



Susan Collett

Susan Collett is a graduate from the Cleveland Institute of Art, Ohio U.S.A. earning a BFA degree in Printmaking with a Minor in Ceramics. Since 1993 she has run a full-time studio art practice in downtown Toronto. Public and private gallery exhibitions and commission work sustain her full-time practice. Large-scale clay sculpture and printmaking has become the focus of her work. The clay works are hand-built of earthenware paper clay and multi-fired to achieve a complex patina of surfaces. The monoprints are printed from plates made of stitched industrial grade roofing copper.

Her work was recently included in the Interior Design Show 2014,/2015, Toronto International Art Fair 2013/2014, Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art 2012, Taiwan Biennale 2012, International Triennial of Silicate Arts, Kecskemet Hungary 2011, Sevres Porcelain Museum Paris, 2010, and an honourable mention at the CEBIKO International Ceramics Biennale in Korea 2009. She has exhibited at SOFA Chicago & New York, Palm Beach and Toronto.

In 2009, Collett was invited by the Ceramic Association of Israel to conduct a master workshop near the Dead Sea and various presentations on her work at The Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art, Toronto, Hangzhou Art & Design Academy, China and Concordia University in Montreal among others. Her work has appeared in Ceramic Review, Ceramic Art & Perception, Ceramics Technical, various catalogues and publications.

Collections include The Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art, The Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery, The Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery, The Queen Elizabeth Hotel Montreal, Ernst & Young Toronto, Trump Tower Miami, The Four Seasons Hotel Toronto, Aeroplan Toronto & Montreal and The Canadiana Collection of the Official Residencies of Ottawa, Rideau Hall where the sculpture Filigree was placed in the private office of the Governor General of Canada.

She received her letters from the IAC, International Academy of Ceramics in 2007 and her RCA, Royal Canadian Academy of Ceramics in 2008.

Collett exhibits at the Sandra Ainsley Gallery in Toronto, Oeno Gallery in Prince Edward County, Ontario, Galerie Elena Lee in Montreal and the Christine Klassen Gallery in Calgary. She recently worked on a new body of print and clay works for two exhibitions, Galerie Elena Lee and The McClure Gallery both in Montreal 2014 and is now preparing for the Korean Biennale, SOFA Chicago,

Susan Collett

Sculpture / Monoprints

www.susancollett.ca





Opposite:
Four Seasons Hotel Toronto 2014
Presidential & Royal Suites

Previous pages: *Royal Suite*
earthenware paperclay, handbuilt
65"h on steel pedestal



Above:
Aggregate 1- detail 2011
earthenware paperclay, handbuilt
majolica, multi-fired

Opposite
Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art
"Why Make In China?" 2013
Rachel Gotlieb, curator

Page 10
Aggregate I, 2011
earthenware paperclay, majolica, multi-fired
25"h x 10"w x 9"d

Pages 12, 13
Laurel Series & detail
earthenware paperclay, multi fired, slips, glaze
26"h x 13"w x 12"d



ANN MORTIMER

Ann Mortimer's work is characterized by its intricate, organic forms, often resembling coral or crystalline structures. Her sculptures are created using a variety of materials, including glass, metal, and stone, which she meticulously shapes and assembles to create a sense of depth and texture. Her work explores the boundaries between the natural and the artificial, often evoking a sense of wonder and discovery.

SUSAN COLLETT

Susan Collett's work is characterized by its vibrant, multi-colored forms, often resembling abstract, organic shapes. Her sculptures are created using a variety of materials, including glass, metal, and stone, which she meticulously shapes and assembles to create a sense of depth and texture. Her work explores the boundaries between the natural and the artificial, often evoking a sense of wonder and discovery.



Susan Collett: Paradoxes of Nature

Susan Collett's polychromatic clusters of organic chaos evoking corals, shells, rocks and minerals appear to spring from nature, untouched by human hands. Tellingly, Collett describes her practice as the "invisible shaping of nature." Although, these organic mounds seem like oddities of nature, they are anything but – they are neither natural, nor manifestations of spontaneous acts. These wondrous creations have been carefully conceived and meticulously constructed by Collett's deft hands.

What is key to Collett's practice is that she is an artist who engages in the medium of ceramics and this material connection also explains her quiet reference or gesture to the vessel – a paradigm form that is often explored, decoded and deconstructed by ceramists. Collett works and reworks her material: tearing, piercing and perforating clay. Also significant is that she is a printmaker which may explain her fascination with paper clay, a composite earthenware that is embedded with paper fibre to enhance strength. Paper clay, it sounds paradoxical and Collett's sculptures, which she makes in series entitled, Labyrinth, Maze and Aggregate, are indeed puzzling enigmas. They are at once smooth and rough, sharply pointed and generously curved, fragile and strong; there is density and mass but there is also light and transparency.

Collett's apparent miracles of the natural world both delight and confound the eye: did they emerge from the sea or the earth? No matter, ultimately, Collett's sculptures are about the exploration of organic form told through the medium of clay— exploiting the dynamic tensions and paradoxes of nature. Her arduous and almost impossible pursuit of shaping and controlling nature are embodied in these exotic aggregates. Collett's states that she is making metaphors of life's many layers of complex meanings but she is also making metaphors of the vibrant life force that stems from nature or, put another way, poetic sculpture.

Rachel Gotlieb 2014







Susan Collett in her Toronto Studio

Artist Statement

My art practice includes the disciplines of clay sculpture and printmaking.

The genesis for my current work of Labyrinth and Maze series derives from my interest in the tension of strength against fragility and as I exaggerate the scale to push the work towards the edge of physical collapse, this theme becomes more potent. The work is hand built and sculptural in nature.

Each Labyrinth is constructed sectionally and secured on steel plinths in order to drive the work into a human-scale relationship. I reveal the copper tabbed seams of each section as a nuance of strength to allow light movement through the many surface perforations, evolving a perceived fragility: undulating forms, movement of clay and light with a constant exploration of shaled and ledged formations - a metaphor for life's layers.

The Maze series, smaller in scale, is an investigation into themes of chaos and order; the strength required for negotiating the paths between our interior and exterior worlds.

Where the Labyrinth series attempts to contain only light, within a vessel format- letting it go through its many organized channels and surface perforations- the Maze series leaves the vessel structure completely into a complex stacking of abstract passageways.

The line of the Maelstrom series becomes not only a lyrical structural element but as well a directional gesture of energy. Movement caught in a fleeting moment held by the duality of energy and stagnation simultaneously, highlighting the transitory nature of all things yet held still.

Working with clay influences the printmaking, encouraging an unorthodox approach of tearing, perforation and embossing. The monoprints incorporate drypoint onto plates composed of industrial grade copper sheeting that is stitched and reconstructed, allowing for unlimited large-scale imagery. The copper ties give a second reading of strength and organic tracings that reaffirm perceptions of fragility and transience.





Opposite:
Lineage VIII 2013
monoprint stitched copper
48"h x 32"w





Lineage Series: The Reverie Art of Susan Collett

Susan Collett sees nature differently than most people do. She has a keen perception of all details in landscape – from self-imposing bridges to the most fragile trees – understanding their nuances in a way that is only possible for someone who has focused on nature and its representations for many years. As she is quick to point out, this isn't a skill that always translates well into words. On a visit to Collett's studio, the conversation immediately turns to "the tensions of strength against fragility" that she perceives in nature and in human beings. She directs attention to the massive clay vessels from her Labyrinth series penetrated by beams of daylight, that generate a palpable impression of solidity and collapse; tensions that you and I might just ignore. For Collett, given her ever-sensitive attention, this opposition serves as a constant source of inspiration.

In the monoprint series Lineage (2013), Susan Collett has made work about the forces and frailties of nature. Her pieces, which might have an Asian aesthetic at first glance, engage viewers in experiences that challenge their perceptions about the empiric and the imaginary, the visible and the invisible. Through volatile colour shades, the artist allows viewers to travel around, taking the everyday and unpacking it in a way that's surprising. The hum created by a frightened flock of petite birds in Detail – Lineage XV seems just as prominent as the visual effect of havoc encountered in the piece. Collett's practice involves a detail-oriented, labour-intensive approach. Her careful alterations to the way we see qualities and dangers in nature bring the subtlety of the prints to the fore. And as with nightingale songbird, the visual imaginary seems resonant and wistful, creating a melancholic mood that crops up again and again in her oeuvre.

Visually, each monoprint of Lineage was precisely created in relation to a particular detail in nature or the urban space (see Lineage VIII). But conceptually, the series is highly fluid, while the idea of a lineage crosses over from one piece to the next. All prints are monoprints, pulled from stitched copper sheeting onto archival Hahnemuhler printmaking papers using oil-based inks. Through blind embossing, Collett amplifies the three dimensional impression by placing objects under damp paper and running it through the press with no ink. Just when you expect something to fall off the platform

or shatter, the press shows down and an intriguing painting on paper comes into view. The technique is challenging. “It forces you to think and work differently. You get to playing with your ideas”, Collett says. Take her clay work, for example, that influences the printmaking: she transfers the technique of perforation and tearing from one medium to another.

With more than fifteen exhibitions since 2000, it is clear that the Toronto-based artist is at the best moment in her career to take on these challenges. The technique of printing is a key component of Collett’s practice. Looking at her Lineage monoprints, they are pathways to going deeper into her sculptural works. They offer insight into how she perceives the world. If the monoprints stand out in her practice for their reverie and transience, they also embody her incredible sensitivity to perception. Collett’s work is as much about showing us how we can dream nature as it is about making it feel like a dream. In this, it resonates with the words of the French-born American artist, Louise Bourgeois: “what modern art means is that you have to keep finding new ways to express yourself, to express the problems, that there are no settled ways, no fixed approach”.

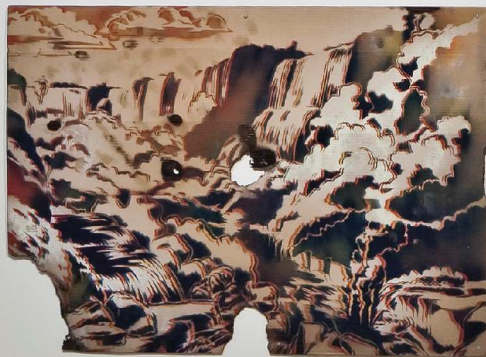
Adina Balint-Babos 2014



Previous pages 20,23
Mercator I & II 2013.
monoprint on copper
55"h x 21"w details

Opposite:
Lineage XV 2013
monoprint on copper
48"h x 32"w











Previous pages 28, 29:

Maze series Citrene 2014

Maze series Adage 2012

earthenware paperclay, oxides, multi-fired
30"h x 10"w x 9"d

Previous pages 26, 27 L-R:

Doris McCarthy Gallery, The C Word

University of Toronto, Richard Mongiat, curator

(L) Maze series: Adage 2012

earthenware paperclay, slips, glaze
30"h x 10"w x 9"d

R) Labyrinth series: Skin 2011

earthenware paperclay, slips, glaze
45"h x 22"w x 27"d

Opposite:

Maze Series: Seismic II 2014

earthenware paperclay, oxides, multi-fire
30"h x 12"w 10"d











Previous Pages 32, 33

Aggregate Series: VI 2015

earthenware paperclay, oxides, glaze, multi-fired
10"w x 9"d x 8"h

Aggregate Series #VII 2015

10"w x 9"d x 8"h

Previous Pages 34, 35

Amalgam II 2014

earthenware paperclay, oxides, glaze, multi-fired
16"w x 9.5"d x 9"h

Amalgam 2014

18"w x 11"d x 11"w 2014

(Gyeonggi International Ceramic Biennale 2015)

Opposite:

Maelstrom I 2014

Earthenware paperclay, oxides, multi-fired
13"h x 14"w x 11"d



Susan Collett RCA, IAC : Selected Biography

Education

- 1986 BFA Cleveland Institute of Art, Ohio, U.S.A., Printmaking/Ceramics Minor
Agnes Gund Memorial Award, 1st Place, BFA Exhibition, Cleveland, U.S.A.

Exhibitions

- 2014 Galerie Elena Lee, Montreal, New Work, solo, clay & prints
McClure Gallery, Montreal, Caméléon, group show, curator Jean-Pierre Larocque
- 2013/14 Toronto International Art Fair, Sandra Ainsley Gallery, Toronto, gallery artists
- 2012 Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto, "The C Word", group Invitational
Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art, Why Make in China?, invitational
Taiwan International Ceramics Biennale, Taipei, Yingge Museum, international juried
New Mexico Museum of Art, Sante Fe, New Mexico, international juried, IAC
- 2011 Toronto International Art Fair, Toronto, Open Studio, printmakers, group show
International Triennial of Ceramic Arts, Kecskemet, Hungary, international juried
Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery, Ontario, "Groundbreakers in Canadian Clay", invitational
- 2010 Sevres Porcelain Museum, Paris, France, International Academy of Ceramics, group, clay
- 2009 CEBIKO, 5th World Ceramic Biennale, Korea, international juried
Burlington Art Centre, Burlington, Ont. "Drawn to Clay", group Invitational, clay, prints
Oeno Gallery, Picton, Ontario, Solo "Labyrinths" clay & prints
- 2008 Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery, Ontario, "Traverse", solo, clay & prints

Awards

- 2010 Canada Council for the Arts, Project Grant, International Academy of Ceramics, Paris
- 2009 CEBIKO, Korean International Clay Biennale, Honourable Mention
Ontario Arts Council, Project Grant, clay
- 2008 RCA, Royal Canadian Academy of Arts
- 2007 Canada Council for the Arts, Travel Grant, Fuping, China
IAC, International Academy of Ceramics
- 2002 Ernst & Young Great Canadian Printmaking Competition, 2nd Prize, juried
- 2001 Winifred Shantz Award, Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery, First Prize, juried
- 1997 Ernst & Young Great Canadian Printmaking Competition, Hon. Mention, juried
- 1990 Hennigar Purchase Award, The Koffler Gallery, Toronto

Publications

- 2014 Toronto International Art Fair, Toronto, Canada. Catalogue Sandra Ainsley Gallery
- 2013 Ceramics Monthly, USA, Review, Heidi McKenzie, "Go East" Canadians Create in China
- 2012 Taiwan International Ceramics Biennale, Catalogue, New Taipei City Yingge Museum
- 2011 Toronto International Art Fair, Toronto, Catalogue, Open Studio, printmakers
The Ceramics Bible, USA Edition, Chronicle Books, Louisa Taylor, UK
Ceramic Review Magazine, Artist Feature, "Figuration & Abstraction", Adina Balint-Babos
Contemporary Ceramics, Emmanuel Cooper, pp. 89., Thames & Hudson
- 2008 Ceramics Technical, Australia, "Canadians in China", Kristen den Hartog, Issue 27
- 2007 Ceramics: Art & Perception, Australia, review, Kristen den Hartog, Impluvium, spring issue

Residencies/Lectures

2013 Scottish Sculpture Workshop, international invitational residency, Lumsden, Scotland
2012 California State University, Long Beach, artist talk, ceramics department, Tony Marsh
Sheridan College, Oakville, artist talk, ceramics department, Linda Sormin
2011 Alberta College of Art & Design, artist talk, "Studio Practices", Greg Payce
Concordia University, artist talk, ceramics department, Jean-Pierre Larocque
2010 Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art, artist talk, "Susan Collett: Israel"
2009 Lectures/Workshops, Israel, Tel Aviv Art Museum & University
Invitation by Ceramic Artists Association of Israel and Binyamini Foundation for Ceramic Art
2008 Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery, Waterloo, artist talk, "The Great Draw of China"
2007 China: Fuping, FULE International Ceramic Art Museums, invitational residency
2003 China: Jingdezhen Sanbao Art Institute, residency
China: Hangzhou Art & Design Academy, slide lecture

Collections

AIMIA, Toronto & Montreal
Aaron Milrad Collection
Burlington Art Cent
The Claridge Collection, Montreal
Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery
Crown Collection of the Official Residencies of Canada, Rideau Hall
Department of Foreign Affairs, Canada
Ernst & Young, Canada
Four Seasons Hotel, Toronto, Vancouver
Greenspan, Humphries, Levine
FULE International Canadian Museum, China
Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art
Icheon, Korea, World Ceramic Centre
Kecskemet, Hungary
Ontario Securities Commission
Sevres Porcelain Museum, Paris
Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery
Trump Tower, Miami
Queen Elizabeth Hotel, Montreal
Yingge Ceramics Museum, Taiwan

Gallery Representation

Galerie Elena Lee, Montreal
Christine Klassen Gallery, Calgary
Oeno Gallery, Prince Edward County, Ontario
Sandra Ainsley Gallery, Toronto

Elected Membership

RCA Royal Canadian Academy of Art
IAC, International Academy of Ceramics

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(pp. 4-7) Royal & Presidential Suites, Four Seasons Hotel , Toronto

Exhibitions: Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art, Why Make in China? pp. 9
Curator: Rachel Gotlieb
The C Word, Doris McCarthy Gallery, U of T pp. 26,27
Curator: Richard Mongiat

Clay Essay: Rachel Gotlieb

Rachel Gotlieb is the Chief Curator of the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art. She is a PhD candidate in Art History at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

Print Essay: Adina Balint-Babos

Adina Balint-Babos holds a PhD in modern French literature from the University of Toronto.
Her academic research explores creative writing and visual arts.
She is currently Assistant Professor of French Studies at the University of Winnipeg.

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