

Master of Fine Arts Thesis

Here Beyond
Sitting with Marta and Flight of Spirits

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In loving memory of

Beatriz Vargas and Juan Manuel Echavarría (los viajeros) and,

Marta Echeverri Gutiérrez.

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Jonah Figueroa Daley, Taussen Brewer and Nate Hill assisted me in the making of Walking with Marta and Flight of Spirits. The Scholes Library's 24-hour room became my office during second year and was the place where most of the planning got done a trip to Colombia with some of my classmates and professors. It was there too where I wrote most of this text.

Introduction and Description

My thesis is comprised of two series of ceramic objects that deal with the construction of identity through the process of remembering, which inherently involves forgetting. The etymology of Oblivion, from the Latin word 'oblivisci' means to "take away" and implies an active rather than a passive loss of memory (Plate, 2015). Focusing on memory and oblivion as active societal tools, rather than passive or involuntary experience, my thesis has focused on simultaneously reproducing and obscuring images from the past to reflect the contemporary condition of the Americas. To that end, one series, Flight of Spirits is based on reproducing pre-Incan objects from the Northern Andes, and the other Sitting with Marta is a group of narrative and figurative works that have sprouted out of stream of consciousness exercises intrinsically related to my lived experience.

The first series is entitled Flight of Spirits. Various objects are scattered on the ground, none larger than four feet in any direction, most could be picked up with one hand. Some represent humans, some animals, others are small, double-spouted vessels. Their surfaces vary, some having high gloss ceramic finishes, others, a smooth satin appearance, some are coated with sand or aggregate, and some are completely and tightly enveloped in fabric. These objects are outlandish, they have forms that might reference ancient artifacts but their materials and methods of fabrication are more representative of our times; iridescent tape, store-bought fabric, crystalline glaze, balloons. In this particular dichotomy the objects do not resemble those of today nor do they look like they were made in a distant past. To illustrate further, one of the works in this series is titled Alcarraza /alka'rasha/, a term that means water storage vessel in Spanish and is often used to refer to double-spouted containers from Latin America. This piece is about ten inches tall and is modeled after a pre-Columbian artifact from the Pacific coast near the border between Ecuador and Colombia (plate No. 1). The original is dated 300 B.C.E to 200 C.E. The proportions are similar in this copy but the form is slightly bigger, stylized, and more rigid than the original. It was fired in sand, which sticks to the glaze during the firing process upon cooling and

this creating a sugary, tactile coat that envelops the entire vessel. The result is perhaps a synthetic version of the alcarraza, far removed in terms of color, surface quality, and use. However, this new, candy-like alcarraza inherits essential aspects of the original. To me, it is a subjective, corrupted version of it; it sits awkwardly between replica and creative expression, between experimental archeology and art.

For the exhibition, I have chosen to display this series on a substrate made of coarse silicon carbide grit, which glitters in darkness referencing both the soil that preserves the artifacts and also the stars in the sky. This substrate sits flat on the floor of the gallery in various islands in that are the shape of a stylized leaf. These leaves get progressively smaller in size and although it might not be immediately perceived, they are positioned in a spiral manner. The first leaf is twenty-five feet long, the second one is half its size, and so on until the last leaf, which is just a few inches long, ends the spiral. The shape of the leaf represents the coca plant; a bush that has been harvested by South American indigenous peoples for thousands of years¹ and is an important part of the Andean Culture and the history of Latin America. This plant has been powerful both because of its sacred status in traditional medicine as well as the sociopolitical implications that the trafficking of its alkaline derivative cocaine has had in the region. On top of this glittery silicon carbide leaves sit the objects of Flight of Spirits. An upside down baby glazed in blue, a pair of alcarrazas covered in colorful play sand, a bright red pair of veiled figures lifting their right hand, a faceless llama decorated with fur and rhinestones. These are some of the objects one encounters walking around the spiral. Only some fall outside of the substrate shapes breaking the pattern on the floor. For instance, a grotesque yellow figure with a deformed face that resembles that of a jaguar stands freely outside the biggest leaf and is accompanied by two black textured mounds that rise behind it. The mounds are peculiar, one stone sits on top of each mound, and tied to each stone is a

¹ Evidence suggests that coca has been harvested as far back as 8,000 years ago (Wills, 2017).

colorful piece of yarn that leads to a deflated balloon. This composed yet bizarre image of the Jaguar God, disfigured and missing its arms, is echoed elsewhere in the space by a soft fabric iteration that lies limp on the floor, also outside the spiral. The Jaguar god represents the sun, a force of the universe that dictates our fate, but however powerful, it is also soft and fluid and reminds us of the ephemeral nature of our existence. Similar to a balloon that may have been floating in the air taut and round and now lies dead like a skin on the floor of the gallery, the Jaguar God reemerges from the past, disfigured and un-built, to speak about the human condition, to triumph and fail simultaneously.

Replicating ancient objects is a way of communication with the makers of the past. The works of the series Flight of Spirits are based on pre-Incan artifacts, mostly associated to the Tumaco La-Tolita Culture (hereafter referred to as Tulato)² and Quimbaya vessels. Although the pieces are not meant to be loyal reproductions, they inherit essential aspects of the originals and they replicate certain motifs common to the Americas such as the Grotesque Jaguar God, the Canastero /canas'terɔ/ (or basket carrier), and the Cacique /ca'sike/ (or Chief). As reproductions, the works are enquiries that become conversations. By making them, I ask questions such as why was it this size? What was it made to hold? How could it be used today? Contrary to what one might expect, replicating ancient objects is never a unilateral conversation. The voice of the ancient maker is present and so is the new voice (in this case my own). The objects are an extension of the body and mind of the maker and their era, as they are made with the materials, tools and equipment that are available to them and they find pertinent to use in their moment in time. This is true forwards and backwards in time. I can speak to the ancient makers because ultimately, I have a say in the way the objects are made and how they are stylized, but I cannot go too far as to stray away from the original objects because then my own

² Author Andrea Brezzi first used Tulato in his 2003 book Tulato: Ventana a la prehistoria de América, where he contracted the commonly hyphenated term Tumaco-La Tolita to encompass the regions of Tumaco in Colombia and La Tolita in Ecuador as well as other archeological sites nearby as one coherent distinct culture of the Northern Andes.

output loses relevance. In this way, my practice, rather than being driven on innovation and creativity, is about listening, rehearsing, and enacting in the making process. It is performative, as I will argue later in this text. Furthermore, the process of conversing with ancestors, or accessing ancestral knowledge via these long-forgotten objects highlights an important ontological truth regarding our material remains. Namely, it illustrates how our objects and our dead bodies may transcend the limitations of our biology surpassing and extending our mortal existence.

The second part of my thesis is entitled *Sitting with Marta* and is comprised of a series of objects inspired by my grandmother, Marta Echeverri Gutiérrez (1925-2016). Due to instability and political unrest in our native Colombia during the 1990's and early 2000's, hundreds of thousands of people, including most of our family members, left the country. Marta however, did not. When I moved back to Colombia after more than a decade in exile, Marta and I spent hours together in her dining room, sometimes in silence. We shared meals, looked at photographs, discussed her childhood, marriage, and her experience relocating to Cuba in the 1940's. The ceramic works in this series use an array of building techniques and surface treatments to convey a certain tone or mood in each of the works. For instance, small crystal formations floating in a dark atmospheric background convey the feeling of uncertainty and expectation in *Wedding Portrait*. Here, a figure standing alone holding a bouquet of flowers, represents Marta in her teenage years, when she was photographed in her wedding day without the groom, who was far away in Cuba at the time of their marriage. Barely having spent any physical time with him and knowing that she would be sent to an unfamiliar island in the Caribbean, after living all of her life in the Andean mountains must have felt like jumping into a bottomless chasm. The interaction between the crystalline entities in the surface and the three-dimensional support conveys moments of drama where vertigo and emptiness are almost palpable. Other stories or subjects in this series are her walks to school as a child, her overall (outward) feeling towards her husband and Cubans, and the very last time that I saw her physical body.

For Walking with Marta I had the privilege of exhibiting in the historic Terra Cotta Building, a heritage structure built in the 19th century by the brick and tile factory that initiated what is today the village of Alfred. The Terra Cotta building is the only surviving structure of the company after a fire destroyed the entire factory in 1909 (Bouck). The façade of the building, clad with greenish bricks and various ornamental tiles, was used to showcase the products of the original company to potential clients and therefore is rich in decoration. The interior is quite intimate with wooden floors and a large fireplace, and resembles a domestic space, specifically a living room. For the exhibition, I wanted to take advantage of this setting by using the idea of home to talk about passing down memories to future generations. The historic building already had a clear connection to the past and therefore informed the way the objects were read within the space. In effect, all of the works looked like they could have been contemporary to the building itself. However, three eight-foot-long LED beams were installed vertically throughout the space to disrupt the anachronistic nature of the content, illuminating the space with lines of light that are reflected on the panes of glass of the windows and the high gloss surfaces of some of the ceramic objects. The scale of the works is not monumental but inside the Terra Cotta Building, the amount of objects and the way they inhabit the space makes the viewer experience the work from within, in other words, to live inside and be part of the installation.

The stories that were included in this series were either seminal moments of my grandmother's life, like her wedding and the death of her husband (represented by a life-size ceramic figure in a gown and a child-size coffin respectively) and also everyday events that she narrated to me and I found interesting to feature. Such moments were anecdotes like the time when the fieldworkers taught her how to eat fleshy worms as a child (here materialized as a large disembodied lavender hand covered in sand holding some sort of worm). In total, there were eight stories, which were a combination of objects and text, each somewhat cryptic but suggestive, so that the viewer could experience them by using their imagination to fill in the blanks. Jacob Lawrence used a similar strategy in his seminal work *The Migration Series* (1941) where he paired sequential images and

captions to create a highly effective narrative format. By using minimal gestures in sculpture and text in an intimate environment, I wanted the viewer to be able to re-live the stories passed down to me by imagining missing aspects of them while experiencing an environment full of tangible physical objects.

Concepts

Although the appearance and methods of these two series (Flight of Spirits and Walking with Marta) is quite different, they are both informed by historical and material research³ as well as my own biography, as a first-generation Latin American immigrant and returning member of the diaspora who works between Colombia and the United States. Three particular themes intersect in my practice: Performativity In Visual Language, The Construction Of Oblivion, and The Ego. All of these themes have to do with the construction of identity and memory, and the process of forgetting. In the following section, I will explore these ideas.

Performativity In Visual Language

Can objects and visual elements be used to construct and modify cultural identity? A possible answer could lay in Judith Butler's take on the theory of performativity. The North American philosopher argues that gender identity is a societal construct rather than an innate quality and may be transformed through gesture and speech. Butler suggests that gender happens constantly through a process of simultaneous rehearsal and performance. We observe, we enact and we assert identity through repetition. For instance, a child imitates their parents or siblings's body language according to gender norms. As an extreme manifestation, I observe how a diva, through body language, music and fashion, becomes a cultural female icon, in many ways by emulating already existing icons that define female identity and femininity. Nadine Ehlers

³ Material research will be addressed in the technical section of this paper.

has developed on this theory to talk about how performativity, in Butler's terms, also affects definitions of race. She analyzes the idea of racial passing, and reworks this term to challenge its meaning by arguing that there is no internal 'truth' to race, "Passing disrupts the notion that race is visible and secured in the body". In this same way, I argue that ethnic and cultural identification are also subject to normative societal laws rather than innate characteristics of a subject, and are therefore performative. In Butler's theory, "Subjects are compelled to enact compulsory norms of gender – those ascribed to masculinity and femininity – in order to become and exist viable social subjects". If subjects are compelled to enact norms of gender (or race), the same can be applied to any other kind of cultural identification, such as being Latinx. In my case, as an artist, I am also compelled to enact upon compulsory norms ascribed to my ethnic background, race and immigrant condition. We must enact on these compulsory norms in order to be viable individuals in society, but regardless, perhaps what most interests me about this is that identity can be enacted and therefore has the potential to be transformed, at least to some degree within those parameters that makes us viable as individuals in society. This is in a way, what the diva does. If Butler's take on the theory of performativity is applicable to objects and visual language, we are not completely restricted by pre-existing social constructs because through semiology and repetition we have the power to influence them.

With Flight of Spirits, I might not be performing myself, but the objects are embodying ancestral iconography and in this way performing a regional tradition. I am aware that this is problematic in a postcolonial context. To create this work, and to connect with my ancestral past I must rely on desecrated tombs and the violent history of the region that produced me. The defaced, violated, decontextualized artifact: the one in the archeological archive, the one in the museum, the object unearthed, exhumed, desecrated. With my history, I must also navigate this postcolonial reality by looking in the mirror, and learning how society wants me to behave. To be clear, I look like a short European, 5'4, brown hair and eyes, light skin, I could easily "pass" as northern European in photographs. But my upbringing, my immigrant status and my

education dictate my race and ethnic position in society. When I was a child, even though I attended a catholic school in an urban setting, I was taught about the Spanish conquering our peoples in third person. According to my teacher, they (the Spanish) invaded us. I understood, that “they” inflicted violence upon our people; they raped our mothers. It was in that rape that we, as a society were conceived. Ultimately, the offspring of this violence, has controlled the narrative, with a bias towards highlighting and exposing Western European colonial ancestry, and obscuring the indigenous, African and Asian roots that are part of the story of what we Colombians are today. Although I understood that my lineage was largely Europeanized, my identity as a Colombian mestizo has always been clear. When I was in high school in the United States, this mestizo identity was reinforced when I had to check a box that identified me as Latino/Hispanic⁴. These distinctions, rather than my physical appearance, dictated the way I would identify and therefore perform from then on. The objects I produce exist as the materialization of this identity. Flight of Spirits focuses on the silenced voices of the oppressed aborigines in our Pan-American society by presenting objects made by our ancestors that are however corrupted with incorrect surface treatments and stylized features. This strategy of modifying the object with cosmetic surface treatments and contemporary tools and equipment, like the electric wheel and controlled kilns in high temperature is a violent act by all means, and also a way of sugar coating the truth of the history of these objects. However, it is also a subversive gesture that purposefully highlights the objects of the ancient Americans and puts them back into a contemporary setting. Whether that is ethical is a fair question, what is important to me is that these objects perform a certain ethnic identity that is complex, and in which I find the history of the Americas reflected.

In Sitting with Marta, the way this history of colonization, ethnic identity, and race comes into play has to do postcolonial dynamics that are byproducts of

⁴ At the time the terms white and Latino/Hispanic were mutually exclusive in school official forms.

centuries of internal tension in Colombia. My intention here was to focus on exile, and one person in particular who had to stay in the conflict territory, as a witness and enduring agent that connected the family (my family in this case) to the ongoing national developments throughout the years. Beneath these stories is the larger narrative of the returning members of the diaspora who eventually, after years of exile, go back to their place of origin to reclaim missing moments with the land and the people they had to separate from.

The Construction Of Oblivion.

Case Study: La Tolita

In the early twentieth century, an Italian entrepreneur named Donato Yannuzzelli bought a small island in the Pacific coast of Ecuador to set up a plant that would allow him to extract gold, which he would then sell to the government in the form of ingots. Yannuzzelli might or might not have known it, but he had just acquired one of the most important archeological sites in the American continent, and he was about to destroy it. One thousand years earlier, this site was a thriving, densely inhabited center. As is common for any other urban center, the sustenance of this town depended on obtaining, manufacturing and trading goods. The economy relied on fishing and hunting and to a lesser extent on harvests of maize and other crops⁵. People here engaged in these activities for generations and became good at it, good enough to sustain and develop other practices. They engineered architecture to withstand storms and floods, they documented and depicted abnormalities and disease in small clay figurines, developed antidotes to illnesses, philosophized about the meaning of life and interpreted the forces of the universe. Leaders were appointed and their bodies adorned with intricate jewelry manufactured out of gold and platinum. Followers wore modest accessories, but each metal component that adorned

⁵ Ubelaker, Douglas H.

their bodies would have taken weeks or even months to make⁶. When a member of the community passed away, they entombed them in a mound, along with their jewelry, ceramic objects, sustenance goods and other offerings so as to prepare them for a journey into another dimension.

When Yannuzzelli arrived in the island of la Tolita in nineteenth century, he was not sitting on a natural gold deposit. In fact, gold does not occur naturally in this area, early inhabitants had imported it from other locations since the fourth century BCE as raw material to make objects of worship, jewelry and tools.⁷ Yannuzzelli was not mining gold in the traditional sense, his operation consisted on systematically tearing down the mounds, or ‘tolas’⁸ where the dead were buried with their objects and then sorting through the material to find gold. Yannuzzelli’s workers moved earth, ceramic, and bones at a pace that was too slow for his purposes and deemed by him inefficient, so he installed an industrial crusher to break down and pulverize materials, making the extraction of metals less cumbersome. Yannuzzelli did this for well over two decades, until 1947 when public disapproval had become problematic for the business and Ecuador inaugurated its House of Culture in order to protect the country’s archeology and history⁹. An estimate by Peter Bauman from 1985 mentions that 1,700 pounds of gold were melted in this period, which indicates the destruction of hundreds of thousands of metal artifacts. The loss of these objects and their

⁶ This is deduced because of the limited technology and the evident use of manual labor that each piece required in order to be made from the collection of the raw material, to the fabrication of the tools, to the manufacture of the actual accessories.

⁷ Brezzi, Andrea. P 97.

⁸ In Ecuador, a *tola* refers to a burial mound, hence the name of the island *La Tolita* or “The Small Tola”.

⁹ Rivera Fellner, Miguel Angel.

ceramic counterparts represents an unfathomable amount of information that will never be recovered. To me, the disregard for this information as secondary, useless, or worthless in the twentieth century echoes tendencies of today, when native ancestral output of the Americas is relegated to the category of archeological artifact in art talk because they fall outside of western-canonical notions of art and design, even within the continent. My education has been westernized and I do not want it to be limited to that tradition, for that reason, attempt to regain ancestral knowledge by actively including it in my praxis, which is equivalent to remembering it.

My interest in the way that culture is represented and manipulated (how it lives and evolves) also includes the negotiations concerning the way in which material and immaterial culture is managed. Particularly, I am interested in the questions of why we forget and how we forget. Hyperthymesiacs,¹⁰ people with extraordinary ability to remember events from their everyday experience, generally find difficulties due to their inability to forget. For some of them, forgetting would mean a form of liberation, like going on vacation, or cleanliness, like emptying the bin. Not being able to forget is therefore, in a way, unhealthy, unhygienic, exhausting. Oblivion, like death, is the ultimate promise of repose, it represents absolution and for that reason, we long for it, but we don't want to forget everything. It seems as though humans have two contradictory instincts: an innate desire for disintegration and an urgent desire for preservation. We would like to position ourselves in the midst of a coherent macro-narrative, and for this reason we have to reinvent our history all of the time, focusing in what is pertinent to us, while the rest of reality fades into the distance. In this way we design amnesia, by selecting the most pertinent of memories only, to fit within a coherent narrative (as individuals, as nations, as humankind). This is how we construct oblivion, though exclusion and through repetition, through

¹⁰ Hyperthymesia is a condition that leads people to be able to remember an abnormally large number of their life experiences in vivid detail.

performativity. In other words, through an assertion of identity. Conversely, this is also how we construct memory.

The Ego.

Our instinct for preservation makes us resist oblivion. Humans accumulate, archive and document in order to resist the natural course of our forgetfulness. We do not want to forget or be forgotten, so we attempt to secure a legacy of our own that may be preserved for posterity and become part of a coherent macro-narrative. We embalm ourselves and as if that wasn't enough, we do the same to others. We are seduced by the remains of the past because in them we see our reflection, so we collect and archive death, to dissect it, until we may figure out how it may fit within our own story. As a human I have both instincts. I feel the urgency for preservation but I also long for amnesia and disintegration. I would like to remember and forget in my own way, to invoke and obscure as I wish, and to represent and omit in any way I find necessary.

Conclusion

Invoking the past is not about remembering, it's about obliteration, because in focusing on one memory one excludes another, and this can be as liberating as it can be cruel, as has been demonstrated in examples above. Through my practice I want to remember, but memory, being a dialectic system, requires forgetting. Throughout this text I have outlined some things that I would like to remember through object making, as an individual, and as a member of a community and contributor to culture. I will not say what I would like to forget, because in doing so, I would fail in the attempt. Forgetting is only achieved through omission. The material goods that I make today are the objects of the future, and they will allow me to travel to other dimensions just like I have been able to communicate with the ancestors and the makers of the past.

Glossary

Alcarraza /alka'rasa/ Water storage vessel, often referring to double-spouted containers from Latin America. From arabic *al karraz* = *Bottle of narrow neck*.

Quimbaya / kim'baya / Culture of the Northern Andes active around 500 BC to 1600 BCE.

Tulato / tu'lato/ Contraction of Tumaco-La Tolita.

Tumaco-La Tolita. Culture of the Pacific coast of the Northern Andes active around 500 BCE to 400 CE.

Poporo /po'poro/ Container used by indigenous people in South America. It is made to contain calcium carbonate from limestone or seashells to accompany the chewing of coca leaves.

Mestizo /mes'tizo/ in Latin America, a man of mixed race, especially the offspring of a Spaniard and an American Indian.

Tola /ta'la/ Artificial mound used to bury the dead.

Icon. A sign whose form directly reflects the thing it signifies

Iconography. The visual images, symbols, or modes of representation collectively associated with a person, cult, or movement:

Archetype. A recurrent symbol or motif.

Artifact. Any object made by mankind.

Cacique /Ka'sik / chief, lord or boss.

Canastero. Vessel attached to a human body.

Coca /ko'ka/ a tropical American shrub that is widely grown for its leaves, which are the source of cocaine.

Tripod. Object made of three supports or legs.

Hyperthymesia. A condition that leads people to be able to remember an abnormally large number of their life experiences in vivid detail.

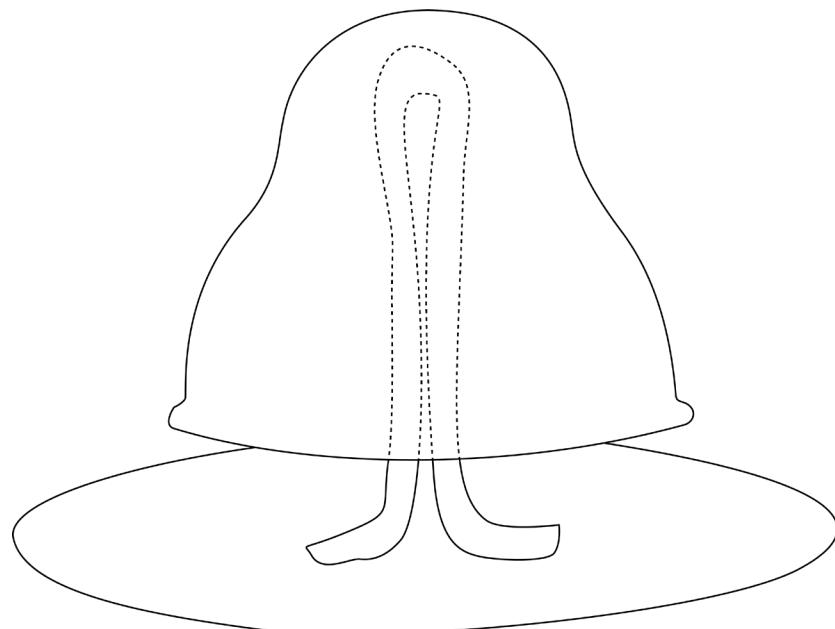
Technical Report

I have been using crystalline glazes many of the surfaces of my work. Rather than trying to achieve large crystals, I tend to use small crystals that float on large forms. I have used titanium-based matt crystalline glazes as well as zinc-based glossy ones. By keeping peak temperatures low, I can achieve true matt surfaces or busy textures with these same glazes. By over-firing them, I have discovered a way of producing nuanced surfaces and single-entity crystals floating on relatively large environments rather than abundant large crystals or crystal textures. Crystalline glazes are very sensitive and many effects can be achieved just by adjusting the firing cycle. There is an awe-inspiring quality to crystalline ceramic surfaces because they resemble natural patterns in nature, which occur due to a combination of order and chaos, especially in macrocrystalline ones, because their development is largely unpredictable. The aleatory nature of this process means that the form has to allow for a certain degree of randomness. In a sense, this is true for ceramic in general because the exact results of a firing are in most cases somewhat unpredictable, making the firing process exciting and sometimes frustrating. With crystalline ceramics this randomness has to be integral to the process. One may program a type of effect but ultimately, the firing dictates the anatomy of the results much like astronomical, geological or biological phenomena create patterns and other visual effects in nature. This aspect of crystalline glaze is interesting because the surfaces contain visual systems that reflect aspects of universe around us and the forces of nature that are beyond our reach and our ability to replicate. For these reasons and how they may speak about time, specially frozen time, crystalline glazes have had a special appeal during these past two years.

Below are some reliable formulas for clay bodies and glazes that I have been working with as well as the test tile design I have devised to study the behavior of these glazes.

Test Tiles.

I have designed a system to test these glazes that incorporates a test tile in the form of a dome with a shoulder, a post that holds the tile up and a plate that gathers the excess glaze to protect kiln furniture.



Basic Crystalline Cycle: To achieve different effects, I started with the firing schedule indicated above, and then changed the peak temperature by ten degree Celsius using the same test kilns. After those tests were made and I had an understanding of the behavior of the glazes, I did tests again changing the dwell temperatures to achieve different crystal formations.

	Rate per Hour	Temperature	Hold
1	150°F / 65°C	250°F / 120°C	1 hour
2	150°F / 65°C (Or faster depending on the type of work)	2218° F / 1214° C (100° F below peak temperature)	0
4	108 ° F / 42°C	2318° F / 1270°C	0

		(peak temperature)	
5	999° F / 999°C Or as fast as the temperature will drop.	1976°F/1080°C (dwell temperature)	4 hours

Crystalline Glaze bases:

The following bases can be used by themselves or with colorants.

Generic. A basic formula that is very reliable and widely used. It has a glossy surface and crystal formations that are very translucent.

Ferro Frit 3110 50.0%

Zinc Oxide 25.0%

Silica 25.0%

+

2% Bentonite

Fara Shimbo Celestite. This formula is also very reliable and it differs from the generic one in that the crystal formations are less translucent and therefore contrast more with the background. I have also noticed that on a black slip, secondary crystallization occurs more often with this glaze, meaning that smaller crystal formations develop around larger ones.

Ferro Frit 3110 50.0%

Zinc Oxide 25.0%

Silica 15.0%

Spodumene 5.0%

Talc 4.0%

Titanium Dioxide 1.0%

+

2% Bentonite

Matt titanium base REF: 18.02.16. This titanium glaze is based on a recipe from John Tilton. It's has a textured, stone-like surface. Because it has so much titanium, cobalt tends to go bright green and other colorants tend to go towards brown or yellow.

Nepheline Syenite 42.5%

Barium Carbonate 32.5%

Whiting 10%

OM4 7.5%

Titanium Dioxide 7.5%

Slips:

Because I have been working at such high temperatures and these glazes flux so much, some of the less stable colorants like reds and yellows tend to "burn out" easily. The most effective way to achieve color in these glazes is to work with colored slips underneath the glaze. The slip becomes a buffer layer that protects the pigment. For slips, I have adopted a simple formula from the Alfred Ceramic Summer Program. I've used this slip recipe with additions of 7-10% color stain for black, yellow and red. Other colors have been achieved with smaller quantities of oxides.

EPK 40%

OM4 30%

Flint 15%

Custer Feldspar 15%

Clay bodies:

Matt Kelleher Junior Pottery Clay, Revised in 2018.

Custer Feldspar 23%

Flint 7%

OM4 25%

Tile 6 10%

Hawthorn Bond 50%
Foundry Hill Creme 25%
Fine Grog 7%
Add 1% Bentonite.

Matt Wedel's Paper Clay for Sculpture.

Lincoln or Hawthorn Fireclay 30%
Nepheline Syenite 20%
OM4 10%
EPK 5%
Bentonite 2%
Talc 2%

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Figures

1. Sand-Fired Alcarraza (left), stoneware, 10 x 6 x 4.5" and the original model (right) from La Tolita archeological site, dating 300 B.C.E to 200 C.E. 5.7" tall, earthenware.

