

May 2024

## Strange Stranger: A Visceral Skin Glaze Exploration into the Neurodivergent Sensory Experience


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### Recommended Citation

Lucas, Sam J. (2024) "Strange Stranger: A Visceral Skin Glaze Exploration into the Neurodivergent Sensory Experience," *Ought: The Journal of Autistic Culture*: Vol. 5: Iss. 2, Article 13.

DOI: [10.9707/2833-1508.1172](https://doi.org/10.9707/2833-1508.1172)

Available at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ought/vol5/iss2/13>

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*Glazed ceramics, mixed media, and photography (2018)*

## Sam Lucas

Sam Lucas creates ambiguous figurative objects predominantly in clay. Her creative practice draws on her experience as a neurodivergent woman today, by exploring aspects of her own unique neurotype. Career highlights include being selected for the headlining exhibition at The British Ceramics Biennial (2019); the Crafts Council Hothouse Talent Development Program (2020); shortlisted for Jerwood Makers (2021); and publishing a chapter, “Unexplained MsStories,” in *Contemporary British Ceramics: Beneath the Surface* by Ashley Thorpe (2020) as well as an article, “I Do Not Make Pretty Things,” in *Studio International Magazine* (2020).

#mybodyinmyhands forms part of Lucas’ doctoral study in Ceramics and Wellbeing at University of Sunderland. Her work demonstrates a contemporary approach to creative practice as research in an interdisciplinary framework. *Same Same but Different* is a practice-based exploration into neurodiversity concentrating on the neurodivergent lived experience and the importance of creativity especially through clay in managing and communicating personal experience.



*Glazed ceramics and photography (2018)*

### **Artist's Statement**

The visceral glaze exploration pieces were the precursor to the final forms for my body of work called *Stranger, stranger*, where I am exploring the weight and awkwardness of being in the body, the pain this alienation can cause, and ironically, the beauty and humor that results from this diversity.

The surfaces of the pieces attempt to describe the interoceptive, exteroceptive and alexithymic confusion that can occur at times with incongruent sensory experiences. The skin qualities are of skin crawling, goosepimples and sweaty and clammy skin, as a bodily visceral response to overwhelming social experiences.

These objects may make you stop and stare, out of curiosity and inquisitiveness. You might be slightly confused, bemused, unnerved, and perhaps disturbed by their uncanny nature and relentless resistance to conform. I create objects that are more about being than being seen. They are frozen moments in time and the position of the work is unfixed, both grasping out at the world and bound to itself, caught as if in a game of “cat and mouse,” yet with nowhere to hide from the inevitable and perpetual anxiety, only the humor can save you.