



Above: *Stack #2*, 2004, porcelain, 11.5" h x 7.5" w x 7.5" l
Right: *Stack #5*, 2004, porcelain, 11" h x 7.5" w x 7.5" l
Cover: *Stack #8*, 2004, porcelain, 10.5" h x 7.5" w x 7.5" l



THE CLAY
STUDIO

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Benjamin Schulman: *Subtraction by Addition*



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The Evelyn Shapiro Foundation is proud to sponsor this exhibition for Benjamin Schulman, the thirteenth recipient of our ceramics grant at The Clay Studio. Both credit and thanks go to the jury panel that selected him: Marlin Miller, Ken Vavrek, and Julie York. My appreciation and thanks also extend to Nick Kripal who served as mentor to Benji regarding artistic and career issues. I am continually grateful to the staff at The Clay Studio, especially Amy Sarner Williams, Executive Director and Jeff Guido, Artistic Director, for their support and for the collegial, welcoming atmosphere provided for our Fellow during his tenure. I express my heartfelt thanks to The Board of Directors and to the Members for their contribution to our grant program.

Stanley H. Shapiro
President

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Marlin Miller
Ken Vavrek
Julie York



SUBTRACTION BY ADDITION

Subtraction by Addition is the synthesis of my interest in functional objects and sculpture.

After spending the majority of my career as a ceramic sculptor and installation artist, I have returned to the processes and techniques of my first introduction to clay, throwing functional pots. Recently, I was given the opportunity to spend a year as a Visiting Professor at Kyung Hee University, in Suwon, South Korea. Immersing myself in a foreign culture with a rich history of ceramic art allowed me to find my own voice within the context of functional pottery. This did not come through the many visits to museums with vast collections of historical ceramics, but from experiencing everyday life in Korea. It also came from understanding the significance of ceramic objects as both a work of art and as an integral functioning part of Korean culture.

These ideas first began one night while eating dinner at a traditional Korean restaurant with some professors and students. I began to notice how the empty dishes were stacked in the hands of the waitress as she took them back to the kitchen. I saw a formal beauty in the simplicity of an unconscious process. Sitting down at a traditional meal in Korea entails eating many dishes filled with different types of Kim-Chi, vegetables, fish, and meats that are served for the entire table to share. The food does not stop coming from the kitchen until every little space on the table is occupied. Individuals aren't given a plate of their own, just a bowl of rice and some chopsticks. As a group you sit on the floor with comfortable pillows, talking, drinking, and eating from the many different dishes on the table.

Although the experience of eating a Korean meal was inspiring, it was still the stacks of dishes that held my attention. I couldn't stop thinking about how harmoniously, but not perfectly, the plates were stacked when taken away. I began seeing these stacks as a metaphor representing the ritual of feasting, sharing, and communicating. In retrospect, I realize why this piqued my interest. I now see how this new body of work addresses the same ideas of community and social awareness that have been prevalent in my sculptural/installation work. Through the random ambiguity of the stacks, I discovered new and interesting ways of transcending objects of everyday life to speak of community and social interaction.

Benjamin Schulman

Education

1999 Tyler School of Art of Temple University, M.F.A. /Ceramics
1996 The Pennsylvania State University, B.F.A. /Ceramics

Awards

2003 Evelyn Shapiro Foundation Fellowship, The Clay Studio, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, S.O.S. Grant
2001 American Craft Council, Emerging Artist Grant
Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, S.O.S. Grant
2000 Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, Artist Grant

Solo Exhibitions

2004 *Subtraction by Addition*, The Clay Studio, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
2003 *Domestic Life*, Soemi Art Gallery, Seoul, South Korea
2002 *Fecund*, Delaware Center for Contemporary Arts, Wilmington, Delaware
Fecund, Gallery X, New York City
2001 *Fecund*, Archie Bray Foundation Warehouse Gallery, Helena, Montana

Selected Exhibitions

2005 *School's Out* (NCECA 2005), The Catonsville Art Gallery, Baltimore, Maryland
The Clay Studio: Thirty Years (NCECA 2005), School 33 Art Center, Baltimore, Maryland
The Clay Studio 30 Years of Excellence, The Clay Studio, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
2004 *Collaborations in Clay II*, Wexler Gallery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Feats of Clay XVII, Lincoln Arts, Lincoln, California
The Clay Studio Resident Artist Exhibition, Lee Gallery, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina
Rowan Faculty Exhibition, Rowan University, Glassboro, New Jersey
San Angelo National Ceramic Competition, Arts Museum, San Angelo, Texas
Six-Inch Clay: A National Ceramic Exhibition, Ronald Barr Gallery, New Albany, Indiana
Pots to Poodles, Appalachian Center for the Crafts Gallery, Smithville, Tennessee
2003 *Collaborations in Clay*, Wexler Gallery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
2002 *Art & Design + Time = ?*, Kyung Hee University, Suwon, South Korea
A Gathering of Peers: Robert Winokur and Graduates of Tyler School of Art, The Clay Studio, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
2001 *Archie Bray Foundation*, SOFA, Chicago, Illinois

Collections

Kyung Hee University, Suwon, South Korea
The Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts, Helena, Montana

Far Left: *Stack #7*, 2004, porcelain, 18.5" h x 7" w x 7" l
Left: *Stack #10*, 2004, porcelain, 4" h x 19" w x 6" l
Above: *Stack #4*, 2004, porcelain, 8.5" h x 7" w x 7" l



Special thanks to:

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