



Yehrim Lee, *Money Chair #1*. stoneware, cone 6 glaze, cone 4 glaze



Yehrim Lee, *Money Chair #2*. stoneware, cone 6 glaze, cone 4 glaze

For the *From Storage to Studio* project, I chose to respond to a nineteenth-century Chinese Garden Seat. The five initial objects I chose were all types of furniture or interior decoration—a table, an incense holder, chairs. For some time, I have wanted to experiment with more-functional work, but I had trouble finding an entry point until this project.

After speaking with the curator, I was drawn to the iconography on the garden seat. In East Asian culture, it is common to convey theme through symbols instead of direct statement. For instance, the magpie bird on the garden stool symbolizes longevity; the peony flower, prosperity; and the pomegranate, fertility. But most interesting to me were the "money" symbols, not painted on the chair but excised into the sculpture itself. The excisions resemble the holes in Chinese coins.

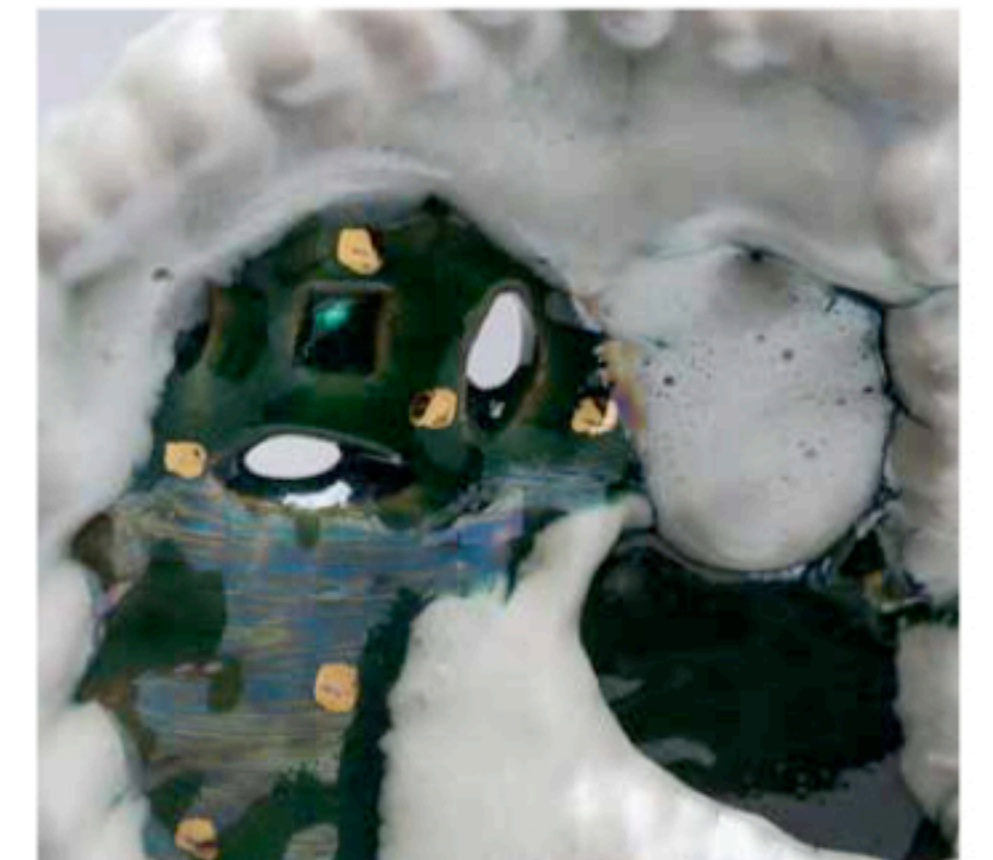
In my work, I seek to bridge the East and the West. I thought it would be interesting to make a modern



**Garden Seat**  
Artist/maker unknown  
Chinese  
19th century  
Porcelain with overglaze enamel decoration  
19 x 14 3/16 inches (48.3 x 36 cm)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Henry P. McIlhenny Collection in memory of Frances P. McIlhenny, 1986-26-296



*Money Chair #2* (detail)



*Money Chair #2* (detail)

stool that was part sculptural and part functional, that combined Chinese iconography with Western directness.

The Western audience may not know the meaning of the money symbols carved into the chair, but it is no coincidence that the sculpture is green, the Western symbol for wealth. I also titled the piece *Money Chair* to emulate Western directness. What further drew me to this iconography of wealth is that consumerism is often a theme in my work. Through colors and glaze, I explore

luxury and decadence with surfaces that crystallize, facet, fragment, stylize, sharpen, and distort. I find a metaphor to my process in the obsessive repetitions of late-stage capitalism.

While the highly ornate decoration of the Garden Seat would make sense to the upper class in an earlier era, my response conveys a more modern sense of abundance through elaborate shape, dripping glaze, sheens, and functionality that is questioned by extravagant form.



The artist in her studio

Yehrim Lee was born in Seoul, Korea. The way she interacts with her work is directly connected to her background in ceramics. She earned her B.F.A in ceramics from Korea National University of Cultural Heritage (2013). In 2014, she continued her studies at the California State University Long Beach as Post-Baccalaureate in Ceramic Arts (2014-2015). She received her MFA in Ceramic Art at Alfred University (2017). She has shown in exhibitions nationally and internationally. Lee was the visiting resident artist at the university of Georgia in the ceramics department (2017-2018). This year, she is currently a resident artist at the University of the Arts and The Clay Studio in Philadelphia. She had shows scheduled for the *Shifting Reverence* show at NCECA, 2019 in Minneapolis and the *Gyeong Gi International Ceramic Biennial*.