

## **Level 6 – Research Framework Document**

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**DATE:** 6.5.19

### **Summary Sentence or Research Question:**

The Wonder of Fruit - I aim to create bright and fun ceramic vessels inspired by fruit.

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### **Summary Statement:**

The project started with a focus on colour and how to introduce more of it into our lives. Colour and texture played a big part in the creation of the work as I have an interest in bringing more colourful objects into the world. I discovered in my dissertation that Britain has an inbuilt chromophobia; a fear of colour. Colour can add energy and life to its surroundings and with the current state of the world, more energy and excitement seems to be needed. To combat this I decided to focus on natural colour as you can't object to natural colour.

Fruit quickly became the source of this natural colour. This work intends to harness the colours of fruit and use them to create wildly useless fruit stands. These vessels are inspired by the patterns and textures of the fruit they hold. Narratives surrounding each individual fruit are used to inspire the form of the vessel. The information is also displayed alongside with an aim to open the viewers eyes to new knowledge about to the fruit.

I was also inspired by the wonder that was felt in history when a new exotic fruit arrived on British shores. These fruits were so amazing and awe inspiring that special stands were made to display them and were seen as a huge symbol of wealth. I was interested to see whether it would be possible to recreate this feeling of wonder if the fruit was to be presented in a different context to normal. Especially as fruit is part of the mundane and a subject that everyone can recognise as part of everyday life.

The pieces are crafted ceramic objects. I worked with clay for most of second year and felt that there was still so much that I wanted to explore and experiment with in this area. I hoped for them to be whimsical and fun in nature, as inspired by the work of Ahyrun Lee, Kaori Kurihara and Chiozza.

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**Key Words:** vibrant colour, fruit, quirky, joy, wonder, coloured ceramic, seeds, contemporary craft, texture, narrative

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### **Research Methods:**

#### *Visual*

I used photography and drawing to research into the visual nature of the fruit. By examining the inner textures and surfaces of the fruit, this will create a new way of seeing the fruit and lead to abstraction. Dissections and physically handling the fruit also helped to see the form in a new light.

To get inspired for the whimsical nature of the pieces I conducted visual research and evaluated artist's work of which I aspire to. For example the playful nature of Chiozza's Lump Nubbins or the use of ceramic to make quirky hybrid forms such as in Kaori Kurihara's work. By identifying what I like in the pieces it enabled me to apply the same logic to my work.

#### *Contextual*

I looked at the broader picture of fruit and especially focused on biology, botany and anatomy as this is where I have an interest. Using books and the internet to learn more about the narratives that surrounded the fruit, its uses, and the structure gave me a clearer view on the subject of my project and helped inspire the form.

The writing of designer Ingrid Fetell-Lee has been very influential to me and my views on colour and its place in society. I read her book *Joyful; The Surprising Power of Ordinary Things To Create Extraordinary Happiness*, to gain insights into what objects can do to make us happier. To see these

principals in action I went to Neal's Yard in Covent Garden, London. An extremely colourful place which helped me understand why colour has a place in society and should be used more. I also visited Collect at the Saatchi Gallery to gain insight into which displays worked and which didn't.

### *Narrative Research*

As each piece has an accompanying narrative, to collect these narratives I researched around each fruit. I looked into growing seasons, places of origin, mythical stories, traditions and news stories. Jane Grigson's fruit book was key to creating my initial findings. I documented each discovery in a table along with an initial material or form ideas that sprung to mind during the research.

### *Material Experimentation*

Researching and experimenting through clay and glaze technology helped me to see what is possible with the material. This allowed me to test the capabilities and opportunities that the material presented and use this to create interesting unique work.

### Key References Used:

Grigson, Jane, and Yvonne Scargon. *Jane Grigson's Fruit Book*. Penguin, London, 1983.

Fetell Lee, Ingrid. *Joyful: The Surprising Power Of Ordinary Things To Create Extraordinary Happiness*. Ebury Publishing, 2018.

digitalfire.com, <https://digitalfire.com/index.php>.

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### **Medium for Research:**

To record my research I drew and used photography to evaluate what I had learnt and to see the subjects in different ways. To construct the forms I used a combination of collage, drawing and photography to make the vessels.

In studio during the making process I used photography to help create the pieces by photographing potential arrangements of clay so I was able to play with options before anything was fixed.

Researching the material through test pieces also helped to develop the ideal finish for the pieces.

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### **Material and Technical Investigation:**

Experimenting and applying the research to the clay was an important part of the process in creating original and interesting results with the material. I will be experimented with colour by creating as many different shades as I could, which then gave me the freedom of a ready made paint palette from which to choose my colours. To document the different colour mixes I created a table of all the different combinations, which helped to keep track as nearly 400 tiles were produced. Although I didn't use these tests directly in the project, they were a good starting point.

For each new piece I tested the techniques and finishes that I would use. This included making scale models, making test tiles specific to each piece and a refining glazes until the perfect one was achieved. When an exact height was needed for a piece, I created shrinkage tests so that this could be calculated into the measurements.

Once I made samples I will collated my findings with drawing and photography in my sketchbook. This helped to play with the ideas created and made links between work. Using models and maquettes were helpful to demonstrate my ideas and to realise what has been swimming around in my head as well as construction methods.

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### **Timescale of work across the year:**

1st term - Created colour test tiles

- Experimented with creating textures especially with different cabbages
- Practised in depth study of a subject

2nd term - Research overview at the beginning then with each new fruit

- Created mock up of ideas Researched narratives and context for the project
- Experimented with finishes and textures
- Created final forms
- Aimed to create 5/8 objects during the course of the project

3rd term - Finished creating final work

- Used final week to resolve presentation of 2D work for wall display alongside work

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### **Identify potential professional contexts for your work:**

These vessels would probably be best suited in a gallery setting. They are functional in that they will hold a piece of fruit but only 1 piece, so not incredibly useful. However I would like to look into ways of bringing these vessels to a wider audience as I am interested in introducing colour to a wider population than the audience of a gallery as these can feel quite cut off from the general population. More accessible ways for my work to be seen could include their use in food displays, use in photoshoots, the distribution of photography containing the vessels, public galleries and restaurants.

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### **3D Outcomes:**

Finished vessels:

- Pomegranate
- Lemon
- Avocado
- Cherry
- Watermelon
- Blackcurrant

Accompanying work

- Pomegranate glaze tests

- Pomegranate texture experimentation
  - Pomegranate scale model
  - Pomegranate cold finishes tests
  - Lemon glaze tests
  - Avocado slip/glaze tests
  - Cherry glaze tests
  - Watermelon clay firing samples
  - Colour test tiles
  - Vegetable exploration tests
  - Clay shrinkage tests
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### **Presentation & Display:**

To display my vessels, it is important to me that they are all on the same table, as they have a relationship to each other. Normally fruit is displayed all together in a fruit bowl so keeping them together mirrors this normality but in a quirky exploded version.

If I could I would display them with a complementary coloured background, as colour is a key aspect to the work and adding more would re-enforce this point. I will be painting the table top and also the graphic boards that will accompany the vessel. In the final photography of the work where I will have more control, I will be looking to change the background from the standard white or black.

Each vessel will be displayed with its corresponding fruit on top and well as accompanying graphics on the wall explaining the narrative surrounding the piece. The graphics will be in a similar style to my research publication.

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### **Portfolio / Publication:**

To go alongside my final display I will be creating a publication which documents my research and making processes. I will be self binding the book as I wish to use the coptic binding method and use coloured thread. I have

also published a website containing my work and produced postcards to promote my work during the degree show.

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### **Ethical considerations**

Will you be asking anyone questions (interviews and or questionnaires)? no

Will you ask people to test or physically evaluate your work for you? no

Do you intend to run a workshop that involves a group of people? no

Do you intend photographing, videoing or sound recording anyone? no

Does your work involve children? no

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### **BA(hons) Dissertation Title / MDes Essay Titles:**

What are the reasons for an apparent lack of colour in British culture?

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