



Casey Taylor











# Artist Statement

The accepted normalities of contemporary interaction, which are concentrated across virtual spaces, form the rubric for our prescribed behavior. But there are implications beyond instantaneous connection. We are active participants, ironically trying to uphold the values of individuality through cultural mechanisms of standardization. This is my chosen narrative and the foundation of my work, provoking a necessary and critical examination of the complexities found within contemporary ritual. Ceramics and illustration are my medium through which I use color, form, humor, exaggeration, and juxtaposition to engage conversations on the implications of current social conventions.







# Thesis

I'm investigating the dichotomy between the tangible and the virtual. The social, material, and personal aspects of life are now paralleled in a separate space- it's paradoxical existence transposed from the physical world into the digital. Here, there is an illusion of transcendence and a gratification from a simulation of actual experience. I'm interested in how the commodification of interaction and identity by corporate entities through digital media alters the value of connection to our reality. There has been an exponential progression in technology from the 19th century to the present, and will continue to rapidly progress through the future- each advancement enhancing our ability to connect with one another (Timeline). We find ourselves now in the midst of the most personal technology- occupying such little physical space that our devices have become completely portable, even handheld, allowing the user a seemingly intimate experience. Our ability to write, edit, create, exchange, and acquire information immediately is undeniable progress. But the immediacy and infinite options presented by the virtual world and it's related technological objects have implications other than what's advertised- at the core of their purpose, they serve a corporate function and have generated a sort of false consciousness among users (Fuchs). We are quick to acknowledge the positive aspects of this technology but are unable to step back and analyze the system as a whole.

"Cultural evolution of Late Capitalism can be understood dialectically, as catastrophic and progress all together." (Jameson)

This illusion of authentic experience and connection can be explained through Marxian critique of capitalist labor relations. As consumers of both technological objects and those social platforms within them, we are active participants with the products they are selling. But when closely examined, our own engagement in the production process is illuminated- without our participation or our socialization, there would be no product. Here is where interaction and connection become commodified and we can be recognized as the labor forces behind production. I'm interested in how this contemporary corporate hegemony contributes to our perception of value in human interaction. Much as the proletariat become disenfranchised and alienated from the product they're producing, we become deprived of authenticity in our interactions across digital platforms. But without recognizing the cause of our deprivation, our continued participation in a search for tangibility only perpetuates the cyclic disconnect we're trying to elevate ourselves from. (Marx and Engels, 40-48.)

Arguably, these digital social institutions not only allow for seemingly human connection but foster social change by uniting people across many demographics who are fighting for the same cause. This is inherently problematic as these efforts become mediated by platforms owned by corporate America. These social platforms can allow what benign social uprising they deem appropriate and in return we feel a false sense of fulfillment in thinking that our social defiance was successful-

only furthering our already present distantiation (Jameson). Henning (2007) describes the effects and outcome of distantiation- "...face-to-face interactions lose their significance in everyday life, as modern media such as money or more recently the Internet step in between. The consequence for individuals is the process of distanciation. It has both a spatial and an emotional side: people who feel a sense of belonging can live far away from each other, and people sharing the same neighborhood may not even talk to one another." Through this process of distantiation, we become alienated from what we were trying to connect with. Here, mass culture can not only dilute a potent social issue but acquire and adopt what was used as a rebellion against said issue and other mainstream ideologies- leaving individuals estranged rather than connected. David Foster Wallace explains this aspect of corporate mass media that, through its adaptation of the modes of expression previously opposed to mainstream thought, 'it [uses] the very tool that exposed the enemy to insulate itself' (Wallace, 184). When community and interaction become tools of corporate hegemonic control across digital spaces, any attempt at rebellion through said spaces is problematic.

The process of Cultural Commodification is also relevant here, as these technologies have directly contributed to the loss of tangible material culture within our society, and the further commodification of what aspects of culture were already commodified. Connection, music, movies, literature, and other cultural objects have become dematerialized- making them much easier to commodify and to consume at industry's benefit. Additionally we are able to reproduce these pieces of information infinitely, and while their potential for infinite reproduction may not benefit industry it further dissolves the sense of ownership we have with these virtual possessions. We can consume hours of digital culture just by having pandora playing in the background, and can acquire any one of hundreds of thousands of books instantly. We are liberated from thumbing through books or CD's, and even from having to ask a person where to find something we're looking for. With this loss of materiality, there is an inherent loss of value without the previously understood tangible connection (Walter, 60) (Belk, 479-481)

My work addresses this by depicting recognizable icons from social media and platforms of digital communication and juxtaposing them with similarly rendered icons resembling the body and objects of consumption existing in tangible world. In my work, I explore form through press-mold and handbuilding techniques. The dimensionality in 3D form is integral to my dialogue with cultural practice and those aspects that lack physicality. Ceramics as a material is deeply intertwined in our human existence, I find interesting parallels with contemporary technology. Both are supplemental tools we utilize in our daily activity, yet through ceramics there is a direct connection to the object both in the making process and in the evidence from that process (Benjamin, 217). Through this material that connects the user to both the maker and the process, I explore the dualities between digital and actual through tangible comparison.



# Process





My practice is somewhat cathartic- a process of constructing my own understanding through physical making and research. My focus here has been contemporary personal connection and the value of interaction through virtual spaces. I depict familiar forms and images from platforms of digital communication and the human body through illustration, ceramic sculpture, and creating press molds to make multiple, identical objects. I value the direct connection between human and material that is unique to the ceramic process.

As an active participant in social media as well as in my studio practice, I find myself continuously examining each with regard to the other. Where technology retains intangible information, clay retains evidence of even the slightest touch. And where clay embodies an unchanging fragility and permanence, the state of virtual material is less concrete. Technology is rooted in corporate ownership, whereas ceramics is rooted in artisan practice.

There is an undeniable irony in physically constructing digital objects and sculpting useless accessories for them through a craft process. Through fabricating this impossible coexistence of the physically digital, I'm beginning to highlight the problematics of the virtual spaces we occupy and connect through.

The main clay body I work with is a vitreous cone 6 white stoneware recipe I formulated to use as both a sculpture body and a throwing body. I also use a warm, light brown stoneware that is my adaptation of Val Cushing's cinnamon stoneware throwing body (Cushing, 38). I do most of my detail work on the sculptures while they're in the greenware state. It's important that the sculptural detail within my forms has been fully considered so the surface treatments both pre and post firing are successful. I create my surfaces using underglaze, ceramic mason stains, oxides, glaze, luster, and oil paint. For many of the objects in this body of work, I've mixed colored slips from the clay bodies I work with. This involves testing stains and oxides in incremental measurements to achieve the result I'm looking for. I like the vibrancy and sometimes glaze-like surface of the low-fire underglazes at cone 6, I combine colors and layer underglaze on greenware and again on bisqueware to achieve a bright surface.

\*Val M. Cushing. Cushing's Handbook, Third Edition.

# Materials



# Recipes

## White Stoneware: cone 6

EPK: 20%  
OM4: 16  
Tile 6: 20  
Neph Sy: 32-36  
Pyrax: 8  
Bentonite: 2

## Brown Stoneware: cone 6

OM4: 20%  
Gold Art: 35  
Hawthorn: 15  
Red Art: 20  
Kona F4: 10

## Clear Glaze: cone 6

EPK: 20%  
Silica: 20  
Wollastonite: 20  
Custer Feld.: 20  
Frit 3134: 20

## Temmoku: cone 6

Custer Feld.: 53.5%  
EPK: 6  
Silica: 22.5  
Whiting: 13  
Barium: 2.5  
Zinc: 2.5  
Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: 10  
Bentonite: 2



# CV / Resume

## Casey Taylor

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### E d u c a t i o n

State University of New York at New Paltz, 2012-2015

State University of New York at Purchase, 2011-2012

Moore College of Art and Design, 2010-2011

NYSSSA School of Visual Art, July 2009

### Q u a l i f i c a t i o n s

Proficiency in Adobe Photoshop, knowlege in Rhino, Zbrush, and Adobe Illustrator. Advanced experience and material knowlege in drawing, painting, and ceramics.

# Creative Projects

Dorsky Museum, 2015:

Wall drawing to accompany the Videofreakz exhibition.

Groove Biscuits, 2014-2015:

Logo design and illustration for the new product of an organic cookie company.

Historic Huguenot Society, 2014:

Worked with H.H.S. to design and exhibit site-specific pieces within historic homes and grounds.

Concept Illustration, 2014:

accompaniment to a proposal for the acquisition of funding to further a graphic novel project.

Ceramic Dept. Advertising, 2013-2015:

Poster designer for bi-annual fundraiser advertising.

Ma & Pa Kettle, 2013:

Hand painted signs for local kettle corn company.

Concept Illustration, 2013:

Accompaniment to a proposal for a graphic novel adaptation of the Talmud.

Between The Arctic, 2012:

Album cover design and illustration for the album titled Silence Of My Sound.

Baker Creek Seed Company, 2012:

Botanical illustration for heirloom lettuce seeds, still in circulation.

Poor Love, 2012:

Album cover design and illustration for solo artist, Kyle Albano.

Rhinebeck High School, 2010:

Cover illustration for the graduation pamphlet, still in use annually.

Oswald The Malihini Mouse In Hawaii, 2009:

Illustrations for a children's book written by Olga Jeffery, available on amazon.

# Teaching Experience

## Private Instructor/Curriculum Designer, Summer 2014:

Organized weekly private/semi-private youth classes in drawing and sculpture.

## Teaching Assistant- SUNY New Paltz, Spring 2013:

Assisted instructor Jess Longobardo in demonstrations, classroom management and aided in instructing students during the Intro Ceramics class.

## Curriculum Designer and Co-Educator, 2010-2011:

Head of creative projects for the introductory youth program at The Southlands Foundation in Rhinebeck New York.



# Exhibitions / Publications

## NCECA National Student Juried Exhibition, 2016:

Makers, Mentors, and Milestones- Leedy-Volkus Art Center, Kansas City, Mo. March 4th - April 30th.

## BFA/MFA Senior Thesis Exhibitions, Winter 2015:

Dorsky Museum at SUNY New Paltz in New Paltz, New York, December 4th - 8th.

## SUNY Student Art Show, Fall 2015:

SUNY Albany in Albany, New York.

## F.A.B. Gallery, 2015:

Undergrad Collective Show, and Private Made Public- at SUNY New Paltz.

## 3D Printing- Reverse Engineering Exhibition, 2015:

Located at SUNY Albany, curated by Michael Gayk.

## Insight/Onsite, 2014:

Site-specific installation at Historic Huguenot Street in New Paltz, New York.

## Oswald The Malihini Mouse In Hawaii, 2009:

Written by Olga Jeffery, published through BookSurge Publishing.

## 13th Annual Juried Art Show, 2009:

The Foundation Gallery at Collumbia Greene Community College.

# A w a r d s

Best In Show selection in the SUNY Student Art Show at SUNY Albany.

Moore College of Art and Design Presidential Scholarship.

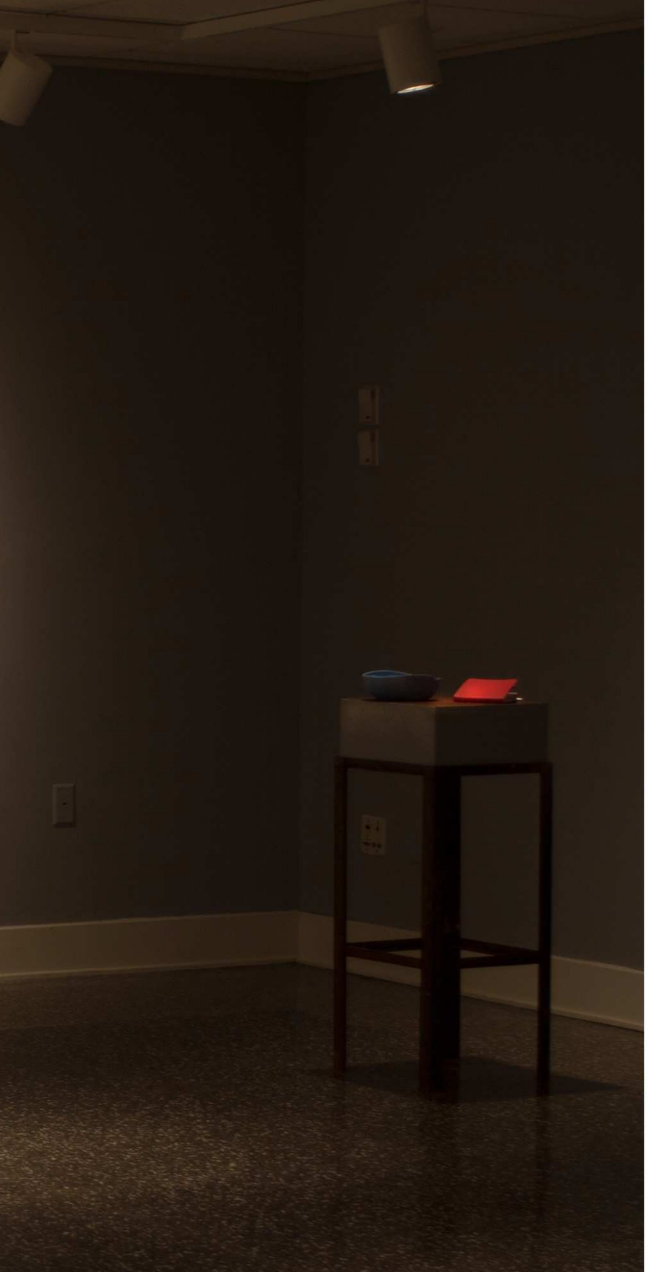
Second Place Award in the Annual Juried Art Show at Columbia Greene Community College.





# Exhibition

at the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art  
December 4th - 8th, 2015









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