

2014-2015 FELLOWSHIPS AT THE ARCHIE BRAY FOUNDATION

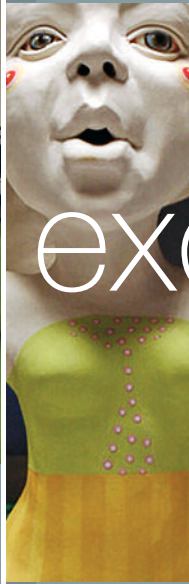
ceramic excellence



Heesoo Lee
Speyer Fellow



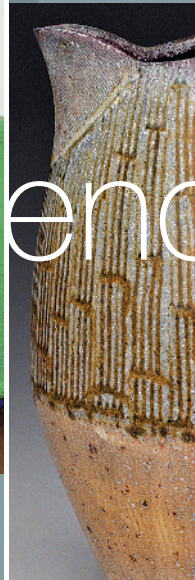
Brooks Oliver
MJD Fellow



Kyungmin Park
Matsutani Fellow



John Souter
Taunt Fellow



Bill Wilkey
Joan Lincoln Fellow

THE ARCHIE BRAY FOUNDATION FOR THE CERAMIC ARTS

has always been an ongoing experiment, a place and experience with no artistic boundaries. The extensive facilities, the freedom to explore and the creative exchange that occurs within the community of resident artists provide a profound opportunity for artistic growth, both for individual artists and for the field of ceramics.

To further encourage the Bray “experiment,” Robert and Suzanne Taunt established the Taunt Fellowship in 1998. Inspired by the Taunts’ vision and generosity, others have since established additional awards, including the Myhre Fellowship in 1999 and 2000, the Lilian Fellowship in 2001, the Matsutani Fellowship in 2006, the MJD Fellowship in 2007, the Anonymous and Speyer Fellowships in 2011, the Windgate Fellowships in 2012 and the Lillstreet Art Center Fellowship in 2014. Most recently, the Joan Lincoln Fellowship (awarded since 2004) was fully endowed in 2014. Each fellowship provides \$5,000 and a one-year residency to a ceramic artist who demonstrates exceptional merit and promise, allowing them to focus more completely on producing and exhibiting a significant body of work during their fellowship year.

Individuals wishing to establish a fellowship at the Archie Bray Foundation are encouraged to contact Resident Artist Director Steven Young Lee.

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INTRODUCTION

Annually, the Archie Bray Foundation invites a critic to spend time at the Bray—to meet with the artists, experience the Bray’s unique environment and develop essays for the fellowship exhibition catalogue. This year, the residency was awarded to Jill Foote-Hutton. Foote-Hutton received her MFA in ceramics from the University of Mississippi, Oxford, in 2003 and her BFA in sculpture from Webster University, St. Louis, in 1994. She is actively engaged in critical dialogue and observations and her writings have been published in *Ceramics Monthly* and *Studio Potter Magazine*. Along with her writing, Foote-Hutton continues to create and exhibit her own artwork nationally.

On a Saturday afternoon in early May, the wind pours over every plane, seeking nooks, crannies and holes to whistle through. Although sometimes, it seems the wind screams more than it whistles. A cargo train sounds off. It is a punctuated alto challenging the breathy voice swirling over the grounds. I cannot help but draw parallels, listening to the immediacy of nature and the distance of industry. The Bray is a place where industry has become deified. The beehive kilns are temples, but nature comes to take them back. The top of the gazebo echoes the tip of the old elevator tower. One structure is in disrepair, a sacred relic. The other is maintained as a center point of fellowship. The grounds resonate with near and distant ghosts.

Isn’t it ironic that, according to legend, Archie Bray Sr. was harshly pressed into the profession of ceramic engineer by his father, Charles Bray?¹ Archie wasn’t allowed to follow his inclinations toward medicine. One generation enforced its will upon the other.

Contrary to that inauspicious beginning, the Bray is now known as a place where makers can rest assured they *will* be supported in the pursuit of their vision. This fine place to work persisted because Archie Sr. found a way, in spite of adversity, to honor his passion in service to art and future generations of makers. And he issued it forth with a spirit of joy, “... may it always be a delight to turn to—to walk inside the Pottery and leave outside somewhere—outside the big gate—uptown—anywhere—the cares of every day. Each time we walk in the door to walk into a place of art—of simple things not problems, good people, lovely people all tuned to the right spirit. That somewhere through it all will permeate a beautiful spirit. ...”²

—Jill Foote-Hutton
www.whistlepigtales.com

¹ Held, Peter, Rick Newby, and Chere Jiusto. *A Ceramic Continuum: Fifty Years of the Archie Bray Influence*. Helena, MT: Holter Museum of Art, 2001. Print. p. 19

² *ibid*, p. 22...

Heesoo Lee

SPEYER FELLOW

Upon the surface of an enclosed cylinder, a girl peeks out from behind a watchful aspen. The forest is impossibly deep and the world we observe invokes a feeling similar to the films of Hayao Miyazaki. Although, Heesoo Lee doesn't intend to direct us as much as the renowned animator. Her narratives are exquisite suggestions of a common experience. The girl is on the brink of coming out into the open or she is on the brink of disappearing into the forest.

What has been restricted to small cylinders and vases now blooms out beyond the surface of the vessel, spilling across the floor as a field of poppies. Lee's illustrations are entering a new dimension. Literally.

This is what the time at the Bray has provided her. The residency is holding space for her to stretch a flat drawing of a stand of aspens beyond the lip of the cylinder. It is holding space for her to push a cylinder beyond the wheel and beyond the round, creating a voluminous mass of a wave. Her fingertips push the white clay with the same immediacy she employs in a brushstroke, delivering an homage to the awesome feeling of nature tumbling over a population with raw force. Within the creative space of

this fellowship, Lee is stretching out her illustrational prowess, but she is also allowing herself to take more risks in her collaborative relationship with clay.

She sits at the wheel throwing a cylinder, trying to get her finger muscles back in shape. This is something she says she has to do after spending an extended period of time handbuilding. "If I don't, then you can see my hand shaking in the final form of the larger pieces."

Lee talks about the gift of humility clay delivers to a maker. To understand what she means about humility, it is useful to know the contrast of pride she guards against. Trained extensively as an illustrator at E Hwa University in Seoul, South



Korea, and then building on those skills, Lee learned to translate paint into glaze as she worked through the night, apprenticing for Julia Kirillova. Kirillova creates ornate Russian tea sets, the perfect incubator to become familiar with saturation levels and other potentials of underglaze. The concentrated time—her thousand hours of repetition—shows in her masterful rendering of a densely populated cityscape, a cherry blossom tree pushing forward through saturated color, and the expressive anthropomorphism of the multiple eyes of an aspen. Illustration offers an opportunity to display domination through skill. Conversely, the intrinsically ceramic materials she traffics in require, at one time or another, a release. She has to abandon any pride in favor of vitrified permanence. Once an object is released into the kiln chamber, all of her expertly rendered illustrations are at the mercy of the process. It is a balance she enjoys. It grounds her.

And, as balance and nature ground Lee, she offers the same to us. She invites us to walk among poppies.



Observe, 2015,
porcelain, underglaze,
22" x 4"x 4"



Poppy Bowls, 2015,
porcelain, underglaze,
sizes vary



Brooks Oliver

MJD FELLOW

He taught himself to use Rhino3D, a computer-aided design software application, to explore the boundaries of form. The technology enables a maker to take a sketch out of their imagination and turn it 360° on any axis. It allows consideration of an improbable curve; and a curve, when repeated, becomes a volume.

Brooks Oliver is inspired by the redirection of magic. He enjoys the comfort an audience finds when they are presented with a familiar thing, as much as he enjoys blinding them with an unexpected action.

Meanwhile, Oliver is motivated by Garth Clark, Ron Gilad and Anish Kapoor, respectively, they are: a ceramic collector and provocateur, a designer and a sculptor.

Oliver actively agrees with Clark—craft and design must evolve an equitable merger for future success. To wit, he is investing his time and energy into the development of a design firm that advocates for artists' vision in quality and commerce. With the mind of an engineer, Oliver is prime to take on the task. His current work has technical troubleshooting embedded in the process. He endeavors to refine production, developing the most efficient and appropriate clay

Stem Vase, 2015,
cast porcelain,
10" x 6" x 6"

Fruit Loop, 2015,
cast and altered porcelain,
4" x 24" x 5"

bodies, glazes and casting methods. For his personal work, this could mean refining a casting slip flecked with colorful bits of grog. If the flecks are too large, it mimics linoleum and this is undesirable to him; so he slowly grinds them to a smaller gauge. It is a laborious process, the grinding, but this is just another puzzle to solve.

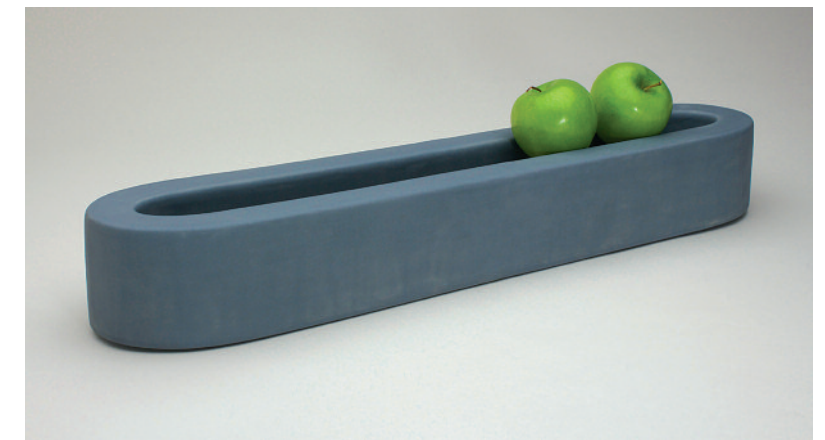
In Gilad he found a model that isolated the necessary components of containment and provided new definitions for vase and bowl: surface and borders. Looking at making through this lens seems to enhance his ability to push the dynamism of the vessel. If a bowl only needs a surface and borders, does the maker have to provide both? If the border is a visual and physical line, what happens when the weight of that line is increased? We see the result in the substantial corral provided by his "Fruit Loop."

He saw a lodestar of joyous, mesmerizing ambiguity in Kapoor's "Cloud Gate," a monumental stainless-steel sculpture in the



heart of downtown Chicago. The highly reflective form, inspired by mercury, runs parallel to intentions Oliver holds for his own work. And it is evident in the forms he creates—there is zero malice in his magical subterfuge. Rather, he delights in the positive redirection of perceptions momentary confusion can elicit. A vessel wobbling without a stable foot, a fruit bowl without a floor, and the flower vase with implied walls are all meant to comfort us with the familiar as much as they delight us in their improbability.

Oliver relates his personal experience standing in front of "Cloud Gate," "Every single person I've seen looking into the reflective surface is happy and smiling." When one observes Oliver's work one should understand showmanship and humor are as essential to him as borders are to a bowl—as technology is to design.



Kyungmin Park MATSUTANI FELLOW

There is a window display in Helena's downtown walking mall Kyungmin Park likes to frequent. It is filled with myriad dioramas populated by curious figurines and it changes regularly. The window is not too far away from another of her favorite, colorful locations: the local, independent toy store. Both locations call to her love of all things cute and tiny. She combs through bins filled with colorful plastic bunnies, delighting in their accuracy.

But, it's not all French fries and rainbows. "I don't want to just make cutesy work. I want people to think." Her formal training and work ethic began early at a fine art academy in Seoul where her day began at 6 AM and didn't end until well after 10 PM. She was exposed to the rigors of every medium. She still holds the merits of such rigor close in her practice. The challenge of conjuring a dutifully rendered figure from an

amorphous cloud causes her to feel alive. Make no mistake, attending to accuracy in the human form takes precedence over everything else in her work. She believes fully in a strong formal foundation before one can begin to explore ideas or toy with composition.

At this point in her evolution, we are seeing formalist and minimalist concerns pushing a figurative artist to focus her attentions. Park has parsed the figure and found the face is currently her essential muse. Using all 43 facial muscles, she repeatedly levels her gaze at the experiences of life. She presents a visual bridge for the viewer, capturing the emotional stream of consciousness in works with multiple figures vying for attention from the same organic mound. She records the inconstancy of the human condition, "In five minutes we feel one way, the next five minutes we feel another way, and the next five minutes? Again, a new emotion."

Even though she doesn't want to make "cutesy" work, she understands the power of cute to lure an audience into these emotional cacophonies. Intuitively, she



employs the vibrant colors of traditional Korean costumes in patterns that dance about her forms, collapsing the volumes she has so diligently coaxed out of the clay. While color is the first strike, cuteness grabs our line of sight from a distance and draws us across the room toward unexpected emotional encounters. On some level, everything she is showing us is autobiographical. The moments she chooses to portray are not always earth-shattering. Often the work is born from simple, subtle moments that have become lodged in her imagination. But the moments must always have some sort of universal recognition.

As we bear witness to her evolution, we also see the development of an iconography. Words are likened to fish coming out of a mouth—sometimes slippery and distasteful. Ladybugs are a commentary on the perplexing dualities of life. One ladybug is cute and the subject of traditionally cute, if morbid, rhyming songs. "Ladybug, ladybug, fly away home. ..." En masse, ladybugs transform into a plague of pestilence.

Park is questioning the frailty of our perceptions.



I Fish You, 2013,
porcelain, underglaze, glaze, resin,
19" x 15" x 9"

No means No!, 2014,
porcelain, underglaze, glaze, resin,
13" x 14" x 23"

John Souter

TAUNT FELLOW



John Souter loves color and light. He is excited about it. His compositions are chromatic test strips of his examinations presented for our pleasure. He is pushed by the same quest as the impressionists: how can light be captured? And if it can't be captured, can he at least draw our attention to it?

Many of Souter's compositional inquiries were born from a seminal experience inside the Chartres Cathedral. Outside, he found the architecture stale. He was, however, mesmerized by the light and air of the interior, "What happens when I put a plastic mirror next to glaze? How does color open visual space? How does the Chartres experience translate into fabric?"

Somehow, Souter is exploiting the materiality of glaze separate from the chemistry. His ideas of color interaction are on par with ceramic giants Ken Price and Ron Nagle. However, beyond Price, Souter

extends the inquiry through his democratic inclusion of materials. You are not just going to see illusions of space and density of pattern rendered in paint here, you are exposed to a velveteen ribbon embedded in all its light-trapping mass within the limpid layers of flux and silica. And in contrast to Nagle, Souter is not a wizard of alchemy; although he does share the same level of curiosity. It drives him to use glazes beyond their limits, layering materials against suggested application directives.

Souter's inquiries and obsessions guide his observations. He looks at matte black glaze and instead of diving into the chemical analysis in order to subtly tweak the attributes this way or that, he looks around the environment for materials that absorb light in the same way. And so he wraps a cone of red underglaze (with a hole in the top, allowing us to peer into a dark void) in black yarn. He delights in the blackness within that is an actual absence of light

and the yarn's ability to relate to that absence in its presence. Then he wraps the whole caboodle in a bright lime-green sweater—strengthening the drama in black with contrasting brightness. He is throwing off presumptions by stimulating the cones and rods in our eyes. He is capitalizing on the age-old war between the complements of red and green.

He transmutes ephemeral light into a tactile experience.

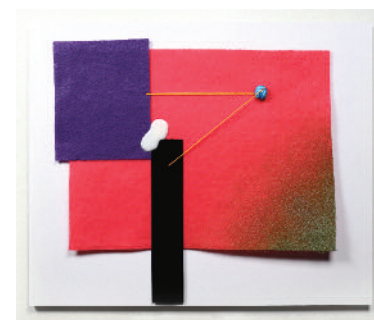
He builds a false corner to be presented upon the flat plane of a gallery wall and fills the angle with a deep shag of red fiber. Then, leaping across the color wheel, he punctures that shag with a turquoise-blue line of yarn. The line drapes downward (we recollect Eva Hesse) as he defines an organic shape across the infinite limit the corner creates. Souter wants us to see the density of the red and he wants to draw our attention to that density, exploding in contrast to the turquoise line. He revels in the blue penumbral shadow falling on the white wall.

Souter celebrates the absurdity of the world. In doing so, he elevates our senses.



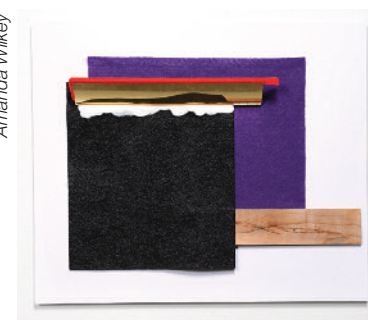
Untitled, 2015,
clay, glaze, yarn, plastic, enamel, table,
dimensions variable

Amanda Wilkey



Sketch #4, 2015,
felt, velvet, string, resin, lacquer,
mounted to paper, 14" x 18"

Amanda Wilkey



Sketch #5, 2015,
felt, plastic, wood, resin, velvet,
mounted to paper, 16" x 20"

Bill Wilkey

JOAN LINCOLN FELLOW

Ceramics is an inescapable, if transitional, family tree. It's almost a habit, but it's a habit evolved from a rich tradition of apprenticeships. Bill Wilkey is one of the new standard-bearers in the lineage of studio pottery. In 2015, he has a hard row to hoe and he knows it, but he is obsessed with preserving craft traditions. He admits the allure of the village potter motif is a romantic one, conceding he never expects to capture the romance fully, because his ego gets in the way, "A cup has to have the same amount of time as a vase." Wilkey believes all pots, great and small, merit equal attention. Just look at the surface detail and you'll begin to get a sense about his stubborn commitment to quality.

He continues to feed his craft obsession each time he sits at the wheel or stokes a kiln, conjuring up more layers on the surface planes of platter and vase, and bowl. His craft compulsions were encouraged early and often by the constant

stream of makers coming through the Great Smoky Mountains, just a stone's throw from his home base. So much exposure, so early, can make it difficult for a maker to hear their own voice.

Can we draw comparisons between Wilkey's work and other contemporary potters? Yes, we can, and we like it that way. There is something grounding us when we call out the lineage: Bill Wilkey, Bede Clarke, Joe Pintz, Don Davis, Kenyon Hansen, Ellen Shankin, Nick Joerling, Charity Davis Woodard.

What you might not know is Wilkey's formal influences go back much, much farther than the American Studio Pottery Movement. They go back to 1436, thanks to a trip to Spannocchia, Italy, where he stood in awe of Brunelleschi's dome.

In Brunelleschi's details and engineering, Wilkey saw biomimicry made manifest. He recalled the poet Wendell Berry, "... And we pray,



not for new earth or heaven, but to be quiet in heart, and in eye clear. What we need is here."

We can see the experience of Brunelleschi's dome and the spirit of Berry's decree—once we know what to look for—in every functional object touched by Wilkey's hand. The segmented planes of a pitcher are methodically built up with tooling textures and atmospheric firing. These textures sit in contrast to each other, bringing geometric asymmetry in concert with symmetry. Handles and spouts follow nature's divine model, adhering to the rule of thirds. But it is in the subtle areas, like the undercut of a foot or the strainer inside of a spout with a pattern cut to rhythmically repeat the larger elements of the form, where one can delight in Wilkey's attention to detail.

Wilkey is about to insert himself into your life. Get ready. His wares are a catalyst for interaction. "I don't see my work solving the world's problems directly. Rather it's more about being proud of what we make and seeing if we can make the best work possible."

Small Serving Bowl Set, 2015,
white stoneware,
3" x 8" x 8"

Quadrant Pitcher, 2015,
white stoneware,
13" x 7.5" x 6"



PAST FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS

1999

Marc Digeros, Taunt Fellow
Sharon Brush, Myhre Fellow

2000

Eric Eley, Taunt Fellow
John Byrd, Myhre Fellow

2001

Jiman Choi, Taunt Fellow
John Utgaard, Lilian Fellow

2002

Jason Walker, Taunt Fellow
Sandra Trujillo, Lilian Fellow

2003

Jeremy Kane, Taunt Fellow
Karen Swyler, Lilian Fellow

2004

Trey Hill, Taunt Fellow
Miranda Howe, Lilian Fellow
Kowkie Durst, Lincoln Fellow

2005

Koi Neng Liew, Taunt Fellow
Deborah Schwartzkopf,
Lilian Fellow
Melissa Mencini, Lincoln Fellow

2006

Jennifer Allen, Taunt Fellow
Christina West, Lilian Fellow
Joseph Pintz, Lincoln Fellow

2007

Jeremy Hatch, Taunt Fellow
Brian Rochefort, Lilian Fellow
Renee Audette, Lincoln Fellow
Anne Drew Potter,
Matsutani Fellow

2008

Kevin Snipes, Taunt Fellow
Donna Flanery, Lilian Fellow
Birdie Boone, Lincoln Fellow
David Peters, Matsutani Fellow
Nathan Craven, MJD Fellow

2009

Martha Grover, Taunt Fellow
Sean Irwin, Lilian Fellow
Gwendolyn Yoppolo, Lincoln Fellow
Kelly Garrett Rathbone,
Matsutani Fellow
Kensuke Yamada, MJD Fellow

2010

Jana Evans, Taunt Fellow
Mathew McConnell, Lilian Fellow
Courtney Murphy, Lincoln Fellow
Nicholas Bivins, Matsutani Fellow
Aaron Benson, MJD Fellow

2011

Lindsay Pichaske, Taunt Fellow
Jonathan Read, Lilian Fellow
Kenyon Hansen, Lincoln Fellow
Sean O'Connell, Matsutani Fellow
Andrew Casto, MJD Fellow
Alanna DeRocchi, Speyer Fellow
Jeff Campana, Anonymous Fellow

2012

Mel Griffin, Taunt Fellow
Giselle Hicks, Lilian Fellow
Sunshine Cobb, Lincoln Fellow
Peter Christian Johnson,
Matsutani Fellow
Chris Pickett, MJD Fellow
Andrew Gilliatt, Speyer Fellow
Jeff Campana, Windgate Fellow
Alanna DeRocchi, Windgate Fellow
Sean O'Connell, Windgate Fellow
Jonathan Read, Windgate Fellow

2013

Zemer Peled, Taunt Fellow
Sunshine Cobb, Lilian Fellow
Tom Jaszczak, Lincoln Fellow
Joanna Powell, Matsutani Fellow
Chris Dufala, MJD Fellow
Adam Field, Speyer Fellow
Andrew Gilliatt, Windgate Fellow
Mel Griffin, Windgate Fellow
Giselle Hicks, Windgate Fellow
Chris Pickett, Windgate Fellow

2014

Adam Field, Lilian Fellow*
Zemer Peled, Windgate Fellow*
Joanna Powell, Windgate Fellow*
Chris Dufala, Anonymous Fellow*
Tom Jaszczak,
Lillstreet Art Center Fellow*

**Stories featured in
previous year's monograph.*

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Steven Young Lee

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