

## Cuong Ta Ceramics

When I got on the pottery wheel for the first time in the spring of 1998, I was hooked. It was a learning experience like I had never known; my hands felt like they were rediscovering something they had always known how to do. The first year working with clay proved to be quite a spiritual process.

I have done a tremendous amount of production since 2000, all while still working as a full time math teacher and department chair in Bay Area independent schools. In 2008, I started a series of wall pieces I called "buttons". This body of work allowed me to explore my design vocabulary, which then fed my production work. Soon, I went on to create large scale installations with these buttons, from restrained grids to free flowing arrangements where the various sizes and designs are allowed to interact and play. In 2010, the City of Emeryville purchased a large installation of the buttons for their permanent collection, which now hangs at entry to Emeryville City Hall. More recently, I have created installations for Carmel.

My current work uses more color, but continues to play with strong graphic imagery. I continue to be inspired by the play and balance between these modular pieces. I see the move from production work to the one-of-a-kind installations as an exciting development in my work, though I continue to find joy in all the different ways of working with the ceramic medium. For the past fifteen years, my work has almost exclusively been built from slabs. Lately, I have been drawn back to the discipline of wheel thrown forms, creating bespoke functional ware for Michelin star restaurants in the Bay Area. I am eager to see what develops as I push the design aesthetic in new ways. Follow me on Instagram @cuongta8 to see.