

Nicholas Danielson: Art
Mentor: Dean Adams -- Art
Wild Clay Research

My USP provided me the opportunity for exploration and risk taking in my ceramic studies. This project helped set the foundation for years of future research and production in my studio practice. I gathered and tested eight different native and noxious plant materials from the Gallatin Valley for testing as glaze surfaces for ceramic objects. Those materials are: Camelina straw (*Brassicaceae*), Horsetail Grass (*Equisetum hymale*), Sedge (*Cyperaceae*), Sage Brush (*Artemisia var.*), St. John's Wort (*Hypericaceae*), Canada Thistle (*Asteraceae*), Wheat straw (*Triticum*), and Pine, Fir, and Cottonwood ash. I collected each sample from land throughout Gallatin County and burned each specimen to accumulate approximately 5,000 grams of ash from each plant. I washed and screened each ash sample and applied them to ceramic test tiles and pots. Each sample was tested in oxidation, reduction, and salt/soda kilns at cone 10, or 2350 Fahrenheit, on two different clay bodies. The clays represent both a high iron body and white porcelain clay. Finally, I photographically documented each test for archival and dissemination. Furthermore, my ceramic practice will continuously evolve from my research. I will address the results and acclimate the finding to my ceramic ware.