

## Patterns of Preservation

For my year 11 visual arts assessment, I created a series of ceramic pieces that explore the intricate patterns and textures found in coral structures. Over the course of the term, I carefully crafted each vessel, using my own pottery wheel to shape and trim them after school. The process was time-intensive, but it allowed me to focus on fine details, ensuring that each piece reflected the unique, organic forms that hold coral characteristics.

Once the initial sculpting was done, I allowed the pieces to air dry. After a week, I bisque fired the pieces, preparing them for the next stage of experimentation with glazes. I researched and looked at reference photos to inspire the colour choices, aiming to replicate the vibrant diversity of coral reefs. This led me to experiment with a range of high-fire glazes, testing different combinations of colours and textures to evoke the natural complexity of corals.

As I moved on to the final firing, I anticipated that the glazes might run, so I placed each piece on small stilts to prevent the glaze from sticking to the kiln shelf. Luckily, I did this, as the glazes did run, but the stilts saved the pieces from any damage. The final results exceeded my expectations, with the glazes enhancing the intricate carvings, imprints, and clay add-ons I had applied to each vessel.

This project was more than just a technical exercise; it became a way for me to express both the fragility and resilience of coral ecosystems. Through the careful application of colours, textures, and forms, I aimed to not only mimic coral structures but also raise awareness of the environmental threats these ecosystems face. The time and effort put into each vessel were a reflection of my passion for both ceramics and environmental issues, blending artistic practice with a deeper message.

