



Gibson Sisson

Fall 2025

Capstone - Pottery

Department of Art and Art History

**Artist Statement:**

This body of work reflects on the balance between idea and making; how concept, quality, function, and process intertwine to form something personal. Each piece begins as a thought, a concept that shifts as it meets material. My practice moves between photography and clay, two mediums that both record touch, time, and surface in their own ways. I'm interested in what happens when an image, something light-based is transferred onto something physical and enduring like clay.

By transferring photographs onto ceramic tiles in "Preservation Act" I explore what it means to preserve contemporary moments through images whose subjects are already old, carrying their own histories forward. Tiles are durable, architectural objects meant to last, and placing images on them closes the distance between seeing and making letting the photograph become grounded and physical. The distortions that happen during firing cracks, blurs, softened edges mirror the way memory shifts over time, and become reminders that transformation is always built into the process. The work becomes an act of saving and transforming, allowing the image to inhabit a new material body.

"Around the Block" approaches storytelling through place. Surrounding preserving crock pots with photographs of different homes, the piece becomes a quiet metaphor for community, care, and the slow processes that hold a neighborhood together. The crock pots are made for preserving and fermenting food, acts that require patience, attention, and time. The small houses form a circular neighborhood that reflects belonging and shared rhythms of tending and sustaining. Each pot and house, cracked, blurred, imperfect, carries the imprint of being touched, made, and changed over time. Together they gesture toward the ways we try and preserve meaning through the places we return to.

Quality lives in those moments of intention the way a glaze alters an image, or a surface absorbs light differently. Function acts as both an anchor and question. Some pieces can be used or held; others simply hold space for reflection. But they all explore how images can inhabit material, and how memory can take form. This work is about paying attention to how ideas shift when they move from one medium to another, how intention lingers in texture and tone, and how something as temporary as a photograph can find permanence through the physical act of making.

**Technical statement:**

My work combines ceramic processes with photographic imagery to explore preservation, and memory. Using mid-range stoneware clay, I hand-build tiles and throw the larger vessels in separate pieces and put together. Surfaces are then smoothed and prepared for photo image transfers once leather hard.

Photographs are digitally produced and printed from a laser jet printer and transferred onto clay using underglaze-based ink made of linseed oil and mason stain. I use the image transfer technique lithography to transfer the image. It allows the image to become physically embedded in the clay surface. To transfer the image, I cover my photocopy in Gum Arabic and place it face up onto Plexi glass, I then roll the ink on the image and blot it off using a sponge dipped into water mixed with Gum Arabic. I repeat this process three to four times, where it can then be peeled up and placed face down onto clay. After image application, the paper is burnished away, and you are left with an image. Once dry, pieces are bisqued to cone 06 in a gas or electric kiln. Once through bisque I glaze the edges and rims of the tiles and pots with a Celadon Clear base with 12% red mason stain, and home made white glaze made of equal parts G200 Feldspar, Strontium Carbonate, and Nepheline Syenite which is applied to the interior of the pots. Everything is fired to cone 6 in an electric kiln, this process introduces subtle shifts in tone, texture, and clarity, emphasizing material transformation.

Photography and clay are treated as preservation tools, one capturing time through light, the other fixing it through heat and material permanence. The physical labor of hand-building, firing, and assembling is integral to the work, reinforcing the tension between time, fragility, durability, and care.

**Title****Original Format**

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Figure 1: Preservation Act

Glazed Stoneware, 18 tiles, 3.5 in x 3.5 in

Figure 2: Around the Block

Glazed Stoneware, 11 in x 17 in



Figure 1: Preservation Act



**Figure 2: Around the Block**