

Amanda Gentry

In a society whose speed and complexity compounds with each passing moment, I take comfort in simplicity. Simplicity has no tolerance for what is untrue or convoluted. Simplicity inspires honesty. Simplicity yields clarity. What I seek from my experience in this world is what I ask of the work I create and put into it.

The results are forms rooted in the basic building blocks of geometry—the triangle, the square, and the circle. Yet when these shapes are applied to gently curved planes, these simple forms begin to take on qualities associated with human emotions. There is a kindness and an empathy to the way these forms relate to the space they inhabit, a gentleness to the way they move when activated, a curiosity to the way they frame negative space.

To achieve these means I employ the simple medium of clay with equally simple tools—a rolling pin, paddle, and a rasp. I roll out the clay into thick slabs, shaping and joining them to one another as I refine the forms through paddling and rasping. To balance out the deliberate nature of the making, I introduce elements that I cannot control. Temperamental glazes and atmospheric firings fueled by gas or wood require that I let go and surrender the fruits of my labor to the unknown. More often than not, what I pull out of the kiln is a stronger expression than what I put in.

Ultimately, working with clay is what grounds me in this human experience. I believe most of us have or are searching for a physical practice that acts as a metaphor or guide on this journey. For some it's tennis. For me it's clay. Through this practice I learn to listen, to be patient, to trust myself, to learn through curiosity and play, to surrender.