

Heather Mae Erickson

Pick Mix / All Sorts Collection, 2014

“Pick Mix / All Sorts Collection” is a reference to the Woolworths-like candy stores where one chooses a mixture from bins of colorful sweets of bulk confections. The collection was designed to get the audience to look longer and make decisions about their favorite eye popping piece of ceramics. Viewers have been known to quickly point and state, “I like that one.” The “like” statement is one that I was hoping for which references the thumbs-up response of the mundane to monumental posts on social media sites such as Facebook. The “like” is that quick intuitive moment where your desires or gut take(s) over. I find it quite humorous a word because it is one of the most generally used non-descriptive go-to words. It may bring one back to an elementary or younger self in relation to basic references of shapes, forms, surfaces, textures, patterns, and colors that trigger memories from youth or current trends in style and fashion. The candy names alone that I remember are inspiration enough to conjure interesting forms and surfaces; Spogs, Strawberry Pencils, Gobstoppers, Black Jacks, Sour Dummies, Flying Saucers, Fried Eggs, Jazzles. Just as in the bins and bags at the candy store, I am mixing the multiple types of objects and allowing the audience and users to create their own sets and compositions. Ultimately the user gets to decide if a dot is as interesting as a pin stripe or a heart or a bunny or a star.

To touch upon process, the use of multiple types of clays, firing methods, and surface decoration application lends to more variety of candy-coated objects. I use, hand-cut or die-cut paper resists on greenware, sponging on greenware and bisqueware, stickers for the outlines of shapes on bisqueware, and different widths of vinyl tapes on greenware. I enjoy the variety of processes to discuss the differences in the craftsmanship of the marks of surface decoration. I am pleased when one thinks something looks perfect at a distance but when viewed up close they see variation in a dot or a pattern. Underglazes and mason stains in glazes and casting slip give most of the color in the patterned or solid color work.