

Artist Statement

Jeff Campana

I draw lines by dissecting and immediately reassembling each pot. The result is a surface decoration with structural implications. Lines seen on the exterior coincide with lines found inside, as each line is in fact a seam; a scar where it was once severed. Though fragile seams decorate the surface, pooling glazes seal and strengthen the ware. The fault lines that decorate the surface threaten to, but do not actually undermine the vessel's ability to contain, display or deliver.

This method of making fulfills my desire to develop a virtuosic touch in clay. When pieces are dissected for decoration, I am able to get an intimate view of my forms. The precise knowledge of pottery cross sections is rarely known by most potters, but mine are constantly viewed, critiqued and refined. I truly know my work inside and out. It is my preference for conspicuous labor and skill that drives me to these intensive and challenging processes.

Currently, my formal choices are influenced by botanical references. Starting with just the vague notion of various plants, I create idealized and stylized renditions of leaves and flowers, controlled and chosen primarily by the intended utility of the vessel. Certain patterns lend themselves to certain forms. I try to listen to the material when determining this. Structural failures in the drying and firing tell me to find new solutions. Working in an almost scientific way, new pots are made in a search for truth, accuracy in expressing my aesthetic ideals. I know a work is successful when it makes me smile just to look at it. This is the tuning fork for my aesthetic calibrations.