

OMPHALOS

Greek for 'navel', omphalos is also the term for ancient stones that marked mythological centers of the world. They were once understood to be the seat of Hestia, who was considered as a procreative and generative principle in both the natural and human worlds. In Linda Swanson's installation, the omphalos is a metaphor for clay's ability to harnesses the generative capacity of earth; the ceramic vessel becomes a center of the social world. Begun as a digital dot, the technological, cultural and natural merge in their forms as they gradually fill, overflow and become encrusted with brine.

Linda Swanson makes work that is grounded in the metamorphic nature of ceramic materials and processes. Her raw and kiln fired works have been exhibited around the United States, Canada and Europe with recent exhibitions at the Musée National de Sèvres in Paris, Galateea Contemporary Art in Bucharest, Art Paris with Galerie Maria Lund, the DePaul Museum in Chicago and the Milwaukee Art Museum. Swanson was awarded the Raphael Prize in Ceramics by the Society for Contemporary Craft in 2014 and an Emerging Artist Award in 2013 from NCECA. Her work has been supported with grants from the FRQSC, Canada Council, NYFA, the Windgate Charitable Foundation and the Constance Saltonstall Foundation. Swanson studied ceramics at the Tekisui Workshop in Ashiya, Japan, and holds a BA in Art History from UC Santa Barbara, a BFA in Ceramics from Cal State Long Beach, and an MFA from Alfred University. She currently lives in Montreal and is an Assistant Professor of Ceramics at Concordia University.