

## *BACK TO THE PROCESS*

I was born into a plugged-in world, raised entirely in the shadow of rapid technological change. While older generations can point to a “before,” I cannot. I grew up with technology as my playground, teacher, entertainment, and escape, offering speed, connection, and efficiency. In doing so, it also quietly erodes purpose, identity, motor, and sensory intelligence. In contrast, my rural, craft-centred upbringing taught me many skills, and that handmade objects bear the marks of time and human touch, holding a permanence and meaning absent from automated, mass-produced disposability.

As technology progresses, many traditional skills and objects have become outdated, overshadowed by a culture of planned obsolescence and constant innovation. The *Nightingale I–V* series draws directly from my lived experience to express the unease I have with a world that moves too quickly to allow for slowness, touch, and the continued use of our hands. I use this foundation to build a conversation between the past, present, and the viable future. What began as a celebration of invention becomes a quiet warning about the futures we are building, and whether they will serve or consume us.

My work calls for a more considered approach to the tools and technologies we use day to day, positioning them to enhance skills already learned rather than replace the learning process itself. The piece *Self Portrait* furthers this idea by acknowledging that I do not want to reject technology, it is too much a part of me but instead examine it through a critical lens. This piece presents many automated and manual tools used, as well as conceptual references and influences that shaped my work.

After adopting this critical lens, I realized the contrast between our hands and technology lies in the process. *Manual Override* frames the hand as a fail-safe, the last thing we can rely on when systems disconnect us from meaning, while emphasizing the importance of process, by showing the steps to creating my sculptures.

I use cyanotype to capture the index of touch directly onto earthenware surfaces, merging one of the earliest photographic processes with a material known for its durability and permanence. Cyanotype, now largely obsolete due to modern imaging technologies, becomes a conceptual counterpoint to contemporary modes of image-making when applied to clay, a medium capable of outlasting its maker. My work consists primarily of hollowed-out sculptures which only go through one low temperature firing, reducing technology and energy use, while embracing the inherent imperfections of hand-built ceramics, allowing each piece to record the marks of my touch and immortalize the physical process of making.

In our rush to embrace convenience and speed, what have we sacrificed? What meaning can we derive from the things we make when those things no longer depend on our hands? These questions compel us to reflect on what it means to remain meaningfully human in an increasingly automated world. As machines assume tasks once bound to human experience, we are left to wonder whether the human hand stands on the brink of obsolescence.