



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 30, 2025

*Elizabeth Layton & Skuja Braden:
Lines That Hold, Forms That Remember*

Opening Saturday, October 4th from 5-8pm and will be on display until December 20th.

Elizabeth "Grandma" Layton (1909–1993), was an artist from rural Kansas who began her drawing practice in 1977 at 68 years old, after a suggestion from her sister to pick up a creative practice. With her unique hand, line, and treatment of space in her work, she fine-tuned her craft through repetitive contour line drawing. This process enabled her to express her deepest thoughts and feelings about her personal life, relationships, body, identity, age, memories, and experiences; as well as her liberal socio/political leanings concerning sexism, racism, ageism, the oppression of LGBTQIA+, censorship, and the well-being of the mentally ill, disabled, poor, and oppressed. All topics that are still relevant and at the forefront today. In doing so, she claimed that her art making practice cured her of her lifelong debilitating depression, a feat that no medication or shock treatment she had previously received ever had..

During these 16 years of prolific art making, Elizabeth Layton went from an unknown artist only to a nationally recognized one with a brilliant voice. Major museums and institutions began collecting her work including The Art Institute of Chicago, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Detroit Institute of Arts, Hammer Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, St. Louis Museum of Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, and numerous other prestigious collections. Her life culminated with a major retrospective at The Smithsonian Museum and glowing reviews nationwide.

Skuja Braden is the collective identity of artists Inguna Skuja (Latvia) and Melissa Braden (California), who have worked together since 1999. Their practice begins in porcelain but moves far beyond material, unfolding as an exploration of impermanence, intimacy, and cultural memory. Drawing from literature, decorative traditions, and Buddhist philosophy, their work insists that nothing—neither identity, nor history, nor form itself—is fixed. At its core, the practice of Skuja Braden dismantles the illusion of singular authorship and stable selfhood. Like the porcelain they shape, which hardens only after a long passage through fragility and fire, their art carries the tension between permanence and transience. Porcelain, long tied to refinement and status, becomes in their hands a vessel of contemporary truths: painting collapses into sculpture, chaos into order, the personal into the collective. Their works invite viewers into this state of flow, where ego, authorship, and hierarchy dissolve, thus creating art that is at once rigorous and playful, rooted and fluid—an art that asks us to reconsider not only what art can be, but what identity itself truly is: impermanent, in motion, and always becoming.

Their breakthrough exhibition *Samsara* (Museum of Decorative Arts and Design, Riga, 2020) established their voice as nationally celebrated yet critically uncompromising, earning the Kilogram of Kulture Prize, a Purvītis Prize nomination, and the Delfi People's Choice Award. In 2022 they represented Latvia at the 59th Venice Biennale with *Selling Water by the River*, an installation of over 300 porcelain works that transformed porcelain into a medium of urgency, beauty, and disruption. In 2025 they were awarded the Baltic Balva for Visual Arts, affirming their significance across the region.

With over 50 solo shows worldwide—including recent presentations in Guangzhou, New York, Milan, Istanbul, and Zagreb—their work resides in major public institutions and private collections, including The Latvian National Museum of Art, Museum of Applied and Decorative Arts, Latvia, Portland Art Museum, USA, Guangdong Museum, Guangzhou, China, Zuzeum, Janis Zuzans Collection, World Ceramic Center, Korea, Kistefos Museum, Norway, Musée Ariana, Switzerland.