Elizabeth Alexander  
American, born 1982  
**Spit Cake**, 2014  
hand-cut bone china, 30 1/4 in. x Dia: 11 1/2 in.  
Courtesy Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art,  
Bentonville, Arkansas, L2022.21.11.  
Photography by Edward C. Robison III.

About the Art

- The column of altered and mostly inverted ceramics might almost be a model for a modern monument.

- The artist has changed the china by removing parts of the decorative elements, leaving irregular patterns around the edges. She carefully cuts the china with a high-powered drill while holding the piece under water.

- The work is part of an ongoing series, begun in 2011, called *Heirloom*.

- The artist has described her practice, including the alteration of objects as “my methods for deconstructing domestic vignettes of traditional success and beauty. This labored breakdown of archetypes unveils a rot behind the shiny exterior while mirroring the cultural pressure to gloss over personal turmoil and carry on.”

- The work’s title refers to a type of cake made with layers of dough or batter deposited, one at a time, onto a tapered cylindrical rotating spit. Generally, spit cakes are associated with celebrations such as weddings and Christmas. This seems appropriate for the stacked layers of elegant and formal china.

About the Artist

1982: Born in Natick, Massachusetts  
2009: Received MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield, Michigan  
2014: Made Spit Cake  
2014: Participated in State of the Art: Discovering American Art Now exhibition at Crystal Bridges Museum of Art and other venues  
2015: Joined the University of North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston-Salem, North Carolina as assistant professor  
2022: Joined Montserrat College of Art in Massachusetts as Associate Professor