

SARAH CROWNER

CLAY BODIES

December 15, 2018 -
April 7, 2019

Educator
Guide



KMACMUSEUM

WELCOME!

Dear Educators,

KMAC is excited to bring the ideas and creations of **Sarah Crowner** and multiple ceramic artists to your students. This field trip guide is intended to help you prepare for your visit to KMAC and to begin conversations around key themes and ideas in your classroom. Through discussion, reflection, and art creation, our goal is to help the artistic process come alive for your students. While touring the exhibition we will look at select artworks to engage students in thinking and discussing what a painting *really is* and how artists from different times and culture have worked with clay. To further cement the connection between responding, creating, and producing, we have also developed an art-making experience that corresponds with the exhibition.

Enjoy your visit!
KMAC Director of Education
Joanna Miller

KMAC MUSEUM

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COVER IMAGE: Pieces from the *Glaze Archive* of Ester Kislin, 2017-2018, Glazed Ceramic. Courtesy of the artist.

INTRODUCTION

Sarah Crowner

If you ask artist Sarah Crowner what goes into a painting, she does not mention paint or canvas. To her, **form**, **shape**, and **color** are the most important elements of painting. She also believes that line, art history, and personal experience add extra layers of meaning to works of art. Crowner has been working in many different ways to express these ideas. In her recent work, she has stitched together paintings with cut canvas, like *Sliced Red and Blue* below, focusing on crafting with form, shape and color.

Crowner finds new ways to express her ideas on painting through creating *Clay Bodies* at KMAC. She chose ceramic works from Kentucky collections and used these to create a 3D representation of painting—one that visitors get to walk through and become part of. She has picked out specific shapes for tables and shelves, brought different colors into the backgrounds, and displayed multiple forms with different ceramic pieces. Viewers can find art history in the vast array of artists and cultures present, as well as see Crowner's personal experience play out in her own ceramics and curated groupings. Finally, as visitors move through the exhibit, they create a line and a conversation that brings all the elements together. Viewers can experience *Clay Bodies* as a conceptual work, but they can also explore individual artists and styles throughout history and from around the world.



above:
Sliced Red and Blue (New Weed) 2,
2017, Sarah Crowner; acrylic on
canvas, sewn; Courtesy of the artist.



left:
Set of 4 Cups, 1995, Gerard Ferrari;
Ceramic; Courtesy Berea College Art
Collection.
Tripod Vessel, c. 800 AD, Unknown,
Costa Rican; Terracotta; Courtesy
Berea College Art Collection.
White Horse Wild Woman, 1983,
Rudy Autio; Glazed Ceramic; Cour-
tesy Collection Al and Mary Shands.

CURATION

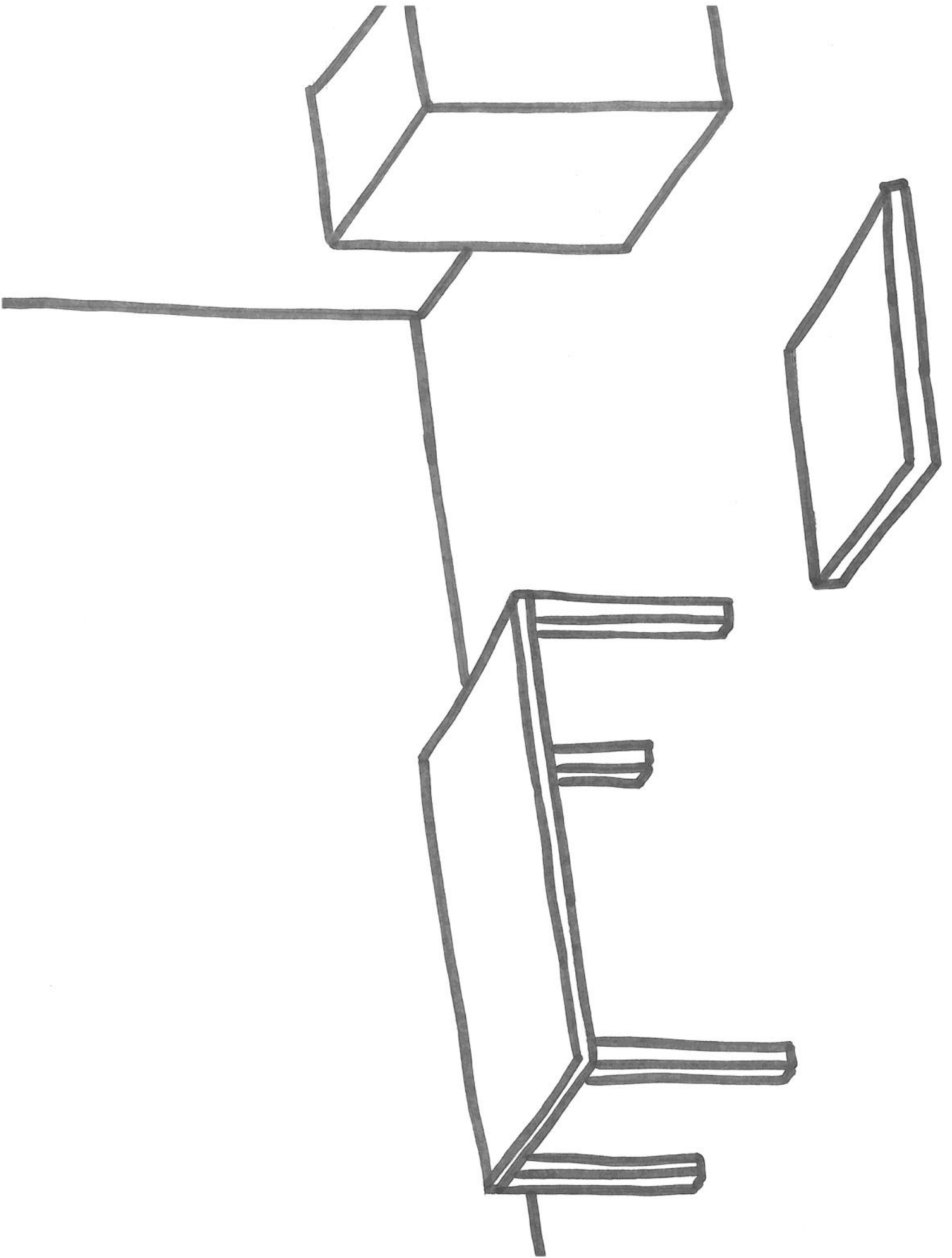
Pre Visit Activity

To **curate** means to select, organize, and manage items in a collection. Sarah Crowner viewed her role as artist in *Clay Bodies* to be more like a choreographer, organizer, or arranger of the elements of art. Explore curation by creating your own exhibit. Cut out the objects you want to display on this page. Arrange them in the blank gallery on the next page. You can even add color to the floors and walls to enhance your work. Share what you have made with others!



from left to right:

Vase, 206 BC—220 AD; Unknow, Chinese; Ceramic. *Reproduction of Persian Architectural Tile*, 1977; Unknown, Islamic; Ceramic. *Bowl*, n.d.; Mary Saxon; Ceramic. *Bowl*, n.d.; Unkown, Native American; Ceramic. *Tile*, 1960; Unknown, Pakistani; Ceramic. *Bowl*, n.d.; Unknown, Maricopa; Ceramic. All Courtesy of Berea College Art Collection. *Wonder Woman Meets Diva*, 183; Rudy Autio; Glazed Ceramic. *Footed Bowl*, 1983; Beatrice Wood; Metallic-glazed Ceramic. Both Courtesy of Al and Mary Shands Collection.



FORM & FUNCTION

Peter Voulkos

Sarah Crowner placed each ceramic piece in *Clay Bodies* very intentionally. In the second room of the exhibition, viewers find a large vessel from Peter Voulkos (*Stack*) in front of four examples of tea pots. Voulkos began his pottery career in the late 1940s making **functional** dinnerware that was wheel-thrown, smooth, and glossy. After visiting Black Mountain College and being introduced to Abstract Expressionists, he began building with clay by hand, creating rough textures and unique forms. Instead of intrinsically functional objects, he made **abstract** and **sculptural** forms that shocked the ceramic world in the 1950s. He blurred the lines that had divided what was considered **craft** and what was seen as **fine art**. As a teacher, he would only let his students make tea pots if they could not function that way.



As the viewer looks beyond Voulkos work, they will see three tea pots made by three different contemporary American artists. All are made with different materials, decorations, and styles; all three function very well as tea pots.

above:

Stack, 2081, Peter Voulkos; Ceramic. Courtesy Collection AI and Mary Shands.

left:

Ceramic Blue Jay Teapot, Cheryl Laemmle; Glazed and painted ceramic. *Black Teapot with Mountains*, 1989, Kurt Weiser; Porcelain. *Teapot*, 1982, Betty Woodman; Terracotta. Courtesy Collection AI and Mary Shands.

Discussion Questions

Do you think there is a difference between *Craft* and *Fine Art*? Why or why not?
When you make something do you consider the object's function? How?

CERAMIC TILES

Doyle Lane

ABOUT THE ARTIST

In 1981 interview, Doyle Lane said, “Why not take paintings out of doors, where one may sit and watch the changing play of sunshine on the glazes and thus have changes of mood during the day?”



above:

Collection of Tiles, Doyle Lane (1925-2002); Ceramic. Courtesy of Jeremy Petty.

As viewers move through the last two galleries, Sarah Crowner draws attention to the way glaze contributes to a work of art. *Clay Bodies* shows a wide variety of glazes and the colors and textures they can produce. The collection of tiles from Californian artist, Doyle Lane, has been arranged by Crowner to show colors moving from warm to cool. Looking closer, one can see pock marks, cracking surfaces, and glossy mirrors. The tiles come from a variety of murals or “tile paintings” made by Lane for Southern California businesses. Lane was often labeled a *craftsman* instead of an artist, not only because he worked in clay but because he was African American. That label is slowly changing and Crowner hopes to encourage his status as a master artist.

Discussion Questions

How can an artist paint with tiles?

What do you first think of when you see the arrangement of tiles?

Do you think it is important to re-evaluate whom the art world has called artists?

VOCABULARY

Ceramic: made with clay and hardened by heat

Curate: to select, organize, and manage items in a collection

Functional: made for a specific purpose or task

Conceptual Art: when the artist's idea is more important than the created object

Glaze: liquid coating applied to clay that hardens when it is fired

Sculptural: relating to sculpture and not necessarily functional

Abstract Art: art that does not represent reality but uses line, color, shape, and form to create effects

LEARNING TARGETS

- I can describe elements of art and principles of design.
- I can identify meaning in visual artworks.
- I can share personal knowledge and meaningful experiences while looking at and making art.
- I can demonstrate skill in sculpting with clay.
- I can create a coil pot with clay.

READING CONNECTION

FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS

The Pot that Juan Built by Nancy Andrews-Goebel

When Clay Sings by Byrd Baylor

Children of Clay: A Family of Pueblo Potters by Rina Swentzell

The Little Clay Pot: by Cheryl Kincaid

What's the Big Idea?: Activities and Adventures in Abstract Art By Joyce Raimondo

FOR OLDER STUDENTS

Making Pottery Without a Wheel: Texture and Form in Clay by F. Carlton Ball & Janice Looos

Talking With the Clay by Stephen Trimble

The Mad Potter: George E. Ohr, Eccentric Genius by Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan

Vitamin C: Clay and Ceramic in Contemporary Art: by Clare Lilley

The Art Book: Big Ideas Simply Explained by DK

INTERNET RESOURCES

Kmacmuseum.org
simonleegallery.com/artists/sarah-crowner/
dulmann galleries.berea.edu/collections/objects/
americanindian.si.edu
craftinamerica.org/artists/peter-voulkos

STANDARDS

Content standards addressed in this tour and art-making activity

KY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FOR MEDIA ARTS

- Anchor 1:** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work
- Anchor 2:** Organize and develop artistic ideas and work
- Anchor 3:** Refine and complete artistic work
- Anchor 4:** Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation
- Anchor 5:** Develop and refine artistic technique and work for presentation
- Anchor 6:** Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work
- Anchor 7:** Perceive and analyze artistic work
- Anchor 8:** Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work
- Anchor 9:** Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work
- Anchor 10:** Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art
- Anchor 11:** Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context

KY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- SL.K-12.1** Participate in conversations with others and express ideas
- SL.K-12.2** Integrate and evaluate information from diverse media
- W.K-12.1** Write arguments based on visual evidence

HANDS-ON ART

Clay Coil Pots

Using new knowledge and inspiration from *Clay Bodies*, students can make a ceramic piece of their own. A field trip with KMAC educators will provide the extra tools students need to create a coil pot. Students will learn coiling and glazing techniques and create a bowl or cup with these skills. (Clay pieces must be kept at KMAC for firing in our on-site kiln for 2-4 weeks and then picked up from the museum.)

WHAT DID YOU SEE?

Post-Visit Activity

Write the title of three works you remember and then answer the following questions thoughtfully.

	Title #1	Title #2	Title #3
Describe the artwork. Try to use words related to the elements of art (line, shape, form, space, color, value, texture).			
What materials and processes did the artist use? How did the materials effect the way you understood the artwork?			
What is the Big Idea? Describe a theme or a story you found in the artwork.			
Describe your reaction to the work. What did the art remind you of?			

CURATION

Post-Visit Activity

After visiting the museum, can you make an exhibition in your home or classroom? Think about objects that go together—either because of a theme, what they are made out of, your personal attachment to them, or just because you like them. Where will you arrange them: on a table, pinned on a wall, throughout a room? Draw what you have created below and write a curator's statement explaining what your exhibition is about.