



# FAMILY TREE

GRACE  
PARSONS



|                  |       |             |
|------------------|-------|-------------|
| STATEMENT        | ————— | PAGE 1      |
| WHERE I STARTED  | ————— | PAGE 2      |
| BACKGROUND       | ————— | PAGE 3      |
| RESEARCH VISITS  | ————— | PAGES 4-10  |
| PROCESS          | ————— | PAGES 11-12 |
| DEVELOPMENT      | ————— | PAGES 13-16 |
| CONCEPT          | ————— | PAGE 17     |
| LEAVES           | ————— | PAGES 18-20 |
| BRANCHES         | ————— | PAGES 21-23 |
| ROOTS            | ————— | PAGES 24-26 |
| BARK             | ————— | PAGES 27-29 |
| FINAL COLLECTION | ————— | PAGE 30     |

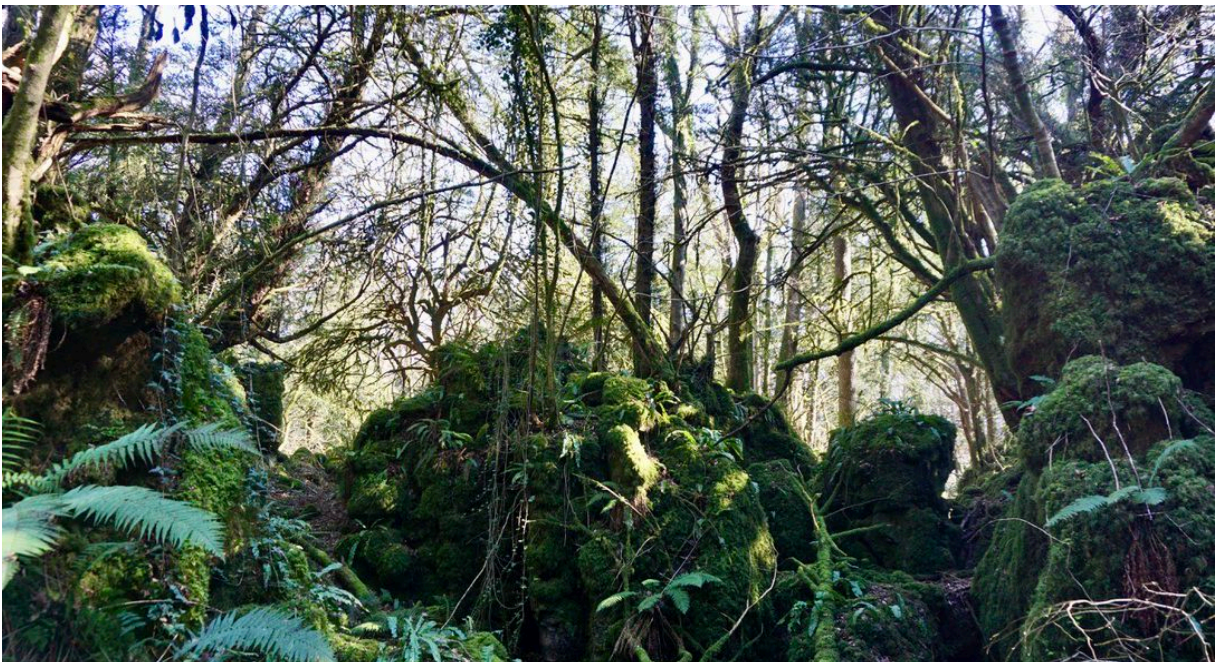


# INDEX

# STATEMENT

Family tree is a project that explores my personal connection to trees and the intimate role they play in our lives. Woodland has been a significant haven in my life, with many of my happiest memories being family trips to the woods. Due to this, my project is particularly focused on the theme of family and connection. Research into the 'Wood Wide Web' led to the discovery that forests are much like families themselves, with trees communicating and exchanging nutrients through an underground 'social network'.

Development of my forms and ideas was also inspired by visits to natural sites of interest. My final body of work consists of four sculptures, each symbolising a member of my family through a different part of the tree. 'Roots'; Mother, 'Bark'; Father, 'Branches'; Sister, 'Leaves'; Me. The pieces were hand built, creating natural forms and textures that are evocative of trees. These were then smoke fired using the traditional methods of raku and saggar, which incorporate smoke and natural materials in the process, allowing nature itself to create tone and leave its signature.



# WHERE I STARTED



Second year project exploring the landscape of the South Downs through smoke fired, abstract sculptures and vessels.



Forests and woods are often depicted in fairy-tales, perhaps we simply need to go into the trees to understand this magic can be a reality. The experience when amongst trees is truly unique, with woodland providing the ultimate haven and escape. They demand our attention and heighten all our senses. We experience the smells of leaves, mud and rain. The feeling of wind and subtle changes in temperature, branches and bark against our skin. The sounds of animals or the crushing of twigs, crunching of leaves, and squelch of mud. Simply the sight of the beauty and scale of trees inspire awe and intense emotions within us.





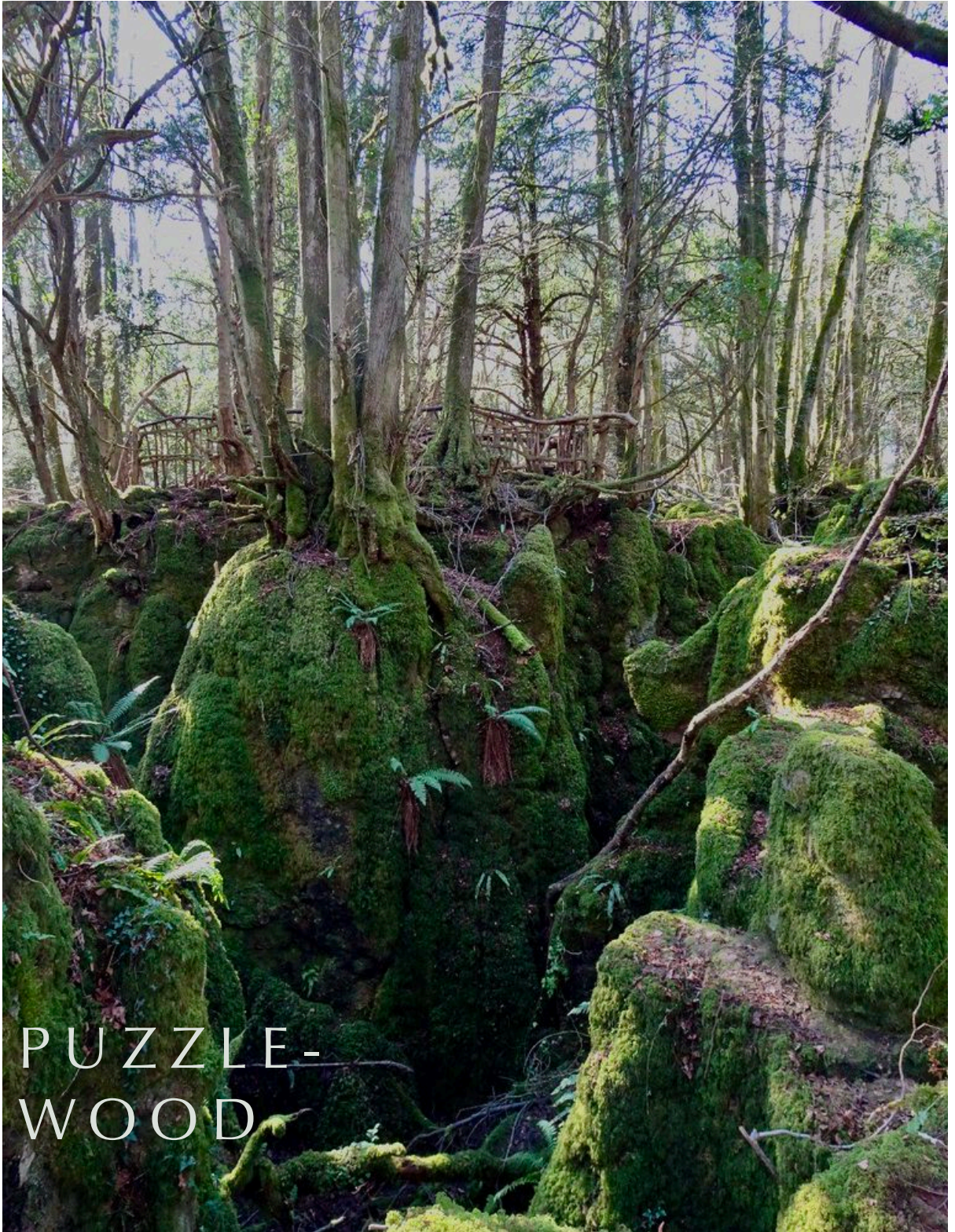
# YORKSHIRE SCUPTURE PARK

Research for this project was undertaken through visiting various woodlands and natural sites, completing sketching and photography to inspire my forms, textures, and designs.


# TATRA MOUNTAINS







PUZZLE-  
WOOD



“The plants’ rootedness in place, their fidelity to the soil, is something we can only admire, especially because our condition is that of an increasing and merciless uprooting.”

(Michael Marder, professor of philosophy, university of the Basque Country)

# NEW ENGLAND WOOD





DODDERHILL  
COMMON

We go into the trees...  
the dream  
Will be made in us by  
celestial virtue.

We go into the trees; the  
night  
Will be soft, the grief  
light.

We go among the trees,  
the soul  
Drowed by the perfume  
of the land.

But silence, you mustn't  
speak, be pious;  
You mustn't rouse the  
birds that sleep.

-Alfonsina Storni-

# SMOKE FIRING

I explored traditional smoke firing techniques of raku and saggar for my work as they allow for the incorporation of natural materials in the process.

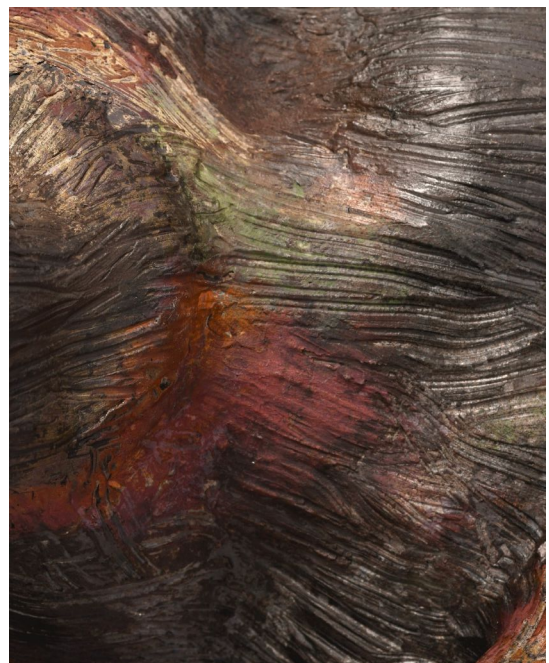


# RAKU

The firing method of Raku involves removing pieces from the kiln when red hot and cooling them rapidly in combustible material like sawdust.



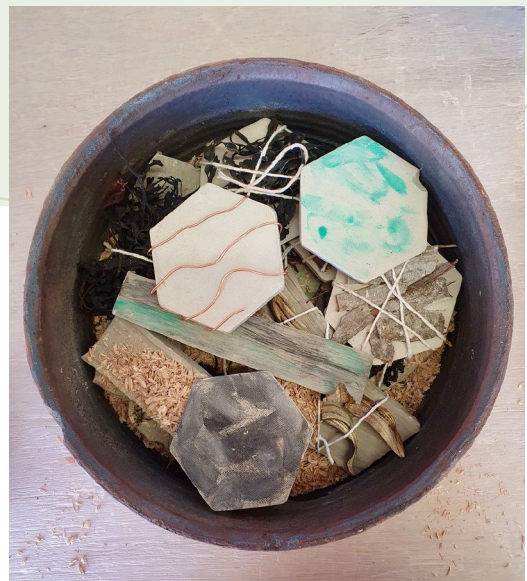
To my raku pieces I applied matte copper glaze, adding colour and depth.



# SAGGAR FIRING



Saggur firing involves surrounding wares with combustible materials such as seaweed and banana skins in a sealed clay container.





## TEXTURE TILES

Texture tiles created by pressing pieces of wood and bark into the clay then saggar firing.







Experiment for a moss like texture with the polymer's technique of flocking.



# TEXTURE EXPERIMENTATION



# FORM EXPERIMENTATION



Initial experiments with more abstract forms, however these lacked the qualities that resembled trees and reflected my theme.



Small scale models made to experiment with form and texture.



Saggar  
Fired



Raku  
Fired

First attempt at making my final bark inspired sculpture.

# LEAVES

## ME

I will represent myself through the leaves and foliage of a tree. This is due me being the youngest child, and leaves to me symbolising youth and energy. Leaves capture sunlight, illustrating the brightness and joy I bring.



# BRANCHES

## SISTER

My sister will be portrayed through the branches of a tree. Branches grow to provide elevation for the leaves, illustrating the communication and growth my sister has initiated.



# ROOTS

## MOTHER

My Mom will be represented through the roots. Roots anchor the trunk and provide nutrients and water that keep the tree alive, this conveying the grounding and support that she provides for the whole family.



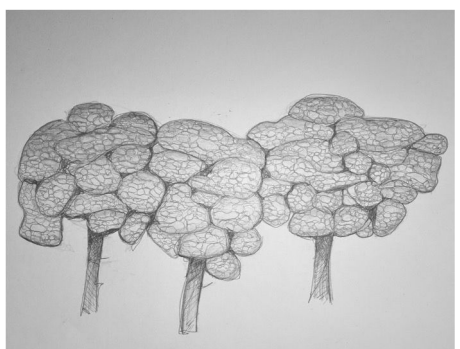
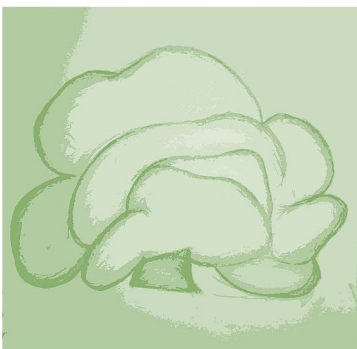
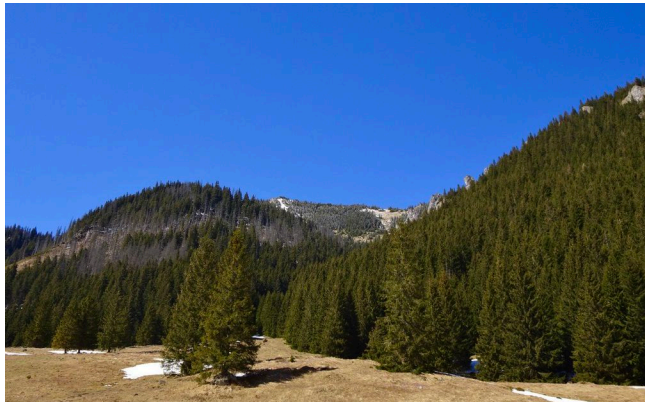
# BARK

## FATHER

My Dad will be symbolised through bark. Bark acts as a layer of protection for the tree, this will embody the security and protection he provides for our family.



# LEAVES INSPIRATION



FINAL  
'LEAVES'  
FORM

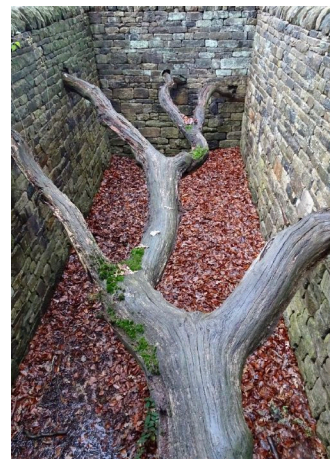
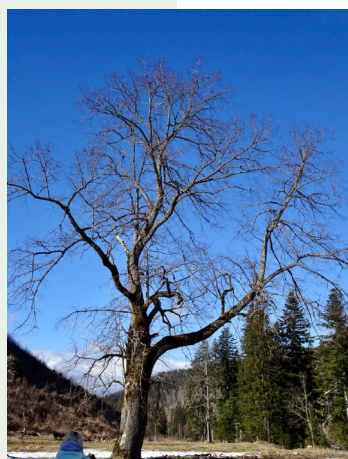
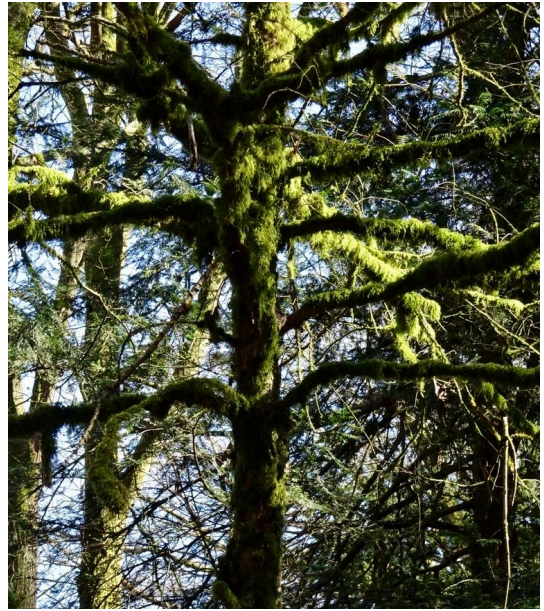




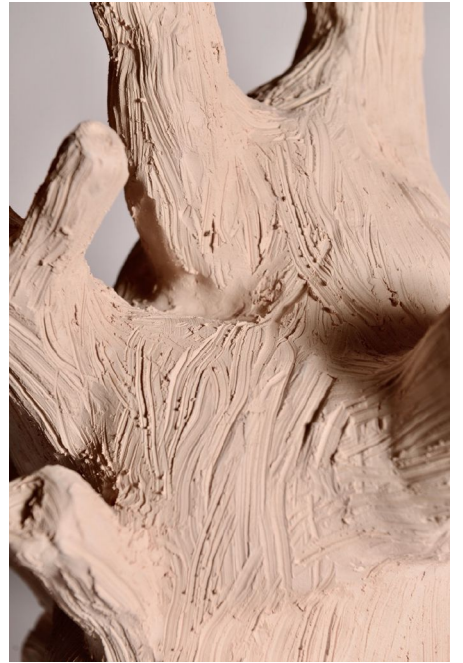
Saggar  
Fired



# BRANCHES INSPIRATION





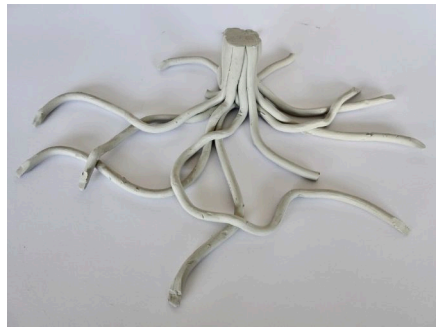
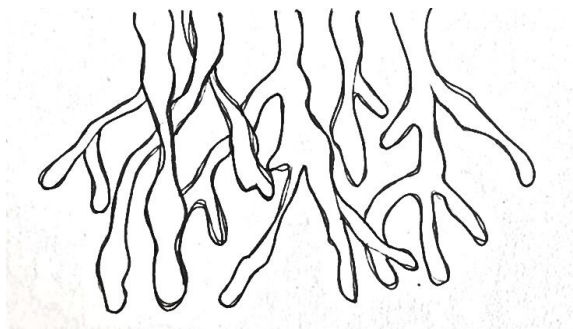
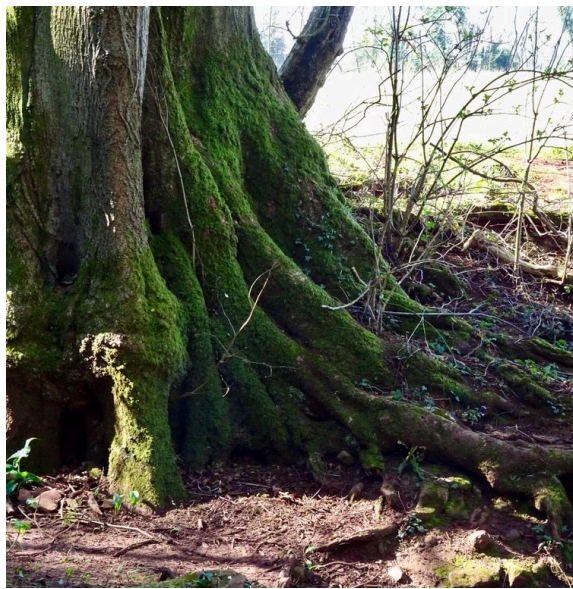


FINAL  
'BRANCH'  
FORM

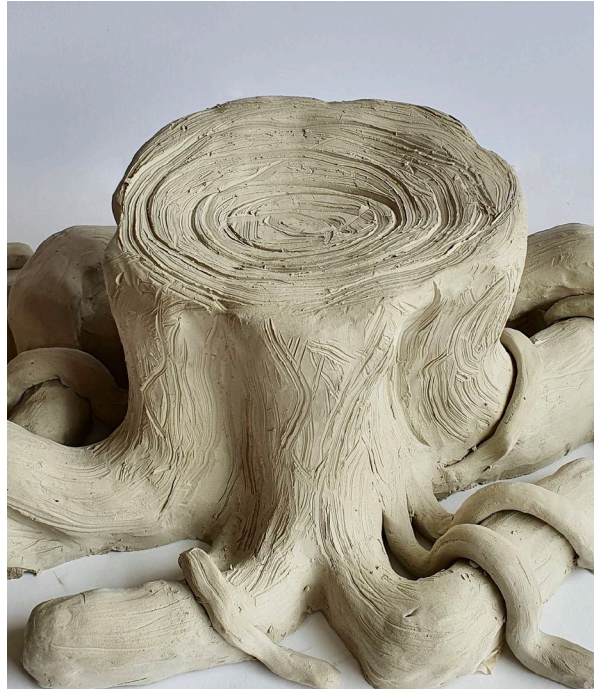


Raku  
Fired

# ROOTS INSPIRATION



Ingela Ihrman, A great Seaweed Day, Finnish National Gallery, 2020.

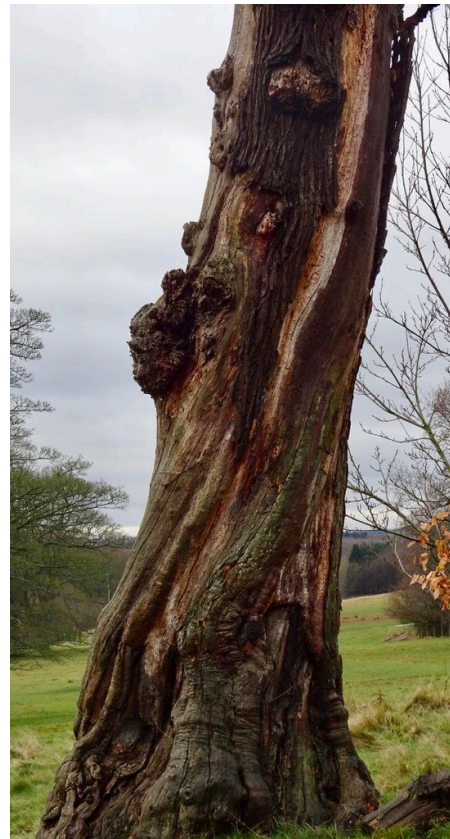
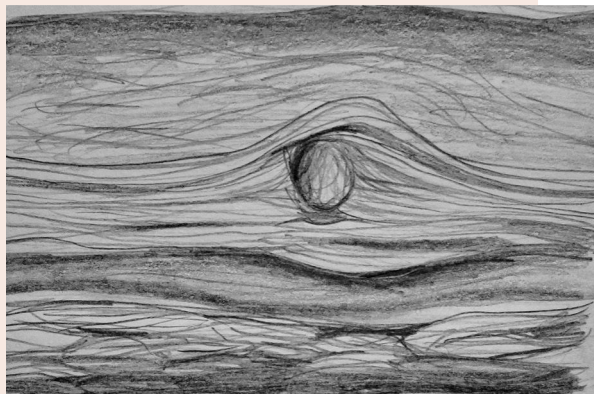


FINAL FORM AND TEXTURE





# BARK INSPIRATION



# FINAL FORM AND TEXTURE



Saggari Fired

The result of saggari firing for this piece was unsuccessful, therefore I decided to raku fire it.



Raku Fired





# FINAL COLLECTION



# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Fischer, Peter, and Brigitt Bürgi. *About Trees*. Zentrum Paul Klee And Snoeck, 2015
- Huikari, Olavi . *Miracle of Trees*. Wooden Books, 2021.Print.
- IRIGARAY, LUCE, and MICHAEL MARDER. *Through Vegetal Being: Two Philosophical Perspectives*. Columbia University Press, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.7312/irig17386>. Accessed 10 May 2022.
- Popkin, Gabriel. "'Wood Wide Web'—The Underground Network Of Microbes That Connects Trees—Mapped For First Time". *Science*, 2019, <https://www.science.org/content/article/wood-wide-web-underground-network-microbes-connects-trees-mapped-first-time>.
- Roetzel, Lindsey Jean. "Welcome To The Wood Wide Web | One Earth". *One Earth*, 2021, <https://www.oneearth.org/welcome-to-the-wood-wide-web/>.
- Rugoff, Ralph, and Melanie Mues. *Among The Trees*. Hayward Gallery Publishing, 2020.
- Wohlleben, Peter, Tim F. Flannery, S Simard, and Jane Billingham. *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate : Discoveries from a Secret World.* , 2016. Print.





GRACE PARSONS  
3D DESIGN AND CRAFT  
2022



Email: [gracemayparsons@gmail.com](mailto:gracemayparsons@gmail.com)  
Instagram: @graciepieart

