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fine arts

CROSSROADS 'CLAYAPALOOZA'

Exhibits of ceramics, with a familiar destructive theme, lead First Friday.

By ALICE THORSON
The Kansas City Star

The theme of destruction cuts a broad swath through Kansas City's galleries and museums this fall.

Last month the Kemper Museum opened June Ahrens' exhibit filled with broken glass and shattered mirrors, and the Nerman Museum introduced Charlotte Street Fellow Peggy Noland's video of an exploding rack of clothes.

Now there's more.

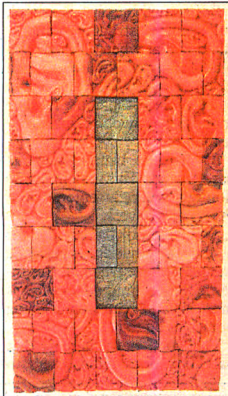
Opening tonight at Belger Arts Center and Red Star Studios is an exhibit of works by veteran ceramics artist Richard Notkin. It includes a big tile mural of a mushroom cloud. On Friday, Kemper at the Crossroads opens an exhibit of works by Boulder, Colo.,-based ceramic artist Jeanne Quinn, which includes an installation of suspended porcelain vessels that will crash to the floor.

Quinn, who showed a chandelier-style installation in the Denver Art Museum's summer group show, "Overthrown: Clay without Limits," will speak at 5:30 p.m. today at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, 4420 Warwick Blvd. Her talk will introduce her exhibit, "Jeanne Quinn: Ceramic In(ter)ventions," opening with a reception from 6 to 10 p.m. Friday at Kemper at the Crossroads, the museum's downtown branch.

The exhibit includes two installations and a wall piece.

The main room, which has been painted ruby red, will feature "Everything Is Not as It Seems," a room-scaled installation of suspended white porcelain forms. Including wires threaded with porcelain spheres like beaded chains and curved elements fitted with lightbulbs, it suggests an ebullient gathering of chandeliers.

For "A Thousand Tiny Deaths," Quinn created dozens of black porcelain vessels in-



FROM THE ARTIST
Richard Notkin's ceramic tile mural, "Signifying Nothing" (2011), is part of his exhibit opening tonight at the Belger Arts Center and Red Star Studios.

spired by historical ceramics, each inserted with a balloon that she blew up and knotted. The vessels hang from the ceiling from black strings attached to the knot of each balloon, until one by one, the balloons deflate and the vessels fall and shatter.

In an interview at the gallery, Quinn said that the work was inspired by the break-up of a relationship and the many little things — her stop at her regular coffee shop, places where she shopped, even her daily encounter with a homeless man — that ended when she moved away.

"Besides the enormous change, there are all these tiny changes," she said. "That's gone. That's gone. That's gone."

On a figurative level, the work removes valuable historical objects from the cabinet of history and places them at the artist's behest. Recontextualized and reanimated by a new idea, they die too, to be reborn in the present.

In her wall piece, "Rorschach



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"Jeanne Quinn: Ceramic In(ter)ventions" opens Friday at Kemper at the Crossroads. The exhibit features a wall piece and two installation works, including "A Thousand Tiny Deaths" (above), featuring suspended vessels that will eventually crash to the ground.

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