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Rupture and Repair: Developing a Saggar-Fired Ceramic Approach to Building Trauma Resilience Through Making, Tending, Breaking and Mending

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Abstract

This capstone thesis charts the development of a method to make, tend, break, and mend a saggar-fired ceramic sculpture, addressing the question, “How can a ceramic process of rupture and repair be useful for developing resilience to trauma?” It highlights the value and drawbacks of the application of ceramics to art therapy. Current literature supports creative destruction as a healing tool for trauma survivors and details how to incorporate it safely. This four-day workshop involved two participants with a trauma history. Both had undergone years of therapy and were screened for ego strength. Results showed that the method can be carried out safely, can be enjoyable, and can result in empowerment, agency, and resilience. Themes that emerged were establishing safety; somatic integration through haptic experience and contact with clay; the value of creative destruction and controlled breaking; addressing perfectionism; identification with the artwork; and somatization of the art making process. Participants noted that rupture creates a need for repair, but what emerges is something different and better. Without the rupture, we remain static and cannot evolve.

Key words: art therapy; creative destruction; controlled breaking; rupture and repair; clay; ceramics; saggar firing; trauma resilience

Introduction

I have been in love with clay since my first ceramic class in college, now over 30 years ago. Some friends and I created the Cape Ann Ceramics Festival, which took place for one month each year for two years and included a show of local and world-renowned artists. One of the artists, Irina Okula, makes, breaks, and re-assembles saggar-fired clay pots. She calls her final pieces “Shards” (Okula, n.d.). In saggar firing, bisque ware, (the first firing), is wrapped in organic materials, loaded in a clay box (saggar) and low-fired. The materials burn off and create marks and flashes of color on the pots. I wondered if the process could be used in art therapy for healing trauma. Irina gave me some pointers and her blessings to adapt her technique for my own use. I then created a method and workshop for making, tending, breaking, and mending saggar-fired clay sculptures to address rupture and repair in a trauma context.

As a trauma survivor myself, it has been an ongoing imperative to heal layers of wounding and to discover my strength and wholeness. The study of trauma has been a personal and professional path. There are many types of traumas, and I believe most people have experienced one or more of them in some form. Trauma can create a rupture, a disconnection, from ourselves, or others. This can result in a sense of brokenness. There are ongoing large and small ruptures. Therefore, the healing path is not to avoid ruptures, but to learn how to repair them. Ceramics is a great means for practicing rupture and repair because it involves many aspects that are not under our control. Treasured artworks break, crack, bubble, and pit (to name a few calamities). Glazes do not come out as planned. Or the opposite occurs. Rather than disappointment and destruction, we get magical results that surprise and delight us, that turn out better than we could have ever imagined. A potter develops practice in grieving losses, responding creatively, learning to trust in the process, and building resilience.

In developing this method, my intention was to explore the question: How can a saggar-fired ceramic process of rupture and repair be useful for developing resilience to trauma? I also hoped to highlight the value of ceramics as a tool in art therapy in general, and, specifically, in working with trauma.

I present here a demonstration of the value, challenges, and learning involved in developing an art therapy workshop for participants who have experienced trauma, with the goal to assist them to create ceramic objects, symbolically break them (rupture), tend them (to develop self-nurturing practices) and put the pieces back together in new ways (repair), that visually concretize strength and healing (resilience).

Literature Review

There is precedence in the literature for the use of ceramics in trauma healing. There is also precedence for breaking artwork as a form of creative destruction to build trauma resilience.

The term “rupture and repair” comes from John Bowlby’s attachment theory (Carney, 2020; Miller-Bottome, et. al, 2018). It is most commonly used to refer to a break in therapeutic relationship. In this case, I am using it to address brokenness and disconnection that occurs through trauma on the personal and interpersonal level.

Resilience is defined as “the capacity to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties,” or the “ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity” (Oxford Languages, 2023). I am using it to address trauma recovery in all its aspects.

SAMHSA, The United States Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2021), identifies trauma as "intense physical or emotional stress reactions" (p. xix) resulting from "a single event, multiple events, or a set of

circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically and emotionally harmful or threatening, and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being" (p. xix). Trauma takes many forms, amongst them Early Childhood Trauma, Bullying, Sexual Abuse, Sex Trafficking, Physical Abuse, Verbal Abuse, Intimate Partner Violence, Community Violence, Complex Trauma, Disaster, Refugee Trauma, Terrorism and Violence, Traumatic Grief, Historical Trauma, Attachment Trauma, and Medical Trauma, to name a few (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2023). Though there are similarities between them, they have different expressions. Initially, I chose to work specifically with sexual abuse, as it is my experience and my interest. As I developed my method, I became more drawn to exploring my current situation, recovery from a hemorrhagic stroke/brain bleed. For workshop participants, I broadened my selection to be inclusive of all forms of trauma. There was a time when I was identified with my trauma. Over the course of healing, I have come to know that it is true, and yet I am more. So, I label trauma with a caveat, that it represents an aspect, but not the whole person or the whole experience.

Sholt and Gavron (2006) discuss the therapeutic qualities of clay. The biblical first human beings were formed of clay. Our ancestors created the first vessels from clay, as what are thought to be ritual items. Thus, clay was used to represent a spiritual connection, perhaps symbolizing spirit in material form. Clay-work involves touch. It is rhythmic and haptic. As touch is our first language, clay has the power to invoke non-verbal experience. It is a “primal mode of expression and communication” (p. 67). Clay is three-dimensional and can simulate real life more closely. It can be contemplated from multiple angles and perspectives. It has an inside and outside. With clay, something can be created out of nothing. It can be formed and shaped. The fact that clay responds to our touch can be empowering. It can be made, destroyed and re-

made easily in its plastic state. Clay-work involves somatic expression. It also invites kinesthetic engagement as it can be thrown, pounded, cut, rolled, poked, stabbed, etc. “Clay-work enables the client to encounter the constructive and destructive aspects of the self” (p. 68). Sholt and Gavron quote Henley (2002), whose book is a primary source of direction on how to use clay in art therapy. He and others identify six therapeutic factors of clay. Clay facilitates “expression of emotions, catharsis, rich and deep expressions, verbal communication, revealing unconscious material, and concretization and symbolization” (Sholt & Gavron, 2006, p. 66).

Morrison (2020) explores the use of clay with survivors of childhood sexual abuse. "According to the American Medical Association (1992), ‘childhood sexual abuse’ consists of contact abuse ranging from fondling to rape and non-contact abuse, such as modeling inappropriate sexual behavior, forced involvement in child pornography, or exhibitionism” … “‘Sexual trauma’ is defined as one or multiple sexual violations that invoke significant distress” (Yuan, et al., as quoted by Morrison, 2020, p. 4). With traumatic stress, Broca’s area, the part of the brain responsible for speech, shuts down and the amygdala, the area responsible for the experience and expression of emotion, is aroused. This combination of factors can cause impaired executive function. Over the long term it can trigger “impaired self-regulation, somatization, aggression against the self and others, character pathology, and dissociation" (Tripp, 2007, p. 177; van der Kolk, et al., 2005). It can also cause ongoing symptoms into adulthood, including PTSD, eating disorders, depression, self-blame, guilt, shame, negative thoughts about the self, feelings of worthlessness, reduced confidence, lack of trust, troubled relationships, and disturbance to sexual activity (Morrison, 2020). Morrison applies Anderson’s (1995) studies on the therapeutic benefits of clay for childhood trauma survivors to Sholt and Gavron’s (2006) identified therapeutic qualities of clay. Anderson found that clay-work could

"contain the client outrage, make what happened to the clients real, and yet provide some psychic distance at the same time" (Anderson, 1995, p. 416). The non-verbal aspect of clay-work is best suited to address the Broca's area suppression and amygdala arousal effects of trauma. In Anderson's study participants concretized by creating an image of their perpetrator and symbolically confronting them. They had an experience of catharsis in smashing the image.

Elbrecht and Antcliff (2014) quote Peter Levine's conception of trauma, that it is defined not by the event but the sense of helplessness. Therefore, it is not the actual past event that needs repair, it is the trauma response in the nervous system that requires completion and resolution (Levine, 2010). Elbrecht and Antcliff suggest resolution through trauma healing at the "Clay Field®," a system developed by art therapist Heinz Deuser where clients contact, create, and/or destroy their creations using non-gritty clay contained within a rectangular box. They describe how haptic contact with clay directly addresses neurological and physical areas of the body most affected by trauma. It impacts the brain stem, the limbic system and the cerebral cortex and stimulates exteroceptors (the five senses) and interoceptors (connective tissue, viscera and muscles), "providing instant feedback to the brain" (p. 23). Elbrecht and Antcliff site three core arenas affected by contact with clay: the skin sense, supporting self-nurturing absent in childhood; balance; and depth sensibility, aiding in "ego consciousness" and "how to handle the world" (p.23). The base of the hand correlates with the abdomen, the core center; the center of the hands to the heart and chest, the heart center; and the fingers "generate cognition and awareness" (p.23). The "Clay Field®," Elbrecht and Antcliff say, is a bottom-up approach, allowing change to occur at the level of inner felt experience and ignite cognitive insight. Whereas top-down approaches begin with cognitive awareness and can trigger recurrence of

unproductive emotions, the “Clay Field®” hands focus on creating, recreating, and trying out new possibilities. This can support a “new more fulfilling paradigm of Self” (p. 24).

Elbrecht and Antcliff (2014) emphasize that safety must first be established to further explore trauma. They employ Levine’s (2010) process of pendulation. Safety is established and then returned to as needed, alternating between trauma vortex and healing vortex. To create safety in the “Clay Field®,” Elbrecht and Antcliff recommend dipping “hands in warm water, holding the wooden container box, distance from the field when needed, and relying on anchors” (p. 25).

Authors Stickley and Wolf (2021) blend Hinz’ (2009) Expressive Therapies Continuum (ETC), Perry’s (2009) Neurosequential Mode of Therapeutics, and Herman’s (1997) stages of healing trauma, in combination with work with clay to create a program of healing for trauma survivors. ETC defines three levels that are engaged when using art materials: kinesthetic/sensory, perceptual/affective, and cognitive/symbolic, with a central concept of creativity linking the levels (Hinz, 2009). The Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics re-establishes regulation through rhythmic, repetitive tasks. Herman’s three stages in trauma healing involve safety and stabilization, remembrance and mourning, and reconnection and integration. Stickley and Wolf’s (2021) three-part program is called “Create, Destroy, and Transform.” A clay vessel is constructed, destroyed, and made into something new. The “Create” stage emphasizes kinesthetic and sensory aspects of working with clay and invites Perry’s (2009) tasks of rhythm and repetition. In this phase, it was noted that participants’ breathing slowed, one person’s hands stopped shaking, and some began to recount their trauma. In the “Destroy” phase, fantasies of aggression against the abuser emerged. Participants recognized the anger involved in destruction. All related to the experience of being broken. Themes from the “Transform” phase

include wanting to fix the piece, tolerance of mistakes, having arrived at a place of more wholeness, and recognizing that they could not return to a place before the breaking, but they could honor the new person that had emerged in the recovery process. All three phases serve to "regulate the lower brain while cognitively processing traumatic experiences in the upper brain" (Stickley & Wolf, 2021, p. 3). Different areas of the brain are addressed in each stage, using a bottom-up approach, similar to Elbrecht and Antcliff (2014).

Stickley and Wolf (2021) present a few safety considerations in implementing their method. Participants should be screened out if not stabilized, to ensure their safety. Fired clay is sharp and can present a danger when broken. People will have different responses to the destruction phase. They suggest sensitivity and re-framing to support the process. They caution against protecting participants from the feelings that arise, as they can be valuable therapeutic material. They speak of the mastery over the traumatic event that can come through this process.

In the "See the Triumph Healing Arts Workshops for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Assault," Murray, et al. (2017) include a similar process. In an experiential, "Finding Healing in Broken Places," a clay pot is broken, decorated, and glued back together. Participants identified benefits of personal growth, emotional expression, nonverbal expression, ability to place/release feelings onto an object outside of self, identifying strengths, visual feedback on growth and change, decrease in shame, learning trust, and connection with others.

Jacobsen-Levy and Miller (2022) use altered bookmaking to explore creative destruction with trauma survivors. They cite Fisher (1974) who "recognized that purposeful, violent, artistic destruction often yielded an intact artistic product" (Jacobsen-Levy & Miller, 2022, p. 1). For trauma survivors, they say, artistic destruction "may reflect the emergence of enraged, dissociated self-states" (p. 2). They describe how "destructive impulses manifested by the

wreckage of art renderings may also be seen as positive therapeutic rituals that discharge or sublimate affective tension while simultaneously offering mastery of said instincts" (p. 2). The authors describe the process of creative destruction as the act of destroying something with the potential to create new pathways. It paves the way for original solutions, re-invention, and new perspectives.

Ripley (2023) notes that trauma hijacks the ability to feel safe in the world. People usually enter the process of post-traumatic repair with impaired trust and a sense of continuing vulnerability. Therefore, like Herman (1997) Elbrecht and Antcliff (2014), and Stickley and Wolf (2021), Ripley suggests that a healing approach to trauma must first address safety. A key aspect of safety is embodiment, a connection between the inner felt sense and the external world. She mentions seven therapeutic factors that help to down-regulate instinctual defense mechanisms resulting from trauma, thereby creating safety. These are: "therapeutic alliance; group belonging; synchrony with the natural world; affect regulation; sensory integration; a positive emotional state; and a sense of agency" (Ripley, 2023, p. 2). She describes how art therapy can be a tool for developing these factors.

Each of the above articles provided a context for the development of my method. I was greatly concerned with the issue of establishing safety in my workshop, particularly considering a population of trauma survivors. These articles confirmed the feasibility of my method and helped me to have faith that I could include creative destruction, but still maintain safety and ensure a restorative outcome for workshop participants.

Method

The workshop I developed was entitled “Rupture and Repair: Building Resilience, A Saggar Fired Clay Process of Making, Tending, Breaking and Mending.” The preparation involved three dry runs; first to develop the method, next to refine it, and a third to construct a format for teaching techniques and to devise a plan for each day. For the first stage, I had Irina’s pointers to guide me (Okula, n.d.).

She told me that cylindrical shapes work best, she suggested cutting completely through on the horizontal and then scoring on the vertical, but not all the way through, and she told me to put the cut sections into a plastic bag to drop them. For clarity, I will refer to the completed construction and the final product as “sculptures,” the areas between cuts as “sections,” and the areas that have been scored, dropped and broken as “pieces.”

I decided to coil build, as it is a simple, hands-on approach that is easy to learn, requires minimal tools, and is one of the oldest ceramic techniques. It carries an ancestral connection to hands that have worked in clay throughout human history. The repetitive quality can be calming. At the same time, it engages the whole body and is very physical. This physicality takes the mind off worries and brings us into the present, to name a few benefits noted in the literature review.

I made three sculptures. Two were cylindrical (Figure 1.1) and one figurative (Figures 1.6 and 1.7). After I coil built them, I cut them first horizontally, and then scored them vertically (Figure1.2). I did not score either the base or the rim sections, to provide grounding and containment. When they were bone dry, I painted them with terra sigillata. This is a slip (liquified clay) that absorbs and amplifies color. I then burnished them, so they would shine (Figure 1.4). Next, I attached copper wire to various areas of each sculpture. Copper wire creates a black mark with white flashing. I bisque-fired all the work to Cone 06 (Figure 1.5). Once fired,

I removed any copper wire that had not disintegrated in the heat. I then put the sections I had scored into a separate plastic bag for each sculpture and dropped the bags one at a time. They broke into many pieces (Figure1.3). I wrapped these pieces in sawdust and straw that had been soaked in Yellow Ochre Oxide or Red Iron Oxide and packed them in a saggar (Figure 4.4). This was fired again at Cone 010. After they were cooled, I removed them from the saggar, wiped off the dust, and began a long process of figuring out how the pieces fit together. I then used 60-minute epoxy to glue them back into place. The final stage was applying Dorland Wax. This creates a seal and draws out the color (Figure 2).

I did not score or drop the figurative sculpture, “Rupture and Repair, Origin.” I only cut it into three sections. I was most attached to this piece and felt identified with it. As I was filming it, it fell over and broke (in the way I did not have the courage to do consciously). I lay down on the ground and sobbed. The next day I had a hemorrhagic stroke (brain bleed). It affected my left brain. I could not read or write, and I had trouble with word retrieval, so I had to drop out of my art therapy program and my second-year internship. It was not for three more months that I would return to my home, see my sculpture again, and eventually repair it (Figure 3.1). 9 months after my stroke, I began the second dry run and stepped back to where I had left off, functional, but still finding difficulty with word retrieval and remembering names.

In the second dry run, I checked my timing to streamline and plan for the workshop. I assessed the tools I would need and ordered them. I built a saggar for each participant. I mixed terra sigillata, following Jeremy Randall’s video (Randall, 2013) and figured out how to measure specific gravity (must be between 110-120 grams per 100 grams of water). I learned to color the organic materials, sawdust and straw, (with the help of my friend Jill Solomon) and prepared enough for our class (Figure 4.1).

There were issues to resolve from the first dry run. The cut sections were sticking to each other during the drying. I had to pry them off with a fettling knife (a blunt knife for ceramics). This made an unattractive line between sections. In the second run, I tried separating the cut lines immediately, but they attached again, as the clay was still wet. I was able to separate them once they were leather hard and to clean up the edges by sanding them with a scrubby once they were dry. (See Figure 4.2 for all the cut and scored demos from the second dry run).

I had scored the sections too deeply and some broke before firing. Also, I made too many scores. Both things caused it to be more difficult to glue pieces back together. I decided to make the scoring less deep and to minimize the number of scored sections, for simplicity and ease during the workshop. I resolved another issue by separating each sculpture into its own saggar for easier re-assembly. In the first run, I dropped the scored segments from high and they broke into too many pieces. This time I dropped them gently and from a foot above the ground. They broke much more cleanly. This made them easier to put back together.

Guided by a wonderful book, “Saggar Firing in an Electric Kiln, A Practical Handbook,” (van de Grint, 2021), I tried some new materials I had never used before; steel wool (for red and orange color and markings), banana peel (for pink color), and painter’s tape (which acts like wax resist). I also used colored slips to paint shapes and marks (Figures 4.3 and 4.4). They darkened in the firing, leaving some color exposed and some black. With these new processes, I got my best results ever! (Figures 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7) The only drawback was that the terra sigillata flaked off on areas of the rim. This was resolved by applying acrylic paint.

There was a total of 6 sculptures completed in this second run (Figures 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11 and 4.12). In the second run, I also added transfer images to two of them (Figures 5.1 and 5.2). This is a simple process. Reversed images are printed. They dry overnight. They are cut out

and applied to a clean area with Modge Podge Image Transfer Medium. They dry for 3 hours. In this case, I dipped my finger in water to remove the paper. I sealed the image with wax. The transfer peeled off in places and the color faded, but it was still a positive addition. I had misread the instructions. I was supposed to remove the paper using rubbing alcohol and to spray the area with acrylic coating. Next time I will try these two improvements.

I used the third dry run to determine how I would teach each process. Because of my aphasia, I had to think about all the words I might need and write them down. I made two new sculptures that I could use for demos and kept them wet. I also made a third figurative sculpture illustrating my current state, “Rupture and Repair: Aphasia, Gateway to the Spirit World” (Figures 7 and 8).

Participants

I was concerned about mental health safety for participants, specifically because the process involves cutting and breaking created work that is associated with the sense of self. I also wondered about the relationship between the unintentional breakdown of my initial figurative sculpture, “Rupture and Repair: Origin,” and my stroke. Was it predicting a crisis to come? Did the loss add to a stress level that was already too high? Or did it generate the stroke, perhaps to impel a greater healing? Who is to know the power of the unconscious! So, I wanted to be sure that participants had enough internal structure to be able to handle challenging emotions and associations to the process.

Initially, I thought about specifying one trauma population, sexual abuse, because (as mentioned earlier) I have a personal experience of how it can cause a sense of brokenness (rupture) and a need for healing (repair). Instead, I chose, for the pilot, to take a broader stance and address all trauma through a strengths-based approach, focusing on resilience.

I am a counseling bodyworker and decided to select clients from my practice who I had an established relationship with. I knew their history and I knew their ego strength. I also knew that they would reach out to me if needed, and that we had a pattern of regular appointments, so we could address any issues that might arise from the workshop. I discussed my intention with each person and shared images of my initial sculptures. I also sent each person a workshop flyer (Appendix 1). I limited the group to 4 participants. Due to upcoming surgeries and scheduling conflicts, two had to drop out. In the end, there were two participants. One was in her late 70s and had recent, traumatic dental surgery. The other was in her 60s with fibromyalgia. One was Jewish, the other White, Christian, but previously married to a Jewish husband. Both were divorced women with children. I, myself, am Jewish, but grew up in a Hispanic community, of a non-traditional family, female, in my late 50's, and am married to a British Indian husband with his children and grandchildren in Denmark. Between the three of us, we encompassed many of the types of traumas referred to in the literature review.

In addition to the flyer, I also gave each participant a list of important information. I asked them to "think of something present to you that caused a sense of disconnect (rupture) with yourself or others and that you want to bring healing to (repair). It could be past or current, but it should be something that had or is having an impact on you." I asked them to sign a consent form to include my observations of them and what they shared during the group. I also got consent to take pictures of their work, not for publication, but to guide me in writing my thesis (Appendix 2).

The workshop took place in a spacious and comfortable ceramic studio suitable for classes (Figures 6.1 and 6.2). It involved four meetings, each approximately 2.5 hours long.

Though there were only two participants, neither could come at the same time for the third meeting, so their sessions took place on separate days, individually.

My method was greatly influenced by several concepts that were described in the literature review. In Murray, et al.'s (2017) "See the Triumph Healing Arts Workshops for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Assault," commercial pre-made pots were dropped and broken. I included a similar process of dropping and breaking in my method, but chose to have participants construct clay sculptures, adding personal investment to the objects created. Stickley and Wolfe's (2021) "Create, Destroy and Transform," included elements similar to my own "making, breaking and mending" processes. Their "making" (create) phase was open-ended. I chose a more directive approach, to create a cylinder, vessel, or figurative form. I was also influenced by the Japanese method of kintsugi, restoring broken pots with gold lacquer. To these methods, I added the concept of tending, (self-nurturing processes), and the element of saggar firing.

Results

Day 1, "Making," began with a warmup to each say our name and make a movement that expressed who we are. The group mirrored this. We then looked at the pieces I had created, and I gave an overview of what we would be doing during our four days together. I explained the concept of the workshop and "rupture and repair." Then we discussed safety. The group agreed to respect confidentiality, to approach me or fellow participants if they felt challenged and in need of support, and to listen to their body and rest or get help if anything felt like too much physically (since both were dealing with physical issues). Participants then shared their safety needs, hopes and fears for the workshop, and whether they had experience with clay. If they

wanted to, they could also share the intention they created for themselves for the workshop. After this, I demonstrated how to coil build. I had wedged clay (kneading it to withdraw any air bubbles) and rolled some coils in advance. I had also rolled a slab (a flat sheet of clay). We used circle cutters to create a base from the slab, and from there we coil built a vessel, cylinder, or figurative sculpture. I demonstrated how to smooth the rim using a bit of plastic bag. We then made our cuts and scores. We ended our day with a one-word body check in.

One participant came up with the idea to place plastic bags between the cut sections to keep them from sticking together. This worked well but kept them from drying, so in between sessions I removed them and eventually had to use a hair dryer to get our sculptures to be bone dry for Day 2.

Day 2 was termed “Tending,” as that was the focus of the day, but there was tending throughout the workshop. We began the day with a dance, expressing how we were feeling in the moment. We had a check in to share anything that came up from the last session and ask any questions. I gave them each a notebook to use if they had anything to journal or to remember to say during our sharing time. We then sanded the cut areas. We worked outside for this step as a safety measure to prevent breathing in clay dust. We brushed off the dust before painting on the terra sigillata. We were careful to only apply two coats to prevent the flaking that occurred during my second dry run. Next, we burnished our sculptures using a piece of plastic bag. Once they were shiny, we added a thin gage of copper wire. We used pliers to cut the wire and twist it around the sculpture so it would fit snugly. We secured unstable areas of wire with wet clay. Copper wire not only makes black marks and white flashing, it also creates a line that helps to define how pieces fit together when they get repaired. Finally, we had a quick check in before ending. I then bisque-fired our pieces to cone 06 to prepare for the next steps.

On Day 3, “Breaking,” I met with each participant separately (because we could not synchronize both of their schedules). We checked in briefly, and immediately moved into our next activity. First, we pried off any remaining pieces of copper wire that had not burned off in the firing. We then placed our cut and scored section into a plastic bag and dropped it. One participant had a great idea to say a prayer. We painted our sections and pieces with color slips and/or wrapped them in steel wool, banana peel, tape, colored straw, and colored sawdust (Figure 6.3). We placed these sections and pieces in our personal saggars, surrounded by uncolored and colored straw and sawdust, and closed them with a lid. I, then, fired the saggars at cone 010 to ready us for our final day.

We decided during Day 3 not to include transfer images. Neither participant was interested, and it would have extended us beyond our 4 days.

One of the participants had arrived late and was stressed, so we began Day 4, “Mending,” with a silent meditation. Next, we each took turns opening our saggars, looking at each other’s pieces and sharing our process. We cleaned off soot from the firing and determined the direction and alignment of each section and piece. We glued pieces and sections together using 60-second epoxy. We buffed them with Dorland’s Wax to draw out color and sheen. Then we all gazed upon our final sculptures and shared what came up. We had some group reflection on the whole process. I gave them a recipe list for making terra sigillata and coloring materials, as well as a feedback questionnaire (Appendix 3), and we ended the workshop with goodbyes.

Participant 1, Chava

Chava (pseudonym), had traumatic dental work 10 days prior to the workshop and was in recovery at the time of our initial session. She would start an activity and then stop and stare into space. There was a sporadic quality to her artmaking gestures. She seemed to gradually come

back into sync and settle into her body over the course of the workshop. She was new to working with clay and, despite the remnants of her resent experience, she was able to create a strong, solid sculpture. She connected her own pain to the pain of the world and dedicated her "rupture and repair" to healing the trauma of her own and the world's teeth. Chava is a therapist and had insight and a gift of poetic descriptive language.

Her shape was a mouth with teeth on the front and back sides of the rim. Initially, there were three lower front teeth (front side), and two upper front teeth (back side), but the two uppers broke off. These were stored and fired in the well of the base. One of the lower front teeth loosened but remained attached.

Chava was excited and nervous to drop and break her sculpture. This we did during our individual session on Day 3 with just the two of us present. Chava and I said a prayer before we dropped our work, for her teeth, my brain, and for the world. We gently dropped only the middle section where there were no teeth. It broke cleanly into three pieces.

This middle section was assembled backwards on Day 4. The 60-second epoxy dries quickly and there is not much time for consideration. This reversal occurred in the rush. It changed the height of the front and back, so the lower teeth rose to the level of the back teeth. It also created some gaps between the sections. There had been an opening between the two levels that Chava referred to as a mouth, and this disappeared. Also, Chava had painted colored slips on her top section when we were preparing for saggar firing. She liked the redness of the Red Iron Oxide sawdust and added extra to her saggar. The extra material resulted in more soot which caused the colored slips to darken. However, she got some amazing bright red-orange flashes of color and many interesting variations. Overall, the sculpture turned out to have a striking and powerful intensity.

Initially Chava was disappointed in her results. She felt because her sculpture was glued on backwards, it was not sturdy. She also compared her firing results to others and thought her sculpture was too dark. I suggested that she give it a bit of time and shared with her that I often dislike my pieces initially and like them better later. Within a few days she loved her creation. She saw perfection in its imperfection. She realized that she could embrace her difference.

Chava found herself talking to everyone about the workshop. It had a huge impact on her. In the section of her sculpture that was dropped, there was a small broken piece. She identified with this piece and felt that it gave her hope. She learned that "rupture and repair" is necessary. It creates an evolution. Broken things do not return to their previous state, rather they become a whole new thing. This, for her, was the hope; the awareness that something good could come of trauma and pain. She also realized many things about her relationship with people in the group. She felt safe and able to reveal herself in a way that was new for her. She learned that she loves working with clay. Coil building seemed less challenging to her than the thought of throwing on the wheel. There was a tactile quality to working with clay that helped her transfer from being brain oriented to body centered. She expressed wanting to continue working with clay and shared her plans to take a class.

Participant 2, Nisa

Nisa (pseudonym) was still formulating her dedication on Day 1. I reassured her that it could "cook" internally and come through the unconscious. On Day 2, she began to clarify her dedication to include all the brokenness throughout her life, from experiences in the womb, her mother's mental health issues, and relationships over time. During the workshop, Nisa was selective in her sharing, but at the end of Day 3, when we were one-on-one, she suddenly opened up and spoke in a steady stream of her past and current life concerns, revealing things I had not

heard before. She said she was currently working on listening to her own voice and what is true for her. I suggested she add that to her dedication.

Nisa had previous experience with clay and had been an art teacher. She expressed a preference for organic, unrefined, abstract art. In the past she had often made pinch pots. In this sculpture she did not refine the textures that occurred while building and she pinched the rim, creating a natural, elemental effect. For me, it had an impact that was visceral and mentally expansive, a feeling tone with no words. She sanded a great deal on Day 2, resulting in gaps between sections. She was not happy with this originally. In the end, she was comfortable with how her sculpture fit together, gaps and all.

It was Nisa's idea to say a prayer before dropping the middle section of her sculpture. She was the first of the two participants to do the breaking, and I incorporated this idea into the session with Chava. My section did not break when I dropped it from a couple inches above the ground, so both of us dropped from higher up. Nisa's sculpture was thinner than mine and probably would have done better dropping lower. A few areas fractured off the broken pieces. We were able to glue some of these back together after the firing. There were some we could not repair, but they created extra interest.

It was also Nisa who suggested using plastic to separate the sections of the sculptures while drying. Nisa was an innovator and added a great deal to the fine tuning of the method.

Throughout the workshop, Nisa was addressing self-judgment and perfectionism. She kept this struggle internal, primarily, and only shared it with us a couple times. She enjoyed the aspects of the workshop such as dropping, breaking, and saggar firing, that involved an external influence beyond her control. They allowed her to practice letting go of perfection.

Nisa had spectacular multi-faceted results from the firing, including oranges, pinks, deep red-browns, grays, markings, and flashings. She liked the final product of her work and placed it in her house where she could see it often. She thought the breaking was fun, she liked the saggar firing, and enjoyed the entire workshop.

My Results

My first sculpture, "Rupture and Repair: Origin," (Figure 2) was dedicated to my childhood experience of sexual abuse by a friend of the family. I have worked on healing this for more than 40 years and my story no longer has charge. Much is resolved. The layer of the onion I am addressing currently is replacing self-judgment and self-attack with self-acceptance and self-love.

"Origin's" spine is twisted and there is an open space in the groin area, symbolic of the wounding from that early experience. It has a power and presence that appears to be greater than its wounding. Now, broken and repaired, I love it even more for its flaws.

After my stroke, I created a large-scale version of "Origin." It is called, "Rupture and Repair: Resilience." (Figures 3.2 and 3.3). It is not scored or broken, though it is separated into parts to allow for my kiln size. It has a similar form to "Origin." There are spiraling wheels on each of the chakras, and it has a petroglyph quality. I added these elements to communicate a sense of healing and strength. It is very grounded and looks like it cannot be blown over (as "Origin" was). It was shown at Flying Horse Outdoor Sculpture Exhibit at Pingree School in Hamilton, MA, from September-November, 2023.

On one of the second run cylinders, I attached transfer images addressing the more current expression of my original wound (Figure 5.2). There is an image of me as a child; a drawing I made of a vulnerable girl buffeted, head bowed, under attack; and a recent version of

myself, hands raised in triumph. On a second run demo figurative sculpture, I attached the same image of triumph (Figure 5.1).

My interest then shifted to my hemorrhagic stroke/brain bleed. The sculpture that emerged, “Rupture and Repair: Aphasia, Gateway to the Spirit World,” shows an opening on the left side of the head where the bleed occurred.” (Figures 7 and 8). It illustrates the sensation of knowing a word but not being able to cross between the two brains to pull it out, as though there were a gap of empty space blocking the connection. I put a ladder on the back side, reaching up to the opening. This reminds me of a Kiva. It transforms the wound into a form of spiritual opening.

Initially, I resisted cutting my sculptures. When I tried it, I liked the result. I had crossed the hurdle, and it was not only ok, but intriguing. My first dropped breaks were stressful. I was afraid that I would unleash forces of self-aggression too strong to counteract. These first sculptures shattered into many fragments, and it was time-consuming and difficult to put them together again. At some points I was overwhelmed and wondered if there was a part of me that was too shattered to repair, even after all these years, and all my work. I slowed down, took my time, and eventually was able to figure out how to put them back together. Because of this level of challenge, I did not break the figurative sculpture, “Rupture and Repair: Origin,” or any of the figurative sculptures to follow. In the workshop I suggested to participants that they cut, but not break their figurative sculptures. Of course, “Origin” fell and broke itself, forcing me to deal with the grief of losing something I cared for, and learning that there is an enduring part of me that cannot be broken. I got better at breaking over time. Eventually, I was able to devise an approach that would allow a gentler, more controlled break. As I did the second and third run, I

found the process less emotional, and more experimental. I became less focused on what wasn't working, and more focused on making things work.

Other processes evolved over time. When I mended the first run cylindrical sculptures, I got glue all over them. I learned to do this better, and now know how to show even less glue for the future. The first run cylinders turned out dark, mostly black with some gray. No color. "Origin" turned out better with a variety of earth colors. In the second and third runs, I developed a process that allowed for multiple strong colors, including reds, pinks, oranges and blues. The first and second run pieces were not attached to each other well. I figured out how to better align them by the third run (Figure 6.4).

As I was working, there were moments of grief. There were also many times of self-doubt. Could I create a process that had a positive outcome visually and emotionally? I questioned how I could ask someone to break a piece they had created. Would it re-traumatize? Would it cause people to hurt themselves? Each time I had to breathe and keep going. The process itself helped me. It was calming to touch clay, work with my hands, focus on kneading, rolling, smoothing, sanding, burnishing, painting, wrapping, and matching pieces together. It also helped to discover the articles included in the literature review. They supported the value of creative destruction and taking charge of the breaking. I saggar-fired my first sculptures with two friends. One helped me color materials, patch areas of flaked off terra sigillata, and was there to answer any questions that came up. The other helped me remember how to fire my kiln after my stroke. So, I was also helped by the power of my community and the kindness of friends.

Overall, my own process involved a dry run, a stroke, two more dry runs, 15 sculptures, of which 3 were figurative and 12 were cylindrical, and one large scale, figurative, outdoor sculpture. It took place over the course of a year. I was ready to give up many times, but I

persevered. With each dry run, I learned more about how to create the work and how to structure the workshop. My results include the development of large and small systems. Because of my stroke/brain bleed, I had to relearn things I had done before, like making terra sigillata, and coloring materials. I discovered a multitude of small things, i.e., I could clean epoxy from my hands with Dr. Bronner's soap. I explored the use of new materials and discovered the best temperature for firing. I learned and re-learned the language necessary to teach the processes, including the names of tools. Figuring out which tools to buy, where to run the workshop, who to choose as participants, and how to protect their safety during the process, were all creative acts. These activities were inspiring and exciting. They built confidence, a sense of efficacy, empowerment, and faith in my own resilience.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the question: "How can a ceramic process of rupture and repair be useful for developing resilience to trauma?" This was carried out through making, tending, breaking and mending saggar-fired clay in a series of four workshops over the period of a month. Themes that emerged were establishing safety; somatic integration through haptic experience and contact with clay; the value of creative destruction and controlled breaking; addressing perfectionism; identification with the artwork; and somatization of the art making process.

Establishing Safety

One of the things I was most concerned about for workshop participants was safety. I was careful about participant selection, choosing those with ego strength and the ability to navigate strong emotions (Stickley and Wolf, 2021). I set up guidelines during our first day together for confidentiality, listening to our bodies and being careful with sharp tools (Stickley and Wolf,

2021). I made myself available to participants should any issues or triggers arise. I asked them to share with the group any safety concerns of their own. I did the more physically taxing work of wedging and making clay coils, taught them how to do it themselves, and gave them the option to make their own or use the ones I had made for them. I emphasized process over product, to ease any self-judgment. I gave them notebooks for journaling, and I checked in with each of them individually on a regular basis before, during and after.

The therapeutic alliance added to the sense of safety (Ripley, 2023). Both participants said they felt safe in the workshop since they were my counseling bodywork clients and already felt safe with me. They trusted me because of the relationship we had built in our work together over time. One participant felt that I was compassionate, present, and attuned during the workshop and this boosted her sense of safety.

Both participants said the processes were fun. I was surprised, myself, at how excited I was for each step of the process, and how much enjoyment I experienced. I was reminded that healing can be joyful. My decision to frame the workshops in terms of resilience, to talk about rupture and repair in terms of healing a disconnection, and to allow participants to choose whether to dedicate their work to a past or current situation, seemed to lighten the topic. It shifted the emphasis to strength. This positive state appeared to add to the feeling of safety (Ripley, 2023).

The experience of agency also added to the feeling of safety (Ripley, 2023). There was a sense of agency in creating something out of nothing. I was impressed with what each of the participants created. My own sense of agency was boosted by the whole process, that I could design the workshop, carry it out and create works of art that had strength and power.

Finally, participants experienced safety through the sense of group belonging (Ripley, 2023). Chava said she felt safe in the group in a way that was new for her. Both participants said they felt heard and inspired by each other.

Somatic Integration Through Haptic Experience and Contact with Clay

Because clay work involves a bottom-up haptic and tactile experience, it also facilitated somatic integration (Anderson, 1995; Sholt & Gavron, 2006; Elbrecht & Antcliff, 2014; Stickly & Wolf, 2021). Participants were wedging, coiling, cutting, scoring, sanding, brushing, gluing, and buffing. They were engaging with organic materials, such as clay (earth), sawdust, hay, and banana peels.

Chava arrived at Day 1 in a trauma state. She would stop suddenly as she was working and stare into space. Her hand movements were sporadic. By the end of the workshop, she was grounded and more settled. She mentioned that working with her hands had helped her feel more embodied. It assisted her in transferring out of brain centeredness and into body awareness, she said. Chava said she loved working with clay and wanted to take ongoing clay classes.

After working with her hands on Day 1, Nisa commented on how relaxed she was feeling. For myself, there were many moments of self-doubt. At one point when I was having difficulty putting my broken pieces back together, I wondered if I was beyond repair. There were many fears about whether I could develop a feasible method and a successful workshop. Focusing on the contact with clay and kinesthetic movement of my hands helped to calm my nerves and move me forward towards a positive completion. Both participants and I noted shifts from strong emotions, such as overwhelm, despair and dissociation, to pleasure, delight, relaxation, and ease. Perhaps this was aided by the many processes involved in the method,

because each time we finished one step, there was a next one to do. So, there was both time to feel the emotions that emerged, and a tactile activity carrying us forward.

Trauma affects Broca's area of the brain, which can block or impair verbalization (Tripp, 2007; van der Kolk, 2005). Art therapy, and in this case clay work, can bypass this because it creates connections to implicit memory without relying on speech (Lusebrink & Hinz, 2016; van der Kolk, 2014). The workshop and the method allowed us to process emotion non-verbally. This added to somatic integration and the periods of relaxation that we all experienced. It also sparked communication. So, at some points the more verbal people of the group were quiet and the quieter of the group were talkative. Nisa, for example, suddenly grew talkative on Day 3.

Creative Destruction and Controlled Breaking

Initially, the breaking of my sculptures was anxiety provoking. Especially after "Origin" broke, as I associated it with my hemorrhagic stroke. I attempted to simplify and improve the breaking process. The system of controlled breaking I arrived at allowed me to take charge of the breaking. I believe it created a reasonable amount of tension. It did not over-protect as Stickley and Wolf (2021) caution against, but it did not re-traumatize, which was my concern. Over time, I got used to the process and breaking became less emotional and more experimental for me.

In the workshop, participants were offered a choice to break or not. Both chose to break. They were nervous, but excited and looking forward to it. Fear transformed into intrigue and interest. Saying a prayer before breaking helped. Both expressed enjoyment in the act of creative destruction.

In my own process and in the workshop, none of us had breaks that could not be repaired. We realized that, actually, <u>any</u> break could be repaired. This contributed to a sense of empowerment, agency, and resilience. In general, this process confirmed that destruction can act

as a positive force to discharge energy and establish a sense of mastery over the destruction (Jacobsen-Levy & Miller, 2022).

Addressing Perfectionism

Morrison (2020) associates trauma with self-judgment and low self-esteem. Her literature review shows a positive correlation between group therapy, art therapy, clay work and enhancement of self-esteem. Self-judgment and self-esteem issues showed up in our group as struggles with perfectionism. One participant mentioned that the dropping (breaking) helped her let go of perfection. The saggar firing process itself is uncontrolled. We do what we can to create conditions we desire, but the firing takes its own course. There were many similar aspects of the process where we each had to let go of pre-conceived notions for results. What came of that were unexpected delights. We each had moments of judging our own work. In the end, we found a way to let that go and fall in love with what emerged.

Identification with the Artwork

All three of us felt attached to our sculptures, both as they were evolving and as a final product. One participant had the instinct to call her sculpture love names. We each felt something powerful and healing in touching our pieces and in gazing upon them. For me, my sculptures began to take on their own archetypal personality. “Origin” has battle wounds, but is strong and feels like a giant, though she is only two feet tall. I dreamed of “Resilience” falling and breaking. Then, for several weeks I dreamed of everything, not just sculptures, breaking. “Resilience,” though, did not break. She has a grounding and empowering presence. Each time I look at her, she is still standing straight and tall, invincible. “Aphasia,” receives from the spirit world in the opening created by my brain bleed. Each of them represents a superhero aspect of me. Sholt and Gavron’s (2006) term for identification with artwork is concretization. It refers to

the projection of thoughts, emotions, and a range of human experience on a physical form. In this way positive and negative emotions can be worked out through an art product.

Somatization of the Art Making Process

One participant experienced the reverse. In addition to identifying with her artwork, she also identified the process of art making in her own body. For example, after wedging clay she described the tension in her shoulder as a wedge of clay. When we scored our sculptures, she identified a scoring in her body that created a vulnerability. She learned that in saggar firing, where materials contact pieces directly, they create marks. Where they contact indirectly, they fume and create flashes of color. At one point she noticed she was holding her chest and experienced the pressure as direct contact creating a mark. In each of these moments, she was the clay. There was a profound sense of healing present. Bessel van der Kolk (2014) talks about restoring synchrony through "sounds and movements embedded in the daily sensory rhythms" (p.141). Perhaps haptic connection with clay is one such sensory rhythm and the above associations represent a restoration of synchrony.

Limitations

There were some drawbacks to the method. It requires a commitment of 4 days, each 2.5 hours. 1.5-2 hours was not enough, and 3 hours might even be better. There are many processes involved and a great deal of work (both a plus and minus). There is an investment in tools and firing costs. Making the object we drop was beneficial in this case in that it added personal involvement, but it could also be the opposite and be too challenging for some people. Therefore, this method requires initial work to ensure that participants know the process they are to engage in, and support in the moment should it be triggering or overwhelming. My first pilot run only involved two participants, and I already had an established relationship with both of them. There

was minimal cultural diversity amongst us. This workshop was a mix of trauma types. The nature of each type is different, so there may have been some general commonality, amidst difference. Also, each of the participants had long time experience with therapy.

Finally, my lens as a trauma survivor may have impacted my analysis and approach. I am an advocate for clay work and may be biased in my passion. It may not be the best medium for all. As a bodyworker, I have an interest in somatic awareness. This may have affected my determination of relevant findings.

Implications

Following the detail enumerated above, this workshop should be implementable by those with art therapy and clay experience.

For further workshops, in the event of extreme reactions to the breaking process, one could try out safety measures used in the "Clay Field®," (Elbrecht and Antcliff, 2014) such as dipping hands in warm water, and taking time to establish a relationship by playing with clay before beginning to create. Extending the process of wedging and rolling coils might also serve to establish a relationship with clay. It would then be possible to pendulate (Levine, 2010), moving between new, unfamiliar experiences, and returning to familiar comfort zones when needed.

The controlled breaking process I developed may be too controlled for some. In that case, one could add throwing clay against the wall to get some of the destructive energy out and allow for more balance when working with an object that has personal meaning.

I recommend exploration of larger participant groups, incorporating new clients, greater inclusivity of diverse cultures, inclusion of those who are newer to therapy, and groups focused on one specific trauma populations. There could be further investigation of how to adapt this

method to different types of traumas. It would also be useful to discover modifications needed for elders and those with physical challenges.

Conclusion

For this study a four series workshop was carried out over the course of a month to make, tend, break and mend saggar-fired ceramic sculptures to explore the question: “How can a ceramic process of rupture and repair be useful for developing resilience to trauma?” Results indicated that this method and workshop was useful in developing trauma resilience. The themes that emerged were establishing safety; somatic integration through haptic experience and contact with clay; the value of creative destruction and controlled breaking; addressing perfectionism, identification with the artwork, and somatization of the art making process.

The study added to the body of knowledge that creative destruction can be carried out safely with trauma survivors and it presented a process for controlled breaking of clay objects. Some things broke that were not planned, and we were able to put them back together in a meaningful way. This provided a lived experience that ruptures can be repaired. It built a sense of empowerment and agency. Both participants were inspired to continue working with clay. One participant summarized the gist of the workshop. Rupture creates a need for repair, but what emerges is something different and better. Without the rupture we remain static and cannot evolve.

Personally, I discovered through this process that art therapy and work with clay addresses a basic sense of being inherently flawed, left over from past trauma. The creative process is my greatest challenge as it forces me to confront what I think I don’t have and can’t possibly do. Again and again, I have to discover my capacity to create, my generativity.

Therefore, it is also my greatest healer. It sculpts that trauma and makes the being that emerged from it beautiful. I am excited to continue exploring this method with groups and individuals, and in further construction of my own artwork.

Gratitude and Appreciation

My heartfelt gratitude to Irina Okula, whose work I admire greatly. She developed the method of making, breaking, and reassembling, she named “Clay Shards.” Irina generously gave me the ok to adapt the method to an art therapy process and gave me some pointers on how to do it. My deepest appreciation to Jill Solomon, friend, teacher, source of inspiration and amazing artist, who showed me how to saggar fire, and gave me advice and support as I learned to do it myself. She mixed materials with me, showed me how to doctor up chipped areas with paint, and was there to answer all my “how do I…?” questions. Thanks a million, to Seyrel and Chris Williams for generously allowing me the use of their clay studio free for the 5 days of the workshop. What an incredible gift! My gratitude to workshop participants for your enthusiasm, inspiration, and feedback. A huge thank you to Raquel Stephenson, Ph.D., my thesis advisor, for her ongoing help and encouragement. Thank you to my mom and dad, Judith and Edward Bernstein, my husband, Ramani Rangan, and my sister, Erica Bernstein, all sources of continuous support, suggestions, and listening ears. None of this could have happened without you all.

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Figure 1: First Test Run

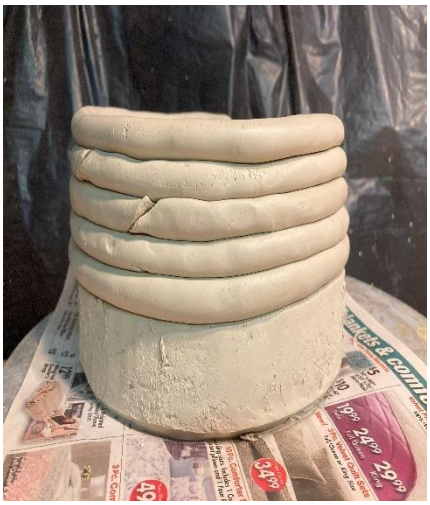


Fig. 1.1. Coil Building

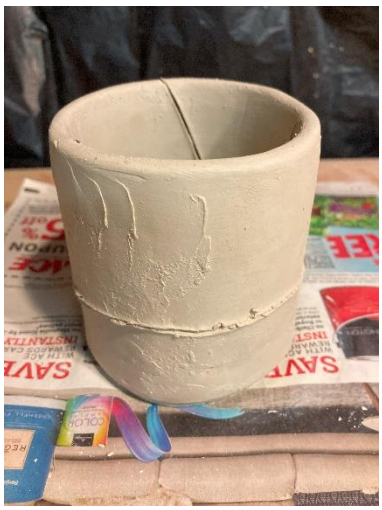


Fig. 1.2. Cutting and Scoring

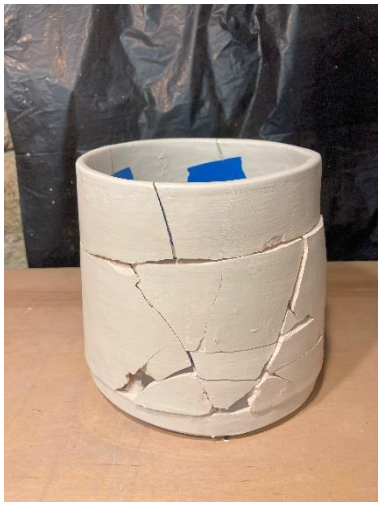


Fig. 1.3. Breaking

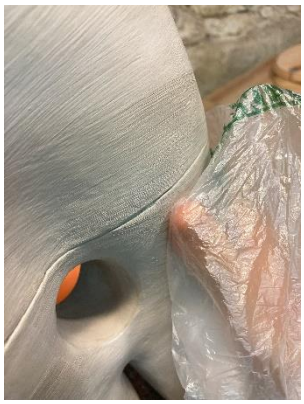


Fig. 1.4. Burnishing

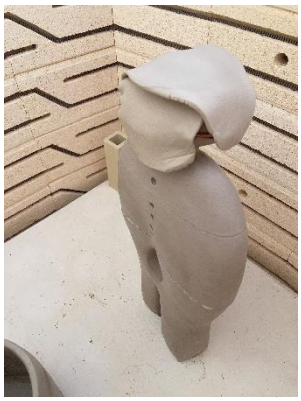


Fig. 1.5. Firing

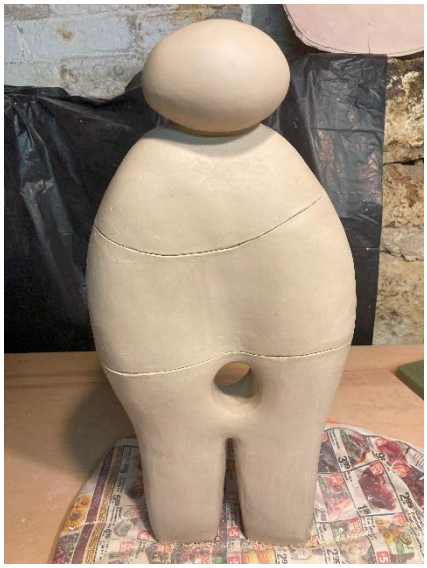


Fig. 1.6. Rupture and Repair: Origin, Front

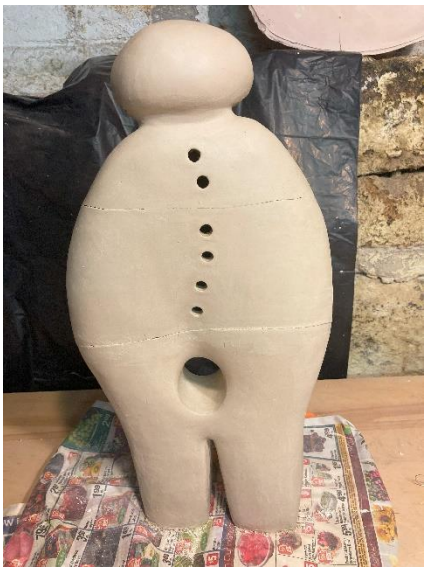


Fig. 1.7. Rupture and Repair: Origin, Back

Figure 2

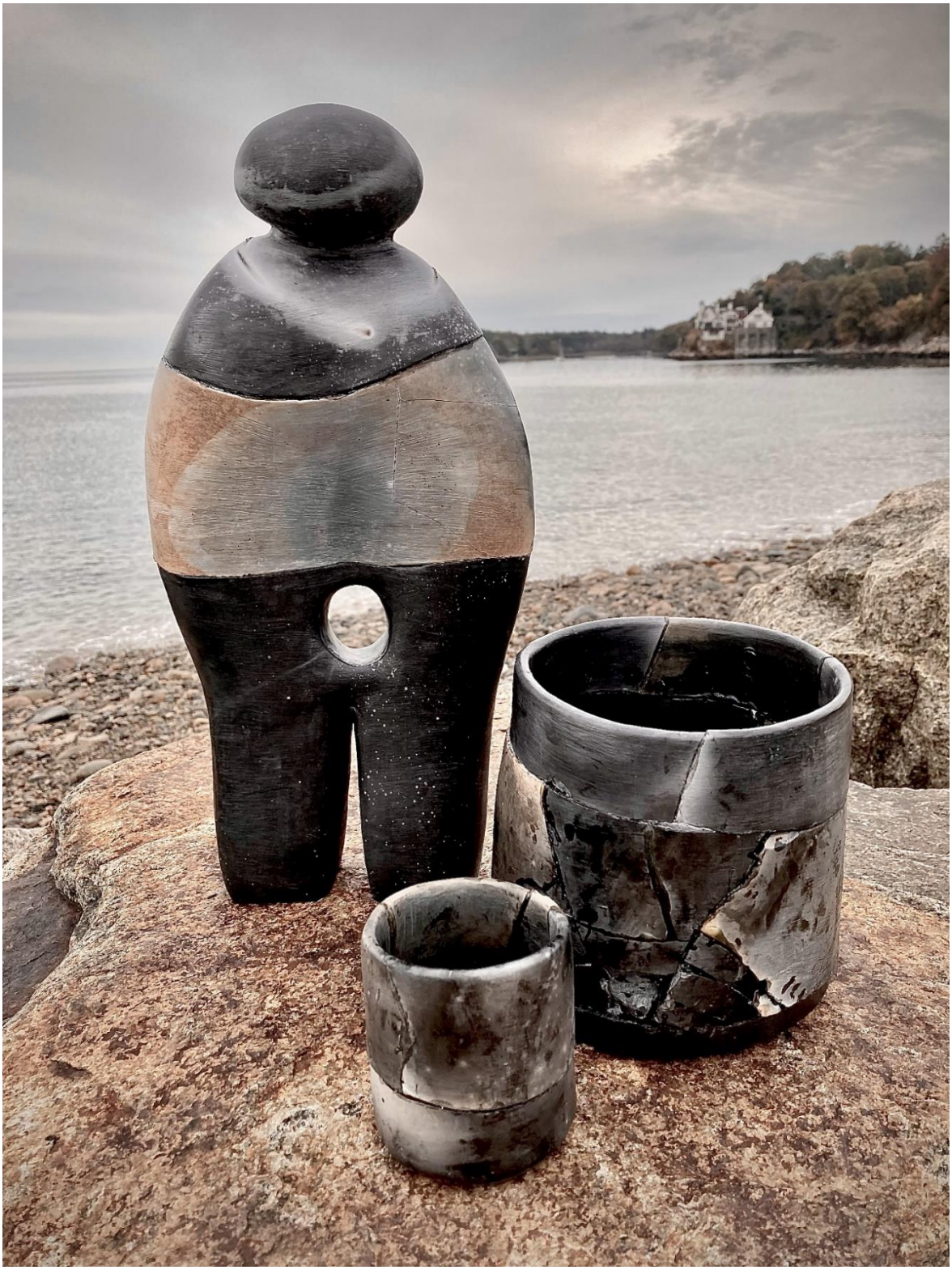


Fig. 2. Jenny Rangan (2022). *Rupture and Repair: Origin, Cylinder 1, Cylinder 2.* [ceramic]. Gloucester, MA/USA.

Figure 3

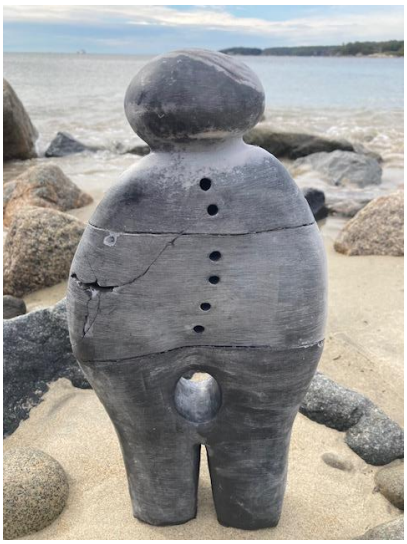
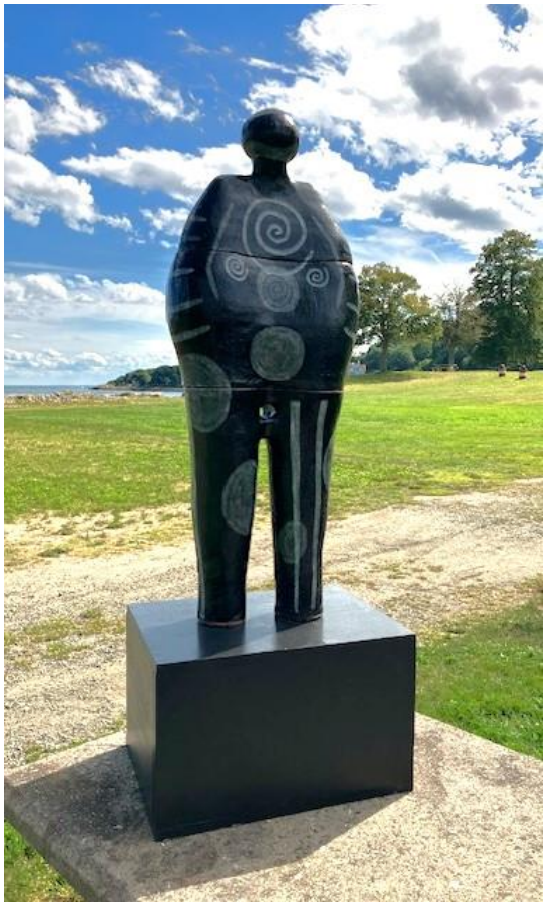


Fig. 3.1. Jenny Rangan. (2022). *Rupture and Repair: Origin, Back,* (After Break and Mend). [ceramic]. Gloucester, MA, USA



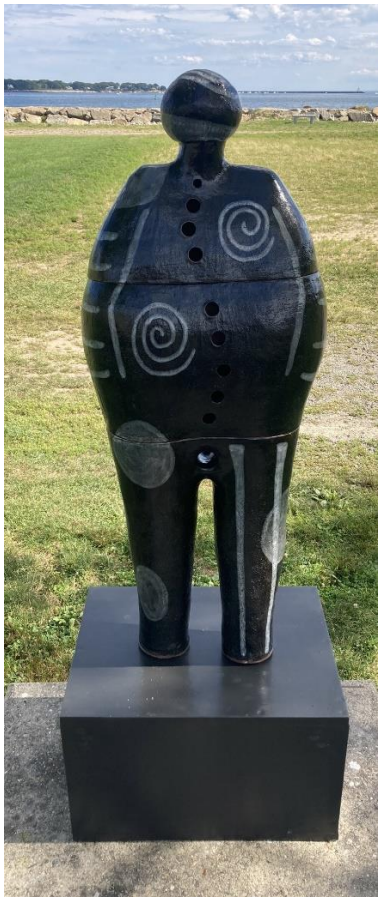


Fig. 3.2 and 3.3. Jenny Rangan. (2023*). Rupture and Repair: Resilience, Front and Back,* [ceramic on wood base, 5.5ft]. Gloucester, MA, USA.

Figure 4: Second Test Run

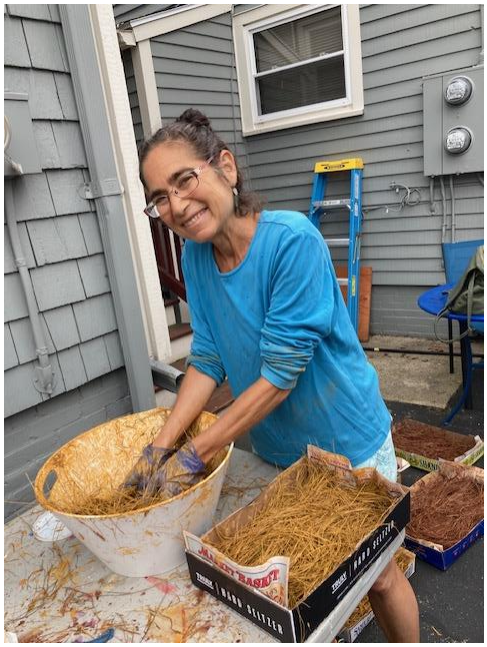


Fig. 4.1. Coloring Materials

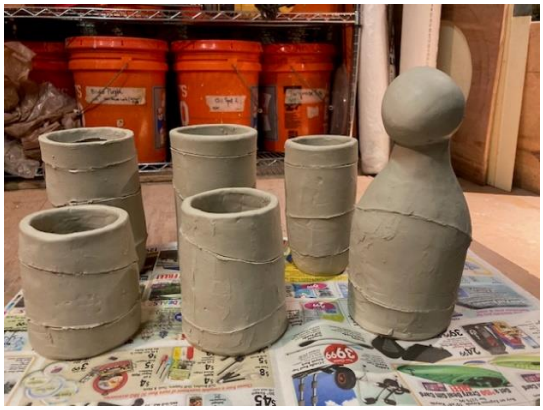


Fig. 4.2. Cut and Scored Demos

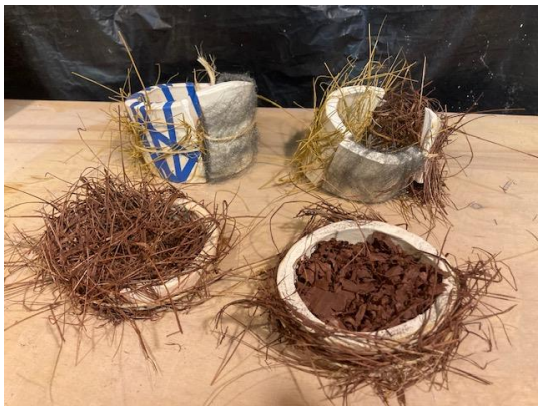


Fig. 4.3. Wrapped in Organic Materials

Fig. 4.4. Stacked in Saggar

Figure 4: Second Test Run Continued

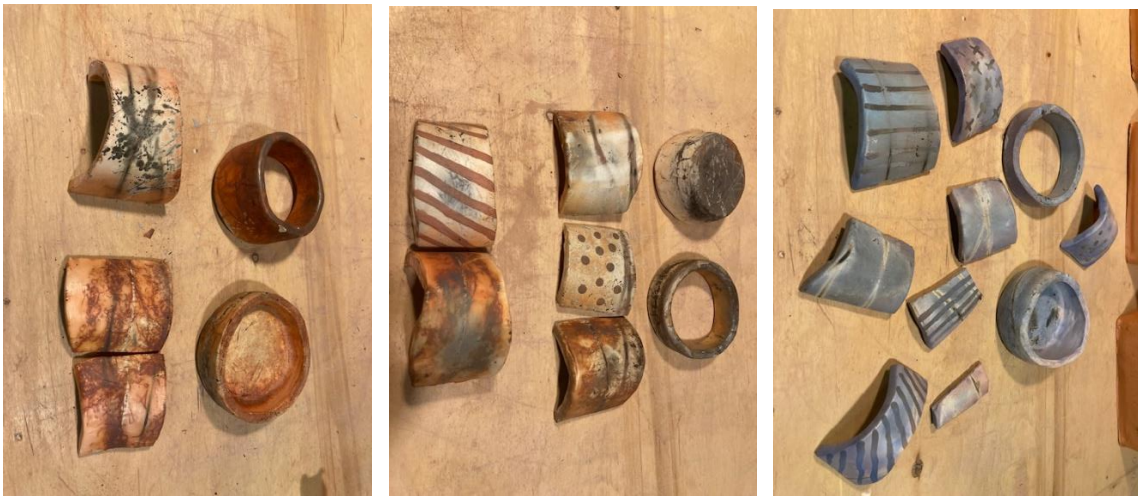


Fig. 4.5, 4.6, 4.7. Saggar-Fired Pieces

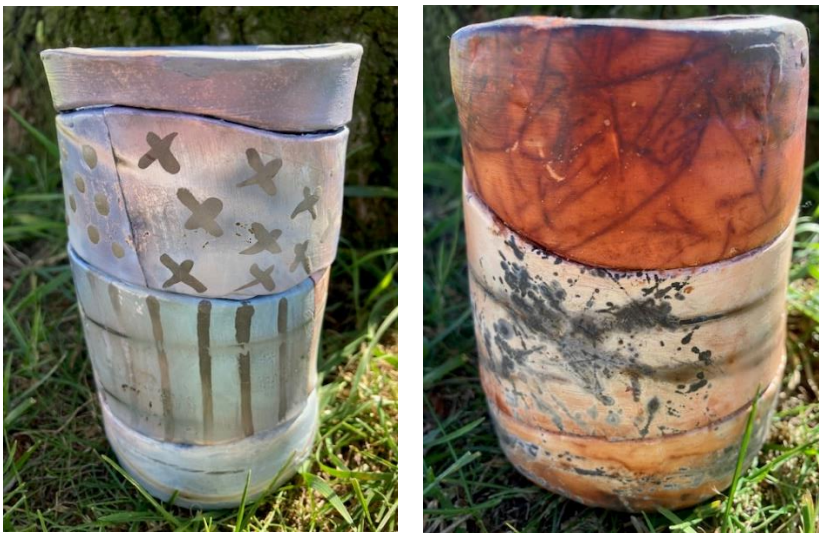


Fig. 4.8 and 4.9. Completed Demo Cylinders

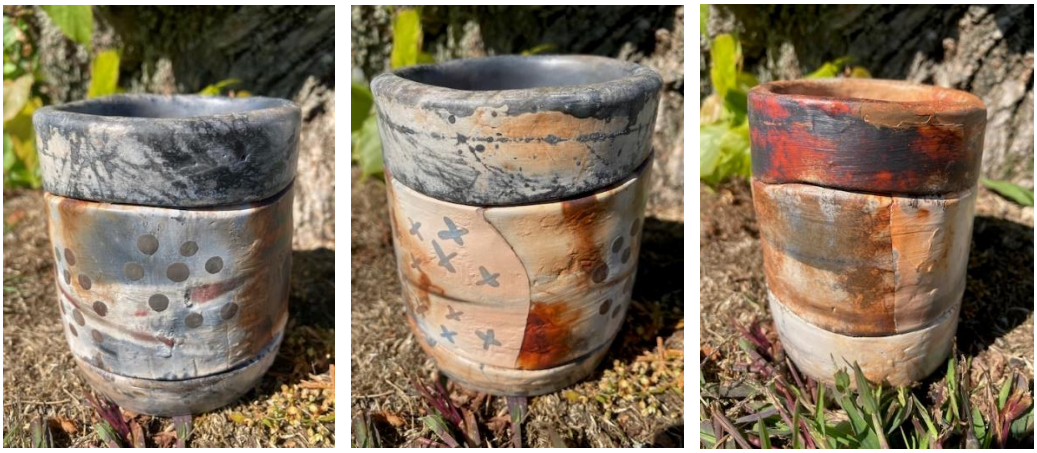


Fig. 4.10, 4.11, 4.12. Completed Demo Cylinders

Figure 5: Second Test Run, Transfer Images

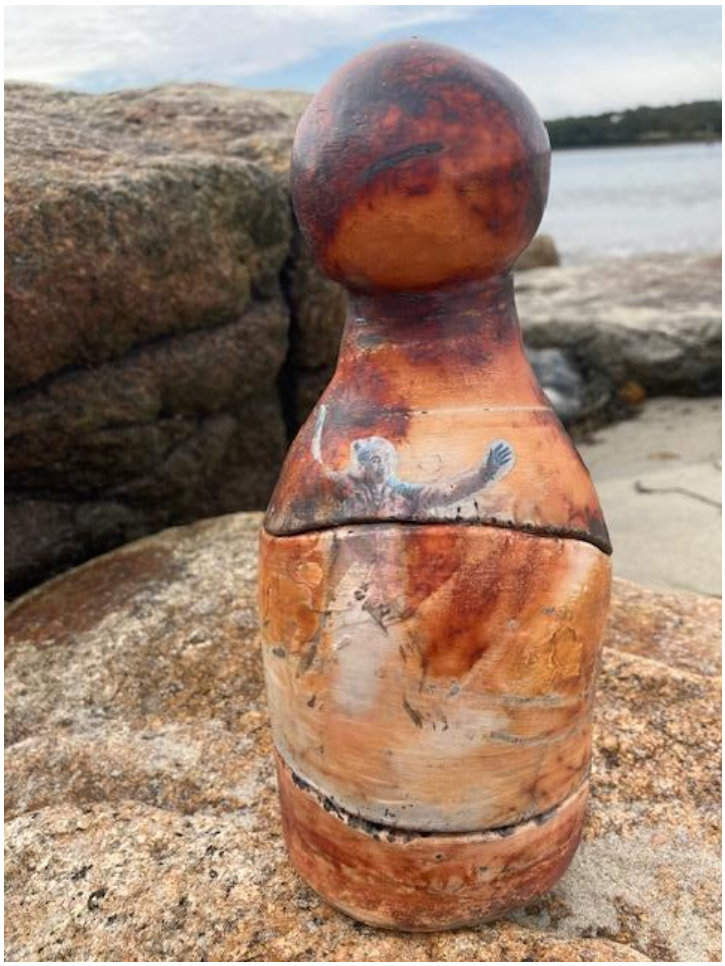


Fig. 5.1. Completed Figurative Demo with Transfer

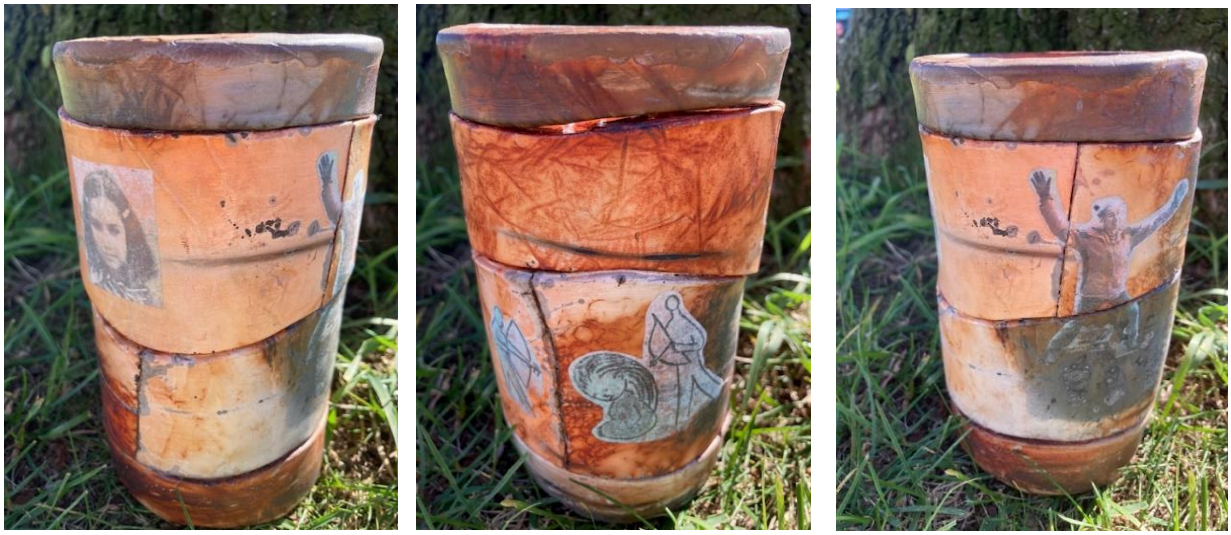


Fig. 5.2. Completed Cylindrical Demo with Transfer, Front, Back and Side

Figure 6: The Workshop

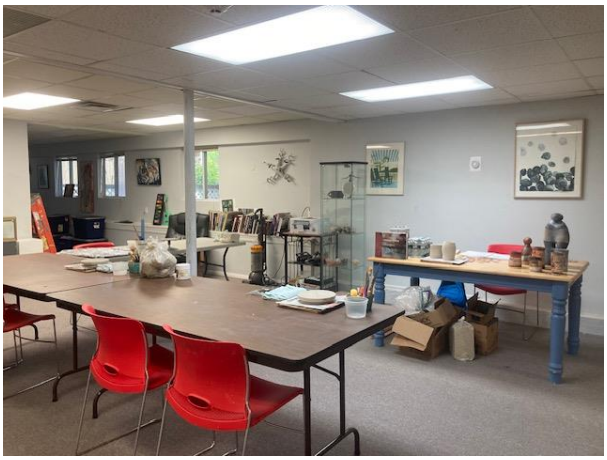


Fig. 6.1. Workshop Studio Day 1

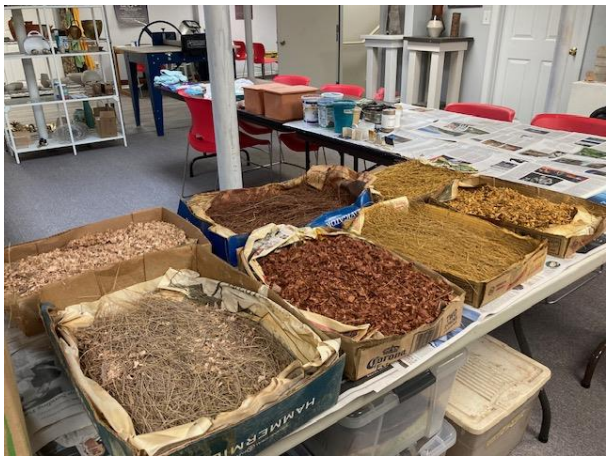


Fig. 6.2. Workshop Studio Day 3

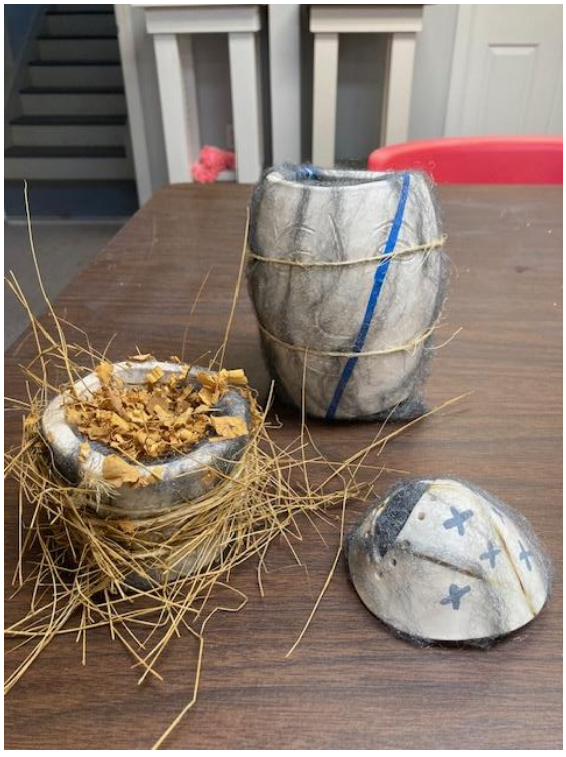


Fig. 6.3. Ready to Pack in Saggar

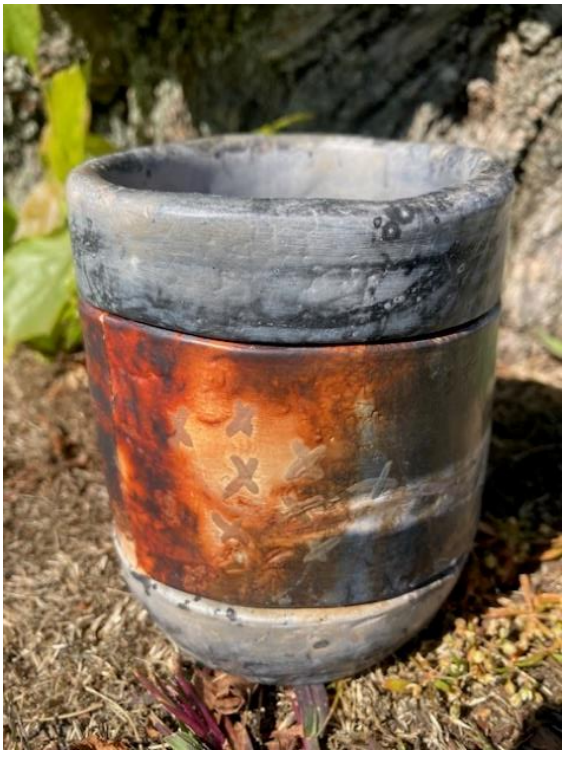


Fig 6.4. Results of Third Test Run

Figure 7

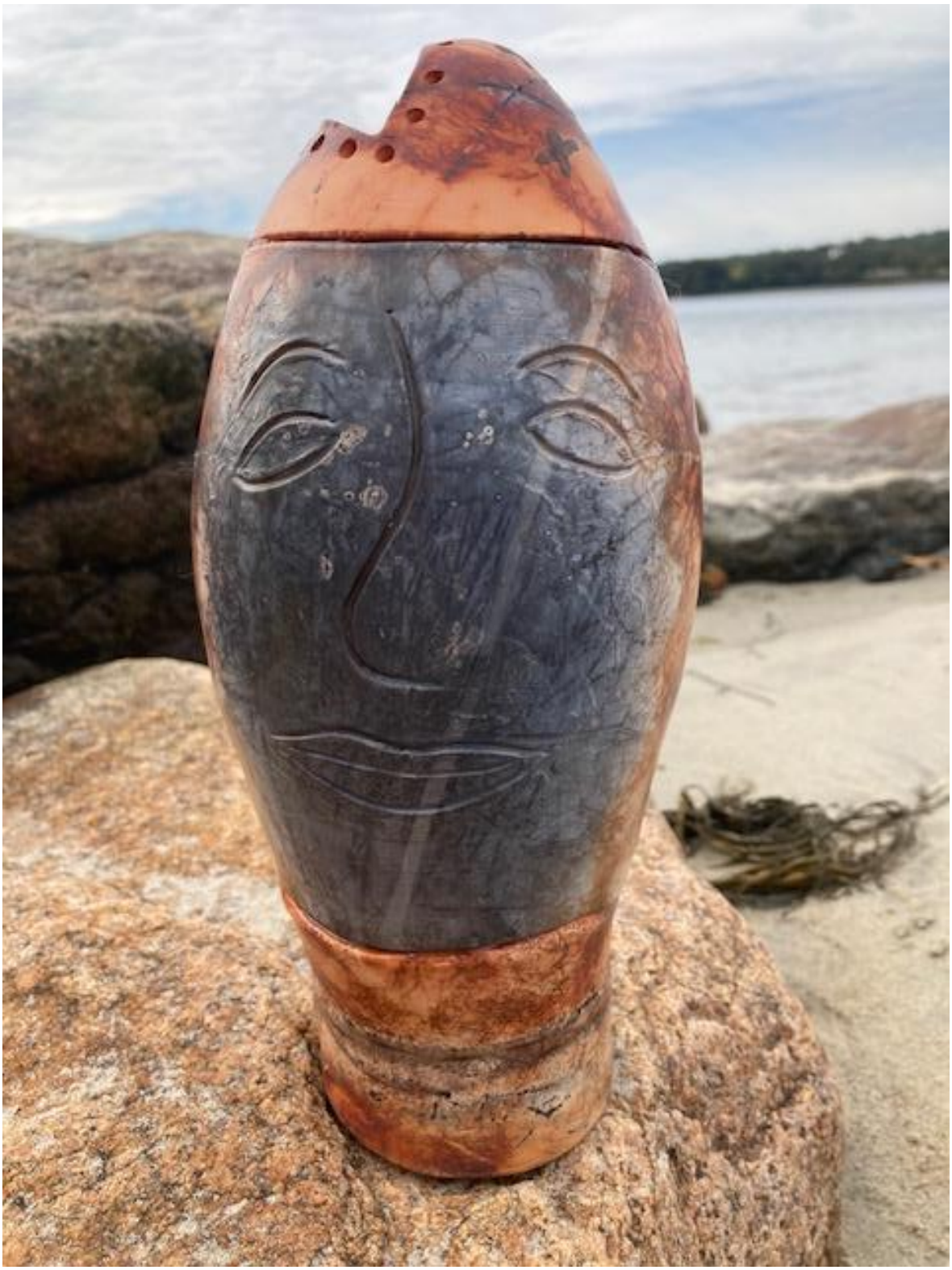


Fig. 7. Jenny Rangan. (2023). *Rupture and Repair: Aphasia, Gateway to the Spirit World, Front.* [ceramic]. Gloucester, MA, USA

Figure 8

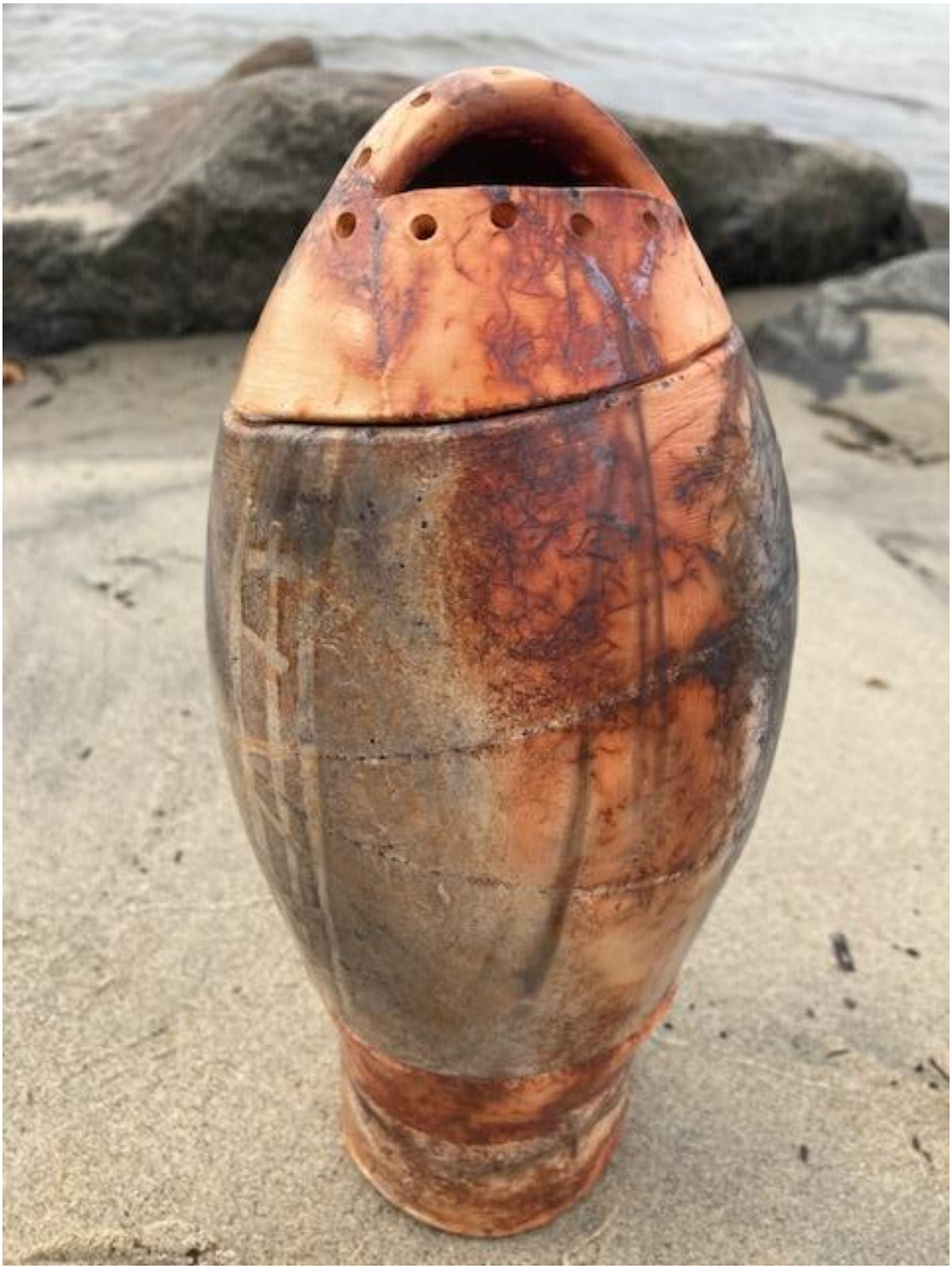


Fig. 8. Jenny Rangan. (2023). *Rupture and Repair: Aphasia, Gateway to the Spirit World, Back.* [ceramic]. Gloucester, MA, USA.

Appendix 1: Flyer

Rupture and Repair: Building Resilience
Saggar Fired Clay Workshop

Day 1: Making

coil build a cylinder or figurative piece, cut and score

Day 2: Tending

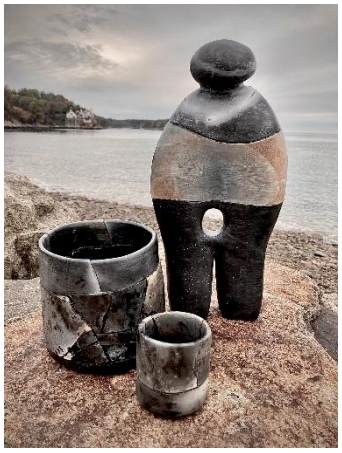
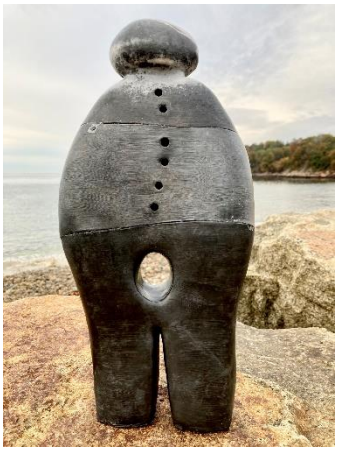
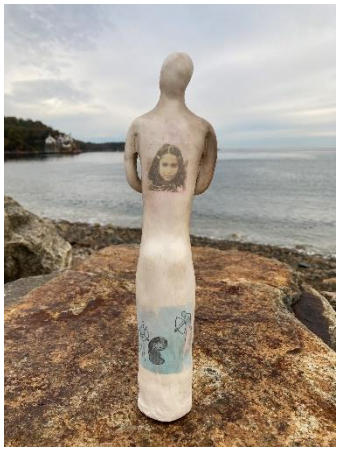
paint with terra sigillata (a clay slip), burnish, add copper wire for flashing

Day 3: Breaking

controlled breaking (optional), wrap in organic materials soaked in oxides and pack in saggars (fired clay containers), begin image transfer (optional)

Day 4: Mending

glue together, wax, add image transfer and/or decorative elements (optional)

Dates: Friday 9/15@11-1, Friday 9/22@11-1, Monday 9/25@9:30-11:30 or Tuesday 9/26@3:30-5:30, Friday 9/29@11-1

Location: Lexicon Studio, 15 Lexington Ave, Magnolia, MA

FREE EVENT, NO PRIOR EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

Note: This will be a process of Developing a Method for my thesis for an MA in Art Therapy. All names will be confidential, and no personal details will be included. Your feedback on the process, your impressions and suggestions will be much appreciated.

Appendix 2: Informed Consent

"Rupture and Repair: Building Resilience, Saggar Fired Clay Workshop," will be the topic of a thesis for an MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Art Therapy. The thesis will focus on developing a method and will explore the question: "How can a ceramic process of rupture and repair be used for healing trauma?" No names, pictures of participants or of their artwork will be used.

I give my consent to Jenny Bernstein Rangan to include in her thesis her observations of me during my art making experience, what I share in group, unless I specify otherwise, and any reflections or feedback I give her on the process of the workshop.

Name:

Print_____

Signature_____

Date_____

I give my consent to Jenny Bernstein Rangan to take pictures to guide her in writing her thesis. I understand these pictures will not be included in the thesis or shown to the general public.

Name:

Print_____

Signature_____

Date_____

Appendix 3: Questionnaire

Rupture and Repair Workshop Review and Feedback

Name:

Any sensations you noticed in your body during the workshop?

Any feelings that came up?

What were your favorite and least favorite parts of the process?

What are your overall impressions of the workshop?

Any suggestions for improvement or ideas for the future?

THESIS APPROVAL FORM

Lesley University
Graduate School of Arts & Social Sciences
Expressive Therapies Division
Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Art Therapy, MA

Student's Name: Jenny Bernstein Rangan

Type of Project: Thesis

Title: Rupture and Repair: Developing A Saggar-Fired Ceramic Approach to Building Trauma Resilience Through Making, Tending, Breaking, and Mending

Date of Graduation: May 2025

In the judgment of the following signatory this thesis meets the academic standards that have been established for the above degree.

Thesis Advisor: Raquel C. Stephenson