

This publication accompanies the exhibition **Relative Bonds** presented at the Estevan Art Gallery & Museum, from **November 22, 2019 – January 10, 2020**

Cover Image: *The Wedding* – 1994, 13” diameter, ceramic and barbed wire, 2019

List of Works:

- Jim and Norrie* - 1950, 15” diameter, ceramic and barbed wire, 2019
- Bonanza Jellybean* - 2015, 11.5” x 9.75”, ceramic and barbed wire, 2019
- Wayne* - 2011, 10” x 9”, ceramic and barbed wires, 2019
- Warren and Vickie* - 2013, 13” diameter, ceramic, 2019
- Jessica* - 1995, 13” diameter, ceramic, 2019
- Vickie and Regan* – 1982, 15” diameter, ceramic and barbed wires, 2019
- Kat and Murray* - 2009, 12.1” x 7.4”, ceramic, 2019
- Norrie, Regan and Mandred*, 15” x 9.5”, ceramic, 2019
- Walter and Verna* - 1998, 13” diameter, ceramic and barbed wires, 2019
- Regan* - 1999, 12.5 x 9”, ceramic and barbed wire, 2018
- Warren and Ashley* - 2015, 14.5 x 9.5, ceramic, 2019
- Royal University Hospital* - 1980, 8” x 5.6”, ceramic, 2019
- Grandma Norrie*, 11” diameter, ceramic and barbed wires, 2019
- Kirsten and Ashley* - 1995, 10” diameter, ceramic and barbed wire, 2019
- Grandpa Jim* - 1994, 11” diameter, ceramic and barbed wire, 2019
- Effie*, 15” x 6.75”, ceramic, 2019
- Regan*, 15” x 8”, ceramic, 2019
- Nan* - 1999, 13” diameter, ceramic and barbed wire, 2019
- Dread Pirate Pink Eye* - 2014, 9” x 7.5”, ceramic and barbed wire, 2018
- Vickie and Kirsten* - 2017, 11.25” diameter, ceramic, 2019
- Wayne, Vickie and Regan* - 1979, 33.5” x 12.25”, 2019
- Mandred and Norrie* - 2012, 10” x 6.5”, 2018
- Mandred* - 2015, 12.75” x 7”, ceramic, 2017
- Matthew* - 2015, 12.5” x 8.5”, ceramic, 2017
- Norrie* - 2013, 12” x 8.5”, ceramic, 2018
- Pippa* - 2017, 10” x 10”, ceramic, 2018
- Norrie* - 2016, 12” x 4”, ceramic, 2017
- Ev and Sylva* – 1943, 13” diameter, ceramic and barbed wire, 2019
- The Wedding* - 1994, 13” diameter, ceramic and barbed wire, 2019

Director/Curator:

Education, Outreach, and Programming Coordinator:

Catalogue Design:

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Relative Bonds

Regan Lanning

November 22, 2019 – December 10, 2020

Estevan Art Gallery & Museum

REGAN LANNING: AN INTERVIEW

The following is an e-mail interview conducted between Director/Curator Amber Andersen and Regan Lanning regarding *Relative Bonds*. This interview took place on November 22nd, 2019.

AMBER ANDERSEN) In this exhibition it is obvious that you are discussing the fracturing of relationships, or the tensions that exist between people. Did this subject become of interest because you are working with a medium (ceramics) that is at both fragile and strong? Or are you a ceramicist and this was a subject you were interested in exploring?

REGAN LANNING) I have been working in ceramics for 4 years. My previous work was mostly in acrylic painting. I believe ceramics is my home. I enjoy creating the “canvas” in any form I want.

The subject matter intrigued me because of the medium, yet I was inspired to push the medium because of the subject matter. It’s hard to separate the two

AA) Not all of the ceramic pieces are fractured. Some remain whole whereas other are held together by glue and barbwire. Can you speak to the use of barbwire and the decision on what objects remained whole and what became fractured?

RL) Barbed wire came to me after some deep searching into my cultural identity. I had made the decision to break the plates, but was casting about looking for a way to rejoin. I decided to use barbed wire as it is a material from my rural Saskatchewan background. Barbed wire keeps things in, keeps things out and has more than once cut me deeply. It’s barbs can never be successfully avoided.

The decision as to which plates to break was a hard one that required a lot of introspection and honesty with myself about the relationships I had chosen to depict. The ones left whole are mostly relationships I can’t speak to, or ones that I’m currently working hard to prevent fractures in.

AA) The use of slip to explore portraiture is unique. What inspired you to try this technique? Have you always been interested in portraiture?

RL) I am a very tactile person. The raised lines fascinated me. I also loved the black slip, as it reminded me of stained glass leading. There is an aspect of iconography within the work. If a person is featured in a stained-glass window, or on a plate, it implies importance or significance. These relationships have both.

I painted portraits for a couple years before making the switch to ceramics. The portraits were for fun and personal skill development; not something I widely shared.

AA) The works all look akin to serving dishes of some sort. Was there a conscience decision for it to mimic ware used for serving food? Does it relate to the traditional use of ceramic ware or does this dig further into the idea of china as a keepsake, something we hold onto?

RL) I believe it started as an irreverent poke at the status quo. The Queen gets to be on plates all the time, why not my Grandmother? All the plates are commemorative of the relationship depicted. A snap shot of what was, and what was going on underneath the surface.

AA) What are you exploring next?

RL) I’m toying with the idea of utilizing hand built ceramic boxes to represent the compartmentalizing of our selves. Things we keep from ourselves vs things we keep from others. I’ve entered into the research and development phase of my creative process, and am sure this nugget of an idea will develop and evolve before I decide upon its final form.

REGAN LANNING: ARTIST STATEMENT

“Relationships never come with a fragile note; though One should always handle with care.”

- Mehar Bhagat

I have long been fascinated with fragility and value of relationships. I wanted to explore the connections that hold relationships together, even when they have been damaged.

Clay seemed to be the perfect medium for this exploration. Ceramic works, once fired, are simultaneously strong and brittle. A clay plate can survive eons, only to snap with one careless gesture.

The same can be said for the relationships we create: one careless gesture and what was built is gone.

If we are to be completely honest, most of our relationships have suffered damages and small fractures though action, word or indifference. We have the choice to repair, rebuild, maintain; or we can choose to simply walk away.

Repairing a relationship takes a great deal of time, effort and patience. What was broken in an instant can take years to repair. Once it has been repaired, the break is still there. Did it create a weak spot? Or did the relationship emerge stronger than ever?

Sometimes the ties that bind a relationship together are stretched to their breaking point. Sometimes the breaks are messy, with jagged edges that can cut. Sometimes relationships end with an almost surgical precision. Sometimes the bond bends or adapts instead of breaking, while sometimes there is nothing left to repair.

Whatever the final outcome, if any attempt to repair was made, it comes down to love. A love worth saving, no matter the time, effort and pain saving it will cost.

I choose barbed wire to repair these broken plates because it’s a material close to my cultural heritage. Growing up in rural Saskatchewan, I often felt that the entire world was held together with barbed wire, glue

and ingenuity. As a material, barbed wire is difficult to manipulate. Its sharp wire twists can hurt you unexpectedly. It creates barriers, fencing things both in and out simultaneously.

The people and relationships depicted in this series live in my heart. I spend copious amounts of time recalling good times, trying to ignore the bad times, and regretting words spoken. Some of the breaks are my fault, some theirs. For some, we were simply victims of time and place. In the end, my love for them all remains deep and enduring.

Regan Lanning, 2019