



# SARAH LOGAN

## Capturing Memories in Clay

By Peggy Temple

Sarah Logan came to the north coast in 2006 as an Artist in Residence in Ceramics at the Mendocino Art Center. She left for awhile, but the beauty of the coast and the connections she had made here during her residency drew her right back. She lives in Fort Bragg, works at Piaci Pub and Pizzeria, and creates unique sculptural ceramic pieces based primarily on natural objects. She was one of the artists recently displaced by the fire at the Bottling Works Building in Fort Bragg; she credits MAC's Ceramics Coordinator Evan Hobart with offering her studio space to finish work for an important exhibit after the fire.

Sarah says she has always been an artist and "I always asked for art supplies for every birthday and holiday, and I

still use a sculpting tool I received from my mom when I was a kid." She grew up in the Black Hills of South Dakota, in the town of Spearfish. Her high school had an excellent art program, including a ceramics program whose instructor encouraged her to experiment not only with ceramics, but other art forms as well. After graduation, she headed to Minnesota State University at Mankato for its well-known ceramics program, and graduated with a BFA degree in Ceramics, with drawing as an emphasis. After a semester in an MA program at Mankato, she applied to and was accepted for a residency in ceramics at the Mendocino Art Center. The entire surroundings there – MAC's campus and gardens, the ocean, the local flora and fauna, all had

a tremendous influence on Sarah's work. She was inspired by the natural environment of the coast and became particularly interested in documenting transitions in life – a dying, wilting calla lily, a curled and brown rhododendron leaf, empty seed pods, a bleached whale bone, a wafting feather – and began creating pieces based on the passage of time. The challenge for her was how to create in clay a memento of her experience of that decay – a sculptural memory of that evanescent moment. Her pieces, from ceramic pods to her "preservation jars," address the issue of how we



Left: Object Study 1, wood fired stoneware, plinth oxidation porcelain, 4" x 6" x 6".  
 Right: Wall Cube, wood fired stoneware cube, oxidation fired porcelain, 4" x 4" x 4".



Left: Structure Series, oxidation fired stoneware and porcelain, 5" x 5" x 4". Middle: Beans (detail), wood fired porcelain, sizes vary. Right: Obsession Jar Series: Bezoars, Pods, Beans, wood fired stoneware and porcelain, vintage glass canning jars, each jar 10" x 5" x 5".

document the processes we observe in nature.

One of Sarah's many captivating projects was a series of small sculptural houses she created after a short trip back to South Dakota during which her grandmother took her on a road trip through the landscape of her life. "Grams drove us around to see all of the places that had been important in our grandparents' lives together. We saw where they were born, the slough they swam in as children, the church where they were married, and the homesteads of long-gone friends, neighbors and family, all within a 20-mile radius of where Grams still lives today. Much of the physical evidence of the people who thrived in these places is disappearing. A few decaying buildings and broken-down windbreaks are all that remain. These landscapes made me consider the objects we choose to surround ourselves with, and the memories associated with them. The house sculptures are a type of family portrait – physical markers of the memories we build our homes with, and the articles we leave behind when we go."

All of Sarah's ceramic pieces are essentially vessels – a seedpod, a house, a bowl, and as she begins a new work, she is asking herself, "What does this vessel contain? Where was this vessel connected? Where did it come from?" Then she will take lines and textures from multiple sources and put them together creating a piece that invokes comfort and restfulness. She prefers working from the idea of discarded or dying things, expanding into universal concepts. Visual objects are to her "metaphors for experiences and reminiscences dulled by the

passage of time. By creating mementos and souvenirs to document my experiences, I seek to give form to my memories, distilling them to their essence and preserving them against decay."

Sarah works in porcelain, and with a red, mid-fire clay body. While at MAC she discovered the porcelain clay body particularly well suited to her work; she describes this clay as "luscious and buttery!"

Sarah is a member of Northcoast Artists Gallery in Fort Bragg. She exhibits at some trade shows and fairs, including The American Craft Council Show and the ACGA Clay and Glass Festival in Palo Alto (Association of Ceramic and Glass Artists). She teaches ceramics at the Mendocino Art Center and has been a visiting lecturer in ceramics at Stanford. Her work can be seen on her website at [sarahloganceramics.com](http://sarahloganceramics.com) and on Northcoast Artists website, [northcoastartists.org](http://northcoastartists.org). She will have an exhibit in Mendocino Art Center's Gallery Ten, in April 2019.



Left: Sculptural Tea, wood fired stoneware, 5" x 5" x 4". Right: Seed Cone Vessel, wood fired porcelain, 3.5" x 3.5".