

# STATE OF CERAMICS *.edu edition*

## Body Language: Human Trace and Digital Touch

a discussion guide by Andres Payan Estrada

November 13, 2020

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### Discussion topic / Intro:

As humans we have a deeply engrained impulse to touch, to connect, to leave an imprint or trace either intentional or by consequence. We often attempt to use touch as way to discern our realities, the relation of another or other—outside of our own bodies and ourselves.

We often try to use touch as a way to understand the incomprehensible; how many times have we stretched out our hand towards the night sky, have run our hand through the ocean water, or held our arm up towards nothingness, towards a sublime that is bigger than ourselves—all in an attempt to connect and understand. We reach out to touch or hold materials and objects around us as a way of understanding them, as a way to ground our association to them through physical relation. We use touch as a way to communicate affection to others and use physical exchanges to make ourselves present and form connections between our bodies. Yet, touch can also be subjective, individual to each body and to the histories, limitations, and impulses.

“Pinch me”

What was our initial impulse to form clay? To create something out of a material that we eventually understood as something outside of ourselves and something malleable that we could transform through a physical exchange between body and material. How does this nascent impulse influence the way we use touch to communicate today? How does touch and body language relate to our current reality where touch can be a series of taps on a glass screen that are translated into digital communication, or when touch is associated with the propagation of illness. How does our evolution into the digital realm affect, impact, or relate to contemporary material and object politics? Have our contemporary conditions changed the way we create, make, and associate with our physical realities?

Where is clay in this reality— the timeless material that extends far beyond our corporal existence that has engrained itself into all moments of human life and evolution? Its malleability has extended beyond its material capabilities into a much more abstract and complex relation to us and our bodies. How has clay archived our histories, individualities, social structures, and how are we using it to propel ourselves and our communities into the future?

## Readings

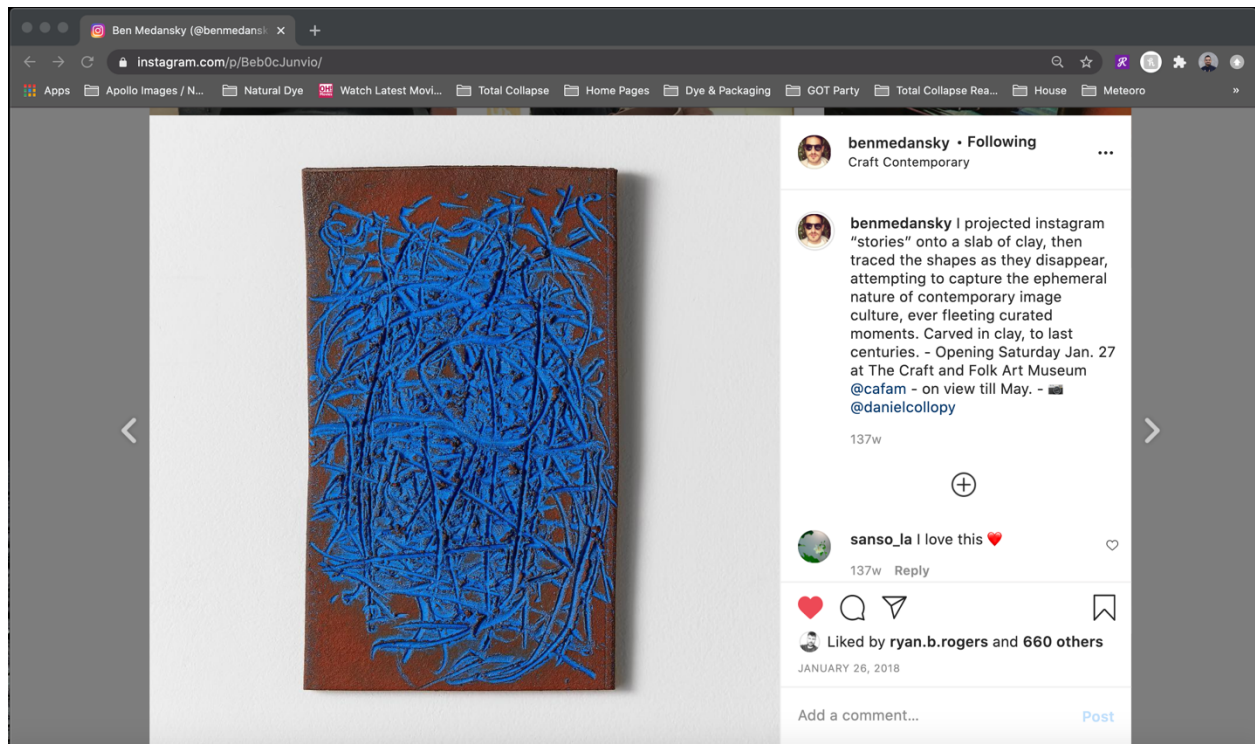
### Required:

- Andres Payan Estrada, "#BodyLanguage." Independent curatorial response essay for *The Body, The Object, The Other*, Craft Contemporary, Los Angeles CA., (Forthcoming October 2020)

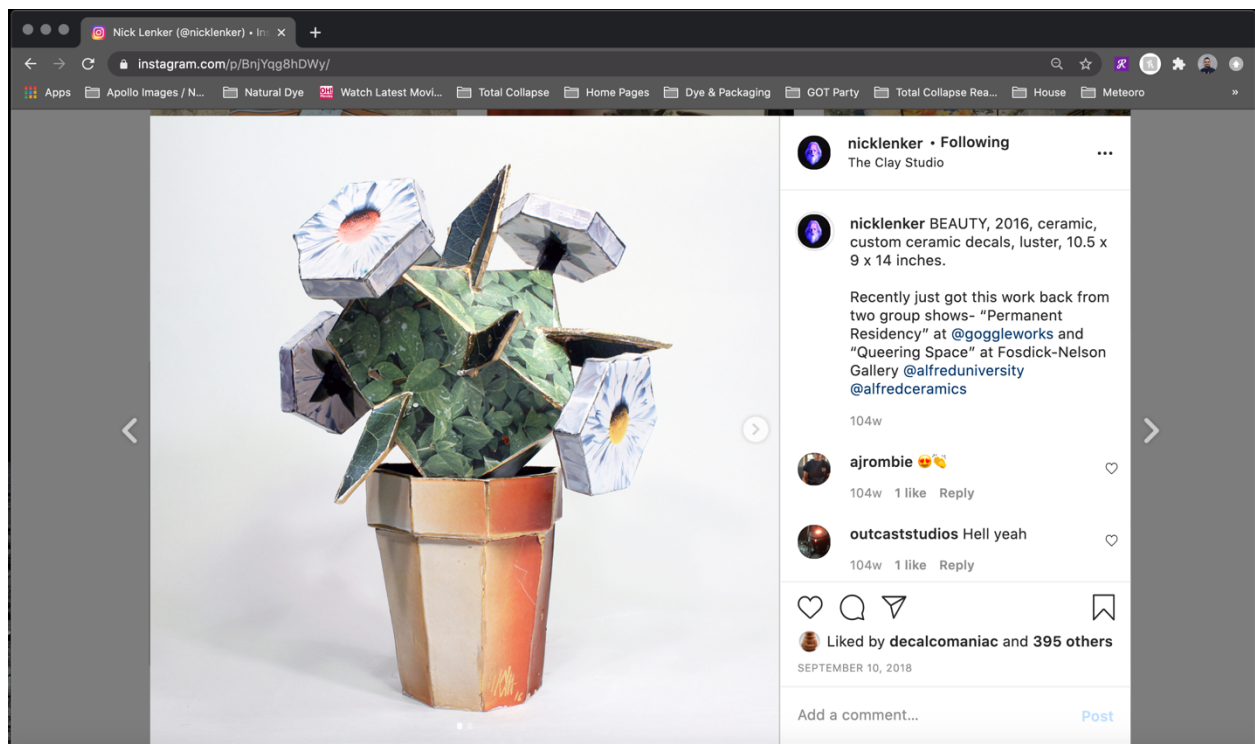
### Suggested:

- Andres Payan Estrada, "#Ceramics." Curatorial essay for *Total Collapse: Clay in the Contemporary Past*, ASU Art Museum, Tempe, AZ. and Rubin Center, El Paso, TX., 2019
- Monika Wagner, "Material." *Materiality: Documents of Contemporary Art*, 2001
- Peter Schwenger, "Introduction: The Melancholy Object of Art", *The Tears of Things*, 2006
- Andrew Livingstone, "Extending Vocabularies: Distorting the Ceramic Familiar", *The Ceramics Reader*, 2017

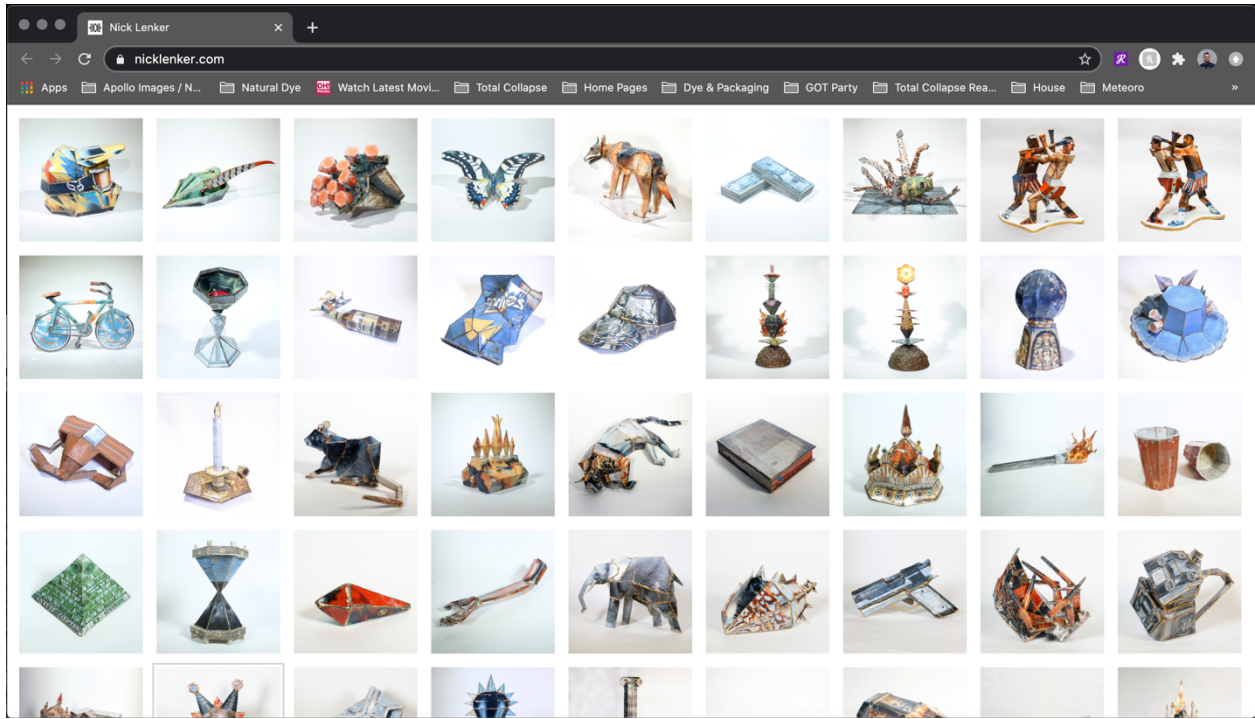
# Images



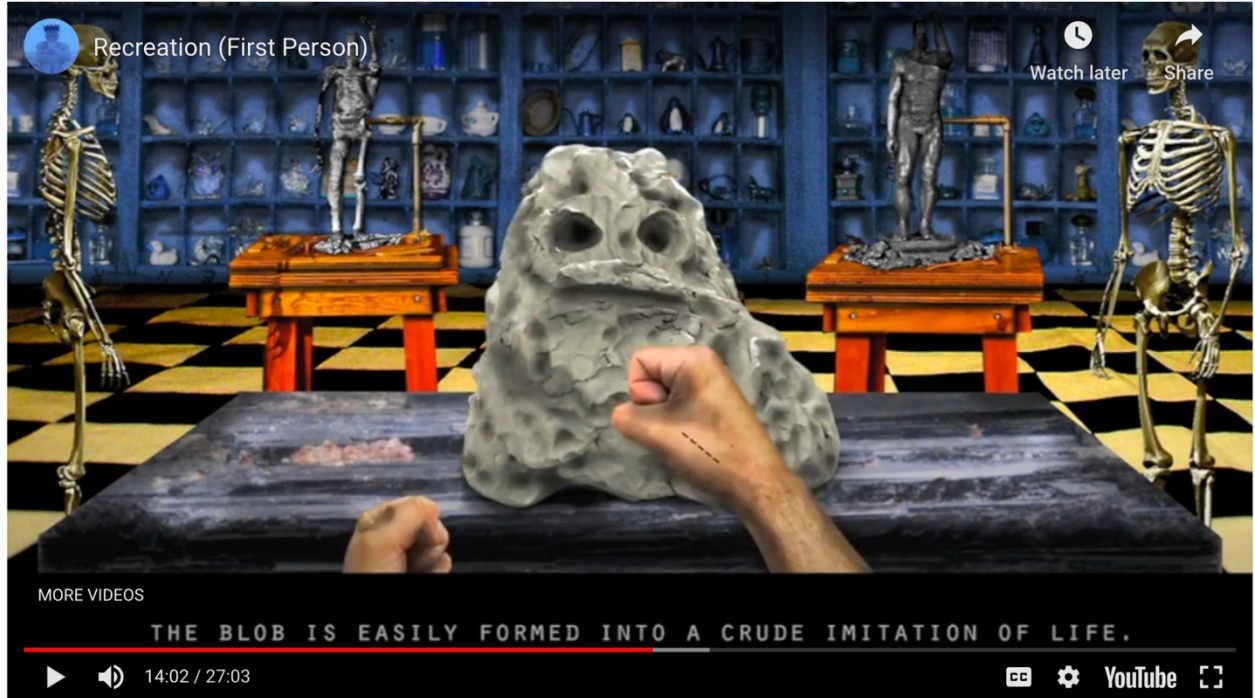
Ben Medansky / Instagram screenshot / Stories, 2017



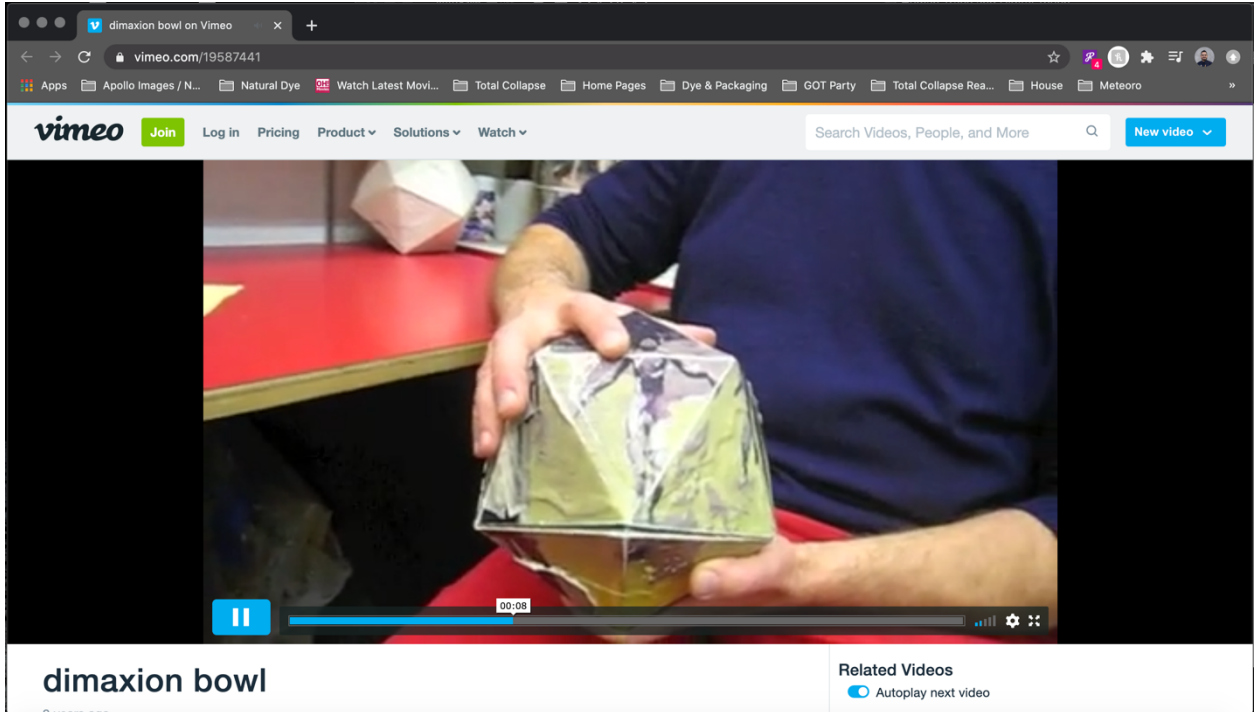
Nick Lenker / Instagram screenshot / BEAUTY, 2016



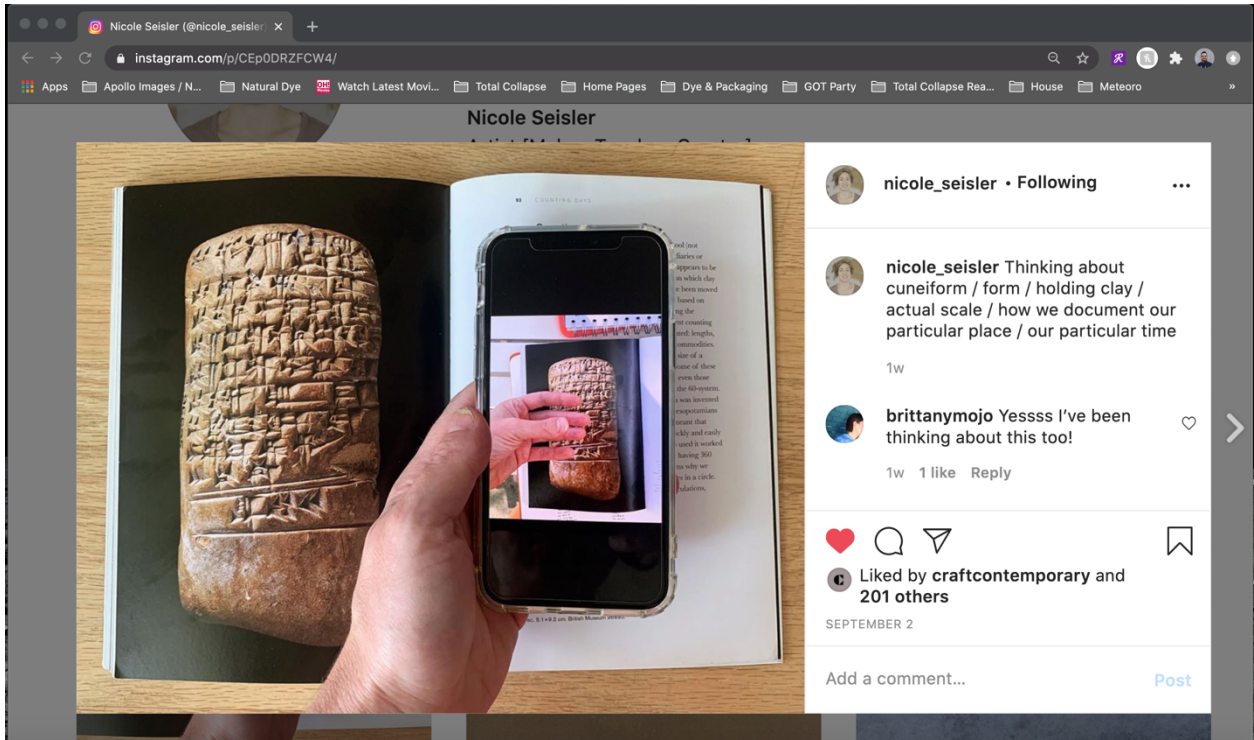
Nick Lenker / Website screenshot / IRL Objects



Nick Lenker / Youtube screenshot / Recreation (First Person), 2017



Paul Mathieu / Vimeo Screenshot / Dimaxion Bowl, 2011



Nicole Seisler / Instagram screenshot, 2020

Filters

pottery

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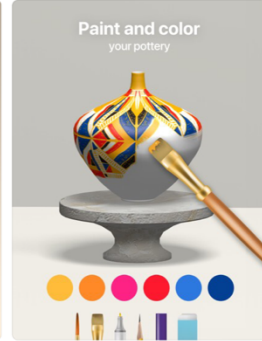
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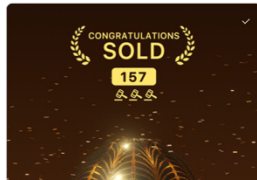
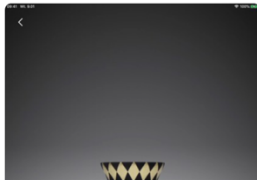
In-App Purchases



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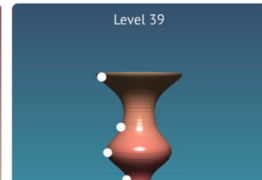
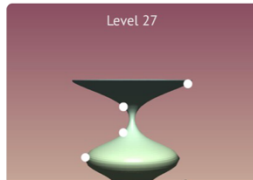
In-App Purchases



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