A large, intricate ceramic floral arrangement in shades of pink, purple, and white, displayed on a wooden trellis structure. The flowers are made of ceramic and have a textured, slightly weathered appearance. The arrangement is dense and fills most of the frame.

**2020**  
**SCRIPPS**  
**COLLEGE**  
**76<sup>TH</sup>**  
**CERAMIC**  
**ANNUAL**

Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery  
Scripps College

## Sentiment and Skepticism: Our Culture of Contradictions

Joanne Hayakawa

As artists who engage with the world, we have much to ponder. Our today is complex, and our current context is muddled, contradictory, frayed and woven with uneven tensions. Our human condition is uncertain, and our faith in good conclusions is rare, though we may continue to hope for them. How do we manage these conflicting dualities? How do we understand the culture of duality and contradicting contexts in our world?

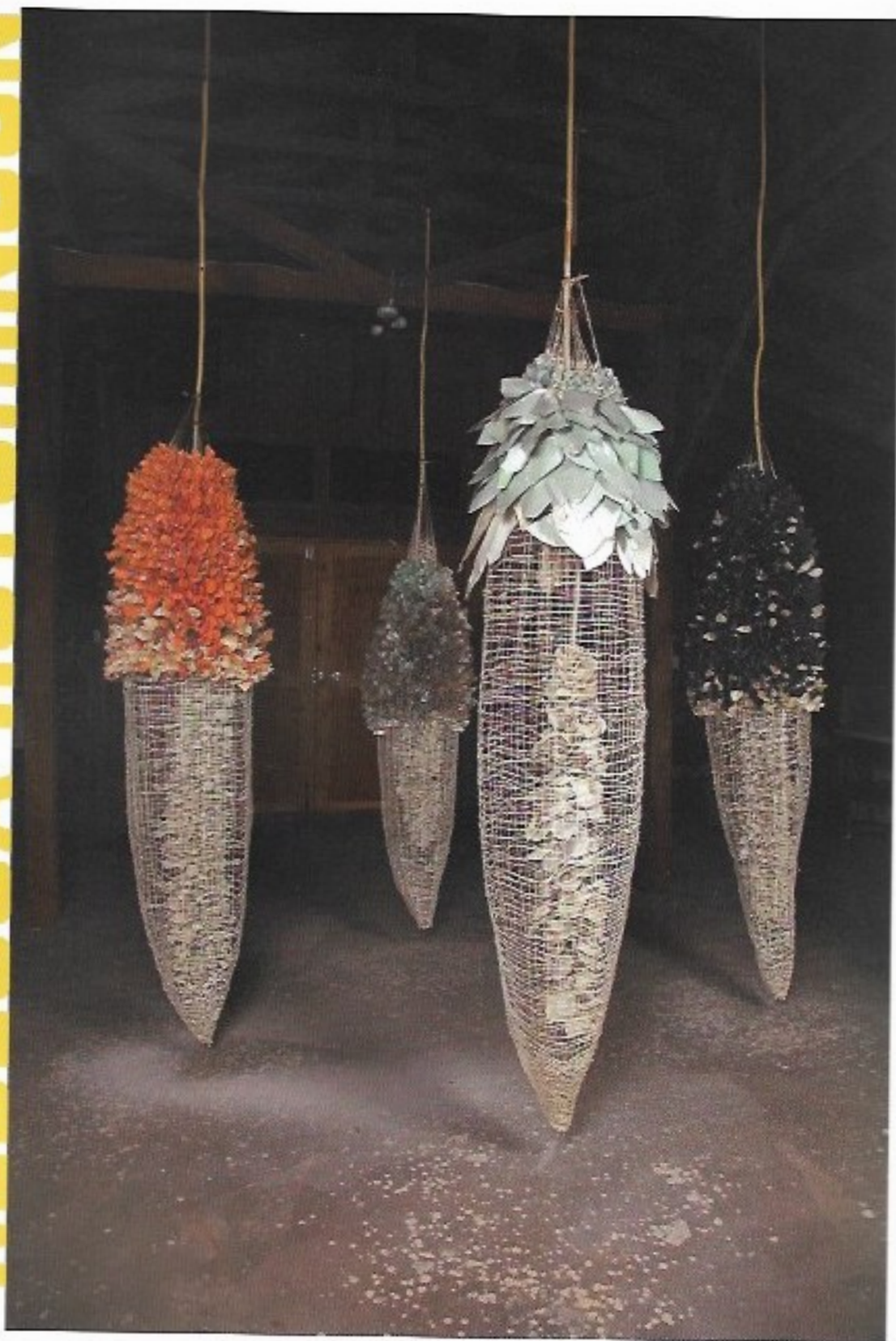
Oftentimes, we move in the space between the different issues to examine them. It is not difficult to find this space when these issues are polar opposites, which is so often the case. Yet, at times they are not, and then one is pulled back and forth between two issues in order to discover common ground. Still, where there is duality, there is tension, and tension always provokes interest. Artists use this duality and tension to present contexts that evoke new conclusions. The artists I have chosen employ themes that pit one thing against another, and the process they choose is affected by the context or environment they use.

In focusing on duality, I would like to direct our attention to the external environment and what we see. In general, I think we are alienated from our own world. We don't know much about where our food comes from and what processes it goes through in order to arrive on our table. We consider the space outside as non-organic and hardly notice changes man, industry or nature make to it. Artists in this exhibition call attention to the disparities between what we assume and the consequences to our natural environment that we often dismiss or barely notice. By doing so, these artists raise valuable questions.

In addition, I have invited artists who investigate both their internal worlds and their external environments: highly individual dualities. Some of the conflicts the artists consider concern the cultural environments in which they were raised. Some artists may allude to a cultural milieu that was once prevalent, but has evolved and changed through time. Again, by looking at their cultural settings, these artists raise questions and challenge assumptions.

This exhibition examines conflicts, intersections and parallel worlds. Themes include science and industry, animal and human associations, recycling and beginnings, and social/cultural values past and present. Even the possible future as seen from a variety of vantage points is considered.

My goal has been to select artists who engage their audience, who can evoke empathy through the dualities and the contexts, both external and internal, in which their pieces are presented. Through humor, reverence for history, fantasy, surrealism and wit, the work examines intention and outcomes. There may be some overlap between external and internal worlds as well. Viewing these works, we will surely be left with questions. By experiencing the work and the questions it raises, we as artists and audience, may find more resolve, greater understanding, some reconciliation of dualities and possibly inspiration—or simply the next step.



*Double Bloom, 2019*

Fired and unfired porcelain paper clay, handmade paper, organic material

Dimensions vary

Photo credit: Jeff Van Tine



*Distending Pink, 2019*  
Porcelain, handmade paper, organic materia  
59 x 72 x 11 inches  
Photo credit: Jeff Van Tine