

# HYBRID LAND

Janet Macpherson



*Migration Bridge*  
Slip-cast porcelain, paper clay, gold lustre, wood, paint, H. 90cm x L. 7metres x D. 60cm, 2017  
Photo Credit: Toni Hafkensheid

## Artist Statement

Hybrids present us with two things happening simultaneously. They are in flux, one always alluding to and challenging the other. The borders between humans and animals, the manufactured and the natural, the spiritual and the corporeal are distinct yet permeable, illustrating differences while creating spaces for wonder and uncertainty. Influenced by my Catholic upbringing, I investigate hybridity within the context of Christian ideology, examining an array of sources from the margins of illuminated manuscripts, lives of saints and martyrs to the depictions of medieval monsters. Medieval images of saints, their faces in expressions of tranquil serenity while being tortured and martyred, speak to Christianity's paradoxical approach to the body that has been my lived experience. The visceral theatre of the Mass itself (the consumption of body and blood of Christ) set against the Catholic devaluation of pleasure, sexuality and other bodily realities, has long been a subject of inquiry for me. Monsters and hybrid creatures serve as commentary throughout religious manuscripts, complementing and antagonizing the texts from their margins. They serve as portents; warning that depraved behaviour will be met by a mythical punishment.



Above: *Ghost*, Slip-cast porcelain, paper clay, gold lustre, H. 48cm x W. 18cm x D. 18cm, 2020, Photo Credit: Ryan Legassicke  
Right: *Migration Bridge (detail)*, Slip-cast porcelain, paper clay, gold lustre, wood, paint, H. 90cm x L. 7metres x D. 60cm, 2017, Photo Credit: Toni Hafkensheid

This work has also been inspired by visits to agricultural fairs, where farm animals are clothed in protective fabrics, tethered tightly to posts, awaiting exhibition and judging. Using molds cast from found toy animals, religious statues, and hunting decoys I dismantle and re-compose these objects to create forms that subtly reveal a discomfoting reality. Animal heads and bodies are interchanged, vegetation grows in peculiar places, and faces are masked and obscured. Wrapping forms in damp porcelain sheets, binding, bandaging the figures and contemplating the intentions of these gestures, I examine the boundaries between devotion and coercion, pleasure and pain, animal impulse and domesticity.



## Biography

**Janet Macpherson** studied ceramics at Sheridan College, and received her MFA at The Ohio State University in 2010. After graduate school, she was granted an artist-in-residence position in the Craft Studios at Harbourfront Centre in Toronto. Janet was the 2013 recipient of the Winifred Shantz Award for Ceramics, which funded a three-month residency at Zentrum fur Keramik in Berlin, Germany. Her solo exhibition *A Canadian Bestiary* was mounted by the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art in Toronto in 2017. Most recently her work was included in the exhibition *Book of Beasts* at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, and in the *Biennale Nationale de Sculpture Contemporaine*, in Trois Riviere, QC. Janet teaches mould-making at Sheridan College, and she currently lives and works in Hamilton, Ontario.



*Falling Antelope with Pig*  
Slip-cast porcelain, paper clay, gold lustre  
H. 12cm x W. 18cm x D. 7cm  
2018, Photo Credit: Ryan Legassicke



*Excess*  
Slip-cast porcelain, gold lustre  
H. 20cm x W. 27cm x D. 16cm  
2017, Photo Credit: Ryan Legassicke

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*Crushed*  
Slip-cast porcelain, paper clay, gold lustre, black underglaze, H. 14cm x W. 26cm x D. 30cm  
2017, Photo Credit: Ryan Legassicke

## Acknowledgments

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