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ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Art and science. Chemistry and magic. Control and chaos. These are some of the dichotomies that are fascinating about the process of making ceramic pieces, and in particular Raku.

Selecting the right clays; determining the forms and patterns; working the clay; carefully drying the clay, controlling the initial firing temperature closely to ensure the clay piece doesn't crack.; making a glaze with the right chemical composition and the final quick firing. These steps are all relatively controlled and planned - science and craftsmanship.

The final step of moving the red-hot, glowing piece to a container with straw; quickly sealing the container as the straw ignites from the heat of the piece, and waiting until the heat and fire burns all the oxygen from the air and starts to pull oxygen molecules out of the glaze chemicals - which creates random patterns of metal flashing, carbon filled cracks, shades of green, red, blue, browns and other colors and turning unglazed clay to a gray or dark black color. These steps are relatively uncontrolled and must be given up to the fire – chaos and magic.

I have tried to match the dichotomies of the creation process to the pieces themselves. Using geometric shapes and tying the pieces together through repeating patterns, connecting lines and related colors mirrors the controlled part of the process. Introducing random patterns, asymmetricalities between the pieces and glazing so that different shades appear in different parts of each piece mirrors the uncontrolled or chaotic part of the process.

The three dimensionality, random colors and textures of each piece create unique works that offer something new from every angle of view and with different intensities and angles of light. The pieces change throughout the day and throughout the year as sunlight and interior lights and shadows play off the reflective surfaces.