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Dirt(y) Politics: Geological Primitivism and Land Use in the Ceramic Vessel Tradition of the American West, 1921-1994

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by

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DEDICATION

For A, C, F, H, and M.
‘Ohana.

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Dirt(y) Politics: Geological Primitivism and Land Use in the Ceramic Vessel Tradition of the American West, 1921-1994

By
Matthew K. Limb

Three California potters Glen Lukens (1887-1967), Hal Riegger (1911-2005), and Rick Dillingham (1952-1994) are at the forefront of art historical interventions in the extraction of the subterranean economy. Their objects, writings, and processes dig up the complex and slippery relations of ceramic vessels to settler colonialism, industrial capitalism, and the liberation of queer personhood in the United States during the twentieth century. I take up the term "geological primitivism" to examine the ways the subjects of this dissertation negotiated their relationship to extraction and the land. Their writings and philosophies reimagined the materiality of ceramics as being ahistorical. The land is not a neutral passive subject. Embedded within its materiality are cultural histories of place and violent genocide enacted under the structure of U.S. settler colonialism. The *California Design* exhibition series, curated by Eudorah Moore at the Pasadena Art Museum, which featured the works of Lukens, Riegger, and Heath, alongside other artists and designers further builds upon the mythologized narrative of the land of the American West as a primordial landscape ready for cultivation and the exploitation of its natural resources.

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Introduction

In a handmade booklet titled "What is a Potter?" written by the ceramist and entrepreneur Edith Heath (American, 1911-2005), she poetically wrote:

> "IN THE BEGINNING… / (this is a very good way to / start a book because it sounds like the Bible or a good / fairy story) / THE EARTH WAS A RED-HOT / MOLTEN MASS OF CHEMICALS / AND MINERALS--BUBBLING, / ZIZZLING AND SPITTING! / SPINNING AROUND AND / AROUND IN SPACE. / AS TIME PASSED— / (thousands of years…not / just a few years) / THIS BOILING MASS / WHICH WAS THE EARTH, / SPINING ROUND AND ROUND— / BEGAN TO COOL. / STEAM FORMED! / ALL AROUND CLOUDS OF / VAPORS, GASES. ROSE TO / BLOT OUT THE SUN. / THE EARTH COOLED MORE/ AND MORE / GRADUALLY THE MINERALS COOLED AND / BECAME / HARD AS ROCKS…./ THEN / PRIMORDIAL ROCK FRAGMENTED / BY RAIN AND SNOW / WIND AND SUN / DISPERSED TO FORM CLAY AND SAND / OXIDES OF IRON / MOLECULES OF FELDSPAR / EONS LATER / THE POTTER / GATHERS TOGETHER—RECOMBINES / RECYCLES— / FROM A HANDFUL OF CLAY / SPUN OR PRESSED / A VESSEL—A TILE / FUSED / AS IN THE ANCESTRAL MAGMA – / MINERALS LONG SEPARATED / ARE ONE AGAIN – / SHAPED FOR HUMAN USE."[1]

This imagined cosmological story of the origins of clay and the role of the potter was continuously edited by Edith Heath for nearly forty years.[2] Through her dedication of the crafting of this mythos, Heath imagined a fantasy that places clay as a primordial material in the chaotic moment of creation. Upon this nascent Earth, clay, sand, and iron lie in wait. Until, after an immeasurable period, the potter arrives. Through the work of the potter, the materials of the world are ordered, combined, recycled, remade, and controlled. According to Heath, the potter holds a large role and outlook for the modern

[1] Edith Heath, "What is a Potter?" Edith Heath Papers. Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley.
[2] *Edith Heath: Philosophies* (Berkeley: Information Office, 2020), 12.

human being. In her story, the potter stands on the edge of chaos, playing within the abyss, to carve civilization out of the fragments and residues extracted from the natural world. Heath has cast the potter in the role of the magician or alchemist. They are a human actor capable of harnessing the energies of the cosmos, ordering nature to create human civilization through a direct connection with the natural environment to form the basis of human achievement over the natural world: the vessel.

This dissertation reframes the discourse of art and environmental engagement through the ceramic vessel tradition and traces an alternative, ecomaterialist, primitive, and settler colonial history of the American modernist studio craft movement centered around California and the greater Southwest. It does so by examining case studies of three California potters, Glen Lukens (1887-1967), Hal Riegger (1913-2005), and Rick Dillingham (1952-1994), and the museological practices of Eudorah Moore (1918-2003), the curator of the Design department at the Pasadena Art Museum (1962-1974), who was instrumental in the success of the *California Design* exhibition series (1954-1976). These individuals have been seen as peripheral subjects in the booming California art scene of the twentieth century, relegated to so-called minor histories of craft and design.

Rather, I argue that Glen Lukens, Hal Riegger, and Rick Dillingham are at the forefront of intervening in the economy of extraction, collectively, their work digs into the complex and slippery relations of ceramic vessels in relation to settler colonialism, primitivism, industrial capitalism, and the liberation of queer personhood in the United States during the twentieth century. As settler potters (a shorthand for settler-colonial, given their collective Anglo heritage), Lukens, Riegger, and Dillingham each fashioned

networks with indigenous communities and renowned Native potters, which profoundly shifted the philosophical grounding of their artwork. All three turned to expressions of primitivism to process the anxieties of the developing modern queer subject. Through meeting, exchanging, and interacting with indigenous interlocuters, the deserts of California and the Southwest became an escape to order and process these emergent identities. The abundant natural resources and indigenous peoples within this region made it idea for the development of American ceramics. However, it set these potters on the path for a direct confrontation with settler colonialism and its legacies in the American West.

The anthropologist Patrick Wolfe referred to settler colonialism as "a structure not an event."[3] Such a structure does not end with colonization, the relegation of indigenous peoples to reservations, or paltry attempts at partial sovereignty. The systemic configuration of settler societies like the United States are meant to render invisible the native progenitors of the land. Lukens, Riegger, Dillingham employed strategies that both colluded with and resisted aspects of settler colonialism. Ultimately, however, this structure is inescapable for these American potters. The tangled intertwining of indigenous and queer white makers unsettled the heteropatriarchal nature of this settler colonial structure, but primarily it fueled the exploration of the queer self and an understanding of the connection between the ceramics and the natural world.

[3] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8 no. 4 (2006), 388.

In her book *The Death of Nature* (1980), the ecofeminist philosopher and historian of science Carolyn Merchant traces the complex development between the West and its relationship with the natural world. She places the Scientific Revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as a historical shift viewed traditionally by scholars as a period of intellectual enlightenment in which, as she writes, "a new science of mechanism and mechanical world view laid the foundation for modern scientific, technological, and social programs."[4] In light of global warming's connection to the use and abuse of the earth's natural resources, Merchant argued as early as 1980 that Western society's growing anxiety over the environment encouraged a reexamination of the pre-mechanical world.

The uniting factor in the ceramic processes of Glen Lukens, Hal Riegger, and Rick Dillingham is an interest in the self-extraction of clays and minerals. By self-extraction, I refer to the process of the potter engaging directly with the natural world to gather the materials needed for their artistic production directly from the earth. Within the United States, this was a necessary practice for potters until the development of a ceramics supply industry. However, many potters continued to choose to gather their own materials over industrial production.

They utilized a primitivist pre-mechanical fantasy overlayed with their individual explorations of queerness to order the ecological anxiety of the modern era. The ecological consequences of the exploitation of the land's natural resources brought on a

[4] Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 2.

renewed understanding, as Merchant writes, of "…the four elements—earth, air, water, and fire—the ancient sources of life and energy…"[5] In her invocation of the ancient world and its elemental roots, Merchant illustrates the ecological stakes Lukens, Riegger, and Dillingham were in tune with through their individuated primitivist approaches to their craft. Their practices occurred via alternative methods of extraction which circumvent, exploit, and steal from capitalist industrial models of disrupting the earth's surface.

Western settler societies have historically framed the environment as an exploitable, God-given asset intelligible primarily through the lenses of capital, industry, and scientific rationalism.[6] Media historian Hunter Vaughan has argued that since the Renaissance, Western society has merited "criticism for erecting an apparatus that is as imperially raced as it is patriarchal" and has been framed specifically "in relation to the advent of capitalism, class, race, and gender."[7] The consequences of this apparatus has produced alarming results in light of the depletion of natural resources and our warming world, and in turn, generated within the humanities environmentally focused studies of literature, media, performance, and art. Referred to as "ecocriticism," this field grew out of studies of literature and cultural theory in the 1990s.While historical discourses in art,

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[5] Merchant, 3.
[6] See Aileen Moreton-Robinson's *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Angloworld* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Elizabeth A. Povinelli, *Geontologies: A Requiem to Late Liberalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).
[7] Hunter Vaughan, *Hollywood's Dirtiest Secret: The Hidden Environmental Cost of the Movies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019): 9.

architecture, and design have an abundance of midcentury literature that certainly can inform an ecocritical lens—such as Ian McHarg's *Design with Nature*—and there exists a wealth of texts on landscape, land art, and representation of the natural world, it is only recently that the field has turned toward the geopolitical, material, and social practices of art and its relationship to the environment.[8] The early 2000s initiated a trickle of museum exhibitions addressing the growing environmental crisis to varying degrees of success, most recently *Nature's Nation: Art and the American Environment* (2018), a touring exhibition organized by the Princeton University Museum of Art..[9]

Yet, American ceramics remains an unwritten chapter in art history's recent turn toward ecocriticism. This is an unusual omission, in that the materiality of ceramics and its energy requirements necessitate a direct connection to the land and the extraction of natural resources. Histories of art that directly engage environmental anxieties brought on by industrial capitalism and the exploitation of natural resources usually place this debate as beginning in the late-1950s and 1960s. As public fervor for the protection of the Earth rose within society, and scientists began to advocate caution for the toll of industrial capitalism on the planet during the mid-twentieth century, conventional histories of "ecoart" have focused on how artists have responded to the growing anxieties about the

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[8] See TJ Demos, *Against the Anthropocene* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2017); TJ Demos, *Decolonizing Nature: Contemporary Art and the Politics of Ecology* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016); Amanda Boetzkes, *The Ethics of Earth Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); James Nisbet, *Ecologies, Environments, and Energy Systems in Art of the 1960s and 1970s* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2014); Emily Scott, *Critical Landscapes: Art, Space, Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).
[9] Karl Kusserow and Alan C. Braddock, eds. *Natures's Nation: American Art and Environment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018).

relationship between the earth and humanity through performance, film, photography, sculpture, and painting. As I will argue, histories of craft, particularly ceramics, are a vital part of this narrative as craftspeople, potters, and ceramic artists have been engaged in robust debates about material extraction, sustainable technologies, and their artistic production's relationship to the land since at least the late-nineteenth century. Glen Lukens, Hal Riegger, and Rick Dillingham each understood clay as a multifaceted material contained within a larger intellectual network encompassing geology, mineralogy, chemistry, geography, architecture, commerce, poetry, and philosophy.

Dig Your Own Clay

Interest in self-extraction despite the availability of commercial products was heavily debated by potters and designers in the mid-twentieth century. J. Sheldon Carey, the Head of the Ceramics division of the Department of Design at the University of Kansas, provided an introductory overview for potters interested in gathering their own materials in his article "Dig Your Own Clay," appearing in the January 1953 edition of *Ceramics Monthly*. Carey presents the desire for gathering your own materials as being a point of wonder for some ceramists who have "never seen clay except in a mixed and de-aired form, either in a barrel or plastic bag."[10] Being thoroughly disconnected from the earthen material through barriers of packaging, for Carey, was not an encouraging way to "intimately know the materials you are working with."[11] Carey assures the first-time

[10] J. Sheldon Carey, "Dig Your Own Clay," *Ceramics Monthly* (January 1953), 24.
[11] "Dig Your Own Clay," 24.

adventurer that clay exists in various amounts and qualities "in nearly every rural area," and can easily be located with little effort. Perhaps he is speaking from his position as the head of a university ceramics department in a heavily rural, agricultural state, but this positionality reinforces the ties between craft, the rural, and a pastoral experience of the land. Clay, is in fact, readily available in nearly every type of environment, regardless of population density or access to green space.

The wide availability of clay and various minerals necessary for glazes directly within the landscape allowed Lukens, Riegger, and Dillingham to subvert industrial extraction. To varying degrees, each potter depended upon the skeletal remains of abandoned industry or pursued "wild clays" directly from isolated wilderness areas. Working with materials that are not processed commercially like wild clays requires a collaborative process. Materials are unrefined and contain gritty qualities which provide opportunities for exploration, experimentation, and learning how to work *with* the earth. The potter does not try to bend self-extracted resources from the earth to their will, but rather recognizes that they must work with the inherent agency of wild materials.

This chosen method of extraction and the required collaboration with the natural environment allows this dissertation to make an ecomaterialist intervention into the historical understanding of the American ceramic vessel tradition. By "ecomaterialist" I am advocating for an approach to questions of art's relationship to the environment that extends beyond the issues of representation that have generally occupied historians of art. Rather, I focus instead on the material ramifications of ceramic artistic practices including the extraction of clay and minerals, the use of fuel, and the embodied

connection that is fostered by a physical, intimate connection with the environment. This builds upon and borrows theoretical frameworks put forth by scholars of materiality such as Jane Bennett's *Vibrant Matter* and Jussi Parikka's *A Geology of Media*. I ask, how has ceramics shaped and been shaped by the potter's relationship to the environment?

However, an ecomaterialist view alone is not adequate as it lacks a framework that reckons with the social and cultural histories of structural power that American potters frequently encounter in regard to land, sovereignty, the mythologization of the American West, and U.S. settler colonialism. The land is not neutral. Embedded in its materiality are histories of place, genocide, living memory, and what the white American settler potters understood as an indigenous spirituality. To account for the complex assemblage in which Lukens, Riegger, and Dillingham and their ceramic vessels are situated, my study incorporates formal analyses of artwork, books written by the artists, exhibition catalogues, oral histories, the personal archives of the artists, and U.S. government documents through the lens of ecomaterialism, settler colonialism, Native feminisms, and queer theory.

Geological Primitivism

My dissertation intertwines three methodological approaches in its examination of twentieth century American ceramics. First, I take up the term "geological primitivism" to examine the ways the subjects of this dissertation negotiated their relationship to extraction and the land by reimagining the materiality of ceramics through an ahistorical lens that erases historical specificity. By working directly with the raw materials of the earth, carefully choosing the ingredients of the clay mixture, and the minerals for glazes,

in the words of Glen Lukens in a missive to the American Ceramic Society in 1942, the potter follows the "immemorial pattern of primitive man in making all the gesturers of creation."[12] As echoed by Edith Heath's cosmological origin fantasy and the mystical role of the potter as a bridge between the mysteries of creation and civilization, the potters of this dissertation advocated for aligning clay with a timeless quality that transcends the specificity of human history or culture, but is rather a universal, shared experience for humans across time and space. I am framing this notion as being an "ahistorical experience" from the understanding of these American potters, which embraces the primal nature of raw materials and adopts a primitive persona through the reenactment of the gestures of generations of potters and their lived experiences. This imagined mythology does not merely place clay as an ahistorical material but is a key component for the construction of a historical fiction as truth—further solidifying the settler colonial apparatus of U.S. imperialism and erasure of the indigenous present and struggle for sovereignty.[13]

Secondly, I repurpose the art critic Lucy Lippard's concept of "land use" to connect the utilitarian attributes of craft and the exploitation of natural resources to ask how ceramics has shaped and been shaped by our relationship to the natural environment. After decamping to New Mexico from New York, Lippard became immersed in the visible issues of settler colonialism present in the contemporary American West. These

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[12] Glen Lukens, "New Pots from the Old Clays of the West," *Bulletin of the American Ceramic Society* XXI, 10 (1942): 238.

[13] The term indigenous began being used in the 1640s to mean "born or originating in a particular place," and was derived from the Latin *indigena* meaning "sprung from the land, native."

issues were perhaps more difficult to see from the position of the New York art world she left behind. In her book *Undermining: A Wild Ride Through Land Use, Politics, and Art in the Changing West*, Lippard turns toward the idea of "land use," or the desire to move beyond a romanticized ideal of the earth and instead center the lived experience of place, or as she gracefully writes, "what we learn from living in a place [and] what we see when we look out our windows."[14]

Through the conception of "land use," ceramics becomes the embodiment of the utilitarian value and lived experience of the land. The creation of the ceramic vessel guides the maker's experience of the landscape of the American West. "Land use" heavily focuses on the process of making. Art historians have often been oriented toward the finished object, neglecting the unseen creative activity of fashion objects. In the history of ceramics, the land disappears from view, yet it is always present in the background of the ceramic object. By reorienting the angle of vision to land use, what appears?

For Lippard, turning toward the concept of land use becomes a crucial designation to consider the past, present, and future of the earth and resists the displacement of Native peoples to the period prior to colonization, providing space of for the indigenous imagination of the present and future. Glen Lukens, Hal Riegger, and Rick Dillingham all experience what they perceive as an indigenous spirituality through their embodied experience of the land. Yet, from the perspective of the white settler potter the land still

[14] Lucy Lippard, *Undermining: A Wild Ride Through Land Use, Politics, and Art in the Changing West* (New York: New Press, 2014), 4.

must retain a use value. Or as Lippard bluntly states, "The fundamental issue here is that we colonials are hard put to understand the sanctity of an 'unimproved' piece of earth."[15]

Yet, for these potters, due to their encounters with Native American makers and exploration of a primitivist fantasy to process the anxieties of a rapidly changing modern world, the capitalist value placed on the concept of "use" becomes slippery. In *Undermining,* Lucy Lippard addresses how the "humble gravel pit offers an entrance to the strata of place, suggesting some fissures in the capitalist narrative into which art can flow."[16] Lippard's model of the ubiquitous gravel pit near her home offers a model that is strikingly like clay—it too can be found nearly everywhere, readily available, if only one knows where to look. The self-extraction of clay, minerals, and other important materials for ceramics production by the potters addressed in this dissertation positions them as the jackals and vultures of the capitalist industrial landscape, using to their advantage materials left behind, deemed meritless due to their inability to generate a desirable profit within an industrial capitalist context.

Finally, I draw upon the philosopher Sara Ahmed's concept of queer phenomenology to examine how the deserts of the American Southwest and the vessels created from its materials provided a sense of orientation for these queer potters. Glen Lukens, Hal Riegger, and Rick Dillingham turned toward the land to achieve varying degrees of personal liberation. Ahmed writes that to be oriented is "to be turned toward certain objects, those that help us find our way. These are the objects we recognize, so

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[15] *Undermining*, 50.
[16] Undermining, 1-2.

that when we face them we know which way we are facing…They gather on the ground and they create the ground upon which to gather."[17] The vessels created by Lukens, Riegger, and Dillingham are an expression of their authenticity, the objects provided a grounding, a direction, a place from which to see, a place from which to *become* and imagine what not yet was.

The queer sexuality of the potters Lukens, Riegger, and Dillingham, provides an additional layer worthy of unearthing to fully grasp the complex web that is situated within the ceramic vessel tradition's relationship with the environment. The social networks these potters formed with Native makers and indigenous communities across the American West position ceramics as a compelling subject from which to examine both the environmental and sociocultural impact of extraction, its relationship to the structure of settler colonialism, and how indigeneity informed the formation of queer identity and liberation from the pre-Stonewall era through to the AIDS crisis.

Chapters

In Chapter One, I examine the glaze experiments of Glen Lukens in the Death Valley region of California. I focus on Lukens's investigation of the mineralogical potential of California's subterranean economy to assert his sexual identity that was publicly masked and instead enacted through material conditions, gestures, and the deployment of glazes. Lukens turned toward the grandeur of geological primitivism to universalize the American engagement with the environment. In his view, ceramics production is a

[17] Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 3.

timeless practice that transcends the sociopolitical reality of the American settler state. Instead, it promotes an honest way of being in the world that reveals the authenticity of the self. Lukens relies upon an indigenous philosophical grounding to act as a balm for the draining experience of modernity in Los Angeles. Lukens's experiments in Death Valley perceived to tame one of California's most isolated and desolate landscapes—transfiguring the mineralogical wealth of the state and ordering the chaotic nature of the desert into a controlled, useful object.

In Chapter Two, I examine the evolution of Hal Riegger's relationship to extraction as it was influenced by his participation in gay liberation movements and queer-positive therapeutic interventions. For Riegger, the primitive encompassed both a set of ideological beliefs and an embodied way of working that generated harmony between the human body and nature. Riegger's embrace of so-called primitive ceramic processes circumvented the restraints of technology and commercialism and became a vehicle to attain a higher form of consciousness and enable a journey toward self-discovery. This psychic release provided by primitivism was crucial to Riegger's expression of queerness. Riegger's embrace of the primitive was foundational to his understanding of his sense of self, how he moved through the world as a gay man, and his shaping of therapeutic approaches to the healing of societal trauma inflicted upon homosexuals in the mid-twentieth century.

In Chapter Three, I assess the exhibition series *California Design* (1952-1976) held at the Pasadena Art Museum and curated by Eudorah Moore from 1962 onwards. I apply a decolonial critique of Moore's exhibition practice to examine how *California*

Design constructed a mythology of California and masked its settler colonial past and present. Moore relies on photography of ceramic vessels within the desert to establish the medium as primordial subjects that act as intermediaries between the viewer and the landscape. The display of these objects within a museum and their commercial consumption by the public through *California Design* demonstrates how institutions like the Pasadena Art Museum exerted their influence to maintain the systemic structure of American settler colonialism.

In Chapter Four, I survey the career of potter, writer, and amateur anthropologist Rick Dillingham and the intricate networks he built amongst his Native American peers. Dillingham explored an aesthetics of repair and mending as he wrestled with the reality of settler colonial structures in the Southwest. While Dillingham wielded his white privilege to uplift Native peoples through exhibitions, written works, and the advancement of Native artists, he is a complex figure who was dismissive of the concerns of factions within the communities in which he worked. The influence Dillingham exerted shaped the collection of Pueblo ceramics through his personal tastes. This limited the cultural expression available to indigenous potters as they worked to appeal to a white market to ensure their economic longevity.

Chapter One: Extracting the Rainbow in Glen Lukens's Death Valley Ceramics and Glass, 1923-1945

Introduction

In 1922, the art teacher Glen Lukens encountered "the most beautiful blue" he had ever seen while on a field trip with his high school students at the Walker Art Gallery in Minneapolis, Minnesota.[18] This enticing shade of cerulean was found on an Egyptian *ushabti*, or funerary figurine, that was touring the United States alongside other objects uncovered from recent archaeological excavations of Egyptian tombs. The rediscovery of Tutankhamun's tomb that same year sparked a renewed fascination with the culture of ancient Egypt. This phenomenon, known as Egyptomania, popularized the use of Egyptian motifs and themes throughout architecture, design, and fashion. The *ushabti* dazzled Lukens's artistic instincts. In his 1966 oral history, he recalled thinking that he would never be satisfied with his own artistic production until, as he stated, he had made "a blue as good as that…a blue as beautiful as that Egyptian blue."[19]

The pursuit of color achieved through glaze materials was the driving force throughout Glen Lukens's career and took him to sites around the world. Yet, the lack of codified sources documenting ancient artisanal techniques proved a stumbling block in his ability to reproduce this beguiling color. Lukens's encounter with the *ushabti* so moved him that he began collecting Egyptian artifacts as a means of researching how ancient artisans could have achieved such a feat. As seen in these two figurines from

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[18] Glen Lukens, Oral History Interview by Hazel Bray, September 30, 1966, transcript, Oakland Museum of California Archives, Oakland Museum of California, Oakland, CA.
[19] Lukens, Oral History.

Lukens's personal collection, the objects are small turquoise faience pieces—the blue ranging from turquoise to a deep cerulean (fig. 1). Through his research, Lukens found that turquoise faience was a deeply significant material to the Egyptians and other cultures of the Mediterranean basin. The Egyptians and Persians viewed the material as mystical with sacred powers, imbued with the shimmer of sunlight and rebirth. It connected the earth with the heavens and was associated with fertility, vegetation, and joy.[20]

This shade of blue captured the imagination of this young man, born on a corn farm in 1887 in Cowgill, Missouri, fifty miles northeast of Kansas City. Glen Lukens had a rural, impoverished upbringing. His early education was sporadic and the rural school he attended had no library.[21] In a 1943 letter to his niece Avanelle Lukens Casper, Lukens wrote that in his recollection, rural midwestern America had taught him "the misery of being refused social recognition."[22] While Lukens never fully articulated the reasons for this social discomfort during his lifetime, Lukens turned toward acceptable sources of expression—the glaze and ceramic medium—and crafted an imperious and respectable public image. Within his archive, however, seeps traces of a vibrant homosocial and sexually intimate life. As a homosexual in the early twentieth century living in a rural town, Lukens had few opportunities for community, affection, or change within his social

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[20] See: Glen Lukens, "New Pots from the Old Clays of the West," *Bulletin of the American Ceramic Society* XXI 10 (10/15/1942), 237-38; Carolyn Riccardelli, "Egyptian Faience: Technology and Production." Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. Metropolitan Museum of Art, December 2017, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/egfc/hd_egfc.htm.
[21] Lukens, Oral History.
[22] Lukens, Glen. *Glen Lukens to Avanelle Lukens Casper and Don Casper, September 27, 1943.* Letter. From Glen Lukens Papers. Archives of American Art. Washington, DC.

environment. Teaching became his vehicle out and color the mode for expression and personal liberation.

More interested in artistic pursuits than farming, Lukens left Missouri for the Oregon State Agricultural College (OSAC) in Corvallis, Oregon. Reflecting upon this pivotal moment in his life in the letter to his niece, Lukens longed for a greater freedom of expression than possible in the "narrowness of Middle Western Culture."[23] By going West, Lukens wrote poetically, "those windswept mountains, the clean fresh deserts, the warm winds from the Pacific" would give him a chance to chase after the freedom he so desired.[24]

When Lukens first started his education in Oregon, the school did not have a ceramics program. The growing art department (which added both ceramics and jewelry to the curriculum, much to Lukens's delight), was in the basement of the campus's Mines building.[25] This immediate adjacency of art and mining, powerfully resonated with his interest in geology and the mineralogical potential of subterranean materials for ceramic art, especially the possibilities for a wide array of colors. This is apparent after his graduation from OSAC in 1920 when Lukens left Oregon and began teaching art in the Iron Hills of northern Minnesota. The encounter between Lukens and the Egyptian *ushabti* two years later at the Walker Art Gallery generated a curiosity to explore the interplay between the subterranean landscape and ceramics.

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[23] Lukens to Avanelle.
[24] Lukens to Avanelle.
[25] Lukens, Oral History.

Open to experimentation, Lukens knew the materials used by Egyptian artisans likely came from the local desert landscape surrounding the Nile River. In 1923 he left behind the Iron Hills for a teaching position at Fullerton High School in Fullerton, California, based on the belief that the nearby mineral-rich Death Valley and Mojave Desert would prove to be a landscape of abundance for the materials he needed to achieve his goal of recreating the color. The region (once commercially desirable for its borax and other useful minerals) held little mineralogical value to the state of California and industrial interests when Lukens began exploring the isolated area; this was due to larger and more conveniently located mineral deposits being found along the coast.[26] This left a convenient post-industrial landscape for the potter to exploit for experimentation.

Consider this *Bowl* (c. 1930s) constructed from materials Glen Lukens harvested in Death Valley (fig.2a-2d). The potter leaves a significant portion of the raw clay exposed, which was a radical artistic choice during the 1930s. In so doing, Lukens centers his driving philosophy about clay and the importance of an authentic interaction with the material. By choosing to work directly with self-extracted raw materials taken from the earth, the potter is able to conduct a careful study across the selection of every aspect of the ceramics process (the ingredients of the clay mixture, the building of the kiln, and the differences in the heating power of fuel resources), in so doing, Lukens

[26] See Dietrich, Waldemar Fenn. *The Clay Resources and Ceramic Industry of California*. State of California Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mines and Mining, Bulletin No. 99. Sacramento, CA: California State Printing Office, 1928. University of California, Davis Libraries, California Mines Geological Collection. https://archive.org/details/clayresourcescer00dietrich/page/n5/mode/2up (accessed July 29, 2023).

wrote in a missive for the American Ceramic Society, the potter followed the "immemorial pattern of primitive man in making all the gestures of creation."[27]

This alignment of ceramic materials and process with an ahistorical experience of human beings resonates with the idea of "geological primitivism." By turning to a discourse of geology, Lukens shifts the temporal scale that his objects engage. *Bowl* is not only a vessel created in the 1930s that speaks of values of that cultural moment, but in Lukens' view, is also an object that exists outside of history. It is an opportunity to participate in the repetition of movements and gestures that exceed beyond time immemorial. Or as Lukens wrote while on a trip to Death Valley, "we go to the desert out of some hungering repetition of an old destiny…clay became something that was no longer material but rather the reincarnation of a sublime idea. The idea of material becomes entirely obliterated. It is a miracle."[28]

Equally important to the understanding of this moment of creation is the lived embodied experience of the desert. Just as *Bowl* has the potential for functional use, shaped by the clay and minerals of the desert, the experience of the desert is shaped through the gestures and movements of making. I equate this embodied interaction with the land with Lucy Lippard's concept of "land use." Lippard writes that "land use" encapsulates more than a romanticized ideal of the earth and centers the lived embodied experience of it, or as she poetically states, "what we learn from living in a place [and]

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[27] Lukens, "New Pots from the Old Clays of the West," 238.
[28] Lukens, Glen. *Untitled Letter*, u.d. Letter. From Personal Writings, Box 26.09A. Glen Lukens Papers, Ceramic Research Center Archives, Arizona State University.

what we see when we look out our windows."[29] This embodied experience between human and non-human, the desert and its materials, is an obliteration of the ego—and as Lukens's believed presented the possibility for true authenticity to be revealed.

In his oral history, Lukens recalled his early moments in Death Valley processing materials, experimenting with silica and talc. He spoke of this experience as a rising of "the deep self, coming up, penetrating the surface of consciousness."[30] The moment of creation and direct contact with the earth and its inner resources influenced how he saw himself as a human being and his ability to express his own humanity. The interaction with clay and glaze material generated a space for a primal expression of man which reconnected him back to the natural world. While *Bowl* is a simple form, it is through the materials extracted from the subterranean wealth of the soil that allowed for an expression of beauty when Lukens approaches the materials with a fine-tuned sensitivity and authenticity. Through this, Lukens believed the deep self, the inner truth of a person, would be revealed.

Lukens turned toward an engagement with the Western landscapes of Death Valley and the greater Southwest to develop an individual expression of queerness as a means of social and personal liberation. I draw upon the philosopher Sara Ahmed's conception of queer phenomenology to examine the ways in which the deserts of the American Southwest, and the glazes and vessels created from their materials provided a keen sense of orientation for Glen Lukens. For Ahmed, to be oriented is "to be turned

[29] *Undermining,* 4.
[30] Lukens, Oral History.

toward certain objects, those that help us find our way. These are the objects we recognize, so that when we face them we know which way we are facing…They gather on the ground and they create the ground on which to gather."[31] Lukens's vessels are an expression of his authenticity, they provided the artist grounding, a direction, a place from which to see, a place from which to *become* and imagine what not yet was.

Through the story of this queer artist, I argue that Glen Lukens's engagement with the land and interaction with its subterranean materiality allowed the artist to express a queer identity that was predicated on the reinforcement of the American settler colonial empire. I will explore how Lukens's relationship to extraction troubled industrial capitalism, but through his pursuit of color, he engaged in stripping the land of its material indigeneity to become a personal expression of his authentic deepest self. I will examine Lukens's deployment of the glaze and his ceramic and glass vessels during the period in which he was fervently working across the desert landscapes of Death Valley, as well as Native American lands in Arizona and New Mexico from 1923 to 1945. The minerals, clays, and other inorganic materials gathered from the desert allowed Lukens to perform queer gestures in the making of his vessels yet were able to pass as acceptable sources of expression.

[31] Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 3.

Color and Clay Infrastructure in California

In 1949 the *Saturday Evening Post* writer Frank J. Taylor hailed the growth of the Southern California ceramics industry, asserting that within the past fifteen years over 1,000 backyard kilns had been built, employing over 8,000 potters, and producing one hundred million dishes per year. Taylor wrote of California ceramics that "the majority [are] so high in color, that eating off them will be like dining off the rainbow."[32] The *Post* credits Dr. Glen Lukens—pictured in a blue smock—for the technological innovations necessary to produce such vibrant colors (fig. 3). Taylor cheekily lamented that there was "almost nothing that the color-mad California dinnerware makers [would] not try at least once."[33] The brightly-colored plates, bowls, and cups at a pottery market in Laguna Beach captured by photographer Gene Lester enthralled the nation and illustrated the changing consumption habits of American tableware (fig. 4). William Wrigley, Jr., the chewing gum magnate and owner of Catalina Island Pottery proclaimed that he wanted "a bit of Catalina to go to every part of the globe."[34] Wrigley's bold proclamation gestures not only to the consumer's craving for color and an association of colorful ceramics with California, but of the desire for the dissemination of the Golden State's mineral wealth across the planet. Glen Lukens recalled a summer session course he taught in 1932 at the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University in Alfred, New York where students clamored to know "if he knew how to make the bright colors of the commercial

[32] Frank J. Taylor. *Saturday Evening Post*, "Dining Off the Rainbow." November 11, 1949, 122. Philadelphia: G. Graham, 1949.
[33] "Dining Off the Rainbow," 123.
[34] "Dining Off the Rainbow," 123.

potters were producing out West on mixing bowls, vases, jardinieres, and bowls. Everyone in love with California bowls!"[35]

The infrastructure, mineralogical knowledge, and familiarity with ceramic technology had developed significantly on the West Coast by the time Taylor showcased colorful California ceramic wares to the American public. However, when Glen Lukens first arrived in Southern California in 1923, chasing after his obsession in the pursuit of that beautiful Egyptian blue, the state's ceramic industry was just beginning to develop and was not at all geared toward the production of tableware or artistic pursuits in clay.

In 1928, just three years into Lukens's intrepid exploration of Death Valley's subterranean economy, the Associate Professor of Mining Engineering at Stanford University, Dr. Waldemar Fenn Dietrich published *The Clay Resources and Ceramic Industry of California* on behalf of the State of California Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mines and Mining. This multi-year study surveyed the state's clay and mineral resources, potential for economic development in the burgeoning industry, and the production and supply chains of every known pottery (from large commercial enterprises to small businesses) operating in the state of California. Dietrich observed that the need for high-quality clays along the Pacific coast had greatly augmented by 1928 due to the "phenomenal increase in population in the region and the consequent demand for structural and decorative clay products."[36] Of the hundreds of potteries operating across California, the vast majority were engaged in meeting the needs of architectural

[35] "New Pots from the Old West," 237.
[36] *The Clay Resources and the Ceramic Industry of California*, 11.

infrastructure: chimney pipes, sewer pipes, bricks, and roofing tiles amongst other products. At the time of the publication of Dietrich's report in 1928, only four potteries reported capabilities to produce ceramic tableware (all in Los Angeles County), while another eleven produced wares classified as "Art or Garden Pottery."[37] Nearly all operating potteries used commercial methods of production, relying on moulds to quickly reproduce and standardize the shapes of garden vessels, pipes, and other products. Dietrich notes an important exception in the San Francisco-based art pottery Jalanivich and Olsen, who were producing "an attractive line of glazed pottery" made "on a potter's wheel."[38]

Outside of industrial ceramic research laboratories—the most robust of which operating in the state, Dietrich notes, was Gladding, McBean, and Co.—codified knowledge on the West Coast of the potter's wheel, kilns, and glaze chemistry was sparse. Information on ceramics was largely disseminated through university-based ceramics programs, the most prominent of which was the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University in upstate New York. Run by the British-born potter, Charles Fergus Binns (b. United Kingdom, American, 1857-1934), Alfred specialized in both the ceramic arts and ceramic engineering for industry. He promoted the "Alfred aesthetic" in his students' work, which was heavily influenced by East Asian porcelain.[39] Porcelain, considered the finest of the three clay bodies (earthenware, stoneware, and

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[37] These four potteries were: J.A. Bauer Pottery Co., Empire China Co., Mission China Co., and Poxon Pottery.
[38] *The Clay Resources and the Ceramic Industry of California,* 207.
[39] See Charles F. Binns, *The Potter's Craft: A Practical Guide for the Studio and Workshop*. New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1910.

porcelain), required high firing temperatures beyond the capabilities Glen Lukens's early experiments, which focused entirely on readily available low-fire earthenware. The lack of codified educational materials and technical know-how prompted a culture of experimentation that defined Southern California ceramics for decades.

Working as a studio potter without the advantages of commercially-backed research laboratories and infrastructure, Glen Lukens was an anomaly in the California ceramics scene in the 1920s. Lukens developed prominent connections within the modernist Los Angeles art scene particularly with the proto-feminist photographer Anne Brigman (American, 1869-1950) and the emerging Black Hollywood arts community. Throughout the 1920s and early 30s, Lukens was a frequent collaborator with Brigman. Known for her involvement in the Photo-Secession movement in the United States, Brigman's photographs explored the primordial through scenes of California's natural environment and the nude female figure. Brigman's career was well-established when she began collaborating with Lukens.

In this *Untitled* (c. 1930) portrait Brigman captured of Lukens in his studio, the potter sits at a kick-wheel shaping a vessel (fig. 5). Brigman's photograph of Lukens at the potter's wheel captures an unusual aspirational moment that elevated his artistic persona. While Lukens had been trained to use the potter's wheel, he famously disliked it, preferring to use handbuilding techniques, molds, and slab building to construct his relatively simple forms. Another photographic collaboration between Brigman and Lukens, *Untitled* (1932), is a surrealist dream-like fantasy created through a double exposure (fig. 6). A close-up photograph of Lukens's hands forming a vessel from wet

clay sits above a display of an array of his early ceramic vessels. The interplay between shadow and light of the clearly defined teapot, bowl, and platter paired with the hazy image of potter's hands at work creates a scene that gives the impression of the objects recalling or imagining their own creation. The photograph goes beyond the parameters of a still life through the recollection of their own making. Here, Brigman suggests the ceramic vessel's ability to retain haptic memory. The hazy impression of Lukens's hands giving the earthen material form, which are then presented to the viewer.

Center, not Peripheral

Glen Lukens was an ardent supporter of Black artists throughout his life, his financial patronage and securing space to showcase black talent in a deeply segregated city were vital in the pre-war years of Hollywood's Black arts scene. The assemblage artist and Los Angeles native Betye Saar recalled to art historian Jane H. Carpenter in *Betye Saar* the importance of Lukens's financial patronage of Hollywood's early black arts community, providing financial support to the dancer and gallery owner Jenny LeJong, the dancer Janet Collins, and the actor Geoffrey Holder, among others.[40] According to Saar, the multitalented artists Lukens helped foster and secu formed the nucleus of Black artistic talent which laid the foundation for a thriving Black Southern California arts community by the 1950s. Recent histories documenting the Black arts scene of Los Angeles have focused on the 1960s forward.[41] Nationally, histories of Black

[40] Jane H. Carpenter, *Betye Saar* (San Francisco: Pomegranate, 2003), 14.
[41] See *South of Pico: African American Artists in Los Angeles in the 1960s and 1970s*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

art communities in the pre-World War II era focus on the East Coast and Harlem Renaissance. The community surrounding Glen Lukens is a much-needed intervention into the development of Black arts in California.

In this photograph by Julius Shulman, Lukens stands second from the left in a jovial and racially diverse group that includes the dancer Janet Collins and gallery owner Jenny LeJong (fig 7).[42] The photograph documents the aftermath of a gathering, possibly a farewell party for the dancer Janet Collins before her departure to New York City and the launch of her career.[43] Lukens frequently hosted in the backyard of his home designed by the modernist architect Raphael Sariano for the Black arts community throughout the 1930s to the 1950s.[44] These garden parties provided space for black intellectuals to gather, converse, and showcase their talents. The multi-racial gathering is unique for a city rife with racial tensions and demonstrates Lukens's position as a key node for the city's artistic network. According to Saar, the multitalented artists Lukens helped foster and secure formed the nucleus of Black artistic talent which laid the foundation for a thriving Black Southern California arts community by the 1950s. Recent histories

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[42] I am still working to identify the other individuals in this photograph. Saar notes that Lukens was a friend of a group of black artists that included Carmen de Lavallade and her husband, actor Geoffrey Holder, however, they are not depicted here. The identity of the Asian man is unknown, but he was also photographed individually inside Lukens's home by Shulman.

[43] See Yaël Tamar Lewin's *Night's Dancer: The Life of Janet Collins*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2011.

[44] Glen Lukens's intellectual gatherings, garden parties, and musical showcases featuring black artistic talent are well-documented and reported upon in the *Los Angeles Tribune*, a newspaper published by Almena Lomax primarily for Black residents of Los Angeles between 1941 and 1960.

documenting the Black arts scene of Los Angeles have focused on the 1960s forward.[45] Nationally, histories of Black art communities in the pre-World War II era focus on the East Coast and Harlem Renaissance. The community surrounding Glen Lukens is a much-needed intervention into the development of Black arts in California.

Glen Lukens's relationship to blackness is complicated and rooted in progressive ideals of the era. Lukens showed intellectual and professional commitments to the betterment and uplift of the Black public of Los Angeles. During years of World War II when rationing had created a scarcity of metals, Lukens began a social program aimed toward urban poor families living in social housing in predominantly black and Latinx regions of the city. The goal of these programs was to provide the urban poor with the knowledge and resources to dig clay from the land their housing was built upon and transform it into oven-safe casserole dishes and utensils. Lukens continued this social programming through the 1950s. A newspaper clipping from *Griffith Park News* promoted Lukens involvement with the East Hollywood Community Coordinating Council for the betterment and development of family living.[46]

Lukens understood the potential of ceramics to offer not only personal liberation in connecting with ones true inner self, but more importantly, the economic and social liberation ceramics home industries could provide to marginalized communities. Lukens emphasized a hands-on approach to the social uplift of marginalized communities. This

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[45] See *South of Pico: African American Artists in Los Angeles in the 1960s and 1970s*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.
[46] *Griffith Park News*, "Family Living Meeting Scheduled by Council,: February 19, 1954.

pedagogical outlook, for Lukens, is rooted in Progressive Era education. Art historian Ezra Shales has argued that Progressive era educators, like John Cotton Dana—the director of the Free Public Library in Newark, NJ—saw the industrial arts, particularly the crafts as "pragmatic vehicles to further civic betterment and self-improvement."[47] Dana believed that innate virtue involved in handwork impacted not only the maker, but that the craft objects themselves had "ethical properties that could rub off" on consumers for the betterment of society.[48] The vessel is a conduit for experience—a way of orienting the public toward a truth that potters have discovered.

Glen Lukens's network of relationships with Anne Brigman, Janet Collins, the Japanese-American author Hisaye Yamamoto, and many other prominent artists, musicians, actors, writers, and intellectuals require a reexamination of the canonical narrative of the development of modernist art and culture in Los Angeles. Lukens has often been depicted as a peripheral figure, central to the city's avant-garde ceramics movement, but of little importance elsewhere. He sits at the center of a multiracial artistic network that crosses multiple generations and was crucial to the uplift of minority voices and communities.

Archaeological Fantasies

Glen Lukens's early experiments with California's minerals focused on the lead glazes already popular within the state, but they were unsuccessful in recreating the

[47] Ezra Shales, *Made in Newark: Cultivating Industrial Arts and Civic Identity in the Progressive Era* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 15.
[48] Shales, 15.

proper shade of blue. Finding little success in these early years, he traveled to the British Museum in London, hoping to find sources of information on Egyptian techniques and the composition of materials required to reproduce the color. An offhand remark from a student in 1931, at the California College of Arts and Crafts (CCAC) in Oakland, where he taught a summer course, led him to the Mechanic's Institute of San Francisco. The Institute held the world's most complete library of abstracts on alkaline pastes. It had initially been established in 1854 as an educational and cultural institution directed toward serving the needs of out-of-work gold miners.

In San Francisco, Glen Lukens met other ceramists whose work in the vessel tradition was fueled by an interest in early twentieth century archaeological excavations. Ceramic sherds, vessels, and sculptural objects provided inspiration for forms, textures, and colors. The dearth of technical ceramics information fueled experimentation of modern studio potters to uncover the technical processes of past cultures. On the East Coast, the American studio potter Leon Volkmar (American, 1879-1959) was inspired by Egyptian, Persian, and Chinese archaeological finds displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Working in Bedford Village, New York, Volkmar was the master technician for Durant Kilns, founded in 1910 by Mrs. Jean Durant Rice, the wife of a wealthy ophthalmologist.

Believing that the vibrant glazes and forms seen in ceramics from past civilizations would find a favorable market in New York City, Volkmar began experimenting with chemical combinations to produce cerulean and turquoise in the 1910s. He had achieved modest success by 1915 in producing the glaze he called Persian

Blue Crackle, which was used throughout the Durant Kiln enterprises. Durant's blue was based on glazes from the 10th to 13th century CE style of ceramic from South Central Asia (fig. 8 and fig. 9). Following Rice's death in 1919, Volkmar hired Manuel Jalanivich, an American studio potter who had trained with the famed Biloxi, Mississippi potter, George Ohr and Niloak Pottery in Benton, Arkansas.[49]

During his time at the Durant Kilns, Jalanivich met Ingvardt Olsen (1888-1959), a Danish immigrant from Copenhagen who had been trained as a ceramic technician at the Royal Copenhagen Ceramic Factory. Jalanivich and Olsen would remain lifelong romantic partners and co-designers, sharing a workshop space and leading *Jalanivich and Olsen* together until their deaths. Jalanivich's influence on the California ceramic art community continued as an early teacher of Vivika Heino at the California School of Fine Arts in San Francisco between 1937 through 1939.[50]

Though Jalanivich's archive is sparse, he is an intriguing figure at the center of the early 20th century San Francisco Bay area ceramics community. A better understanding of his work would explore how the Biloxi potter George Ohr—a true visionary in his approach to both glazes and clay—had an influence on California ceramic pedagogies and styles; tracing influence via a lineage that spans Ohr to Jalanivich to Heino to a vast network of Southern California makers.

Though unknown now, Jalanivich and Olsen were primary figureheads in the San Francisco Bay area ceramics world in the 1930s and 1940s through their teaching and

[49] "Manuel Eugene Jalanivich," Biloxi Historical Society Archives, 08/31/2023, https://biloxihistoricalsociety.org/manuel-eugene-jalanivich-1898-1944.
[50] Biloxi Historical Society Archives.

production of functional pottery. Glen Lukens was aware of the glaze experiments based on West Asian archaeological finds that Manuel Jalanivich and his partner Ingvardt Olsen were working on in San Francisco. During the summer of 1931 while teaching at CCAC, Lukens met the couple. In the transcript of his oral history, when was asked if he knew the couple, he seems evasive and did not wish to discuss them. His only response when pressed by the interviewer Hazel Bray, was that yes, he knew the couple, and that "they were wheel people,"[51] before changing the subject. Lukens dismissal of the pair could be due to a dislike of their work, or that they were both engaged in the recreation of colorful glazes from ancient sources. However, it is also likely that Lukens, who very firmly distinguished between his professional life and his private sexual life, did not wish to be associated with a well-known homosexual couple in a pre-Stonewall Era.

At the Mechanic's Institute of San Francisco, Lukens found a wealth of information on alkaline glazes. Akaline glazes use borax, potash, or soda ash (all of which were easily located in Death Valley) to produce brilliant colors at a low firing temperature. Due to the nature of the materials, however, the resulting glaze is often lumpy, drippy, and poorly disperses over the surface of the vessel. If the glaze composition contains too much alkali, the glaze is susceptible to crazing, which causes the glass-like surface of the glaze to crackle due to too much tension during the cooling process.[52] While crazing has at times been a popular aesthetic choice to add dynamism to

[51] Lukens, Oral History.
[52] See Robert Fournier, *Illustrated Dictionary of Practical Pottery* (Radnor, PA: Chilton Book Company, 1992).

the vessel's glaze, it can make the vessel unsafe for food consumption or ruin the aesthetic the potter wishes to achieve if not done intentionally.

This viscous aesthetic caused by alkaline glazes did not bother Lukens in the slightest, and were crucial to the development of both Jalavanich's glaze as seen in *Flared Bowl* (1924) (Fig. 10). Jalanivich's work is strikingly similar to Lukens's in the use of bright viscous glazes that partially reveal and contrast with an exposed clay body. His large drips were created through the process of dipping the vessel into the glaze, but he shares with Lukens's an aesthetic of making visible the labor of the craftsman. Neither Lukens nor Jalanivich's work attempts to conceal that it is clay with a glaze covering—this in itself is a clear break from ceramics of the prior two decades of the Arts & Crafts movement ceramics were more often vehicles for three-dimensional painting or exploration of an organic form. Rather both Lukens and Jalanivich's works leave the base unglazed, exposing it as raw earth, but also emphasizing the skin-like role glaze takes on over the body of the pot.

Lukens differentiated himself from Volkmar and Jalanivich by working directly with raw, unprocessed materials. Working with indigenous materials forced Lukens to abandon imitation. The unpredictability of raw materials creates a uniqueness that is determined by the mineralogical makeup on the area of extraction, whereas commercial materials are processed to create uniformity.

Lukens embraced the element of chance and spontaneity that comes with working with raw materials. For Lukens, the reproduction of this hue of blue is steeped in the power of fantasy, image-making, and the spread of Egyptomania across the United States.

The circulation of Egyptian artifacts within American museums had a substantial impact on American design, architecture, and visual culture. Lukens locates this fantasy as originating within the desert landscape. The stark landscape, heat, and aridity of Death Valley positioned the area to be seen as an exotic locale. Long known for its mineral resources and carrying a name with storied-origins, Death Valley evoked the mystery and sensuality of Egypt.

While Lukens was also drawn to Death Valley for its mineral wealth, his interest in color was aesthetic, technical, and economic. Prior to 1950, ceramics fluctuated between the fourth and fifth largest industries within the U.S. economy.[53] Making an oblique comparison, perhaps, to what could have been possible for Death Valley, he wrote in a 1942 article for *American Ceramic Society* that the desire for vibrant colors sparked "a new industry and trade routes to foreign lands" in ancient Egypt and Persia.[54] A greater variety of color opened the more economic opportunity.

Death Valley Modernisms

Glen Lukens began making regular trips to Death Valley to gather raw materials in 1925. Although he had no formal training as either a geologist or ceramic engineer, he became proficient in both. He purchased a car—an incredible expense for an artist living on the salary of a high school art teacher—and explored the region on weekends, taking with

[53] Glen Lukens, "Ceramic Art at the University of Southern California," *Design* 45 no. 9 (1944), 19.
[54] Lukens, "New Pots from the Old Clays of the West," 237.

him a shovel and buckets to collect raw samples.[55] A motor vehicle was an incredible investment in the mid-1920s, and with no established roads to Death Valley, travel was quite precarious.[56] His dedication to this venture demonstrates the significance of both his personal drive and insatiable curiosity. He focused his self-directed study on the Panamint Valley area of Death Valley, a volcanic repository which he knew to have once been the location of significant borax and talc mines.[57] This map produced by the Pacific Coast Borax Company orients the region's location to the surrounding economic and population centers of Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and the few options for motor vehicle travel to and from the area (fig. 10). Borax mining in Death Valley, once one of the most important minerals extracted from the region and transported to Los Angeles on the much-storied teams of twelve mules, had decreased significantly by the 1930, the year the map was printed. Closer, more convenient sources of minerals found nearer to California's population centers on the coast relocated the Valley's mining industry. However, much of the decaying infrastructure was left behind and abandoned—creating a post-industrial landscape for Lukens to exploit in his collection of materials.

Death Valley has long been a favored subject by Lukens's fellow California modernists: California modernist photographers Edward Weston (American, 1886-1958), Johan Hagemeyer (b. Netherlands, American 1884-1962), and Ansel Adams (American,

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[55] Lukens, Oral History.
[56] See John L. Von Blon, "Death Valley Transportation," *Scientific American* vol 125 no 14 (October 1, 1921), 232.
[57] For a history of the known geological and historical information available on Death Valley from Lukens's era, see L.F. Noble, "Rock Formations of Death Valley, California," *Science* vol 80 no 2069 (August 24, 1934), 173-178; R. M. Glendinning, "The Role of Death Valley," *Economic Geography* vol 16 no 3 (July 1940), 299-311.

1902-1984) began photographing Death Valley as early as 1936, helping to further cement the place as a site of otherworldly beauty, desolation, and otherness within the American imagination and the visual culture of California. For instance, Weston's *Golden Canyon, Death Valley* (1938) captures the geological and geographical variations found within a single region (Fig. 13). In the left distance are the salt flats found on the valley's floor, hundreds of feet below where Weston is standing. The geological layers of the Pantamint mountains are clear. The photograph shows both the desolation and alien beauty the California desert landscape, its variations in texture, and its possible use in promoting the state's self-image. The state's burgeoning film industry and image-making empire further conditioned the state's landscape to be interpreted as fantasy—particularly its desert regions.

Anne Brigman's photography were a key component to Glen Lukens's promotion of his Death Valley ceramics and glass. *Untitled (Yellow Death Valley Bowl)* (1934) featured in *Fortune Magazine* displays one of Lukens's earliest experiments with uranium glazes (fig. 12). Lukens's fingertips elevate the bowl, proffering it up to the viewer. Brigman's development of the photographic print creates a distinct gradiation in the background of the image—emphasizing the shadow of the held object and creating the effect of a darker shadow-like substance emanating from the vessel. The hazy contrast between shadow and light offers a mystical elment to the proffered bowl. Shortly after this image was taken for *Fortune Magazine*, *Untitled (Yellow Death Valley Bowl)* (1934) was accessioned into the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse, New York (fig. 13). It is key to note that Lukens's interest in Death Valley preceded modernist photography by

nearly fifteen years. Lukens investment in the subterranean potential of the area is centered on object-making, rather than image-making, that is invested in the sociocultural project of defining and romanticizing California; here, the object proceeds the image.

Whiteware

A major advancement in Lukens's pursuit of color was the development of the California whiteware clay body, developed between Lukens and Gladding McBean, a California clay company. As raw California clays are very rich in iron, the clay holds a reddish hue—making it nortoriously difficult for Lukens to showcase the myriad of colors he was experimenting with and wished to produce. For Lukens, however, the experiments dedicated to California's raw clays was not motivated by creating a more malleable clay body, but rather, to produce a clay body that would more readily take color.

The ability to produce such vibrancy did not develop easily. Lukens and his collaborator Dr. Thomas Curtis, a ceramic engineer based at Gladding McBean's laboratory in Lincoln, California had a difficult task to accomplish. Gladding McBean hoped to develop a white bodied clay that could be fired at a low heat, saving on fuel costs while easily passing for as closer to porcelain than terra cotta. Lukens hoped that by removing or neutralizing the iron, a white-bodied clay would provide a better reflective surface for color. Lukens and Curtis worked with raw local clays from Death Valley and the surrounding Mojave Desert. Together, they were successful in their development by using talc as an additive agent to the clay body. The talc stabilized the clay while the

other minerals in the material reacted with the glazes that were applied. This resulted in a versatile, low-fire whiteware that could easily take bright glazes and is still widely used today.

Through the processing of the raw materials of the earth in the development of whiteware, Lukens was able to achieve whitening of the California landscape by removing key features found in the native clays of the region; allowing him to achieve his desired vibrant colors. Whiteware's popularity and association with the history of California ceramics is crucial to the larger implications embedded in the development of the material. In the late 1960s, San Francisco-based potters Jim Melchert (American, 1930-2023) and Ken Price (American, 1935-2012) also claimed to have invented a clay body called Whiteware in 1960s.[58] Both whitewares were created to make a clay body better suited for suffusing color within the surface of the vessel.

What is it about California that creates an urge for color and whiteness? What is the connection between California and the surface/superficial? The development of Whiteware by Lukens and Gladding McBean mirrors several key historical moments that upheld the idea of White supremacy within California. The racial politics of the materiality of whiteness is loaded in connection with a state that was rife with racial tensions in the mid-twentieth century as seen through the Zoot Suit Riots (1943) and the Watts Riots (1965).

[58] Ken Price Papers, Archives of American Art. Smithsonian American Art Museum. Washington, DC.

The creation of whiteware strips the land of its indigenous matter. It fully processes out any claim to native-ness in order to create a blank sheen of a surface to cover and arrange as the potter sees fit. Whiteware is invested in the politics of white settler colonialism. It removes the traces of indigeneity to make room for the exploitation of the natural resources of the place by White people, who in turn develop industry, commerce, and domestic spaces to diminish the any claims of indigenous sovereignty. Whiteware creates a blank canvas, much like historians have argued how the American West was rendered as a *tabula rasa* or blank canvas for ideas, fantasies, and dreams could culturally be applied to the region. The physical clay body takes on the White body politic, using the subterranean resources of the occupied land to fuel the culture and artistic expression through the glaze that covers up the extraction and subjugation of Native tribes through the form of the ultimate object of white American domesticity: the vessel.

California's history of anti-Blackness and brutality toward indigenous peoples are hidden beneath a progressive reputation. Historian Lynn M. Hudson's book *West of Jim Crow: The Fight Against California's Color* Line traces the history of California as the land of progressive freedom and its shortcomings around issues such as citizenship and segregation.[59] Hudson notes that the progressive mythology of Black Californians'

[59] Cassie da Costa, "California's history of anti-Blackness hides beneath its progressive reputation," *High Country News* October 20, 2020. https://www.hcn.org/issues/52.11/ideas-interview-californias-history-of-anti-blackness-hides-beneath-its-progressive-reputation.

imagining the state as a hope for freedom they could migrate to beginning in the Reconstruction Era through the Great Migration.

California's status as a "free" state upon acceptance in the Union in 1850, allowed it to be imagined as a place where democracy and justice could thrive compared to Southern states. However, Hudson notes that the year of the California Constitutional Convention, 1850, was the same year of the Fugitive Slave Law being expanded into the West and emphasizes the necessity of Black voices to challenge this narrative of progressive whiteness. Hudson uses case studies on Black perspectives of California from the pre-Civil War years through the Great Depression which conclude that California was often seen as worse for Black people than slave states and that there was little difference between the Black experience in California and their peers in the deep South.[60] These opposing narratives parallel the role craft is deployed to connect the state to a politics of *naturalness*, which is embedded in California's image, use as a tool to smooth over settler colonial politics, racial tensions, and the manufacturing of queer freedom of expression building in the underbelly of the controlled image of the Golden State.

A Rainbow of Minerals; or Glen Lukens's Geological Primitivism

After seven years of experimentation, Lukens achieved success in the much sought-after turquoise in 1932 as seen here in *Bowl with Raised Foot*, which features the crazing effect alkaline glazes are prone to (fig. 14). The sheer amount of knowledge

about clay, minerals, and techniques for working with low-fire materials that Lukens produced in his experiments in Death Valley and the deserts of California laid the foundation for technical knowledge and pedagogy for American Studio Ceramics of the West Coast. At the center of Lukens's pedagogical philosophy garnered from his experiences in Death Valley was a direct engagement with the land and its materials.

His research and technological achievements were recognized nationally, and he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Ceramics for the Oregon State Agricultural College in 1939, the same institution from which he received his Bachelor of Science in the Industrial Arts nineteen years earlier.

Glen Lukens's alignment of clay as an ahistorical material embraces a faceless, flattened vision of the historical relationship between humans and the earth's materials. Through the self-extraction of minerals and clay, the potter puts forth a primitivist vision of mineral extraction that reframed the material conditions of extractive capitalism. The colonial violence of land seizure and environmental degradation to fuel capitalist accumulation is reconfigured as a primitivist fantasy. Through this primal experience of nature, the embodied experience of the land and its materiality are seen as an opportunity for savage exertion which held the possibility of personal renewal.The human relationship to the earth remains a constant dictated through the development of ceramic objects throughout major civilizations. Ceramics provides a cultural lens for how human beings have conceptualized their relationship to the land the changing discourses of human-mineral relations. By turning to a primitive, timeless experience of nature, Lukens attempts to universalize the human experience to one experienced by white, middle-class

Americans. He imagines ceramics production as an ancient, timeless practice that transcends the sociopolitical reality of American life—it promotes an honest way of being in the world—and reveals the authenticity of the deep self.

Art historian Ross Barrett provides a useful parallel to the intersection of primitivism and extraction in his examination of Standard Oil and the reimagining of the oil industry as a timeless component of the natural world and a primordial object of human action. Barrett notes that primitivist extraction aligned with antimodernist arguments that decried the rigid structures of middle-class America and urged people to "rediscover primal energies and corporeal capacities smothered by civilization."[61] Glen Lukens's personal connection to the land, and the one he encouraged his students to develop in their own individual fashion, was based in reconnecting back to a lost primal energy that modernization has trampled.

Lukens's vessels transgress the narrative of material progress and linear improvement fueled by technological innovation and unrestrained market exchange. *Bowl with Raised Foot* relies upon ancient technologies and the recovery (and improvement upon) of loss knowledge from ancient civilizations. The vessels of studio craft worked alongside settler capitalism, working toward the similar goal, but artists like Glen Lukens's deploy ceramics as a gentler alternative, progressive in its stance but acting as a veneer for the politics of neoliberalism.

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[61] Ross Barrett, "Picturing a Crude Past: Primitivism, Public Art, and Corporate Oil Promotion in the United States." *Journal of American Studies*. Vol 46 no 2 (May 2012), 397.

The language Lukens uses to describe his sojourns into the desert emphasize conquest and industry. This language is meant to construct a fantasy for his audience. Lukens' travels "began as an adventure" where he "found," "discovered," and "acquired," materials and craft knowledge in the "land of the Navajos…an ancient people" of the desert. This allowed him to "develop" the raw resources into exotic sounding glazes that invoked both desire and fantasy, such as "Water-of-the-Sea," "Mojave Golden Amber," "Egyptian Turquoise" and "Arabian Black Lustre." Under his guidance the desert "flowered into a new phase of ceramic achievement.[62]

When Glen Lukens and others write about gathering local, raw, wild materials frequently invoke the term "indigenous" to describe them. In a May 1944 issue of *Design*, Glen Lukens describes his glass and pottery as "entirely made from materials indigenous to the Southwest."[63] By emphasizing the indigeneity of the minerals, the materials are racialized and acknowledged as the original presence on the land. This assertion props up the myth of North America as an empty, under-utilized continent—waiting for capitalist industry to put the land to use. The history and presence of indigenous peoples are erased and in their place, the resources of the land are mythologized. The indigeneity of minerals highlights the materials as untouched, unutilized, precious matter that white settler colonist potters can extract from the land and create desirable ceramic objects as a cornerstone of a modern, civilized society. This is a fantasy projected onto the minerals and landscape of the American West.

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[62] Glen Lukens, "Glen Lukens: Artist, Craftsman, Teacher." *Design* vol 45 (May 1944), 19.
[63] "Glen Lukens: Artist, Craftsman, Teacher," *Design* vol 45 (May 1944), 19.

The minerals Glen Lukens uses within his glaze chemistry do not stand on their own terms. By emphasizing their indigeneity, they are racialized and displace the indigenous American as the physical presence occupying the land. The physical presence of the native peoples is relegated to the "ancient" past with a spiritual presence to be admired and emulated by exploiting the mineral wealth of the land. By turning the focus to the indigenous material wealth of the continent, potters push forward a white settler colonial mythology of untouched and unutilized precious matter that can be extracted from the land to create an object of civilization and domesticity. The subterranean potential of the American continent is reimagined as a metaphor for the United States' indigenous heritage. This strategy actively displaces the Native American subject's claim to the land and reimagines the American vessel as the container of mineralogical potential to achieve artistic greatness in an American civilization.

In this photograph, *Untitled* (1929) Brigman captures a still life of a vessel Lukens's referred to as California Desert Glass. The glass plates were created using the ceramic molds for his "Winddrift" plates (fig. 16). Lukens placed discs of sheet glass over the molds and as they were gradually heated, the glass would slump into space of the mold taking on its texture and form. Lukens's interest in glass was two-fold: the continued manipulation of rough clays caused arthritic pain in the artist's hands, making working with glass easier on the body; the basic material composition of glass—silica, soda, and lime—are the same materials used in glazes for ceramics. The easy reproducibility of the glass vessel provided a greater amount of time for experimentation with colors. While it is unclear what color the vessel in Brigman's black-and-white

photograph may be, Lukens named the colors he developed for glass after natural features from the environment. The pairing of the California Desert glass plate with a tumble weed-like plant emerging from its center, demonstrates that through industry, the desert landscape is life-baring. The harnessing of the mineralogical potential of the desert can transformation the arid region into a place of civilization and growth.

Co-opting Indigenous Philosophy

Lukens's relationship with the landscape was deeply informed by a relationality that did not privilege the human being over other organisms or inorganic matter. He frequently spoke of Death Valley as if it were a living consciousness. In a letter to former student Roy Walker, Lukens recalled a recent trip to Death Valley, writing "Death Valley is to me a personality and in sunshine or mist or rain or moonlight…[I] feel its heart beating in complete and terrible wisdom."[64]

One of Lukens's best known vessels, *Death Valley Plate*, won the National Ceramic Award given by the Everson Museum in Syracuse, New York in 1941 (fig. 36a-36c). The ceramic vessel is a representation of Lukens's phenomenological embodied experience of place. The plate is the land of the American Southwest taken form. *Death Valley Plate* is a silent symphony to the materiality of the California desert. It *speaks* but can only be heard and understood by those who have a conscious connection to the land. Throughout his correspondence, Glen Lukens frequently assigned animate qualities to the

[64] Letter to Roy Walker, January 7, 1941.

land, soil, and minerals. In a 1941 letter to former student, the gay potter Roy Walker, Lukens described a recent trip he took to the desert with his studio assistant Joe Mason. He writes, "Death Valley is to me a personality and in sunshine or mist or rain or moonlight or complete dullness, I feel its heart beating in complete and terrible wisdom. We sat by a great fire in the lodge [and] listened to the desert talk."[65] By assigning a degree of animacy to the landscape, Lukens adopts a deeply indigenous perspective and pushes back against what political theorist Jane Bennett has called our "earth-destroying fantasies of conquest and consumption."[66] This is not to say that Lukens actively resisted structures of settler colonialism, but rather that he recycled an indigenous understanding of the earth to fuel his primitivist reframing of subterranean resources and their subsequent extraction as a spiritual, healing communion to the vagrancies of modern life.

For Glen Lukens, the animacy of the desert did not die with its materialist transformation into a ceramic vessel. In an undated letter to Roy Walker, Lukens shares a plan using photography and film to breathe the life and abundance of the desert he so loved into his home. He wrote, "I'm going to make a glass bead screen for projecting Koda Chrome and 8mm movies…[it] will be for stills and then I'm going to make a koda chrome of each pot I send out and the deserts and mountains will find a second blooming on the screen here in this little house."[67] It is unclear if this plan was ever realized, however, the connection between the materiality of the glass beads and the projection

[65] Letter to Roy Walker, January 7, 1941. Glen Lukens Papers. Archives of American Art.
[66] Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), ix.
[67] Letter to Roy Walker, undated. Glen Lukens Papers. Archives of American Art.

through light of his vessels allows the desert landscape to flourish. The primitivist experience which brought spiritual and psychic relief continues to live on within the object as it is recalled through film and circulates public space.

This relinquishing of control and active collaboration with the land marks a valuable relationship between maker and material that denotes Lukens's geological primitivism. The reorganization of the artistic subjecthood, in which the control of the thinking human artist defers to the will of inanimate matter, channeled by the subconscious of the artist. By allowing the clay body and minerals a unique level of agency, the potter relinquishes control to achieve a more authentic expression. The vessel becomes a physical collaboration between the natural resources of the land and the potter—a dance of embodied knowledge that seeks to place the potter as a being more in tune with the perplexity of the universe.

Writing in his journals near Tuba City, Arizona, adjacent to Hopi Reservation land, Lukens reflected, "I have unconsciously been putting on the character of the Indian and this time spent here in the desert…though began as adventure is becoming illumination. It is always this way when I come to the desert, orientation takes place immediately where in cities the problem of adjustment requires days and often months."[68] Through putting on the "character of the Indian" Lukens constructs a queer settler colonial identity, made possible through an engagement with the materiality of a place. Lukens regularly visited the Southwest as an escape from the disorienting modern space

[68] Painted Desert Letter. Glen Lukens Papers. Ceramic Research Center archive. Arizona State University. Box 26.05 New Mexico/Arizona.

of Los Angeles. He became friends with Maria Martinez, the San Ildefonso Pueblo potter, whom he proudly collected and imitated her work (fig. 18-19). Lukens was proudly self-taught and rarely attributed the influences of others on his process, with the exception of his relationships with Native American potters in California, Arizona, and New Mexico.

The experience Lukens describes here is reminiscent of what Philip Deloria called "Playing Indian," a long American tradition of white settlers taking on the guise of the Native American to construct a new settler colonial identity. Through putting on the "character of the Indian" Lukens is able to achieve illumination and orientation. In Lukens's case, a queer settler colonial identity is made possible through an engagement with the materiality of place–a whitening of the land to achieve his desired vibrant colors and a removal of key features of clay in the Southwest.

Lukens saw his understanding of authenticity and truth reflected in the art, culture, and philosophy of the Native peoples of the American Southwest. He wrote, "The Indian has for thousands of years searched without pause for the values in his own body that are promised in the sun, the rain, the clouds. He is an artist because he has not been taught to be one. He has trained his sensibility to be conscious of the spirit of existence and because his sustenance is derived from living growing things about him he has learned to symbolize….he has learned too that there can be no art without the inclusion of the body. Take of the trails leading off the main highway and you will find Indians artists everywhere at work."[69] Lukens was notoriously private with his glaze chemistry, keeping

[69] Glen Lukens Papers. Ceramic Research Center archive. Arizona State University. Box 26.05 New Mexico/Arizona.

his notebook full of chemical formulas locked up. When students at USC managed to steal the notebook, they quickly found that Lukens's glazes could not be reproduced as he purposefully left out key ingredients. Lukens believed that creativity came from deep within the self and the unconscious. His research and development of glazes were *his embodied experience of the desert*, not his students, for them to copy would be to neglect their own personal truths.

Glen Lukens' time in Death Valley parallels the struggle of the Timbisha Shoshone's fight for land sovereignty in the region. Unrecognized as a formal tribe by the federal government until the 1980s, the Timbisha Shoshone clashed with the Department of the Interior and National Parks service in order to maintain access to sacred sites and their ancestral homelands which includes the land designated as Death Valley National Monument in 1933. While Lukens was well-known for engaging with potters of the Southwest, he had little creative exchange with the Timbisha Shoshone, who were better known for their woven baskets and jewelry than a ceramics tradition. (fig. 39) Though Lukens made frequent trips to the Southwest and developed friendly relationships with prominent Pueblo potters, despite all of the time he spent in the Death Valley region, the Shoshone are not mentioned at all within his archive.

White Americans upheld the Pueblo peoples of the Southwest as the most cultured Native Americans who were most closely like them. The Pueblo engaged in agriculture, held spiritual practices European and later American explorers, surveyors, and anthropologists recognized as a religion. Lukens most certainly would have encountered the Shoshone on his many trips to Death Valley, perhaps he makes no mention of them as

they lake a ceramic tradition and therefore, did not register as being aligned with his purpose in the area. Many white surveyors and later tourists to Death Valley depended upon the local knowledge of the Timbisha Shoshone to navigate a harsh climate with huge variations in temperature depending upon the proximity to the valley's floor.

Queer Optics, Tactics, and Gestures

On a more personal level, Glen Lukens was involved in a series of intimate relationships with Black men, some of whom worked in his studio as his assistants. In a 1943 letter to his niece, Lukens reveals the impact his studio assistant Joe Mason, a Black man, had upon the process. He emphasized that "Joe taught me the meaning of liberty—freedom. Joe helped me. It was he who mixed every pound of clay and who weighed every ounce of sand from which I made the clay…which won the first national award."[70] Though it is unclear if Lukens and Joe Mason were physically intimate, they lived together in a one-bedroom home for several years before departing ways. Additionally, Lukens and Mason appear to have had an especially creative partnership. One object left to the collection of the Museum of Art and Archaeology at the University of Missouri by Lukens's niece was signed by both Lukens and Joe (fig. 20). The museum has stipulated that this secondary signature is from Glen Lukens's brother Joseph Lukens. It is unsurprising that a museological institution

[70] Lukens to Avanelle.

Though Lukens was a known benefactor of early black art spaces in Los Angeles, the power dynamics of a white queer maker who regularly received assistance in his studio from his Black romantic partners who remain uncredited within his work should not be ignored.

One object left to the collection of the Museum of Art and Archaeology at the University of Missouri by Lukens's niece was signed by both Lukens and Joe (fig. 20). The museum has stipulated that this secondary signature is from Glen Lukens's brother Joseph Lukens. It is unsurprising that a museological institution, Vera O'Dell, Lukens's niece, and the other remaining figures in Lukens's family, would put forward a narrative that concealed the intimate relationships Glen Lukens had with various Black men throughout his life. There is no evidence that Glen Lukens remained in contact with Joseph once he left Missouri. Lukens was a prolific writer to his family members, corresponding with his sister Edith Stone (née Lukens) and niece, Verna O'Dell (née Lukens), nearly every week.

Additionally, in Lukens's last will and testament, there is no mention of bequeathing any of his estate to his brother or his brother's children—perhaps a sign of family tensions and a desire to keep Glen Lukens's narrative and image free of his homosexuality and interracial relationships. The language and stipulations in Lukens's final will suggest that his family at least, was aware of his homosexual interracial relationships, and most assuredly did not approve. The fourth stipulation of Lukens's will reads, "Should any of my heirs, or persons claiming to be my heirs seek to contest or break this Will, I declare that it is my intention to give to such persons the sum of One

Dollar ($1.00) and no more."[71] This note of warning was clearly meant to discourage anyone from challenging his wishes after his death, which is likely what he expected given that he bequeathed his sister only 10% of his estate and the younger Black man who he lived with for the last decade of his life, Vernon DuHart, 90% of the estate and the home they shared together.[72] This legal maneuvering was premeditated by Lukens, as his final will and testament was written and signed on September 19, 1961—six years prior to his death. After Lukens's death, his sister, Edith Stone, managed the gathering of materials for his archive and worked to preserve his legacy. In the documents Stone provided listing important people in her brother's life, DuHart is the only individual she expounds upon, calling him a drunk who took advantage of her brother. While there are certainly absences within the archive, the portrait Stone's actions and Lukens's own legal documentation points to an attempt on Stone's part to preserve her brother's legacy free from any stain of homosexuality or miscegenation. Through official documentation of his will, bank statements, and concerned letters to his lawyer from Verna O'Dell, the intimacy of Lukens's personal and private intimate life are revealed.

Glen Lukens's significant correspondence with his former student, the openly gay ceramist Roy Walker detail much of Lukens's feelings on gay politics and his own desires. Lukens and Walker maintained correspondence for nearly 20 years. In a letter dated October 31st, Lukens reminisces his affections for a shared paramour, Greg, that Lukens and Walker both desired, writing that "Greg dropped in for a few minutes [this]

[71] Glen Lukens, "Last Will and Testament" (Los Angeles, CA, September 19, 1961), 1.
[72] Glen Lukens, "Last Will and Testament" (Los Angeles, CA, September 19, 1961), 2.

afternoon…I can see how you were attracted to him. I was too."[73] Their prolific correspondence for much of their adulthood, speaks to a profound friendship; Walker was likely one of the few individuals in Lukens's life who he had confided in about his sexuality.

Lukens' formation of gay identity in the prewar United States depended upon a literal whitewashing of the earth, which removed the gritty resistance of California's native materials to create a white, blank slate from which Lukens could imagine his own present and future. To recall Sara Ahmed, to be oriented is "to be turned toward certain objects, those that help us find our way. These are the objects we recognize, so that when we face them we know which way we are facing…They gather on the ground and they create the ground on which to gather."[74]

Glen Lukens's goal for his objects is to create a specific visual and tactile experience that is achieved through the minerals of Death Valley. During the years 1935 and 1936, Lukens displayed his Death Valley ceramic bowls and vessels in the California Pacific International Exposition in San Diego (fig. 22). The artwork on display, similar to *Bowl* (c.1932-1936), caught the attention of one fair attendee who wrote to Lukens to express his concern (fig. 2). Worried that Glen Lukens's name would be tarnished by being associated with the objects displayed under his name, the fair-goer wrote, "I don't

[73] Glen Lukens to Roy Walker, October 31.
[74] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 3.

know if you've been to the World's Fair, but there's something up there that you must see and you must correct it. Instead of putting your pottery around, they've put some pottery, a pot here and a pot there and they've got your name on it but I'm sure it's wrong. Do something about it, because the stuff is just awful; it looks like Gargantua has made it."[75]

Knowing the man was referring to his thick-bodied vessels, dripping with sensuous glazes, Lukens replied, "They are mine. That's the way I feel now. I feel like it's the earth, maybe speaking—I'm a barbarian," which he signed "Gargantuanally Yours."[76] Lukens's embrace of Gargantua, the fabled giant from French humanist François Rabelais's sixteenth-century novel *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, was a telling metaphor for the ways Lukens understood his own work. Bawdy and vulgar, Rabelais's novels were extravagant and satirical works of literature that addressed the grotesque: featuring dirt, feces, rituals of defecation and other disgusting social behaviors.

Unlike many modernist potters, Lukens approach to the process of making ceramics was reversed. He held little interest for fine forms, but instead emphasized the aesthetics of the glaze. Often leaving the form raw, such as in *Bowl* (c. 1932-1936), allowed the crackled earth to give a structure for the glazes' viscous drips. In a second unglazed vessel, likely made around the same period, the vessels plain exterior is prominent (fig. 23). Yet, within the vessel's interior a dramatic turquoise crackle glaze pools. Lukens embraced the aesthetics of the surface over the form. Surfaces, often seen as superfluous and lacking depth, and merely a finish for the more vital form (criticisms

[75] Glen Lukens Papers. Archives of American Art. Washington DC.
[76] Glen Lukens Papers. Archives of American Art. Washington DC.

that are also directed toward conceptions of queerness), become charged sites where complex forces engage. The surface is the last point of contact of the artist and the first point of contact for the viewer—creating a haptic relationship between bodies across space.

In this *Plate* (c. 1940s), the viscous glaze spills and cascades down in drips across the sides of the vessel (fig. 24). Glen Lukens glazes as viscid, fluid, and sensual. It is clear from the drippy, fluid glaze that Lukens took great interest in exploiting the propensity for alkaline glazes to clump and run, causing them to spill over and take on the appearance of bodily fluids. Lukens interest in glazes altered the traditional work-flow of modernist ceramics of beginning with the form and applying a glaze to accentuate that form. Lukens's begins with his sumptuous glazes and allows it to dictate the form that best amplifies its characteristics. He chooses surface, over form.

Glazes are the surface layer of the ceramic object. It is the site of physical contact, the exchange of touch, they are the skin covering the body. Historian of design and material culture Victoria Kelley writes that the "surface's role [is in] defining, separating and containing, including and excluding."[77] The glaze, as the surface, is the site of physical contact and often what captures the attention of the eye. Within the vessel tradition, it is the barrier that binds the porosity of clay through which the object can safely be used to drink or eat. As Kelley suggests, the glaze is used to define, separate, contain, include, and exclude.

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[77] Victoria Kelley, "A Superficial Guide to the Deeper Meaning of Surface," in *Surface Tensions: Surface, Finish, and the Meaning of Objects*, ed. Glenn Adamson. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 13.

Kelley writes that "resistance might be expressed by keeping on the surface that which cannot be allowed to become too deep-rooted, in the face of a history of oppression and demarcation."[78]

Consider this rare *Bowl* (c.1940) (fig. 35a-35e). From a distance the vessel appears quite normal for Glen Lukens's visual program. Raw exposed earthenware with a dripping white crackle glaze. However, details of *Bowl*'s clay surface depict a very unusual object in Glen Lukens's *oeuvre*, with a treatment of the vessel's body uniquely fashioned. What appears to be the white dripping glaze that cascades down the vessel's body (fig. 25a-25e), is encased in a woven, lattice-like formation that in closer details of the pot are reminiscent of baked bread. The firing of the object led to the surface of the lattice structure to take on a much darker hue that its sides and interior.

As a queer object, Lukens's *Bowl* (1940) is a complex structure for capturing the dynamic between queer identity (and potentially sexuality) as it relates to the domestic sphere. Lukens was very invested in the vessel tradition. Encasing the raw vessel (already a domestic object) in another layer is unusual, however, to do so in a lattice-like pattern that resembles bread (an object with deep associations with the foundations of human civilization and domesticity) echoes Lukens's association of ceramics with a primal energy that connects potters across time through ancient history to the present moment. Glen Lukens's creative investment was primarily in his unique glazes and bright colors he was able to achieve through diligent research. Lukens's application of the glaze to the vessel combines something of his own creation with the earth, the dripping, sensuous,

[78] Kelley, 22.

oozing application of the glaze in *Bowl* resembles a primal claim, an application of the a product of the body to the body of the earth; whether this could be read as a metaphor for seminal fluids is a matter of interpretation, however, there is a distinct sense of interiority spilling over into the exterior, marking it and extending the space of the inside through viscous drips.

Glen Lukens offers a portrait of a complicated man, though progressive within his moment, he demonstrates how within a white settler society, queer politics are tied up within the structures of settler colonialism. While he may have achieved personal liberation for himself through an engagement with the land, it only serves to heighten the settler colonial inheritance of conquest embedded within the materiality of American ceramics. Glen Lukens's ceramic vessels are nefarious, they promulgate the settler colonial goals of the U.S. empire with a smile and cozy blanket. This is capitalism on an intimate scale—beautiful and seemingly benign.

Conclusion: The Domestic Landscape

In two unpublished images for *Popular Ceramics*, Glen Lukens has both his Death Valley ceramic vessels and glass plates photographed while being held in a pair of disembodied hands of a white figure, one female the other male (Fig. 26-27). These images prompt questions about how Lukens's investment in the minerals and clays of California remained important factors in the objects as the circulated within the private domestic landscape of the homes of collectors. Through the physical engagement with Lukens's vessels, can the viewer capture a portion of Lukens's experience in the desert? The object

itself captures the experience of some of California's most isolated landscapes and vast mineralogical wealth and transplants it to the domestic sphere. There within the home, the gritty, raw, primordial experience of the landscapes of Death Valley become contained—they are controlled disorder, the chaos of nature harnessed into a beautiful, useful object. Taking possession of these objects becomes a way of claiming the desert for oneself.

The growth of home industries in California during the mid-twentieth century and Lukens's continued advocation to turn to the use of local raw materials spread the ideology and geological primitivist experience to California home industries practitioners. Ceramics were seen as an important stepping-stone toward the development of a civilization; California, with its rapid growth and modernization in the twentieth century was no different.These vessels encapsulate Lukens's life, the desert, his experimentation with minerals, and the creation of objects that pointed him toward liberation and allowed him to shape his world and For Lukens, the interaction between maker and materials was a process that allowed the earth to speak, if one was careful enough to listen.

Chapter Two: Extracting the Queer Primitive: The Pedagogy and Vessels of Hal Riegger

Introduction

The April 1971 edition of *Ceramics Monthly*, a magazine publication geared toward sharing techniques and other information on ceramic art, published this image of three men prospecting for clay in Panamint Valley, California as part of the many summer workshops the periodical advertised (fig. 1). These three men are participants in Hal Riegger's (American, 1913-2005) "Experiment A" summer workshop series. Though his career spanned being a prominent educator, commercial ceramic technician, studio potter, and designer, Hal Riegger's documentation of these workshops and his accompanying philosophy in his book *Primitive Pottery* (1972) remains the artist's most enduring legacy.

The "Experiment A" workshops (1962-1977) were quasi-anthropological excursions into isolated natural environments to experiment with local materials and so-called 'primitive' tools and methods of making. For Riegger, the primitive encompassed both a set of ideological beliefs and an embodied way of moving through the world, movement which generates harmony through connecting the human body with the natural world. In his view, the primitive was devoid of the restraints of both technology or commercialism, and therefore, a vehicle to attain a higher form of consciousness and discovery of the inner self. Riegger wanted students to experience pottery making

"…through the eyes of early man."[79] At every point of the ceramic vessel's construction—tools, materials, and fuel—the participants were constricted to what was immediately available in the local environment. Riegger's courses remained popular during the fifteen-year period they were offered. Copycat and spin-off courses run by former students and admirers abounded in the April editions of *Ceramic Monthly* announcing that year's summer workshops and such offerings continued on for decades.[80]

The photograph of the 1970 workshop depicting the three men captures much of the essence of Hal Riegger's philosophy of making taught in the course. Each of the three figures are actively engaging with the earth. Their hands sift, touch, examine, and support their bodily contortions through a direct contact with the land. Leaning into the crags of the soil with rapt attention, they consult one another, scooping handfuls of earth to investigate the precious clay found within. This making is embodied, and direct–it asks for somatic, qualitative knowledge of the material in contact with flesh. The earth and its materiality are, in this calculus, as important as the body and the two become inextricable in the ceramic process.

Panamint Valley is a significant location in the history of American ceramics. The region's unique geology caused by shifts between the North American Plate and Farallon Plate beneath the Pacific Ocean, leading to volcanic activity, the rise the Sierra Nevada Mountains, formation of the Great Basin, followed by a significant glacial period that

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[79] Hal Riegger, *Primitive Pottery* (New York: Litton Educational Publishing, Inc., 1972), 13.
[80] See the April edition of *Ceramic Monthly* (1960 through 1990). While Hal Riegger's began to offer the course less frequently by the mid-1970s.

filled the region with lakes that through evaporation left behind a variety of sediment—these events which occurred between 3 million and 10,500 years ago—made the area rich in minerals, clays, and other materials highly sought after by California ceramists throughout the twentieth century. The Panamint Valley and surrounding Death Valley region was a favorite repository for the extraction of materials by the California educator and studio potter Glen Lukens, as discussed in Chapter One. As I explored Glen Lukens's self-extraction of materials due, in part to necessity as a reliable ceramic supply chain remained underdeveloped, Hal Riegger (working a generation later) was working with a material landscape where commercial clays are readily available. What is the purpose of self-extraction when clay materials and minerals became available through a capitalist economy?

In this chapter I will examine Hal Riegger's ceramic vessels, those of his students, and his writings to trace the evolution of his thoughts on the self-extraction of materials. I argue that extraction of materials for his own work and the development of his pedagogy that circulates through his writing was heavily informed by an evolving queer sexual identity. Through shared philosophical commitments with American studio potters in understanding of their material, a therapeutic commitment to heal himself and others from the damages inflicted upon persons of non-normative sexualities, and an open and robust sexual expression encouraged Riegger to rethink his personal relationship with clay and turn to alternative methods through the cultivation of a queer primitivism. By embracing primitivist elements within his practice, Riegger centered extraction in his understanding of the material of clay and methods of pottery making. By turning to the

local land, gathering one's own materials, and locally available fuel sources, Riegger troubles the capitalist economic relationship between material and maker. His commitment to an inner, personal truth intertwines sexuality, extraction, and primitivism as a strategy Riegger adopts which allows the homosexual to find sexual identity and expression by positioning themselves outside of the modern urban center.

The anthropologist Scott Morgensen writes that non-indigenous queers, like Hal Riegger, often "resolve their settler colonial inheritance by creating queer cultures that make the land their medium for liberating sexuality and gender."[81] While Morgensen is writing about the Radical Faeries, a queer consciousness and secular spirituality movement that arose during the sexual revolution amongst gay men in 1970s, his attribution of land as a central medium for the liberation of queer bodies working within a primitivist fashion resonates with the activities of the openly gay Hal Riegger. In his retreat to the isolated rural locales, often on or near Native American reservation land, Hal Riegger co-opts a perceived primitive indigenous sexuality as a matter of healing the inner self. This ethos made primitivism a key attribute of his practice, and for Riegger and certainly groups like the Radical Faeries, queer primitivism was a conceptual site for developing and accepting their sexual identity. The sense of liberation or salvation that white settler queer practitioners extracted from these ideas, however, was necessarily built on a white imaginary of a "pure," "wild" and "liberatory" indigeneity disconnected

[81] Scott Morgensen, "Ancient Roots through Settled Land: Imagining Indigeneity and Place Among the Radical Faeries," in *Spaces Between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 181.

from the lived realities and ways of making of indigenous practitioners.[82] Indeed, much of the spiritual foundation of this queer primitive practice permitted Riegger and his students to explore modes of production outside of heterosexual and capitalist contexts. Yet the practice of this imaginary, largely divorced from Native makers, re-entrenches the white settler colonialist as the original resident, now more spiritually in tune with the landscape.

Finding and Leaving

When Hal Riegger arrived in San Francisco in 1947, he was amongst the most highly-trained potters in the region. He attended the New York State College of Ceramics, Alfred University in Alfred, New York, where he received his Bachelor of Science in 1938—arriving just after the retirement of the famed ceramic educator, Charles Fergus Binns (born British, American 1857-1934). Following graduation, Riegger briefly worked for Homer Laughlin Pottery Company, a commercial ceramic production company based in East Liverpool, Ohio on the Ohio River in 1938. Riegger left commercial ceramics for education when he began teaching at the Philadelphia Museum School of Industrial Art (which later split to become the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Philadelphia College of Art) from 1939 through 1942. Riegger's early work demonstrated a keen eye for technical proficiency. *Bottle* (1938) demonstrates Riegger's early control of complex forms. The amphora-shaped vessel's long thin neck to flared lip and carefully incised lines along the object's shoulders allow the vessel's form to shine without the need of

[82] "Ancient Roots through Settled Land," 181.

glaze to accentuate its compelling profile (fig. 2). *Bottle* won Riegger national recognition when he received the Purchase Prize awarded by Harshaw Chemical Company for the 8th Ceramic National in 1939.

The Ceramic National (1932-1972) was a yearly juried competition held by the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse, New York. While this annual ceramic competition was overshadowed on the West Coast by the Scripps College Ceramic Annual (which unlike the Everson's remains a yearly-event as of 2023), the Everson's Ceramic National was a bedrock for the exhibition of and philosophical development within the American Studio Ceramics Movement during the twentieth century. Founded in honor of the late-Adelaide Alsop Robineau (American, 1865-1929) by the Syracuse Museum of Fine Art director Anna Olmsted in 1932—over the National's forty-year history—the Everson's exhibition documented American ceramics at a time "…when the field of ceramics splintered into an unwieldy number of factions," and collected over two hundred of the purchase prizes awarded throughout the exhibition's history.[83] Riegger receiving a prominent award after only completing his undergraduate training speaks to his skill as a young potter. Following his time at the Philadelphia Museum School of Industrial Art, Hal Riegger completed his Master of Arts at the Ohio State University (OSU) in 1946. In 1947, Riegger decamped for the West Coast when he began teaching at the California School of Fine Arts (CSFA) in San Francisco. Riegger arrived in the San Francisco Bay Area as its thriving artistic community was rising in national importance in both painting

[83] "The Ceramic National," Everson Museum of Art, 08/31/2023 https://everson.org/explore/current-exhibitions/ceramic-nationals-1932-1972/.

and the crafts. Riegger's time teaching at CSFA overlapped with prominent abstract painters Clyfford Still (American, 1904-1980) and Mark Rothko (born Latvia, American, 1903-1970).[84] By the time of his arrival in San Francisco, Riegger had built an illustrious career as a potter and was rapidly ascending and establishing himself as a prominent educator and highly skilled ceramic technician.

Extraction by Necessity and Choice

Hal Riegger's experience with working with wild clays began while serving in Civilian Public Services (CPS) in Trenton, North Dakota. The CPS was a program formed by the government of the United States that provided conscientious objectors an alternative to military service during World War II. This initial foray into wild clays initially came from a place of necessity. In a 1945 letter from Hal Riegger to Anna Olmstead, the director of the Syracuse Museum of Fine Art (now the Everson Museum of Art) and founder of the Ceramic National (1932-1937), Riegger recounts his efforts to set up a pot shop at the North Dakota camp. The goal of the pot shop was to produce tableware capable of receiving the rough handling of a camp full of men.

Riegger wrote to Olmstead that he was committed to "…[using] native clays…because of the economy of this process."[85] The native clays required extensive testing by Riegger and his untrained assistants, making the process slow and laborious.

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[84] Jeanne Willette, "Art in San Francisco, 1940-1950," December 30, 2011, https://arthistoryunstuffed.com/art-in-san-francisco-1940-1950/.
[85] Hal Riegger to Anna Olmstead Letter. January 9, 1945. Everson Museum of Art Archives.

Riegger confided in Olmstead that due to the necessity of understanding the intricacies present in the materials immediately available that "we are a way off yet from actual production of anything."[86] Through his work to meet the needs of the CPS, Riegger understood that the acquisition of materials through self-extraction and learning to work *with* their impurities within wild clays was a design problem that studio potters and commercial potters must learn to address.

Interest in extraction despite the availability of commercial products began to be debated by potters and designers in the early-1950s. J. Sheldon Carey, the Head of the Ceramics division of the Department of Design at the University of Kansas, provided an introductory overview for interested potters in his article "Dig Your Own Clay," appearing in the January 1953 edition of *Ceramics Monthly*. Carey presents the desire for gathering your own materials as being a point of wonder for some ceramists who have "never seen clay except in a mixed and de-aired form, either in a barrel or plastic bag."[87] Being thoroughly disconnected from the earthen material through barriers of packaging, for Carey, was not an encouraging way to "intimately know the materials you are working with."[88] Carey assures the first-time adventurer that clay exists in various amounts and qualities "in nearly every rural area," and can easily be located with little effort. Perhaps he is speaking from his position as the head of a university ceramics department in a heavily rural, agricultural state, but this positionality reinforces the ties

[86] Hal Riegger to Anna Olmstead Letter. January 26, 1945. Everson Museum of Art Archives.
[87] J. Sheldon Carey, "Dig Your Own Clay," *Ceramics Monthly* (January 1953), 24.
[88] J. Sheldon Carey, "Dig Your Own Clay," *Ceramics Monthly* (January 1953), 24.

between craft, the rural, and a pastoral experience of the land. Clay, is in fact, readily available in nearly every type of environment, regardless of population density or access to green space.

Hal Riegger's article "Behind the Designs," in the September 1953 issue of *Ceramics Monthly* was positioned from his role as the lead industrial designer at a small pottery in Miltonvale, Kansas. Even as a designer, Riegger considered the extraction of materials, but more from the perspective of supply management, transportation costs, and maintaining the running of a small business. He emphasized with insistence that "clay is obtained within a mile of the plant."[89] In addition allowing for cost saying measures and streamlining the process, localized materials provided character in their products, which ultimately appealed to the consumer.

Riegger's formulation of the extraction of craft materials does not stray far from capitalist roots. Riegger imagines the medium of clay to be "…a *situation*" which includes equipment and ceramic materials. The goal of the studio potter or commercial production plant is to take the medium through "…merchandising, and finally it is [the] operation of the whole to provide employment and realize profit."[90] The sensitivity required in understanding the material of clay, is a sensitivity to its impurities and unique geological qualities. Therefore, it is a sensitivity to the extraction of materials in a specific place.

[89] Hal Riegger, "Behind the Designs," *Ceramics Monthly* (September 1953), 13.
[90] "Behind the Designs,"13.

By adhering to the unique qualities present in the material, Riegger believes a more *honest* production is possible, which in turn allows the pot to "serve its public…maintain its character as a manufactured pot…"[91] Riegger's conception of *honesty* in ceramic vessels is directly tied to an intimate understanding of the earth's natural resources and the potter's ability to adapt from one locale to another. Self-extraction allows an intimate understanding of the material, connecting the potter to the natural environment.

Riegger continued to offer advice on extraction through his writings. In "Beginning with Clay," in the September 1962 issue of *Ceramics Monthly*, he encourages his readers to become opportunistic scavengers, making use not only of the materials found in their immediate local environments, but in sites where the refuse of modern infrastructure and construction can be found: Saw mills for sawdust or wood shavings, machine shops for metal filings or abrasive dust, and new building projects for gravel, sand, or clay.[92] The cast offs of modern industry, or that which is deemed useless or unwanted is given value by the potter to reshape.

Skirting around the edges of extractive industries and supply chains remains a central theme for Riegger's approach to extraction. Should a young potter wish to deliberately search out wild clays, they must recognize that these clay deposits are deemed wild because they are not seen as useful to commercial interests due to either being too small of a deposit, too difficult to get to and mine. Clays are often disregarded

[91] "Behind the Designs," 13-14.
[92] Hal Riegger, "Beginning with Clay," *Ceramics Monthly* (September 1962), 15.

by industry due to being too gritty or considered impure—according to Riegger, these qualities make them especially good for certain ceramic techniques like raku. Unrefined and gritty qualities provide opportunities for exploration, experimentation, and learning how to work *with* the earth. Wild clays are a collaborative process, the potter does not try to bend the extracted resources from the earth to their will, but rather recognizes that it must be a collaborative process.

This approach to the material resonates with a story Riegger sagely retold to his readers in an earlier issue of *Ceramics Monthly*. Like a ceramics proverb, Riegger recalls a story of two students both attempting to master working with clay. The first student, forces his will upon the material, exercising human control and dominance to bend it into submission. The second student demonstrates a greater understanding and works *with* the clay, creating a harmonious relationship between human and inorganic matter to reveal the inherent character of both. In Riegger's workshop, he states, "We are trying to govern ourselves by the attitude of his second student."[93] The relationship that Riegger advocates for between maker and material demonstrates a proto-environmentalist thinking where the human being is not attempting to place themselves at the top of the structure of power, but rather acknowledges that the inorganic matter must be seen as an active collaborator.

In the pursuit of searching for the cast-offs of industry, Riegger advises young potters, that it is crucial to be aware of the information published through the state bureau of mines for your area. Not only will these pamphlets and studies provide maps for where

[93] Hal Riegger, "Behind the Designs," *Ceramics Monthly* (September 1953), 15.

materials can be found, but it will provide a critical road map to *where* industrial extraction is taking place so that one can choose to either take advantage of industry's refuse, or stick to the wild, isolated clay deposits already deemed commercially unviable.

Within the context of the artist-potter, Riegger believes that the "rules of industry do not apply."[94] If you are to make a career out of working with clay and have come to know your material inside out, you make the adjustments in how you handle the material based upon whether you like or dislike the results, because, as Riegger simply writes, "the clay isn't going to change for you."[95] Riegger's deep knowledge of the extractive network that clay exists within on both the industrial and independent scale, made him a particularly useful asset to begin teaching alongside the entrepreneur and ceramic designer Edith Heath (American, 1911-2005) at the California College of Arts and Crafts (CCAC) beginning in the 1955-56 academic year. Heath, appointed as the head of the department, was the co-founder of the commercial pottery Heath Ceramics in nearby Sausalito, California, had trained at the Chicago Teachers College and Chicago School of Design under László Moholy-Nagy. Riegger, an accomplished educator in his own right, had previously worked for Heath as a lead skilled laborer, was appointed as the department's associate head.

During their brief tenure at CCAC (1955-1957), Heath and Riegger developed a heavily design-oriented approach to ceramics that prioritized rethinking the material of clay through technology and the environment, alongside the principles of design. During

[94] *Studio Potter* July 1975 "On Finding and Using Local Clays," Hal Riegger, 42.
[95] *Studio Potter* July 1975 "On Finding and Using Local Clays," Hal Riegger, 42.

their first year leading the program, Heath and Riegger organized the exhibition *From Molten Materials Into Fused Form* (fig. 3-5). In this exhibition tableware was shown alongside raw minerals, rock samples, and geological surveys conducted in the state of California. Organized as an educational tool that encouraged hands-on interaction, the display separates, classifies, and labels the various components that form the making of a ceramic object from extraction to finished product—rendering visible the geological and material network of working with clay. Heath and Riegger's choice to prominently display a 15 ½ inch platter in the center of the display acts as a pedagogical tool to encourage their students to consider the larger network (and its implications) that connect the potter and designer to the land and its natural resources. The full exhibition display features a wide variety of vessels, including a María Martinez platter as well as Heath's own California stoneware.

Heath also introduced exciting new technologies being developed by Dr. Willi Kohn, a Jewish émigré and former high-temperature ceramics researcher for the State Porcelain Manufactory in Berlin who was committed to the development of sustainable and efficient ceramic technologies. Heath met Kohn in 1943, while taking a University of California extension course on ceramic technology he taught. While little of Kohn's archive survives, his bridging ceramic engineering with the California ceramic movement is an important history that needs more exploration. Kohn's interventions into ceramic technology range from the first solar furnace (which he and Heath would hope to one day be the only type of kiln used to fire ceramics—requiring no additional energy) (fig. 6). Kohn's precarious experience in a turbulent Weimar Germany shaped his educational

approach. Above all else, Kohn encouraged a strict adherence to efficiency—with materials, energy use, and the management of waste. He emphasized the necessity for a self-reliant approach to gathering natural resources and the expenditure of energy that was independent from the reality of an unstable and inconsistent government that could not be depended upon during the interwar years.

Though Heath and Riegger's teaching at CCAC was both innovative and visionary in its approach to both sustainability, resource management, and alternative fuel sources, they did not remain with the school, a bastion of California craft and design, for long. Hal Riegger was fired from the California College of Arts and Crafts in 1957, followed shortly afterward by Edith Heath. The reasons for their departure are a matter of speculation. According to Riegger and Heath's student Robert David Brady, Riegger was "fired because he was gay."[96] Brady recalls knowledge of Riegger's sexuality spreading through the gossip mill of the CCAC campus, resulting in the teacher receiving public scorn. According to Brady, Riegger was able to support himself after leaving CCAC through glaze calculation courses he taught to advanced ceramics students from across the San Francisco Bay area from his Mill Valley studio. Brady speculates that Riegger's experience of dismissal from CCAC due to his sexual identity led him to remain unaffiliated with academic institutions for much of the remainder of his career. Indeed, after leaving CCAC Riegger taught briefly at the Claremont Graduate University in the mid-1970s. The remainder of Riegger's public teaching career took place in residencies,

[96] Robert David Brady Oral History. March 10-12, 2008. Archives of American Art.

summer workshops, and short-term teaching contracts. Riegger's sexual identity had a detrimental impact on his career, yet he remained public about his sexuality.

The complete restructuring of CCAC's ceramics department following Heath and Riegger's departure was tulmultuous and met with both hostility and jubilation on part of the student body. In the late-1950s and the early-1960s, the rise of ceramic sculpture challenged how ceramics should be taught. According to Brady, some students were more interested in the possibilities of taking clay seriously as a sculptural medium. Heath and Riegger, while both precise craftsmen and deeply knowledgeable of ceramic technique, were adherents to the vessel tradition. Their replacement at CCAC was Viola Frey (American, 1933-2004), a ceramist who specialized in monumental figural sculpture. Frey would go on to build a prestigious ceramics program at CCAC and help bolster the Bay Area's artistic accolades. By the late-1950s, Hal Riegger were no longer on the cutting edge of ceramics as a new generation of makers—including Viola Frey, Peter Voulkos, and Robert Arneson, disrupted the vessel tradition with abstraction and changing notions of clay to explore formal ideas of scale and form. As a new generation became the driving artistic force in American studio ceramics, Edith Heath and Hal Riegger continued to develop and innovate the field through technology, resource extraction, and pedagogy.

Mattachine Society

In the summer of 1955, Hal Riegger began a decade-long correspondence with Bill Lambert, the editor of *ONE Magazine* from 1954-1966. *ONE Magazine* was a

homophile publication associated with the Mattachine Society, an early organization focused on the rights of gay men founded by Harry Hay and Rudi Gernreich in Los Angeles in 1950. The magazine was at the center of the US Supreme Court case One, Inc. v. Olesen, a landmark decision for LGBTQ rights within the United States. This ruling was the first to address the right to free speech with respect to homosexuality by allowing the magazine to be circulated through the US Postal Service. This decision allowed *ONE Magazine* to continue its development as a central pillar of the West Coast gay community. Lambert, as editor of the publication, was a key member of the publication and maintained correspondence with Hal Riegger throughout his tenure with *ONE*. Riegger and Lambert exchanged ideas on emerging philosophies of sexuality, the intellectual needs of gay male homosocial communities in California, and their private relationships. In his July 1955 letter to Lambert, Riegger laid out his reasoning for leaving teaching his first teaching job at the California School of Fine Arts, which stemmed from loss of faith in ceramics as an art form and the pressures of a rigorous schedule leaving little time for his own creative practice. Riegger embraced the ethos of studio ceramics, believing that a central tenent of the medium was the truthful interaction between a potter and their materials. Riegger's struggle with his sexual identity placed his core beliefs about his artistic production in crisis, leading him to walk away from his career as he was beginning to receive national recognition. Riegger wrote to Lambert that he "[cared] little now" for the many accolades he achieved early in his career saying, "I have done little potting. My interest has surely been in the direction of people and of

course self-discovery."[97] Riegger's struggle with his sexual identity inhibited his artistic practice, leading his to step away from the pressures and responsibilities of teaching students to give himself the time and space to seek therapy.

Through the Mattachine Society, Riegger encountered Dr. Blanche M. Baker, a psychologist and early proponent of therapeutic perspectives that embraced homosexuality as a cultural norm. Riegger noted to Lambert that his progress with therapy altered his relationship with ceramics. He wrote to Lambert, "you might understand that with the progress of therapy many things change. This is quite true in my case…I have gotten back to doing a few things…but my god, they are quite different than ever before."[98] Riegger's involvement in the homophile therapeutic efforts of Dr. Baker radically reshaped both his interest in forms and his treatment of clay. To recall Riegger's prior to his involvement in homophile therapy, consider *Vase* (1944) from the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City (fig. 7).

Vase is an eight-inch stoneware vessel that reflects the intimate scale of stoneware prior to the sculptural impulses of the 1950s. The incised lines of the vessels exterior provide both surface decoration and texture, reflecting the individuality of the maker and a skilled use of the potter's wheel in the creation of the uniform lines. *Vase* reflects a vastly different social and personal paradigm from work Riegger began making in the 1950s. One of the earliest works Riegger made after undertaking his therapeutic journey

[97] Hal Riegger to Bill Lambert, July 21, 1955. Hal Riegger Papers. ONE National Archives, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.
[98] Hal Riegger to Bill Lambert, July 21, 1955. Hal Riegger Papers. ONE National Archives, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

of self-discovery is *Two Faces* (1951) is a double-sided stoneware platter each side depicting a face (fig. 8a-8b). The eyes on *Side A* are closer together and with the elongated nose and pinched frown give the abstract facial form a feeling of confusion, tension, and sadness. The eyes lack a distinct form and are smeared. Riegger has applied an additional iridescent glaze beneath and surrounding the eyes on *Side A* hinting toward a tearful, lost, emotional state. The crunched raised brow furthering the tension. In contrast, *Side B* is much more clearly defined. The eyes are clear and open, the face relaxed and at ease with a full brow and smile. Riegger's *Two Faces* invokes imagery of the two-faced Roman God Janus. Known as the god of beginnings and endings, transitions, passageways, and the resolution of conflict, Janus is an apt art historical icon for Riegger to draw upon.

As Riegger became aware of the philosophies of Dr. Blanche M. Baker the self-perception of his gay identity changed and became more welcome and accepting. The medium of clay, as a changeable, malleable material in a constant state of transformation until it is fixed into a durable (yet delicate) state through fire, is an apt medium for a gay artist to take up in the exploration of their own identity. Clay haptically expresses the experience of the maker, making the body a central part of the labor process. For Hal Riegger, the psychological change of accepting and embracing his sexuality is mirrored within the possibilities of transformation endemic to clay as a material.

Hal Riegger's involvement with *ONE Magazine* and the Mattachine society provided a crucial site of exchange for his ideas on art and emerging homosexual/homosocial philosophy *within* a non-heterosexual dominated space. As one

of the primary gay political organizations in the pre-Stonewall era on the West Coast, the Mattachine Society was a foundational platform for the cohesion of a gay political and cultural identity. Riegger's relationship with Bill Lambert extends midcentury American studio ceramic history into early homosocial mass media spaces, cultural dialogues, and political organizations. After discovering Hal Riegger's career as an artist, Lambert inquired, "How about an ad for your ceramics?"[99] Lambert's query demonstrates the desire of 1950s gay political and media organizations wished to include fine art within the national cohesion of gay male identity and culture. Riegger was hesitant in accepting Lambert's request in 1955. He only recently had begun working with ceramics again, but thought that some of his smaller pieces, made with hand techniques rather than the wheel, could appeal to *ONE Magazine*'s audience. Negotiating a 70/30 deal with the magazine for the profits, the partnership moved forward. Riegger's lack of financial records and sparse personal correspondence make it difficult to ascertain if or to what degree this venture was successful.

Riegger's embrace of more primitive acts of making aligns with the exploration of his sexual freedom and identity. His involvement with the Mattachine Society and *ONE Magazine* were important hallmarks in the development of his artistic philosophy, and later education programming he develops known as the Primitive Pottery workshops. Through the Mattachine Society and the work of Dr. Blanche M. Baker, Hal Riegger found community and voice for his understanding of a complex sense of self. In a June

[99] Hal Riegger to Bill Lambert, July 20, 1955. Hal Riegger Papers. ONE National Archives, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

1955 letter, Riegger detailed his private relationship and philosophical outlook on emerging twentieth-century homosocial thought. Riegger expressed the desire to never become complacent or satisfied with "my own homosexual marriage."[100] Though he was very happy married to Major Gilbert R.V., an American servicemember stationed in Korea, Riegger acknowledged that "the fulfillment of man as a 'pleure—sexual animal'" was a desirable outcome, he wrote, "Anthing—anytime. All experiences—not any one excluding others."[101] For Riegger, sexual liberation was a cornerstone of his identity despite engaging in a relationship he structured through the lens of marriage. He later wrote to Lambert that though his gay husband was bisexual his "present 'marriage' is far happier than I could ever possibly imagine from its type."[102] Riegger saw himself as quite sexually liberated, writing that "I'm the kind of guy who want to eat his cake and have it. And maybe, by golly, I'll just do that one of these days. Not a matter of choice, but a matter of embracing more into ones life. That's the way I see it. And maybe I'll try a sheep too. Other's have! Why not?"[103] Riegger's characterization of a more free-flowing sexuality as not a matter of choice, but a pathway to a more enriched and fulfilled life is key to the therapies of Dr. Blanche M. Baker.

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[100] Hal Riegger to Bill Lambert, June 16, 1955. Hal Riegger Papers. ONE National Archives, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.
[101] Hal Riegger to Bill Lambert, June 16, 1955. Hal Riegger Papers. ONE National Archives, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.
[102] Hal Riegger to Bill Lambert, July 21, 1955. Hal Riegger Papers. ONE National Archives, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.
[103] Hal Riegger to Bill Lambert, July 21, 1955. Hal Riegger Papers. ONE National Archives, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

Riegger did not view his journey through self-discovery as an isolated endeavor, but viewed himself as part of a diverse collective of people and cultural group that, in his view, was difficult to define. In this instance, language fails Riegger, as the political, social, and cultural landscape of LGBTQIA+ culture in the United States had not fully developed to distinguish the nuances between the terms 'gay' and 'queer.'

With the assistance of Dr. Baker, Riegger pioneered using art as a therapeutic medium for those struggling with their sexuality. His writing in the article, "Beginning with Clay," reflects a desire to connect working with the material of clay and self-acceptance. He writes, "Sooner or later we all learn that clay batches and glaze recipes are of little value in themselves. Their true value lies in what we *do* with them. We discover that the thing that makes our pottery or sculpture truly good is what it contains of ourselves."[104] In *Family Portrait* (fig. 9), Riegger creates a grouping of figures that remains ambiguous to allow the viewer to find themselves. The self's relationship to family for queer men, particularly in the mid-20th century, was often fraught with tension. However, Riegger's sculpture is left ambiguous enough that it leaves space for a queer interpretation and imagination of the family unit. The figures are not clearly gendered and could be interpreted as a same-sex couple.

Extracting Queerness?

Hal Riegger is part of a cadre of gay male ceramists in California whose sexual orientation became a noteworthy aspect of their artistic practice during the 1950s. In the

[104] "Beginning with Clay," 14.

San Francisco Bay Area, Riegger's dedication to sexual exploration and self-discovery led to a break with the vessel tradition and an embrace of what he thought of as more primitive ways of making. Riegger wrote to Bill Lambert how therapy and embracing a vivid sexual lifestyle altered his approach to the craft, finding that upon his return to making objects that despite knowing "techniques up and down [I] find that I want to do very crude things, entirely by hand, no wheel."[105] The embrace of simpler tools and more primitive way of making, brought Riegger a degree of freedom of expression that broke away from the constraints of tradition.

In Los Angeles, a contemporary of Hal Riegger was the midcentury designer, drag performer, and potter Sascha Brastoff (American, 1918-1993). Brastoff owned and operated the Sascha Brastoff Ceramics Factory from 1946-1962. He was celebrated for his lines of dinnerware sets, decorative plates, figurines, and other vessels. Like Riegger, Brastoff self-defined as being a involved in a gay marriage (to the Hollywood costume designer Howard Shoup), yet his sexual identity is often disregarded or ignored as important to his artistic production. Brastoff's work is far more decorative than Riegger's and relies heavily on drawings to decorate the surface. *Vanity Fair Floral Still Life* (1955) provides an abstracted scene of flowers and fruit, its curvilinear lines are playful while the glazed surface creates a feast of color (fig. 10). The flamboyance and sensuousness in *Vanity Fair Floral Still Life* is found throughout his work. Brastoff's control of his own ceramics factory allowed him a great deal of creative freedom to explore homoerotic

[105] Hal Riegger to Bill Lambert, July 21, 1955. Hal Riegger Papers. ONE National Archives, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

desire. *Penis Bowl* (ca. 1956-1959) shares the biomorphic, organic, and curvilinear lines of Brastoff's plate, but here the leaves and fruit are blatantly phallic and become a jumble of genitalia masquerading as flora (fig. 11).

Though widely different in style, both Brastoff and Riegger reached national acclaim through their participation in the Ceramic National at the Everson Museum in Syracuse, New York. Each artist demonstrates the diversity found within California ceramics and its rapid development during the first-half of the twentieth century. Both Hal Riegger and Sascha Brastoff's ceramics production demonstrate an interest (or affiliation) with homoeroticism and gay culture. Brastoff achieves this through surface decoration, while Riegger's interest lies in form and process.

In September 1962, Hal Riegger published "Beginning with Clay," the first in a series of articles titled *Pots and People* that he produced for each issue of *Ceramics Monthly* from September 1962 through March 1963. This series focuses on different styles and techniques of ceramic artists, designers, and potters of the San Francisco Bay area, however, of the individuals Riegger choose to feature is a diverse cast of ceramists who were members of the city's burgeoning queer community. The seventh article in the series *Pots and People* focuses on the art and designs of the Chinese-American maker Win Ng. Sprinkled in throughout the article are subtle nods toward the acceptance of ones' identity and how this has had an impact on Ng's work. Riegger observes that, "[Win Ng] has a constructive self-awareness, and this is the quality that separates him from the mass of potters without much identity. He has the courage to express what he

sees within himself and through himself, and what he has discovered to be his relationship to the past, the present and for all time."[106]

Primitive Workshops

Consider this ruggedly formed vessel (fig. 12). Created by Rick Dillingham, a student of the Primitive Pottery workshop in 1971 and later a graduate student of Hal Riegger's at Claremont Graduate School (1974-1976). The vessel's lip is coarse and jagged—lopsided due to the harsh indent from the maker's hands upon the neck. The pot is devoid of a glaze or other applied surface decoration. This lack of 'finish' brings forth the rough, porous surface of the raw clay, from which the occasional bit of gravel protrudes, emerging from the vessel's body. The object is not conventionally beautiful, nor does it adhere to any sense of uniformity. The making of this vessel was predicated upon working *with* the raw materials and their impurities. Accentuating the local raw clay's natural tendencies rather than asserting control over the medium. The vessel is an expression of the desert landscape and the rudimentary making experience, a collaboration between maker and the embodied experience of the local environment. Dillingham's ruggedly made vessel stood out to Riegger as a primary example of his methodology, that it was given a place of privilege—one of only two vessels that were given their own pages in the printing of *Primitive Pottery.*

Riegger photographed a variety of subjects for his book on the workshops, including finished objects, making-in-action shots, the extraction of materials,

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[106] Hal Riegger, "The Art of Win Ng," *Ceramics Monthly* (March 1963, 17.

anthropological images, and potential tools. This photograph from a workshop held at the Colorado River Indian Reservation is a close-up of a hand indented into the earth (fig. 13). This image resonates with hand stencils in ancient cave art such as those found at Lascaux. The handprint is an act of affirmation and claiming—through the assertion of space the subject demands their being be rendered visible. For *Primitive Pottery*, Riegger has elected to use a close-up emphasizing the interaction of the potter directly with the earth. This is a direct method of extraction rather than becoming intertwined with the extractive industry capitalist complex. The photograph begs the question, who gets to lay claim to the land and assert their identity through an interaction with it? By focusing on claiming act of the handprint, Riegger appears to break from his earlier decentering of the human being to place the land and human on equal footing, here, the agency and power are in the hands of the human.

Riegger wanted students to experience pottery making "through the eyes of early man."[107] At every point during this vessel's making—gathering the materials, forming the vessel, firing the pot—Dillingham was constricted to what was immediately available in the local environment. Within the parameters of the workshop, Riegger advocated for an embodied process that encouraged an intimate relationship between maker, object, and natural environment. Influenced by the aesthetics of Japanese Zen Buddhism, he believed an interconnected experience with the natural environment was central to the spirituality of the object and dignity of the maker.[108] Riegger extends the structure of fabricating art

[107] *Primitive Pottery,* 13.
[108] See Shin'ichi Hisamatsu, *Zen and the Fine Arts* (Kodansha International, 1971) trans. Gishin Tokiwa, 28-38.

beyond the physical object to encompass the embodied experience of the maker in the physical world.

Rick Dillingham's rugged, gravel-inflected vessel, is an early example of his works absorption of what Hal Riegger called 'primitive pottery.' For Riegger, the primitive encompassed both a set of ideological beliefs and an embodied way of moving through the world which generates harmony by connecting the individual and the natural world. He sees the primitive as being devoid of the restraints of technology and commercialism—it is a vehicle to attain a higher form of consciousness. This process centered on two key concepts, or what Riegger calls "awareness" and "sensitivity."[109] The first referring to close observation of the materials, the latter describing the cognizant method of using the materials to their maximum extent. In Dillingham's roughly formed pot, the bits of gravel embedded in the object's surface creates a textural variation that acts as aesthetic decoration (rather than applying a glaze). Rather than avoiding or removing the gravel (awareness), the artist works with the material to elevate the traces of the natural environment (sensitivity).

The limitation to materials available in the desert proved troublesome for potters accustomed to working with commercial clays and glazes. Commercial clays and glazes are refined to produce consistent results. In Riegger's view, commercially processed materials damaged the vessel's character. He believed it far superior to locate clay in the field.[110] Wild raw clay bodies are full of gravel and mineral impurities that are

[109] *Primitive Pottery,* 12.
[110] *Primitive Pottery*, 18.

geologically specific to the place they are harvested. Working under these conditions encouraged the maker to work *with* the imperfections of the materials—creating a more intimate relationship to the natural environment over commercial alternatives.

Tools, fuel sources, and materials to construct a kiln (if one was needed) were also required to come from the local environment. Lacking access to a pottery wheel or casting molds, Dillingham was limited to hand building techniques: slab construction, the pinch-pot method, and coil building. However, Riegger discouraged participants from relying on prescribed methods of making learned in the studio. He believed this skill set inhibited creativity and forced preconceived ideas upon the material's natural impulses.

In this series of photographs taken at a summer workshop in the deserts of California during the mid-1960s and through the 1970s, Riegger makes note of students who were particularly enterprising in adopting his approach, or at least the spirit of it. During a workshop held in southeastern California in 1964 a group of students gathered damaged rubber tires abandoned along the desert roadside (fig. 14-16).[111] The materials were locally available and just as much a part of the landscape as the gravel and porous clay of Rick Dillingham's ruggedly made vessel which Riegger praised. The rubber tires proved to be an extremely effective source of fuel (fig. 17). In this photograph, the tires are ablaze emitting black smoke, the flames precariously surrounding the makeshift kiln. The man overseeing the firing has his eyes and mouth wrapped in a handkerchief and towel, protecting his body from the dangerous and toxic activity. The black smoke releasing a mixture of carbon monoxide, cyanide, sulphur dioxide, and styrene—to name

[111] *Primitive Pottery,* 80.

a few of the compounds being released into the air. This damaged the area's air quality long after the potters left the workshop behind it, endangering local public health and the environment.

This turn toward the discarded materials of a capitalist, consumer-driven society, is dystopian. It would seem to be far removed from Riegger's Zen-inflected goals of generating harmony through a connection to the natural world. However, though Riegger was initially a bit dismayed by their choices (and notes briefly in *Primitive Pottery* that the question of the ethics of this situation is another matter entirely), he celebrates the students for their ingenuity and creative thinking. He even suggests that perhaps potters might continue experiments with rubber tires, to find ways to fuel their kilns with the material "efficiently and smokelessly."[112]

This disregard for the landscape and the health of the local population—the Mojave, Chemehuevi, Hopi, and Navajo peoples who collectively form the nearby Colorado River Indian Reservation—smacks of a privileged settler colonial stance. The temporary nature of the workshop and the manufactured distance by going out into the land, away from settler society, allows for what political theorist and historian Lorenzo Veracini theorizes as the settler colonial "non-encounter."[113] Veracini argues that central to the structure of settler colonialism is a recurring need to disavow the presence of indigenous others through the non-encounter. This allows for the continued erasure of the indigenous body to assert power and their active presence. The erasure of indigeneity

[112] *Primitive Pottery*, 80.
[113] Lorenzo Veracini, "On Settlerness," 2.

paves the way for the settler body politic to assert the means of maintaining an authentic claim to the land.

Riegger's workshops were a manifestation of the everyday politics of settler colonialism. Riegger sought to distance himself from the difficulty of the term 'primitive' as a problematic concept within his methodology and at the heart of Western modernity, saying that "perhaps we should dream up a new term."[114] The term 'primitive' in fine art discourse has undergone multiple transformations as its meaning shifted over time and across cultures. Initially used in nineteenth century by the French in *Nouveau Larousse*, the term was used to describe the perceived simplicity and imitation of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Flemish paintings.[115] By the early-twentieth century the term had evolved to include the belief that a primitivist life—which implied a return to nature—was a superior way of being. Robert Goldwater's *Primitivism in Modern Art* (1938) examines the 'discovery' of African, Oceanic, and other tribal arts by European modernists which generated a related 'primitivist' impulse in their early-twentieth century painting.

The critical reevaluation of the terms 'primitive' and 'primitivism' was taken up by the seminal 1984-85 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, *"Primitivism" in 20th Century Art.* Curated by William Rubin the exhibition brought together Western art objects with the non-Western art they drew upon. By creating dialogue between the

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[114] *Primitive Pottery,* 12.
[115] William Rubin, "Modernist Primitivism: An Introduction" in *Primitivism in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1984), 2.

Western and non-Western objects, he sought to elevate 'tribal arts' away from ethnographic study and toward fine art. Rubin demonstrated that "primitivism," while a deeply ethnocentric term with potentially derogatory connotations, refers to the Western interest in art objects produced by non-white makers and not art made by so-called primitive peoples.[116] Rubin and Riegger are quick to note that 'primitive' does not mean crude or backward. In Riegger's view primitive objects often exhibited a higher level of craftsmanship that required vast knowledge of the limits of readily available materials.[117]

Hal Riegger's justification for the term and his return to centuries-old methods of making is centered around the effect of an embodied experience of the practice has upon the maker and the resulting pot. Hal Riegger's justification for the term and his return to centuries-old methods of making is centered around the effect such a practice has upon the maker and resulting pot. The process of retreating to the land and engaging only with local resources is spiritually transportive and psychically freeing. Riegger writes, "We are, in a sense, taken back to the uncluttered thinking of children. Not only is this refreshing in so complex an existence, it is good training for the mental processes."[118] In other words, for Riegger, ceramics allows a structural escape from the pressures of modernity and an industrialized society that redefined embodiment, kinship, and disassociated their ability to connect with the world around them.[119]

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[116] Rubin, 5-10.
[117] *Primitive Pottery*, 6.
[118] *Primitive Pottery*, 3.
[119] *Queer Settler Colonialism,*1-3.

Contemporary potters have continued this line of thinking, but abandoned the messiness of the term 'primitivism.' The Australian potter Ben Richardson proposes the term "place-based making," as a methodological practice that engages with the "natural, physical, and narrative resources of place."[120] Richardson roots his methodology of making within phenomenology. His aesthetic philosophy positions Japanese Zen aesthetics *against* the Western aesthetic tradition traced back through Emmanuel Kant and Plato. Richardson sees the Western tradition as anthropocentric, privileging the human experience above all else.

Place is created through the object's natural materials, the embodied experience of the maker, and the physical tools of making. Working with raw materials is exceedingly difficult. Raw clay Richardson suggests working with the materiality of the clay is imperative for the placeness to shine through. The materiality of place is uniquely tied to the experience of a specific physical geography. Uniformity is anathema to place-based making.

Richardson advocates for allowing the "materials to reveal their full potential" and develop a sympathetic relationship between the agency of the natural materials and the choices of the potter that maximizes and accentuates the agency of the non-human. The potter's job is to help the earth 'speak' through an object. The essence of Richardson's "place-based making" is repeated again and again in writing by contemporary ceramists working in the vessel tradition. It should be unsurprising that all

[120] Ben Richardson, "Place-Based Making" *Studio Potter*

of these writers are based in settler colonial nations and is not how indigenous voices have articulated their experience of place.

Yet, Riegger (and Richardson) is uncritical of the sociopolitical dynamics inherent within his primitivist discourse. Supplementing his own experience in the desert workshops, Riegger includes examples of potters working in a 'primitive' fashion in Fiji and West Africa. The methods of production Riegger advocates are the daily realities of ceramics production in the sites of the 'other' which *Primitive Pottery* investigates. In Riegger's iteration of these techniques, educated settler potters can participate by traveling to the desert and getting in touch with the more primal aspect of their craft. This approach follows what art historian Hal Foster refers to as a 'primitivist fantasy,' or the idea that "the other, usually assumed to be of color has special access to primary psychic and social processes from which the white subject is blocked."[121] This primitivist fantasy experience created by and for a white settler colonial audience went beyond the making of an object. Photographs from Riegger's workshops reveal a loose social environment—shoes and shirts were often not worn by male participants (fig. #-#). The desert provided a psychic escape from the daily grind of modern life—an opportunity to return to a simpler state of being and making.

In the introduction to *Primitive Pottery*, Hal Riegger recounts a discussion with Elmer Gates—a renowned Mojave potter—regarding the term 'primitive.' Whereas Riegger embraced the term, Gates rejected it in favor of 'traditional.' Gates's distinction

[121] Hal Foster, "The Artist as Ethnographer," in *Return of the Real* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 175.

is a nod to the centrality of the concept of "survivance" to Native American peoples. Coined by the Anishiinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor in *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance*, the term is a portmanteau of survival and endurance/resistance.[122] Gates's embrace of 'traditional' over 'primitive' reflects his desire to emphasize the *active presence* of indigenous peoples on the land and the continuation of their cultural practices. It is a demand to be seen on one's own terms. Riegger rejects this distinction—this rejection privileges his white settler viewpoint over the contemporary conditions of Indigenous peoples.

This rejection highlights his positionality as a white settler body creating a fantasy experience for other white settler bodies. Here, Riegger exerts his settler colonial and authorial authority—rejecting the political and cultural connections of his craft, its materials, and the philosophy he purports to the ongoing reality of being an indigenous maker in an oppressive settler state. For Riegger, the primitive is marked by settler colonial authority, but it is not positioned as forbidden, taboo, or uncivilized—rather, it is an escape from the complexities of life and society, a path toward mindfulness, and a spiritual connection to the land.

It is crucial to examine the larger systems of power Hal Riegger's *Primitive Pottery* perpetuates in its circulation and how it constructs the production of craft

[122] Survivance is a critical term in Native American studies. It was first employed by the Anishiinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor in *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance* (1999). A portmanteau of survival + endurance or resistance (depending on the critic's orientation), it speaks to an active sense of presence and continuation of Native American culture that renunciates narratives of domination, tragedy, and victimhood.

knowledge. Riegger uses a combination of text and images to create a document that is one-part how-to manual and one-part philosophical text. Since its publication in 1972 *Primitive Pottery* has become a widely cited instructional manual within craft philosophy and reached an audience that extends far beyond potters interested in working with wild clays. Excerpts from Riegger's text have been compiled alongside other seminal texts theorizing the act of making such as Anni Albers' *On Weaving*.[123] The kind of images which Riegger shows within *Primitive Pottery* (and those that he leaves out) implies not only what kinds of bodies are engaged in this type of making, but who does and does not have access to these workshops or the ability to participate in the philosophical approach Riegger takes towards clay and other materials gathered from the local natural environment.

In the photographs Riegger selected to include depicting scenes from his workshops held between 1962 until the book's publication in 1979, each body seen is white. Riegger includes images of black and brown makers from Nigeria and Fiji, but these makers are separated out from the white makers in the book's structure. Riegger's inclusion of non-white potters is an effort to position his methodology as part and parcel of the practices of the global potter. In this portrayal, white middle-class students are engaged in the same methods of making as their counterparts in Africa and the South Pacific.

[123] Excerpts from *Primitive Pottery* were selected as crucial craft documents for Glenn Adamson's edited volume *The Craft Reader* under the "How To" section alongside other seminal works such as Anni Albers *On Weaving*.

For Riegger clay is a universalizing medium. Its materiality and use are shared by all cultures and peoples across the Earth and throughout time. While utopian in thought, this view lacks nuance and circumnavigates the tumultuous power structures at play; on the one hand, white makers exploring their craft through rudimentary tools and materials is a lesson in broadening the techniques available to them and advocating for this specific way of making as a vehicle in the pursuit of a specific psychological release—while on the other hand for the makers in Nigeria and Fiji, their practices are an act of survival, the continued economic safety of their families and communities, and the preservation of cultural tradition. Hal Riegger's approach smacks of the pitfalls of the rise of the global potter, or the idea emerging within postmodern art movements like Pattern and Decoration that any culture's artistic traditions, design motifs, and ways of making are ripe for extraction by white American artists. The inclusion of Nigerian and Fijian makers becomes another point of extraction for the development of a U.S. craft pedagogy.

By making the sole bodies of color portrayed in *Primitive Pottery* from outside of the United States, Riegger affirms that the psychic release he wishes his students to achieve through his pedagogical teachings are only the purview of white makers. The need for a return to the uncluttered thinking of early man is only available or necessary to the modern white American potter, whether that is because the civilization of the white body is further advanced and thus in need of a return, whereas bodies of color already exist within that state of being. Within the system of power within *Primitive Pottery*, Riegger reinforces a racial hierarchy.

Primitivist Thought in Ceramics

The approach to primitivist thinking in American ceramics can be traced through a series of articles across several craft publications beginning in 1949 in "Indigenous Ceramics," from the April 1949 issue of *Craft Horizons*. Practicing potter Henry Bollman oddly does not talk about indigenous ceramics in terms of Native American. They are mentioned only briefly before co-opting the term 'indigenous' to meaning local. There is a clear attempt through his language to mark American settler society and the emerging American empire after World War II to see themselves as the indigenous inheritors of the land, and that ceramics is a primary vehicle to achieve this goal. Bollman seems unaware that Native American people continue to make ceramics during this period—and indeed is undergoing a massive revival with figures like María Martinez, Nampeyo, and others leading the charge. Indigenous for Bollman becomes a term that refers to a specific kind of making, rather than a group of people who under the structure of the U.S. government have been oppressed, stripped of their land, and from Bollman's view, not a part of the present. They are fully relegated to the ancient past—he is not advocating for the study of their designs but rather adopting their approach to materials (without supply chains makers are limited to their local environments) in an effort to generate national pride.

Bollman wants the modern American potter to turn toward the land in order to create more American objects. Inspiration is to be drawn from the "native soil," while educators should lead the charge in creating genuine, sincere objects of Americana. He believes that potters can provide a civic duty by engaging directly with their local

landscapes which will "contribute to the cultural growth of [their] communities."[124] Potters are particularly suited to this goal as they are "in almost every part of our country. If more [potters] would seek inspiration near at hand, I am sure that rich veins of Americana would be brought to light." [125]

For Bollman turning to the land is a way of throwing off the shackles of the past in ceramic traditions. He views ceramics as too bogged down with European and Chinese traditions and inspirations, reducing the American potter's creations to mere imitation. In his view, these objects created from the American soil, minerals, and resources don't necessarily even have to be of high artistic quality—that is not the point of this exercise. He notes that "whether or not [the potter] takes prizes with these pieces in this, that or another contest, [they] win an emotional response from his neighbors, and probably from all Americans who appreciate the strivings of a fellow American."[126]

Bollman is writing in the wake of a U.S. victory in World War II and the emergence of the United States as a global superpower. American nationalism is at an all-time high. The ability of the potter to go out into the countryside/wilderness/landscape for Bollman is connected to the American attributes of liberty and freedom—potters are exercising those values by turning to "each in his own countryside…"[127] By using local materials and turning to the natural resources of the continent that are readily at hand, Bollman believes these objects are imbued with the very soul of the country.

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[124] Henry Bollman, "Indigenous Ceramics," *Craft Horizons* (April 1949).
[125] Henry Bollman, "Indigenous Ceramics," *Craft Horizons* (April 1949).
[126] Henry Bollman, "Indigenous Ceramics," *Craft Horizons* (April 1949).
[127] Henry Bollman, "Indigenous Ceramics," *Craft Horizons* (April 1949).

The objects Bollman uses in the article establish Native American ceramics as ancient and relegated fully to the past—it is not something taking place in the present. This stance, and really his entire argument, drives home the point that settler colonialism must constantly be reinforced in order to maintain its legitimacy and claim over the land. Bollman sees the potter as a central figure in maintaining this control and in so doing exemplifies the very foundational aspects of what an American should be and how an American citizen can go about exercising their hard-won liberty and freedom.

In the May 1953 *Ceramics Monthly*, academic Whitney Halstead's "Southwest Indian Pottery," provides a brief history of ancient southwest culture's pottery. Halstead, a professor in the History of Art department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago takes an expansive historical approach that is far more critical of history than Bollman. Halstead's language recognizes that the land he is addressing did not always belong to the U.S. this is a departure from Bollman's American nationalist view of the land. Halstead acknowledges the past and present struggles facing Native Americans and recognizes their current temporality. He writes that "In the story of the Southweest the past and the present merge, and there is no break in the traditions of the culture. The beautiful pottery which was produced in the prehistoric pueblos and by the Hohokam and Mogollon peoples is being equalled today. The customs and traditions of the pueblos kept alive and vigorous have been responsible for their survival as a cultural group. Pottery has played its part and is a tradition that is alive and growing."[128] Halstead's article is followed ten years later by a piece written by Hal Riegger for the May 1963 issue of *Ceramics*

[128] Whitney Halstead, "Southwest Indian Pottery," *Ceramics Monthly* (May 1953).

Monthly entitled, "Pottery Making – Indian Style: for vacation trip or summer camp." Riegger's article is a technical guide, step-by-step process of how to do ceramics outdoors in a Native style, but he pitches it as recreational, fun summer activity for American potters. Riegger emphasizes the peace, quiet, and revitalization that can occur if "we try to recapture the same kind of environment that was commonplace to the Indians native to our country."[129] Riegger's article reads as a Walden-esque that ignores the structures of power and access around the idea of recreation. Clearly addressing a privileged white, middle-class audience, he ends the article with the encouragement, after having completed your own pots, to "make a trip to the museum and compare your pieces with some authentic Indian ones."[130] Riegger clearly desires the maker to see themselves in the Native objects and their experiences as being linked across time to a primitive culture. Through a fun summer vacation activity, you too can have the opportunity to play 'indian' and connect with nature to recharge from the rigors of modern life while you're out engaging in recreation.

[129] Hal Riegger, "Pottery Making—Indian Style: For Vacation Trip or Summer Camp," *Ceramics Monthly* (May 1963), 25.
[130] Hal Riegger, "Pottery Making—Indian Style: For Vacation Trip or Summer Camp," *Ceramics Monthly* (May 1963), 25.

Chapter Three: Fruitful Ground: Mythologies of 'Nature' in *California Design* and the 'Craftsman Lifestyle' Fruitful

Introduction

Imagine a garden. The sun is shining. A variety of plants fill the space and trees tower overhead. It is private and intimate—a personal green haven. Children play in the shade, enjoying the fresh outdoor air. Perhaps they are searching for insects or some imaginative game. Eudorah Moore—the curator, architect, and publicist of the *California Design* exhibition series (*CD*)—hoped that something akin to this photograph from *California Design 8* (1962) came to mind when Americans envisioned their own backyards (fig. 1). Richard Gross, the photographer for *CD 8*'s catalog, places two children playing next to a large fiberglass planter containing a bamboo tree. The scene is relaxing and begs for the viewer to be consuming a cool drink while watching their children play amongst the plants, enjoying the fruits of a California lifestyle. Gross's photography across the *California Design* exhibitions from 1962 to 1976 portrayed and sold the California lifestyle to the American public. Imbedded in this image is an ideology of California living—what it means to be a Californian, for whom that lifestyle is available, and the kinds of consumer objects permit this mode of living. Central to these ideas are the white children, the abundance of foliage, and the fiberglass planter. *The California Design* exhibition series explores, recycles, and propagates a white settler colonial ideology through industrial design and handcrafted objects.

California Design (*CD*) was a series of thirteen exhibitions that featured handcrafted and industrially made objects by California artisans and designers. Running

from 1954 through 1976 each iteration (apart from the final show of the series—*California Design '76*) was held at the Pasadena Art Museum (PAM).[131] Located in Pasadena, California (an affluent, arts-minded community), PAM was a key institution in the early examinations of the American avant-garde in painting and sculpture.[132] The first seven iterations of *CD* were curated by Clifford Nelson and replicated the model of design shows perpetuated by the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met) and later the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA).[133] Nelson featured a selection of objects from the Los Angeles Furniture Mart that was supplemented by contributions from local craft organizations like the Southern California Handweavers Guild.[134]

In 1962, the series was taken over by the new head of PAM's design department Eudorah Moore (American, 1918-2013) (fig. 3). Beginning with the 1962 exhibition *California Design 8* (*CD 8*), Moore shifted the annual exhibition to a larger triennial show—growing the series in ambition, scale, and scope. To raise the quality of the

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[131] The Pasadena Art Museum has an intriguing and important history that frankly deserves deep exploration. While I will provide the very basic information necessary, this chapter is not the right space to delve into PAM's cultural importance and the economics and politics involved in its rise and fall as an avant-garde institution. The story of PAM is quite rich and has not yet been fully evaluated for its cultural import. Many big personalities with at times conflicting motivations were involved including Eudorah Moore, who will be discussed in depth in this chapter. My decision to focus this chapter on the relationship of craft to 'nature' reduced the importance of human actors in the narrative.

[132] PAM's exhibition legacy includes the first Marcel Duchamp retrospective, the first exhibition on Pop Art in the United States.

[133] This history is documented in Antoinette Guglielmo's dissertation, "Workbench of American Taste: Richard F. Bach, Industrial Art, and Consumerism at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1917-1940" and will be elaborated on later in the chapter.

[134] Glenn Adamson, introduction text to "Craftsman Lifestyle: The Gentle Revolution" in *Craft Reader*, ed. Glenn Adamson (Oxford: Berg, 2010), 214.

exhibition's objects, Moore instituted a jury system for the selection process. Craftspeople and designers anywhere in the state of California were invited to submit *physical objects* at one of two locations: San Francisco and Los Angeles.[135] The objects submitted were judged by a panel of leading designers and craftspeople. Thousands of objects were submitted and ultimately about 1 in 15 selected for exhibition. For *CD 8* these changes meant that the show filled nearly all of PAM's galleries—approximately 12,000 square feet of space with more than 750 objects on display.[136]

In Gross's photograph, the planter was created by industrial designer Elsie Crawford (American, 1913-1999) who moved to Los Angeles in the late-1950s after a career in a New York architectural firm. Crawford specialized in concrete and fiberglass planters and seating manufactured by Architectural Pottery in Los Angeles during the 1960s.[137] The style of the planter pictured was called a "tree-planting sculpture" by the *Los Angeles Times*. Crawford, however, viewed them as, she termed it "structural pavers" that allowed for "flexible landscaping."[138] Crawford's planters were popular in domestic, commercial, and industrial spaces throughout Southern California—similar planters by Crawford were used prominently in the landscape design of Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). The light weight of the fiberglass material allowed the consumer a high

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[135] Moore was insistent that physical objects be submitted. Photographs of objects or plans were not sufficient. At least one physical prototype of an object must exist.
[136] Donald Albrecht, "Introduction," *California Design* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2005), 10.
[137] Crawford would later partner with Architectural Fiberglass in Los Angeles, a company which evolved out of Architectural Pottery.
[138] Myrna Oliver, "Elsie Krummeck Crawford; Artistic Industrial Designer." *Los Angeles Times* June 3, 1999.

degree of versatility in moving the object across spaces. This movability allowed (and promoted) green foliage into many arenas of daily living. The easy reproduction of the planters and their desirability in public and private spaces demonstrates that an intimate connection with the natural environment was a hallmark for the Golden State's lifestyle.

The photograph's composition is utilized to great effect. An energetic diagonal line connects the two children to Crawford's planter and the bamboo tree inside it. The progression from shortest (the kneeling child), middle (the leaning child), to tallest (the bamboo in Crawford's planter) narrates a passage of time—like plants, children grow. The abundance of greenery, natural light, and relaxing atmosphere provide the ideal conditions for the growth of plants and children. The enclosed green space of the garden is adjacent to the domestic space of the home. Gross ties the need to commune with the natural world on a personal level to the importance of 'natural elements' in the rearing and development of children. They are healthy, they are able-bodied, and they are white.

The connection between whiteness, nature, and health is a central tenant of the visual culture and mythology promoted about California throughout its history, and eventually, exported to the rest of the world as an ideology. This is a foundational myth of an American California.

The Museum, Capitalism, and the Consumer

California's postwar boom and rapid growth of suburban life generated the economic, social, and cultural conditions that fueled the *California Design* exhibition series. Southern California's unprecedented economic development translated to an increase in the disposable income of middle-class. An expanding population drove the expansion of

suburban housing, creating a need to fill the postwar home with consumable goods that reflected the inhabitants' ideology. The newly arrived population, already inundated with mass media images of the Golden State's lifestyle, were culturally primed to be taught what it meant to consume and live like Californians.

California Design provided a consumable model of the California lifestyle. The exhibition series built upon a long history of capitalistic consumption filtered through the museum institution. Since the 1851 Great Exhibition in London's Kensington Gardens, the institutional display of consumable goods in museums—be it mass-produced industrial design or handmade objects—have advanced commercial and industrial interests. American museums formally began cultivated relationships with commerce and industry with the founding of design and industrial arts departments in the early-twentieth century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Department of Industrial Relations was directed by R.F. Bach from 1918-1949.[139]

Under Bach, the Metropolitan Museum of Art produced the *Annuals*, commonly called 'The Manufacturers' Show,' a series of fifteen exhibitions of contemporary industrial design from 1917 to 1940.[140] The *Annuals* were meant to advance art in industry, and elevate good taste, rather than stylistic concerns. The shows encompassed home furnishings, ceramics, metalwork, textiles, jewelry, lighting, drawing, and photography.

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[139] Antoinette M. Guglielmo, "Introduction," in "Workbench of American Taste: Richard F. Bach, Industrial Art, and Consumerism at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1917-1940" PhD dissertation December 2008
[140] Guglielmo, 147.

Bach's motivations for the *Annuals* are deeply influenced by Progressive ideals. Antoinette Guglielmo argues in her dissertation on Bach that he was "motivated, in part by Progressive ideals of the time about the civic value of museums and their obligation to society…in their agenda to improve the economy, the status and education of the American designer, and society-at-large through the refinement of public taste."[141] Though divorced from the Progressive politics of the early-twentieth century, Eudorah Moore's motivations for *California Design* share deep commonalities with Bach's *Annuals*. Moore viewed *CD* as an institutional-centering of a very loose and informal network of designers-craftsmen scattered across a large state. She wanted to build community for the state's designers but was also engaged in educating the public (and future designers) by building a *California* sense of taste. In doing so, consumers would open their wallets and boost the region's economy. Moore regularly engaged with young designer-craftsman and encouraged them to submit to the *CD* series to launch their careers.

Both Bach and Moore targeted a wide swath of designer-craftsman, industrial manufacturers, and the consumer with the message that good design sells, and good taste buys products sponsored by the museum. Bach called for the Met's *Annuals* to serve as an 'adjunct of the factory,' and the 'workbench of American taste,' reinforcing the mandate of its original charter as a practical value to society.[142] Bach's use of metaphors speak to the commercial and industrial connections in the basic goals of the American

[141] Guglielmo, 150.
[142] Guglielmo, 10.

museum institution. Museum's shaped taste, but in doing so they became a crucial part of a larger network of production and consumption. Bach speaks of the museum in terms of the economic labor it can generate for a society.

The *Annuals* were innovative in their exhibition display. Using the conventions of the department store showroom, the Met displayed objects to exhibit goers with a familiar visual experience in an unfamiliar space. Guglielmo argues the art museum and department store "gave rise to the need for people to negotiate choices and exercise taste as they navigated through the new spatial experience of universal display" when confronted with a variety of objects housed in the same space. This cultivation and "expression of choice by museum visitors is central to the process of consumption."[143] These conventions of display continued in two exhibition series at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA): *Useful Objects* (1938-1950) and *Good Design* (1950-1955). These exhibitions built upon the Met's twenty-one-year model for an industrial design exhibition.

Both *Useful Objects* and *Good Design* were led by Edgar J. Kaufmann, Jr. He became MoMA's Director of Industrial Design in 1946 and acted as a lead buyer for *Useful Objects* before managing the institution's transition to the later series. Kauffman, Jr. viewed these exhibitions as a public buying guide for the American home. The curatorial team focused on middle-class consumers. Kaufmann, Jr. and his team selected well-designed everyday items that could be purchased for under $5.[144] Featured items

[143] Guglielmo, 6.
[144] When adjusted for inflation, $5 is $101.88 in 2021.

varied widely. Everything from kitchen dishes to chairs to personal hygiene products were arranged in installations that evoked window shopping or simulated domestic interiors. Through the exhibition's design commercial and domestic space merged within the museum institution.

Like the Met's *Annuals* and MoMA's exhibitions were a key component of the museum institution's commercial role as a societal tastemaker. Art historian Mary Anne Staniszewski argues that *Useful Objects* "was a realization of the Museum's charter to educate the public about all aspects of modern visual culture" especially that which "also directly affected manufacturing and consumption."[145] This directly mirrors Bach's earlier insistence on the museum institution as an economic engine generating opportunity within industry and consumption patterns. The Met, MoMA, and later PAM are each invested in the promotion and formulation of good taste.

While centered in New York City, the *Useful Objects* and *Good Design* exhibitions traveled widely. The first 1938 exhibition toured seven venues: two department stores, three universities, a specialty shop focusing on homemade craft products, and an art association. The wide variety of venues—including commercial and intellectual centers—demonstrates a fluidity across distinct social spaces and speaks to their mass appeal.

The blurring of museum and commercial space is evident in this photograph from MoMA's 1940 exhibition, *Useful Objects of American Design Under $10* (fig. 13). Here, objects are presented to the public on tables and shelving positioned at waist and eye-

[145] Mary Anne Staniszewski, *The Power of Display* (Boston: MIT Press, 1998), 160.

level. Visitors handle the objects directly, eliminating the physical distance between the human body and the museum object. The handling of objects speaks heavily to the physical experience of *commerce*, rather than a more *intellectual* experience expected in a museum setting. The distance between body and object in the museum is part conservation and part veneration of the untouchable quality of an object that is elevated to fine art. By disrupting this distance and physically engaging with the object demonstrates the necessity for haptic knowledge of the three-dimensional object—exacerbated here by the utilitarian nature of the objects presented. Within *Useful Objects*, haptic experience is just as valuable as the optical. *Annuals*, *Useful Objects,* and *Good Design* demonstrate the museum institution's role in defining a standard of 'good' living for the American home. More importantly, these exhibitions clarify the role of the museum in stimulating commerce, production, industry.

The 1953 exhibition of *Good Design* traveled to the Long Beach Municipal Art Center and was widely featured in the *Los Angeles Times*.[146] The coming of *Good Design* generated conversation of beginning an exhibition series that focused on California's own booming industrial design and craft industry. The following year, *California Design I* opened at the Pasadena Art Museum in 1954. While heavily based upon earlier models, *California Design* expanded beyond mass-produced objects. CD highlights mass-produced object manufactured with cutting edge technology and craft—a pairing that within Southern California's design aesthetic and consumption habits are not always in

[146] Wendy Kaplan and Staci Steinberger, "'It Has to Be Sold': The Dissemination of California Design, 1945-1965," in *California Design*, ed. Wendy Kaplan (Los Angeles: LACMA), 295.

opposition. Californians' saw themselves as living on the cusp of tomorrow, with more fluid social boundaries than their East Coast counterparts. Their embrace of the modern did not mean a rejection of the handmade. Some handmade objects were included in the Met's *Annuals*, but MoMA's *Useful Objects* and *Good Design* favored the mass produced. This suggests that a California ideology embraced an eclectic modernism.

The *California Design* series does not recreate earlier iterations, but rather rebrands these exhibitions' central idea—bringing high quality products to the masses and shaping their palettes—through the lens of California myth and fantasy. They continued the display tactic of the department store showroom—creating relatable environments for the consumer but with California flair (fig. 14). The glossy images Eudorah Moore commissioned Richard Gross to produce for the catalog exported the modern California home and lifestyle to the American public. However, their most innovative attribute was their presentation of California's natural environment and its relationship to the object.

Eudorah Moore's most significant change to the institutional structure of *California Design* was her insistence on the production of large, lavish catalogs for each exhibition. Motivated by a visionary outlook for the future of California's designed goods, Moore argued that each catalog should include an image of *every* participant's work. She was committed to the historical importance of the series and its artists, by photographing everyone's work at least once, she ensured a permanent afterlife for the artist, their work, and the exhibitions.

Moore hired the Los Angeles photographer Richard Gross to produce the photography for *California Design 8*.[147] Little is known about Gross's formal education in photography aside from his participation in a 1968 summer workshop at the University of California Santa Cruz taught by the famed photographer Ansel Adams, and his colleagues, the critics Beaumont and Nancy Newhall.[148] It remains unclear what Gross' established artistic practice consisted of at the time of his hiring for *CD* or what he accomplished outside of his work for the Pasadena Art Museum. Moore and Gross had a close working relationship, were likely friends, and often collaborated on photography shoots (fig. 4). Following *CD 8*, Gross was hired to provide photography for the remainder of the *CD* series (*9, 10, 11,* and *'76*) as well as Moore's exhibition of traditional crafts, titled *Islands in the Land: Traditional Objects from Appalachia and the Valley of the Rio Grande* also held at the Pasadena Art Museum (November 1972-February 1973).

Gross created eye-catching, colorful photographs that were disseminated to magazines and newspapers—generating excitement about the exhibitions beyond the

[147] Little is known about Richard Gross aside from that he developed a lasting friendship with Moore. Internet research has proven largely fruitless. I am hopeful that more information about Gross becomes available after I gain access to the CD archives at the Oakland Museum of California in the fall or winter.

[148] Gross is listed as primary participant of the 1968 Images and Words Workshop held at UC Santa Cruz. The workshop included photographic exploration of Santa Cruz County via daily field trips. The goal of the workshop was to learn what is involved in working with professional designers, typographers, engravers, and printers, culminating in the production of a photographic book. The workshop ran from 1967-71, with the summer of 1968 being the only year Gross participated in. The 1968 workshop culminated in the production of *Project FIND: Friendless, Isolated, Needy, Disabled: In Santa Cruz County, California*. These records are in the archives of UC Santa Cruz.

local audience in attendance. National press in turn, stimulated commercial interest in the objects, bolstering the careers of designers and craftspeople well beyond California.

Richard Gross' photographs have been positioned in art historical discourse as crafting a California lifestyle. Design historian Donald Albrecht argues that the image of 'California' the series presented was of a place, "where people enjoyed the fruits of postwar American life, combining indoors and outdoors, high and low style, contemporary technology, and traditional handicraft."[149] Albrecht celebrates an inclusive approach that blurred the boundaries between art, craft, and design which aligned with the state's way of living that celebrates a circumvention of convention and hybrid aesthetic. Beyond a porous art/craft binary, the images Richard Gross creates of California demonstrate that place, land, and its use are the key components of lifestyle.

Portrait of an Object

I use the concept of portraiture to map the cultural geographies of the *California Design* series and Eudorah Moore's ideologies as they pertain to the relationship between the natural environment and craftspeople, their objects, and the American public that consumed them. This chapter untangles the intertwining of the modern craftsperson, their lifestyle and objects, the primarily white middle- and upper-class American who consumed them, with the relationship of each to 'nature' and the natural environment. I examine the centrality of 'nature' to the structural formation of craft objects and the

[149] Donald Albrecht, "Introduction," *California Design*, by Jo Lauria and Suzanne Baizerman (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2005), 10.

lifestyle of craftspeople as promulgated by Eudorah Moore, filtered through her understanding of nineteenth-century craft philosophy. In her advocacy and promotion of California's robust craft and design industries across publications and exhibitions, Moore emphasizes a nineteenth-century philosophical connection between 'nature' and the craftsperson as a vital component of craft's identity.

Art historian Jenni Sorkin argues that Richard Gross treated the art objects in *CD* "to a form of portraiture, set against stunning backdrops of ocean, forest, desert landscapes to underscore the connections between exhibits made from natural materials (wood, wool, and clay) to the natural world."[150] The connection of the object to 'nature' and the natural environment on the basis of its materiality is crucial to unpacking the relationship between the object and the land. Sorkin's conceptualization of Gross' photographs as 'portraiture' rather than still life or landscape, provides a forceful methodological approach to map the complexities of object, place, and land. Portraiture assigns a degree of agency to what is depicted in an image—that which is shown can be both object *and* subject.

To parse the ideas found within this chapter it is necessary to be explicitly clear in the meaning and boundaries of key terms. By 'nature' I refer to the philosophical and intellectual construction of the human understanding of the physical world. As ature is a human concept, its meaning has shifted over time and place with an intellectual history that can be traced. 'Nature' is distinctly separate from the organic, mineral, and

[150] Jenni Sorkin, *Art in California* (London and New York: Thames & Hudson, 2021), 206.

atmospheric *things* that exist within the physical properties of space. These things—rocks, trees, animals, sunlight, weather—are better understood as the 'natural environment.' The term 'land' is equally complex. It combines both the philosophical and intellectual idea of nature with the physical matter of the universe that defines and differentiates space.

For Eudorah Moore's exhibition practice, California made an ideal and robust bedfellow for modern American craft. A member of the elite WASP circles of midcentury Pasadena, the parameters of 'Anglo-American remained largely applicable to her own construction of whiteness.

'Craft' and the construction of the craftsperson's identity are rooted in a nostalgic vision of labor, dignity, and land that reinforced a Protestant Anglo-American whiteness. By identifying '*California'* and '*craftsperson'* with 'nature,' the same goal is achieved: to tie the formation of the place or group's *identity* to an abstract notion of an elevated sense of one's spirit and a sense of health and wellness. The construction of 'California' and the construction of 'craft' and the lifestyle of the 'craftsperson' were in the business of constructing healthy, happy, white American bodies.

The mythos that built the idea of California and constructed the identity of the modern craftsperson coalesced in the same cultural period during the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Curiously, at the center of both the myth of California and the craftsperson is a dynamic relationship to 'nature' and the natural environment—constructed for the comfort and security of Anglo-American bodies and American citizens. The nineteenth-century boosters who sold the myth of California considered

Americans of Anglo-Saxon and Nordic origin to be the parameters of whiteness. This nineteenth-century construction of whiteness was defined in part by its refusal to grant the privileges of whiteness to Jews, Southern, and Eastern Europeans, whom at the time were emigrating en masse to the ~~North~~ Atlantic Seaboard. Though, by the early-1950s the parameters of whiteness had eased ~~permeated~~ to include *some* of these groups, in the elite WASP circles of midcentury Pasadena I would argue that the parameters of 'Anglo-American' remained largely applicable to that place and moment's construction of whiteness.

Eudorah Moore recycles the philosophical thought of William Morris, John Ruskin, and Gustav Stickley to imagine and understand the 'New Craftsman Movement' developing around her in postwar Southern California. Her adopted hometown of Pasadena, California was one of the intellectual, economic, and labor centers of the American Arts and Crafts Movement. The families of her socioeconomic class in Pasadena, with whom she played a visually prominent community figures were steeped in the artistic history of the area.

"Craft" and the construction of the craftsperson's identity are rooted in a nostalgic vision of labor, dignity, and land that reinforced a Protestant Anglo-American whiteness. By identifying "*California"* and "*craftsperson"* with "nature," the same goal is achieved: to tie the formation of the place or group's *identity* to an abstract notion of an elevated sense of one's spirit and a sense of health and wellness. The construction of 'California' and the construction of "craft" and the lifestyle of the "craftsperson" were in the business of constructing healthy, happy, white American bodies.

California Dreaming: Sunlight, Health, and Whiteness

California Design 8 begins by perpetuating myths. The catalog's opening text of its first theme "native wood" reads:

> In a region whose social structure represents a rebellion against rigid and mechanical urban formalities, the recognition of the warm organic qualities of wood is natural. The forms and finish may vary, but the awareness of the living quality of wood and its designed potential is fully appreciated and used by craftsman, designers, and manufacturers alike.[151]

This introduction text perpetuates the idea that Californian society, due to its originality and innovative spirit, has a greater connection to the spiritual quality of nature. This societal connection to nature is at the center of the mythos of California. In Gross's idyllic backyard patio scene from *CD 8*, the adults socialize off to the side at a table, enjoying the afternoon outside conversing with one another among a carefully cultivated landscape (fig. 5). Richard Gross's photograph perpetuates this myth.

The large ceramic screen and relief by Stanley Bitters mimics the stain of the Redwood seating's base, providing a warm atmosphere further accentuated by the yellow of the chair and bowl of Valencia oranges in the center. This arrangement of objects is materially connected to the earth (clay) and trees (wood of a Redwood) of the region. The potted plants, oranges, and trees framing the central display communicate the importance of an organic, natural mode of living.

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[151] *California Design 8* (Pasadena: Grant Dahlstrom/The Castle Press, 1962), 10.

At the center of the image, Valencia oranges fill an adobe bowl designed by Eva Hoessly for Western Quarry Tile. This orange is at the center of a second myth that *California Design 8* perpetuates. The opening text on the exhibition's theme "native color orange" reads:

> Introduced to California in the mid 19th century by the mission fathers, the Valencia orange tree eventually covered much of California terrain. One hundred years of orange fruit as a part of the native landscape has naturalized orange to indigenous color.[152]

Factually, Moore's text is incorrect. Environmental historian Jared Farmer notes that while Spanish Franciscans *did* bring the orange tree to California in 1769, their orchards (likely *citrus aurantium*, a bitter tasting fruit known as Seville oranges) fell into total disrepair after the secularization of the Missions in 1834.[153] The Valencia orange which Moore valorizes—a sweet tasting citrus fruit popularized through juicing—was not introduced until the late-1840s by land developer William Wolfskill in Santa Ana, California. However, the true scion of California's citrus industry—the Naval orange—was not introduced to the state until 1873 when the U.S. Department of Agriculture sent two cuttings to Riverside, California.[154] Moore's text is especially revealing for its perpetuation of a California mythology, in particular, her misattribution of the Valencia orange's history and romantic imagery of a Spanish past.

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[152] *California Design in Color* (Pasadena: Grant Dahlstrom/The Castle Press, 1962), 21.
[153] Jared Farmer, *Trees in Paradise: The Botanical Conquest of California* (Berkeley: Heyday, 2017), 418.
[154] Farmer, 410.

From its very inception, California itself began as myth. Spanish explorers sailing along the Pacific coast northwest of Mexico named the 'island' they encountered after an idyllic isle from a sixteenth-century Spanish chivalric romance, *Las Sergas de Esplandián*. The nineteenth century writer Edward Everett Hale, while researching the etymology of the name, translated the tale into English in 1862. He later published portions of his translation in the *Atlantic Monthly*, titled "The Queen of California."[155] Hale's translation paints a vivid image of a dangerous paradise; an island filled with golden light, bountiful soil, and all manner of earthly riches populated by beautiful dark-skinned women who ate any man they encountered. Named for the island, *California* held the promise of treasure and entered the realm of fantasy.

California's association with riches only heightened with the discovery of gold in 1848. Nearly 300,000 people flocked to northern California hoping to build their fortunes. Though most of the forty-niners did not strike it rich, the Gold Rush did elevate the California to fabled status in the American cultural imagination. Gold, however, was merely a jumping off point for the construction of the California dream. Nineteenth century boosters seeking to attract capital and population ('of the right sort') to California needed to disassociate themselves from, what Farmer refers to as the state's "coarse," "mongrel," and "foreign" image due to Spanish colonization and the Gold Rush.[156] Early reports commissioned by the railroad industry and the state and federal governments

[155] Edward Everett Hale, "The Queen of California," *Atlantic Monthly*, March 1894, 265-278, reprinted in *The Queen of California: The Origin of the Name of California* (San Francisco: Colt, 1945), 1-47.
[156] Farmer, 25 and 468.

emphasized California's desirable climate and agricultural potential. In 1857 California State Agricultural Society reported that there was "incontrovertible evidence" that "valuable Mediterranean tropical fruits, including olives and oranges, could be cultivated commercially" in the state."[157] Boosters amplified these themes to carefully manufacture an image of California as a sunny Edenic Mediterranean paradise ripe for agricultural development.

This 1893 promotional pamphlet for *The Land of Sunshine* periodical was released for the Chicago World's Fair (fig. 6). Midwesterners made an attractive market for boosters like Charles Lummis, the editor of *The Land of Sunshine.* California historian Kevin Starr notes that promotional boosters promised that in Southern California, the farmer would be a middle-class horticulturist. The agricultural industries alluded to in the image—citrus, fruit, and vineyards—were not the "backbreaking ordeal of the New England and Midwestern farm."[158]After the initial work of planting and irrigation, the labor on a California farm was primarily concerned with upkeep and harvest. Farmers could also yield a comfortable income on less acreage in California, given the higher cost of citrus, fruit, and wine making up the income made from large tracts of land dedicated to wheat, corn, or soybean production. Freed from hard labor, California farmers had the time and means for cultural pursuits: books, a rose garden, a piano. Smaller land holdings promoted tightly knit communities, or colonies, who built

[157] Farmer, 25-26.
[158] Kevin Starr, *Inventing the Dream: California through the Progressive Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 46.

schools, churches, and concert halls—all pursuing an aspirational ideal of an Anglo-American civilization.

The early social organization promoted by boosters between the 1870s and the 1930s conveys an ideology of Jeffersonian Republicanism. According to historian Pierre Laszlo, this ideal was carried to California by small religious groups of settlers primarily from the Midwest.[159] D.M. Berry organized fifty families in Indianapolis who—seeking a warm and gentle climate after a severe Indiana winter in 1872-1873—founded the Indiana Colony on a portion of the Rancho San Pasqual. This community later became Pasadena, California. The Indiana Colony was founded as an offshoot of the San Gabriel Orange Grove Association.[160] Citrus groves were foundational to Pasadena's wealth and community growth.

The white female figure in the promotional image for Lummis' *Land of Sunshine* holds a cutting from an orange tree. The image is visually organized around ideas of land, whiteness, agriculture, a Spanish past, and the development of commerce and industry. The combination of these elements encapsulates the visual construction of the California dream. They are a repeated trope in the visual culture of the state from the 1870s through the 1960s. The central female figure is stylishly dressed as a late-nineteenth century modern woman. Historian Jared Farmer argues that the pairing of women with agriculture were key to creating an image of a civilized white society.[161] Late-nineteenth century boosters were spinning a narrative that differed from California's public image during the

[159] Pierre Laszlo, *Citrus: a History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 69.
[160] Laszlo, 69.
[161] Farmer, 26.

Gold Rush. Single males were the primary group who traveled to the state to strike it rich. These men were migratory as they moved from claim to claim searching for gold. Long-term infrastructure was slowly established, and the region grew, however, mining was not an attractive visual device to convince Anglo-American settlers to choose California as their home. The invocation of women and agriculture meant to establish to the stability of married heterosexual workers occupied with farming the land—a profession and marketable image that provided a steady foundation on which to construct a society; far better than miners motivated only by profit.[162]

This pamphlet produced by the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce is a continuation of visual rhetoric promoted by *Land of Sunshine.* Similar in theme, composition, and organizational elements, the pamphlet features an orange-clad white female figure who waves to the audience, her arms overflowing with flowers and fruits (fig. 7). She stands against a decrepit, crumbling Spanish archway—visible in the background through the arch is a gleaming white modern city showing manufacturing and industry against snow-capped mountains. The white female figure signals to the viewer the bountiful nature available for cultivation, the gleaming white city in the background the modernness of an Americanized California distanced from its crumbling Spanish past.

Native Colors and Materials

[162] Orchard owners always gave lip service to hiring 'good white men' with wives and children, as husbands and fathers were assumed to be more responsible and pliant than single, childless men. In practice, though, seasonal workers of this higher grade could never be found in sufficient quantity. See Farmer, 468.

Eudorah Moore, newly appointed as the head of the design department at the Pasadena Art Museum in 1962, structured the exhibition around 'native' themes of California: wood, oranges, earth, needs and way of life, and the beauty of gold. Most of the color photographs in the 1962 catalog's printing centered on 'orange' as the most visually engaging and unifying theme. The catalog—the first of the *California Design* series to feature colored images—is overflowing with orange hues; the stain of the wood in James Hubble's carved pillar, the Webb Textiles' woven rattan draped over a Tropi-Cal collapsible cabana designed by Danny Ho Fong, the paneling of Virgil Elsner's stereo cabinet prototype, in the vinyl-covered foil wallpaper by Winfield Design and Associates, and the wool accent rug (this time peppered with pink) by Marilyn Cremer, and the steel garden tools forged by Corona Clipper and Forge Company, (fig. 8-11).

Through the rhetoric of 'native color orange,' Eudorah Moore is invoking a usable Californian past through shared collective memory and speak to their contemporary social anxieties. By 1962, the Los Angeles Basin had undergone rapid demographic, economic, and structural changes. Therefore, it is unsurprising that *California Design 8* would be rooted in a sense of collective nostalgia. The selection of the citrus fruit and associated hue were a deliberate strategy designed to appeal to a white Southern Californian public's sense of nostalgia and national mass media markets. Oranges are integral to the fantasy of California, the state's projected public image, and its history. The decision to focus the exhibition on the citrus and the pigment was not random happenstance, but rather a deliberate curatorial strategy that established the naturalness of the state's settler colonial past.

As a symbol, the orange is a key component of the California way of life. The citrus fruit comes into season during the cold, dreary, and dark months of winter, symbolizing sunshine, the bounty of nature, and the year-round outdoor lifestyle available to Californians. The steel garden tools showcase this idea clearly (fig. 11). It was not uncommon for middle-class Californians to have citrus trees on their property—tools needed to prune, harvest, and otherwise manage the trees speak to an intimate connection with the natural world built into the state's lifestyle. The permeability of indoor/outdoor living that defines the domestic sphere in the Golden State provided fruitful ground for craftspeople and designers to address unique needs. The open landscape, warm and sunny climate encouraged craftspeople and designers to think and make on both an intimate scale for interiors and a large scale for "the embellishment of gardens, patios and outdoor walls."[163] The California mode of living seeks to collapse the space between human and nature, or in the words of the exhibition catalog to "broaden the scope of life in the sky, on the ocean, in the desert, in gardens, swimming pools and even trees."[164] These designs and the aspirational mode of living they embody are exported throughout the country—selling the idea of *California*.

The eighth iteration of the Pasadena Art Museum's *California Design* exhibition series takes up the Valencia orange as an inspirational subject for designers and craftspeople. Hailing the one hundred years of the "orange fruit as part of the native landscape" which "naturalized orange to indigenous color," the exhibition catalog

[163] "Foreward" *California Design 8* (Pasadena: Pasadena Art Museum, 1962), iii.
[164] *California Design 8*, xi.

showcases vessels, wallpapers, garden tools, textiles, office furniture, and toys all awash in citrus.[165] By showcasing orange and emphasizing the color (and fruit's) indigeneity to the region reveals a complicated connection between nature, whiteness, and Native Americans.

Early advertisements for oranges in the nineteenth and twentieth century depict white female figures surrounded by lush vegetation and the bountiful orange harvest. Adorning wooden crates and shipped to East Coast markets, the labels of California's citrus growers sold health, dreams, and sunlight in a box. The meticulous lithographs produced by commercial studios in San Francisco and Los Angeles from the 1880s through the 1950s crafted a visual language that was synonymous with the prosperity and romanticism life in California offered: green orchards, bountiful harvests, snow-capped mountains, the glittering waters of the Pacific Ocean, exotic palm trees, never-ending sunlight, beautiful women, regal Native Americans, and athletic men; and everywhere, the orange.

Orange—both as a fruit and a color—represented the good life available in California. However, the intrepid American consumer need not fret about not living on the sunny shores of the golden coast, if the advertisers were to be believed, the consumption of the state's oranges could transport you there. The visual culture of California orange production emphasizes the beauty and bounty of the land, the health of its product, and the naturalness/native-ness of the orange. After all, what would California be without oranges?

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[165] *California Design 8*, 22.

The wooden crates that sold California oranges around the United States were vessels shilling out the good life, health, and prosperity. The manufacturers went to great lengths to promote a connection between the orange and California's land, but additionally to time. Despite being a product of colonialism and the spread of Catholicism in California, within these lithographs the orange is present as having always existed in California and as a key aspect of California identity. Like the *California Design 8* exhibition, citrus growers were fond of emphasizing the native-ness of the orange.

In a lithograph for the Native Daughter Brand, a well-dressed white woman in a large hat holds a basket of oranges, her other hand extended upward holding an orange by her fingertips while looking out at the viewer (fig. 12). Behind her, surrounded by a gilded Rococo frame, is a grove of orange trees, men on ladders moving up and down to fill white cloth bags with the citrus where they are emptied into wooden crates waiting on the ground. The incorporation of the Rococo design elements within the frame, lend an air of fantasy, regality, and prosperity to the image. Produced by H.S. Crocker Company of San Francisco and Los Angeles, this lithograph adorned orange crates shipped from Riverside, California from 1885-1899. By the late-nineteenth century, the cultivation of oranges had spread throughout much of the agricultural land of Southern California. The dress of the human figures depicted is contemporary with the period and communicates to the viewer that the fantasy presented in the images is less about establishing the native-ness of the orange to California, and by extension the people harvesting the citrus, but rather that these oranges came from *California* rather than elsewhere. This image of an

Edenic landscape serve to promote California as a paradisiacal garden ripe for the taking—the white woman a symbolic figure of purity, Americanness, and the California dream.

The establishment of visual native-ness across time in the lithographs depends on two common tropes: a romanticized Spanish past and erasure of any Native American claim to the land and the violence they endured. The lithograph for the Casa Blanca Brand, associated with Victoria Avenue Citrus Association, from the 1930s uses a frame against a solid light blue background, making the interior of the frame appear as a portal to another world (fig. 13). Within frame, snow-capped peaks tower above rolling hills that descend into an ordered citrus grove. In the foreground, a Spanish-style building reminiscent of California's many missions, stands on a rocky outlook; gnarled trees and palms crawl up the rocky façade. The employment of this Spanish fantasy landscape during the Great Depression could be an allusion to better times removed from the financial and agricultural realities of the present. The placement of the orange outside of the dreamlike landscape suggests that in this moment of uncertainty, an orange has the ability to transport the consumer to a different time and place.

Like other popular advertising campaigns in the United States, the bodies of Native Americans are employed in the advertisement of California citrus. This lithograph of the Squaw Brand, packaged by Pattee & Lett Company in Rialto, California adorned wooden orange crates from 1890 through 1906. Produced by the Los Angeles Lithography Company, the image centers on a female Native American, her gaze fixed on the viewer, in one hand a single orange proferred out, the other cradling a Native basket

overflowing with oranges against her hip (fig. 14). The image is reminiscent of scenes of trading and economic exchange, here a female figure brings the fruits of her (or her community's labor), which has been boxed and sent to American markets. The connection between the orange fruit, her body, and the Native vessel overflowing with citrus creates a picture of outside of the contemporary moment and connects the fruit to the Native American, and thus, time before white settler colonists. This image lends the orange cultural legitimacy as being 'native' to California and its associated iconography. However, the image (and other depictions of Native peoples in citrus advertisements) feature many inaccuracies. The dress, dwellings, and cultural objects shown throughout the lithographs feature native peoples who would have been from the Great Plains region and connote merely the idea of the 'native' rather than any adherence to truth or historical accuracy.

By framing the exhibition publication around oranges and their evocation of California's natural environment and history, the exhibition places a product of colonialism—the orange—as a vehicle for native-ness and indigeneity. It centralizes and celebrates a white middling class identity through its color and objects and prompts a reading of Gross' images as objects colonizing the space masquerading as something natural.

The colored portion of the catalog concludes with a reminder of *California Design 8*'s larger thematic reach: 'born of native earth.' Clay objects were prominently featured in the exposition and is attributed as growing evidence of California's exceptional ceramics industry and innovative training through local institutions. The

catalog states, “From the days of the earliest Spanish settlers to the present time, California’s earth has provided the material for shelters, containers and decorative objects.” Any historical record of the Chumash, Tongva, or other indigenous groups of Southern California using clay are removed, yet the writers chose to emphasize the ‘native’ quality of the material used by California artisans. In doing so, the ceramic object produced is more directly tied to the earth through its materials and sense of place. There is a legitimacy implied in an object being ‘native,’ as if it were somehow more real or natural because of its origin.

This photograph from *CD 8* depicts an executive swivel chair in walnut wood and orange leather upholstery designed and manufactured by the designer-craftsman Sam Maloof (fig. 15). Featured prominently in the exhibition catalog, this chair was one of three that received a full page dedicated solely to the object and of the three it was the only image reproduced in color. This choice is in part to honor Maloof’s status and influence as a major figure in California craft and design.

Moore was deeply aware of the need to generate commercial interest in the exhibition’s products. Featuring a well-known and established woodworker whose object has been marked as an *executive* swivel chair—setting it apart by class and signaling a connection to power and authority—was an effective approach to achieving her economic ambitions. However, the chair’s orientation and the flora incorporated as the image’s setting complicate a commercially driven narrative capitalizing on the celebrity of the chair’s maker.

Unlike many of the chairs featured throughout the *CD* series, Maloof's executive swivel chair *is not* designed or intended for outdoor use. This chair is meant for the interior setting of a corporate office. Instead, the chair is placed within a copse of eucalyptus trees in a grassy forested area facing away from the viewer. Moore and Gross's decision to orient the chair in this fashion is a curious and unusual choice. While this orientation features Maloof's fine craftsmanship along the back of the chair, it does not showcase the area of the object meant to be occupied by a human body. Chairs across the *CD* series are typically oriented toward the human. This technique allows the viewer to imagine the body using the object thereby creating a spatial relationship between body and object and increasing the likelihood of generating a commercial exchange.

The outdoor setting and absence of human figures generates a connection between the chair and the eucalyptus trees surrounding it. The absence of other plants on the ground is due to a property of the eucalyptus tree itself—its leaves contain a toxic compound that changes the soil when the tree sheds them, rendering it inhospitable to other plants. As the only other sizable thing in the image, the chair is connected to the trees surrounding it through materiality—though, Maloof's chair is constructed from walnut. The sheer size of the eucalyptus trees dwarf the chair. Yet the stiles of Maloof's chair provide an upward line that parallels the tree's growth. The orange hue of the leather upholstery is itself a nod to the *CD 8*'s emphasis of the orange fruit and its history in the region. These visual cues create the idea that Sam Maloof's chair is the end result of the cultivation process, from the growth and harvest of the tree.The *executive*-ness of Maloof's chair provides a sense of control and power to the image. This power, normally

exercised within the space of offices and corporate boardrooms, has been supplanted into a natural setting. This creates a sense of dominion and control of the setting.

Manufacturing the Natural: Craft and Nature

Photographed on shallow pedestals against a shadowed hill and beach, five glass vessels reflect the setting California sun and reveal the environment surrounding them (fig. 18). Richard Gross' image of Richard Marquis's rectangular bottle reflects the trees and beach—transmitting the viewer's understanding of the image's 'nature' through the glass vessel.[166] Gross' photographs mediate a relationship with nature for the viewer and photographer, but nature is already being mediated by the object.

Within the *California Design* exhibition series, the objects colonize the landscape. Set against backdrops of eucalyptus, arid deserts, and craggy beaches lie pots, weavings, and chairs. Objects clearly made with human hands, yet the images are absent of humans. The pairing of object and landscape at times are connected through materiality and place.

Gross's photographic style emphasizes natural lighting and settings. Across the five *California Design* exhibitions Gross worked on he developed a technique that placed the art object directly within the California landscape. This style was a lively departure from traditional museum photography that centralizes the art object against a monochromatic background. Gross' photographs construct an idea of nature and the

[166] Little is known about Richard Gross aside from that he developed a lasting friendship with Moore. Internet research has proven largely fruitless. I am hopeful that more information about Gross will become available after I can access the *California Design* archives.

natural that is entirely manufactured. Objects are placed and arranged, lighting is manipulated, and the object photographed.

Art historian Jo Lauria called this style a 'back-to-nature environmentalism' that served as an artistic antidote to the social and political calamities of the era.[167] The illusion of post-war life in Southern California was disrupted by the Watts Riots (1965), a growing counterculture movement with flash points in the state at UC Berkeley (1964-65), and growing dissatisfaction with the government's handling of Vietnam. Gross' photographic work for the *California Design* series distinctly depicts an increase in rural and wilderness locales beginning with *CD 10* and *CD 11*, in 1968 and 1971 respectively. Lauria's analysis understands *California Design*'s objects in relation to the society which produced it. The objects tell a larger story than being a stand-in for selling a California lifestyle. To return to a quote by art historian Jenni Sorkin, Gross treated the art objects in the *California Design* series "to a form of portraiture, set against stunning backdrops of ocean, forest, desert landscapes to underscore the connections between exhibits made from natural materials (wood, wool, and clay) to the natural world."[168] Sorkin's choice of 'portraiture' rather than still-life provides an important distinction. Portraiture implies a level of agency given to the object. The objects both are, and are not the objects of Gross' images, but also act as subjects for other objects. Like in Gross' photograph of Marquis' glass rectangular bottle, the object reflects the landscape—connecting the object to a network of relations at the material and optical level.

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[167] Jo Lauria, *California Design* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2005), 2.
[168] Jenni Sorkin, *Art in California* (London and New York: Thames & Hudson, 2021), 206.

In *California Design 8*, Gross's landscapes were limited to forested parks and outdoor gardens. As the series progressed, Gross and Moore chose increasingly isolated locations; creating a progression from highly cultivated and 'tamed' nature toward an aesthetic of the 'wilderness.'By focusing on idyllic and fantastical images of handcrafted goods in the diverse topography of the California landscape in the later *CD* exhibitions, Moore and Gross shift the narrative away from politically divisive topics toward the seemingly banal subject of the land. Yet Moore's approach to the land as a subject reveals a fractured layer of social tensions at the very root of California's mythos.

The Pasadena Art Museum's decision to photograph exhibition objects in the open air of California's picturesque environment is unusual. Not only are the objects exposed to the elements and risking damage or wear, the abandoning of traditional photographic representation of an object for museum display is radical—and in that, it should be commended. This exhibition series reimagines what is possible for an object to visually communicate and imbue far removed from the white cube of a gallery or a wooden pedestal and vitrine. By placing the objects in nature, they appear more lived and real. The images break down the barrier between viewer and object and the untouchable quality of the museum. They take the museum out into nature and when seen in the context of the exhibition space, bring nature back into the museum.

Following *California Design 8*, Gross was hired to provide photography for the remainder of the *CD* series (*9*, *10*, *11*, and *'76*) as well as Moore's exhibition of traditional craft *Islands in the Land: Traditional Objects from Appalachia and the Valley of the Rio Grande* held at the Pasadena Art Museum from November of 1972 through

February of 1973. It remains unclear what Richard Gross's established artistic practice consisted of at the time of Moore's hiring him for *California Design* or what he went on to accomplish outside of the exhibition series and other work he did for the Pasadena Art Museum.

There is little natural about the nature found within Richard Gross's photographs. Across the five *California Design* exhibitions Gross worked on he developed a technique that placed the art object directly within the California landscape. This style was a lively departure from traditional museum photography that centralizes the art object against a monochromatic background. Gross' photographs construct an idea of nature and the natural that is entirely manufactured. Objects are placed and arranged, lighting is manipulated, and the object photographed. Gross and Moore went to great lengths to hide or erase the human presence in *CD* images. This is most evident in images of the desert and beach. The form of sand and earth change when physical pressure is exerted upon them; in other words—physically arranging the objects on the land would have left footprints and possible other traces of human activity. In this image, Eudorah Moore is crouched ceramic disk, four feet in diameter, made by Henry Cabaniss (fig. 19-20). Gross photographed the disk from multiple angles. In both images there is no trace of Moore's presence or that anyone had ever been there, all that is a disk that appeared in the desert.

In the introduction to *CD 11*, Moore gives a brief acknowledgement to the labor involved in to ensure few (to no) indexical remains signaling a human were captured in the *CD* images. She includes an image of Richard Gross' assistant Patrick Gannon carrying equipment across desert near Palm Springs (fig. 21). Gannon has moved away

from the object Gross intends to shoot and is helping to reflect sunlight in order to better light the object. In this random moment of happenstance, Gross has captured the laborious conditions Gannon has been involved in to remove the human figure from the *CD* images—his footsteps carefully line the sand dune in order to not appear final image. Though there are no craft objects in Gross's image of his assistant, this candid shot provides an intriguing glimpse into what happens when Gross *does* include the human figure in these catalog images. The mountains Gannon approaches completely dwarf his body. The rolling dunes and barren landscape of the Coachella Valley are barren of any other visible life forms—the landscape's inhospitable and hostile terrain on full display. Gannon's body provides an important glimpse into scale and depth that is absent from the images of craft objects.

Gross's photographs do not generally provide closeups of the exhibition objects but tend to capture the image in the middle ground backed by a scenic view. The viewer is not meant to grasp the haptic quality of the craft objects through the photographs, but rather Gross's photographic images use the object to mediate the viewer's experience of the land.

This image of three organic stoneware forms by Michael Arntz was photographed in an artichoke field in central California from *CD 10* (fig. 22). The biomorphic forms atop boxy pedestals are out of place amongst the plowed soil and fields of artichokes in the distance. The forms are abstract against the ordered tilling of the field. Arntz's stoneware forms 'grow' from the ground through their materials—clay and various minerals for

glazing. There is a dignity of labor and humbleness associated with agricultural work within American philosophy.

Agricultural labor in California historically relied upon first indigenous, then Mexican bodies. Under Spanish colonialism eventual transition to an independent Mexico, the native indigenous population was forced off their lands to work for the Spanish missions and rancheros. By the early-nineteenth century, native Californians were decimated. These genocidal practices were advanced further upon the conquest of the region by the Americans.

The biomorphic form of an abstract sculpture by Jun Kaneko emerges directly from the rocks and earth (fig. 24). Kaneko's looping form and dripping glaze is in sharp contrast to the weathered stones from which it rises. Approximately three feet in height, the scale of Kaneko's ceramic sculpture is lost among the rocks as the photographer has chosen tight framing, with little reference to scale anywhere in the image. This growing, looping form glazed with drips, stripes, and brushes of color is both a contrast and continuation of the rocky ground—it is an evolution. The looping form grows out of the rocks, its material once a part of them, but through time, erosion, and human creativity and intervention, the clay form has emerged. Here, is a taming of the land. Nature, in all its wildness, has been harnessed through technology and heat to become something controlled; a modern Prometheus.

The photography controls nature by eliminating the footsteps and human presence necessary to create the photograph. The photograph is creating a vision of a more 'naturey' nature than actually exists, one that from the viewer's perspective is often

devoid of a human presence or interaction, even as it is controlled through photographic processes, framing, and the object itself.

These objects of *CD* were intended for the domestic sphere, both inside the home and around its immediate exterior (the garden, the patio, the deck). The objects photographed for *California Design* are taken far beyond that space. They are fully removed from the domestic sphere and placed in a seemingly pristine wilderness of earth and sky. In *California 8* the catalog text is explicit in stating that it presents products to "broaden the scope of life in the sky, on the ocean, in the desert, in gardens, swimming pools and even trees." Here, the text connects the space of nature (sky, ocean, desert) with the domesticated outdoors (gardens, swimming pools). Through craft objects space is claimed. By displaying a Kaneko pot in your home, you own a piece of the land whence it came. It is a way of pushing/expanding the space controlled by man—and if the audience and consumers of these objects is any indication, that expansion and control of space, materials, and land is the domain of whiteness.

The importance of light (concomitantly nature, time of day—sunset), framing, materials and the process of photography is constructing an illusion. Craft and craft artists transform the natural in order to connect with it. As Sorkin notes, Gross's photographic style treats the object to a form of portraiture. I propose carrying this idea forward by centering the object as the image's the primary actant. My interest is in the object's relationship to the natural environment. This has been framed by Gross's agency in taking the photograph from a specific angle, with specific lighting, in a specific place; all choices by the human actant. But where is the object's agency? When Eudorah Moore

and Richard Gross arrange the object to their liking to be photographed, what becomes of the object's relationship to the land?

First, there is the object's materiality. In *California Design* images, objects are often paired with environments that are connected to the object's materials. Wood carvings and furniture are seen with trees. Glass vessels are shown on sandy beaches—using both the sand and the reflectivity of the water to connect with the to the vessel's materiality. Ceramics are paired with earthy scenes—often involving sand or landscapes that appear very rich in minerals and natural resources beneath the surface. Fibers, in part, are an exception. The photographs of textiles and other fiber arts from *CD 8* and *9* (1962 and 1965, respectively) are usually paired with plants—perhaps a nod to the material's organic origins. Fiber pieces in later *CD* exhibitions are usually brightly colored and placed in desert landscapes or hanging from a vertical thing (be it a tree or a rock formation). The object's material connection to the landscape is further emphasized by Gross and Moore's motivation for taking the photograph. The images across the *California Design* exhibition series were meant to sell the idea of *place*. They are not *site-specific*, but they are *place-specific*. Across the collection of images—deserts, coastlines, forests, meadows, cultivated fields, rocky outcroppings, and cliffs—the biodiversity showcased is meant to speak of California. The place-ness embedded in photograph carries over to the object, often emphasized through the object's materiality. When these objects return to the museum, displayed, sold to a consumer, and placed in the space it will occupy—the object carries forward the place-ness of the photograph. The objects in *California Design* are meant to speak of a place called California. Richard

Gross and Eudorah Moore make this happen by traveling with the object from its place of origin and making, or perhaps even the museum where it will eventually be displayed and sold, to a different place—largely California's public lands.

It is curious that Moore and Gross, wanting to sell the idea and myth of California, did display the objects of *CD* in California's many iconic, recognizable landscapes. There are no images of craft objects displayed with Yosemite's Half Dome, Big Sur was not utilized, there are no giant Sequoias or towering Redwoods, and though there are beaches they are not the recognizable beachscapes of Malibu or La Jolla. This could be for many reasons. Perhaps it was not financially viable to travel outside of Southern California (transporting the objects in a recreational vehicle). I do not believe finances were a problem. Eudorah Moore was an extremely resourceful woman who across her career made great and frequent use of her network of connections for both free labor and the deep pockets of Pasadena's elite. Iconic recognizable landscapes would also overpower the object's presence in the image; Yosemite, Malibu, Big Sur, and other iconic landscapes would have manufactured a site-specificity. Eudorah Moore was not selling a site, she was selling a place—*California*. Moore and Gross chose non-places for the photographs to imbue the images and objects they contained with a sense of placeness.

The Craftsman Lifestyle

In 1976 Eudorah Moore published *Craftsman Lifestyle: The Gentle Revolution*, her manifesto on the lives of the makers involved in the *California Design* series. From the

beginning, Moore is clear that the book is *not* about objects, but people, attitudes, and changing values in judgment.

The book aimed to provide a sociological study of craftspeople, providing "insights into what they regard as important, [and] into how they view their life and work."[169] It offered a simplified, informal, composite image of the California craftsperson's lifestyle through humble portraits of the artists in their homes accompanied by interviews and quotes. Moore believed that this organization of the text would allow the reader to draw their own deductions.[170] However, the text is awash in her political and philosophical ideology.

Moore opens the introduction to *The Gentle Revolution* with a quote from Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*:

> As every individual…by directing (his) industry in such a manner as its produce may be of greatest value, intends only his own gain, he is in this as in many other cases led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention…by pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of society more effectively than when he really intends to promote it.[171]

By invoking Smith and capitalism's individualistic, market-driven ideology, Moore takes a capitalist/libertarian inflected nostalgic view of craft labor and the mode of living it promotes. Moore positions craft labor as working for oneself and improving the laborer's life—social cohesion and harmony, if they happen, are happy by-products of the individual's pursuit of the market. This capitalist ideology effectively masks modern craft's socialist philosophical roots.

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[169] Eudorah Moore, "Introduction" in *Craftsman Lifestyle: The Gentle Revolution* (Los Angeles: California Design Publications, 1977**)**, 1.
[170] *Lifestyle,* 1.
[171] *Lifestyle*, 1.

In 1974 Eudorah Moore opened *California Design 1910*, the first retrospective of California's Arts and Crafts movement in an art institution. The show required historical research into the state's makers and the philosophical ideas they engaged with. Moore read the works of Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin, and William Morris and interpreted their words through her experiences with contemporary makers, whom she believed were living the ideals articulated by the Arts and Crafts movement.[172] Moore's work on *CD 1910* motivated her work on *The Gentle Revolution*. Through a conscious approach to their own labor and adherence to process, craftspeople cultivated an appreciation for beauty and art's ability to activate an elevated awareness and appreciation for life. These contemporary artisans, whom she called the 'New Craftsman's Movement' celebrated the triumph of the individual and continued the nineteenth-century idea of craft as a critique of meaningless mass consumption; if not for the public than for the makers themselves.

After surveying hundreds of craftspeople across the state, Moore concluded the craftsperson's lifestyle shared four common traits across the entire group. First (and for Moore, most important), "the role of the craftsperson is universally a conscious and considered choice…people [worked] creatively with their hands because [gave] them joy" or because "they had to." Second, they viewed "art and life [as] a single fabric, and the quality of living the monument." Third, craftspeople reported a "love of nature and identification with the unity of all things." Finally, craftspeople exhibit the best of American priorities and thought through their lives. Moore notes the interest in quality over quantity because quality concerns the daily living experience of the individual.

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[172] *Lifestyle*, 1.

Additionally, she includes the standard American disregard for long-held hierarchies within social structures arguing that "old ideas of 'suffer now for ultimate rewards' are replaced by 'extract from every moment the joy it offers; whether pleasure in one's work, in visual perceptions, in good food, or in quiet repose. LIVE IT."[173]

Moore saw the largest difference between the 'New Craftsmen's Movement' and the Arts and Crafts Movement to be the level of society each respective movement attempted an intervention. From Moore's view, the Arts and Crafts movement (A&C) stemmed from the political and social concerns of the elite for society as a whole unit in response to the Industrial Revolution. The 'New Craftsmen's Movement' centered on the introspective individual—positioning the social concerns of the Arts and Crafts movement as too theoretical and unpragmatic to practical living terms. Instead the new movement celebrated the individual and their relationship "to work, to living, to family, to nature and to himself."[174] Moore filters out the socialist rhetoric of the A & C movement, but retains its ideologies of joy in labor and a connection to the natural environment.

Labor historian Eileen Boris writes that John Ruskin and William Morris "hoped to reunite art and labor, mental effort and manual achievement, work and play" to counteract the "fragmentation of social life endemic to the emerging corporate order."[175]

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[173] *Lifestyle,* 2.
[174] *Lifestyle*, 2.
[175] Eileen Boris, *Art and Labor: Ruskin, Morris, and the Craftsman Ideal in American* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 198?), 3-4.

Though Moore would not disagree with craft's ability to transform the social order, that was merely a by-product of the transformation seen in the individual maker.

William Morris and John Ruskin rooted their critique of industrial capitalism within the pollution of the land, the mechanization of men, and the falsification of architecture. Yet both men understood that until the consumer and the producer moved beyond 'purses' and 'machines' to a more community-minded approach, art would remain separate from labor and the beauty of the earth wither under the pursuit of profit.[176] Modern craft has always been associated with nature, the land, and a softer sort of life that is a balm to the drudges of a capitalist society. Craft philosophy emphasizes community, nature, and joy in labor—these principles remained steadfast well into the late-twentieth century and are evident in Moore's life, how she structured *California Design*, and her personal beliefs on the importance of California craft. It is unsurprising then, that Moore would return to the craft object to the landscape, as both a unique feature of California, but also as the source for the materiality of the craft object. Indeed, Moore and Gross create distinct links between labor, land, and the craft object numerous times throughout *California Design*.

Moore does not shy away from embracing industrial materials and aesthetics—since the end of World War II and the rapid growth of industries pivotal to the war effort and the pivoting of these industries to mass produce consumer goods—new materials from plastic to fiberglass have been successfully used by California designers and are an integral part of the state's midcentury aesthetic. Moore's project *Craftsman Lifestyle* is a

[176] Boris, 7.

continuation of the aesthetic and philosophical principles laid down by Ruskin and Morris on the purpose of craft. A simple way of living, joy in one's labor, using nature as inspiration, and a rooted connection to place.

Chapter Four: Rick Dillingham and the Settler Politics of Clay, 1972-1994

Introduction

On May 12, 1974, the exhibition *Seven Families in Pueblo Pottery* held its opening reception at the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico (UNM). By all accounts, the event was a party. Potters traveled from all over Pueblo country to attend. The celebration brought together families and friends spread out across the vast desert landscapes of Northern New Mexico and Arizona, renewing old bonds and forging new ones. While the exhibit may have been small, and the clay vessels on display humble, it brought together some of the most skilled potters in North America. In a photograph from the opening day of the exhibition, a cheery group of women socialize together like long-lost friends (fig. 1). The group includes the matriarchs of several key families involved in the production of Pueblo ceramics: María Martinez (San Ildefonso Pueblo, 1887-1980), Santana Martinez (San Ildefonso Pueblo, 1909-2002), Lucy M. Lewis (Acoma Pueblo, 1890-1992), and Nellie Douma Nampeyo (Hopi-Tewa, 1896-1978), the daughter of the legendary Hopi-Tewa potter Nampeyo (1859-1942).

Standing behind this grouping of women, looking a bit stressed but no less jovial, is the twenty-two-year-old potter Rick Dillingham (American, 1952-1994). Then a student at UNM, Rick was the primary architect of the *Seven Families* exhibition. Reflecting upon that day nearly twenty years later, in 1993, Dillingham wrote, "The show's opening was an event that can never be repeated. Potters, many of them now deceased, came from all over…To an avid collector like myself, the event—full of potters

and suffused with goodwill—was magic."[177] This event was a core moment in the young potter's life and the result of years of building relationships with the Pueblo matriarchs and their families. Just weeks after the opening, Dillingham would graduate from UNM and move to Claremont, California, where he would attend the Claremont Graduate School to complete his MFA under the functional potter and renowned ceramics writer Hal Riegger. Afterward, he would return to New Mexico, settling in Santa Fe, where he continued to deepen his connections with Pueblo families and other Native potters of the Southwest for the remainder of his life.

Of all the potters considered in this project, Rick Dillingham most directly confronts

the historical ramifications of settler colonialism. He disrupts this hegemonic system by undermining what theorist and historian of settler colonialism Lorenzo Veracini calls the "non-encounter."[178] Veracini argues that central to the structure of settler colonialism is a recurring need to disavow the presence of indigenous others through the non-encounter. This allows for the continued erasure of the indigenous body to assert power through their active presence. The erasure of indigeneity paves the way for the settler body politic to assert an authentic claim to the land and its resources. As expanded upon earlier in this dissertation, I pair Veracini's philosophy of the *encounter/non-encounter* with the American land artist Robert Smithson's concept of *site/non-site* to theorize how the relationship American potters formed with the desert landscapes of the American West.

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[177] Rick Dillingham, "Acknowledgements," in *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994), 6.
[178] Lorenzo Veracini, "On Settlerness," *Borderlands* vol. 10 (2011), 3.

The objects they produced from the land's clay and minerals reinforced—or at times troubled—U.S. settler colonialism.

Rick Dillingham is a troubling artist for the reinforcement of the structure of settler colonialism. As this chapter will argue, it was through his sustained relationships with local indigenous potters of the Southwest, which led to exhibitions like *Seven Families* and other projects upon which I will elaborate, that informed a growing awareness of the embedded history within the desert landscapes he came to consider his home. Through these friendships and throughout his body of work and its reception in the world of American craft, Dillingham grappled with the settler's relationship to the land in the American West, a process by which scholars of settler colonialism have termed "the inheritance of conquest."[179] This chapter examines how Dillingham attempted to imagine a path forward for settlers and Native peoples alike. Two generations younger than either Glen Lukens or Hal Riegger, Dillingham turns further away from an extractive relationship with the land and the indigenous peoples who live there than either of his predecessors were able to achieve. Rather, Dillingham emphasized exchange, an imperative to give back, as well as an embrace of models of kinship through his connections to the matriarchal Pueblo communities and queer sexual identity that were anathema to the extractive model of U.S. heteropatriarchal settler colonialism.

To be clear, Rick Dillingham is a flawed model. The relationships he built and the intellectual, artistic, economic, and at times sexual exchanges he engaged with

[179] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8 no. 4 (2006), 388.

indigenous peoples is a narrative entirely constructed from a settler viewpoint. Dillingham spent his life building close friendships and, at times, intimate relationships with Southwestern indigenous peoples. These relationships and the knowledge exchanged culminated in two major publications on Native ceramics of the Southwest, both published near the end of his life: *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery* (1994) (an expansion and revision of the original *Seven Families* exhibition) and *Acoma and Laguna Pottery* (1992). It is unclear to the degree with which his indigenous interlocutors found professional parity—from interviews and recollections of the Dillingham, such exchanges appear to have been a mostly positive and welcome relationships, but one not without tensions. Dillingham's commitment to meaningful exchange manifested through several avenues. These included the launching of many Pueblo ceramists' careers through *Seven Families* and his later books, and the promotion of contemporary indigenous ceramics through the Mudd-Carr Gallery which he operated in Santa Fe. Throughout his life. Rick Dillingham was dedicated to the preservation and restoration of indigenous objects, growing the academic field of Native American ceramics, and perhaps most importantly, his own personal financial investment in the collection and preservation of Mojave artistic traditions. Over time, Dillingham amassed the most complete and well-preserved collection of Mojave objects in the world, which he ensured would be placed in the hands of indigenous-led institutions and caretakes prior to his untimely death from HIV/AIDS in 1994.

I will explore the development of the negotiation between Dillingham, his objects, and the land of the Southwest across his development of bonds with the Puebloan

peoples, his scholarly work, and his oeuvre. Initially for Dillingham, the land's influence on the settler potter's queer body created an authentic, truthful, sexual experience, which provided a way forward within his own sexual liberation. However, through building local networks, living with and among the peoples whose ideologies he appropriated for the formation of his own sense of self, Dillingham gained a more nuanced understanding of the potter's relationship to the land.

Additionally, Dillingham failed to gain a nuanced understanding of exchange and cultural appropriation—while his oeuvre and life's work attempted to center the living presence of indigenous peoples—he ultimately was an adoptee of the philosophy in ceramics of the "global potter"; an idea that blossomed in the 1970s that all of ceramics history was fair game for creative production regardless of cultural nuance and the resulting flattening of specificity and historical dynamics of power and privilege. However, his work offers an important opportunity to understand the role ceramics can take in imagining decolonial futures, which I will examine through his major lifework: the *Globe* series (1974-1994).

Through this body of work, Dillingham's process shifts from a physical understanding of the land and its materiality to a political, social, and cultural one as he confronted the weight of history from a settler perspective. However, rather than confront the nuanced history of settler colonialism in the Southwest and imagine a possible future of reconciliation for the region's varied peoples, Rick Dillingham embraces a globalist view of human culture. Although it took time for him to absorb and gain a more nuanced understanding, Rick Dillingham learned to listen to the earth. However, his hearing was

by no means perfect. His subject position as a white settler remained central to his world view, and whatever his own desires or goals were, they did not (and could not) change his place within the hegemonic structure of settler colonialism.

Speak of the Desert

On a trip to Santa Barbara, California in 1974, two well-established potters Beatrice Wood

(American, 1893-1998) and Vivika Heino (American, 1910-1995) encountered the ceramic vessels of the young potter Rick Dillingham. Though the twenty-two-year-old had yet to establish himself as a well-known figure in California ceramics, Wood and Heino were impressed. Wood wrote to Dillingham of the famed artists' collective thoughts of his work, writing appreciatively, "We both are enthusiastic about your bowls. They speak of the desert, have an organic quality, a life of their own, and besides are an original use of clay."[180] Wood and Heino were well-positioned to understand these objects: both were celebrated ceramists with thriving careers, giants within California's studio pottery movement, and experts on the American ceramic vessel tradition.

Though the precise bowls described in Wood's letter are unknown, they would have been similar to *Untitled (Bowl, 5-72-1)* (1972), which is indicative of Rick Dillingham's early work prior to the early-1980s after receiving his MFA (fig. 2). This vessel is an early example of the artist's experiments with the broken pot technique and

[180] Beatrice Wood to Rick Dillingham, personal correspondence, July 5, 1974, Rick Dillingham Papers, New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe, NM.

exhibits the key characteristics which would define his early career: local raw materials, the rupture and repair of the vessel, and an investment in basic tools and techniques. Large swaths of the object's surface remain undecorated, emphasizing the bisqued raw earthenware clay body and echoing Wood's poignant language. The raw earthenware, lacking decoration, is indexical in its point of origin—in this case, the Mojave Desert.

As Wood notes, the bowl "speaks of the desert." She assigns a degree of agency to the object which acknowledges the active negotiation between the potter and the land in the making of a ceramic vessel. When done successfully, as she sees in Rick Dillingham's work, the vessel takes on "a life of [its] own." Wood recognizes Dillingham's individual and creative voice, but through the making identifies the crucial presence and voice of the land within his pots.

Dillingham's early ceramic techniques that so enchanted Wood and Heino were heavily influenced by his love of Native American pottery of the Southwest and interactions he had with Puebloan and Mohave potters. As a child, beginning in 1964, Dillingham's family took regular vacations across Arizona and New Mexico, introducing the then-adolescent to the burgeoning tourist market of Southwest Native ceramics, which were vital to the economic prosperity of Southwestern indigenous peoples. From roadside markets and village shops, Dillingham purchased pots from Hopi, Acoma, Laguna, and other Pueblo makers, beginning at the age of twelve to amass what would become a lifelong collection. Back home in California, Dillingham was able to acquire further Native American pottery, baskets, and figurines through thrift stores. The artist recalled in a 1993 interview with journalist Daniel Gibson that, "…nobody gave a damn

about any of this [Native American pottery] back then, you could pick up pots inexpensively—though not always in the best condition."[181] His thirst for indigenous ceramics continued to develop concurrently with his own ceramics practice. Though he learned to throw on the potter's wheel while attending Moorpark Junior College (1968-1970) in Ventura, California, he never adopted the technique into his regular practice. He preferred the handbuilding techniques favored by Native artists: coil building, pinch-pots, and rudimentary hand tools.

While attending the California College of Arts and Crafts (CCAC) during the 1970-71 academic year, Rick Dillingham met the potter Hal Riegger, discussed in Chapter Two, and learned of the workshops he had been holding in the desert since the mid-1960s. These quasi-anthropological excursions out into the California desert were meant for students to experience pottery making "through the eyes of early man."[182]

Consider this ruggedly formed vessel Dillingham created in the Spring of 1971 during the "Primitive Pottery" workshop held near Parker, Arizona on the Colorado River Indian Reservation (fig. 3) The vessel's lip is coarse and jagged—lopsided due to the harsh indent from the maker's hands upon the neck. The pot is devoid of a glaze or other applied surface decoration. This lack of 'finish' brings forth the rough, porous surface of the raw clay, from which the occasional bit of gravel protrudes, emerging from the vessel's body. The object is not conventionally beautiful, nor does it adhere to any sense of uniformity. Gravel-flecked, the making of this vessel was predicated upon working

[181] Daniel Gibson, "Rick Dillingham, Artist—A Very Very Versatile Man" *The Santa Fean Magazine,* January-February 1993, 28.
[182] Hal Riegger, *Primitive Pottery* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1972), 13.

with ~~the~~ raw materials and their impurities. This meant accentuating the local raw clay's natural tendencies rather than asserting control over the medium. As an example of Rick Dillingham's absorption of what Hal Riegger called "primitive pottery," Dillingham's vessel is an expression of the desert landscape and the rudimentary making experience, a collaboration between maker and the embodied experience of the local environment. For Riegger, the primitive encompassed both a set of ideological beliefs and an embodied way of moving through the world. This form of embodiment generates harmony by creating a connection between the individual and the natural world. As underscored in his text, *Primitive Pottery*, Riegger sees the primitive as being devoid of the restraints of technology and commercialism, and thus a vehicle to attain a higher form of consciousness.

While attending Riegger's workshop on the Colorado River Indian Reservation, Rick Dillingham met the Mohave potter Elmer Gates (1929-1990). While Mohave men were not traditionally trained as potters, Gates learned the craft from his aunt and widely studied the pottery styles and techniques of the Pueblo, Navajo, and other southwestern groups. Gates sold his work at the Colorado River Indian Tribal Museum and was a well-known mentor to young Mohave and Maricopa artists.[183] A prolific artist, Elmer Gates's work has a significant presence in museum collections, private galleries, and auction

[183] It is unclear exactly how Rick Dillingham met Elmer Gates. Per Hal Riegger's *Primitive Pottery* text it is clear that Elmer Gates had interactions with Riegger's workshops and students. It is possible that Dillingham met Gates independently of Riegger through his activities as a collector. It is highly likely that while attending the workshop, Dillingham would have pursued such opportunities to meet local indigenous potters and purchase their work.

houses, but the written historical record of the man is sparse.[184] Known for his intricate paintings on effigy vessels, frog figurines, ceramic dolls, and traditional Mohave forms, Gates preferred to work with micaceous clays, heavy in the mineral mica, which gave his objects a sparkling brilliance.[185] Within his personal papers, Rick Dillingham cited Gates as one of the "most influential teachers of [his] life."[186]

Gates's influence on Dillingham's overall investment in the ceramic production of Native Americans is what led him to leave California behind, and with it the California College of Arts and Crafts, and transfer to the University of New Mexico to complete his Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1974. Rick dedicated a significant portion of his time in Albuquerque to meeting Pueblo makers and learning from them.

Dillingham was invested in the desert landscape, the people, and its history before he ever set foot in Hal Riegger's workshop, which arguably made him more predisposed to Native American perspectives and a desire to learn directly from Indigenous ceramists. His boyhood ceramics collection propelled his understanding of clay's materiality. Specificity of place and the embedded history of the land and its inhabitants was a key aspect of Dillingham's conceptualization of clay.

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[184] Elmer Gates provided a linguistic interview to Susan Penfield in 1969. At the time, Penfield was a young anthropology student who today is a specialist in Indigenous language documentation and revitalization. The recording of the interview is held at the Doris Duke Native American Oral History Collection, Arizona State Museum Library and Archives, University of Arizona. The recording is not available to the public and is likely a recording to preserve the Mohave language, rather than include historical elements of his life.

[185] Allan and Carol Hayes, *The Desert Southwest: Four Thousand Years of Life and Art* (Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2006), 140-144.

[186] Rick Dillingham to Unknown, personal correspondence, 1982. Rick Dillingham Archive, New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe, NM.

While Dillingham's rugged vessel may express the embodied and psychological experience Riegger sought for his students, it is distinctly different from *Untitled (Bowl, 5-72-1)* (1972) that Beatrice Wood and Vivika Heino encountered in Santa Barbara. *Untitled (Bowl, 5-72-1)* contains elements of surface design in the yellow pigmentation that becomes smoky due to the outdoor firing, its bare earthenware surface is smooth and not as roughly formed at the *Untitled* vessel from Riegger's workshop. The bowl that Wood and Heino praised has clear allusions to Native American ceramics and decoration, though, this is not acknowledged by either Wood or Heino. Instead, the bowl "…speaks of desert," but this view lacks the specificity of history, people, and the vibrant life of that landscape. Wood's language abstracts the connection to place. Through traveling from the site of its minerals, clay, and making to elsewhere, *Untitled (Bowl, 5-72-1)* (1972) takes on the qualities of what the American land artist Robert Smithson referred to as a "non-site."

Site/Non-Site as Encounter/Non-Encounter

Smithson states in "A Provisional Theory of Nonsites" (1968) that within this moment of travel through space, "Everything between the two sites could become physical metaphorical material devoid of natural meanings and realistic assumptions."[187] The specificity of Rick Dillingham's *Untitled (Bowl, 5-72-1)* (1972), the local relationship to

[187] Robert Smithson, "A Provisional Theory of Nonsites," 1968, accessed 08/31/2023, https://holtsmithsonfoundation.org/provisional-theory-nonsites.

the land and the influence his budding mentorship with Mojave potter Elmer Gates, is lost in translation.

The ”encounter” Dillingham experiences with Mojave and Pueblo makers, that become so central to his production is transformed into the “non-encounter” for viewers who lack the knowledge of Dillingham’s vast network of indigenous relationships. The potters discussed throughout this dissertation have employed ceramics to escape the structural pressures of modernity and an industrialized society that redefined embodiment, kinship, and disassociated their ability to connect with the world around them.[188] The Australian potter Ben Richardson (b. 1951) has proposed the term “place-based making” as the methodological practice that generates meaning and an affective relationship with clay through the ”natural, physical, and narrative resources of place.”[189] Richardson roots his methodology of making within phenomenology. His aesthetic philosophy positions Japanese Zen aesthetics *against* the Western aesthetic tradition traced back through Immanuel Kant and Plato. Richardson sees the Western tradition as anthropocentric, privileging the human experience above all else.

Place is created through the object’s natural materials, the embodied experience of the maker, and the physical tools of making. Working with raw materials is exceedingly difficult. Richardson suggests working with the materiality of the clay is imperative for its site to shine through. The materiality of place is uniquely tied to the experience of a

[188] *Queer Settler Colonialism.* 1-3.
[189] Ben Richardson, “Place-Based Making” *Studio Potter* website, 08/31/2023, https://studiopotter.org/place-based-making.

specific physical geography—just as in Smithson's conception of site. Uniformity is anathema to place-based making.

Richardson advocates for allowing the "materials to reveal their full potential" and develop a sympathetic relationship between the agency of the natural materials and the choices of the potter that maximizes and accentuates the agency of the non-human. The potter's job is to help the earth 'speak' through an object. The essence of Richardson's "place-based making" is repeated and echoed throughout writing by contemporary artists working in the vessel tradition. It is therefore unsurprising that all of these writers are based in settler colonial nation states. The process of settler colonialism creates a need to connect with the land to claim sovereignty over it and its material resources. The erasure or "non-encounter" with the indigenous body allows the settler state to coverup any conflicting past (or current) claim to the land and create their own mythological narrative. Richardson rooting his methodology in East Asian and European philosophy dismisses the vibrant and alternative organizational approach to clay and connecting with the land. Richardson's dismissal of the aboriginal experience in Australia, or other indigenous voices around the globe, only furthers the goals of the settler state and continues to attempt the erasure of indigenous contributions to the understanding of clay.

Potters operating within the hegemonic system of the settler state have often prioritized the non-encounter with the indigenous body in their work as a way to connect physically *and* spiritually with the landscape—as seen in Glen Lukens and Hal Riegger in chapters one and two of this dissertation. Place-based making in concert with the non-

encounter, is a settler colonial form of generating place and an authentic claim to the land and its resources for settler potters. For Rick Dillingham, the encounter remains a key attribute of his work (whether selfishly or benevolently). As his work developed, Dillingham relied upon the continued *visible* presence of "the encounter" with the indigenous other to be a defining attribute that he develops in his work.

In *Untitled (Globe, 9-79-13)* (1979) the viewer is immediately confronted by the object's construction (fig. 4). The cracks which ricochet across the pot's form act as an echo of their own creation—a past event. The viewer knows that at some point, the object was made, broken, and then remade again. The breaking and remaking redistributes the decoration into a patchwork design. Art critic Richard Huntinton, writing for the Buffalo Courier-Express, wrote in a review of Dillingham's work at the Nina Freudenheim Gallery that Dillingham's vessels recall their origin as a pile of broken fragments. Their reconstruction invoking "an archaeological finger" that creates a slippage within the vessel's temporality.[190] The majority of the critics who wrote on Rick Dillingham's work have been immediately drawn to this conundrum of the pot's past/presentness.

This invocation of archaeological time is not without good reason. During his time as a student at the University of New Mexico, Rick Dillingham was employed by the anthropology department to reconstruct broken Native American vessels from the shards found in archaeological digs throughout the region. The reconstruction of a three-dimensional form from broken pieces intrigued the young artist. *Untitled (Globe, 9-79-13)* recalls the process of archaeology both through its reconstruction and the raku

[190] Richard Huntinton, "Random Beauty," *Buffalo Courier Express - April 9, 1993,* 29.

techniques Dillingham applied. In archaeology, shards collected by archaeologists are exposed to different soil compositions and erosion environments, resulting in varying colors and states of decay in shards, that when reconstructed, sat next to one another. Dillingham recreated this effect by applying the surface decoration prior to the final firing and reconstruction. The orange, yellow, and white shards are discolored in places—sometimes appearing brown—are pieced together.

In *Untitled (Vessel)*, (1985) the association with a temporal quality is spurred further through its connection to ancient cultures (fig. 5). The art critic Deborah Phillips proposed that Dillingham's *Globes* sought to be "Anasazi artifacts," whose forms echo the silence of the past and "seem to hold secrets…in their hollow interiors"[191] The mysticism Phillips evokes feels regrettably misplaced for a potter deeply familiar with the history of ceramics in the Southwest and was an expert in the techniques of both ancient and modern indigenous potters, yet their silent, magical quality is repeatedly invoked to describe the objects. Rather than the Anasazi, it could be argued that Rick Dillingham's 'broken pot' method is a direct appropriation of the rich history of Mimbres pottery, a culture from what is now the American Southwest from approximately 1100 CE to 1300 CE (fig. 6). For the Mimbres culture, pottery played a key role in their burial practices with ceramic bowls being entombed alongside the bodily remains with other offerings. These vessels were purposefully broken and scattered around the grave—a custom archaeologists have come to understand as "killing" the bowl, releasing the spirit of the earth and subsequently, the spirit of the deceased body.

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[191] Matthew Kangas "Repairative Drive," *American Ceramics* 8, no. 4 (1990), 128.

Public knowledge and circulation of the ceramics of the ancient Americas is crucial to the interpretation of Dillingham's objects. Though perhaps unconsciously, Rick Dillingham relied upon the ceramics of ancient cultures and Pueblo pottery to held define what his own work *was not*. Rick Dillingham manifested his commitment to the encounter as an embracement of a "global" mindset, that all human culture is open and worthy of exploration. There is a tension in Dillingham's work between the "global" and the "local." While he, a white gay male settler, was uncritical about adopting techniques and traditions of the Pueblo community as a part of a global ceramic history, he was socially, politically, and economically committed to his local community of indigenous groups. This tension creates uneasy grounding for positioning Dillingham. While an object like *Untitled (Vessel)*, (1985) perhaps fails to reach a historical reckoning with the embedded history of the land and encounters he has with indigenous makers. However, works of art cannot do everything, nor should Dillingham be held to such a standard. When considering his unique bonds with the Puebloan people and commitment to amplifying their successes, Dillingham the man and his objects, creates a tension that *attempts* to unsettle the existing structures of power.

To Albuquerque and *Seven Families*

Upon his arrival in Albuquerque as a student at the University of New Mexico (UNM) in 1972, Rick Dillingham immediately began contacting Pueblo matriarchs known for their family's involvement in ceramics (fig. 7). In this photograph Dillingham took in 1972 of María Martinez and her sister Desideria Sanchez of the San Ildefonso Pueblo, the two legendary potters are casually seated in their home in a relaxed atmosphere and are

grinning at the camera. This image is indicative of the early relationships Dillingham began forming with Puebloan potters as a young man. Dillingham took advantage of UNM's resources to learn all he could about Native American art and lifeways. He began working as an archaeological technician in the campus' Anthropology Lab and took courses in ethnography. In one course taught by Dr. Linda Cordell, Dillingham created a series of works using indigenous techniques and materials as part of his studies. *Untitled (Globe)* (1972) (fig.8) was pit-fired in Dr. Cordell's backyard and remained in her possession until her death in 2013 when it was bequeathed to the New Mexico Museum of Art. This early globe lacks the signature breakage that Dillingham became known for, but at the base of the vessel's body through the white swirling stripe a stress fracture has begun to form. The light coloring of the vessel's glazes indicate that Dillingham likely used raw local materials to create the glazing upon the surface. In a self-written entry for curator Susan Wechsler's book *Low-Fire Ceramics* (1981), Dillingham recounted these early formative years at UNM. He began traveling almost immediately after arriving in New Mexico. His first contact was with the legendary family of Hopi potters—the Nampeyos. Of his own accord, Dillingham believed himself to be well-received because he approached the family as a fellow potter, not an anthropologist. As a potter, Dillingham claimed to speak the same "…ceramic language."[192]

It is unclear to how Indigenous potters perceived Dillingham in their own words, however, knowledge of the curious and bright young Anglo potter quickly spread throughout the Pueblos. He was continuously welcomed into the homes of many of the

[192] Susan Wechsler, *Low-Fire Ceramics* (New York: Watson-Guptill, 1981), 23.

most prominent families in Southwestern pottery. In addition to "shop talk," that is, exchanging information on ceramic processes and materials, he began trading his own work—brightly colored functional stoneware bowls—for the pots made by the matriarchs of powerful Pueblo families. Dillingham's stoneware vessels were valued for their decoration and utility and became popular for use on Pueblo feast days and celebrations.[193]

As his bonds with Pueblo makers grew, Rick Dillingham began compiling notes from what he learned from the matriarchs of the Puebloan families. These notes and interviews he conducted with the indigenous potters became the basis for an exhibition he mounted in the final semester before graduation. *Seven Families in Pueblo Pottery* was an exhibition held from May-September of 1974 at the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico. Nearly 230 works of contemporary Puebloan pottery were presented, representing individuals from the San Ildefonso, Santa Clara, Acoma, Hopi-Tewa, and Laguna Pueblos. The exhibition was an unexpected and overwhelming success. *The New Mexican*, the region's newspaper, called the exhibition "the first of its kind ever presented."[194]

Seven Families in Pueblo Potter was innovative in that it exhibited contemporary works and named the individual Native artists and provided a personal statement from each person, a practice that was uncommon in museum's exhibition of Native work.[195]

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[193] Wechsler, 23.
[194] "Indian pottery exhibit first of its kind" *The New Mexican.* May 1, 1974, B7.
[195] "Throwback Thursday: Maxwell Museum Exhibitions," August 31, 2020, accessed 08/31/2023, https://maxwellmuseum.unm.edu/news-events/blog/throwback-thursday-maxwell-museum-exhibitions.

By naming each person and including statements in their own words, the exhibition elevated the each individual artist rather than categorizing them broadly by tribe and time period as is often done with Native ceramics—circumscribing them to an ancient past that does not acknowledge the present and continued presence of Native people. By centering the voices of Puebloan people so centrally in the exhibition's catalog, Dillingham and the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology were attempting to acknowledge the colonial roots of the museum's collection and its traditional exhibition practices. In a statement released by the museum in 2020, the Maxwell Museum traced its roots to reckoning with the necessity of recognizing the role institutions have played in colonial violence to the *Seven Families* exhibition.[196]

As the popularity and attendance of the *Seven Families* exhibition increased during the summer of 1974 and demand for the catalogue amplified in the intervening years, members of the Maxwell Museum staff speculated on why the exhibition "…had benefited from 'the Tutankhamen effect.'"[197] A reference to the popularity to the blockbuster exhibition *Treasures of Tutankhamun*, organized by the Metropolitan Museum of Art that toured the United States between 1976-1979 to great popular public appeal. J.J. Brody, the director of the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology called Rick Dillingham the "…driving personality" behind the exhibition and that its uniqueness and

[196] "Throwback Thursday: Maxwell Museum Exhibitions."
[197] "Throwback Thursday: Maxwell Museum Exhibitions."

intimate nature were solely "…because of the many different ways in which he informed himself about Pueblo pottery and involved himself with it."[198]

The intimacy and personable level the exhibition allowed into the lives of contemporary Pueblo potters choice was possible because of the unique and sustained bonds Rick Dillingham built with the Pueblo people over several years. The notes and interviews he conducted provided the exhibition a level of intimacy and humanity not before seen in exhibitions of Native American art.

The original catalog for *Seven Families* became a sought-after guide for anyone interested in collecting Pueblo pottery. The original cover design was adorned with a flashy Frank Stella-like "7" (fig. 9). Originally released through the Maxwell Museum, demand for the catalog quickly exceeded the institution's printing capabilities. Director J.J. Brody turned to the University of New Mexico Press to take over reproduction of the text. By 1994, the catalog had gone through fifteen editions and over 80,000 copies were in print. In subsequent reprintings, the cover was changed to a work by the Hopi-Tewa potter Dextra Quotskuyva Nampeyo (fig. 10).

Seven Families relied overwhelmingly on Rick Dillingham's personal collection, rounded out by loans from the potters themselves and a small number of local private collectors. Dillingham expanded upon his rationale for what to include in the exhibition two decades later, recalling: "The…exhibition had its roots in my own pottery collection. I found I was attracted to pottery that was done within certain families and in similar

[198] J.J. Brody, "Introduction," *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994), 12.

styles…These selections were purely personal…I make no value judgments about the talents and skills of the individual potters or the relative importance of the different families. The selections are based on my personal tastes, my friendships with the potters, and the potters' desire to work with me to present their families in this publication."[199] This remark is enlightening to the degree that Dillingham's personal taste defined the exhibition, and thus the Pueblo pottery market due to the exhibition's success. This market was in part defined by the willingness of indigenous people to befriend a white gay Anglo potter and participate in sharing their knowledge. Though it is unclear at the onset of befriending Puebloan potters if Dillingham imagined a future for the information he gathered as an exhibition, book, or only for his own personal reflections. Dillingham acknowledges that one of the primary flaws of *Seven Families* was "…that it did not include as many families of exceptional potters as I could have presented."[200] Over the next twenty years, Rick Dillingham continued to build bonds of friendship with Pueblo potters to work toward expanding the text. In 1994, *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery* was published posthumously by the University of New Mexico Press.

In *Seven Families in Pueblo Pottery*, Rick Dillingham's goal is to establish the canon of Pueblo ceramic art history. In part due to the matriarchal cultures he is examining and his desire to establish the longevity of the pottery traditions within these families, genealogy charts play a significant role in establishing the "dynastic" quality of each Pueblo family. Ultimately, Dillingham came to view the methodology of *Seven*

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[199] Rick Dillingham, "Forward," *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994), 6.
[200] *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery*, 6.

Families as inherently flawed, calling it…"too influential: some beginning collectors felt that if a potter wasn't in the catalogue his or her work wasn't 'collectable.'"[201] During the twenty years between the exhibition of *Seven Families in Pueblo Pottery* in 1974 and the publication of *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery* in 1994, Dillingham grew an awareness of the power he wields as a scholar in the economic fortunes of Pueblo artists; especially if they were individuals who worked alone or did not come from a long family lineage—arguably, the group of Pueblo artists who would have benefited the most from the exposure Dillingham's books offered. In *Fourteen Families*, while Dillingham expands the groups of Pueblo makers included in the text, his methodology for the project's parameters continued to exclude individual makers who lacked the fortune of coming from celebrated family lines. Dillingham is aware that the Pueblo potters included in both *Seven Families* and the expanded *Fourteen Families* texts benefited financially and, in many cases, launched the careers in younger potters within these families. The potters not from "dynastic" families struggled to gain name recognition and validation of their work as worthy of collection by white collectors and tourists. Lacking any formal training as a historian, Dillingham (perhaps) would have benefited from questioning what was his responsibility to the Pueblo people in his role as a writer and scholar. The choice to focus on large, well-documented, and established families on one hand appeals to his ego as being the scholar who establishes the foundation for Puebloan ceramic art history. On the other, perhaps Dillingham believed that this canonical

[201] *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery*, 6.

foundation was *needed* for the field to grow and gain the attention it deserves. Dillingham was flawed and self-aware enough to know the mistakes he had made.

It could be argued that Rick Dillingham's queer positionality, the bonds he built with Pueblo matriarchs, and his limited immersion into the communal lifeways of the Puebloan people approached a type of kinship bond that does not cooperate with the heteropatriarchal construction of settler colonialism. Within *Seven Families* and *Fourteen Families*, Dillingham's clear emphasis on the matriarchal culture of the Pueblo, how this influenced the passing down of knowledge of ceramics, and the primacy of family history and connection to the land centers how key the Pueblo Matriarchs were to maintain their traditions, communities, and cultures.

To return to the political theorist and historian Lorenzo Veracini, a key tenet of how Veracini conceptualizes the structure of settler colonialism is that the indigenous person and settler colonizer occupy the same locale, but do not meet.[202] Veracini's view does not account for the slippages of intimacy between the settler and indigenous potter within a place. Instead, it centers a heteropatriarchal construction of settler colonialism which depends upon the separation of the settler body politic from the indigenous native to prop up the settler colonial family unit as a method of controlling the sovereignty of the land through private property and heterosexual reproduction. Dillingham's queerness and the bonds formed with the matriarchs of the Pueblos offers a case study for a settler body that does not cooperate within the bounds of the heteropatriarchal settler structure,

[202] Lorenzo Veracini, "On Settlerness,"*Borderlands* vol 10 (2011), 6.

but nevertheless benefits from it anyways, despite any attempts by him to unsettle this dynamic.

The Potter as Anthropologist

While building relationships with the Pueblo peoples of the American Southwest and compiling notes based on those conversations, Dillingham asserted a most peculiar and curious proposition. In his recounting of this moment in his life to curator and historian Susan Wechsler, Dillingham observed that he was well received by the Pueblo because "I spoke pots, not anthropology. I became involved with them as people and potters, dealing with their problems just as I deal with mine."[203] Dillingham's assertion of the local-ness of his interactions with Puebloan potters is a key attribute of how he attempted to unsettle the structure of settler colonialism. Dillingham rejects an extractive relationship with Native Americans and imagines (at least for himself) that due to his humble position as a potter, the power relations between settler and indigenous Native were more balanced. Whether this was true in reality or from the perspective of the Pueblo, remains unclear, but for Dillingham, approaching the indigenous potter as a fellow maker dedicated to a shared craft and material provided a softening or breaching of structural power relations. Through the local and the personal, Rick Dillingham believed there to be the potential to build a better world. And if his wide acceptance by the families of Pueblo potters can be quantified in a measurable way, it would seem that at least to some extent, this view was shared by his indigenous interlocutors.

[203] Wechsler, 22.

Much has been written about the extractive and destructive behavior of anthropologists, artists, and even art historians in their relationships with the indigenous peoples of the Americas. A key factor in Rick Dillingham's relationship with the Pueblo is a focus on the personal and local—but especially, the longevity and continuity of the relationship. Rick Dillingham remained a present part of Pueblo communities through various facets of his life: potter, art dealer, ceramic repairman, writer, and researcher. He retained his settler colonial identity, but within the intimacy of the personal and local connections forged, there appears to be slippage and opportunities for the unsettling of structural power.

Foster's essay never strays from its anthropocentrism—as the title indicates he is interested in the agency of human actors—the artists. Foster's formation of the category of 'the other' depends upon the acceptance of a Euro-American centric definition of modernity and postmodernism, rather than accounting for multiple modernisms and divergent experiences of temporality and spatiality stemming from the fracturing of colonialism. Foster centers his argument on the actions of artists engaging in a community that has been othered by…In each example Foster provides, the artist comes to the community from the outside, creates an intervention, and leaves. The relational dynamics Foster articulates produce an extractive, temporary relationship between artist and other. The authorial voice always lies with the artist, limiting the ability of the 'other' to speak for themselves. Like the artists he is critiquing, for Foster, the lived experienced of 'the other' is outside of Euro-American modernity—they experience time differently.

The historian Mark Rifkin examines the diverging temporal experiences of Native Americans and their settler counterparts. Rifkin states that native peoples are placed in a double bind within a settler construction of time. They are either always "consigned to the past, or they are inserted into a present defined on non-native terms."[204] Foster's critique of 'the ethnographic turn' imposes a settler-dominated view of time that gives no sovereignty or self-determination to the 'other,' in which the artist is intervening with. Rick Dillingham and other craftspeople who formed long-term, local relationships with indigenous communities, that strove to be more equanimous appear to be a significant strain of art production that continues to be ignored in key discussions on contemporary art—but whose contemporary is it anyways?

Foster's privileging of fine art discounts how craft histories supplement and disrupt the history of contemporary art history. The material, embodied, and corporeal experiences of potters are an ignored, but important part of this history. Rick Dillingham models (or at least imagines) a less extractive, long-term relationship, that maintains a physical presence within the community.

In the Field: Rick Dillingham and Susan Peterson

It would be remiss not to include the potter and educator Susan Peterson (American, 1925-2009) in a discussion of the political and social potential of craft networks and communities to unsettle structural power. Peterson is a celebrated ceramics teacher, artist, educational television star, and author, who, for most of her career was based in Southern

[204] Mark Rifkin, *Beyond Settler Time: Temporal Sovereignty and Indigenous Self-Determination* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 3.

California. Art historian Jenni Sorkin characterizes Peterson as an accomplished, adaptable, and protofeminist potter and key member of the West Coast ceramics avant-garde at midcentury.[205] Of the many books Peterson wrote on ceramics, two focus on influential Pueblo potters: *The Living Tradition of María Martinez* (1977) and *Lucy M. Lewis, American Indian Potter* (1984). Peterson and Dillingham used similar, but at times diverging strategies to unsettle the structural power in place between indigenous potters and their settler counterparts.

In *The Living Tradition of María Martinez*, Peterson adopts two key strategies to great effect: modeling the book's text after oral tradition and a purposeful, considered use of photography. Peterson viewed the book as a collaborative project between herself and the Martinez family. In the text's introduction, Peterson acknowledges the power differential between herself, a white, female settler academically-trained ceramist, and the family—noting the difficulty in fostering an open dialogue with an outsider.

Sorkin credits, in part, Peterson's communal upbringing in an Amish-Mennonite religious community for shaping her understanding of ceramics as a process for both personal experience and community building—one that centered a "…nonhierarchical and participatory {experience]."[206] These values rooted in communalism and championed by centering nonhierarchic divides in ceramics, led Susan Peterson to extensively work noted Pueblo matriarchal potters like Lucy M. Lewis and María Martinez. The communal

[205] Jenni Sorkin, "Women Kitchen Potters: Susan Peterson, 'The Julia Child of Ceramics'", *Live Form: Women, Ceramics, and Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 199-242.
[206] Sorkin, 203-205.

working conditions of the Pueblo potters, led by women, built a set of labor relations familiar to Peterson's own background. Peterson strives to allow the Martinez family to speak for themselves—choosing to publish lightly edited oral histories and prioritize photographic documentation of the people, process, and location. She wrote, "Indians preserve what they have within themselves. Writing down is not their way."[207] The book's structure resists an anthropological lens by emphasizing the subject's contemporaneity; this is a *living* tradition, not historical documentation of some past disappeared people. Peterson's text and photography seek to elevate María's practice to fine art rather than ethnography.

Peterson and Dillingham were successful *because* they were connected to local communities and had *lived experience* of the places of which they wrote. Peterson notes in *The Living Tradition of María Martinez* that her success in the book's production was due to her thirty-year association with the San Ildefonso Pueblo, María, and her family.[208] Peterson came to associate with the Martinez family through the summer workshops held at the University of Southern California's Idyllwild campus. Partially funded by a National Endowment for the Arts grant, these workshops were innovative in presenting Native American makers to a settler audience. After discussions with María and her family about the need to document their process and objects, Peterson agreed to take on the book project in 1974.

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[207] Susan Peterson, *The living tradition of Maria Martinez* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1977), 3.
[208] Peterson, 3.

Peterson emphasizes the labor of the Native American body and its connection to the land. In this photograph, the two human figures are depicted firmly situated within the landscape of Northern New Mexico collecting materials for the Martinez family's ceramic production (fig. 11) The wide angle of the image emphasizes the vastness of the New Mexican landscape, not prioritizing the action of the human figures in the image. This is in stark contrast to the photographs used by Hal Riegger in *Primitive Pottery* discussed in Chapter Two, which favored close-ups and were fully centered on human action. While the photographer documenting the Martinez family's process could have cropped a tighter frame to focus on the actions of the two figures, the framing thoughtfully captures the importance of the land itself and how it dwarfs the human actors, rather than a portrayal that emphasizes the human control over the natural world. For a book that is documenting the artistic process of a celebrated family of makers, the photographs in Susan Peterson's *The Living Tradition of María Martinez* are startling in the thoughtfulness of their approach. While it would make sense to emphasize close shot images of the hands and actions of the Martinez family—which images like these are included—more often than not the book's photographs document full bodies and emphasize the lived closeness to the natural world the Martinez family inhabited. In the Pueblo ceramic tradition, clay is dug near one's home below the mesa the community sits upon. The photographs accentuate the Martinez's family intimate and contemporary closeness with their land and the natural world.

The photographs that Rick Dillingham takes for the expanded *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery* are all portraits. The book's structure is divided by Pueblo, and then

each family within that Pueblo. At the beginning of each section on a new Pueblo, an ariel photograph of the Pueblo and immediately surrounding area is included, followed by an intricate chart tracing the family under discussion's genealogy. After establishing place and lineage, Dillingham leans heavily on close-up, simple portraits of makers from the family paired with images of each makers' objects. The photographs are very natural, with no attempts to enhance the subject, but rather portray them as they are on a day-to-day basis. The portrait of Ethel Youvella (fig. 12), part of the Chapella family, shows an older woman dressed in flowered smock. Each portrait is accompanied by quotes directly from the maker on a variety of subjects: their own practice, relationship to pottery and the land, thoughts on tradition and the market, and mentions of family history. These quotations recreate the level of intimacy within the text that allowed the initial *Seven Families,* in part, to become so successful. Generational tensions across the three, and sometimes four, generations of families are readily apparent—both in dress, embrace of non-traditional cultural elements, and their statements about their work. Kimberly Medina (fig. 13) of the Medina Family in the Zia Pueblo, is dressed in more contemporary clothing and hairstyle. She states an interest in her family's history and traditions; an admiration for how it is continued to be carried on. However, "Now that I'm older and going to school, I want to find out what's out there for me. I make during the summer when I'm not in school and when I need to make some extra money…It's hard for me to decide which direction to go. School is the most important thing for me now."[209] Per Kimberly's statement, within *Fourteen Families*, room has been made for

[209] *Fourteen Families,* 130.

disagreement, disinterest, and an emphasis on other priorities. The quotations paired with the objects and portraits allow the Pueblo individuals to define themselves on their own terms and provide a fascinating overview of the conflicts within Puebloan artistic families in the early-1990s.

Within the text of *The Living Tradition of María Martinez*, Peterson does little to contextualize the social and political struggles of Native peoples in the Southwest over land sovereignty and other contemporary indigenous issues. Whether this was a conscious choice on her part or the Martinez family remains unclear. Though the text of the book may not be so overtly political, Peterson's skilled deployment of the camera subtly speaks these issues. Susan Peterson is a key model for how settler potters can successfully collaborate with indigenous makers. To a great extent she is able to remove her authorial voice from the text, allowing María and her family to define themselves on their own terms.

Like Peterson, Dillingham also works to remove his own voice as an author. Aside from his words in the Foreword to the text and his work constructing and verifying that the genealogies of families are correct, he is not present beyond the continuous credit line of many of the ceramic objects included: Rick Dillingham inventory. The great variety of differing voices providing an overall picture of contemporary Pueblo ceramics allows for a far more of the social and political struggles from within Puebloan communities to leak through the text. While it may not have been a conscious choice on Dillingham's part to have *Fourteen Families* casually reveal contemporary indigenous politics, he does not censor them or choose different, more apolitical quotations, from the

many interviews he conducted. Lack of access to adequate healthcare is alluded to repeatedly. Alma Tahbo, daughter of Grace Chapella, mentions two strokes she experienced in the 1980s and that lack of assistance and medical care severely impacted her ability to work.[210] Rayvin Garcia of the Nampeyo family, mentions an often-repeated conundrum—the necessity of survival and economic pressures of carrying for herself and her children. Garcia states, "I've been at it [pottery making] about nine years…and it's mainly my grandmother [Fannie Polacca] who taught me. I took her painting style, and I don't want to go into other designs. This is the best way of making a living for my family."[211] Garcia's expression of disinterest in exploring her own designs in favor of the tried-and-true methods of her grandmother is motivated by the necessity of staying within the bounds of tourists' expectations in order to facilitate economic security for her family. Creativity is stifled based upon the expectations and desires of the white collector's definition of what defines "Pueblo" ceramics. Iris Youvella Nampeyo casually mentions time spent in a residential school before getting "back to the reservation and [seeing] all the traditional pots" that she would begin to make.[212] The commentary style that Dillingham chooses for *Fourteen Families* allows for far more nuance, intimacy, and glimpses into the living and working conditions of the daily lives of Pueblo potters in the late-twentieth century.

The longevity of the relationships potters like Susan Peterson and Rick Dillingham maintained with their indigenous collaborators, their familiarity, and intimacy

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[210] *Fourteen Families,* 21.
[211] *Fourteen Families*, 38.
[212] *Fourteen Families*, 40.

are crucial for an equitable, sustainable dynamic. Peterson and Dillingham allow the intimacy learned through their chosen material to show them the way to navigate a more meaningful and equal relationship. These potters understood that there is always a push and pull, a give and take. That through an experience like working with the medium of clay, behavioral change could occur and make an individual more grounded and more aware of the world they moved through.

Bones and Intimacy: Dillingham and the Encounter

Upon completing his education at UNM, Rick Dillingham returned to working with his former mentor Hal Riegger at the Claremont Graduate School, Scripps College in Claremont, California. There, Dillingham produced a body of work for his MFA from 1974-1976 that continued to contain many of qualities the young artist associated of Native Southwestern ceramics: an emphasis on exposed raw clay bodies, muted coloration in glazes that were derived from organic colorants and minerals, while continuing to experiment with his broken-pot method. In *Untitled (Vessel)* (1976), the elongated vessel form Dillingham has selected is uncommonly seen in Pueblo ceramics (fig. 14). While the cracks in the object are visible throughout the neck and body, they are far less emphasized than in his later work like the previously mention *Untitled (Globe, 9-79-13)* (1979) (fig. 4). *Untitled (Vessel)* appears far less a reference to archaeology and the object's reconstruction and more an experimentation in raku firing techniques. In Raku, ceramic pots are removed from the kiln while still red hot and placed in a combustible material, such as sawdust or newspaper. This starves the pot of oxygen and creates an unpredictable glazing and surface pattern that are often smokey in appearance.

A different piece, also titled *Untitled (Vessel)* (1976) (fig. 15), was also fired using the raku technique—a process that Hal Riegger was an early pioneer of the American form of the process. Yet, in this *Untitled (Vessel)* (1976), Dillingham has returned more clearly to an archaeological presence in the broken and pieced together vessel. The raku process here, accentuates the differences in each individual shard pieced together to make the vessel whole.

The Seattle-based art critic Matthew Kangas places Rick Dillingham's oeuvre in the mid-1970s firmly within the tradition of other American ceramic vessels and sculptures of the decade that held strong associations with ritual and ceremony.[213] Dillingham's process of breaking the initial bisqued form could very well be understood that way. This photograph from *Pasatiempo*, a Santa Fe-based arts periodical, shows the artists in the midst of breaking a vessel (fig. 16). Held in his hand is a small wooden paddle, which Dillingham described in the accompanying interview was used to gently break apart the form so that the pieces came apart just so. This attention to detail in how to break the pot to best suit the potter's goals suggests that Dillingham's process was less about chance and more intentional. The care and attention required to disassemble and reassemble the object, is an expression of loving attention and intimacy. Kangas views the moment of breakage from a psychoanalytical perspective. He equates the action of breaking as the trauma an infant comes to understand when the mother removes her breast—violently pushing the infant into understanding its own corporeality. For Kangas,

[213] Matthew Kangas, "Rick Dillingham and the Reparative Drive," *American Ceramics* 8 no. 4 (1990), 129.

the reconstruction of the vessel is the artist reenacting the "reformation of the mother."[214] While, Kangas's psychoanalytical view feels at times off kilter for Dillingham, his point could be extended to an the Puebloan understanding of the earth as the physical body of the Great Mother spirit. In this sense, Dillingham's reconstruction becomes an act of care for the repair of a fractured earth.

A level of intimacy and care is deeply prevalent in Dillingham's *Bone Pot* (1975), an unglazed raw earthenware vessel that was fired using the Japanese raku technique (fig. 17). The smoke produced as part of the raku process gives the vessel its varied peachy-pink coloring, splotched through with darker surface texture. Attached to the neck of the vessel are two bones Dillingham was given by a Hopi sheep herder rumored to be his lover.[215]

At this early point in his career, Dillingham was traveling across the Southwest to gather raw materials directly from the earth. He was known to have spent weeks in the desert, with a variety of male lovers. One such relation, the French academic Denis Berthier recalled his own experience in a letter to Dillingham. Berthier asks, "Do you still have your VW van with this special smell in it? A blend of clay and cow-shit-full-of-scorpions-you-make-your-lovers-collect-for-you?"[216] Berthier's cheeky and vibrant comment suggests that for Dillingham, at least, these sojourns into the desert were opportunities to share space with other queer men. Within this context, the rumors

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[214] Kangas, 130.
[215] Unnamed to Rick Dillingham, personal correspondence, 7/20/75. Rick Dillingham Archives, New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe, NM.
[216] Denis Berthier to Rick Dillingham, personal correspondence, 7/20/78. Rick Dillingham Archives, New Mexico Museum of Art.

circulating among Dillingham's friends about the supposed acquisition of *Bone Pot*'s materials takes on an additional layer of meaning. Unlike the other vessels from Dillingham's MFA which incorporated bones, feathers, and other organic materials from the Southwestern deserts, in *Bone Pot*, Dillingham straps the animal bones to the outside of the vessel. The bones remain external from the structure of the pot, rather than making them part of the clay body's form as he does in *Pierced Vessel* (1973) (fig. #). The curvature of the animal bones act as arms, as if they were embracing the body of the vessel or reconvening a moment of intimacy. Dillingham's decision to provide a title for this work is also unusual and suggests a sly euphemism for a sexual encounter, "boning."

Art historian, curator, and friend of Rick Dillingham, MaLin Wilson-Powell recalled the artist's need to physically touch any pot before being able to understand it; that for him, there was a sensuality to understanding the clay body only activated through touch. Upon the potter's receipt of the Distinguished Artist Award (1993) by the Rotary Club of Santa Fe, Wilson-Powell wrote that "…ceramists get their hands dirty…Instead of holding grains or liquids [Dillingham's vessels] suggest another type of encounter. They are storage vessels for seeing new possibilities."[217] *Bone Pot* as an encounter for new possibilities, and how these objects shape the way Dillingham, or the audience shifts to see this possibility. recalls the words of the philosopher Sarah Ahmed quoted in this dissertation's introduction. Ahmed states to be oriented "…is to be be turned toward certain objects, those that help us find our way. These are objects we recognize, so that

[217] MaLin Wilson, "Rick Dillingham: An Appreciation," Santa Fe Rotary Club Award 1993, 11.

when we face them we know which way we are facing…They gather on the ground and they create the ground upon which to gather."[218] CONNECT BETTER

The "encounter" and its intimacy are physically present in *Bone Pot.* Encounters manufacture a connection between beings across space. This slippage and entanglement with the indigenous body resonates across Dillingham's oeuvre.

These muddled connections between queer settler bodies and their indigenous counterparts is further defined by queer theorist Scott Lauria Morgensen's conceptualization of the structure of queer settler colonialism. In his book, *Spaces Between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization* (2011), Morgensen writes that, "…modern queer subjects, cultures, and politics…[came] into existence when the heteropatriarchal advancement of white settlers appears to vanquish sexual primitivity," which white settlers quickly co-opted as their own politics and history.[219] Morgensen argues that the rise of the white settler state redefined embodiment, desire, and kinship as the colonial heteropatriarchy eliminated Native culture and controlled racialized populations.

Within the structure of settler colonialism, non-Native and Native queer identities produced an intimacy with one another formed through the need to tell different kinds of stories and explore alternate means of embodiment outside the structure. For non-Native queer settlers like Rick Dillingham, this intimacy can lead to the appropriation of Native cultural traditions as a means of achieving sexual liberation. The cultural and material

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[218] *Queer Phenomenology*, 3.
[219] *Spaces Between Us*, 1-2.

knowledge of the land Dillingham gained through his relationships with Puebloan matriarchs and queer Natives, provided the means for escaping not only the geography of heteronormative morality by retreating into the desert landscape away from prying eyes, but also the conditions for him to form a queer identity outside the heteropatriarchal structure of settler colonialism, but nevertheless retained its own queered version. Morgensen suggests that the indigeneity the structure of settler colonialism must continually erase in order to maintain power can be recalled by "…modern non-Natives as a relationship to Native culture and land that might reconcile them to inheriting conquest."[220] This problematizes Dillingham's ability to truly manifest decolonization as it shrugs off the historical trauma of colonization and reproduces an alternative version of the framework for the settler body politic. To move toward a decolonial impulse in his craft, Dillingham would need to deconstruct the framework of his queer settler identity by reorienting himself. A monumental (and perhaps impossible) task to ask of anyone. While Rick Dillingham's oeuvre and scholarly work my unsettle settler colonialism, it does not and cannot deconstruct it. Ultimately, while he was at once rejected from the heteropatriarchal settler hierarchy due to his sexuality, he simultaneously benefits from that hierarchy in his relationship to indigenous makers.

The Global Potter

Rick Dillingham is among a cadre of ceramists in the American West, including Ralph Bacerra and Adrian Saxe, who self-identified as a 'global potter.' Together, they mark a

[220] *Spaces Between Us,* 2-3.

break in the history of the vessel tradition as it embraces postmodern impulses and draws from a variety of cultures, time periods, and methods of making. In a 1981 interview with *Artlines*, Dillingham recalled the criticism that he appropriated his technique from Native American peoples. He said, "in retrospect, it's kind of funny. A lot of people thought, 'Oh, he's ripping off the Indians. He's polishing his pots and firing outside' and all that kind of stuff, but there were Anglos doing that twenty years before me. It's a method. Just because someone works in stoneware or porcelain doesn't mean they're ripping off the Japanese. It's purely a method."[221] Dillingham's comparison of the materiality of porcelain and stoneware to Native American artistic methods lack nuance. Stoneware and porcelain are clay bodies, or the actual mixture of clay and minerals that compose the clay's materiality. Porcelain is the purest form of clay, composed primarily of kaolin, stoneware contains more impurities particularly iron, whereas earthenware (Dillingham's clay body of choice) contains the most impurities. The mineral composition necessary to create porcelain or stoneware can be found on most continents, though the knowledge for doing so was a closely guarded secret and took Western cultures centuries to master. The method Dillingham is employing exists within a power structure of settler colonizer and indigenous colonized.

Dillingham subscribed to a view of *world* culture—ceramics are a timeless practice and its processes, materials, and objects belonged to no one group, but rather the whole of the humanity. The idealism of this belief is misguided. He recycles, references,

[221] "Rick Dillingham: Reassembled Raku," *Artlines* vol. 2 no. 11 (November/December 1981), 6-7.

and regurgitates indigenous practices, but in doing so they are marked as different and radical due to his whiteness. While Rick acknowledges that the Puebloan people were pivotal to the development of his practice, he is uncritical of the ramifications of adopting their practices for himself. In the foreword to *Fourteen Families* Dillingham expands upon his philosophy of his chosen material, saying,"…clay, Mother Earth, is the vehicle that conveys potters' souls and is the glue that binds deep and lasting friendships. It is a tangible spiritual connection to life itself, and is not to be taken lightly. The clay is a great teacher, and many potters find joy in molding Mother Earth, listening to what She has to say, and attaining a center of peace while working. I have been very fortunate to know as many potters as I have, both Anglo and Native American. We all share common ground."[222] This is the danger of clay. As a material it has been relevant to nearly every human culture since before the advent of writing. Stating that "We all share common ground," is poetic, noble, and speaks to the very real and awesome powers of this material, which Dillingham makes clear are "…not to be taken lightly."[223] This nobility lacks nuance, because we simply do not all share common ground; violent histories of colonization and extraction (which continue today) impact some while benefiting others. Common ground is aspirational and a worthy pursuit, but the political and social histories of that ground must be acknowledged. In order to harness the full potential of the medium, potters much be in touch with the depth of the political, cultural, and social

[222] Rick Dillingham, "Foreward," *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press,1994), 10.
[223] *Fourteen Families*, 10.

histories of their materials. Without doing so, it becomes too easy to flatten the diversity of cultural tradition and not hold accountable the violent histories of settler colonialism.

Return to Santa Fe

Dillingham consciously attempted to find ways to give back to the Indigenous peoples who had given him so much and allowed him to bolster his career and provide for his economic success. Following graduation from the Claremont Graduate School with his MFA, Rick Dillingham returned to Santa Fe, New Mexico permanently. His interest and expertise in not only ceramics, but Native American clay practices of the Southwest formed a trajectory that intertwined artist, gallery owner, curator, lecturer, and writer. Shortly after arriving in Santa Fe, Dillingham began working for a new Native American arts gallery owned by Ray Dewey, a prominent Santa Fe arts dealer and dealer in non-Western art. He remained with Dewey until opening his own venue, the Mudd-Carr Gallery, which he owned and operated for fourteen years.

Little is known about the Mudd-Carr Gallery's day-to-day operations as the gallery's records appear to not have survived to Dillingham's archive. However, through provenance research of contemporary Native American ceramics at major museums across the United States, Dillingham had a large impact on collecting habits of influential tastemakers and institutions. *Plate* (1988) is an unusual vessel depicting a repeating rabbit figure on a black background was personally commissioned by Rick Dillingham from the Acoma Pueblo potter Emma Lewis-Mitchell, before being acquired by the collectors David L. Stearman and Bernice Stearman, who in turn donated it to the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in 2008(fig. 18). *Plate* is one of at

least six objects in the NMAI's collection that passed through Dillingham's hands. While he certainly profited from selling these pieces, it is clear from the objects in NMAI's collection that Dillingham prioritized selling the works of both the families he had built networks with and younger, less well-known indigenous artists.

Once established financially as an artist, Dillingham used a significant portion of his wealth to assemble the largest and most complete collections of Mojave art. The Dillingham Collection today resides in the now indigenous-led institution, the Indian Arts Research Center at the School of Advanced Research in Santa Fe. The continued friendship Rick Dillingham built with the Mohave artist Elmer Gates was a prominent influence on Dillingham's dedication to the preservation of Mohave culture. Gates, deeply involved in the preservation and revitalization of the Mohave language through researchers at the University of Arizona and University of California, Berkeley, may have seen his assistance in encouraging the growth of Dillingham's Mohave collection as another facet of Gates's dedication to the preservation of his own culture.

Dillingham valued the lessons he learned from his interactions with Puebloan potters. He was infuriated by artists who he believed were inauthentic with their exchanges with the indigenous cultures of the Southwest. In an interview with *Artlines Magazine* in 1981, Dillingham observed of the Santa Fe art scene's relationship to the authenticity and honesty he found in Pueblo ceramics: "The problem in this town is that a lot of artists absorb but don't assimilate and try to sell it. I find most of this town vulgar because of that…They confuse art with object."[224] This observation reflections

[224] *Artlines*, 7.

Dillingham's deeply held position that an authentic, honest, and humble position is required to achieve the possibilities of a higher, more meaningful experience of feeling the presence of the earth.

It might not be possible to fully understand how Native potters understood and viewed Dillingham and his actions, on their own terms and in their own words. One relationship that remained central to him throughout his life was with the celebrated San Ildefonso Pueblo potter María Martinez (San Ildefonso Pueblo, 1887-1980). Dillingham enjoyed a robust relationship with the legendary Pueblo potter renowned throughout the world for her black-on-black ceramic style. In this treasured photograph (fig. 19) María Martinez is photographed holding one of Rick Dillingham's *Gas Can* vessels, a gift from the artist himself. Taken in the late-1970s, during the last years prior to her death, the photo is encased in a silver frame and stamped and etched with a beautiful fan-like design. It remained one of Rick Dillingham's most treasured personal objects, bequeathed to the New Mexico Museum of Art upon his death. Upon María's death, Rick Dillingham was the only non-Native individual allowed at her funeral.[225] Funerary rites are amongst the most sacred of all rituals to the Pueblo people. Outsiders are not permitted within that sacred space and the knowledge of what occurs are closely guarded. That Rick Dillingham was invited speaks volumes of how María and the San Ildefonso Pueblo viewed him. He was twenty-eight years old when María died and referred to this allowance as "the greatest honor of [his] life."[226]

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[225] *Artlines*, 26.
[226] Correspondence, Rick Dillingham to Hal Riegger, 10/14/1992. Rick Dillingham Archives, New Mexico Museum of Art. Santa Fe, NM.

Shifting Ground, Changing Landscapes: The Problem of Time

In the twenty years since Rick Dillingham produced the exhibition *Seven Families in Pueblo Pottery*, the landscape for the collection of contemporary Native ceramics, attitudes about innovation and tradition, and the field of ceramic art in the wider Americas had shifted. The Pueblo art market in the early-1990s remained non-Native collectors, however, since the 1970s, collectors increasingly sought out specific pieces that they commissioned from potters to fill out their collections.[227] To meet the needs of this expanding market and continue to support themselves financially, Puebloan potters were faced with the choice of adapting to ceramic kiln technology to save time and meet increased demand. Some potters resented the pressures of the market as it cut into their individual creativity to meet collector expectations of what "Pueblo" ceramics looked like. Other, usually younger artists, adapted to electric kilns and some commercial materials to meet the needs of the market and gained greater economic success.

The tension between tradition and progress in Pueblo culture in the last decades of the twentieth century were not new, but instead a recurring theme within Native American cultures since colonization. The expression of these tensions are quite evident within Dillingham's expanded book *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery*. In the Foreword to the text, he writes of how the Tafoya family, members of the Santa Clara Pueblo and an original family from the *Seven Families* exhibit, chose not to participate in the new publication "…in protest of today's trend toward kiln-fired pottery and the

[227] *Fourteen Families in Pueblo Pottery*, 6-9.

practice of some potters misrepresenting nontraditional pottery to the buyer."[228] While Dillingham calls this decision "noble," he spends several paragraphs of the brief Foreword gently critiquing this choice. He provides a detailed history for how Pueblo potters, including those from the Santa Clara Pueblo, have constantly reinvented tradition to adapt to the needs of the market. Commercialism, and its importance to the furtherance of Pueblo ceramics (and its necessity for economically supporting many Pueblo communities), is one of Dillingham's key concerns in the 1994 text. He states that as "commercialism becomes more prevalent in these villages, styles and tastes may change…[the] Pueblo still keeps old stylistic traditions alive, but the electric kiln has all but supplanted the traditional outdoor sheep-manure firing."[229] While Dillingham has identified a key tension as the Pueblo debated adapting to modern ceramic technologies, his own interviews for *Fourteen Families* undermine his statements. Far more potters within the text state they are interested in maintaining the traditional ways of making, than adopting new methods; those that do express interest, tend to be from the youngest generations. Ultimately, while Dillingham makes clear his opinion on which side the Pueblo should move toward, he makes clear that there is room for both kinds of making within the larger landscape of Pueblo pottery.

The fluctuation between "tradition" and "progress" to meet demands of a capitalist market altered the working conditions of Rick Dillingham's own work. The vessels he produced in the early- to mid-1970s, including *Untitled (Bowl, 5-72-1)* (1972)

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[228] *Fourteen Families,* 9.
[229] *Fourteen Families*, 10.

and *Bone Pot* (1975), used materials Dillingham gathered directly from Southwestern deserts, were fired using outdoor in a pit with traditional fuel sources, and relied on local minerals and organic matter for surface decoration. By the early-1980s, demand for Rick Dillingham's work had increased to the extent that he could no longer keep up without sacrificing the labor-intensive processes of gathering raw materials and firing outdoors. As seen in this portrait of Dillingham in his studio, he too bought an electric kiln (fig. 20). The embrace of advanced ceramic technology is most prevalent in his *Globe* series (1974-1994), the styles in which he became most well-known for came after his adoption of modern firing techniques.

In the 1980s, Dillingham embraced gold, silver, and copper-leafing on his *Globes* and very notably, the pieced together shards became more painterly and colorful. In *Large Globe* (1988) the vessel looks far less a reference to an archaeological past, but rather a carefully pieced together colorful expression of decoration and glazing; the breaking and remaking still alluring and centered within the piece's construction. Art writer Jan Adlmann's 1990 catalog essay for Rick Dillingham's exhibition at the Linda Durham Gallery in Santa Fe pushes the understanding of the temporality of Dillingham's vessels away from the archaeological past. She argues that the fractured vessels of the potter's *Globes* are a nod to time, but it is process, not archaeology. For Adlmann, the forms explore the process of making—and remaking—the body of the earth. Though Adlmann does not pursue this lens of critical inquiry further, a consideration of the object less of an archaeological totem, and more an exploration of process is an important development. Process suggests continued action, that even in its static form, *Large Globe*

continues to be made and unmade. Each time the eye traces a crack along the surface of the body of the pot, the mind deconstructs the object; re-imagining the initial breakage and the circumstances that led to it, the handling and reassembly of the shards, and finally the decoration of the reconstructed objects surface.

Garth Clark—the influential ceramic gallerist and dealer whose monumental impact on American ceramics influenced everything from academic writing to museum acquisitions and taste-making—argued that Dillingham's "pots stand as a rebuke to the urge for perfection" found throughout indigenous ceramics.[230] Whereas native potters of the Southwest were weighted down by centuries of tradition and refinement, Dillingham's work was afforded the freedom to push boundaries, deconstruct the vessel, and appropriate an indigenous cosmos, rituals, and techniques for an Anglo-American audience. According to Clark, Dillingham's legacy was succeeding where the indigenous potter could not tread. This interpretation reflects a deeply held colonialist bias and disregards the innovation and experimentation on the part of Native American potters. While celebrating Dillingham, Clark cannot extend agency to indigenous actors the control of how their own temporality is to be perceived, instead they are stuck always playing their assigned role. Clark's analysis also places Dillingham in the role of a savior figure, picking up the mantel that indigenous ceramics could no longer carry weighted down by their own history.

[230] Garth Clark, "A Symphony of Shards," (lecture, Sculpture Objects Functional Art + Design Conference, 1994).

To recall Mathew Kangas argument, that Dillingham's loving reconstruction becomes an act of care and its implications for a fractured earth, arguably, objects like *Untitled (Globe 2-80-?)*, (1980) could be considered to render visible the spatial and temporal politics of settler colonialism in the American Southwest. However, rather than a dismal reflection of violence, I find Dillingham's *Globes* to be rather hopeful. They reflect Dillingham's understanding of the interconnectedness of all things. The reassembling of broken archaeological shards implies that the culture which created the shards has disappeared. Dillingham's life and work reflect too great of an awareness of the presentness of Indigenous cultures to relegate them to a lost, forgotten history. Instead, I believe the *Globes* are a fresh response to the historical trauma of settler colonial violence—the breakage does not mean something is over, but can be the beginning of something new. The act of breaking acknowledges the historical violence against both indigenous peoples and the environment caused, in part, by a fundamental differing epistemology of the land as a resource to be exploited. The repair of the vessel becomes an attempt to reimagine an alternative future, a path forward for settlers and indigenous bodies alike.

It is not coincidental that Rick Dillingham titled a major body of his work with the term 'globes.' The etymology of the word 'globe' evolved in the late-fourteenth century from the Latin words *globus*, meaning a spherical mass, and the term *glebe*, meaning soil of the earth.[231] For Dillingham, the form of the globe maps a physical

[231] "Globe," Oxford English Dictionary. Accessed 1/20/2022. https://www-oed-com.proxy.library.ucsb.edu:9443/view/Entry/78845#eid2985916

geography of a place, real or imagined. I contend that Dillingham's objects extend the conversation beyond the globular form. The *Globes* manifest a growing political awareness of the impact of settler colonialism, extractive capitalism, and the human involvement in the violent fracturing of the earth. Historically, Globes have been tools of colonization which mark, characterize, and claim. They map the way for the extraction of value and pave over the indigenous presence and history of a land settled with the design of erasing them fully.

Dillingham's *Globes* express a need to reimagine a future for the collective of humanity and manufacture a relationality with the earth and land upon which individuals live. They ask the viewer to reorient their own relationship with the land and its history. Every crack is an event, an indexical record of the physical life of the object. Typically, cracks are anathema to the vessel tradition. They render the object void of its utility and are a negation of the whole. Each crack is an event. Events take place. They bear meaning in relation to the things around them.

Dillingham's fragmentation is fundamentally different from the Japanese practice of *kintsugi,* or the Japanese method for repairing broken ceramics with a special lacquer mixed with gold, silver, or platinum. This tradition incorporates principles of Zen Buddhism, which seeks to embrace the imperfection. Dillingham does not elevate the act of repair to incorporate precious metals, but rather chooses a mundane material, glue, as the reparative agent.

Toward the end of his life Dillingham lamented that at a recent opening for a gallery show in Santa Fe, the audience was no longer willing to pick up his *Globes*,

believing them to be too fragile and too expensive should they falter and break. For Dillingham, the globular object was not fully completed until it was experienced through touch. Through an active haptic engagement the holder becomes connected—to Dillingham, the ground from which the materials came. This manufactures an interconnected ecosystem of the art object—cracks become points of connection and possibility, but also the fractured tensions of capitalist extraction and settler colonial violence in the Southwest. Through touch, Dillingham's *Globes* aim to generate dialogue, awareness, and even healing.

Conclusion

In the August 1991 *Architectural Digest* article "Desert Textures: An Austere Backdrop for Art and Nature in California," the design critic Michael Webb examines the interior of a modern stone and stucco home the interior designer Steven Chase created for a client near Palm Springs, California. Chase was tasked with working with the client's extensive art collection to fashion a space that seamlessly united the art with the rugged scale and beauty of the surrounding Palm-Indio Desert. In the article's titular photograph, the photographer Mary E. Nichols makes a patchwork bowl by Rick Dillingham the central focus of the image (fig. 23).

Rick Dillingham's patchwork bowl mediates the viewer's experience of nature. It sits centered on a black marble coffee table against the majestic backdrop of the Palm-Indio Desert—fully present within the space through the room's glass wall. The bowl does not compete with the scale and majesty of the Santa Rosa Mountains, but rather complements them. Using pinks, gold, green, brown, and luster glazes, the bowl

resonates with the temporal shifts of the landscape surrounding the home. Nichols's photograph captures what I have argued was a central goal for Rick Dillingham's ceramic vessels: to generate an awareness of the interconnected system that encompasses humans, the natural environment, and all things—organic and inorganic.

Like the *Globe* series, the bowl contains the signature cracks for which Dillingham was celebrated. Arguably, the bowl successfully produces a heightened awareness of the connection between the human and the natural world—or a *reorientation* of the viewer—without the further grounding in the embedded history of the earth from which it came the vessel's radical political potential to speak to the structures of settler colonialism and imagine new paths forward flickers out of sight. Such is the menace of the structure of settler colonialism. It is ingrained in American society to the point that it is designed to be invisible. Dillingham's hope that the fractured cracked object would be a 'fresh response to history' and allow for the reimagination of our collective future, settler and indigenous alike, depends upon an awareness of the past in order to remake the future. Ultimately, Dillingham's inability to reorient *himself* in deconstructing his own queer settler colonialism, is in my view what stood in the way of achieving his goals. He acquired what he needed from Indigenous potters, but nonetheless wound up integrating their methods into his own queered framework, rather than destroying the framework itself.

Scholars of settler colonialism have argued that unlike the structure of colonialism, a theoretical model of the decolonization of a settler colonial power structure has not been fully imagined. I am not suggesting that American ceramists must stop

making objects from materials of the land or finding ways through their artistic practices to connect with their natural environment. The deconstruction of a settler colonial framework might offer opportunities for Indigenous making, lifeways, and land stewardship to take the fore. This would offer a path forward that is not governed by the extractive capitalism that characterizes modern settler colonialism. Ceramics and clay are uniquely suited to do just that. Decolonization and the undoing of the violence of settler colonialism is a messy and jumbled affair. Rick Dillingham's life demonstrates how tangled up in one another settlers and indigenous peoples can be—for better or worse.

Dillingham's oeuvre points to specific steps required to attempt a decolonization of our collective inheritance of conquest. Americans must become more fully aware of their identity as the descendants of settlers. As a nation (and world), the collective trauma created through the history of American imperialism in the American West (and going back to the beginning of genocide in the Americas from the moment of European colonization) and its continued, ongoing impact on the Native peoples of this continent must be grappled with. An understanding of the interconnected nature of all things and that humans are not a privileged species within that network—an epistemological view of the Earth that the indigenous peoples of the Americas well understood prior to European colonization—must be rekindled if our species is to grapple with damaging effects of the Anthropocene and late-stage capitalism. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change—the first global treaty explicitly created to address and combat climate

change—was signed and ratified in 1992.[232] I wonder, if Dillingham had not died two years later and lived to see the acceleration of neglect of the planet in the 1990s through the early twenty-first century, would he have continued to make globes? Would the cracks have taken on new meaning? Ultimately, Rick Dillingham's labor with clay was an exercise in hope. His *Globes* are a dream for a better, more just world that could reconcile its history of violence and exploitation. A world that could repair itself by turning to the local, reconcile with its history, and find redemption—a path toward healing.

Rick Dillingham's *Globe* series are vessels that provide an opportunity to reimagine an alternative collective future. They are by no means a neat and tidy blueprint for how ceramics can speak to the deconstruction of vast political structures that are ingrained in the very fabric of the United States. The *Globes* fall short in failing to recognize the necessity of indigenous peoples defining themselves on their own terms. Greater control and say over the utilization of the natural resources of the land by Indigenous peoples is needed to achieve Indigenous sovereignty.

[232] Lindsay Maizland, "Global Climate Agreements: Successes and Failures," Council on Foreign Relations, updated November 4, 2022, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/paris-global-climate-change-agreements.

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