

Jess Riva Cooper

Website: jessrivacooper.com | Instagram: @jessrivacooper

Education

2010 – MFA, Ceramics, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI

2006 – Diploma in Craft and Design, Sheridan School of Craft and Design, Oakville, ON

2004 – BFA, Interdisciplinary, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, NS

Selected Exhibitions**Upcoming & Recent Exhibitions**

2027 – Solo Exhibition, Idea Exchange, Cambridge, ON

2026 – Solo Exhibition, Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Toronto, ON

2025 – As it Unfolds, The New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA), New York, NY

2024 – Pullulate (Solo Exhibition), Harbourfront Centre, Toronto, ON

2024 – A Living Palette, Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo, ON

2023 – Young Masters Maylis Grand Ceramic Prize, Cynthia Corbett Gallery, London, UK

2023 – ICAF: International Ceramic Art Fair, Gardiner Museum, Toronto, ON

Selected Past Exhibitions

2020 – Ceramattack III: Delicate Multiplex, Duane Reed Gallery, St. Louis, MO

2018 – Every Thread That Binds You (Solo Exhibition), Fentster Gallery, Toronto, ON

2017 – Viral (Solo Exhibition), Gallery House, Toronto, ON

2017 – NCECA Annual Exhibition: The Evocative Garden, Disjecta Contemporary Art Center, Portland, OR

2015 – Serotiny (Solo Exhibition), Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo, ON

2015 – OFF Artfair, Espace Art 22, Brussels, BE

2015 – Women: A Celebration, Arcadia Contemporary, New York, NY

2014 – Souvenirs from the Future: A Survey of Contemporary Ceramics, Lawrence Arts Center, KS

2014 – RBC Emerging Artist Exhibition, Gardiner Museum, Toronto, ON

2013 – NCECA Projects Space, George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston, TX

2012 – Archie Bray Resident Artist Exhibition, Kolva Sullivan Gallery, Spokane, WA

2011 – Sprouting at Bone (Solo Exhibition), Katherine Mulherin Contemporary Art Projects, Toronto, ON

2011 – Golem and Dybbuk (Solo Exhibition), Brandeis University, Waltham, MA

Selected Artist Residencies

2026 – Artist-Led Workshop, Medalta, Medicine Hat, AB

2025 – Artist Residency, Mid-Atlantic Keramik Exchange, Kópavogur, Iceland

2013 – Artist Residency, The Wassaic Project, Wassaic, NY

2013 – Artist Residency, Arts/Industry, John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI

2012 – Artist Residency, Medalta Historic Clay District, Medicine Hat, AB

2012 – Artist Residency, Wingate Scholar, Archie Bray Foundation, Helena, MT

2011 – Artist Residency, Lillstreet Art Center, Chicago, IL

2011 – Artist Residency, Women's Studies Research Center, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA

2011 – Public Art Commission: 2nd Street SE Public Art Project, Outdoor Sculptural Installation, Medicine Hat, AB

Academic, Teaching & Visiting Artist Roles

2014–2023 – Sessional Faculty, Department of Craft and Design, Faculty of Animation, Arts, and Design, Sheridan College, Oakville, ON

2015–2019 – Facilitator & Instructor, Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic (In Association with The Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art), Toronto, ON

2012–2013 – Visiting Assistant Professor & Studio Head in Ceramics, Eastern Oregon University, La Grande, OR

2015 – Visiting Artist & Lecturer, Department of Fine Arts, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, ON

2011 – Visiting Artist & Lecturer, Concordia University, Montreal, QC

Selected Publications

- Cooper, Andrea Dara. *Gendering Modern Jewish Thought*. Indiana University Press, 2021.

- Hey, Anne. *4 Degrees Arts*. Ankama Éditions, 2016.

- Kohler, Ruth DeYoung, and John Michael. *Arts/Industry: Collaboration and Revelation*. John Michael Kohler Arts Center, 2014.

- Stouffer, Hannah. *The New Age of Ceramics*. Gingko Press, 2016.

Selected Awards & Recognitions

2023 – Young Masters Maylis Grand Ceramic Prize, Cynthia Corbett Gallery, London, UK

2023 – Helen Copeland Memorial Award in Ceramics, Craft Ontario, Toronto, ON

2014 – RBC Emerging Artist, Gardiner Museum, Toronto, ON

2012 – Wingate Scholar, Archie Bray Foundation, Helena, MT

Jess Riva Cooper is a Toronto-based mixed media artist whose work explores transformation, ecological reclamation, and the relationship between human structures and invasive plant species. Through ceramics and installation-based sculptures, Cooper examines how nature encroaches upon and reshapes the built environment. Her process mirrors this phenomenon—she repurposes fragments of her older sculptures, integrating them into new forms. Once pristine, her figures become overgrown with plant life; their skin is punctured with vines, their heads sprouting leaves instead of hair. These haunting transformations blur the lines between life and decay, capturing moments of struggle and metamorphosis.

Cooper received her BFA from NSCAD University and an MFA in Ceramics from the Rhode Island School of Design. She has exhibited widely and participated in prestigious artist residencies, including Medalta, The Archie Bray Foundation, and The Kohler Arts/ Industry Program.