

**CRAFT  
YEAR** **20  
20** **ANNÉE  
DES  
MÉTIER  
D'ART**

A representative survey  
of current works by  
Craft Nova Scotia members.

2020

September 24  
to November 7

Mary E. Black Gallery  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

# Executive Director's Message

In 2007 we marked the first installment of Craft Year which saw over 700 events celebrating craft all across Canada from coast to coast to coast. Craft Year 2015 saw an increase in activity, with almost 900 events including exhibitions, workshops, lectures, sales, book launches, and more. The event brought to light the many happenings of craft that take place on a local, national and international level, informing the public of just how active the Canadian craft field is. The Canadian Crafts Federation declared this year to be Craft Year 2020. Obviously due to the global pandemic, the level and nature of Craft Year 2020 events/activities have been substantially different than originally planned, but craft organizations across Canada are still finding ways to help celebrate and promote craft, particularly during these unprecedented times.

In conjunction with Craft Year 2020, Craft Nova Scotia invited members to submit work in response to an open call for entries. It is the intention of the Craft Nova Scotia Exhibitions Committee that this exhibition be a representative survey of current works by members. Therefore there is no theme for this exhibition; members were asked to submit recently-created works for consideration, and the response was outstanding, with 121 submissions from 53 artists.

An invited panel of three jurors, Gilles Latour, Adriana Afford, and Ray Mackie selected the works to comprise the exhibition from amongst those submitted. The 28 works by 19 members of Craft Nova Scotia showcase the wide range of mediums, techniques and materials found within the crafts community. You will have the opportunity to see a snapshot of craft ranging from novice to master artisan. We think it's a fine way to celebrate Craft Year 2020.

**Susan Hanrahan**

Former Craft Nova Scotia Executive Director

# Artists

Marla Benton	4
Hélène Blanchet	6
Kate Church	8
Meryl Cook	12
Julian Covey	16
Jessie Fraser	18
Liza Hageraats	20
Wendy Johnston	22
Laura Kenney	24
Toni Losey	26
K Maclean	30
Theofani Pitsiavas	34
Andrea Puszkár	38
Lynette Richards	40
Julie Rosvall	42
Ralph Simpson	46
Jim Smith	50
Gina Stick	52
Athanasia Vayianou	58



# Marla Benton

This piece is a playful way to remember how much I loved, during my childhood and still as an adult, communicating through letter writing. There are tiny little ceramic envelopes that you can put in a hole at the back and they slide through the building and out the front door. There is another hole in the back where you can put a small ceramic marble and it rolls through the building and out the window on to the balcony. The marble runs along the balcony and down the staircase. Having the sculpture be interactive is important to me, to draw in the viewer and let them play with the art.

MAHONE BAY POST OFFICE

38 × 25 × 27 cm

Stoneware, glaze, underglaze



# Hélène Blanchet

This is a picture of my garden. It sits on a south-facing slope, bordered by the forest, a rushing stream and fields of wild blueberries. It is inspired by Hundertwasser who believed that there should be “no straight lines” in any design as nature does not have straight lines.

MY HUNDERTWASSER GARTEN

35.5 × 66 × 2.5 cm

Cotton, silk, embroidery floss,  
glass beads, wood frames, acrylics





# Kate Church

*A poem for the swan* is the next piece in my re-emerging work. It speaks about relationships with beings and beliefs. Floating on water, the tugging lines that hold us back and floating upon the water upon the swan, their stillness bringing tranquility.

FLOATING ON THE ROPES, THE SWAN AND  
HER COMPANIONS...

50 × 33 × 41 cm

MIXED MEDIA: canvas, acrylic paint, wire, textiles,  
feathers, polymer clay, wooden base



# Kate Church

*The Arrival* is a heartfelt piece. She indeed has arrived. I completed this and the second submission this spring when I finally felt able to concentrate and focus after more than a year of medical treatments for breast cancer. *The Arrival* just arrived as I sat quietly filled with pleasure and gratitude to be able to work again. Personally, it symbolizes the pride and joy to be able to return to my intricate, detailed work.

## THE ARRIVAL

46 × 23 × 50 cm

MIXED MEDIA: canvas, wire, acrylic, textiles,  
polymer clay, metals, found objects



# Meryl Cook

As the COVID-19 pandemic was developing around the world, I felt overwhelmed and powerless by the amount of suffering.

This quote inspired me:

*“Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world. All things break. And all things can be mended. Not with time, as they say, but with intention. So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally. The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you.”*

— L.R. Knott

I wrote about what qualities each of these types of love would embody, and how it would look or feel to really live these kinds of love. This triptych is my response — with intention, to the world’s suffering. Hooked mainly in the colours of the Heart Chakra (pink and green), I spent March and April 2020 hooking and sending love out to the world in the form of these three pieces — Unconditional, Intentional and Extravagant.

LOVE IN THE TIME OF A PANDEMIC (triptych)

68.5 × 137 × 1.5 cm

Hooked on linen with hand-spun and commercial yarns,  
recycled and new wool fabrics and sari ribbon



# Meryl Cook

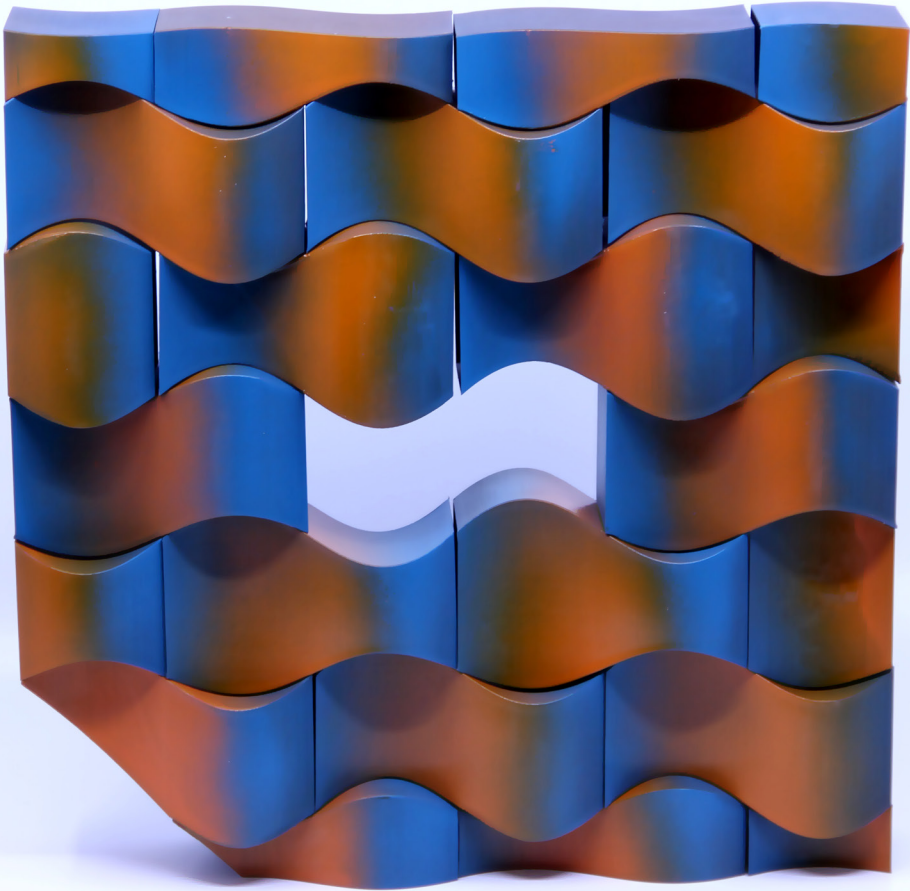
The words on the linen around the edges, and that now reside on the back of this hanging are “Greater ease & flexibility. Delivering O2 & love to my tissues & cells. Room to breathe, expand.”

The inspiration for *Opening* was my word for 2020, Open. I was writing in my journal about staying open to possibility, to taking on new adventures and putting myself out there. I want to be open to success, to open doors for myself and others, to let light in and to step into my power as an artist, woman and entrepreneur. I visualized the body feeling of open as my lungs opening and breathing freely. I hooked it in the Heart Chakra colours of pink and green and the gold of the Solar Plexus Chakra.

## OPENING

71 × 74 × 1.5 cm

Hooked on linen with hand-spun and commercial yarns,  
recycled and new wool fabrics and sari ribbon





# Julian Covey

This work is a playful study in design, three-dimensional pattern and rapid prototyping technology. I began developing the components of this piece during the pandemic lockdown. Like many in our community, I suddenly found myself unable to access the facilities necessary to make and fire ceramic work. My solution was to work digitally. In virtual space, I have unlimited material and am not constrained by the working properties of clay.

The art of mould making has taught me how various components connect and interlock like a puzzle. I decided to employ this theory to the art objects themselves and share the satisfying delight of perfectly fitting pieces with the viewer.

I designed the individual pieces that compose this work to function as three-dimensional relief tiles or bricks but they can also function as vessels. This particular work is made of 3D printed PLA and serves as a proof-of-concept.

CURVES AND SWERVES

30.5 × 7.8 × 30.5 cm

3D printed PLA, spray paint



# Jessie Fraser

During the recent lockdown, I felt a longing for the home I left behind only six months prior, I also became engrossed with W.G. MacLaughlan's photographic albums of buildings damaged by the Halifax explosion. I couldn't get these images off of my mind and for the first time in a decade I took up a pencil and attempted to render these photographs. For me, Jacquard weaving better captured the feeling and the depth of the photographs. As I spent time weaving I realized these images reminded me of my prairie home that I was longing for. They reminded me of all the slanted and deteriorated structures you see when driving through the flat landscape. I found an unexpected sense of connection in photographs documenting the effects of a tragedy and it has me thinking more deeply about environmental history and how time and place alter perspectives.

TO BRING THE FARAWAY NEAR SERIES

142 × 66 cm

Cotton and silk



# Liza Hageraats

The fall foliage was on full display when I traveled to Japan and I let them influence my color choices for this short kimono jacket known as a Haori. I used a variety of techniques including a combination of Shibori dyeing, Sashiko embroidery and Nuno felting to include pieces of antique Japanese kimono silk. I followed the traditional construction of kimonos, using only straight panels of felted merino and silk to create this garment. There are no seams relying only of felting techniques to create the shape.

FALL HAORI

140 × 5 × 80 cm

Pongee silk, merino wool top, dyes,  
embroidery thread, antique kimono silk



# Wendy Johnston

I have been working as a studio potter in New Brunswick for the past 24 years. Over these years, my work has evolved from functional tableware with minimal decoration to pottery that celebrates colour, the natural landscape, and historical decorative motifs inspired by European decoration and architecture.

In 2014, I received a NB Creation Grant award to develop a body of ceramic work and drawings based on the theme of “*Scavenging for Beauty*”. From this exhibition, I have continued to explore the delicate relationship between nature, historical decoration and the influences of industry. In the two vases, I have wrapped the clay with copper wire from old transformers found in local scrap yards.

## BLUE WIRE WRAPPED VASE

10 × 15 × 30 cm

Earthenware clay, underglazes, copper wire  
and clear glaze





# Laura Kenney

Before the pandemic hit and the world changed, climate change was on my mind. Wide scale changes need to be happening and we were marching in the streets, especially our youth...listen to the scientists we were asking.

But I worry it is too little too late...so here Earth...here is an ice cream to cool you off...too little too late.

HAVE THIS..IT WILL COOL YOU OFF.

85 × 59 × 1 cm

Rughooked and felted wool and silk on burlap



# Toni Losey

My current work approaches the subtleties of living, defined by form, movement, colour and texture. The *Pill Bug Series* is an exploration of complexity and uniqueness of movement. This work, through the contours of the body and the placement of the appendages, captures movements which are compelling in their peculiarity. Highly textural and seemingly organic surfaces are utilized to invoke a belief we are experiencing a kind of mimicry of life. Ceramics offer endless opportunities to explore, and for me, glazing is the catalyst in my attempt to marry technical/material process with conceptual prowess. Here, through the use of contrasting turquoise and burnt orange, I highlight the movement, the twisting and turning of this form. The addition of bright white and coloured glaze “buttons” on the tips, directionally added to enhance the movement and organic quality of the work.

PILL BUG SERIES: TURQUOISE AND BURNT

14 × 10 × 9 cm

Earthenware



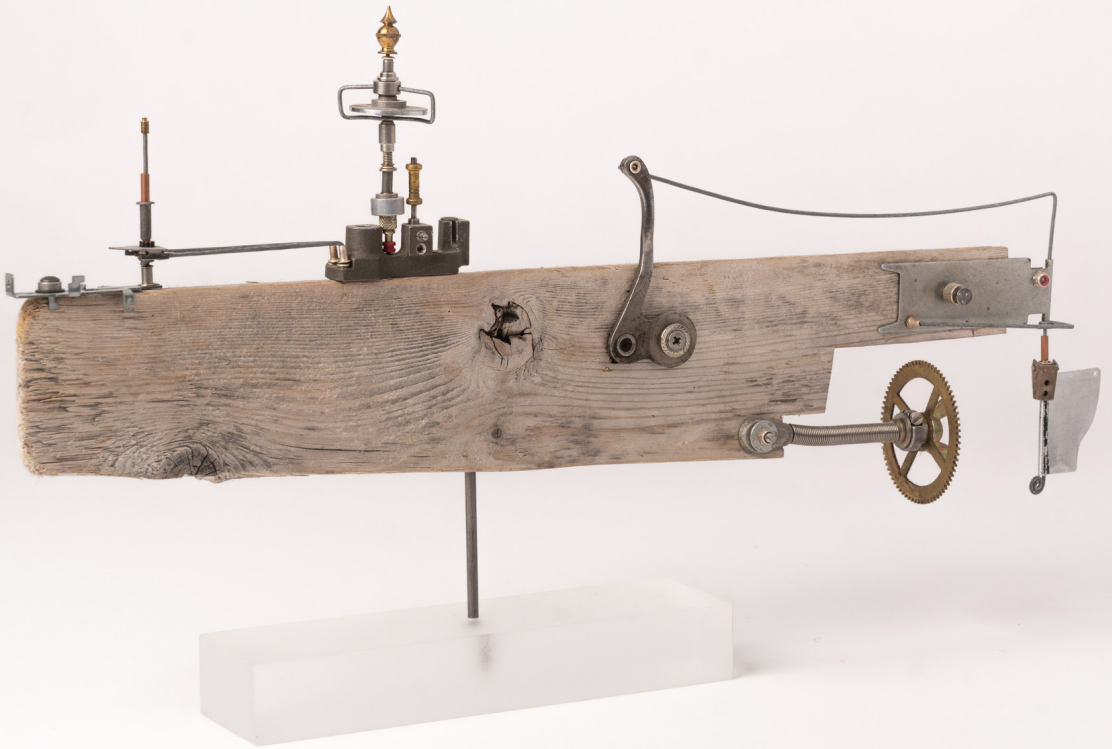
# Toni Losey

My current work approaches the subtleties of living, defined by form, movement, colour and texture. The *Pill Bug Series* is an exploration of complexity and uniqueness of movement. This work, through the contours of the body and the placement of the appendages, captures movements which are compelling in their peculiarity. Highly textural and seemingly organic surfaces are utilized to invoke a belief we are experiencing a kind of mimicry of life. Ceramics offer endless opportunities to explore, and for me, glazing is the catalyst in my attempt to marry technical/material process with conceptual prowess. The use of bright oranges and limes serve to enhance the dark underbelly of this form as it closes in on itself. The glazed “buttons” on the tips, intensify the organic quality of the work.

PILL BUG SERIES: ORANGE AND LIME

11.5 × 8 × 9 cm

Earthenware



# K Maclean

Creating from disparate objects considered disposable, and objects found on walks, into a recognizable form requires the engagement of both the viewer and the artist's imagination and pays homage to the stories that overlooked objects can tell.

HMCS TRAWLS

40 × 5 × 30 cm

Ocean tumbled wood, wire, hardware, clock parts





# K Maclean

Creating from disparate objects considered disposable, and objects found on walks, into a recognizable form requires the engagement of both the viewer and the artist's imagination and pays homage to the stories that overlooked objects can tell.

HMCS ELIZE

50 × 10 × 25 cm

Ocean tumbled wood, found objects, wire,  
hardware, clock parts



# Theofani Pitsiavas

*The Foundry Collection* incorporates diverse aged metal castings from the original Lunenburg Foundry. When completed, the Foundry Collection will comprise 11 lamp sculptures. The first in this thematic collection is the *Cope and Drag Table Lamp*, which stems from a base of cast metal as heavy as it is strangely shaped and is anchored to a cherry wood base, juxtaposing the peculiarity of the metal piece against the beauty of the wood. The post is made from unidentified mystery wood salvaged from a pallet, many years ago. Its texture and colour create a tone transition from the base to the shade. The shade's construction is based on the structure and seemingly endless vitality of Nova Scotia fish shacks. My objective with this collection is to capture the rugged elegance of Lunenburg, with its history of world class shipbuilding, and its fiery foundry tradition.

## FOUNDRY COLLECTION I: THE COPE AND DRAG TABLE LAMP

40 × 21.5 × 61 cm

Cast iron, cherry, walnut, cumaru, cedar, virola, plywood, mystery pallet wood, lamp hardware and cord



# Theofani Pitsiavas

*The Crucible* is the second lamp in the Foundry Collection. Inspiration for the design came from two sources. First, the three-pronged metal casting has a machined hole into which beautifully fit a steel tube I had in my workshop. The tube is thin but strong and gave a tall, lean look to the blossoming design that spoke to me. Second, in researching foundries I learned that a crucible is the ring-shaped container in which metals are melted. By creating a tight, circular shade from very thin vertical strips of wood, the shade takes on a translucent pinkish tone when lit. An orange tone radiates thru the top opening of the shade inferring the glow of liquid metal. The three wider, fin-like strips reference the base's prongs, creating a solid counterbalance for the piece. This elegant lamp solidly stands over 4ft tall.

## FOUNDRY COLLECTION II: THE CRUCIBLE TABLE LAMP

20 × 20 × 126 cm

Cast Iron, steel pipe, steel fasteners. Woods: cherry, red oak, Douglas-fir, walnut, Cumaru, spruce, birch plywood, lamp hardware and cord



# Andrea Puszkar

Rollerskating is one of the great joys of my life. I created a plaster mold and have been working with the rollerskate as my canvas for plant based imagery and carving. The object of the rollerskate holds a special history for many people – often connected with youth, nostalgia and fun. I have used the rollerskate as a way to find joy in the technical challenges that ceramics brings, finding balance in a challenging medium.

Each of the pieces that I have submitted connect to the theme Craft Year 2020 because they blend contemporary imagery and technique with traditional practices; I am drawn to craft because of this exploration. My practice extends these boundaries by using technology to create decals and to reproduce images. I carve and work with sgraffito, a very traditional ceramic practice on clay bodies that are entirely contemporary – such as *The Rollerskate*.

## THE ROLLERSKATE

25 × 12 × 25 cm

Earthenware, black slip, wood





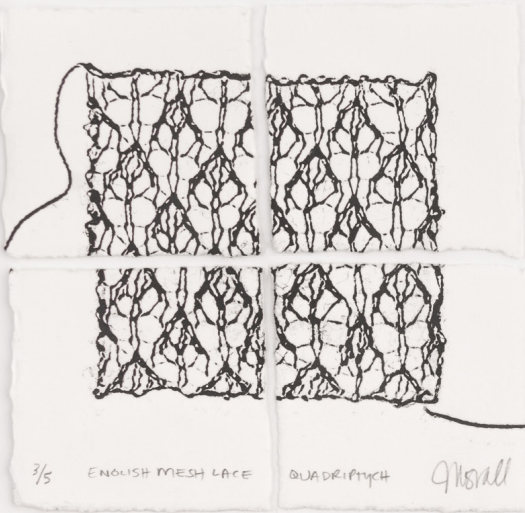
# Lynette Richards

The ocean perpetually creates the coast. It covers and uncovers, destroys and reveals. During COVID, I walked the rocks of Terence Bay frequently. In grey weather, the granite and sea can seem brutish, yet if we stay, we are offered orange and ochre lichen, chartreuse and plum seaweed, a flash of turquoise in cresting waves. Resourceful people settled here. This stained glass window is about using what is found, recycling old and discarded glass. The heritage glass is from broken Victorian era windows, the beach glass gathered in Terence Bay. The rest are odd bits left over from other projects. I pieced and painted them. The window itself is recycled. I began it in 2015 but I was dissatisfied with the calibre of my portraiture. It languished. I took advantage of COVID to pull it apart, paint a much finer portrait, rework and rebuild it.

## MY ROCKY SHORE

1 × 35 × 35 cm

Glass, including mouthblown, machine made, vintage pressed glass, beach glass; vitreous paint, kiln-fired; silver-stain, kiln-fired; lead came and copper foil



# Julie Rosvall

After a three year gap in my printmaking practice, when I didn't create any new works, I was determined to get back in the print studio in August 2019. I searched out an exchange that could jump start my printmaking. I found "Return to Sender", an Ontario based exchange that challenged participants to edition a mini-print of only 1.75 inches square.

The task proved more difficult than I expected. After several failed attempts to knit very fine yarn, and etch tiny plates, I had to get creative. In the end I created a small quadriptych print, which allowed me to work with thicker yarn, and create an image in four pieces that would still fit into the tiny glassine envelopes required for the exchange. Since completing that initial print in September I've created several small quadriptych textile relief prints inspired by the first experiment. While I expect this series to expand in the months and years to come for now it is *Quadriptych*, a series of four textile relief prints, each printed on four small pieces of cotton rag paper.

QUADRIPTYCH

26 × 26 cm

Textile relief print, oil based ink on cotton rag paper



# Julie Rosvall

I've always had an interest in mark making on paper, and for many years envisioned using textiles to emboss paper. After seeing the work of printmaker Betty Goodwin in 2010 Rosvall was inspired to explore soft ground etchings with her knitted swatches. My attempt to avoid knitting large items started to falter in 2016 when I printed my first *Shawl #1*, and has continued from there. Due to its size I wasn't able to etch on copper, so used a more direct approach inking the shawl and printing directly onto rag paper. *Vesna Shawl Triptych* is the second in what will become a series of textile relief prints of large shawls knit using hand dyed silk, and captured in ink on paper.

VESNA SHAWL TRIPTYCH

76 × 168 cm

Textile relief print, oil based ink on cotton rag paper



# Ralph Simpson

I have an innate interest in the natural world around me, field, forest, and wetland which inspires my work. My work comprises baskets, vessels, and sculptures which arise from a deep curiosity and emergent understanding of my chosen materials. I combine traditional weaving techniques with various plant fibre to create a contemporary art form.

I work with an array of locally gathered plant material both woody and herbaceous including but not limited to cedar, ash, maple, oak, various barks, roots, common rush, cattail, dandelion, Devils Paint Brush, Daisy as well as many perennial garden plants like iris, lily, daffodil, and papyrus. My work varies in form and style but what resonates in all my pieces is the underlying investigation into ways that plant materials can be used to spark interest or insight in the natural world.

I employ harvest principles that embrace environmental integrity and sustainability.

POPPY PODS (2)

13 × 13 cm

Black ash and waxed linen





# Ralph Simpson

I have an innate interest in the natural world around me, field, forest, and wetland which inspires my work. My work comprises baskets, vessels, and sculptures which arise from a deep curiosity and emergent understanding of my chosen materials. I combine traditional weaving techniques with various plant fibre to create a contemporary art form.

I work with an array of locally gathered plant material both woody and herbaceous including but not limited to cedar, ash, maple, oak, various barks, roots, common rush, cattail, dandelion, Devils Paint Brush, Daisy as well as many perennial garden plants like iris, lily, daffodil, and papyrus. My work varies in form and style but what resonates in all my pieces is the underlying investigation into ways that plant materials can be used to spark interest or insight in the natural world.

I employ harvest principles that embrace environmental integrity and sustainability.

## ACORNS

9 × 15 cm

Handwoven dandelion, day lily, daisy,  
devil's paint brush, daffodil



# Jim Smith

'Salt Cellar' displays, serves, and celebrates salt with the importance that it deserves. Used as a food preservative for millennia, salt has enabled countries and cultures to survive and expand, trade, migrate, and even conquer. Wars have been fought over it and revolutions sparked. As a flavour enhancer, salt was a coveted commodity, requiring elaborate commissioned objects for the table that celebrate its importance in human culture.

European references in this salt cellar's form and handles combine with Islamic references in the decoration to suggest the cross cultural interactions generated by salt.

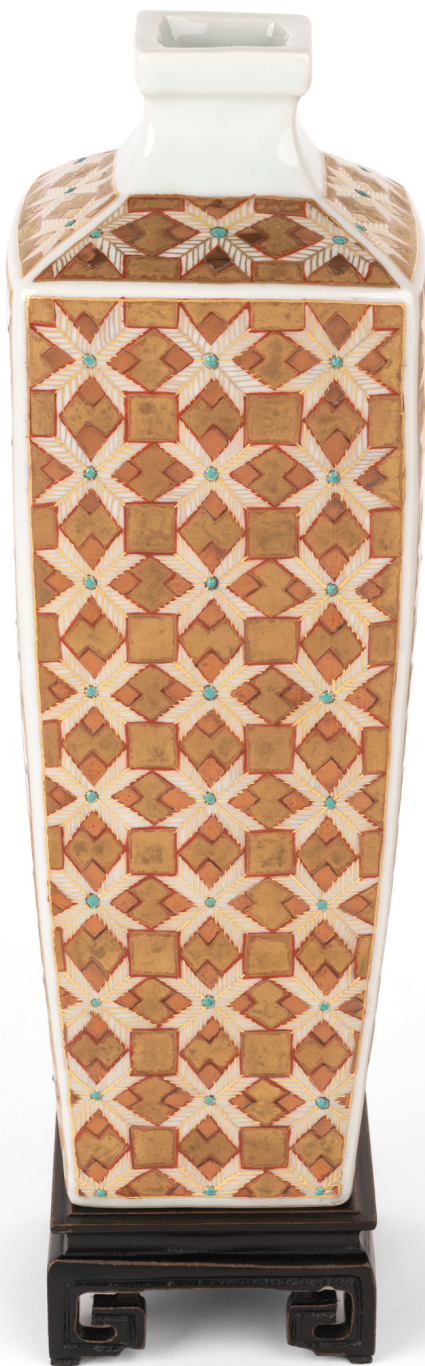
This piece stores the ingredient while displaying the salt in a diminutive depression in its lid. This exalted position atop the piece and raised above the table reminds the user of the significance this mineral has had on human civilization.

My intent is to create an object that is beautiful, functional, and intellectually stimulating, with the power to enrich one's life.

SALT CELLAR

22 × 13 × 15 cm

Nova Scotia earthenware clay, slip, stains, oxides, glaze



# Gina Stick

This vase is part of my *Warrior* series featuring an original arrowhead icon signifying the bravery of the human spirit, shining out without doubt or hesitation. By bravery I mean a natural state of being that is full-hearted, generous and true beyond fear and shame.

The purpose of my work is to empower the user, the ritual, and the environment in the appreciation of the “art of everyday life”. A key aesthetic is called yun. Yun is literally an ochre-like substance found in the stream-beds of Tibet. More broadly yun can refer to places or objects exuding an enriching presence — not as commodity, but in their power to provoke direct immediate openness, communicating to the viewer’s innate richness and un-fabricated awareness. Earth Warrior features rich un-burnished gold and under fired teal enamel in evocation of the earthy depth of natural ochre and turquoise, provoked through contrast of shiny gold and copper shifting elusively with changing light. Luminosity resides in contrast.

EARTH WARRIOR PORCELAIN VASE  
(WARRIOR SERIES)

12 × 12 × 36 cm

Porcelain, over-glaze enamel (gucai, fencai),  
24k German and Roman golds, copper lustre



# Gina Stick

It is said in my tradition that all the various manifestations arise from emptiness. Emptiness is not vacant like a parking lot but full of all potentiality, full of energy, richness, and luminosity. Emptiness means without solidity. The logic goes that because things are not solid they can be luminous, hovering between form and emptiness, between. Emptiness — the unborn — is the source, the mother that gives birth to all phenomena and is its quintessential nature.

This piece piles richness on top of richness as the joyful unborn nature of all things, organized chaos born of space. The spiral goes both ways.

While I can explain this, the intent and feeling is perceptual, direct.

UNBORN, PORCELAIN PLATE

23 × 23 × 5 cm

Porcelain, underglaze blue and white (Jingdezhen quinhua),  
overglaze enamels (gucai), 24k Roman gold





# Gina Stick

It is truly joyful to be a chrysanthemum. Be a chrysanthemum.  
An aspiration of art is to awaken the heart.

This piece works with harmony though asymmetry based in the dynamic relationship and tension of three elements interacting within space. I see space as filled with energy. The green/teal background is space in this composition. There is communication between space and form (the flowers). Move the objects and space changes, the tension between objects shifts. Find the spot where they communicate dynamically — they “click” into place when interconnected in proportional space.

Detail intent is to build a totality, one thought, first thought: tone-on-tone water-based eyelet pattern is beaded on for background texture and nuance; hand-painted oil media bleeds beyond the edge.

JOYFUL TO BE A CHRYSANTHEMUM, 2  
(#2 IN A SERIES)  
50 × 50 × 7 cm  
Jingdezhen Porcelain, celadon, overglaze enamels  
(gucai)



# Athanasia Vayianou

Being an artist that works with the idea of memory, childhood and imagination, this piece is very private to me. It is inspired and influenced by memories of looking at a dark sky, hoping that I would be able to see more stars in a congested city like Halifax, and failing. We only have to realize that beyond the darkness, there is a whole universe waiting for us to explore. When you turn off the lights, you will be able to see the light shine. This piece is quite fitting during the time of crisis we are facing today, in various ways, and I hope it resonates with each viewer in a unique way.

## **IN THE DARKNESS I SEE.**

43 × 7 × 1.5 cm

Sterling silver, fine silver, copper, enamel,  
freshwater pearls

## CREDITS

COVER ARTWORK: Gina Stick's Earth Warrior Porcelain Vase

DESIGN: Grace Laemmler | [gracelaemmlerdesign.ca](http://gracelaemmlerdesign.ca)

PHOTOGRAPHY: Ian Selig



### CENTRE FOR CRAFT NOVA SCOTIA

#### Mary E. Black Gallery

1061 Marginal Road, Suite 140  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

902 492-2522

[craft-design.ns.ca](http://craft-design.ns.ca)

[info@craft-design.ns.ca](mailto:info@craft-design.ns.ca)

[centre.admin@craftnovascotia.ca](mailto:centre.admin@craftnovascotia.ca)



[@centreforcraftercraft](https://www.instagram.com/centreforcraftercraft)

[#craftyear2020](https://twitter.com/craftyear2020)

### GALLERY HOURS

Wednesday to Saturday | 11 am to 4 pm

FREE ADMISSION



### CRAFT NOVA SCOTIA

1113 Marginal Road  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

902 423-3837

[craftnovascotia.ca](http://craftnovascotia.ca)

[office@craftnovascotia.ca](mailto:office@craftnovascotia.ca)



[@craftnovascotia](https://www.instagram.com/craftnovascotia)

[#craftns](https://twitter.com/craftns)



Published © 2020 by Centre for Craft Nova Scotia

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing of the publisher.

The Centre for Craft Nova Scotia is funded by the province of Nova Scotia, and is a program of Craft Nova Scotia.