

BFA Senior Thesis Conversations featuring Chiapei Huang

Questions by Daniela Segovia

Chiapei Huang is an undergraduate student working towards her BFA in Ceramics at California College of the Arts.

See more of her work on Instagram [@j.h.ceramics](https://www.instagram.com/j.h.ceramics).

What is your thesis investigating?

The thesis in my work defines life, death, love, and hate from my own experience and perspective. Life is about abundance, growth, and culmination—but for me it also means being an orphan after losing my parents. The topic of death is never pleasant; my experience dealing with death came when I lost my parents three months apart and the fact that I had an unborn sibling that I did not know of. We have all heard the phrase “it is a thin line between love and hate.” In the psychological analysis, love and hate are similar and yet opposites: it is these polar opposites that I am trying to translate through ceramics.



Life, Death, Love and Hate.

What or who are your major influences?

Lucie Rie and Harrison McIntosh influenced my vessel form and artistic style. I also like the concepts and style of Mid-Century modern design. I admire Sakiyama Takayuki and Hitomi Hosono’s detailed craftsmanship and delicate execution. The repetition of each carving and layer displays a well-thought design, years of practice, and tremendous patience. Overall, I think I am attracted to a simple form with a complex design, so when I make my own art, I follow a similar design concept with a different style in mind.

How has your project evolved?

Making narrative work is new to me. Making project-based work helped me create work with background stories and themes. Researching materials and concepts before making my work also helped me understand the connection between theme and my artistic output. These graduation showpieces are a stepping stone for me to create art without any instructions except for my own thoughts and ideas. While I included many techniques in the pieces for this showcase, I am still learning as I create each piece.



Alone in This World (6.75" x 3.75")

How do you approach atmosphere and color?

Many of my works, functional or non-functional, display duality. I try to use a different technique in the making. Every project starts with a theme that I think about over and over again before sketching it out. I also rely on research to build up core concepts and background ideas. I use Mason stain in many of my works; I like the muted colors that stains provide, as I find subtle colors more appealing.



You Never Came (4" x 5")



Losing Time, Losing You (4" x 4.5")



Prosperity (Sizes: Green: 4.5" x 4", Orange: 5.5" x 3.75", Blue" 4.5" x 4")

What's next for you?

I want to continue creating work that relates to emotion in abstract form. I never liked abstract art until I started planning for my showpieces. I also looked to artists such as Sakiyama Takayuki and Noguchi Isamu, for inspiration. The Norse god Odin's pet ravens Hugin and Munin (Thought and Memory) probing the surface to bring hidden truth is also an inspiration for making raven-related art.



Left to Right: Love (6" x 6"); *Hate* (5.5" x 5").