



Iowa Research Online
The University of Iowa's Institutional Repository

Honors Theses at the University of Iowa

Fall 2018

What is it Made of?

Yuyang Guo

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.uiowa.edu/honors_theses

 Part of the [Ceramic Arts Commons](#), [Interactive Arts Commons](#), and the [Sculpture Commons](#)

This honors thesis is available at Iowa Research Online: https://ir.uiowa.edu/honors_theses/272

WHAT IS IT MADE OF?

by

Yuyang Guo

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for graduation with Honors in the Art, Studio

Andrew Casto
Thesis Mentor

Fall 2018

All requirements for graduation with Honors in the
Art, Studio have been completed.

Lynne Lanning
Art, Studio Honors Advisor

WHAT IS IT MADE OF?
Yuyang Guo
Fall 2018
Andrew Casto
School of Art and Art History

People often have strong opinions and preferences on colors. We associate colors with specific objects, occasions, and emotions subconsciously, but our relationships with colors are more than the preconceptions. This project is aimed at evoking viewers' individual associations and experiences with colors by providing them with sets of uncommon yet somewhat plausible combination of colors and objects. I will be exploring new forms and building techniques while making the project.

To realize this, I chose three to four items for each of the eight basic colors that I included based on a web quiz and my own interpretations. I used stoneware clay and porcelain as the medium, made 25 different items and 8 trays mainly by hand building, but also incorporating the wheel as a tool. To keep the presentation unified and to minimize the distractions, I challenged myself to slab building 8 round trays in the same size to a scale that is significantly larger than my usual work to display the items. I then hand built detailed and recognizable real-life items which were also different from my familiar working style. During this process, I also explored sculpting techniques to make my objects more convincing. Those practices helped me refine my skill set greatly as a ceramist. For the finish, I used underglaze to achieve the opaque and saturated color as I pictured, and I improvised by using spray paint to adjust and enhance the color. However, I assume it would be more inspiring to explore more with the glaze materials and integrate this distinct character of ceramics with the color theme.

I partially shared this project with peers and I received intriguing feedback from the viewers. Those seemingly odd combinations did evoke some unique and peculiar experiences and associations. The pomegranate shape vase colored in green reminded a viewer of her families' concept of adolescence, and a cake colored in blue evoked another viewer's memory of Christmas. It is delightful to see the work bringing out tiny fragments of audiences' life. This project offered me the chance to realize that although art itself isn't all subjective, the reflections and interpretations from both the makers and the viewers aren't far from the representations of ourselves. It also provided me a new perspective that a piece can be effectively interactive without physical interactions. Those ideas will be incorporated into my future projects.