Echoes Within- Artist Statement

For over a century, clay and ceramic production have maintained a steady presence in my family history. The ongoing material engagement has carried profound, tacit knowledge from one generation to the next. Growing up, my parents' ceramic practice shaped the world around me. Immersed in the tactile and temporal rhythms of clay—as process, narrative and lived experience—my own relationship to the material gradually unfolded.

I recall the flames from the large kilns in the garden reflected in the night sky—the fire holding information legible only to those initiated. The shared anticipation before a cooling kiln was opened- not knowing if it would bring grace or dull the days to come- such early experiences formed a foundational sensitivity to process and matter. The materiality of clay became familiar before it became conscious.

And yet, perhaps inevitably, I distanced myself from this imposed material. Clay seemed to make constant demands. It required full attention, and offered nothing without it.
As my artistic practise evolved, I turned to painting. Its materiality allowed for precision, a kind of minimalism that left no visible trace of the hand. I sanded the painted canvas to a matte dryness, withholding every trace of my hand- a gesture refusing the fragility of touch. Yet, the seemingly inert surface was shaped by tension and intensity- layers built, erased and muted to stillness. Recalling the character of porcelain, it was resilient not in spite of its fragility, but becuse of it.
Unconciously, I continued to gravitate my painting toward qualities that echoed clay. Even as I steered away from it, the estranged yet formative inheritance had fostered a way of thinking through material.

Over time, I became curious about the origins of my insistence on painting these white, matte and dry surfaces. The expression sprung less out of concious choise, and more from a felt resonance, unspoken yet persistent.
In 2023, a grant from Konstnärsnämnden provided the space to explore the intersection of painting and clay. This investigation extended beyond the material itself—it called for a deeper engagement with history. As part of the process, I reached out to my parents.
With clay as mediator—softly bridging years of silence between my father and me—a renewed conversation began to unfold. My great-grandfather's handwritten notes from the rise of Sweden's first ceramic factory in the early 20th century, served as material for a dialogue across time. In reenacting his glaze recipes, my father and I engaged in a material inquiry.
The process gave me a deeper understanding of glaze chemistry and material properties—not only as science, but as a lived archive, where knowledge is passed through gesture and touch.

By allowing personal history and material to converge, my practise found resonance within an inherited knowledge I had long kept at a distance. This work marks a turning.

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Clay registers touch with unforgiving clarity, preserving each mark of the hand, not only on the surface but in its structure. Once fired, these impressions become permanent. In this sense, clay becomes more than medium; it is memory made material.
My recent work engage clay as a temporal and sensorial register, one that mediates questions of how gesture, time, and affect are preserved and reverberate within material form.

While I may seek control, the material insists on its own agency. Working with porcelain means negotiating fragility and resistance, navigating the tension between precision and

unpredictability. This dynamic becomes a dialogue—in which the material is not passive but responsive. It holds the trace of contact, the intimacy of its making.

Each of these work resonates in relation to another, enacting a slow oscillation of counter-forms. What one articulates, another withholds; what one reveals, the other denies. Between them, a chiasmic space unfolds—a reversal where visibility turns back upon itself. Perception is drawn not toward resolution, but relation; not to what is seen, but to how seeing itself is structured.
They act as sites of encounter, where image, materiality, and spatial perception converge. Rather than treating the painterly as a surface application, this inquiry considers how such qualities are materially embedded and perceptually enacted.

The ceramic process has altered how I approach painting on canvas- not only in gesture but in material itself. Once held apart, the practices have begun to consciously fold into one another —bringing with them a material alignment of support and substance. For some of my recent paintings, I have made paint from kaolin. The same fine, white mineral that forms the basis of porcelain. In other works, I´ve painted with red clay. As the boundary between materials softens, one medium begins to act through the other.

These paintings are made on sheer linen—a material that, like clay, carries a memory of origin. Woven so lightly it nears transparency, the linen becomes less a barrier than a membrane. It receives both pigment and light, suspending the painted layer between surface and space. The brushstrokes are no longer sanded down to erase touch. Instead, traces remain visible-retaining marks of presence, pressure and movement.

Yet still, these paintings speak through restraint. Here, light is not painted onto the surface, but revealed through the careful bleaching of the canvas. In this act of withdrawal, absence folds into presence. The surface becomes a threshold—the faint edge between what remains and what has receded. Light drift across surfaces, binds form and field, dissolving the edges between image and object. The visible hovers just above the tactile.
The painterly is lived through haptic perception—an attuned engagement with repetition, orientation, and the subtle forces that shape structure and touch.

It is in this space—between surface and depth, between what was and what is still forming that meaning emerges immanently. As a lingering resonance within, it is gradually perceived.

Disa Rytt