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Artist Statement

I have been an independent studio ceramicist since 1976. I produce one of a kind sculptural vessels and sculpture, in clay and mixed media, about nature, culture, and society. My work can be figurative, abstract, symbolic, or humorous, or all of the above.

and artistic challenges, and carry a visual narrative.

Clay has long been acquainted with human hands. Its tactile quality, and endless technological, and spiritual evolution. The human impulse to create art is evident in the most ancient artefacts, and clay prompted some of the earliest applications of artistic expression.

Clay contains traces of everything that once existed, single-cell organisms, complex life forms, mountains, dust of distant stars, ground together by time and geological events. It embodies history and continuity, engaging the mind in technical and expressionistic challenges that require the exploration of aesthetics, physics, and engineering concepts. Making objects in clay is a testament to that history and a link in the story of human culture.

I learn by looking, by recognizing or tracing connections, from the architecture of living and inanimate forms, to social structures and dynamics. This flow of information feeds

that finds its expression in my work.

Currently, the subject of my work is the underlying architecture of natural and, sometimes, human-made forms, interpreted and imagined into new forms in ceramics, metal and mixed media. In this exploration, using elemental materials, I re-imagine small, complex things, and intangible and ephemeral moments: frost and wind, networks of light and shadows, water and rust, erosion and decay.

This concept has long been an interest in my work, and has resulted in increasingly abstracted forms. The format transforms small, often microscopic, sections of structures into large, ethereal and abstracted forms. These are individual pieces, or linked elements that sometime make use of light and shadow as an evocative tool.

I find beauty in odd things, and I communicate this in my work. My work is grounded in the Fine Craft ethic, and the vessel is the foundation of my practice. Every thing that has life is a vessel, and that continues to be my subtle connection to traditional

tradition. I like broken old things, erosion and rust, wrinkled, fossilized remains.

Anita Rocamora

Artist Statement *continued*

I use materials and techniques that document, not only in appearance but also in process, the changing nature of living things: growth, maturity, decay. This is done by using materials that are transformed by fire, water and chemical reactions during the building and firing cycles.

Increasingly the leftovers of natural processes such as growth and decay are mixing in with the leftovers of human activities, metal, plastic, wood, the discarded skeletons of synthetic life. The two often combine in anachronistic assemblages that, thanks to the elements, take on a new sensibility of form.

Piles of rocks, lichen and mossed, harbors of insects and reptiles; coils of discarded barbed wire, trellises for grasses and wild cucumbers, all slowly sinking back into the

Using nature as a metaphor for the human experience is not a new concept, but where else but in nature will a person find reason and purpose, and make peace with the business of being alive, or how to grow and age with beauty and grace?

I do not ascribe magical powers to the natural world. It is enough for me that the unfolding of its secret mechanisms sustains a lifetime of wonders. I strive to give form, with respect and honesty, to the visual information and enquiries elicited by the observation of natural processes and transformations, throughout a day, a season, through many years of my lifetime.

Nature teaches me everything I need to know about the world, and how to live: my human identity, how to be of this earth and not just on this earth, my guiding principles of social and environmental justice, appreciating and learning from the beauty of the essential, and the processes of life, decay and death.

This is what underlies the art I make, a long and deliberate journal of what I learn about the world, and about myself as a creature in this world, among many others.

Anita Rocamora
Artist Statement *continued*

The following excerpts describe recent exhibitions.

Stilled Lives/Nature Morte

M I I I T I I I M M
lesson: bad timing, an ill considered move, are sometimes all that stands between a
vibrant pacTevgo