

Professional Development Grant Report

**Zentrum Fur Keramik: Berlin Artist Residency Program
June 3rd to July 16th 2018**

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A. Restatement of Creative Activity

As an invited guest of the Zentrum fur Keramik-Berlin I participated in a six week collaborative residency with Bulgarian American artist Iren Tete during the summer of 2018. Our proposed project sought to join our sculptural and functional approaches to ceramic design through a shared interest in midcentury design and brutalist architecture.

The Zentrum fur Keramik is a ceramic research and residency center, the only one of its kind in Germany. Berlin, an internationally recognized art center, offered exposure to contemporary European ceramics, networking opportunities for future projects, and research into student opportunities. Through the unique opportunity of living and working in Berlin I had access to the city's Museums, Galleries, and architectural sites to visit as primary source materials to inform the collaborative creative project. As a visual artist the opportunity to study objects and spaces in person is an irreplaceable experience.

Specific project goals were to use our respective specialties in ceramic forming and ceramic finishing to generate architectural tile and functional wares using digital and traditional processes. The collaborative project developed a line of functional ceramic tumblers, decorative tile, architectural tile prototypes, and statuary. Our design process used digital renderings for planning both mold and hand formed ceramics.

Upon completion of the project I exhibited prototypes and completed works as part of the 2018 Faculty Biennial at Arkansas Tech, and in "Orchard Floor" a solo exhibition and lecture at University of the Ozarks in Clarksville AR (Aug 22-Sept 22). Iren Tete will share work and lecture on the collaboration at University Nebraska-Lincoln with dates pending.

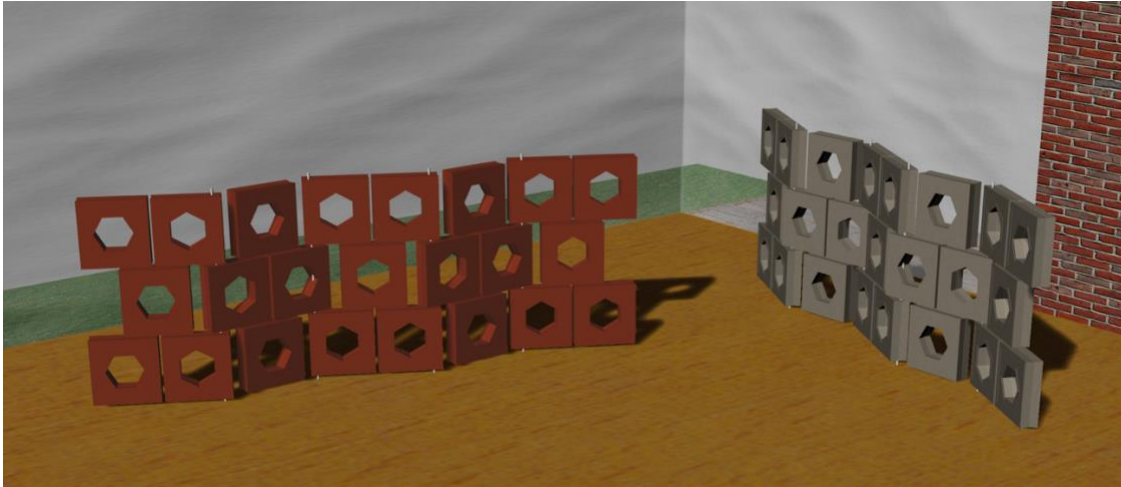
A. Brief review of Creative Work

Over the course of our first week in Berlin we visited local material suppliers to assess the clays and glazes available, surveyed the space and equipment of the center in person, and began visiting Art Museums and Institutions throughout the city.

Three things occurred during the first week that resulted in the subtle reformatting of our project goals. 1-There were numerous local clays with visual and forming qualities un-available in the USA, this guided our decision to focus on surface finish using primarily these clays opposed to glaze. 2-The center directors proposed a collaboration where Tete and I would generate the surface design for a limited edition run of porcelain cups to be produced by their studio using their clay and glazes. 3-We visited and studied an exhibition titled "Beyond Compare" at the Bode Museum which inspired the development of studies for a series of sculptures inspired by Janus figures as a metaphor for the split of East and West Berlin.

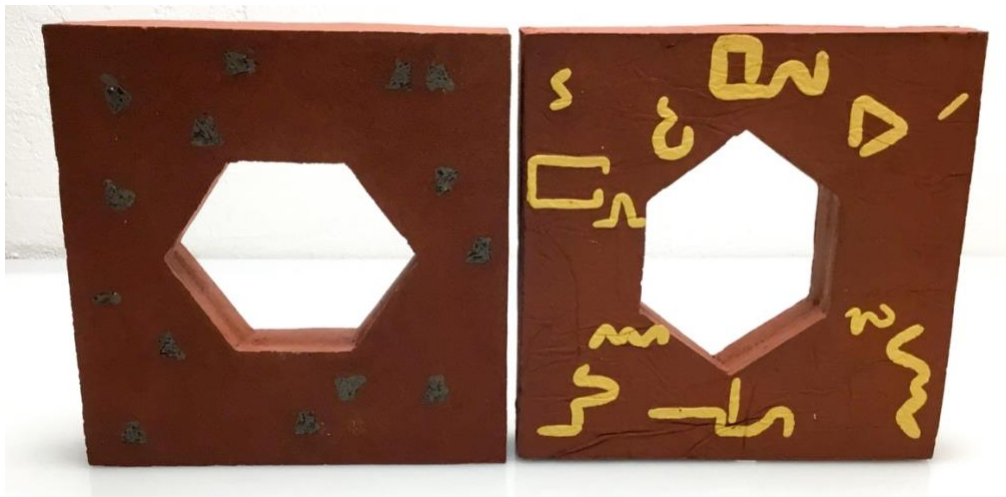
Working from our initial six week plan, the proposal of a collaboration with the directors of the center, and the show "Beyond Compare" we outlined three creative projects to develop while in residence. These included brutalists inspired architectural tile, statuary prototypes/studies, and water etched porcelain cups.

In response to the stark yet elegant brutalist architecture of the GDR we designed tile which made use of the local clays to provide both the structure and surface of the tile. Some tiles became compositions intended as stand-alone pieces while others were treated as prototypes for modules to be reproduced in quantity and assembled into free standing screens or used as architectural tile to clad interior structures.



Rendering of tiles assembled as a free-standing screen

The tile prototype which was made into a mold for reproduction mimicked concrete block found throughout our neighborhood in Pankow. The simple square unit had a tapered hexagonal opening, when rotated in stacking to alternate the upturned point or flat edge, a simple elegant pattern is formed. This single building unit was unfinished, practical, yet beautiful. Embodying the presence of brutalist architecture.



In addition to the design of tile for use as architectural adornment and furniture, we used to format to collaborate on formal compositions that responded to sites like the Reichstag Building, The Bauhaus Archive Museum , Le Unite de Habitation, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Berlin Wall, and the contrast of communist block housing with ornamented Bavarian architecture.



Architectural Tile Study: Yellow Screen
Terra Cotta, Yellow Stoneware, Glaze

Architectural Tile Study: Metallic Square
Terra Cotta, Gray /Yellow Stoneware,
Porcelain Slip, Glaze



A series of smaller compositional studies were made to test the adhesion of the three different clays and their interaction with an iridescent metallic glaze

A series of statuary were also developed in response to “Beyond Compare: Art from Africa in the Bode Museum “.The exhibition paired Christian and African sculptures and relics in order to show the parallels in belief structures and use of art as objects of worship.



Janus Figure with Structural Screen
Terra Cotta, Yellow Stoneware, Porcelain Slip

Further dichotomies observed in the architectural split between East and West Berlin influenced the making of the final compositions with stands, screens, and contrasting textures.



Our third project developed the surface design for a series of porcelain cups which were cast and glazed by Kaja Witt and Thomas Hirschler, the directors of Zentrum fur Keramik. This project was completed after the completion of our residency and shipped out from Berlin in early August. Unfortunately it did not arrive in Russellville in time for the Faculty Biennial.



B. Summary of outcomes and experiences

The three projects completed in residency reflect three applications of ceramics in the contemporary field: fine art, functional design objects, and architectural modules. The diversity of projects further reflects the diversity of Berlin and the breadth of art and architecture available for study in the expansive museum collections and gallery districts.

The Tile and Statuary were exhibited in the 2018 Faculty Biennial at Arkansas Tech, and presented as a portion of the visiting artist lecture given during my solo exhibition at University of the Ozarks in Clarksville AR (Aug 22-Sept 22).

C. Conclusions

Living and working in Berlin offered exposure to contemporary and classical artwork, diverse architectural sites, the chance to use new materials, and work with artists and designers with diverse perspectives. Collaborative projects promote rapid idea development and innovation that lead to outcomes not arrived at individually. There were multiple aesthetic and conceptual outcomes that are informing my personal sculpture practice in my studio at ATU.

The process of collaborating in designing and producing the water etched porcelain cups illustrate the dynamics that can occur in small creative businesses. Such approach's to design and making are important to teach to students at ATU who will seek practical applications for their skill sets in self-employment and industry after graduation.

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TECH
ART
DEPARTMENT

FACULTY

BIE

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AL

20-21
AUG SEPT

RECEPTION
5 SEPT
WEDNESDAY
2:30-3:30 PM

FEATURING

LYN BRANDS • SUMMER BRUCH • JOSHUA FISHER • JASMINE
GREER • NEAL HARRINGTON • JOHN MCGREW • JESSICA MONGEON
DAVID MUDRINICH • JESSE RING • DUSTIN SIMPSON • DAWN WARD