ARTIST STATEMENT

Matthew Schultz
International Museum of Surgical Science
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My work exists at the intersection of sculpture, ceramics, sound, photography, film, performance, and installation. Although I work across many disciplines, I do not consider them separate practices. Each medium offers another means of investigating the same fundamental concerns: transformation, trauma, belief, power, mortality, and the human desire to construct meaning from experiences we cannot fully explain.

As a sculptor and ceramic artist, I am particularly interested in the vessel as an extension of the human body. Vessels contain, preserve, protect, conceal, and transform. Their cavities suggest organs, chambers, laboratories, and sacred spaces. Clay itself possesses an almost anatomical quality. It responds to pressure, records touch, undergoes transformation through heat, and emerges as something simultaneously fragile and enduring.

My work frequently explores the intersection of scientific authority, mythology, medicine, and ritual. Throughout history, the human body has been interpreted through overlapping systems of knowledge, from anatomical investigation and surgical intervention to spiritual healing, alchemy, and ceremonial practice. I am interested in the objects these systems produce and the authority we assign to them.

My multimedia installation *The Exhibition for the History of The Division* exemplifies this approach. Through life-sized wax figures, sculpture, historical-looking artifacts, written documents, and recorded narratives, I constructed the institutional history of a fictional hermetic organization. The exhibition adopted the visual language of museums to examine how presentation, classification, and institutional authority influence what audiences accept as historical truth.
https://www.mattschultzartist.com/the-division
https://www.mattschultzartist.com/division-website

My more recent ceramic practice investigates the relationship between organic form, ritual function, and sculptural experimentation. I create objects that move between functional vessels, ceremonial instruments, anatomical specimens, and imagined technologies. Some are intended for contemporary spiritual and magical practice, while others challenge the boundaries between sculpture, scientific apparatus, and biological structure.

Sound remains an important component of my practice. My experimental instruments and compositions investigate physical vibration, resonance, and the relationship between the body and its environment.

Ultimately, I am interested in creating objects and environments that seem to possess histories and purposes beyond their immediate appearance. By combining traditional craftsmanship with experimental technologies, I construct unfamiliar worlds in which medicine, mythology, scientific inquiry, and the sacred intersect.

I want viewers to encounter something that feels simultaneously ancient and futuristic, recognizable and impossible, beautiful and unsettling.