

***Abstract***  
***James Houghton***

James Houghton explores the functional vessel outside of its intended use through unconventional ways of working with clay. He mixes this with his skills from throwing on the wheel to create a body of work that relates to functional ceramics but makes the viewer wonder about the purpose of the vessels. James hopes this work creates a sense of humor and curiosity when looking at this whimsical and colorful work.

Through the study of historic ceramics, James furthered his knowledge and applied it to better understand the world of contemporary ceramics. The pieces find themselves within the contemporary world of ceramics, falling somewhere between sculptural experimentation of clay, while still grounding itself within the familiar world of functional ceramics.

James used a variety of techniques to make this work, ranging from constructing his own molds, coil building, wheel throwing, and handle pulling, in combination with experimentation with textural glazes in contrast to smooth traditional pottery surfaces. The sculptures are accompanied by four ink drawings in black and white that are meant to highlight the form's silhouette, by isolating it from the color and texture. The drawings are focused on the beauty of the form instead of color. The drawings are also a place for James to show how his initial thinking started when trying to visualize how this body of work would come together.