MATERIAL INSTINCTS:
RUMINATIONS ON MOTHERHOOD AND CRAFT

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ABSTRACT

Material Instincts: Ruminations on Motherhood and Craft, is an MFA Thesis Project that focuses on the liminal and subjective experiences of motherhood through a direct engagement with tactile materials and forms. This project includes three distinct works that utilize various installation and display methods, and that intersect both public and domestic space. Encompassing ceramics, textiles and stitchery, my art activates the inherent historical, social and political significance of these materials and processes which, in turn, elucidate the complexities of my identity as artist + mother.

Keywords: motherhood, craft, ceramics, clay, quilting, feminist art, labour, domestic space, covid-19

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time to talk with me about art and mothering, even in the thick of her own graduate journey. Thank you to my big brother Chris Riedmueller for demonstrating so many years ago what we are made of and how to live with integrity, courage and intelligence. To my soul sister Judea Cassyn for her encouragement and belief in me which was utterly contagious, and for all the times she lifted me up or told me to relax. Heartfelt thanks go to my Mom for her ongoing love and encouragement and to my Dad for his everlasting loving presence that I carry with me.

I am so thankful to my three children, Willow, Silas and Rowan, the greatest teachers of my life. These three beautiful people gave me the gift of being their Mom. They continually amuse me and are my muses. Finally, I am forever and eternally grateful to my partner in life and soul mate, Adam Greaves, who encouraged and supported me selflessly in this, the fulfilment of a lifelong dream and goal. This work could not have happened without his boundless devotion and Love.

I wish to acknowledge this space that I have called home, raised my children and studied as Treaty 7 territory and the traditional territory of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Nakoda (Stoney), and Tsuut'ina. In this, I honor the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Material Instincts: Ruminations on Motherhood and Craft, is an MFA Thesis Project that examines the troubling implications and entanglements of the roles of artist and mother. My central research interests encompass both culturally familiar and less visible aspects of mothering: time distortions; loss of individual identity; domestic labour; love and the performance of care. Through the use of materials and processes often assigned to the realm of craft, I explore margins of high and low art, personal and political subjectivities, the hand-made, industrial objects and contemporary methods of display. I aim to unmask the invisible nature of the labour involved in mothering through seemingly endless, repetitive handwork. The process of fabrication takes place over many months, in institutional and domestic settings. This exploration of labour and time addresses the nature of craft material processes and points towards second and third wave feminist theory that posits the personal is political.[1]

> Richly evocative of tradition, history, and a standard of quality, [craft] can connote many things: skill, art form, antidote to the machine, hobby, therapy, counterculture, deception. In the past decade alone, with the rise of a new generation, we've seen the field expand to include DIY, craftivism, and maker culture.[2]

[1]Julia Schuster discusses second wave feminist Carol Hanish who coined the phrase "the personal is political" to indicate that the personal experiences of women are important because they "represent collective experiences of oppression in patriarchal power structures of society." Schuster goes on to explain that third wave feminists re-interpreted this idea to encompass "everyday feminism" or behaviors and activities that challenge gender inequalities in ordinary ways like fashion, consumer choices or by "reclaiming/learning traditional feminized skills" such as knitting or embroidery. From: Julia Schuster, "Why the personal remained political: comparing second and third wave perspectives on everyday feminism," *Social Movement Studies* 16, no.6 (2017): 647-659.

[2] Joyce Lovelace, "Craft: Seriously what does the word mean?" *American Craft Magazine*, October/November, 2018, https://craftcouncil.org/magazine/article/craft-seriously-what-does-word-mean/.

The hierarchy and divisions[3] of material used in art production emerged in the Renaissance[4] and have been defined along lines of gender, place of fabrication and function. Materials and process such as ceramics, sewing, weaving and knitting became the tools used in mid-twentieth century feminist art[5] and their use was emblematic of women's daily experiences. I was drawn to these materials and have engaged with them long before I understood this about them. I use these materials and processes in my investigations of methodical labour, tactility and sensuality and the intimate spaces of domestic life[6]. The divisions and barriers between craft and 'high' art practices have undergone a long and complex history, leading to the present moment of Postdisciplinarity, a term that craft scholar Glenn Adamson first initiated as an "undifferentiated field of practice" where "no one activity has any more right to be called art than another."[7] Now commonly understood as a term for the use of *any* and *all* material as a means of expression in art, Postdisciplinarity is the contemporary theory that

[3] Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock describe this hierarchy as "a stratified system of values," where "painting and sculpture enjoy an elevated status" whereas other art forms seen inside homes such as quilting, embroidery or stitchery are "relegated to a lesser cultural sphere under such term as 'applied', 'decorative' or 'lesser' arts." From: Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, "Crafty women and the hierarchy of the arts," in *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (New York: Pandora Press, 1981), 50.

[4] Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, "Crafty women and the Hierarchy of the Arts," in *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (New York: Pandora Press, 1981), 50.

[5] Cornelia H. Butler and Lisa Gabrielle Mark, *WACK!: art and the feminist revolution*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007).

[6] As described by M. Vincentelli, domestic spaces and homes are relevant yet underrecognized as locations for experiencing art, particularly ceramics. Although home is the most common space to encounter ceramics, it remains "undervalued because of an understanding of domestic space as a female sphere." From: M. Vincentelli, *Women and Ceramics: Gendered Vessels* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 128.

[7] Glenn Adamson, "Introduction, Section 7: Contemporary Approaches," in *The Craft Reader*, (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010), 586.

allays any high/low debate of the past.[8] Nonetheless, ceramics and textiles contain an embedded material and historical context that complicates and deepens their interpretation. Using stitchery in an artwork acknowledges the history of women working in domestic spheres; creating a handmade clay vessel points to the ramifications of industrialization and authorship. In my artwork, I use craft materials and processes to signal a feminist politics through my work. In my graduate work, I utilize these materials to connote political and social contexts that are often overlooked or undervalued, specifically within the home and throughout the role of motherhood.

I am a mother of three children, Willow - age 12, Silas - age 10, and Rowan - age 7, whom I am raising with my husband-life-partner, Adam Greaves.[9] We inhabit a suburban, 1978-era house in the Varsity Village neighborhood in Lethbridge, Alberta. Our space is ample and decidedly unstylish. We have too many books and shelves that overflow with handmade pottery. Life is very busy. In my domestic circumstance, time is a most valuable commodity. Personal growth, political involvement and art fabrication must take place in the 'everydayness' of life. The work of my MFA project is about navigating time scarcity and my experiences as a mother within private and public realms. I struggle with capitalist progress and neoliberal economic and political systems that stress individual freedoms over community, connection and imperfection, that diminish the domestic sphere, and mothering in particular, by not adequately recognizing its contribution to a productive and vibrant social order. This point is amplified by the

[8] The hierarchical division between art and craft were formed by the "conditions of production and the audience," From: Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, "Crafty women and the hierarchy of the arts," in *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology*, (New York: Pandora Press, 1981), 70.
[9] Adam Greaves is a Mental Health Therapist with Alberta Health Services and is classified as an essential worker.

current covid-19 global pandemic requirements of ongoing self-isolation and social distancing [10] where the domestic space of 'home' has become the *only* place of existence for most individuals and families. The duties and labour requirements of mothering have been compounded by newly necessitated tasks of homeschooling, pandemic preparedness, frenetic household and personal hygiene requisites and expanded kin work tending to extended family, elders and community. Social institutions are dismantled, public and post-secondary schools are shut down, the economy is closed for business and civil liberties are drastically limited, yet the home, family and society at large must find ways to continue to function. As a graduate student and mother, an already tricky navigation of time and space has been made more complicated. However, it has also been simplified in unprecedented ways. My family unit of five rely on and interact solely with one another, highlighting the intricate workings of our small micro-community. The thesis work undertaken during this unique time seeks to explore the complexities of the maternal experience and the artist + mother identity in conjunction with feminist questions surrounding equality, subjugation, harmony and freedom.

[10] covid-19 pandemic / https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/ https://resources-covid19canada.hub.arcgis.com/. Beginning in December 2019 in Wu-han China, this novel virus was declared a global pandemic by WHO in February 2020. At the time of this writing, May 10, 2020, Canada has been on lockdown for 58 days, schools, universities, businesses and all public spaces are closed, there are 68,738 confirmed cases and there have been 4,870 deaths in Canada. There are over 4 million cases worldwide and 282,823 people have died.

2. HISTORY AND CONTEXT

2.1 (My) Clay History

The canon of craft history that I refer to in my work and this Thesis Support Paper is largely rooted in the ideas of William Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement.[11] The idea of 'lost knowledge' or a preservation of a way of life is something that has permeated craft history[12] as it deliberates over the Arts and Crafts movement as well as the studio potter movement.[13] Today, craft theory has moved forward to embrace postcolonial thought and postdisciplinarity.[14] I have heard it said that ceramics has been *having a moment* in contemporary art. I have also heard ceramic artists rebuke this, asserting that rather, it is having a *reckoning.*[15] At long last, craft materials and the people who use them are being acknowledged in the art world. Modernism's categorizations of high/low are linked to colonial behaviour. The othering of materials that has taken place

[11] British craftsperson and founder the Arts and Crafts movement, William Morris, promoted social reform through a return to hand-made objects. In response to industrialization, Morris heralded his ideas as reclamation of the joy lost in alienated labour. Morris is looked to as a champion of craft. Through this movement, the use and production of textile and other craft mediums, have been linked with political critique of labour.

[12] Craft theorist Glenn Adamson talks about the challenge that craft has faced with the idea of "imminent disappearance." This likely harkens back to the birth of the Arts and Crafts movement in the milieu of industrialization. He describes craftspeople as experiencing an "ongoing sense of loss." As a solution to this backward-looking position, Adamson's suggestion to counter this narrative by "framing craft as a powerful driver of progressive change in its own right." Glenn Adamson, *The Invention of Craft*. (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 184.

[13] In the 1950s in the United States, a new spirit in studio pottery was taking place. We see the rise of the studio potter, who takes "all aspects of the making themselves from digging and preparing the clay, throwing and decorating to building and firing the kilns." Andrew Livingstone and Kevin Petrie "Section 2.2 Studio Ceramics, *The Ceramics Reader* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 127.

[14] Described by Glenn Adamson as an undifferentiated field of practice. Hickey, G. "Why is sloppy and postdisciplinary craft significant and what are its historical precedents?" *Sloppy craft: Postdisciplinarity and the crafts*, ed. Paterson, E. C., & Surette, S. (London: Bloomsbury. 2015), 109-124.

[15] The idea of *a reckoning* is taken from a conversation I had with ceramic artist and scholar Lyndsay Montgomery, Assistant Professor of ceramics at Concordia University, where she described her view of clay's continuance and slow acceptance into the art world, summer 2019.

in the past, parallels a suppression of voices. To say that clay's (and thereby craft's) exclusion from the art canon is gendered and racist is not outrageous. Glen Adamson, foremost craft theorist, recently wrote: "You can make a strong case that the long-standing marginalization of the crafts…..was just the art world's way of practicing sexism and racism, barely disguised as a policing of disciplines rather than people."[16] In my own story, it is often the women I have encountered who have brought me progressive insight and understanding about my material and the meaning that it can convey.

I began my experience with clay at the Emily Carr University of Art and Design[17] in1994 and continued my studies at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design[18] in 1998. These two art schools in Canada are highly regarded historically and have maintained their solid reputations as excellent art educational institutions despite a series of restructures over the past several decades. They are vastly different in their approaches, reflective of their unique East Coast /West Coast sensibilities.[19] I learned from two eminent Professors and Canadian ceramic artists, Paul Mathieu and Walter Ostrom. It was a privilege to be introduced to clay by these two men who were divergent in their material practice and approaches. Mathieu had the utmost clarity in his articulation of the conceptual relevance

[16] Adamson, Glenn, "Art Embracing Craft," *Artsy*, Jan. 13, 2020, https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-art-embracing-craft/.

[17] Emily Carr University of Art and Design (ECUAD) (formerly the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design) is a public post-secondary art school and university located in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Established in 1925 as the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts, as the first degree-granting institution in British Columbia created specifically for students of both the visual and performing arts. It was named after the Canadian artist Emily Carr in 1978. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emily_Carr_University_of_Art_and_Design/.

[18] NSCAD University, also called the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, is a post-secondary art school in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. It was founded in 1887 by Anna Leonowens and later became the first degree-granting art school in Canada. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NSCAD_University/.

[19] The ceramics department at Emily Carr was strongly connected with the sculpture department, lending to its focus on conceptual work. The NSCAD ceramics department existed within the craft division, which acknowledged and cultivated both functional and sculptural ceramics.

of a ceramic object – including figurines, utilitarian pottery or elements of architecture – and he expounded on the distinction between sculptures made of clay and ceramics.[20] He was one of the first craft theorists I read, initiating my deeper investigation of clay, ceramic as a material, and the objects we create with it. His classes consisted of philosophical lectures on contemporary discourse more so than discussion of technique or critique. Ostrom, on the other hand, taught through material demonstrations, affirming himself as a skilled maker and radical storyteller. In fact, he has frequently been characterized as one of the key contributors to the growth and progress of ceramics as a field of art study in North America, certainly in Canada.[21] Due largely to his "interest and dedication to pots that exist for, and are about domestic spaces, (the department) attracts students who are also interested in domestic settings and functional work."[22] there is an unmistakeable legacy of women potters who have emerged from the NSCAD program with a recognizable NSCAD aesthetic.[23]

None of my professors in ceramics were women. By the time I was preparing to graduate this absence of female mentorship was weighing heavily on me. It was my aim

[20] P. Mathieu, "But Is It (Ceramic) Art? Ceramics and the 'Problem' with Jean-Pierre Laroque's Exhibition at the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art," in *Craft Perception and Practice: A Canadian discourse, volume III*, eds. Paula Gustafson, Nisse Gustafson & Amy Gogarty (Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2008), 113-124.
[21] "Explicating Histories," *Utopic impulses: contemporary ceramics practice,* eds. Ruth Chambers, Amy Gogarty & Mireille Perron (Vancouver:Ronsdale Press, 2007), 3.
[22] N. Clement, "Function, Form and Process: Walter Ostrom and the Female Potters of NSCAD," *Utopic impulses: contemporary ceramics practice,* eds. Ruth Chambers, Amy Gogarty & Mireille Perron (Vancouver:Ronsdale Press, 2007), 5-19 .
[23] The NSCAD ceramics department was well known for the women potters who went through the program and then went on to become highly influential Ceramic Professors throughout North America. The technique of 'cut and paste' or throwing and altering functional pots to create unique forms as well as the signature earthenware or terracotta clay body became strongly associated with NSCAD and Walter Ostrom. Functional pottery and the women who innovated during this new era of ceramics, determining the legacy of the department, include Sarah Coote, Linda Sikora, Katrina Chaytor, Julia Galloway and Joan Bruneau.

to use utilitarian pots to express my own narratives, and I craved exposure to insight about the creative process from women who were working in this way. To fulfil this deficit, upon graduating with my Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from NSCAD, I embarked on two post-degree special studies with two renowned women ceramic artists and NSCAD alumni, Joan Bruneau and Julia Galloway. Special studies with these women had a profound impact on me as I revisited the two institutions at which I studied to complete my undergraduate degree, Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design and Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. In these ceramic departments, instructor/mentors performed their own studio practice under the same roof as the small group of studio students. This environment fostered sharing, communication and storytelling in long days and evenings in the studio. Nothing else was as compelling as life in the studio. In these circumstances 'the personal' became a part of our art making. We were making functional ware, so of course we shared meals, and in this, we shared ourselves. Inquiry and critique of our functional vessels took place in everyday gatherings and in special celebrations. Learning crossed over from the academy into personal experiences and relationships. This was the framework for an authentic feminist theoretical practice.

I continued my frequent relocations from west coast to east coast to pursue studio work, gaining exposure to a myriad of cross-Canadian perspectives, that in that pre-social media era, were more limited in their accessibility. From all of my teachers, the message that I received was that clay had entered the contemporary art canon sometime around the mid-twentieth century after the rise of the studio pottery movement. What lingered was only the nuanced residue of the art/craft debate. Clay artists in the late

1990s – 2000s asserted an end to material hierarchies and claimed a hard-won battle that was, for the most part, over.[24]

Central to my research have been investigations of artists who work with maternal themes, women working within a feminist art canon and women artists who have propelled ceramics forward. Artists such as Betty Woodman (1930-2018), whose work embodies irreverent examples of disrupting function in favour of expression in her painterly wall pieces, sculptural vases and platters and large-scale installations. Woodman's early feminist viewpoint was expressed in her commitment and pursuit of technical and material mastery, as much as in her legacy of innovation and creativity. She was one of the most famous women ceramic artists, known for her re-interpretation and extraordinary alteration of wheel thrown forms, cut and assembled into abstractions of function and form.

Two years before her death in 2016 at age 85, she was the subject of a solo show at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, with the title *Theatre of the Domestic*.[25] Her influence was significant. At NSCAD, in the basement of the Morse's Tea building, the ceramics department held a large collection of bisque pots that had been created during artist workshop demonstrations and left behind. This rich trove was housed in the clay mixing and storage area, a hidden place that only some senior students or graduate students would access. Within this collection were some of Woodman's iconic oversized 'pillow pitchers.' The quiet, enchanting experience of not only seeing and examining

[24] This is anecdotal but it was my understanding that the art/craft material debate that had plagued ceramics for so long was finally fading and was no longer the prime occupation of craft theorists.
[25] Betty Woodman, *Theater of the Domestic*, at the Institute of the Contemporary Arts, London, England, February 3 – April 10, 2016. https://cfileonline.org/exhibition-betty-woodman-theatre-of-the-domestic-at-institute-of-contemporary-arts-london-contemporary-ceramic-art-cfile/.

these unglazed, unfinished pots but moreover, holding them and encountering them in a tactile way was deeply affective for me as a young, aspiring artist. It was in moments such as these that I began to contemplate and understand the elements that come together when ceramic pots become art. Within these radical and beautiful objects was a disruption of the status quo and an extraordinary material acuity.

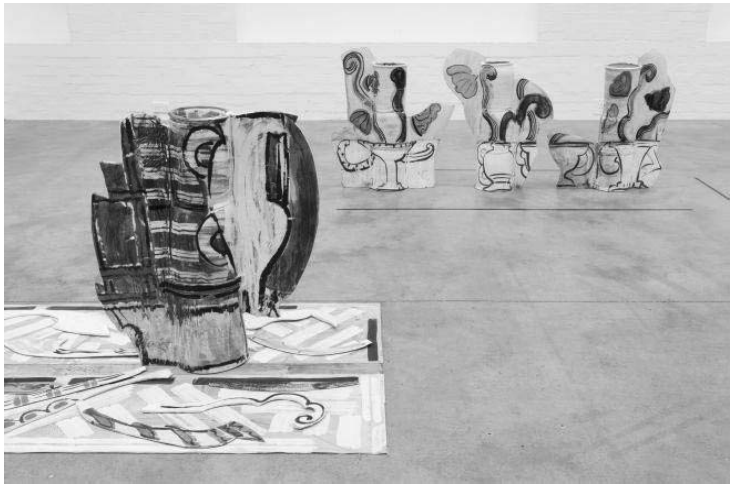

Image 01: Betty Woodman, *Theatre of the Domestic*, 2016, glazed earthenware, installation at ICA, London

Image 02: Betty Woodman, *Rose et Noir Pillow Pitcher*, 1989, glazed earthenware, epoxy resin, lacquer, paint, collection: Joan Hardy-Clarke

My graduate research unearthed information about another significant ceramic artist, Marguerite Wildenhain (1896-1985). I had discovered her infamous interactions with Bernard Leach,[26] however, as a historical figure, her influence was largely undervalued until recently. Trailblazing from an early age, she was the only woman at the Dornburg ceramic workshop at the Weimar Bauhaus. In 1925 she was the first female to earn the designation of Master potter in Germany.[27] She later emigrated to the USA as a Jewish refugee. In 1952 she set up a Bauhaus style pottery workshop in Sonoma County, California, "long after functional pottery had yielded to ceramic sculpture."[28] Her unique pedagogy reflected the Bauhausian approach and was "admired for its uncompromising rigour in pursuit of the craftsman ideal."[29] Hers was not an object-focused pedagogy, rather, students threw five or six hundred pots over the course of their two or three months in residence and then left with no pots or products of their labour in hand. Pond Farm, Wildenahain wrote, was "not a 'school'; it is actually a way of life."[30] The training was decidedly process-oriented and it marked an important cornerstone in the evolution of mid-twentieth century craft. Jenni Sorkin, craft theorist, asserted "Pond Farm's anti-object stance troubles the dominant narrative, marking an important and overlooked moment in modern craft."[31]

[26] Brent Johnson, "A Matter of Tradition: A Debate between Marguerite Wildenhain and Bernard Leach," *The Ceramics Reader*, eds. Andrew Livingstone and Kevin Petrie (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 114-120. Bernard Leach was the dogmatic grandfather of studio pottery in England who promoted the Japanese techniques as the most superior and espoused the philosophical views of Soji Hamada.
[27] Jenni Sorkin, *Live Form : Women, Ceramics, and Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 56.
[28] Ibid.p.56.
[29] Ibid.p.57
[30] Ibid.p.56
[31] Ibid.p.61

Wildenhain's unconventional views extended to all aspects of her methodology. In 1953 she publicly challenged Bernard Leach and with that, opposed the gender and race-based hegemony that was dominating studio craft discourse. She was a master of her craft during a period when ceramics was dominated by men, though she did not attain artistic recognition equal to any of her male counterparts, a double-erasure, typical throughout the art historical canon.

In the Bauhaus, ceramics served as a crossover medium, one in which women and men could both gain mastery. However, gender discrimination was systemically and broadly reinforced in institutional and cultural contexts eventually leading to an environment where women were widely excluded from the professoriate, a lack I experienced during my undergraduate studies more than forty years later. It is for this reason I have been drawn to explore feminist art practices, and to utilize materials and ideas considered to be the territory of women. This has provided me with a wellspring of belonging and inspiration while continuing to expand my material knowledge of clay.

Clay is fundamental to my research method of *practice as research*. Estelle Barrett, who writes about studio-based, practice-led research, as an emergent research methodology wrote, "The continuity of artistic experience with normal processes of living is derived from an impulse to handle materials and to think and feel through their handling."[32] Further, Natalie Loveless, who has written extensively about *research-creation*[33] in her theory driven, often interdisciplinary, artistic practice asserts, "I start,

[32] Estelle, Barrett, "Experiential Learning in Practice as Research:Context, Method, Knowledge." in *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 6, no. 2 (2007): 115.
[33] Loveless writes "Research-creation is a geographically specific term that works in tandem with alternatives such as practice-based research, practice-led research, research-based practice, research-led practice, creative praxis, arts-driven inquiry, arts-based research and increasingly,

then, with feminism as a mode of attention, political commitment, and theoretical engagement for emerging questions surrounding artistic knowledge production."[34] It is in this "feminist mode of attention," that I find *my* footing in the space of personal subjectivity. This is where I live in sensorial atunement with clay as I ruminate on my maternal self.

In this arena, my body, hands, senses and my engagement in the repetition of material explorations are the tools of my research. I have a craftsperson's affinity for my material which I believe has a basis in rationality. The relationship that has developed over a long period of time, after prolonged interactions of working with my material is what Peter Dormer, craft scholar, terms *tacit knowledge*.[35] This type of knowledge is gained solely through experiential means. Tacit knowledge is not easily codified and therefore cannot be transmitted through language alone.[36] In the case of the craftsperson, it must be acquired through observation, proximity and practice. Through this ongoing activity, neural pathways are changed, similar to the case with playing a musical instrument. This physiological effect on the endocrine system, creates an emotional connection between the material and the maker. According to Barrett, "Creative arts research is often motivated by emotional, personal and subjective concerns, it operates not only on the basis of explicit and exact knowledge, but also on that of tacit and

artistic research." From: Natalie Loveless, *How to Make Art at the End of the World*, London: (Duke University Press, 2019), 4.

[34] Natalie Loveless, "Practice in the Flesh of Theory: Art, Research, and the Fine Arts PhD**,"** *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37 (2012): 93-108. https://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/2531/2771/.

[35] I read about Peter Dormer's accounts of tacit knowledge in his PhD Thesis from the Royal College of Art in London, 1992. His writing stood out at the time as he was one of the first craft theorists from this institution. His critical and curatorial work helped to promote the crafts into postmodern visual culture. The Peter Dormer Lectures take place annually in the UK in his memory.

[36] Ibid.

experiential knowledge."[37] Over time, artists and craftspeople feel emotionally entwined with their processes and material. This type of knowledge arises from our handling of materials and becomes central to the experience and meaning of the work.

In practice-led research, the artist's deep understanding of material is a requirement for originality. Barrett maintains, "the new can be seen to emerge in the involvement with materials, methods, tools and ideas of practice. It is not just the representation of an already formed idea nor is it achieved through conscious attempts to be original."[38] It is this engagement with tacit knowledge that gives rise to new discoveries and reflections that originate through making. Loveless corroborates my emotional, personal and subjective relationship to material engagement as a site to explore feminist reflections on motherhood.

> The role of the personal voice in feminist criticism –read in, but not reducible to, the autobiographical, confessional, situated, motivated, interested, anecdotal, and performative –is to assert a location and production of value tied to those material and phantasm-like locations we call the "I" and the "me.[39]

The craftsperson in me knows this in an embodied way; the scholar can support it with contemplative knowledge; the artist discovers it through research-creation and inquiry.

2.2 Craft and Ceramics

Craft is an expansive term, used to describe a range of ideas relating to: standards of skill, tradition, making, materials, function, creativity, human experience and activity,

[37] Estelle, Barrett, "Experiential Learning in Practice as Research:Context, Method, Knowledge." in *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 6, no. 2 (2007): 115.
[38] Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt, "The Magic is in Handling," *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2007), 30.
[39] Natalie Loveless, "Practice in the Flesh of Theory: Art, Research, and the Fine Arts PhD**,"** *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37 (2012): 93-108. https://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/2531/2771/.

cultural knowledge, social and political engagement. Many people have attempted to define the specific attributes of production and material that must be fulfilled in order for objects to qualify as craft such as the work must be done predominately by hand or reference craft traditions and history.[40] However, in an evolving theoretical arena craft takes on a myriad of meanings such as: "applied creativity,"[41] "making something well through hand and skill,"[42] "a cultural and critical response to the entire history of making 'things,'[43]" "an action, a community, something with agency,"[44] "a constant dialogue between personal histories and materials,"[45] "grows from everyday human experience, which makes it inherently social and political,"[46] "an embodied way of passing on culture,"[47] "an intrinsic expression of life and creation."[48] Alongside these wide ranging attributes, I find my own explanation of craft. To me, craft is a corporeal process that

[40] Bruce Metcalf, "Reconsidering 'The Pissoir Problem,'" in *The Ceramics Reader,* ed. Andrew Livingstone and Kevin Petrie (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 244.
[41] Joyce Lovelace, "Craft: Seriously what does the word mean?" *American Craft Magazine*, October/November 2018, https://craftcouncil.org/magazine/article/craft-seriously-what-does-word-mean/. Quote by Susannah Daly.
[42] Glenn Adamson, The Invention of Craft, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), xxiv.
[43] Joyce Lovelace, "Craft: Seriously what does the word mean?" *American Craft Magazine*, October/November 2018, https://craftcouncil.org/magazine/article/craft-seriously-what-does-word-mean/. Quote by Stephanie Syjuco, artist; assistant professor in sculpture, University of California, Berkeley.
[44] Ibid. Quote by Abraham Thomas, curator-in-charge, Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian American Art Museum.
[45] Ibid. Quote by Tanya Aguiñiga, artist and designer.
[46] Ibid. Quote by Suzanne Isken, executive director, Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles
[47] Benjamin Lignel, "Persistent Craft, Fragile Museums," *Norwegian Crafts*, August 22, 2017, http://www.norwegiancrafts.no/articles/persistent-craft-fragile-museums/. Quote by Namita Wiggers, educator; director and co-founder, Critical Craft Forum.
[48] Joyce Lovelace, "Craft: Seriously what does the word mean?" *American Craft Magazine*, October/November 2018, https://craftcouncil.org/magazine/article/craft-seriously-what-does-word-mean/. Quote by Natalie Chanin.

engages skill and knowledge with the head, heart, hand (and tools) of the crafter, resulting in a state of flow.[49]

Ceramics is a practice that takes place within the field of craft. Clay is shaped by hand and tool into countless forms. When raw clay is fired and glazed, it becomes ceramic. This complex union of form, surface and color is a conduit for the communication of ideas and stories. Vessels are containers, objects of function, their utility adding a layered meaning that can be understood conceptually. Function, as described by Paul Mathieu, "implies a form of abstraction, the reduction of a natural experience into a cultural one." [50] Craft is an activity, both in its making and its use; in the performativity of the 'everyday'.

To address the conceptual meaning derived from 'everyday use' as it has emerged in relational and performative aesthetics is relevant here. It is through use that the object gains meaning. However, to view craft (and ceramics) as dealing only with 'the object' overlooks recent assertions of craft discourse that view craft as a *verb*.[51] For instance, in the ideas surrounding activist craft and craftivism, value and affect rest largely in the time and interactions spent *in the making process*. This idea reinforces my own making experience and it troubles the view that artists engaged in craft are solely concerned with

[49] The idea of 'flow' according to Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi, Hungarian-American psychologist, is "the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it." Taken From "Sloppy craft and interdisciplinarity: The conversation" in *Sloppy Craft: Postdisciplinarity and the Crafts*, eds. Elaine Cheasley Paterson and Susan Surette, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 151.
[50] Paul Mathieux, "*But is it (Ceramic) Art?"* in Craft Perception and Practice Volume III, ed Paula Gustafson, Nisse Gustafson, Amy Gogarty (Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2007), 135.
[51] Glenn Adamson, "Introduction, Section 7: Contemporary Approaches," in *The Craft Reader*, (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010), 585 "…the preferred term of self -dentification of those involved: they describe themselves as 'crafters.' In its active, verb-like quality, the word seems designed to achieve differentiation from the older term, 'craftsperson', with its connotation of fixed and permanent identity."

the creation of perfect or aesthetic objects. In the case of Marguerite Wildenhain, her pedagogy was rooted in the process of making, not the outcome of the labour. Her view was that the vessel is 'live' in that the clay registers the immediate gesture of the artist.[52] Her term conveys the "artist's embodiment of form itself, through an indexical presence that becomes ever present and unceasing."[53] Additionally, Opposing the idea that 'object creation' defines craft, are artists engaged in performative craft, which focuses on durational and relational exercises with material that do not result in craft objects but might result in objects that are performative remnants or residue.

For instance, Canadian Indigenous artist Ursula Johnson's basket weaving is simultaneously performative, is engaged with traditional knowledge and materials, is object making and is layered with the intellectual activity of art creation.[54] I would argue that in her case, neither the material nor concept are subordinate to one another, but they exist equally; the idea cannot be expressed without method, material and processes. Johnson makes craft and she makes art.

The adage that craft is made from "traditional" methods and materials, excludes those that work in unconventional or contemporary materials such as plastics or computer components, while still drawing upon traditional methods such as crochet or stitchery. Additionally, an emerging category termed hybrid craft is made by artists who engage in digital design or manufacturing processes at different stages of their material practice. Definitions are evolving. As Bruce Metcalf puts it, "Discerning shades of craftiness is

[52] Sorkin, Jenni, *Live Form : Women, Ceramics, and Community* (Chigaco: The University of Chigaco Press, 2016), 11.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ursula Johnson, "First Nations Cultural Preservation Through Art": TEDxHalifax. YouTube, November 23, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HHvaZKFgRA/.

accurate and useful. After all, the central enterprise in contemporary craft has been expanding the traditional boundaries."[55]

There are circumstances in which concept is inextricably linked to material in what could be termed conceptual craft or process art, "in these works, the content is not wholly fixed but occurs – at least in part – during production."[56] This assertion contradicts Adrian Piper's position that in conceptual art, the idea is primary, the material is subordinate. Regardless of primacy of concept or material, all varieties of concept-driven art work have been influenced by Marcel Duchamp's Fountain as a foundational conceptual work. *Fountain*, an unremarkable, garden-variety porcelain urinal bearing the signature 'R. Mutt 1917', is an iconic art object that has had a profound influence on the art and craft worlds. Garth Clark, prolific curator and theorist of contemporary ceramics readily states that both Duchamp, as well as surrealist artist Meret Oppenheim, followed a similar method in that "all they did with their found ceramic objects…..with the slightest modifications, was to contextualize them."[57] *Fountain,* in the context of craft vs art, has been at the center of discussions of the value of labour, as discussed in John Roberts ideas of "conceptual acuity" or Richard Sennet's ideas surrounding "the genius of the hand."[58] These discussions parallel the complications in my domestic arena about which *type* of labour is most important, most elevated or most valued.

[55]Bruce Metcalf, "Reconsidering 'The Pissoir Problem,'" in *The Ceramics Reader*, ed. Andrew Livingstone and Kevin Petrie (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 244.
[56] Paul Owen discussed the rise of protest art largely used by feminist and non-western artists as "critiques of the canon of Western aesthetics." from: Paula Owen, "Fabrication and Encounter: When Content Is a Verb" in *Extra/Ordinary: Craft and Contemporary Art*, ed. Maria Elena Buszek (London: Duke University Press, 2011), 88.
[57] Ibid.p.278-284.
[58] Schwabsky, Barry, "Making is Thinking," *American Craft*, Oct/Nov 2008, 84.

However, if craft wishes to ascend binary arguments and engage in the domain of conceptual art, then the work of contextualization that Clark specifies must take place to "signal relevant aspects of an intersection or communicative situation."[59] Makers of handmade objects need to determine the linguistic clues or vocabulary they are using in these communicative situations. Robert Arneson[60] laid the groundwork in the 1960's when he inserted himself into the critique of status art with his own cheeky retort to *Fountain* with *Funk John*, a ceramic toilet that declared "This IS art!" Further, Kim Dickey, professor from University of Colorado, steered the conversation to a feminist arena with her droll offshoot of conceptual "toilet art" with a series of female urinals entitled *Lady J's* (1994-1999) whose functional purpose was to allow women to urinate standing up. [61]

Image 03: Kim Dickey, *Bushes 2 from the Lady J Series*, 1994-1999, glazed stoneware

[59] Taken from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contextualization_(sociolinguistics).
[60] Robert Arneson, creator of the California Funk movement of the 1960's
[61] University of Colorado was where Betty Woodman taught as a professor of ceramics and her influence was a defining aspect of their program.

These glazed, porcelain hand held urinals are aesthetic objects that read as a vessel of function. The meaning of the object, a feminist critique on the visibility of women artists in the art and craft worlds, is unmistakeable, signalled by the material expression and the object's performance of function in collaboration with the idea. In this work, Dickey's acumen of intellect and skill of hand are inextricably linked.

The amorphous 'art world' and 'craft world' contain edges of intersection rather than an amalgamation. As Bruce Metcalf stated, "…not everyone who makes art is making craft. Craft has limits…some things are just not craft."[62] Within these assertions lay a potential site of transformation; an opportunity to deconstruct an outdated system of comparison and move forward, in both theory and practice, to see an emerging subjectivity that encompasses and values intellectual *and* intuited knowledge.

2.3 Politicized Textile: Quilts, Stitching and Knitting

In the 1960's, 70's and 80's feminist (2nd wave) scholars began their research of quilting as a liberating act.[63] This shifted the cultural understanding of quilts from objects of function to visual objects with historic value. Feminist scholars such as Griselda Pollock and Rozsika Parker criticized the positioning of quilting and textile work below that of other art mediums, as work that took place in the domestic sphere.[64] There were

[62] Bruce Metcalf, "Reconsidering 'The Pissoir Problem,'" in *The Ceramics Reader, ed. Andrew Livingstone and Kevin Petrie* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 244.
[63] Kirsty Robertson, "Quilts for the Twenty-First Century: Activism in the Expanded Field of Quilting," in *The Handbook of Textile Culture*, eds. Janis Jefferies, Diana Wood Conroy, and Hazel Clark (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2014), 2.
[64] Rozsika Parker, and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology*, (New York: Pandora Press, 2013), 70.

many feminist scholars, such as Janis Jeffries, who wrote about the fundamental role of quilting in the recording of women's narratives, stating that:

> It is now generally acknowledged that many women have inscribed in quilts and stitch work the stories of their lives as a source of pleasure and painful recollection, using the medium as a weapon against the constraints of femininity and as a potential means of challenging masculine meanings and dominance in the visual arts and society.[65]

The act of revisiting the history of quilting through a progressive, feminist lens is what scholar Kirsty Robertson refers to as "productive re-interpretation.'[66] Quilts allowed for one of the first vehicles of activism and protest art by women. It is through this lens that quilts are recognized for the range of cultural influence they have provided, particularly in the empowering act of collective making – such as creating safe spaces for women, the passing of skills and knowledge through generations, and providing valuable sources of income.[67] Their unique historical value lies in that fact that they are reflections of the lives and experiences of mostly unheard, unseen, unrecorded female voices and their study and analysis has allowed for reclaimed histories of marginalized women and women of colour.[68] For this reason, Robertson asserts that "in fact, it was precisely the undervaluation of women's history that lead 1970s feminists to look at quilts."[69]

In 1971, an exhibit entitled *Abstract Design in American Quilts* at the Whitney Museum of American Art was curated by quilt collectors Jonathan Holstein and Gail Van der Hoof.[70] This exhibition marked the earliest acceptance of textiles into the

[65] Janis Jeffries, "Review of Quilts 1700-2010," *West 86th*18, no. 1 (2010): 125.
[66] Robertson, "Quilts," 7.
[67] Robertson, "Quilts," 5.
[68] Robertson, "Quilts," 5.
[69] Robertson, "Quilts," 6.
[70] Karin Peterson, "How the Ordinary Becomes Extraordinary: The Modern Eye and the Quilt as Art Form," in *Extra/Ordinary: Craft and Contemporary Art*, ed. Maria Elena Buszek (London: Duke University Press, 2011), 99.

contemporary institute as field of visual arts practice. This transformation of curatorial perspective was later extended by feminist artists such as Judy Chicago, Miriam Shapiro and Joyce Weiland who reclaimed textile, with all its imbedded history, to assert a feminist voice in the gallery-museum institution. This resulted in the era of politicized craft materials merging with fine art practices and the beginning-of-the-end of the art-versus-craft debate. What has ensued are radical acts of social criticism in a multitude of materials. I place myself firmly in the proximity of these women artists who use craft and textile materials for their rich communicative and sensorial implications within their art practice. In my work, I embrace the concept of 'productive re-interpretation' by allowing a crossover of materials such as clay and yarn to act as a stand in for traditional fabrics and stitching. I contend that these unconventional quilting materials maintain the politically subversive potential that has been acknowledged in the history of quilting.

2.4 Artist + Mother Identity and Feminist Art Practice

> By saying that domesticity is the locus of art, I do not mean that domesticity is so great….it has the stench of slavery about it. What I am saying is that those *women* were so great…Despite the stench of slavery and the need to do four million chores, they still made art.[71]
>
> -Miriam Schapiro

My upbringing in a working class, white settler family was steeped with many embedded norms and messages. I was told that I could 'do anything, be anything', yet the subtext indicated that many of those 'things' probably weren't a good idea. When I entered Emily Carr University at age 20, I began to assemble my own literacy in feminist ideas, and my entry point to these ideas was feminist art. The feminist art practices of

[71] Amelia Jones et al., *Sexual Politics : Judy Chicago's Dinner Party in Feminist Art History* (Los Angeles: University of California Press,1996), 119.

Tracey Emin, Mariam Shapiro, Judy Chicago[72] prompted me to value the use of material and craft practices to create work about my experiences as a woman. I explored the work of female artists from Louise Bourgeois to the Guerilla Girls. It has been one of the great pleasures of my graduate research to re-visit these artists from my current viewpoint.

Positioned within feminist art theory, my graduate work uses the experiences of women as subject matter in art making. I combine these ideas with an evolving studio craft practice which values the 'living form'[73] of material labour and engagement. Where are my intersections?[74] To determine where I claim a unique territory of research leads me back to these feminist art origins. Privileging my own voice and point of view in search for that territory brings me to where my past and present collide: Home. In determining what *kinds* of labour qualify for research-creation Natalie Loveless affirmed, "It is a voice that champions the home as a location from which to speak, whether that home is understood as the private and domestic, the personal and cathected, or the location of a political identity."[75] At this very moment that location is my kitchen table, shared with homeschooling material and remnants of today's lunch. Covid-19 is my present moment. I hold onto hope that this global pandemic has the potential to shift and change how we co-exist on this planet. It might, but for now I am sad and grieving all that is lost: my children's education, my MFA studio, time, friends, family, seasons, future plans, dreams. In her project about depression entitled *My Public Feelings*, Anne

[72] Judy Chicago and Miriam Shapiro's Womanhouse, Tracey Emin's autobiographical quilts,
[73] Jenni Sorkin, *Live Form : Women, Ceramics, and Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 11.
[74] Feminist, woman, artist, anti-capitalist, European settler Canadian, mother, craftsman, scholar
[75] Natalie Loveless, "Practice in the Flesh of Theory: Art, Research, and the Fine Arts PhD**,"** *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37 (2012): 93-108, https://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/2531/2771/.

Cvetkovich describes the domestic "as the private life of public culture, the home becomes the soft underbelly of capitalism, a place where the current state of things is experienced through a complex range of feelings."[76] I restate a personal commitment: this situation of covid-19, although extreme, will not derail my MFA work, in fact it will only build its resilience. The necessity to further weave my art practice into my domestic life allows for a unique opportunity to connect and crossover, and in a sense, make more whole, my research and practice.

I continue to investigate feminist artists who utilize the location of 'the everyday' in their work, revisiting Helena Reckitt's writing on feminist art and relational aesthetics, particularly her examination of Mierle Ukele's *Maintenance Art,* in which the artist performed a myriad of 'institutional maintenance'[77] tasks so routine, they were close to imperceptible. Unveiling issues of class, race and gender, *Maintenance Art*'s question of who is performing the work of keeping everyday society running, becomes magnified against the backdrop of covid-19 life. Essential workers such as grocery store clerks and sanitation workers fulfill the roles that are required to keep everyday life functioning at a basic level and these workers are organized according to gender, race and class. As I work to situate my practice today while the entire capitalist project is being interrogated, Reckitt's writings about Mierle Ukeles' art and performances that point to unrecognized labour and care work are highly relevant. Ukele's museum work "linked domestic work to that of producing and sustaining human labour – the labour of creating life."[78] By

[76] Ann Cvetkovich, "The Utopia of Ordinary Habit: Crafting, Creativity, and Spiritual Practice" in *Depression: A Public Feeling* (London: Duke University Press, 2012), 154-202.
[77] Helena Reckitt, "Forgotten Relations: Feminist Artists and Relational Aesthetics," in *Politics in a Glass: Case Feminism, Exhibition Cultures and Curatorial Transgressions,* ed. Angela Dimitrakaki and Lara Perry (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), 131.
[78] Ibid.p.133.

renaming the labour with which she was most occupied, she asserted her right to be seen in the context of an art gallery. “Her provocative art drew attention to institutional mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, validation and denial.”[79]I struggle with audience and presentation of my own work. Public and private galleries often have tenuous relationships to exhibiting functional clay work. I wonder how to arouse the gatekeepers. For instance, to display work in a market setting holds elements of performativity. In fact, as a young mother it was a nod to third wave feminist ideals to work at handmade craft venues with a baby in a sling or young children ‘helping’ with the sales. Perhaps I too, could embrace a “Uklelian gesture” and “recode all of my activities as art.”[80]

In the mother + artist identity, one of the complex issues is the negotiation of space and time to live and work within both identities. I have resisted the notion of making the identity of the mother + artist visible, maintaining a separation of private and professional ethos. I have done this to avoid the challenges of not being taken seriously when both of the roles are being performed at once, within view. Judgement of the public behaviour of mothers is pervasive. This holds irony; both of the roles are performed in the private sphere all the time. It speaks to the patriarchal structures that are in place in the art world and craft world. Natalie Loveless’s curatorial project *New Maternalisms:Redux* brought together artists who were engaged in a similar negotiation of mother + artist identities.

> I developed *Maternal Ecologies* and the *New Maternalisms* curatorial series as a reminder of the historical insistence on maternal invisibility in both art and academia that precede, and can inform, feminist artistic activism in the present moment.[81]

[79]Ibid.p.133.
[80]Ibid.p.133.
[81] Natalie Loveless, *New Maternalisms: Redux.* ed. Natalie Loveless. (Edmonton: University of Alberta Department of Art and Design, 2018), 34-50.

In my experience up until now, it was not common or widely accepted to have children present and participating in the displays of woman's art practices. Yet this turned up in my research, reflecting both a changing attitude as well as a desire for audiences to see themselves represented. I found many contemporary artists who work with maternal themes and some who even include their children in their work. Included in Loveless's curatorial series *New Maternalisms*, is the work of artist Courtney Kessel. She brings her daughter into her performative work to depict the emotional and mental load of mothering in a most literal and symbolic way. Kessel's integration of her identity as an artist and a mother is powerful and legitimizing.

> It is apparent in my work that I have made a definitive choice to be transparent about my maternity. In fact, I use it as a vehicle for discussion. Placing the private and domestic in the gallery, performs a maternal visibility that has not often been seen, let alone permitted.[82]

Image 04: Courtney Kessel and Chloe, *In Balance With*, 2014

[82] Natalie Loveless, *New Maternalisms: Redux.* ed Natalie Loveless. (Edmonton: University of Alberta Department of Art and Design, 2018), 39. Courtney Kessel in an interview with Christina La Master, Cultural ReProducers, 2015.

To see aspects of oneself in the art work of others is validating. I experience this in Lenka Clayton's artistic practice where her determination to make visible the commonplace and daily experiences of motherhood is a subversive and feminist act. In her project, *Artist Residency in Motherhood.*[83] Clayton invokes a Uklelian gesture by asserting the performance of maternal work as artist's labour. Viewing this work is a liberation of sorts. Her work grants permission to access my own experiences in mothering as subject matter in my work. I am not required to come up with 'real' subject matter. Rather, I am invited to engage more deeply and to extend the task at hand and entwine the nurturing and emotional labour required to raise children with the labour required in art-making.

At a key point in my young parenthood, in the summer of 2011, I entered a month-long ceramic residency at Medalta's artist in residence program.[84] As I navigated the artist + mother roles, I did not name it at the time, but I was engaged in a feminist art practice. I was enacting everyday gestures and actions that were seen by others. That is why it is terribly important to be able to see versions of yourself in the world. It is the origin of self-awareness and knowledge. The end of the residency culminated with an exhibition in the historic bee hive kiln gallery. It was a wonderful experience to take my

[83] In the current iteration of the work she shares the authorization, inviting any artist mothers to download her free kit. She describes the work as "a self-directed, open-source artist residency to empower and inspired artists who are also mothers." Retrieved May 20, 2020 from http://www.lenkaclayton.com/artist-residency-in-motherhood/. She is also included in Natalie Loveless, *New Maternalisms: Redux.* ed Natalie Loveless. (Edmonton: University of Alberta Department of Art and Design, 2018), 134-150.

[84] Medalta is a Museum and National Historic Site in The Historic Clay in Medicine Hat, Alberta. It is also home to the Shaw Center for Contemporary Ceramics and the Medalta International AIR (Artist in Residence) Program.

children through the space, show them my work and teach them how to see, respond to and interact with a ceramic exhibition. It allowed me to perform the roles of artist and mother together in the public sphere.[85]

Motherhood is a transformative space. It has changed me physically, mentally and emotionally. It is a liminal, ongoing and unfolding space. It requires an unravelling of self and a re-construction or re-organizing of the pieces. Much like winding a mess of yarn into an orderly skein. I can now proclaim my artist-as-mother status. I am in the arena, it is a vulnerable place to be, nevertheless I have arrived.[86]

2.5 Maternal Subjectivities

The days go slow but the years go fast.

- Unknown

The experience of time changed immeasurably for me when I became a mother. Babies exist on a twenty-four-hour clock, not a schedule of night and day or light and dark.[87] I found this altered sense of time was hugely disorienting. Sleep deprivation affected my ability to process emotion, perception and thought. I had to keep life simple. A good day's adventure would be a walk through my quiet neighborhood. During this time of adjustment, I experienced the first of many instances of shunning, loss of access

[85] Medalta fostered an environment of openness and support, welcoming my children, and it was in this space that I first set up toddlers on a studio couch with sesame street on a laptop while I glazed work and loaded kilns. Artist residencies are an important opportunity for mothers to shift their focus and priorities towards their art practice for a period of time.

[86] This idea of vulnerability and the arena are taken from BrenÈ Brown, *Braving the Wilderness : The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand Alone* (NewYork: Random House,2019).

[87] This was one of the most difficult realities for me, an adjustment that is most severe in the first three months after birth, often referred to as the fourth trimester of the mothering phase. The baby is outside of the womb, but continues to exist in a womb like state, learning how to eat, sleep and poop, in no particular order.

to what had previously been available to me, and increased isolation due to my maternal status. Whether it was being asked to leave locations for breastfeeding, not being allowed to bring strollers into certain establishments or my own sense of reclusion, I avoided conflict and isolated myself from public life. This avoidance and isolation increased as our family grew.[88] While on one hand it felt like time was standing still, I also became aware that any time for myself or my art practice would be stolen or woven into the fabric of feeding, nurturing and raising children. In response to this pervasive situation for women, Jungian scholar Clarissa Pinkola Estés wrote,

> I've seen women insist on cleaning everything in the house before they could sit down to write... and you know it's a funny thing about housecleaning... it never comes to an end. Perfect way to stop a woman. A woman must be careful to not allow over-responsibility (or over-respectability) to steal her necessary creative rests, riffs, and raptures. She simply must put her foot down and say no to half of what she believes she "should" be doing. Art is not meant to be created in stolen moments only.[89]

How we record the passage of time is one of the ideas that I seek to address in my art practice.[90] Time is a natural consideration when dealing with material practices. In her Art NOW lecture, Natalie Loveless relayed her research of Michelle Bastian's writing about time telling. Loveless invites artists to "de-naturalize time long enough to allow us to remember that we are indeed always surrounded by other times and other places."[91]

[88] The only place I could exist without judgement was the children's section of the Public Library. I spent many an hour in that quiet, welcoming space, experiencing my version of sleep deprived time distortions while my babies grew into sitting, crawling, standing and walking people.
[89] Clarissa Pinkola Estés, *Women who run with the wolves: myths and stories of the wild woman archetype* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2003).
[90] My perspective of time has only become more layered and complex. How is it possible that time's speed can feel different to people experiencing it together? For children an hour can feel unending, a summer can be an eternity, yet a mother may feel a week pass in a breath, a season in a blink.
[91] Natalie Loveless, "Sensing the Anthropocene," Art NOW Speaker Series, Department of Art, University of Lethbridge, March 29, 2019, https://player.vimeo.com/video/327983456

She calls for ‘defamiliarizations’ of clock time and challenges artists to “intervene into them at the level of daily practice.”[92]This is a feminist response and can be a quiet dismantling of a powerful mechanism that dictates our lives.

Working extensively with clay has given me the understanding that time and timing are critical, tuning to the rhythm of clay’s timing allows me to denaturalize clock time. Whether in the constructing, drying, glazing or firing processes, the time in which these processes are executed often determines a successful or unsuccessful outcome. Time is expressed in the material itself. Fired clay carries with it the meaning of permanence as in the case of an archeological record. The fired clay pieces that I have created are permanently on this earth, like plastic, only better. This applies to textiles as well, stitching being a stand-in for moments passing. Within craft practices, repetition and the passage of time are requirements of making. If time is not spent doing, then nothing is being made.

Until my graduate studies, I have self-identified as an object maker. The roots of my practice were informed by the historic use of clay, predominantly utilizing the language of the domestic through functional forms created on a potter’s wheel. There are few objects as intimate as the favorite mug. It is held, even coddled. It touches our lips, becomes coveted, and ownership is asserted through repetitive use. In my household, ‘that is MY favorite cup,” becomes a declaration of identity, territory, need. Cups hold warmth, refreshment, that which nurtures us, memory and personality. They become a cherished presence in our everyday lives and their use elicits the feeling akin to a conversation with an old friend. Objects of this type scaled for use in interior spaces are

[92] Ibid.

handled, washed, stacked and hung. They reflect the intimacy and warmth of homes. They are ritualized, used in small daily ceremonies or elaborate celebrations. In discussing the power of the intimate encounter, Paula Owen's account of the relationship between the object and the audience builds around what Bourriaud called "transitivity":

> The act of wearing, using or participating with an art object neutralizes the distance between the object and the viewer, allowing for the experience to be personal, ephemeral, associative and responsive, much like conversation.[93]

Within this understanding of intimate objects, handmade pots have always been in the territory of relational art. Therefore, my domestic space has long been a site of art experiences, inviting others into encounter and dialogue. Craft theorist Howard Risatti reminds us, "The doing that pertains to craft is never empty or rhetorical; always it is filled with meaning."[94] It is in the creation of these objects of everyday use that I express another layer of care and nurturing toward my family. The cultivation of sensory awareness by embedding our daily rituals with organic, sensual materials is one important way that I intervene in what I see in my children's lives as an almost inescapable trend toward a culture of sensory deprivation. Memory and comfort are some of my considerations when making objects that will be used by small hands and seen by imaginative eyes. In Betty Woodman's words, "The nourishment is offered on two levels."[95] Handmade pots offer a pathway to engage in an everyday experience of art and life.

[93] Paula Owen, "Fabrication and Encounter When Content Is a Verb," in *Extra/Ordinary: Craft and Contemporary Art*, ed Maria Elena Buszek (London: Duke University Press, 2011), 86.
[94] Howard Risatti, *A Theory of Craft: Function and Aesthetic Expression* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 126.
[95] Garth Clark, "Betty Woodman: Storm in a Teacup an Anecdotal Discussion of Function," in *Shards: Garth Clark on Ceramic Art*, ed. John Pagliaro (New York: Distributed Art Publications, 2003,) 253.

3. MATERIAL AND METHOD

At the beginning of my research, I asked: what will it look like to transition my practice from object maker to a more diverse artistic practice? Can craft be art or are they fundamentally different? One is defined as an activity of labour; the other as an activity of intellect. In her book *The Human Condition* (1958), Hannah Arendt pointed out, "Whenever the intellectual worker wishes to manifest his [sic] thoughts, he must use his hands and acquire manual skills just like any other worker."[96] In tandem with this, as a maker, I apply intellect in my material practice to contextualize my ideas. What results from this combination of labour is a slippage in the categorical overlay of art and craft as described in the term sloppy craft.'[97] This emergent theory interrogates the construct that craft is the realm of skill and art is the realm of ideas. It exists against the back drop of postdisciplinarity, where craft practices exist seamlessly within the lexicon of contemporary art. In this, 'sloppy' refers less to the execution of the material skills and more to the overlapping borders of 'craft' and 'art.' 'Sloppy' is like a stand in for 'complicated.' Functional clay objects carry social and historical meaning, reflecting knowledge and experiences from the hidden domestic. They are the basis of my visual language. I piece together their arrangement, whether rhythmic or jumbled to constitute a personal syntax, a poetry of form and pattern. Kirsty Robertson conveys, "To patch or piece together suggests collecting information or things, an act of investigation."[98] The labour and process involved in making the form creates one layer of meaning.

[96] Barry Schwabsky, "Making is Thinking." *American Craft*, Oct/Nov 2008, 84.
[97] Elaine Cheasley Paterson and Susan Surette, *Sloppy Craft* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015)
[98] Kirsty Robertson, "Quilts for the Twenty-First Century: Activism in the Expanded Field of Quilting," in *The Handbook of Textile Culture*, eds. Janis Jefferies, Diana Wood Conroy, and Hazel Clark (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2014), 2.

Consequent layers of meaning emerge within the form's relationship to each other, the space which contains their display and the ways in which the audience encounters them.

3.1 Love's Labour: before, now and yet to come

Love's Labour: before, now and yet to come is a series of dimensional hexagonal forms installed on a wall to create a large motif resembling a quilt pattern. The surfaces of the hexagons vary in their design, however repetition and uniformity lend the piece a sense of formal cohesion. This work engages the idea of repetitive labour in three essential ways: 1) creating multiple hexagonal ceramic slip casts made from a single plaster mold; 2) creating surfaces on each hexagon with underglaze, firing, glaze, collage and woven processes, and; 3) grouping, arranging and positioning the completed components in various sites – such as my kitchen, backyard, studio and a gallery space.

The material processes involved in the fabrication, surface treatment and assembly of each handmade hexagon is where much of the content of this work resides. It is about time and labour as much as it is about communication and holding space. Clay slip casting is a slow and laborious process. It was developed for industrial use to create multiple identical forms. It has been adopted by studio artists and its use references and exploits the notions of repetition and mass production. Initially, I adopted a system of creating one form per day. Industriousness prevailed. I duplicated the mold, and soon sped up my technique to create two forms per day, increasing production in an echo of maternal multi-tasking.

I am using a plaster mold of unknown origin. It was stored in the Art Department at the University of Lethbridge along with several similar industrial molds; therefore I

consider my use of it to be site responsive.[99] The casts produced from this mold are decorative, functional and dish-like, and I have chosen to subvert these vessels by turning them upside down and using the foot of the dish to present my content and design imagery. The hexagon design was one of the most popular quilting patterns in the 1800s.[100] I am drawn to its natural geometry. By hanging the collection on the wall, the piece references pictorial space through the lens of quilting history.

Image 05: *Love's Labour: before, now and yet to come*, (detail, in progress), slip cast stoneware, 2020

[99] In this case, fabricated in response to the particular site of the institution as well as later, responding to gallery space it inhabits in its grouping and positioning. I chose to work with this form as is resonated with me as a design element, linking to my explorations of quilts and their history in feminist politics.

[100] The earliest hexagon template that quilt researchers have found was made in England in 1770. Hexagon became one of the most popular patterns in England by 1830. Taken from: "Art: Quilts and Quilters: Pieced Quilts: Hexagon." Illinois State Museum Society, accessed April 15, 2020. http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/art/htmls/ks_piece_hex.html/.As well I looked closely at the hexagonal quilt patterns of Albert Small circa 1945 from: American Quilts: The Democratic Art, 1780-2007.

As a craftsperson, I engage in all aspects of fabrication, from mixing and pouring the slip to cleaning the seams, and adding the elements needed for wall mounting. I underglaze the forms, bisque fire them. I formulate and mix my glazes, glaze the form, and fire again. The meaning of this process vocabulary may not be immediately clear; however, what it represents is the embodiment of time and labour. Within this time and labour is the significance of craft, as an action. I recall the words of Carla Needleman, "…when I work at my craft in a way that allows each moment to fall of its own weight, without hurrying or retaining it, such a way of working will produce in me a greater state of sensitivity."[101] It is this time of solitary engagement in method and process where content and meaning is created. Some of the hexagons become a small loom for simple weavings, others have surfaces reminiscent of fabric scraps and traditional quilting patterns, some hold dimensional, doll-part forms. I was drawn to these doll forms, in part when reflecting on Clarissa Pinkola Estés' discussion of archetypes; the doll represents a child's first interaction with their intuition or listening to an inner voice. These disassembled and disembodied limbs holding tools can be read as an allegorical depiction of labour, however for me they also point to the practice of listening to the intuitive voice of the self. Each hexagon is handled and treated as an individual component, the result of a distinct intention or intellectual direction; subjected to countless decisions and choices relating back to my knowledge of clay as well as my own personal narratives. Much like the process of a patch sewn into a quilt, each hexagon is an expression of ideas that together create a series.

[101] Carla Needleman, *The Work of Craft: An inquiry into the nature of crafts and craftsmanship* (New York: Kodansha International, 1993), 9.

3.2 If pots were thoughts

If pots were thoughts
I would write you a poem
about fragility and fear
how care and courage
is the only work that can save us[102]

If pots were thoughts, is made up of many white, bisque fired vases bundled together and suspended. These repeating hollow vessels are round and bulbous at the belly, then cinched to an impossible waist with an elongated neck ending in a slightly widened rim at the top. There is an unfinished quality to the vases with the mold seams remaining highly visible. They are fastened together with yarn. They look to be tumbled together, askew, in a pile. The yarn that is wrapped around them, holding them together is carefully, tightly wound, binding and securing the vases to one another. In this mass of repeating forms there is an odd uniformity. The colors are muddied oranges and greens and yellows reminiscent of vintage acrylics found in the bargain bin at some thrift store. The palette could be called ugly. Against the white, bisque clay, the yarn affords the only colour and the lines offer a striking design in contrast to the soft white pottery forms. This mass of forms hangs suspended, taught lines of yarn tethered to the floor and the walls create a stillness, giving the impression of the suspension of time. Without the tethering, the vessels rub together in a delicate friction. Shadows of the form and lines are cast on the wall and floor.

[102] I wrote these words when wrapping yarn on the stick structure being built with my daughter in our backyard space.

Image 06: *If pots were thoughts-third iteration,* slip cast stoneware, yarn, 2020

I have created four iterations of this suspended installation. With each version, the piece has changed and grown larger. The final installation of this work is in a large spruce tree in my back yard. This decision was made in response to the closure of the studio and gallery facilities during covid-19 shutdowns. I needed to find a place for it to be. In response to the context of covid-19 and isolation, this works incites the feeling of a sad memory, something lost. A closeness that may not return.

If pots were thoughts, is an investigation of the use of the vessel as a sculptural form. Crafted from a found mold and slip cast stoneware clay, I begin to decontextualize the form by leaving it in a bisque state, the seams and residue of the slip casting process are left intact. Without glaze, the context of function is removed, leaving instead a porous, open surface. In this ambiguous state, the group of vessels serve as a phrase or syntax from a location of domestic space, rather than as a functional object. This evidence of process is meant to allow for a revealing and uncovering of a variety of possible

meanings. Informed by my history as a vessel maker and the influences of Betty Woodman, Joan Bruneau and Katrina Chaytor,[103] this object mass is at once common and familiar, resembling recognizable forms from nature such as a rose hip or seed pod. Yet its exaggerated stature is almost comical or garish, its voluminous belly offset by an overly narrow neck. It is a difficult form to cast, prone to collapse and sagging when too thick, or tearing and cracking when too thin. I began to keep all of the casts, successful or not, out of interest and as a record of my labour. Something close to a poetic meaning began to emerge for me from these distorted forms; all originating from the same mold, the same process, but with infinite variations, minute and significant.

The idea of tying or binding these vessels occurred spontaneously. The act of wrapping these bisque pots felt akin to the care that I perform as a mother, using a commonplace acrylic yarn, wrapping and creating a soft surface covering to these bald pots. Within this understanding, the wrapping alludes to comfort, softness, memory and care. Reminiscent of weaving threads, the visual result is coloured lines, appearing both soft and taught; tension and stillness pointing to a moment in time. The use of yarn enriches the material meaning pointing to a deep history of women's narratives expressed in textile.[104] Binding and tying connote restriction. However, being bound to circumstances and relationships can create stability and strength.

[103] Katrina Chaytor once commented on the voluminous and bulge-y nature of my woodfired pots (a contrast to the often stoic and austere forms common to wood firing) by stating "Your pots are not about being on a diet!" I loved this take as I felt I was trying to make a feminist response to a predominantly male studio pottery activity by creating soft, fleshy, volume filled vessel that could hold feast-worthy amounts of food and libations.

[104] " *'A Labour of Love'* exhibited at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in NYC, 1996, "…assembles the work of 50 contemporary artists drawing from folk, craft, outsider, decorative and fine art traditions…This exhibition of handcrafted, often labour intensive work by American artists from various cultural and artistic backgrounds is an investigation of some of the ways art and the everyday are inextricable interwoven," https://archive.newmuseum.org/exhibitions/257

The reflective discoveries that I encountered during the process of making this piece is one that Paula Owen's corroborates, "The object links us to thoughts, memories, sensations, histories and relationships rather than being an end in itself with a predetermined meaning."[105] The time spent wrapping and tying these forms together became a quiet and meditative space for me. The bundle became larger and heavier and the act of holding these awkward forms tightly together using only yarn, was challenging. In this quiet space, I felt parallels to the emotional and intellectual balancing act of my maternal life. This dance of trying to create stability, to wrap and tie a strong enough net with this ordinary, fallible material held me in a pocket of solitude, rich with reflection and contemplation. Time in this meditative space is the purpose of my practice.

In the final installation of this work, I am collaborating with my daughter. She initiated a self-directed project collecting large branches and sticks to build a tree structure. This structure is now being built under a large spruce tree in our back yard where it interacts with *If pots were thoughts,* also installed in this large tree. The covid-19 pandemic has transformed our home into a crossover space where public school, MFA studio, recreational, social and living spaces intersect. The collaboration creates a unique circumstance; one we normally do not share. My decision to install the final version of this piece in a large tree in my yard is an important evolution to my practice. By opening the parameters of work normally done in solitude, it opens the time allotment for studio practice and allows for material and conceptual intersections. The work is ephemeral, it feels like a moment in time, and a memory of something already gone. The location of the

[105] Paula Owen, "Fabrication and Encounter: When Content is a Verb," in *Extra/Ordinary: Craft and Contemporary Art*, ed. Maria Elena Buszek (London: Duke University Press, 2011), 84.

chosen site points further to my investigations about the viability, visibility and value of labour that takes place in the private domestic.

3.3 In the family of things

Wild Geese

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting -
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things. [106]

In the family of things, replicates familiar household objects, slip casting a selection in clay and fired to a white bisque.[107] They are unglazed. They hold a

[106] Mary Oliver, *Wild geese: selected poems*. (Tarset: Bloodaxe, 2004)
[107] In the summer of 2019, as a part of my summer semester, I attended a workshop on mold making at the Shaw center for contemporary ceramics at Medalta, Medicine Hat, Alberta. I had some mold making experience from my undergraduate education, enough to know that this was a process that held great interest and potential for me. I had audited a Digital Fabrication class in the semester previous and had 3D printed some altered tea bowl forms. I had made molds for them but was really having trouble getting good casts out of them. This workshop enabled me to work with a contemporary of mine, Jeremy Hatch. He is a master at slip casting and a professor at University of Montana.

remarkable amount of detail on their matte surface. Easily identifiable, the objects – a rolling pin, a wooden spoon, an oven mitt – insinuate a language of their own. The translation of material leaves an almost ghostly appearance, a muted shadow of the original object. No longer functional, these objects seem to exist at the margins of what we consider art, craft and material reality. Integrating the home space with gallery space has created the opportunity to place these objects within a 'real life' setting. There is an interesting interplay with household objects in these interventions. I am photographing them with quick cell phone shots which reflect a casual accessibility. This work is an examination of domestic spaces and the objects within them. I have chosen these specifically as they exist in a crossover of my domestic space as well at my studio space.

Image 07: *In the family of things*, slip cast stoneware clay, photograph, 2020

The first example of this type of crossover object was my rolling pin in my studio. This tool, wooden, simple, is not entirely common as many traditional tools are now available as plastic disposables. I am always disappointed in objects that have this

temporality, although avoiding them can be difficult. The wooden rolling pin evokes in me a sentiment not unlike nostalgia or earnestness. It might very well be the first tool that my children and I ever used together.

The rolling pin is evidence of two worlds that are central to me and my labour, so it is a welcome intersection in my research. As Barrette verifies, "A general feature of practice-based research projects is that personal interest and experience, rather than objective 'disinterestedness' motivates the research process."[108]

In the family of things has evolved as an investigation of display methods. I 'plant' the replicant tools in domestic and studio situations and photograph them. The resulting scenes animate the objects through unsentimental positioning with household spaces, tools, surfaces and objects. Paula Owen offers up some considerations of this activity describing a "deemphasis of the actual object, in favor of the activity surrounding it." These photographs become documents of a performative act, an encounter between the replicant art object and the domestic site, challenging our assumptions about what constitutes an aesthetic encounter. In the time of covid-19 home has become the studio, the domestic, the research site and the place of all relations. The necessity to continue the research obliged me to focus on an exhibition practice that examines the entanglements of displaying artwork in domestic spaces.

[108] Estelle, Barrett, "Experiential Learning in Practice as Research:Context, Method, Knowledge." in *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 6, no. 2 (2007): 119.

4. CONCLUSION

The opportunity to think through the history and evolution of craft methods and materials and their connection to my own artist-mother identity has been transformative on many levels. What began as a journey of looking at contemporary artists using ceramic and textile materials, evolved into an experience of exploring craft theory with feminist art practices. My alignment with the theme, 'the personal is political' was a revelation. I re-visited the feminist art history that I learned in my early art training and began to utilize personal experience from my private, domestic realm, producing work that felt relevant and reflective. This led me to seek out contemporary examples of women addressing their experiences of motherhood in their art practices. I made many enriching discoveries. Some of the common threads that emerged in these works of maternal art challenged norms in material usage, installation methods and the subjectivities portrayed. The work that I uncovered revealed to me many layers of ambiguity and ambivalence in the role of mothering that I had felt but had not openly encountered. Portrayals of confusion, sadness, loneliness and frustration were rich discoveries. I was inspired by seeing other artists grapple with these complexities; it gave me permission to explore similar ideas in my own work. What began as a journey of hoping to find a niche for my ceramic practice in the contemporary art world, turned into an expansive uncovering of contemporary feminist and maternal art – work that conveys an inherent feminist politics through materials such as textile and ceramics and draws subject matter from the experiences of women's lives.

Challenging norms in material led me to accept a similar challenge in my display methods. For instance, *In the family of things,* I created staged yet informal photographs of clay bisque replications of tools, placed in home settings. I then displayed these

photographs alongside two museological plinths containing the delicate cast objects. The gesture of elevating the everyday objects through display in plexiglass vitrines suggests a dichotomy in museum and gallery display in relation to the imagined everyday lives of tools and objects of use.

In my writing, I address the effect of covid-19 on my installation choices. My response to the limitations presented by the pandemic produced some of the most unexpected and liberating revelations in this body of work. The work *If pots were thoughts* was created with the premise of deconstructing the function of the vessel, while portraying allegory of binding and balance. However, in the original display and installation, the piece remained a relatively standard sculpture. During the covid-19 shut down, the unavailability of a white cube exhibition space pushed me to re-think and probe alternative installation possibilities. Suspending the disassembled pieces from a large tree opened up conventions of a neutral gallery space and invited the vocabulary of environmental and ecological art into the reading of the work. This unexpected and welcome development along with the presentation of a photograph and video of the work in situ challenged one of my long-standing assumptions about the display of ceramic objects and has generated new excitement for further exploration.

Throughout my research-creation project, I engaged in a reflective practice which was carried out largely during the time spent fabricating and making the work entitled *Love's Labour: before, now and yet to come*. This composition of individual elements embodies the steady pulse central to my art practice. The individual pieces became an echo of my inner landscape. When assembled together, facets of commotion and calm intertwine; the ambiguities or 'sloppiness' of overlapping identities are unmasked. Once installed, this work held a compelling presence in the gallery space, the components, both

aesthetic and disparate, merge into one vivid focal point. Through the creation and installation of *Love's Labour*, I was able to theorize and recognize a longstanding preoccupation about craft I had yet to articulate: the state of flow significant to craft as a verb is parallel to my practice and method of mothering.

This feels like the most difficult part: to summarize my graduate research and work, and put into words what I have discovered, how I have grown as an artist, mother and person. Perhaps it is not possible to arrive to a tidy summary. This marvelous, tangled web of life is meant to be unravelled, not always neatly wrapped in skeins. In my pursuit of an authentic feminist art practice, the lessons I have gleaned may be considered a starting point as much as a conclusion.

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THESIS EXHIBITION DOCUMENTATION

Image 1: Exhibition Installation

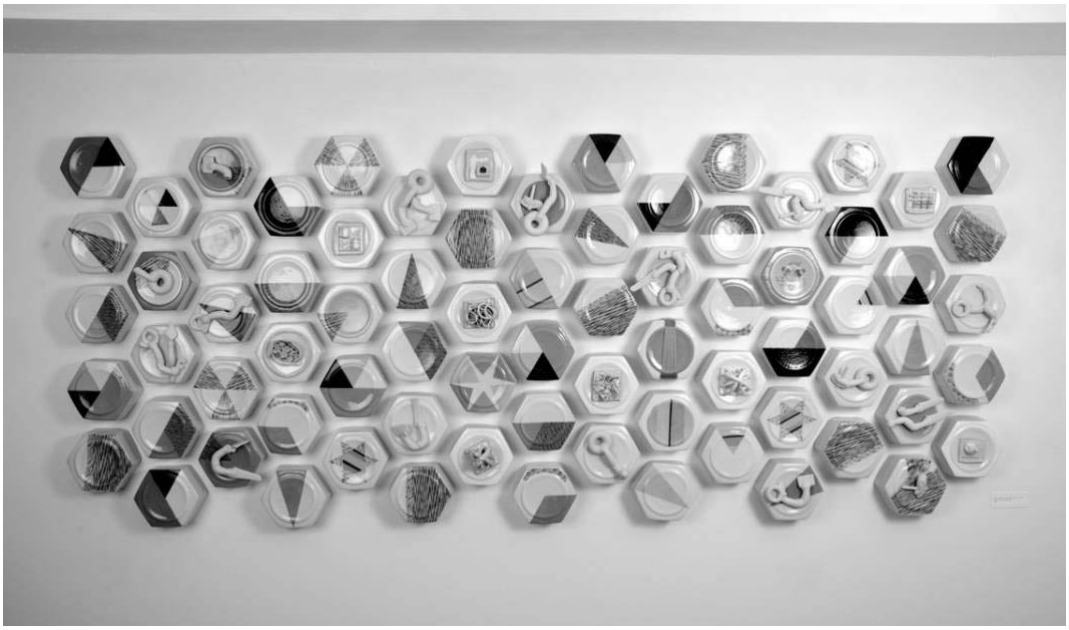

Image 2: *Love's Labour: before, now and yet to come* (installation)

Image 3: *Love's Labour: before, now and yet to come* (installation detail)

Image 4: *In the family of things* (installation)

Image 5: *In the family of things* (installation detail)

Image 6: *In the family of things* (installation detail)

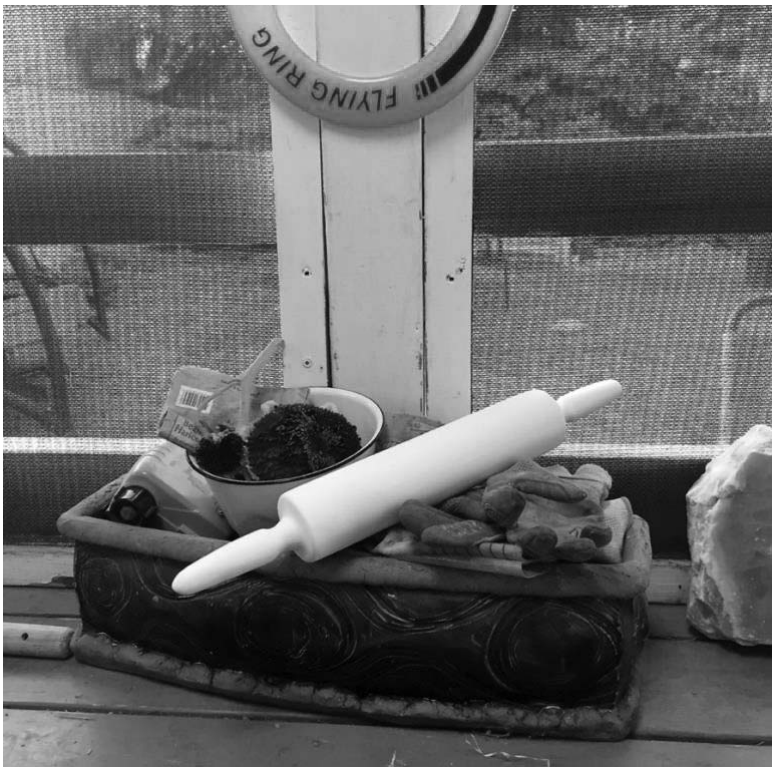

Image 7: *In the family of things* (photograph)

Image 8: *In the family of things* (photograph)

Image 9: *In the family of things* (installation detail)

Image 10: *In the family of things* (installation detail)

Image 11: *In the family of things* (photograph)

Image 12: *If pots were thoughts* (photograph)

Image 13: *If pots were thoughts* (installation detail)

Image 14: *If pots were thoughts* (video still)