

## **A Ceramic Journey: A Season for Everything – a Journey Through Time and Space**

Lisa Creskey – notes from Artist Talk on May 25, 2018 at the Gardiner Museum

The slideshow I presented began with images of my studio, and then broadly outlined a selection of my local exhibitions, my international biennale experiences, and some of my significant works from 2010 to the present exhibition at the Gardiner Museum.

For the last decade I have been investigating the multidimensional possibilities offered by the ceramic medium. The purposes of this investigation is to find tools, ways of seeing that can be used to deepen a connection and understanding to history and the function of time.

Visual tools that I have been developing: Scale; Artifact/Architecture; Location Drawing.

**Scale** - My studio is a place where I use scale as a tool to create resonance with the subject and connection with the viewer.

My studio with *Rookery* (2012), a response to the World Heritage Site designation of the Rideau Canal.



**Artifact/ Architecture** – I visually engage with artifacts, architecture, and historical documentary drawing (as from old school textbooks) in the attempt to discover and question my own way of seeing and understating and making art.



### *Alien Landscapes (2012)*

Taiwan Ceramic Biennale 2012 – in the collection of New Taipei City Yingge Ceramics Museum.

*Lady Franklin's Dream – Sycorax*  
(2015)

Taiwan Ceramic Biennale 2016 – in the collection of New Taipei City Yingge Ceramics Museum.



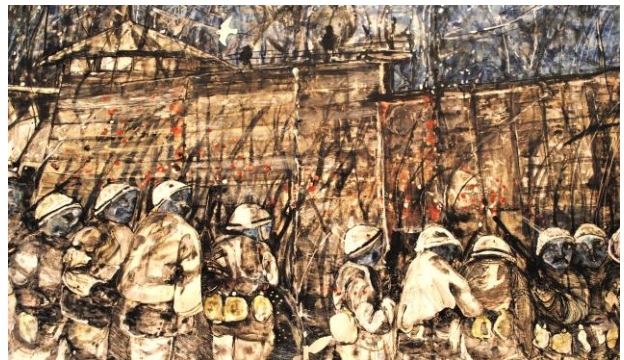
*Reflection Through Time and Ice – HMS Terror* (2016)

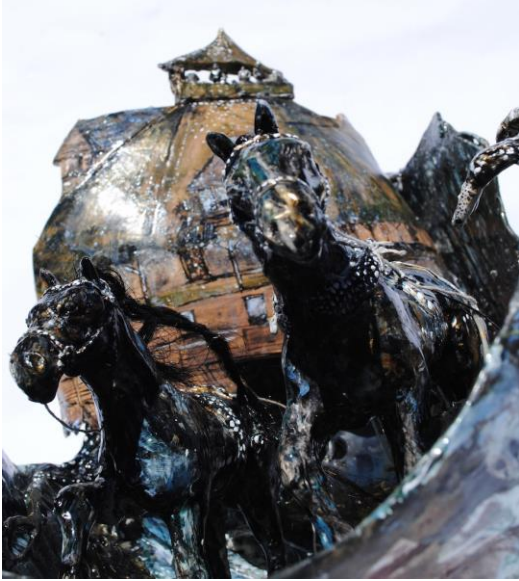
Gyeonggi International Ceramics Biennale 2017, South Korea – in the collection of KOCEF, Korea Ceramic Foundation.

**Location Drawing** – on site sketching at sites depicted in historical drawings and photographs to generate a connective visual reference.

*Kingston, Portsmouth Harbour 1971*  
(2013)

“Pole Star Drift” 2013 exhibition at Karsh Masson Gallery, Ottawa. Kingston Penitentiary and the prison riot of 1971.





*Aylmer Yacht Club by Moonlight*  
(2016)

*Procession and Cormorant Weather*  
(2016)

“When Horses Walked on Water” 2016  
exhibition at Craft Ontario Gallery,  
Toronto.



*Figures* (2016)

“Match” 2016 exhibition at Art-image Gallery,  
Gatineau, Quebec.



## “A Season for Everything – a Journey Through Time and Space”

In the field of science and philosophy, the study of time involves building models for how time might work and then testing the model. This process of observing, building, and questioning, observing again, connects so directly to my process.



### *Block Universe (2018)*

According to the Block Universe Theory of Spacetime, the events of the past and the future are already encoded as in a block of cement. If our Universe is like this block, then everything has already happened - past and future - and time is an illusion. The characters in this story discovered this theory in the apartment building inspired by City Park and other 1950s architecture. But why do we experience only moving forward in time?

## *Expanding Block Universe*

As they move into Fall, the band encountered a structure akin to Habitat 67, referencing the Expanding Block Universe Theory of Time or Growing Block View. Here, the past and the present exist and the future does not exist. The present is objective, like a moving spotlight. By the passage of time, more and more of the world comes into being; therefore the block universe is growing. The Growing Block View is an alternative to both Eternalism (according to which past, present, and future all exist) and Presentism (according to which only the present exists).



## *Einstein's Train*

This piece in the story represents Einstein's most famous thought experiment about lightning strikes as seen from a moving train that shows how two observers can understand space and time in different ways. To an observer watching the train as it passes, the lightning strikes at each end of the train occur simultaneously. But to an observer on the train, from their perspective, the light from the two lightning strikes also has to travel equal distances, and they will measure the speed of light to be the same in either direction. But because the train is moving, the light coming from the lightning in the rear has to travel farther to catch up, so it reaches them a few instants later than the light coming from the front. Since the light pulses arrived at different times, one can only conclude the strikes were not simultaneous—that the one in front actually happened first. In short, Einstein realized, simultaneity is what's relative.

## *Coaxing Spring*

At the end of the year is Spring, represented by the March Hare, coaxed back into a state of being by the potentially optimistic Fish-Head figure. This figure in my work represents the complex relationship of human dependence on the environment and natural resources. The Hare is closely watched by its natural predator the Lynx, symbolic here because of endangerment as a species.



## *Autumn Tree*

According to the Shrinking Tree theory the past, present, and future are all real but differ in some extent. While there is only a single past and present, there are many different futures branching forward in a tree structure from the present. But as time passes just one future is retained, and the other branches fall out of existence.

## *New Moon with Horse and Buckets*

A bucket is half-filled with water and suspended by a rope; the rope is twisted and the effects on the water by the spinning bucket when it is released are observed. In the debate about defining notions of space and time as real objects (absolute) or simply as effects on objects (relational), Isaac Newton devised this rotating Bucket Argument in 1689, to explain that all motions in the Universe are absolute, not relative, as the water in the bucket reacts to the spinning - flat water surface at start of rotation; rotation of bucket and water (concave shape); rotation of water still after bucket stops. As the argument limits itself to the water and bucket only, without reference to the earth's gravity, it is incomplete, according to later theorists. The buckets hung on the Maple trees to collect sap to make maple syrup represent the many arguments used in further theorizing about space and time



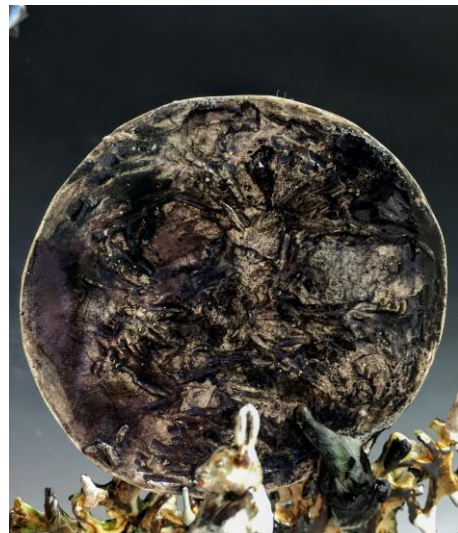
## *Through Time and Ice - Zodiac*

Belongs to an ongoing project that explores the concepts of time and space. *Zodiac* expands on my earlier work, *Reflection Through Time and Ice – HMS Terror* (2016) - now in the Gyeonggi Ceramic Museum, Korea - where ice and melting ice are used as a metaphor for the influence and impact of historical events on the present and the future. The zodiac boat was a tiny detail in the earlier work; now enlarged in this work it skims the delicate, ever-changing surface of the ice, as the present moment is suspended and propelled forward between the past and the future.

## *Figures*

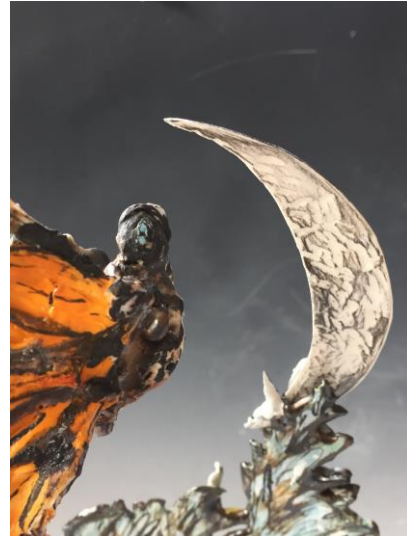
In the Vedas, the earliest texts of Indian philosophy on Time and Space, the universe goes through repeated cycles of creation, destruction, and rebirth. In our visual story, the natural cycle of the seasons along with the lunar cycle represent this philosophy. Through the changing seasons and with the phases of the moon, our friends lead us on this journey.

Each phase of the moon is represented by a figure.

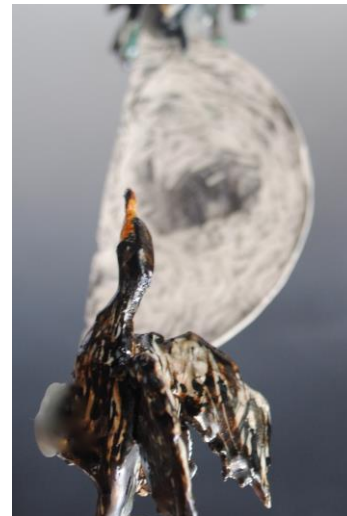


The **New Moon** is represented by the mother **Hare** hiding in her nest, unseen, with her young leverets, small yet full of potential and preparing to emerge into the world.





The **Waxing Crescent Moon** is represented by the **Small Monarch** butterfly and caterpillar. (The caterpillar will arrive in the Vitrine Window later in the spring.)



The **First Quarter Moon** is represented by the **Cormorant** who is making its comeback in our lakes and rivers following its period of being on the endangered list.



The **Waxing Gibbous Moon** is represented by the **Coywolf**, the successful hybrid species that has evolved from Coyote and Wolf interbreeding.



The **Full Moon** is represented by the **Monarch Spirit**, at the summit of its full metamorphosis. Despite its seeming fragility, the Monarch butterfly migrates annually over vast distances between Mexico and Canada, as it has always done, dismissing notions of countries and borders.



The **Waning Gibbous Moon** is represented by the secretive **Lynx**, whose main diet in boreal forests is the Snowshoe Hare. It's status is critically imperiled in some parts of Canada.



The **Last Quarter Moon** is represented by the **Fish-Head**. For many years in my artistic visual iconography, this figure has represented the complex relationship of human dependence on the environment and natural resources.



The **Waning Crescent Moon** is represented by the **Monarch** butterfly that has visually merged with an Autumn stalk or bare tree branch, and a chrysalis. (The chrysalis will arrive in the Vitrine Window later in the spring.)