

Silvia Rigozzi
Drawing Objectives 2018

Artist Statement

The smell of Spring air, the peacefulness of sunset, the comfort of a restoring hot cup of oolong tea, make me stop and wonder. Slowing down, paying attention, wholeness, are what I live by and pursue. Before I entered the world ceramics, drawing used to be only representational, a reproduction of beauty. Working with clay is a moment of nourishment and patient retracing towards the discovery of my own unity. Now, drawing has become a personal investigation and research: a tool to study, discover, dissect, prepare. Drawings are thoughts and predecessors to form. I envision, and then make. The planning and the making feed one another in a symbiotic relationship; sometimes, clay creation comes first and drawing follows as a complement to fuller exploration and understanding. Sometimes drawing serves as literal preparation to drawing or carving on a pot.

A body of drawings happens out of an interest and a passion. All acts of creation originate from a need and involve a sacrifice and a risk. I cannot plan it. It has to come from within. From a desire to understand, or express. Sometimes the drawings I make out of this need seem unrelated, but they aren't. All is one. Our work tells us things we don't know yet about ourselves. We may think we know the meaning of something we are making, or we may be driven by a need without knowing why. But we say "yes" and make first. Then the meaning appears to us. It is all connected, every endeavor feeds the next, and paves the way for new creations. Drawing is the essential language of art, it allows for immediacy, and extreme freedom. It is a thinking tool.

As a tea lover and believer in the importance of treasuring the present moment, the concept and tradition of the Japanese tea ceremony are compelling to me. Japanese aesthetics, the imperfection of forms, harmonious contrasts, and especially sake and tea ware have been at the core of my drawing and ceramic pursuit. Both ceramics and drawing require to stop and pay attention. To look closely. My work focuses on objects that embody the essence of relationship: being present, honoring the moment, holding and being held, taking care, seeking harmony. Clay and drawing are a way to record the passing of time, to remember, to tell the journey and make it visible, leaving crumbs that trace the way back. Drawings and pots become the history of the soul.

In my drawings I try to capture and imagine the unpredictability and variety of effects that the mystical power of fire has on clay, and then I make or glaze a pot accordingly. By concentrating on the exploration of pottery forms through drawings, gestures used in glazing, and material interactions, I notice parallels between ceramics and drawing. I use gouache and watercolor as glazes: I pour them, brush them, let them run, drip and pool with the force of gravity. I use water-based materials over glue and oil pastels the same way I use glaze over wax resist on ceramics and watch the interaction between them. Drawing helps me to understand form, materials, color combinations, and technique: I prepare and move forward.

Using mixed media, photographs and other scraps, combined with words is also a way to explore and accept what doesn't respond to my aesthetic principles, but to a need of recording the passing of time and make it durable. In the future I want to transition towards more free combinations of lines, colors, tones and meaning. I want to reach the power of drawing of releasing the imagination. I want to cross the threshold of representational to the unknown; I want to take more risks, and let my free hand show me what I don't know yet.