

Where Tradition and Technology Meet

Anna Calluori Holcombe

Abstract

When I travel and explore the world, I cannot help but make connections. Nature is one place that I look for these connections. Interestingly, the word nature has multiple definitions, ranging from a person's inherent character to an organ's function and to the flora and fauna found in the landscape. In this presentation I will discuss how I have managed to combine the long held tradition of Ceramics in China to the current contemporary use of 3D technologies. I will briefly describe the technologies I use as a methodology of creating, inspired by my working in China.

When I travel and explore the world, I cannot help but make connections. Nature is one place that I look for these connections. Interestingly, the word *nature* has multiple definitions, ranging from a person's inherent character to an organ's function and to the flora and fauna found in the landscape. I have been to China 12 times in about 16 years. The theme of this Congress directly relates to how my working in Asia has influenced my creative process and how I have managed to combine the long held tradition of Ceramics in China to current use of 3D technologies.

I had a pivotal change in my creative process after working in China at an artist residency in a factory at Fule International Ceramic Art Museums, Fuping, China. I realized that my hand does not have to touch every part of my work for it to be mine. This was a liberating realization. I can make the artistic decisions, but others can do the work, in a special type of collaboration.

My process involves 3D scanning natural objects and creating 3D printed models to cast in plaster for slip casting with porcelain. At this stage, I make the connection of the model to the clay object. Criticisms of 3D fabrication in craft largely center on a loss of materiality, how the inhuman algorithm replaces the human touch. Despite the use of this technology, I do a great deal of handwork in arranging, cleaning, connecting and glazing.

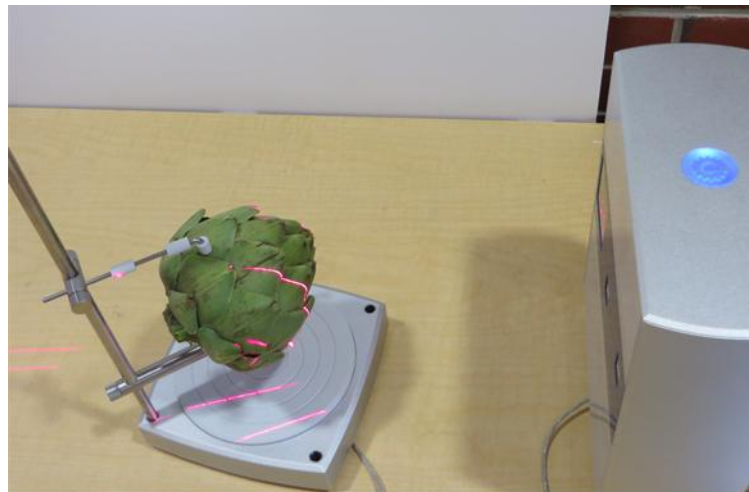


Fig. 1. 3D scanner at work

Here you can see the scanner at work (see Fig. 1), a mesh of the scan, a high quality 3D image, two plastic models (Fig. 2), the white one of an altered file turning the artichoke into a bowl (Fig. 3). A mold was made of this model, and here you see

the resulting porcelain slip cast bowl.



Fig. 2. Anna Calluori Holcombe, 3D printed plastic models



Fig. 3. Anna Calluori Holcombe, Artichoke bowl from *Peinte 50* 2016, Jingdezhen porcelain, slip cast,
9 cm high x 13 cm diameter

This method of working continued during my residencies at the Pottery Workshop in Jingdezhen and Shangyu Celadon – Modern International Ceramic Center. In these two residencies I brought 3D printed models with me and had molds made for my slip cast work

The Pottery Workshop in Jingdezhen is situated in the heart of the “Sculpture Factory,” a series of small workshops each doing a specific aspect of the ceramics process. I

worked there in 2012 for a month. I had access to the “mold man” and “slip casting lady” and a variety of people with specialties that would allow me to make many more parts to my work that I could possibly do in my studio at home.



Fig. 4. Anna Calluori Holcombe, *Piante 42*, 2012, Jingdezhen porcelain, slip cast, PVD, 19 x 18 x 18 cm

Continuing the *Piante* series (Fig. 4), I work in an assemblage fashion to create sculptural arrangements.



Fig. 5. Anna Calluori Holcombe, *Piante 47*, 2014, porcelain, slip cast, cast glass, luster, 11 x 38 x 38 cm

In some of these pieces I use LED lit pedestals to accentuate the translucent qualities of the porcelain and cast glass, adding the elements of light and shadow to the composition (Fig. 5).

In 2016, I worked for a month at the Shangyu Celadon - Modern International

Ceramics Center, Zhejiang Province, a collaboration between Tsinghua University and the District of Shangyu. I had access to a variety of clays, mold making, kilns and helpful assistants to continue my Piante series.



Fig. 6. Anna Calluori Holcombe, *Piante 51*, 2016, Jingdezhen porcelain, slip cast, industrial plate, 20 cm high x 33 cm diameter

By taking natural objects and using them in a digital form creates a juxtaposition that I find interesting, suggesting a relationship between the forms that take on the genre of the still life.