

## Summer Scholar Project Proposal

**Name:**

XXXX

**Proposed Mentor:**

XXXX

**Proposed Project:**

Real or Imagined: A Study of Landscapes Through Functional and Non-Functional Ceramics

**Completed Relevant Coursework:**

Ceramics – Spring 2006

Mosaics – Fall 2006

Intro to Studio Art – Spring 2005

Intro to Painting – Fall 2005

Painting 2 – Fall 2006

**Background:**

Ceramics is a field of art that, because of its three-dimensionality, is a completely distinct form of artistic expression from the arts with which I am familiar. This difference is especially apparent for many two-dimensional artists, like myself, because it involves many conceptual and compositional differences. While the processes of painting, drawing, and photography focus primarily on relationships of shading and color, which in turn lead to relationships of shape and volume, ceramics inherently focuses first on three-dimensional relations of shape, scale, and volume, with the importance of color following. The two-dimensional arts are the translation of our three-dimensional world into a flat image, while ceramics is the creation of a physical three-dimensional volume.

**Project:**

As an art major, I have expressed myself predominantly through two-dimensional art, with a focus in painting. Ceramics is a relatively new medium for me, and although I had an introductory class in ceramics last year, I would like to spend more time learning about the different techniques that can be used so I can develop my own style in another medium. Aside from getting more experience and knowledge of different types of clay – different colors, and with or without grog (ground up particles of pre-fired ceramic clay) – and the processes of firing and glazing, I want to experiment with different ways of expressing myself through functional and non-functional ceramics.

For this project I plan to gain a proficiency in ceramic techniques including:

- Slab work
- Wheel thrown work
- Glazing and using glaze as a method of depicting images
- Firing of kilns

- Working with different clay bodies to produce different effects in ceramics and pottery
- Experimenting with glazes to color clay before working with it in slabs or throwing it on the potter's wheel

I plan to learn more in these areas by completing a project which focuses partly on ceramic slab work and partly on thrown pottery. Because my experience with two-dimensional art is primarily representational, I want to use ceramics as a way to branch out into abstraction and non-functional/decorative art, while at the same time still creating representational art. I plan to use pottery as a way to make functional art where I can also mix my experience with two-dimensional, representational art. This will provide a more concrete visual experience for the viewer than abstraction. Therefore I would use slab work and thrown work to bring together functional and non-functional art, abstraction and pure representation.

I hope to achieve this by joining these opposites with a common theme: the question of reality versus imagination. For this project I will create pairs of works including an abstract piece of slab work inspired by a landscape, and a corresponding piece of pottery which will be used as a sort of canvas for a realistic depiction (through glazing) of the landscape that inspired the abstract piece. Each set of artworks will present the viewer with a landscape which brings into question the difference between imagination and reality. Some of the pairs of artworks will use real landscapes and places as inspiration, while others will be inspired by imagined places. However, since these pieces will be questioning reality and imagination, the landscapes that seem to be real will not always be inspired by actual places, and the ones that seem unreal may in fact be inspired by actual places. By presenting pieces that represent landscapes which could be real or imagined, but which would not necessarily fit into the expected category, I will challenge the viewer to question the difference between fiction and reality in visual terms while also gaining knowledge and experience in the arts of ceramics and pottery.