

Texture

(70)

The initial steps in the archaeological scientific analysis of clays and firing methods involve observing and comparing samples with known materials. Using a digital microscope, I examined textures closely, employing these samples to recreate surfaces that reflect the raw, organic qualities of historical artifacts.



(71)



Photo:

Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Collected items from the foreshore, observed under a digital microscope to examine the texture of artifacts weathered by the tide].

(72)

The texture of each piece mirrors the natural and weathered qualities of the Thames foreshore, achieved through hand-carving and impressing techniques. Inspired by fragments uncovered through mud-larking, the pieces convey a tactile narrative of the river's landscape and the history embedded in its layers. Each vessel features a contrast between the smooth, glazed interior and a raw, irregular exterior, enhancing the textural experience and invoking a sense of place through touch.

(73)



51° 28' 49.0" N 00° 10' 17.5" W

III. Three Experiments



51° 30' 30.3" N 00° 05' 50.0" W

Texture



174



51° 30' 35.5"N 00° 05' 37.2"W

Three Experiments



51° 30' 02.2"N 00° 03' 48.0"W

Texture



(76)



(77)



51° 30' 26.4" N 00° 02' 31.4" W

III. Three Experiments



51° 30' 24.9" N 00° 02' 08.8" W

Texture



(78)



(79)

Photo:
Tseng, S.-N. (2024) [Geographical photos of the Thames foreshore]



51° 29' 48.9" N 00° 01' 57.8" W

III. Three Experiments



51° 29' 34.5" N 00° 01' 56.3" W

Texture



Oyster



Porcelain fragments



Pottery fragments



Sand

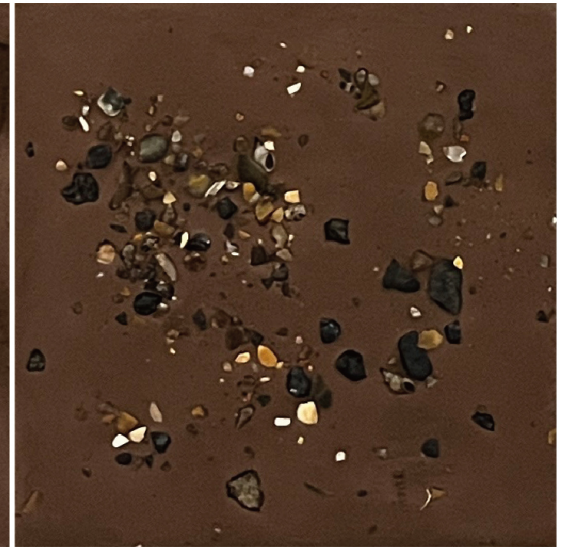
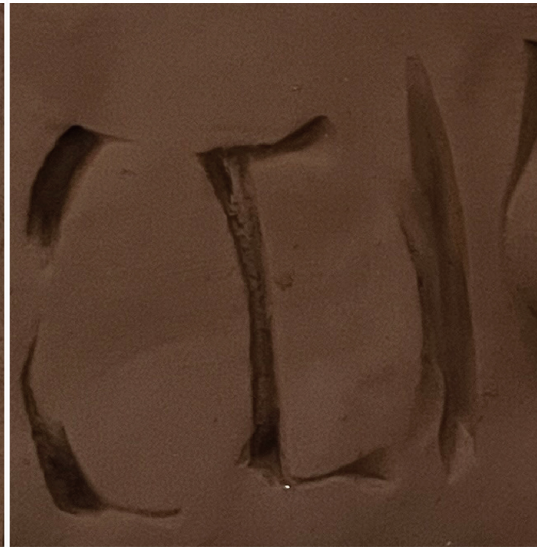
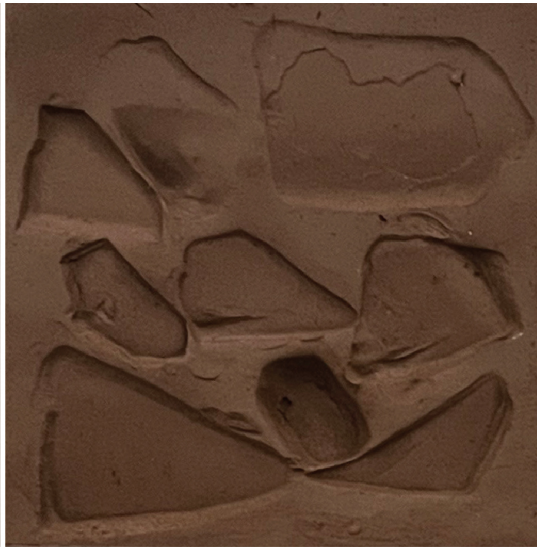


Photo:
Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Photos of collected items and clay samples].

Impressing the surfaces or sections of items collected from the Thames foreshore and other research locations has become an integral part of my study. These samples serve as valuable references, offering insights into material characteristics and the historical contexts of the artifacts.



Fossil from Folkestone Beach



Leaves from Highgate Wood Park



Tabacco pipe



Earthen ware

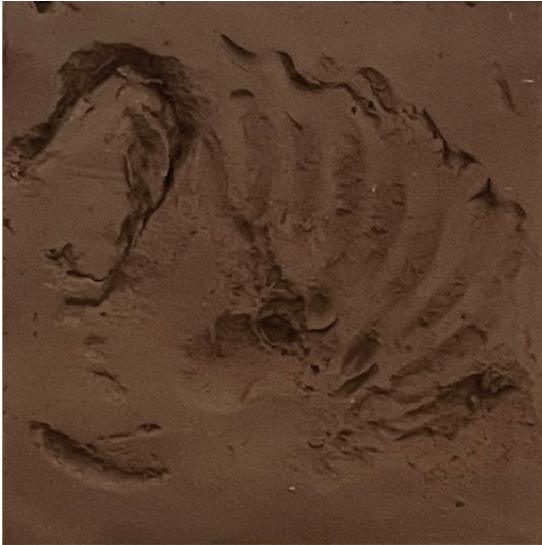
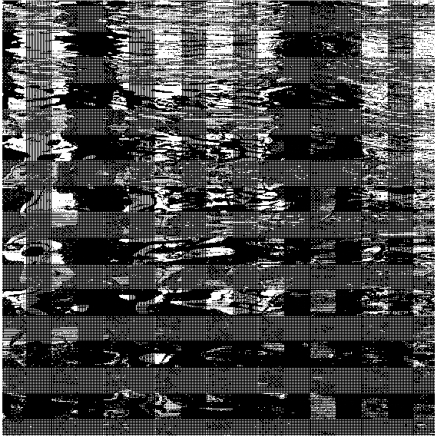
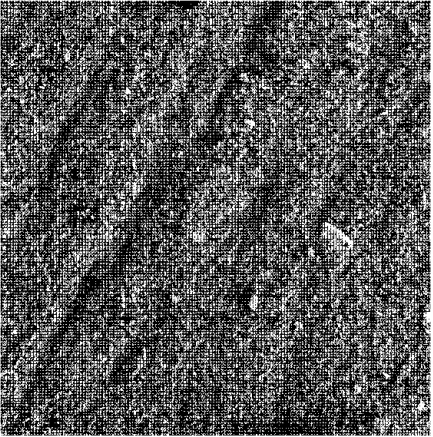


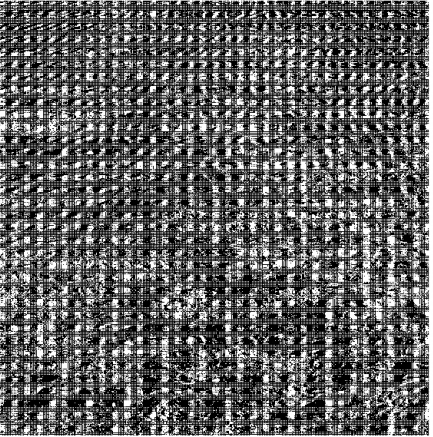
Photo:
Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Photos of collected items and clay samples].



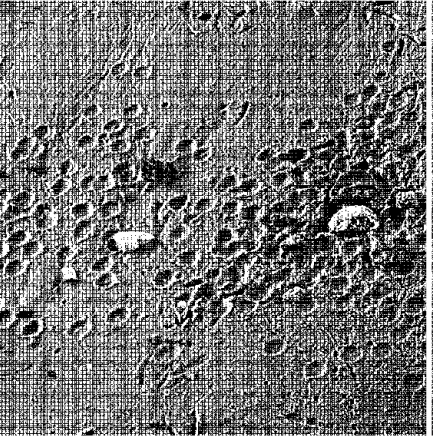
Water ripple of Thame



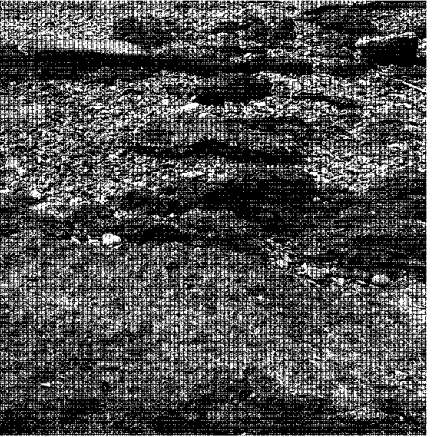
The trace of tides



The trace of tides



Water drip trace



Moss and mud on rocks

Photo:
Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Detailed surface photos of the foreshore were transformed into patterns].



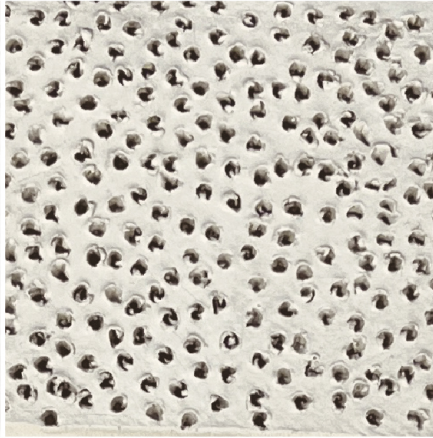
Water ripple of Thame



The trace of tides



The trace of tides



Water drip trace



Moss and mud on rocks



Photo:

Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Incising and impressing patterns onto clay sheets and clay lumps, shaped to imitate rocks, to test the material's plasticity and transform the geographical textures of the foreshore].

**Photo:**

Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Photo of the grinding process using a mortar and pestle to pulverize materials into fine dust, which is then mixed with earthstone clay. The image shows London yellow brick and Roman red pottery being processed in sequence].

Materials for this project are sustainably sourced, primarily from the Thames foreshore, and combined with Scarva Earthstone Professional PF560 White clay, selected for its strength and fine texture. This approach reflects a commitment to reducing industrial dependency by utilizing locally sourced and reclaimed materials, integrating environmental consciousness into the artistic process. Reclaimed materials gathered from the river are ground into dust and added to the clay, embedding historical fragments within each vessel. These choices resonate with themes of resource conservation, highlighting the interconnectedness of human activity, materiality, and environmental impact.

III. Three Experiments

**Photo:**

Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Photo of the grinding process using a mortar and pestle to pulverize materials into fine dust, which is then mixed with earthstone clay. The image shows blue and white porcelain and tobacco pipe being processed in sequence].



Scarva Earthstone Professional PF560 White Clay



Earthstone White Clay + London Yellow Brick



Earthstone White Clay + Roman Pottery



Earthstone White Clay + Tobacco Pipe

Photo:
Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Photos of recycled material samples].

I incorporated the material powder into Scarva Earthstone Professional PF560 White clay, with the recycled powder making up approximately 4.5% of the mixture. This experiment aimed to test the plasticity and observe any color changes when blending the recycled material with common clay after bisque firing.

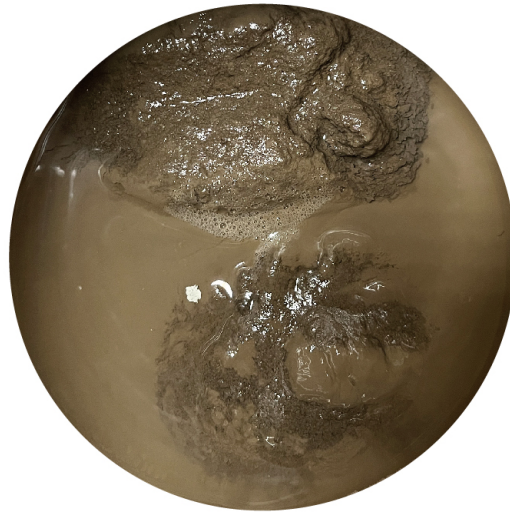
III. Three Experiments



The raw material sourced from Wimbledon



Grind the rock into fine dust



Mix to a smooth liquid



Dry on plaster bat

Photo:
Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Photos of recycled material samples and their making process].

Acquiring local clay is a concept I find particularly compelling for establishing an interactive connection with London's geological features, its pottery and brick industries, and the city's development. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to collect local clay from Wimbledon during an event organized by Golden Earth Studio. I then explored two different processing methods—dry and wet—to prepare the material for use as pottery clay and engobe in this project.



newspaper, waster paper, and envelope



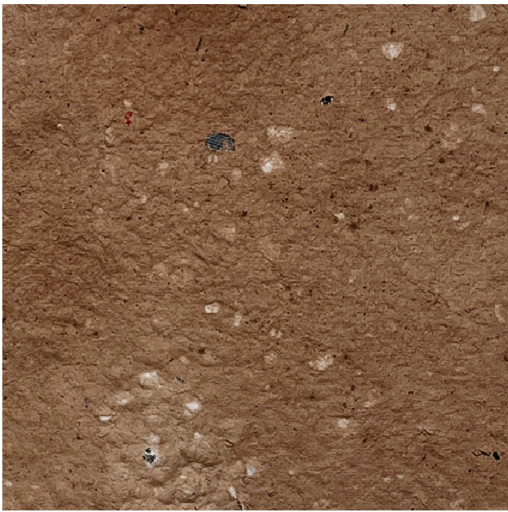
waster paper



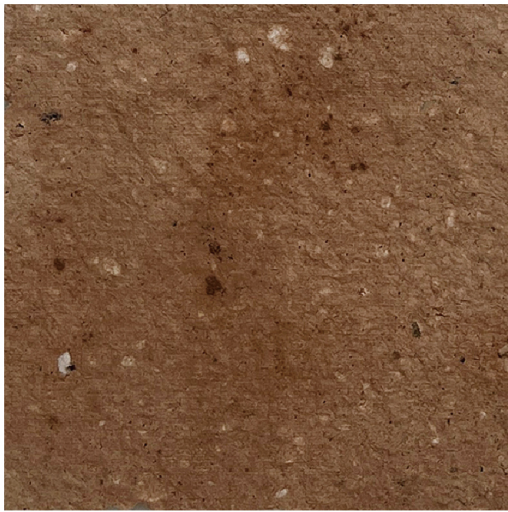
waster paper + terracotta clay



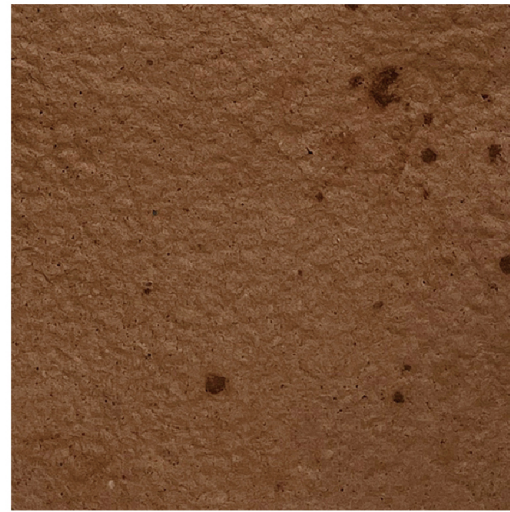
waster paper + terracotta clay



waster paper + terracotta clay



waster paper + terracotta clay



waster paper + terracotta clay

Photo:

Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Photos of recycled material samples].

In the middle stage of this project, I began exploring materials as pigments to uncover new possibilities and interpret the connection between material and human society, much like the fabric of a city. Earthstone clay and terracotta clay were initially applied to paper to test their consistency and ability to impart color. However, the clay proved too thick to layer effectively, leading me to shift toward paper-making. In this process, the clay was incorporated into the recycled paper-making method, blending more easily with water and paper fibers. By experimenting with different clay percentages, color variations were created, and the sheets were woven together to form a specific pattern.

III. Three Experiments

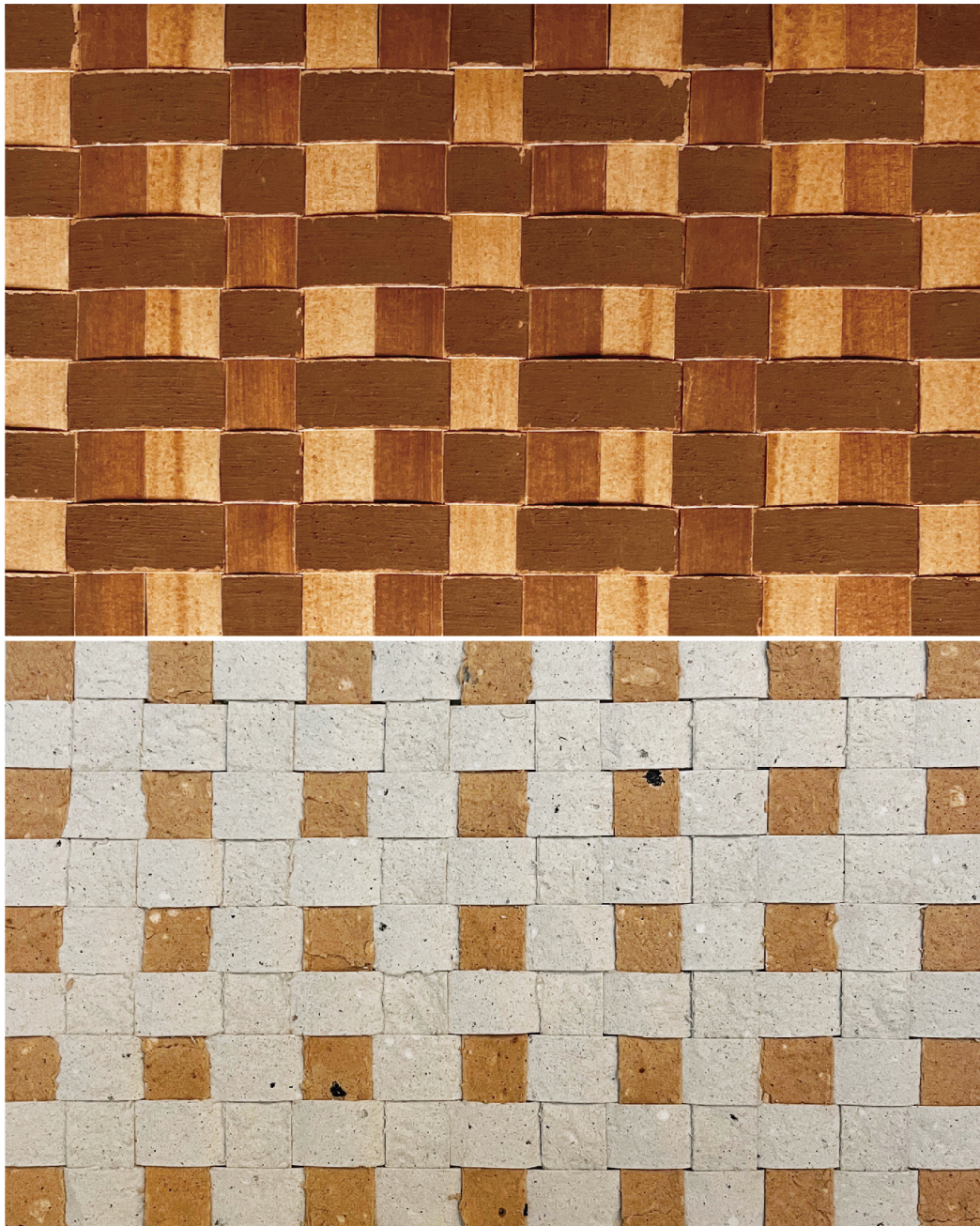


Photo:
Tseng, S-N. (2024) [The first image shows the result of clay applied to paper, while the second image depicts fabric made from recycled paper and clay].

III. Three Experiments

Photo:

Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Photos of local soil at H.G. Matthews Brickworks, located in Bellingdon].

I collected raw material during a Clay Festival workshop in Bellingdon and learned to grind and filter it to mix with egg yolk for making pigments. This experience inspired me to use local materials as a coating for earthenware in my experiment, a process commonly referred to as 'slip' in pottery. The fine dust can also be used as a glaze or engobe in future experiments.



51° 44' 52.7" N 00° 38' 34.1" W

Material



Wheel-made pottery is typically associated with the late Iron Age, Roman, and later periods, as potters from prehistoric, Anglo-Saxon, medieval, and Celtic times did not use the wheel. Mass-produced pottery, marked by its uniformity, was rare in Britain before the Industrial Revolution, except during the Roman period. Today, electric throwing wheels are widespread in many countries, often regarded as a leisure activity. However, they also carry spiritual significance and serve as a means to explore traditional techniques and local history.



Photo:
Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Photo of practicing wheel-throwing].

The techniques used in pottery-making demonstrate a thoughtful blend of traditional and modern approaches. The act of using a throwing wheel to shape each vessel echoes ancient practices of centering clay, aligning it along an axis to create balanced, functional forms. This method of controlled, intentional shaping honors the craftsmanship of the past while incorporating contemporary tools. The process highlights the ongoing dialogue between innovation and tradition, suggesting a sustainable future that respects ancient techniques while adapting to modern challenges. Each piece thus represents a continuous relationship between human skill and the evolving landscape of ceramic arts.



Photo:
Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Photos of the pottery-making practices].

Creating vessels with a throwing wheel involves refining the skill through consistent practice. This technique allows for greater control over the clay, shaping it with precision, and fosters an intuitive understanding of the material's behavior as it transforms into both functional and artistic forms.

III. Three Experiments



Photo:
Tseng, S-N. (2024) [Photos of the pottery-making practices].

This work remains a project in progress, as the process of creating pottery involves numerous stages that demand both time and the application of advanced techniques and knowledge to achieve high-quality results. The project is envisioned as a long-term endeavor, continuing to explore local materials while engaging with diverse themes such as geology, the Anthropocene, London's history, and Britain's pottery heritage. There are countless untold stories yet to be uncovered and shared in the future.

The next phase of this research aims to deepen practical experimentation, focusing on how pottery-making can effectively reflect the geographical features of the foreshore. Future outcomes may extend into spatial applications, such as the formulation of clay recipes derived from locally sourced materials or the promotion of a responsible and sustainable design philosophy. This project has shifted my perspective, encouraging me to think more critically about environmental sustainability and the role of human effort in shaping a more conscientious future.

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