Roots, reality, and culture.

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Roots, Reality, and Culture.

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Thesis Proposal

My pieces are sculptural abstractions of the human figure, which reference the body in a celebratory manner. The Yoruba sculpture of southwest Nigeria, dating from 100 to 1450 C.E. made from a range of materials including wood, copper, and clay are my primary influences. Yoruba work from this era, depicted deities and effigies that coincided with their belief system, with the visual emphasis centered on the limbs and torsos of the figures suggesting movement. Yoruba art was often frontal in appearance and intertwined with narrative images revealing the thematic content within their work.

The art that I create references my life experiences through narratives. I begin by giving form to narratives referencing my upbringing in the urban areas of Chicago, where I was exposed to a diverse culture that was created within a heavily populated urban area. My formative years 1980-1990 were during the height of the “hip-hop generation” and I lived in a place and time where such urban art forms as graffiti and break-dancing evolved into solid genre from underground beginnings. These experiences, and the people associated with them, are often the central concept behind my sculptures. I work to capture a viewer’s imagination by connecting his or her ideas of presence to that which is timeless. By abstracting what is expected, by referencing the human form and by shaping the landscape of the material I work with, I create sculptures that give a viewer room to place his or her own perspectives somewhere within my idea of how experience is represented.

Within the aspects of my sculpture that are their surface and visceral qualities, I respond to vary the contrast of hard and soft, shiny and matte. This type of variation allows a viewer’s eye to perceive movement in form and highlight. I expect a viewer to
perceive these elements as those that are most important. The unification of surface and form that my art displays creates a visual dialog that relates to the viewer the perpetuation of my concept. The concept that surface of my sculptures relates to the skin of the human body. My work has a presence that a viewer can investigate the form of and ask questions of them selves pertaining to who they are and how they relate to the different environments that they have had experience with.
Where I'm from

The south side of Chicago during the mid-1970's was a time of despair for the African American community, and this is when my life began. When the 1960's passed, the shift in time signified the end of the height of the civil rights movement, an end of the critical era that established a level of equality for Blacks in the United States of America on a massive social scale experienced for the first time in the country's history. So many of the Black community's great political leaders including Malcolm X, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., were assassinated with the intent of deterring the momentum of their teachings, teachings that would further strengthen the Black community. The United States government, by means of false imprisonment and murder, systematically dismantled the Black Panthers and other radical groups who preached consciousness and empowerment throughout the community. Eventually, the same government that had falsely accepted the teachings of its Black heroes began the injection of crack cocaine into the Black community and subversively aided in the increase of Black on Black crime and violence. The era that was ending was also an era surged with an outbreak of teenage pregnancies? The adversities of the people who existed then, were a catalyst that contributed to the impoverished state that inner city Blacks find themselves living in presently.

I witnessed the great struggle to survive by the women in my life during my adolescence and this had an extremely profound impact on my perspective of the world. Growing up in a household of single women which included my mother, two of her sisters, and my grandmother allowed for a unique experience. I was my grandparent's
first-born grandchild to their seventeen-year-old daughter. My grandmother had left my grandfather a few years before I was born because of the continued womanizing and alcohol abuse that she had to endure before she decided to leave him. Later, he moved a few miles from the house where we lived but rarely did he come by for visits and he did not contribute to my aunts’ upbringing. She resented him and I remember her stating regularly whenever his name was mentioned that he was “a no good, low down dirty nigga”. My mother is a very hard working woman who never let having a child at the age of seventeen stop her from obtaining her goals, growing up and watching her struggle to become the self sufficient and empowered woman that she has become has had a significant impact on my perspective of women. A perspective framed by the experiences that I had while growing up in the household that the women that I lived with as a child worked to maintain.

I was the only male in our household and the women were very protective of me; raising me with the strong notion to become a good black man and not one of those “dirty niggas” that they had encountered that they had had hard experiences with.

My mother was adamant about my exposure to public art, I was educated on the subject through visits to museums, and was also taught about Black history, the history of my culture. In hindsight I see my mother, her sisters, and my grandmother as women of change, Black women who understood the conditions affecting the community, conditions that left it in a state of disarray and in a condition that still needs work. The women in my life the women who raised me, were trying to make a difference by educating me and by influencing the only Black man that they could have an immediate and significant impact upon.
Identity

"I work out of a response and need to redefine the image of man in the terms of the Negro experience I know best." ~ Romare Bearden

I take great pride in my identity, especially the situations in my life that have shaped my personality, this Black identity has also informed my art making. Growing up in Chicago’s impoverished south side during the beginning and height of the hip-hop generation, which flourished in inner cities around the country in the late 1970’s and 1980’s, had a grand affect on my modes of expression. The styles of art that were starting to emerge from a renewed Black movement, Break-Dancing, graffiti, and the music that was central to these artistic elements in the culture, flourished as a means of communication for the people involved. Hip-hop culture was a direct response to the way people in poor urban communities lived an expression of the way people lived on a daily basis. The emergence of these styles captured the exposure that artists had to a surmountable level of injustices throughout the community in which they were born. Musicians such as Public Enemy, EPMD, and Boogie Down Production pushed consciousness in hip-hop music and made a distinction between the hip-hop and rap genres of music. These artists held themselves responsible, both socially and politically, for encouraging the youth to “fight the powers that be” and for educating the people about such things as the dangerous hormones contained in the meat produced in the United States. Hip-hop music inspired and deeply moved me to spread my own message.
and I believed graffiti was the form of artistic expression that best suited me, during my adolescence.

Art meant to me being a member of the tagging crew known as D.A.D., which stands for Down And Dirty, writing graffiti on the subway trains on the north side of Chicago. The tagging crews from the north side typically consisted of white and Latino youths who tagged trains, but our crew had seven black adolescents this factor made us unique. We were an all Black crew that received recognition for our talents and became known throughout the area by name. This recognition was exciting and at the same time gave us a sense of belonging and pride. This sense of belonging and pride carries on through my work today. The primary objective of our tagging crew was to gain notoriety from our peers including other taggers, dancers, and MC’s. We accomplished this by tagging as many trains and public works as possible and by composing large murals that were visible to the commuters on the subway. The murals were often illegible to the untrained eye with the letters that overlapped and used a mixture of hard angles and curves that gave the work a very hard line feel. We employed sixty to one hundred cans of spray paint on a single mural and our art was inspired by the music we were listening to. My art has grown with me, and now, I work hard to attain notoriety once again and to demonstrate how I have become a new artist, one who overcame and adapted to the situations that I faced while growing up. I have become an artist who has taken the advice of those women who wanted me to be “Good” and have done my best to show them that I am just that. I also want to show not just the Black community that I have made it, but all communities who might see my work and think of the situations and landscapes that they were raised in
Historical References

As a descendent of Nigeria I feel deeply connected to the Yoruba sculpture of the southwest region of that country in Africa. The artwork originating from there has intrigued me ever since I discovered it during my undergraduate studies. The most captivating aspect of the Yoruba work from Nigeria is the sophistication of these sculptures. Although Art historians tend to label their work as "primitive" (which to me carries a derogatory connotation) perhaps because the Yoruba people's primary material was wood, and not a more modern material, I find it to be quite the opposite. What is often unrecognized by historians is that Yoruba sculptures were also made of copper, clay, and bronze. They were one of the first metal smiths, and were quite advanced in their ability to work metal as well as clay. They were a hardworking and spiritual people with hunting and agriculture systems that sustained their lifestyle. Yoruba artwork was at the center of their highly complex spiritual belief system which focused on family, gods, goddess, effigies, and deities.

The pieces of art from the Yoruba culture that I find particularly powerful are the figurines that they created. The human figure as the centerpiece of these objects is represented as standing, on bent knees, or seated on a circular stool. These particular sculptures are very balanced and symmetrical employing the use of repetition of shape within different parts of the body; with the features and body parts somewhat abstract in form.

The narratives found in these works, as well as the negative space that is found in many of the Yoruba carvings, are points of great interest to me. "Ife head piece," (Image 1A) is
a carved alter piece, the large base head represents a deceased ancestor with bulging eyes and protruding lips. The hair is intertwined and frontal to display an onk, implying the symbol of life, and further stated by the figures being carved as to represent spirits. Two birds supported by other adornments are proudly perched on both sides of the figure with a watchful eye and with their backs supported by a compound displaying a snake, belly up which bridges the entire structure.

The large base head of the deity shown in (Image 1B) is rendered in a manner which shows an attachment to the spirit world and that is treated with less naturalism than images of deceased ancestors found in similar works. The figures above him are mounted on a circular stool with the prominent figure shown as a chieftain with one hand grasping an ox's horn while he sits on its back while the other hand is firmly around a staff which he holds. The other figures around him are one tenth of his size making him seem larger than life as he proudly adorns an elaborate chieftain’s headdress while one of his subjects is under his arm, possibly representing a son or close relative, a composition further commenting on his elite status.

The narratives found in (Image 1C) depict a family tree, also used as an altar piece, this piece first draws the eye to the classic deity head base which is a the Yoruba way of expressing that everything is built on their belief system. Above the head is a circular stool dictating the format of the altar by composing family members who encompass the edge of the stool, the figures are in both frontal and side poses, participating in daily life activities. The next level is also anchored by the circular stool the more important family members most likely wives and first born children represented here, as they carry out their rituals of daily life. In the center of the sculpture lies the patriarch of the clan,
standing proud and depicted larger than life, with his hands holding the walls of the exterior structure that supports his family as he adorns a large hat that shelters them.
Development and Progression

"Art is not what you see, it is what you make others see." ~ Edgar Degas

I entered the graduate program at Rochester Institute of Technology weighing a decision between creating pottery or sculpture, because my undergraduate experience focused primarily on working as a potter but also because I experimented and enjoyed working with sculpture. I attended school in the Southwest Region, in a landscape surrounded by desert and mountains. My major was art education with my studio

Yoruba Family Tree (image 1C)
concentration in ceramics. I did not work with the ceramics faculty until my junior and senior years due to the fact that the graduate students in the department taught most foundations courses. I was given some valuable words of advice from those maverick grad students who expressed to me that "the greatest thing one could do was to make, make, make and then make some more". Although I was a strong thrower I did not have a conceptual mindset and therefore I concentrated on process mimicking pots from books and magazines while formulating a variety of clay bodies and glazes. During my time in undergraduate studies we the students built a large Anagama kiln in the mountains and the studio rallied around the project. We donated countless man-hours so that the kiln was built in one year. My aesthetic changed with a new understanding of this new process and I began to see my pots as landscapes and I employed glaze to make the distinction between land and sky, the atmosphere and the in-between. Although I was elated about my new pots and the new wood fire experience I was left feeling concerned and not quite sure that I was making my best work. The pots that I was creating did not communicate enough about my own life experience and they were not as much apart of me as the graffiti murals that I created in my youth.

The first project that I was assigned during my first quarter was a wall project, and this made me extremely excited since I felt that it immediately freed me from my focus on pots. I decided to create a project that was site specific and that was built from found and onsite materials. This lead me to an idea for an alter to be used in solstice celebrations. The project was extremely laborious as it was built of hand-made adobe bricks which I made from the building site in my backyard which was surrounded by forest. I wanted the viewer to feel a sense of stumbling upon an artifact from an ancient
culture and I felt the project was successful especially after my graduate peers gathered around the candle lit altar that I covered in red and yellow carnations and surrounded with Delos Delimorte skulls. The project was an important step for me since it was an object that had function, that function was to display or present an idea as opposed to the way a piece of pottery is functional as an object to be used by the hand in a daily ritual.

I moved through several bodies of work during the second and third quarter after the mind opening experience with the wall project. Experimenting with as much as I could and developing a content base, became my biggest priorities and these foci encompassed my work as I spent as much of my time thinking and writing about my ideas as I did actually creating them. I wanted to interject my ideas about the black experience in America into my work and wanted to discuss the social injustices within the community, injustices including police brutality, the extreme poverty, and crime. The artwork that manifested from these ideas was not seen as successful. It was often critiqued as being too literal and lacking in substance. My struggle continued through several bodies of work before I discovered a project that interested me, one that was capable of supporting my ideas.

The next project I decided to pursue revolved around a series of hands which were to dealing with my ideas of social injustice through gesture and surface painting. I saw the hands as a window to the soul in the same ways that the eyes are often seen in this respect, the hands depicted life experience in the way that hands are often groomed and cared for in order to somehow show social status. The hands that I created were grouped in pairs, facing one another as though they were in conversation. The images painted on them were of urban origin employing the same format as graffiti, with bold lettering,
sharp outlines, and overlapping forms and images. Text and imagery were primary components of this work and I used bombs, missiles, crack pipes, and guns labeled with political slogans protesting a range of issues including the invasion of Iraq and drugs in the ghetto. The work felt closer to how I truly wanted to represent my ideas but it still was not exactly what I was searching for. In order to express what I wanted to, I had to make research an important aspect of my work as I became more frustrated with my results. I researched different artist who focused on political concepts in their art and tried to find a common thread that filled their work with the passion of socio-political ideas. I found the work of Leon Gulub, Robert Arneson, and Kiki Smith to be admirable, but I did not feel a direct kinship to these makers, mostly because they often commented on social ideas in the third person and not from personal experience.

I finished my first year of graduate school with a series of work that were human torsos that were wheel-thrown and altered and that explored a very quick and gestural approach to making my work. The torsos were very helpful to me in that they allowed me to be spontaneous using basic mark making to deform and disfigure them in a way that expressed a disturbed beauty. They became more universal in a manner that “The Hands” were not, as “The Hands” were obviously black hands but the torsos were remnants of a body that were not tied to either color or gender. The torsos became models for a larger, coil-built torso that allowed simplification of my ideas and the ability to stray from such a literal context. I wanted my work to be less chaotic and bring the viewer into it through surface and form while it expressed my desire to be more inclusive and not solely discussing a plight that was only that of the black man. This work expressed the struggle of all men. For the first time I began to understand the power of
simplicity and how form and surface could communicate ideas in a subversive way. The larger scale torso I created was a major milestone for me and it successfully communicated my ideas of frustration and disappointment with a situation involving an African immigrant who was murdered in New York City by the police. This particular work of mine expressed my sentiments of how black men are often looked upon as cattle that are disposable and killed with no regard while also challenging the concept of what is “body”. The large torso also exposed an important question about how we view one another in our society; an intriguing interest to pursue as an issue to work with in my next project.

Contemporary References

The two contemporary artists who constantly inspire my work and ideas are Romare Bearden, a painter, and Julio Gonzales, a painter and sculptor. I find these two artists inspirational for very different reasons. Both artists commented on social and political issues, although Bearden more so then Gonzales. Bearden’s work resonates deeply with me because of a shared African American heritage, and the struggle to create under the constrictions Africans in America must endure. I also admire his ideas of universality as it relates to the human condition. Julio Gonzales’s revolutionary idea of drawing in space, has given me a deeper understanding of how sculptural objects can interact with
space. His use of the figure and its relationship to nature allow the viewer to engage his work as part of a continuum, uniting man and his environment.

Romare Bearden was an African American painter during the Harlem Renaissance who gained international notoriety for his vibrant paintings and collages. He painted in many different styles including classical portraits, expressionism, and abstraction. The aspect of Bearden’s work which I find most profound is his use of form and color as he often stripped down the formal rendering of figures to focus on the emotion of the subject using color and mark making as a catalyst for investigation. He once said, “I work out of a response and need to redefine the image of man in the terms of the Negro experience I know best.” (Fine, 45) I seriously relate to this particular statement as a man of color working in the visual arts. Bearden did not want to be thought of as a “Black painter” but simply as a painter who happened to be Black. He created images that were universal in their rendering of the human experience. This was a huge step for a black artist during that time, still today a white artist using white people as a subject are still perceived as universal and images of black people are not received as such but are labeled as folk art, or urban art.

In 1974 Bearden painted “One Night Stand” (Image 2A), a watercolor on canvas, as one of a series where the artist reflects on his experiences during the Harlem Renaissance. He was a great appreciator and fan of jazz, frequenting the different jazz clubs for inspiration and to seek out musician friends such as Duke Ellington. “One Night Stand” is an expressive painting that captures the musicians at work with the overlapping figures reflecting the tight quarters of stage life while playing their respected instruments. The background is a soft brown with blotches of red, green, and pink as vehicles for
displaying the lights and atmosphere of the room. Some of the musician’s faces are frontal while others are seen in profile, fragmented with various hues of brown, green, black, red, gold and orange. Their eyes are somber and glazed over, commenting on the drug and alcohol abuse in the jazz culture of the time. “Black Manhattan” (Image 2B), oil on canvas collage, painted in 1969, is an example of Bearden’s social awareness. The image depicts a black ghetto in New York City. At the time, Bearden’s career was flourishing and he used his work as a platform to discuss the conditions Blacks lived in while residing in urban housing projects. He used color to simplify the work and allowed the figures to move forward on the canvas. The concept centered on the main figures being observers of their counterparts, white Manhattan, while continuing on with their daily lives as they wait for equality.

“One night Stand” Romare Bearden  (Image 2A)
Sculptor Julio Gonzales was trained as an industrial welder and had a revolutionary understanding of spatial representation which he used to create an innovative relationship between drawing and sculpture. His early work years were spent within the avant-garde circle of pre-war Europe. He worked with other bohemian artists such as Pablo Picasso, Andre Salmon, and Max Jacob. A primary influence and collaborator of Picasso, Gonzalez helped expand the cubist movement from two-dimensional renderings, transforming them into three-dimensional sculptures that captured space. Gonzalez once said, "To project and draw in space with the help of new devices, to use this space and construct with it as if it were a newly acquired material—that is my endeavor" (Withers, 28). His concepts were always modeled from the idea of drawing in space. He took a
more representational perspective, concentrating on metals as artistic possibility rather than industrial function. He was forced to concentrate his efforts on drawings due to a shortage of oxygen and acetylene caused by World War I and the rationing of these materials. Gonzalez produced an abundance of welded-iron sculpture in the last ten years of his life, once again collaborating with Pablo Picasso as well as actualizing many drawings he created during the war.

“Monsieur Cactus” (Image 3A), created in 1939 is one of Gonzalez’s most revered works as the piece is abstract with heavy reference to the figure. The work is very frontal with organic and geometric shapes assembled together to create negative space that reference centual parts of the body. Thorny cacti like structures protrude and protect the most vulnerable parts of the figure. Thick and hardy stalks are juxtaposed by thin elongated limbs, creating and elegant balance of form allowing it to grasp space.

“Maternity” (Image 3B), created in 1934 is a striking example of the artist’s use of welded steel rods to lend an unprecedented openness to the structure. Like much of Gonzales’s work “Maternity” appears to be abstract while retaining figurative references. The structure builds from the horizontal circle, through the stepped form, to the upper loop which projects into space. This loop suggests a head with sprouts of hair, and a ring and plate indicate breasts. Gonzales was a formalist who stripped the human form down to basic shapes providing a primal quality that moves the viewers’ eye around his pieces.
Finding my voice

I finished my first year of graduate school on a high note after having received praise from my faculty and peers and after I was accepted to a three-month residency at The Clay Studio of Missoula in Missoula Montana. I was very excited about the opportunity and felt this was a great way for me to build on what I had learned after my first year of studies at The School for American Crafts. Working at the Clay Studio of Missoula would allow for me to have my first solo exhibition as a professional artist a chance for me to have a trial run of sorts, and a cohesive body of work much like the one I would produce for my thesis exhibition. I had clear goals for myself and for the work that I wanted to create so while I visiting in New Mexico. Before arriving in Montana I compiled research on African Art and also met with professors from the university for guidance as to how to approach a solo exhibition. I wanted to create work that did not deal with my politics in the way that my past work had, and I titled my exhibition Future Primitive before any work had begun. The work was to pay homage to my African heritage mixing some traditional forms such as the mask and the tripod with contemporary ideas of urban black culture.

During my residency I met many great artists who gave me feedback on my work. I spent time at the Archie Bray foundation conversing with resident artists and visiting the local studios. This was a very informative time for me since it opened my eyes to the orientation of contemporary ceramics and I spent the majority of my three-month summer residency in Missoula being quite productive as an artist. Half way through what should have been one of the highlights of my artistic experience I was
phoned by my wife and told she wanted a divorce. This announcement shattered my world as I knew it and I began to think about what was really important to me in my life. Although I was very passionate about social and political issues I was not sure that this needed to be the theme of my work and I felt extremely confused and at a stage of doubt and uncertainty. The work needed to become more about things that were positive since there was enough negativity in the world. This idea lead to an urge to deal with beauty, even though in my own world I felt everything was ugly and horrid. Reflection became a big part of understanding the separation from my wife and through this process I found myself rediscovering things that made me happy and that dealt with beauty. Instead of seeing what was disturbing to me about urban life I began to rediscover what I thought was spectacular. Urbanization became more of a phenomenon then a disease and reflections about the eight years I spent in New Mexico discovering my inner being moved back into the forefront.

I had trouble discovering what I wanted to focus on creating for the entire first and second quarters when I returned for my second and final year of graduate school. I was working all over the place, figuratively, abstract, and somewhere in-between and I desperately searched for anything that I could hold on to and that felt close to being right. Frustration soon set in and caused me to make poor decisions that further affected my work. It was not until the first of the year that I felt that I gained some clarity and was able to create work that discussed the beauty of duality as it pertained to my life experiences. Growing up in Chicago and experiencing urbanization at its best and worst along with the experience of living in the southwest and absorbing the profound culture and landscape were both parts of my experience that I wished to translate into my art.
This revelation was achieved through long conversations with Professors Rick Hirsch, Julia Galloway, and Levon Sheppard and looking at as much work as I could, while trying to find inspiration and an outlet for my expression. These aspects allowed me to address the new concerns in my life through the process of making art.

The Body of Work

After a multitude of research and soul searching I decided to use the philosophies of the Yoruba people as a framework for my creations. They believed that man and nature were one entity and therefore land and sky are parts of the whole separated only by the mind. Calling on form, surface, and title to communicate the ideas I created work that referenced body, land, and text in the form of graffiti. These three entities where overlapped and intertwined and I explored ideas of inside and outside, allowing a dialogue pertaining to what one projects onto the world to arise. It is not always what is on the inside of that person or vice versa, that shines through, in the same way a cactus is very rough and thorny on the outside but soft and fleshy on the inside. I wanted the pieces of work I was to exhibit to have a strong interaction with one and another, and to feed off of each movement, in the same way that break dancers "pop-lock" and pass the dance around to one another. The work for the show contained a very recognizable format and there were three obvious sections in each individual piece, a bottom representing legs, a mid section functioning as a torso, and a top suggesting arms and a head.

In the piece entitled "Blue Monday" the negative space in the base of the piece allows the viewer to see a portion of the midsection that was penetrating the base and above that one can see the arms sway as a weapon with three holes that are finger size to
allow one to pick up the object if desired. The lower third of the sculpture was sandy brown and very textural while the interior and top were both blue and green, representing water.

"Nina Sky" was a piece that switched formats where instead of sticking with a unified bottom section the bottom was separated with a broad strong legged stance. I chose to employ a brown hue and a smooth texture to this piece. The midsection was attached to the bottom not allowing any light to pass though it, while the top arced between two shoulders, which were lined with gold leaf. The top element has a hue gradation from one shade of blue to another in the same way that the sky appears at dusk in the desert.

"Female Cardinal’s Last Song" is heavily glazed with a thick, crawling, white glaze allowing the viewer to observe the satin brown beneath the first layer. The lower section is highly concave while balancing the midsection, like a female’s hip balancing a hand in a sassy manner. The midsection boasts a large "V" shaped bottom aligning with the smaller "V" shape of the bottom section. The swaying top sections are designed to resemble birds pulling away at each end in a departure of one another.

"Zuni Pueblo" has a vertical attitude with the lower section heavily textured in a brown and yellow glaze. It represents a worn wooden bracelet. The midsection consists of a piece firmly balanced and resting comfortably, similar to a Chinese pillow, that is glazed in a flaky, metal like surface revealing parts of the yellow and brown of the lower section. The top section is curved on one end with a point and pierced at the other, pointing west covered with a metal replicating glaze in the shape of a fishhook.

"Lobo Night" displays a bottom section that is covered in a dense, smooth crimson glaze while the form is curvaceous on one end. While sleek and linear on one side, it is
balanced by curves on the other. The midsection repeats the crimson glaze and the form thins as the eye approaches the middle part. The ends are weighted and vertical. The top portion of the piece rests above and stretches in opposing directions. Treated with a matte yellow glaze with variants of orange exposed here and there the piece is finalized with colors. This same orange hue is repeated in the interior of the bottom section of the piece.

"Native Tongue" is grounded on a rusted steel base with the bottom section treated with a matte brown glaze while a bright blue glaze surprises the eye on the interior. The midsection is tiny in comparison but is the same matte brown hue and is in the shape of the letter “N”. Representation of the letter is stylized in the form of graffiti letters. The top section is a lengthy piece of fabricated steel that sways and stretches elegantly across the form, pointing in the direction of northeast at one end and southwest on the other.
Conclusion

"The stone that a builder refuse will always be the head cornerstone" ~ Bob Marley

I believe that one should not have expectations when entering any endeavor. One should rather except challenges and build a wealth of knowledge based on these experiences. Expectation allows for disappointment when being let down does not happen, then disappointment does not seem as tragic. Having the desire to pursue a dream, goal or passion does not necessarily allow or guarantee success it merely means that one has the opportunity to realize ones goals. This does not come with out hard work, dedication, and adversity, struggle builds character, and the one who will succeed embraces adversity and uses it as a tool. My experience in Graduate School was one that presented issues that I could have never anticipated. I am thankful for the experience and will use it as part of my foundation and as a move forward, with the pursuit of my goals in ceramics in mind.
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