



2020

JUROR JULIA GALLOWAY

STRICTLY FUNCTIONAL POTTERY NATIONAL[©]

THE BEST IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN FUNCTIONAL CERAMICS

**Celebrating twenty-eight years of
the SFPN exhibition 1993-2020**



Jim Connell - Rock Hill, SC

28TH ANNUAL STRICTLY FUNCTIONAL POTTERY NATIONAL[©]



FRONT COVER IMAGE: Nolan Baumgartner - Chicago, IL



Joe Singewald - Cold Spring, MN



Jesus Antoshka - Mastic, NY

THE BEST IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN FUNCTIONAL CERAMICS

JUROR HALL OF FAME

2020 Julia Galloway

- 2019 Malcolm Mobutu Smith
- 2018 Ben Carter
- 2017 Linda Sikora
- 2016 Simon Leach
- 2015 Matt Long
- 2014 Christa Assad
- 2013 Jim Connell
- 2012 Jack Troy
- 2011 Mary Barringer
- 2010 Bill van Gilder
- 2009 Pete Pinnell
- 2008 Linda Arbuckle
- 2007 Malcolm Davis
- 2006 Tom Coleman
- 2005 John Glick
- 2004 Susan Peterson
- 2003 Wayne Higby
- 2002 Jack Troy
- 2001 Linda Christianson
- 2000 Ken Ferguson
- 1999 Warren MacKenzie
- 1998 Cynthia Bringle
- 1997 Val Cushing
- 1996 Phyllis Blair Clark
- 1995 Chris Staley
- 1994 Bill Daley
- 1993 Jack Troy

Julia Galloway



When the Strictly Functional Pottery Exhibition started, there were more divisions in the field of ceramics, and not many juried shows specifically for pottery. This exhibition was a unique opportunity for potters to have their own national juried exhibition - woohooo! It was very exciting for many potters, and acceptance into this exhibition was a rite of passage.

A curious part of this annual exhibition is that there is a different juror each year. With this comes a different focus to each exhibition. For applicants, it is a challenge in wondering about expectations. I decided to select works that were interesting to me, pushing some boundary or assumption about pottery and that represented a wide variety of work being made today. I was often drawn to clear concept over intense skill and tried very hard to be aware and suspect of my own 'taste' during the jury process.

Looking over the applicants this year, I am impressed by the variety of works, concepts, skills, ideas, techniques, references and bravery. There are some things that stick out in the submissions.

- There were many vases, plates, covered jars, pitchers and mugs that were salt/soda and/or wood fired. Such a large number of atmospheric fired work made this genre very competitive. In much of this type of work it was difficult to see the artists' ideas or unique touch, as the firing process has such a strong identity.



- The accessibility to a variety of stable underglaze colors is apparent. For many years it was difficult to get a strong red color glaze – this is a problem no more. There was a lot of red and yellow underglaze lavishly applied across many surfaces of the pottery. Though perky, I think that we are still seduced by the underglaze colors themselves and miss that they often flatten form and overwhelm the pottery itself.

- There was less pottery that was slip cast, printed or ready-made than I expected. Perhaps we still link the term 'function pottery' to the traditional studio pottery movement. Tradition is, still, important to the pottery community, though it is exciting to see such variation and invention in pottery today.

- There were fewer pots that had an extreme sense of form, or exceptional form. Many pots were straight cylinders, and this seems to be a response to so much surface decoration and/or how pottery looks in the Instagram format. I was surprised by how a piece with clear, strong form really jumped out. There was a clarity and conviction to this work.

- There seemed to be a collective interest / influence of modern design on many of the applications, interesting! I found myself thinking about what makes work timely? Timeless?

- Were there any overall weaknesses in the applications? Mostly I was aware of how much skill it actually takes to make good pottery, work that is 'deskilled' is a concept, not a stop on the road to developing skill. It takes a long time to make a good solid handle, a clearly articulated lip that relates to the form, a relationship of intent and craftsmanship. Pottery, pottery takes time, a lot of miles on our hands.

Juried exhibitions are still important, they give a professional context to work. The number of 'likes' and rapid sales of pottery does not ensure continued intelligent growth and expansion in our field. I appreciate how many people applied to the strictly functional exhibition. If your work was rejected, please, chin-up, there is nothing personal about this, just say, "the hell with Julia" and head back into the studio! If your work was accepted, congratulations, well done, and now, head to the studio, we all still have work to do.

Respectfully submitted, Julia Galloway, Strictly Functional Pottery National Exhibition 2020



Amy Burk



Kevin Lehman



KyoungHwa Oh - Grand Junction, CO

This year we are very excited and fortunate to have Julia Galloway as the juror for the Strictly Functional Pottery National. In these trying times, she has done more to promote the artists and the work in the show than we ever could have imagined. She also suggested many alterations to make the SFPN show more relevant in today's world. Thank you again, Julia. She selected 108 pieces for this year's show. We believe this is another wonderful show with something for everyone to enjoy and appreciate...online.

Julia Galloway is a utilitarian potter and professor. She teaches ceramics at the University of Montana, Missoula. Julia attended the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University for her BFA degree and then the Massachusetts College of Art as a post-baccalaureate student. She attended the University of Colorado-Boulder for her MFA degree, and during her studies she was a visiting scholar at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design studying contemporary crafts and the history of pottery.

Julia's wide ranging interest and involvement in the field of ceramic arts includes: making pottery, jurying exhibitions, studying ceramics from other cultures, writing about pottery, and mentoring emerging artists. She is dedicated to education, whether it be at a traditional college campus, a craft school, or a local arts center; she has taught more than 200 workshops, demonstrations and lectures. She has exhibited nationally and internationally and has published in Ceramics Monthly, Studio Potter, Art and Perception, Clay Times and other many other publications.

We thank all the many volunteers and organizations that help with making this show a reality and we thank all the applicants who have been faithfully applying for years and the new potters who took the chance this year to apply. We are especially indebted to Lois Wilkins and Margaret Seidenberg-Ellis for their tireless editorial assistance. And, as always, thank you to the patrons that support this wonderful exhibition.

Enjoy the show online,

*Amy Burk and Kevin Lehman
Co-Directors, SFPN*



Dane Hodges - Minneapolis, MN



Isaac Howard - Bellingham, WA



Kelsey Nelsen - Lopez Island, WA



Market House Craft Center is celebrating 28 years of presenting Strictly Functional Pottery National®

The organization was founded in 1946 as the Conestoga Valley Chapter of the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen. In 1988, it was reorganized into two separate organizations: the Market House Craft Center and Lancaster Designer Craftsmen. The MHCC is a nonprofit [IRS 501(c)3] educational organization whose mission is the encouragement, education and promotion of quality crafts and craftsmanship. Lancaster Designer Craftsmen is an organization of 150 craftspeople and friends of craft.

The purpose of this organization is to encourage and promote Pennsylvania crafts and craftsmen. The MHCC and LDC are totally volunteer organizations. Sixty volunteers work many, many hours to make the Strictly Functional Pottery National® a success every year. Without these dedicated volunteers, the MHCC would not be able to present an exhibit of such magnitude.

Market House Craft Center
335 N Queen St
Lancaster, PA 17603



Online Show Dates:
Saturday, September 26, through
Saturday, October 31, 2020



Reagan Lehman

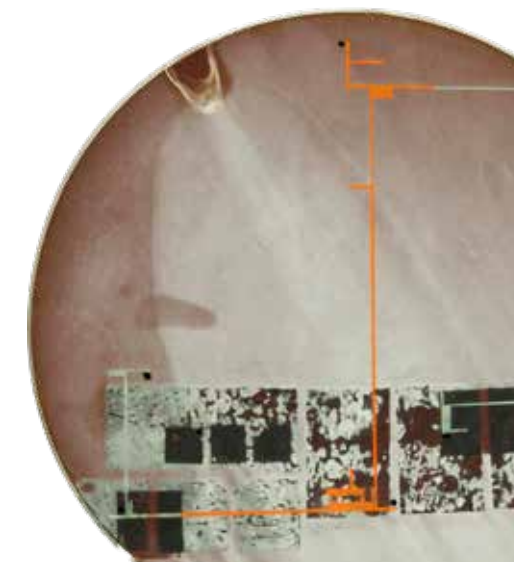
We would like to introduce Reagan Lehman as the latest addition to the SFPN team. Reagan Lehman is a marketing consultant and pottery enthusiast in Lancaster, PA. Professionally, she creates marketing content for websites and social media. In the evenings, you can often find her in the studio experimenting with clay. She is absolutely delighted to contribute to SFPN this year.



2019 SFPN reception with juror Malcolm Mobutu Smith



Brandon Schnur - Independence, MO



Maddie Fowler - Kalamazoo, MI



2020 SFPN CASH AWARDS

FIRST PLACE	Standard Ceramic Supply Co.
SECOND PLACE	Lancaster Designer Craftsmen
INNOVATION AWARD	Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen
BEST THROWN AND ALTERED AWARD	Bailey Pottery Equipment Corp.
FORM & FUNCTION AWARD	Market House Craft Center
BEST HANDBUILT AWARD	Karen Peiffer Pottery
BEST TEAPOT AWARD	Kevin Lehman's Pottery
BEST USE OF COLOR AWARD*	AMACO - American Art Clay Co.
POCONO AWARD*	Pocono Chapter Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen
FOUNDER'S AWARD*	Scott Jones, Founder of the SFPN

2020 SFPN PERMANENT COLLECTION ACQUISITIONS*

PIECES WILL BECOME PART OF THE FOLLOWING PERMANENT COLLECTIONS:	Bailey Pottery Equipment Corp.
	Ceramics Monthly
	George School
	John Ground
	L&L Kiln Manufacturing, Inc.
	Richard Oelschlaeger
	Skutt Ceramic Products

2020 SFPN JUROR'S CHOICE AWARDS

- DECORATIVE SURFACES
- DIGITAL PRINTING
- RETHINKING PROCESS
- SLIP CAST

*Awards selected by the award sponsors. All others selected by Julia Galloway

The 2020 Strictly Functional Pottery National® exhibit is grateful for the generous support of the following sponsors:

2020 SFPN VISIONARIES	Bailey Pottery Equipment Corp. PO Box 1577 Kingston, NY 12402 800.431.6067 www.baileypottery.com	2020 SFPN PATRONS	AMACO - American Art Clay Co. 6060 Guion Road Indianapolis, IN 46254 800.374.1600; 317.244.6871 www.amaco.com	2020 SFPN PATRONS	L&L Kiln Mfg. Inc. 505 Sharptown Road Swedesboro, NJ 08085 877.455.5456 www.hotkilns.com	2020 SFPN FRIENDS	Lancaster Potters Group Lancaster, PA
	Market House Craft Center 335 N Queen Street Lancaster, PA 17603 717.509.7547 www.strictlyfunctionalpottery.net		Amy Burk Pottery Lancaster, PA		Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen 335 N Queen Street Lancaster, PA 17603 717.431.8706 www.pacrafts.org		Millersville University Clay Students 717.872.3011 www.millersville.edu
	Lancaster Designer Craftsmen 335 N Queen Street Lancaster, PA 17603 717.431.8706 lancasterdesigner@yahoo.com		Ceramics Monthly 735 Ceramic Place, Suite 100 PO Box 6102 Westerville, OH 43081 614.890.4700 www.ceramicsmonthly.org		Pocono Chapter, PA Guild of Craftsmen www.poconocrafts.com		Scott Jones Pennsylvania
	Standard Ceramic Supply Co. PO Box 1624 Pittsburgh, PA 15242-0240 412.276.6333 www.standardceramic.com		Clayworks Supplies 4625 Falls Road Baltimore, Maryland 21209 410.235.5998 www.clayworkssupplies.com		Richard Oelschlaeger California		Spectrum Printing, Inc. 1160 Enterprise Road East Petersburg, PA 17520 717.569.3200 www.spectrumprintpartner.com
			George School 1690 Newtown Langhorne Road Newtown PA 18940 215.579.6500		Skutt Ceramic Products 6441 SE Johnson Creek Road Portland, OR 97206 503.774.6000 www.skutt.com		
			John Ground Pennsylvania				
			Karen Peiffer Pottery Pennsylvania				
			Kevin Lehman's Pottery 580 S Prince Street Lancaster, PA 17603 717.509.7547 www.klpottery.com				
			Laguna Clay Co. 14400 Lomitas Avenue City of Industry, CA 91746 626.330.0631 / (800) 4-LA-GUNA www.lagunaclay.com				



SFPN encourages you to support the exhibition. Tell your friends and neighbors about it!
If you wish to donate to the SFPN, please visit www.strictlyfunctionalpottery.net for more information about becoming a sponsor or donor.

CELEBRATING TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS

28 | SFPN



Seth Green - Fort Wayne, IN



Chris Alveshere
Bismarck, ND
Bud Vase
3x7x2 / Colored Porcelain / ^10 /
Oxidation
\$98.00



Wesley Anderegg
Lompoc, CA
Quail and Snake Cup
3x4x3 / Porcelain / ^6 / Electric
\$150.00



Wesley Anderegg
Lompoc, CA
Rabbits Jumping Beer Cans
3x4x3 / Porcelain / ^6 / Electric
\$150.00



Jesus Antoshka
Mastic, NY
Pitcher
12x7x7.5 / Stoneware / ^10 / Gas
Reduction Salt
\$200.00



Andrew Avakian
Missoula, MT
Vase
18x7x7 / Terra Cotta / ^3 / Oxidation
\$600.00



Lillian Babcock
Long Beach, CA
Olga
6x3x4 / Porcelain / ^10 / Oxidation
\$300.00



Noel Bailey
Waitsfield, VT
Snow Drift Serving Piece
4.8x17x9.3 / Porcelain / ^10 / Reduction
\$260.00



Kirsten Bassion
Marblehead, MA
Large Serving Bowl
5x10x10 / Brown Stoneware & Porcelain / ^6
/ Oxidation
\$270.00



Ben Bates
Libertyville, IL
Candelabra
22.5x12.5x12 / Stoneware / ^13 /
Anagama
\$700.00



Bob Bruch
Oberlin, OH
Waterfall
10x11.5x9 / White Stoneware / ^6 / Electric
\$900.00



Asta Bubliene
Kew Gardens, NY
Small Teapot with Butterflies
7.5x7x4 / Porcelain / ^6 / Electric
\$90.00



Brooke Cashion
Alfred, NY
Double Vase
7x6x6 / Porcelain / ^10 / Oxidation
\$210.00



Ben Bates
Libertyville, IL
Candelabra
17x9x9 / Stoneware / ^13 / Anagama
\$300.00



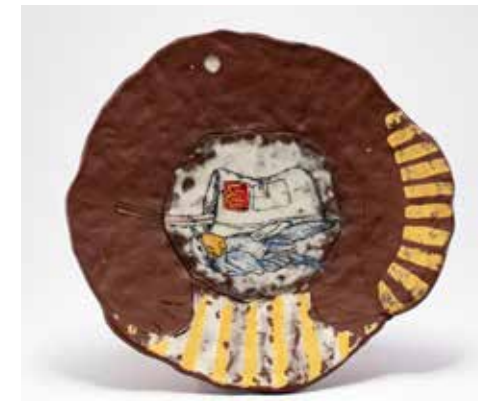
Nolan Baumgartner
Chicago, IL
Jar
9.3x9.3x9.3 / Porcelain / ^10 / Soda
\$160.00



Pamela Berry
Gaithersburg, MD
Washington Color School Inspired Tray
0.3x7x5.3 / Stoneware / ^6 / Electric
\$55.00



Lane Chapman
Missoula, MT
Strawberry Moth Bowl
4.5x8.3x8 / Red Stoneware / ^6 / Electric
\$100.00



Lane Chapman
Missoula, MT
Don't Throw Your Trash on the Ground (set
of 2)
1.5x7.5x7.3 / Red Stoneware / ^6 / Electric
\$200.00



Sam Chumley
Sevierville, TN
Toothy Ice Cream Dish
3x4x4 / Earthenware / ^4 / Oxidation
\$70.00



Andrew Clark
Jackson, TN
Cup Garage
8x7x7 / Stoneware / ^6 / Electric
\$400.00



Susan Cohen
Alexandria, VA
Night and Day
9x8x8 / Stoneware / ^12 / Wood
\$160.00



John Cohorst
Omaha, NE
Space Don't Care Astro Mug
6x4x4 / Porcelain / ^10 / Oxidation
\$75.00



Zach Dunn
Trumbull, CT
Craggy Centerpiece Vase
5x7x2 / Stoneware / ^12 / Wood
\$95.00



Ruth Easterbrook
Somerville, MA
Garden Oval Server with Double White Flowers
2x15.5x6.5 / Stoneware / ^10 / Reduction
\$325.00



Mark Errol
Tifton, GA
Cul-de-Sac
15.5x7.3x7.3 / Stoneware / ^6 / Oxidation
\$310.00



Jim Connell
Rock Hill, SC
Green/Black Carved Teapot
14x10x8 / Stoneware / ^10 / Reduction
\$800.00



Jim Connell
Rock Hill, SC
Red Wine Tumblers, set of 5
12x4.5x4.5 / Porcelain / ^10 / Reduction
\$500.00



Josh DeWeese
Bozeman, MT
Butter Dish
6x9x6 / Stoneware / ^10 / Wood/Salt/Soda
\$120.00



Amy Evans
Seymour, TN
Basket
8x6x4 / Stoneware / ^6 / Electric
\$100.00



Maddie Fowler
Kalamazoo, MI
Pour Over Set
5x5x5 / Mid-Range Brown / ^5 / Oxidation
\$120.00



Maddie Fowler
Kalamazoo, MI
Black Dinner Plate
0.8x10x10 / Mid-Range Brown / ^5 / Oxidation
\$60.00



Chase Gamblin
Bloomington, IN
Blue Tumblers
7.5x8x4 / Stoneware / ^6 / Electric
\$175.00



Frank M Gaydos
Philadelphia, PA
WhiteWave
4x22x22 / TerraCotta / ^4 / Electric
\$190.00



Michael Geisert
Charlottesville, VA
Cocktail Tumbler Set
5.1x3.3x3 / Casting Slip / ^6 / Electric
\$145.00



Rosa Salas Gonzalez
Meridian, MS
Sake Set
14x12x11 / Earthenware / ^O4 / Oxidation
\$695.00



Seth Green
Fort Wayne, IN
Tankard
7x4.5x5 / Stoneware / ^9 / Reduction
\$65.00



Stephen Grimmer
Alto Pass, IL
Caramel Teapot
5x8x5.5 / B-Bix / ^11 / Anagama
\$200.00



Mike Gesiakowski
University City, MO
Floret Storage Jar
6.5x9.5x9.5 / Earthenware / ^O4 / Electric
\$200.00



Steven Godfrey
Anxchorage, AK
Sandhill Crane Salt Cellar
5x6x4 / Stoneware / ^10 / Reduction
\$190.00



Christine Goh
Bethesda, MD
Serenity Vines
2x9.8x9.8 / Stoneware / ^10 / Gas Reduction
\$80.00



Kaila Guilmet
East Helena, MT
Cup
4.5x2.8x2.8 / Stoneware, Porcelain / ^10 / Soda
\$60.00



Wesley Harvey
East Point, GA
Spanker and Piss Freak Mugs, from the "Handkerchief Series"
4x9x3 / Porcelain Slip / ^O6, 10, 015 / Oxidation
\$300.00



Stephen Heywood
Jacksonville, FL
Round Serving Trough
5x12x12 / Stoneware / ^10 / Reduction Cooled Wood
\$300.00



Dane Hodges
Minneapolis, MN
Ewer
8x4x3.3 / Porcelain / ^6 / Oxidation
\$115.00



Isaac Howard
Bellingham, WA
Pitcher
10x5x4 / Porcelain / ^10 / Soda
\$185.00



Scott Jelich
Anchorage, AK
Pitcher
12x7x6 / Stoneware / ^10 / Reduction
\$200.00



Matt Kelleher
Alfred Station, NY
Pitcher
12x8x7 / Red Clay / ^3 / Soda
\$300.00



Sooyeon Kim
Johns Creek, GA
Fruitfulness II
10x9x8 / Porcelain / ^6 / Midrange
\$700.00



Jessie Kristy
Bishopville, MD
Whiskey Sippers with Tray
5x10x5 / Porcelaneous Stoneware / ^6 / Electric
\$110.00



Scott Jennings
San Francisco, CA
Skinny Jar
10x4.5x4 / Hawaiian Red / ^5 / Electric
\$190.00



Rachael Marne Jones
Canton, NY
Montana Granite Seed Bank Design 1 (The Seed Bank Project) Bank No. XXXV
7.5x4x6 / Porcelain Slip / ^5.5 / Electric
\$150.00



Lauren Karle
White Bear Township, MN
Indian Paintbrush Yunomi
4.5x3.8x3.8 / Earthenware / ^2 / Electric
\$68.00



Stephen Lally
Alexandria, VA
Corona Cup
4x3x3 / Earthenware / ^3 / Electric
\$50.00



Harry Levenstein
Great Barrington, MA
Set of Bowls
3x7.5x7.5 / Porcelain / ^11 / Reduction-cooled, Anagama
\$280.00



Lynne Norwood Lofton
Chagrin Falls, OH
Budding
8.5x9x5 / Earthenware / ^04 / Oxidation
\$300.00



Wade MacDonald
Birmingham, AL
Dotted Fracture Mug
4.5x7.3x4.3 / Porcelain / ^5 / Electric
\$200.00



Wade MacDonald
Birmingham, AL
Crackle Fracture Cup
4.5x5x4.3 / Porcelain / ^5 / Electric
\$200.00



Jessi Maddocks
Berthoud, CO
PrintCast in Peach
3.5x4.5x3 / Porcelain (Slipcast and 3D Printed) / ^6 / Electric
\$60.00



Will McComb
Oxford, MS
Coffee Pot
8x7.5x5 / Stoneware / ^10 / Reduction
\$90.00



Jennifer Mecca
Gastonia, NC
China Blue Lillie Vase with Gold Luster Leaves
11.5x6x6 / Porcelain / ^8, 019 / Electric - Twice-fired
\$275.00



Esther Mech
Watkinsville, GA
Etched Cup
3.1x3x3 / Porcelain / ^10 / Wood/Soda
\$75.00



Jessi Maddocks
Berthoud, CO
PrintCast in Azure
3.5x4.5x3 / Porcelain (Slipcast and 3D Printed) / ^6 / Electric
\$60.00



Liz Mazurek
Fort Collins, CO
Bulbous Mug
4.5x4x4 / Porcelain / ^10 / Gas Reduction
\$100.00



Scott McClellan
Port Angeles, WA
Coffee Carafe
14x6.5x6.5 / Earthenware / ^1 / Oxidation
\$125.00



Jacob Meer
Hopkins, MN
Square Mug
3.5x4.3x5.3 / Porcelaneous Stoneware / ^10 / Wood
\$50.00



Melissa Mencini
Austin, TX
Fruit Basket
6.5x9.8x6.5 / Porcelain / ^8 / Electric
\$275.00



Courtney Michaud
Tyrone, NM
Deco Boxes
2.5x5x5 / Porcelain / ^9 / Oxidation
\$200.00



Polina Miller
Burke, VA
Butterscotch Cup
4x4.5x3.5 / Porcelain / ^10 / Reduction
\$55.00



Ayla Mullen
Floyd, VA
Handled Poppy Vase
9x8x8 / Stoneware / ^10 / Gas Reduction
\$200.00



Kelsey Nelsen
Lopez Island, WA
Goldfinch Yunomi
3.5x3.5x3.5 / Stoneware / ^10 / Soda
\$50.00



Elizabeth Paley
Durham, NC
Zigzag Jar
8x7.8x7.8 / Brown Stoneware / ^6 / Oxidation
\$210.00



Chris Pickett
Pocatello, ID
Yunomi Composition x 4
10x10x4 / White stoneware / ^6 / Oxidation
\$550.00



Alex Pratt
Dearborn, MI
Hidden Garden Vase
7.8x7.5x7.5 / Porcelain / ^6 / Oxidation
\$85.00



KyoungHwa Oh
Grand Junction, CO
Blue Butter Dish #3
4x11x7 / Porcelain / ^10 / Gas Reduction
\$280.00



Sarah Jewell Olsen
Kansas City, MO
Blue Cup with Platinum Details
3.5x3x3 / Porcelain / ^10 / Gas Reduction
\$50.00



Lisa Orr
Austin, TX
Multi-Party Centerpiece: Cake/Bouquet,
Crudite/Candlestick, Bundt/Bonbon Bowls
14x8.5x8.5 / Earthenware / ^4 / Electric
\$450.00



Susie Rubenstein
San Juan Capistrano, CA
Cloud Bowl
5.5x10x10 / Porcelain / ^10 / Reduction
\$175.00



Ann Ruel
Ocala, FL
Irises and Snap Dragon Garden Vase
Trio Set
10x10x4 / Porcelain / ^5 / Electric
\$500.00



Shana Salaff
Fort Collins, CO
Sushi Server
3x9.5x9.5 / Porcelaneous Stoneware / ^5 /
Oxidation
\$115.00



Mary Ellen Salmon
Trumansburg, NY
Seed Pod Vase 1
9x4x4 / Porcelain / ^6 / Oxidation
\$188.00



Brandon Schnur
Independence, MO
American Elm Tea Jar
4x5x5 / Porcelain / ^10 / Reduction
\$200.00



Pamela Segers
Duluth, GA
The Games We Play (Lunch Plate)
1x8x8 / White Earthenware / ^5, 017 /
Electric
\$500.00



Gertrude Graham Smith
Bakersville, NC
Flower Candle Pedestal Bowl
10x11.5x11.5 / Porcelain / ^10 / Soda
\$275.00



Adam Spector
Canandaigua, NY
Fractal Moon Vase
14x3x14 / Porcelain / ^9 / Electric
\$375.00



Adam Spector
Canandaigua, NY
Plexus Vase
8x10x2.8 / Porcelain / ^9 / Electric
\$250.00



Joe Singewald
Cold Spring, MN
Serving Tray with Wings
2.5x13x11 / Stoneware / ^10 / Gas Reduction
\$160.00



Kanika Sircar
Washington D.C.
Ratri Sukta
9.5x6.5x1 / Stoneware / ^6 / Oxidation
\$300.00



Andrew 'Augusta' Smith
North Augusta, SC
Tea For Three
5x10x8 / Black Flameware / ^10 /
Reduction
\$350.00



Jonathan Steele
Eugene, OR
Gongfu Tea Set Featuring 100mL Kyusu
5.5x4x4 / Stoneware / ^10 / Wood
\$495.00



Debra Stern
Bellingham, WA
Dessert Bowl 2
2x7.5x7.5 / Stoneware / ^5 / Electric
\$150.00



Chad Steve
Tequesta, FL
Sangria Pitcher
9x6.5x6 / Porcelain / ^10 / Soda
Reduction
\$120.00



Mike Stumbras
Riverside, MO
Empty Set in Laurel Urn
12.5x6x6 / Porcelain / ^10 / Gas Reduction
\$860.00



Timothy Sullivan
Marietta, GA
Covered Jar
10x7.5x7.5 / 50/50 Porcelain & B-Mix /
^10 / Reduction & Electric Refire
\$325.00



Sumiko Takada
Columbus, OH
Inlaid Bowl - 01035
6.5x7x7 / Stoneware / ^5 / Electric
\$380.00



Tracie Griffith Tso
Reston, VA
Bunny Blossom Chawan
3x4x4 / Stoneware / ^6 / Electric
\$200.00



Joan Ulrich
Alexandria, VA
Oval Cream and Sugar
4.5x4.5x3 / Stoneware / ^10 / Salt
\$175.00



Molly Uravitch
Minneapolis, MN
Eyes on Your Vase
13.5x12x11 / B Clay / ^6 / Electric
\$600.00



Megan Thomas
Van Wert, OH
Ghost Bird Yunomi
4x4x3 / Stoneware / ^8 / Wood
\$55.00



Megan Thomas
Van Wert, OH
Bird Effigy Bowl
4x7x4.5 / Stoneware / ^8 / Wood
\$68.00



Samuel Thompson
Appleton, WI
Orange Razzle Dazzle Camouflage Plate
1x8.5x8.5 / Red stoneware / ^1 / Electric
\$70.00



Veronica Watkins
Maryville, MO
Large Strainer Vessel
6x9.3x11.5 / Red Stoneware / ^5 /
Electric
\$325.00



Susan Kay Wechsler
Hamburg, NJ
Sushi Set
19x9x2.5 / Stoneware / ^2 / Oxidation
\$250.00



Dryden Wells
St. Louis, MO
Teapot & Jar
11x11x11 / Stoneware / ^6 / Electric
\$700.00



Lars K Westby
Annapolis, MD
Octo Platter
16x16x2 / Red Earthenware / ^4 / Electric
\$175.00



Adero Willard
Chicopee, MA
Tall Vase
20x9x6 / Terracotta / ^3 / Electric
\$700.00



Emily Rose Wright
College Park, MD
Sheep Cups with Stand
8.5x13x5 / Stoneware / ^6 / Oxidation
\$100.00



ChengOu Yu
Alfred, NY
Imprint
10x4.5x3.5 / Porcelain / ^6 / Oxidation
\$120.00



ChengOu Yu
Alfred, NY
Mystification
7.5x6x4 / Porcelain / ^6 / Oxidation
\$200.00



Alex Zablocki
Alma, MI
Vase with Multi-colored Glaze Chunks
12x12.5x14.8 / Porcelain / ^9 / Oxidation
\$1,200.00



Sooyeon Kim - Johns Creek, GA



Lynne Norwood Lofton - Chagrin Falls, OH



Chase Gamblin - Bloomington, IN



JULIA'S Instagram POSTS



@strictlyfunctionalpottery

Julia Galloway
www.juliagalloway.com



I included these two pieces in the 2020 Strictly Functional National Exhibition as the surface design is absolutely lovely and does not overwhelm the form. The surface pattern moves around the form and both challenges and embraces the shape. I also enjoyed the boldness of the surface pattern and found this relationship of surface and form to have a unique sense of the makers. This work will be for sale on the Strictly Functional website from September 25th to October 31. Alex and Adero - thank you for applying to strictly functional, so happy to have your work in the show.

Over the course of my career I have set down a path for creating rich elaborate handmade ceramic work that combines elements of functional pottery, vessel, and sculpture – exploration of the decorative clay surface is the unifying. As a black woman of color, my African American, Native American and European ancestry influences my exploration of artistic visual languages that uses a myriad of decorative techniques, overlapping pattern and color provides. This provides me with endless possibilities to express through the clay form and surface, concepts of identity, history, materiality, and design. - Adreo Willard

Alex Pratt is a ceramics artist based in Dearborn, Michigan. His influences include mid-century textile design, Scandinavian pottery of the 1950s and 1960s and German Expressionist woodcuts. Alex earned his BFA from the University of Michigan and teaches at a number of art centers in southeast Michigan. - Alex Pratt



I included these pieces in Strictly Functional Exhibition 2020 because they both embrace that wonderful intense and intimate softness of clay. The pots are gently off center, and beautiful satin phenomenal surface with a little bit of glaze run and crystal growth. The both also have an interesting relationship of inside to the piece to the outside of the piece. On Bob's pot, I travel from the outside to the inside up and over the undulating lip, and on Liz's cup, it seems like one could travel right into the cup through that poke, or dimple on the side.

In developing my asymmetrical work, I am guided by the interaction of volume and line during the making of each piece. My irregular, apparently random, coil-built constructions result from variances introduced at the base of each vessel during the initial phase of my hand-building process. From these slight modifications in the base upon which I coil-build each vessel, a uniquely organic – yet 'predetermined' – shape emerges. My surface treatment of each pot aims to highlight and complement the work's narrative contour. - Bob Bruch

I strive to connect the perception of our own bodies as influenced by media and society to soft, fleshy ceramic sculptures and objects in an attempt to alleviate the negative perception of our bodies. By creating quietly beautiful ceramic objects influenced by my own bodily insecurities, I hope to evoke a sense of appreciation of the features found on ourselves that provoke personal feelings of shame or discomfort. - Liz Mazurek



Fruit Basket by Melissa Mancini

Candelabra by Ben Bates

Here both artists are brilliantly making structures using clay, and the space is creating a surface pattern. The space is as important as the clay itself. It is uncommon to see so much space in ceramics – that's not 'inside of a vessel, or some people say, the breath of space inside the pot. There is a fantastic lightness of being in these objects – they are so much about celebration. In Melissa's basket, the negative space moves up, and the handles rise up and flair out in a gesture of exaltation. In Ben's candelabra, there is massive almost frantic energy moving all about the piece, makes me laugh and it is easy to envision it center stage at a raucous dinner party.

I am so inspired by the 'Tree of Life' pieces, they are powerful artwork and were the original gem for these candelabras. Once I started building them, the making and creative process completely took over and the act of making itself became a new source of inspiration. I love the negative space, I love the making process, and I hope the joy I experience in this process is shared with the viewer / user. - Ben Bates

I am interested in the subtlety within form, obvious function and the intimate moment of a pot being used. I prefer to make smaller objects that one would tend to hold close, increasing the users understanding and furthering the investigation of the form. The exploration of these concepts keeps me pushing the definition of my work. - Melissa Mancini



L: Jar by Nolan Baumgartner. R: Serving tray with Wings by Joe Singerwald

These two pieces have delightful restrained fluidity on the surface that is harmonious with the form. Joe's beautiful 'Serving Tray with Wings', displays flowing waves of white glaze trailed across the surface, loosening the structured form. Nolan's glaze, starting to melt down the side of the jar runs is rather restrained for soda fire, the viscosity of the melt encourage the fullness of the form. And besides, look at that green....ohhh, copper carbonate...delicious.

I am deeply satisfied when my ceramic interpretations create an aesthetic attraction upon entering individuals' private lives. I choose to hand build and wheel build utilitarian pottery with hopes my cups are the first to dirty once unloaded from dishwashers and my vases are the first filled with spring flowers. I love thinking of the maker each time I interact with their work and when I use my own pieces, my eyes follow soft curves while fingers trace lips and feet, reminding me why the pot in hand was pulled aside and brought into my personal life. – Joe Singewald

I focus on making work that is comfortable and familiar. I want my forms and motifs to vaguely reference some sort of thing you've seen before, but you're not quite sure where. The surface is defined with arches, ellipses, and other patterns that I render in slips and glaze. The patterns are mapped out based on the golden ratio, and, by repeating and flipping simple mathematical graphs, my motifs emerge. After the precise formation and decoration, the elements and atmosphere of the soda kiln complete the work. - Nolan Baumgartner



Top: Night and Day Jar by Susan Cohen Bottom: Craggy Centerpiece-Vase by Zachery Dunn

For many in ceramics, tradition is still very important. As a field, we look backwards and forwards; historical ceramics where we have been, as well as pushing ahead to what's next. There were several wood fired pieces submitted to the exhibition and these two really stood out. The Large Jar by Susan Cohen captured the classic large woodfired vessel; the buildup of ash, sometimes obscuring the surface, other time enhancing it as a beautiful record of the firing process: part Tamba pottery tradition, and part Frank Boyden. Zach's Craggy Vase embodies that wonderful thing about wood fire – the absolute transformation of what at first could look like a lump of clay, into an object so much its own, it's almost other worldly. I appreciate the juxtaposition between the raw beautifully crude clay vase with these delicated pink flowers in them.

Fire captures my imagination. The many variations of the firing process give each piece of pottery its unique character. Most of the pottery is wheel-thrown, using either stoneware or porcelain clays. The fire is the unifying element in my work. The transient effects of the flames are "frozen" on the pieces, which embody the physical changes that they have undergone. I envision making pottery as a way of sharing. Pots should invite you to use and feel them. Each pot develops a story, like a favorite cereal bowl or a tea bowl that gets used for many years, and is surrounded by memories. Using something beautiful can be a source of enrichment and joy. - Susan Cohen

My work attempts to elevate and highlight what would otherwise be the quotidian, be that a simple flower arrangement from the garden, or a cup of coffee. When life slows down, small, seemingly simple things, become even more important, and perhaps they always should have been. The subtleties of the surface are highlighted by the flame and ash of the woodfire process making each piece unique. - Zach Dunn

Top: Deco Boxes
By Courtney MichaudLeft: Imprint Vase
By ChengOu Yu

I am interested in the work of these two artists because of how the work is hyper geometric in surface and form, and also has an intimate conversation of actual or implied relationship between the insides and outsides of the piece. I also experience a bit of 'scale shifting' when looking at the work. In Courtney's small covered boxes, I wonder if those black stripes are long urban shadows or a super closeup of text. With ChengOu's vases, that small blue wash of glaze could also be waterfall, making me two inches tall. The craftsmanship of these works is breath taking.

I make pottery because it is limitless. Pots can enter a home becoming an intimate object of use, mark moments of life serving as monuments to be admired, or to simply serve as a visual art object. Using defined silhouettes, color, and line I represent landscape, sky, and natural order. I look to tall windmills jutting from rolling fields, mid-twentieth century design, and streamlined American silver to compliment natural references. The industrial leads me to sharp edges and definitive shapes. - Courtney Michaud

ChengOu Yu's making process attempts to combine contemporary Western approaches (trying to work towards innovation and originality) with the influence of Chinese traditions in ceramics (a high level of respect for historical forms and using repetition and technique to reach the ideals of "quality" and "beauty"). He uses pottery techniques to inform his design process. He states "I love the way that form reacts to every manipulation and the contrast between the rigidity of the molded object and the human touch. - ChengOu Yu



2020 Strictly Functional National Exhibition
 L: Fruitfulness II by Sooyeon Kim
 R: Charcuterie Board by Rosa Salas Gonzalez
 B: Sheep Cup with Stand by Emily Wright

I was excited to jury these pieces into the exhibition as the artists are staging their pottery in context to support the ideas in their work. Sooyeon's small covered jars, so lovely and delicate, staged with small grains of rice to support her ideas of 'many making up one'. Rosa's fantastic set of pouring pots and cups is joyous, playful, the cups circling around, like her family does during dinner. Emily's sheep cup with stand -honestly, I laughed out loud when I saw this piece. Oh! it delights me, its humor, character and fresh handling of the clay; it is completely its own stage set that I get to observe and partake.

The most joyful moments of artistic creation are when I express my thoughts, create an aesthetic, project my feelings through clay and even discover a new technique or style. My technique of hand building with tiny pellets of clay springs from the basic principle that from many can come one. As a child I often heard 'don't waste a single grain of rice' With my utilitarian ceramics I am excited to establish a connection with the new owners and feel a sense of accomplishment. - Sooyeon Kim

Salas, a native of Maracaibo, Venezuela, said her ceramic sets are meant to enhance the experience of sharing meals together. "There's this thing we say in Latin American communities, 'sobremesa,'" she said. "It's pretty much the time you spend with your friends and family chatting and catching up after you eat. It's not the action of eating. It's that moment you share with people." - Rosa Salas Gonzalez

My work re-creates nostalgia. From parties made abstract to dinner at grandma's, my pieces use pattern, color, and sculpted objects to represent memories. Pottery can straddle the line between functional, symbolic, and decorative and has unique power to hold the nostalgic. Nostalgia is how we continuously form ourselves and how we place ourselves in the world. - Emily Rose Wright



Montana Granite Seed Bank
 By Rachael Marne Jones

2020 Strictly Functional National Exhibition

I think this work is brilliant; this is strictly functional, however this is not flask or oil bottle. This lovely porcelain slip cast container, this little sculpture, is an actual seed bank for holding seeds; these are made to be filled with local seeds and buried in the ground to assist in biodiversity and stewardship of our planet. We all have concerns in our lives, personal, political, and it's very difficult to merge these concerns with utilitarian pottery itself. Often we end up with artwork that's a little weak in clarity, both as an object and as an idea. However, Rachael has completely embraced both her interest in useful objects as well as environmental concerns in this deeply thoughtful, stunningly beautiful and exceptional work.

A seed bank is a storage container (often made of clay) that is specially designed to create a controlled, interior climate so as to maximize the seed's potential viability. Although it is hard to have expectations that a project (these seed banks) such as this could potentially exist beyond our generation, the planting of the seed banks is an important aspect of the project and the act is meant to highlight the importance of local ecology in the midst of an increasingly global outlook. - Rachel Marne Jones



Teapots & Coffeepots included in the Strictly Functional National Exhibition

L. Carmel Teapot by Stephen Grimmer
 R. Coffee Pot by William McComb



Ahhhhh, Coffee pots and teapots, a quintessential form for the studio potter. I selected these two pieces as every part of these complicated pots is strong and well thought through. The craftsmanship is exceptional, handles well balanced to spout, attractive lid and knob as well as clearly articulated form. Glaze surface quiet and supportive of the form, these pots better inherently understood through use and time, a treasure.

I sell nearly all my pots out of my shop in Alto Pass, Illinois, it's extremely gratifying when folks come in, start handling pots, and suddenly 'get it.' I can tell when their conversation lowers and they start pointing out subtle details to each other. I am witness to a new intimacy building between handmade pots and people. I have a lot of repeat customers that tell me how my pots have become a part of their daily lives, that the pots beautify their homes, about the great food served to loved ones in my pots. Through these conversations and through these pots, relationships are built. - Stephen Grimmer

I like the idea of engaging with art in that (domestic, morning) space. If you have to drink coffee or tea in the morning, you have to drink it out of something right? So, I love the idea that instead of drinking out of a mass-produced object from the store, instead, you are drinking out of something that is incorporating all the aesthetics of painting or sculpture. I love that you can engage with art in that real intimate and mundane space. - William McComb



Toothily Ice Cream Dish by Sam Chumley

The Games We Play (lunch plate) by Pamela Segers

These are low fire earthenware highly decorated playful dishes. Both artists are using underglazes, showing tremendous skill and a clear vision for their artwork. Sam, capturing a gesture with a brush and Pamela, showing astounding skill with airbrushing. I continued to be amazed, year after year, about how versatile ceramics is, the clay and glazes themselves, and how each artist finds their own way to manipulate, explore and master this material. Exhibitions like this are where we can see such a wide variety of work and inventive ways artist are working with the material. A bit of a potluck...enjoy!

Overall, my work is made up of parts of stories to be examined and then built up to create a whole experience. My main objective is to create work that is both personal and stimulating enough to draw the viewer in for a closer look. The importance for selecting ceramics as my vehicle for a narrative approach is mainly due to its natural affinity. Ceramics allows me a method of documenting events and experiences that in later years will provide a personal story retold with a personal voice. - Pamela Segers

I see pottery as a medium that is familiar and approachable cross culturally, and therefore provides a solid platform to express ideas to an audience. The imagery I utilize references the stylistic elements of traditional tattoos with dense, vivid tones and bold lines. I allow the user to bring their own associations to my pots. Whether the viewer chooses to see playfulness, repulsion, angst, or any other associations, I hope to instill a sense of energetic boldness. - Sam Chumley



I enjoy this work because it's just so darn complex! Alex's vase is decorated with glazes that have been fired and cut into shapes - 3D chunks of color, added to the vase and fired again. The vase itself is as complicated and colorful as the flowers that go in it. And, how lucky is Andrew's cup, to have a garage to park in when not in use. Such an event using these pots. These pots help expand the understanding of functional. Pottery has a wide and deep relationship with use - so whether it be the mug, chipped and cracked, rolling around on the dashboard of my truck - and I still use it every morning -- or the huge wedding platter that I made for friends, a special moment, made to be used once. Utility is not in question, it's the union of the intent and follow through that I find interesting.

My work takes apart the ceramic vessel and re-animates its constituent parts. Vestiges of utilitarian ceramics are free to perform as comic objects frozen in acrobatic recombination. I incorporate ceramic materials' uncanny ability to mimic the familiar. Thick slices of juicy orange glaze operate as household sponges. Hearty drips fall like melted Velveeta cheese. Luminous greens resemble Laffy Taffy. - Alex Zablocki

I am currently exploring work that comes from an interest in machinery and engineering. Influenced by schematic cutaway drawings and simple machines, I aim to make functional pottery that features moving mechanisms. Terra sigillata, underglaze, and engobes allow my work to have moving components that the user can operate and interact with. The bright contrasting colors I use to separate surface layers come from schematic drawings using opposing colors to highlight each part of the machine. Through a process of problem solving and engineering I seek to combine a simple functional vessel with a complex machine. - Andrew Clark



This work is stunning as it is both tremendously complex as well as elegantly simple. So much can be done with clay and slip and a lot of patience! I marvel at the focus and skill in these works. There is something about such precise order that is seductive. Something about repetitive pattern or motion is appealing, pleasing, not unlike seeing rows of bowls on a ware board. I find structure soothing. I am glad that someone is finding and championing order in today's rather chaotic world.

I work with Terra Cotta Clay in the cone 04, low fire range. I enjoy making large platters that are from 16 to 24 inches in diameter. They can be used as both functional objects and/or hung as decoration when not in use. I consider the work as decorative objects intended to visually enhance their surroundings. Lately I have been exploring color along with hand-made, self-designed stencils. It is exciting to see how the designs change from one phase to the next, drawing on the past, experimenting for the future. - Frank Gaydos

Sumiko creates her functional work with stoneware that is fired to cone 5 in oxidation. Her inlaid pieces are painstakingly crafted by hand: first carving the designs on the ware, then filling them with colored slip, and finally cleaning up the excess slips. She also uses slip decorations and various glazes of her own formula in her work. - Sumiko Takada

Alongside music, my background in science and math informs my art. Physics governs the relationships between the forms and surfaces of my zigzag and swoosh pots. I cut or swipe patterns into slipped cylinders; these expand into captivating organic designs as I stretch the pots from the inside. The transformations are different every time, functions of variables both within and beyond my control: initial patterns, depths of cuts, slopes of curves, plasticity of clay bodies, magnitude of expansion, directional spin of the wheel. - Elizabeth Paley



These pieces are some of my favorites in the exhibition. This is an interesting comparison. Megan's cup IS a bird to drink from. Steve's salt cellar, he has literally 'put a bird on it'. Kelsey's cup shows us about bird, with delightful gesture. I work with these ideas also; when something 'IS', when something is 'SHOWN' and when something is 'ABOUT'. In addition I love the idea of a 3D object becoming 2D decoration. Birds are a common theme in ceramics. Historically we see birds depicted in just about all cultures as they are often used as metaphor, dynamic decoration, and simply because they are beautiful.

As a maker of ceramic sculpture and sculptural vessels, I am interested in how the objects that artists make reflect values, attitudes, and aspirations indicative of a particular time. Steeped in the ecological anxiety of our current moment, I find myself thinking about how environmental degradation affects people and how clues about ecological history and attitudes towards the environment manifest in material culture. - Megan Thomas

I have begun to make work primarily out of stoneware, finished with an iron bearing wash. These pots appear to be made out of raw steel, a feeling that is contradicted by the sweetness of the birds and the softness of the forms. When sitting next to a window, the light reflecting off of their surfaces makes these jars appear as if they exist in a night landscape with the light of the moon highlighting edges and curves. - Steve Godfrey

My work is rooted in home and place-making. I am interested in the intimacy between people and the pots we live with; they are made to fit our bodies, we carry them around and put them in our mouths. In the same way I have a relationship with the birds I carve on my work, inhabitants of the small Island we all call home, this place we build our nests. - Kelsey Nelsen



I am interested in objects where one thing is becoming something else. Pottery, usually round with few edges and no actual sides, is transformed here. Veronica's larger strainer vessel embodies soft geometry, a round thing transforming into square, with added strainer pulling it in that direction. Wade's dotted fracture mug is a hard geometry, and its transformation is the cup is either quickly unfolding into a taller cup or folding into a shorter cup, as it either straightens up or settles down. In addition to Wade's cup's tremendously complex form, the surface has fantastic reference to pop culture and Roy Lichtenstein as well as the tight logic and order of digital structure / communication.

My work reflects a fascination with utilitarian objects. The wonder of pottery is that it has the potential to become the user's companion each day, taken into the home, and into the hand of the user—a very personal space. It is considered many times, and on many levels, both consciously and subconsciously. As our world becomes more virtual, I am compelled to be a maker and stubbornly hold to the commitment that beautiful handmade objects impact our existence. - Veronica Watkins

As a ceramicist, I embrace handcraft and digital methodologies as I work toward defining vessels and sculpture that are personally and culturally relevant. Through the process of research, ideation, and practice, I have formed the groundwork for celebrating the human element of contemporary architecture and the vessel and their relationship as common structures or ideas. I believe an object as fundamentally simple as a cup has the power to reflect and confront the myriad complexities associated with living in the twenty-first century. - Wade MacDonald



Quail and Snake Cup by Wesley Anderegg | Bunny Blossom Chawan by Tracie Griffith Tso

I juried these delightful pots into the exhibition as they are fantastic examples of artists using aesthetic historical traditions and surroundings near and dear to their heart as a primary influence on their work. These are stunning examples of making work that is culturally influenced and still personal and expressive of the artist. Wesley, living in the southwest is depicting local species, road runners and quail in his bold delightful style. Tracie's bowl is in homage to her Asian heritage and surface decoration influenced by her pet rabbit and muse-juror, and the skill in that brush work – no joke, darn amazing!

My major artist influences are “my love of nature – animals and flowers. Art is a natural part of my personality, it just flows from me. I could not escape it. A piece of pottery as artwork in itself – each one is an individual traditional Chinese composition but is truly functional artwork” I hope my artwork will “broaden the depth of understanding of Asian composition and appreciation of the elegance and simplicity of traditional art.” The artist and her husband reside in North Reston along with her muse and rabbit, Cleopatra. – Tracie Griffith Tso

At the dawn of mankind primitive peoples fashioned clay objects. They sculpted about what they knew and wanted. Pregnant women and animals were hot topics of the day. I think of my work in the same way. Though the topics may be different I feel a link to those ancient people sitting around playing with this beautifully plastic material. - Wesley Anderegg



Spanker and Piss Freak Mugs from the Handkerchief Series by Wesley Harvey, included in the Strictly Functional Exhibition

These cups are an exceptional example of work in which both the utility and content are given the same amount of attention and care. In a useful object, half of the concept of the piece is absorbed through the idea/actual of use. This leaves room for the maker to bring in their own ideas and concepts. Sometimes these ideas are political and/or personal, sometimes they reference history, trends or specific techniques or materials used as metaphor. With these cups I think, what is the narrative of the surface decoration, why is Wesley putting this imagery on these familiar cups, what does having this imagery on a cup tell me that is different than if it were on a painting? Pottery is latent with ideas and my understanding of function, or utilitarian, continues to expand the more I learn. These cups are slip cast porcelain, fired to cone 01, 10 and 015, with clear glaze, decals and luster.

My current body of artwork examines gay male sexuality through the lens of queer theory using appropriation of imagery and objects. I want to address the social and cultural issues and implications of homosexuality in a society that is becoming more accepting of what used to be a scarlet letter worn only in the shadows of back alleys and dimly lit rooms. Illustrations from 1960's male physique magazines allow me to appropriate a fantasy male subject who is handsome and extremely physically fit, that interacts with other men in encounters that ride a line between caring and loving to deviant sexual acts that can be sometimes hard to look at. - Wesley Harvey



L: Seed Pod Vase by Mary Ellen Salmon
R: Corona Cup by Stephen Lally

Artworks included in the Strictly Functional National Exhibition

When reviewing these pieces for the exhibition, they both made me think about touch; how the artist touches clay, and how we touch each other. Mary Ellen's 'Seed Pod Vase' has repetitive elegant touch, over and over again moving the soft clay under her fingers, it is rhythmic and seductive. This is what many of us love about clay, the responsive touch. Stephen's 'Corona Cup' with depictions of the virus exactly where you would pick up the piece made me think about how, on account if the current epidemic, that human touch can now be so dangerous – challenging to be on the surface of a cup. Touch? No touch?

A comment by a gallery owner about my glazes being too glossy led me down a rabbit hole to change clay bodies (from stoneware to porcelain); then textures (from sharp edges to round + slip), and forms (from bowls to cylinders). I stayed loyal to my precious box of wooden pieces throughout, and two to three years later the seed pod vases emerged, finally satisfying my inner critic. - Mary Ellen Salmon

Working within the constraints of utilitarian ware creates challenges, but it also allows a level of intimacy and connection between artist and owner that is not present in most other media. I strive to make pots that convey more than just the ability to function. My pots need to work, but just being functional or “hand-made” is not enough. To be successful, they need to explore the visual and textural landscape of sculpture and of nature. - Stephen Lally



L: Budding by Lynn Horwood Lofton
R: Flower Candle Pedestal Bowl by Gay Smith

This work makes me think about celebration, a large raucous overflowing gathering or small quiet celebration - a moment of intimate appreciation. Both of these pieces create a location or narrative around them. I can easily see one tulip in Lynn's precious bud vase, this small animal carrying a beautiful budding flower on its back. And Gay's vase/candelabra/bowl combination, staking a claim on the middle of a table, room a glow with candle light and the end of a meal, empty dishes around as we ease back into our chairs for after dinner conversation. A functional pot can be the small vase on the window sill that gets a fresh flower every morning, or a vase and candelabra, over flowing with light and sweet heady scent of flowers, drawing people together for a once a year brouhaha.

I love the challenge of creating work that will have a place in everyday life. Objects that have dual function (visually playful, yet serving as a vessel), appeal greatly to my sensibilities as an artist. The creativity to transform clay into something original requires touch, flow, technical skill, and both a sense of space and humor. - Lynn Lofton

These days, I contemplate living as a practicing artist on a planet facing extraordinary shifts. I imagine what the work of my hands and heart might contribute. Perhaps, this work develops qualities which may be of benefit: caring attention, commitment, honesty, courage, passion, hard work, love of beauty, and a willingness to get one's hands dirty. Do consciously made pots carry some ineffable ability to transform and heal? What lies embedded in the stone of fired clay by the creative alchemical bond between material, process, and person. What may be conveyed through use or enjoyment? - Gay Smith



There is something wonderful about pottery in sets. Sets where the parts are the same but not matching is where potters sing – so much room for creative problem solving and unique solutions. Often the visual dialogue between the two pieces helps the viewer/user understand the ideas in the pots. Joan's lovely cream and sugar is a shining example of matching but not the same. Both pots have the same tone – soft, warm, generous, however the creamer – reaching out and up to the world, and the sugar bowl, rolling around quiet and grounded. Andrew's tea for three is wonderfully staged, teapot up on a trivet with three cups bobbing around it. I was drawn to the steely satin black glaze, so dense like cast iron, anchored to the table. Hats off to Andrew for making these from flameware!

A lifelong artist with a degree in scientific illustration from Northern Illinois University, Joan states "The creative path doesn't end. There is always that next thing to achieve, whether it is reconsidering my creative intentions or mastering a particular challenge. What grabs me now is making unexpected choices, hopefully producing quietly surprising pots. - Joan Ulrich

This set is a combination of two different bodies of work. One with deep throwing rings (cups) and the other one quieter (teapot). It was exciting to see them come together, just like that, different clays, different firings and then there the set was. These are made from flameware, the teapot designed specially to go on the stove, and the handle not get too hot, and the trivet to hold the hot teapot. I am pleased with this clay and how the set came together. - Andrew Smith

Blue Cup with Platinum Details by Sarah Olsen
Basket by Amy Evans
2020 Strictly Functional National Exhibition



I was struck by the clarity of vision of both of these pots. With Amy's proportions of handle to basket, where the surface is on the form, and size of the decoration seemed just exactly right for me. The soft geometry of this piece is both understated and bold. It reminds me, somehow, of the early pots of Bill Daley or Francis Senska, without seeming dated. Sarah's Blue Cup with luster decoration harkens back to a mid-modernism sense of design, layered and elegant. The influence of early modern design is respectful, not overwhelming or obscure.

My functional pottery incorporates natural imagery, pattern and form to the enjoyment of the user. I am heavily influenced by my immediate surroundings and love of nature. – Amy Evans

I am a potter with a design aesthetic. Through thoughtful craftsmanship, I intend to communicate the importance, permanence, and necessity of my pots. I use porcelain to throw and hand build shapes that are informed by facets of design, historical ornamentation, and Modernism. Practical beauty is conveyed through the articulation of curves and edges that create the forms and adorn their surfaces. I am drawn to the dynamic form change that occurs when a graceful curve moves around a pot and into an edge. - Sarah Olsen



There is a tradition in historical European porcelain and Chinese export porcelains where the decoration is basically in a frame, a window on the side of a piece. Scenes of the world or portraits are inside the frame. Both of these pieces reminded me of this decorating device, establishing a central focal point, and the rest of the surface radiating out from there. I cannot tell if the butterfly has particular meaning for Asta, or what the script in the circle on Kanika piece says, however, clearly they are important and I enjoy the attention that is drawn to each.

My work combines thoughtful forms with layers of design, color and textual imagery. Ratri Sukta is one of a series of mandalas or cosmic maps that look both upward and inward. Schiaparelli's maps of Mars in a clouded sky surround the central circles containing excerpts from the Rg Veda: 'The goddess Night has drawn near, looking about many sides with her eyes. She has put on all her glories. The immortal goddess has filled the wide space, the depths and the heights. She stems the tide of darkness with her light' (trans. Wendy Doniger). – Kanika Sircar

Working with clay I feel my connection to the earth and nature, which allows me to create forms that are both functional and beautiful, and incorporate a life and character of their own. I like to combine simplicity and opulence in my designs and for the design to follow and enrich the form of the object. I combine organic imagery and motifs with geometric ornaments and abstract designs to reveal a juxtaposition of natural beauty to man-made environments. - Asta Joana



One of my teachers, Walter Ostrom (brilliant) said that all surface decoration in the entire history of ceramics comes down to dots, lines and floral representation, I added imagery to that list – I think that's pretty true, and makes something very complicated and often intimidating, very simple and doable. These three pieces embrace line, in aesthetic, intent and content. Lars use of line (similar to all his work) is 'sort-of-clear-sort-of-not-clear lines' surface, delighted by ambiguity, Pamela's line – right out of middle school, unrestrained and so direct, a pleasure in its clarity. Sam, lines as cover or camouflage - smart. A line is not just a line, and who would have known that something so simple would be so fulfilling.

My artwork is a reflection of how I interpret my physical world and cultural surroundings through the medium of clay. Foremost this search is a personal need to express ideas through the creation of objects which have been created by my own hands. - Lars Westby

My work is influenced by many of the modern artists of the 20th century, from Gene Davis's stripes, to the geometric forms of Frank Stella to the work of the Bauhaus artists. I seek to embrace their aesthetic with functional pottery. - Pamela Berry

The colors and decorative elements of my work are inspired by early 20th century geometric abstraction and constructivism. This plate specifically is part of a new body of work inspired by WWI 'Dazzle' camouflage used on naval ships. This camouflage, created by a British marine artist in 1918, is made up of complex geometric patterns and shapes in contrasting colors. - Sam Thompson



When jurying the Strictly Functional Exhibition, I was drawn to two things about these pieces. First, both pots are close translations to their inspiration. Susan's sushi set is clearly a boat, chops sticks as rows and cups are little buoys or inner tubes. Stephen's serving trough is from a corrugated drain pipe. A real object, examined, digested and then produced. Second, though they stand on their own, both objects will be invigorated by use. I do not believe that all pottery must bow to utility fully, or is incomplete or unfinished when empty on a mantel or shelf. However, these pieces seem to still have room in them for interaction. In addition, through aesthetics, the work leans towards specific use, beautiful sushi lining up inside the boat tray, and a rough loaf of multigrain bread - cut in thick slices on Stephen's serving trough. The pots are almost advertisements for what they are for, is that a visual onomatopoeia - you are like what you are for? OK, I just made that up, but it's a wonderful idea!

Susan Wechsler started hand crafting functional pottery in 1967. She built up her own wholesale designer pottery business but gave it up in the early 80s so she could devote herself more fully to creating new art. Her passion for cooking and entertaining is what drives her to create gorgeous platters, baskets and bowls to enhance the foods they hold and to beautify the home environment. - Susan Wechsler

My work takes influence from things that are industrial, mechanical and manmade. I often reference barns, silos, factories and water towers as well as many other structures. Many of these buildings are used for containment and are in essence vessels of function. Chimneys, windows, vents, smokestacks and piping are integrated in my work as decoratively charged elements of visual interest. Sometimes these elements are incorporated into my work as handles, lids, and spouts. The atmospheric firing processes of soda and wood help to give my work the same sense of history and aged qualities that I look to for inspiration. - Stephen Heywood

I juried these fantastic pots into the 2020 Strictly Functional exhibition as both of them are delightfully quirky and fly in the face of what we often consider 'good pottery'. How curious, at the bottom third of Mark's vase, where we would think stability is a must - he has pierced it with many holes, why? not sure, however now the bottom of the pot - usually where the piece is the heaviest, is now the lightest. When I think of a vase, I think of a graceful form, often reaching up with a sumptuous curve, however, Andrew's vase, the neck is a little herky-jerky, moving up with stops and starts like putting on socks when your feet are wet - what spirit! These works fall under no pottery tradition, I have not seen these vases before, and in their challenge to our common understanding of pottery there is a rightness to them, just a different language. When I first look at them I am not sure what I think, because I haven't seen them before, however, if I can wait it out, shift my eye glasses of expectation, I can start to find the wonder in not knowing. Bravo!!! In addition, the layered surfaces of these vases are delicious, rich with intent and mastery of the materials.

I have chosen to be a potter because it is a way for me to create many surfaces to decorate and share my personal stories in a manner that puts me in direct contact with my customers. They have made a choice to purchase my work and display it, most likely in their homes. Making work that is about the home for the home has always been important to me as a maker, but so has been being honest about what my message is - Mark Errol

My hand built terracotta vessels bring the richness of public architectural forms into homes and individual, intimate environments. Architecture, historical ceramics, abstract painting and color theory are some current ideas driving my work. Many of my vessels are the result of my attempt to understand the proportions of historical ceramic vessels. The layering of slips, underglazes, glazes, and use of a sand blaster make possible the varied and complex surfaces on my vessels - Andrew Avakian

On both of these pieces I am struck by their weightlessness, how they float off the surface - this is due to the relationship of surface and form (ah, that ole chestnut...). The glaze itself, as the viscosity of the glaze is melting gently down on these pots visually giving have a tremendous sense of lift or rise. This is the beauty of glaze melt, the pooling of slow gravity - there is nothing else like it. It looks to me that these are both traditional high fire Chinese glazes; on Polina's cup - an iron bearing glaze, a long lost great grand glaze of temmoku, and on Susie's bowl, a classic feldspathic celadon. These are early high fire melters in ceramic history, iron and feldspar, as this delights my inner glaze geek. Lastly, the decoration on these forms is loosely gridded out, the dots, flowers and clouds make a loose pattern. Since the pattern is not exact, it brings a casualness to these pots, gently relaxing a tight form, all and all, beautiful pottery.

Polina is always striving to capture and master specific artistic techniques, or styles, and then finds herself eager to learn and master something new in addition to drawing inspiration from nature, or from other forms of art. She says that turning dirt into beauty- combining the potter's elements of earth and fire, are as close to magic as one can get. "Making art is less about leaving your distinctive mark than simply doing what you love." - Polina Miller

I have always been attracted to handmade objects intended for daily use. They are reflections and often celebrations of how we live, what we need and enjoy using to make ourselves comfortable. Whether it is a wooden spoon, a particular bowl, or a textile, these objects define and enliven our routines. In my studio, the challenge, objective and adventure are to make spirited and beautiful pieces for daily use. - Susie Rubenstein

With these dishes I am taken by the relationship between strength and delicacy. These shallow bowls, bold in shape, and in the first layer of glaze - be it leaves or squares. And then on top, these delicate graceful patterns of flowers and leaves. It is a remarkable combination. There is a level of sophistication to this merger, without being trite or predictable. They both push symmetry aside, but not balance. Both have a confident touch, glazing miles of flowers have come before these pots here, however, they still feel fresh and full of discovery.

I make useful ceramic vessels that are designed for aesthetic pleasure as well as utility. I enter into the very personal space of the viewer/user's home, thus participating in the intimate (and very necessary) rituals of another's daily life. My work runs the gamut between traditional or historically significant forms and inspirations and a more postmodern pastiche of style, colors, and decorative patterns. I love beauty and elegance as much as quirkiness and playfulness, and my vessels seek to allow the user to share my passions. Decoration versus content, beauty versus pragmatism; these are the dialectics that inform my work. - Shana Salaff

Growing up in the rural Midwest, I gained insight and appreciation towards my surroundings at an early age. As an aspiring artist from a little girl on, I loved and drew my environment. Time, distance, formal education, life experiences, travel and parenthood only honed my upbringing's passion. I continue to be inspired spiritually in interpreting nature's three-dimensional gifts unto the two-dimensions of my clay vessels. - Debra Stern



Both of these pots are steeped in tradition, Brandon's 'Yixing - esque' covered box and Ann's 'Softpaste Porcelain-esque' French vase; these are like seeing old friends. Both are about observing nature, Brandon building the box to look like a part of a tree trunk, leaf laying easily on the top as a knob. Anne, with exquisite painting skill she depicts a flower garden, snap dragons and iris so lovingly portrayed. I am struck by how both of these are part of something larger than themselves. We know we are looking at a fragment of a tree, a physical three dimensional representation of a small piece of a larger whole. The red underglaze on the vase is a framing device, to draw the edges of the painting, a two dimensional portrayal of part of a garden that is much bigger than the flora and fauna depicted. Scale and context, these are powerful devices to support self-expression.

I enjoy removing the obviousness of functionality within the sculptural object, referencing the natural world provides a juxtaposition to contemporary consumption of the natural world without the full appreciation of its beauty. The trompe l'oeil imagery assumes a solid object while providing active space for its intended purpose. - Brandon Schur

As my talent is to create pottery, I pass on my stories through this particular medium. It is fitting that I gravitate toward functional pottery as the traits of purpose, responsibility and province are very highly valued traits in my family. The images that I carefully hand draw are mostly images found in nature such as birds, bees and flowers. Many birds are associated with motherly love and, of course, when paired with the bees, they are a natural symbol of courtship and maternity. - Ann Ruel



First off, holey moley this is some astounding craftsmanship! Wow and wow. In both of these pots the geometric intersection of line, plane, mass and form is elegant and sophisticated. Both of these pots rely on light to understand the form. ChengOu's vase is reliant on how the light is hitting and being absorbed into the form. The unglazed or satin/matte or slip glaze surface absorbs the light, bringing a crispness to the shifts in plans through casting subtle or sharp shadows. If this had been covered with a fatty thick glaze, that would have softened the form and the piece would lose its crisp articulation. Dane's ewer is absolutely dependent on how the glaze is breaking, how the glaze is moving down the form. Up at the top of the ewer, the glaze is thinner, light easily penetrating to the clay, sharp and clear. As the glaze moved down the form (in that marvelous way that glazes melt responds to heat and gravity), the glaze is thicker and softer at the bottom of the piece. This gives the ewer a tremendous lift. If this piece had been glazed with a shino, or a majolica, this reaction to light and gravity would have been lost. The mathematics of these pots, and the sensitivity to angles is ordered, seductive and sensual.

I am inspired by historical vessels, repetitive patterns as well as modern architecture. I attempt to translate those impressions into reductive forms. The use of light and shadow offers a subtle movement throughout the visual surface represented by assembled individual forms. - ChenHou YU

In keeping with traditions of ceramics, my pottery references the natural world, modestly, in structure and detail; from foot to lip, the lines mimic the soft transitions one sees in nature. I work in clay because it fills my heart. The processes involved, the material itself, and the utilitarian aspects are rooted in our basic human nature. - Dane Hodges



These two lovely pieces are as much about the inside space of the pots, as much as what they look like from the outside. These pots are SO FULL of air, of form, of how clay can wrap around space. Even if these pieces are empty, they are full of space. Chad's Sangria Pitcher is the widest just about exactly at the bottom one third of the pitcher. Ayla's vase widens out just a little below the halfway point. Where the piece is the widest, where the form changes from going out to going in, where the weight in the piece is articulated, these things change the way that we see and experience the volume of the form and how we feel about the internal space. The other thing I love about these pots is that they are very much themselves, they are what we call 'a potter's pot', they are not about "God and the wind" or the kitchen sink. They are self-contained, pleasing solid pottery.

I see pots as vessels for storytelling; they can invoke thoughts, memories, and emotions which enliven a moment or an entire day. Clay is my canvas and my collaborator, and together we explore how to convey the poetry of the natural world within the limits of a vessel. My hope is that these stories, carved in clay, will expand and individualize within the home, taking on a life of their own like the best folktales, through the accrued layers of meaning which use and touch bring to everything familiar. - Ayla Mullen

The forms are functional, uncomplicated and approachable. The surfaces are spontaneous, with natural variations due to each collection of the sand's unique material make-up. The combination of form and surface evoke a transition between water and land, reminiscent of a melting sheet of ice or water passing over white sand. - Chad Steve

***post script - Chad Steve is using different sand from across North America in his glazes and pottery - how cool is that!**



These are bright pots! Bright! Beaming! Sunshine! These pots are YELLOW! RED! BLUE! These pots are COLOR! Hear the trumpets sound! These pots are more closely related to fiesta ware, rather than the brown wood fired pitchers we often associate with traditional studio pottery. This work is rooted in contemporary/modern design. They are designed to look beautiful on your table, wall or mantel - and demand the space to do so! These pots are the focal point of the room, all eyes on them. Color is demanding, and delicious. Chris Pickett's wall box with cups is an orchestra of circles and squares, order - and almost out of order!! If I am reading Chris Alveshere's bud vase correctly, it's several smaller pots glazed to the slab below, a delightful combination of order and chance. These pots get the blood racing!

When considering form, I often think of its potential as metaphor. My work is guided by concepts associated with comfort such as childhood idealism and personal relationships. Shared cultural experience of comfort serves as a point of entry to my work. In this piece, the grouping of vessels functions as a metaphor for the comforts found in the idealism of childhood, and the value of the individual roles in personal relationships and close communities. The array of colored dots that decorate the surface of the grouping refer to a favorite childhood toy, the Lite Brite. This reference is a point of entry to the comfort and idealism of childhood. As I pushed each colored plastic peg into place, there was no question in my mind, I would grow up to be an astronaut. My future was set in stone. There was no need to worry, I could attend to more important matters, such as glowing colored plastic pegs. - Chris Pickett

I visualize pots in everyday objects and places, seeing the potential of form and color in everything from vintage wooden toys, a pile of Skittles, or wandered in thrift stores. This inspiration has steered me into making pots for the countertop, and pots that allow for a vast range of function. The compact size of my work allows an intimacy between vessel and user, and stems from my eternal love for cups. A love for cups that has led me to make other forms that are meant to be held, experienced, and appreciated from all angles. - Chris Alveshere



I have always had a soft spot in my heart for pottery on trays. Maybe it has to do with my kitchen table always being a little messy and a tray helps the pots from getting lost in the chaos. Maybe it's the ritual of taking a pot off the tray, and the ceremony that comes from the act of moving it out of its resting place. Or maybe, just maybe, it's also the fact that this tray, this platform is the pot's home base, and, like a dancer, it returns back down to the stage, again and again. These are particularly strong examples of pots on a tray - they have design cohesion. With Jessie's work, the soft cup is on the soft tray, the negative of the cup is echoed in opposite as a solid form in the tray. Chase's is contrasting a refined cup made of pure porcelain and gold luster with a tray of Brick Clay, rough and course, the opposition of material reflecting the strength or each.

For the past few years, I have been working on a series of cups that utilize a framework of colorful slips and highlights of gold. The slip provides a soft color palette, lusciousness and gestural textures while the gold luster highlights moments of significance. Gold luster's intrinsic value and reflective quality contributes to its ability to evoke emotive sensations within the user and viewer. - Chase Gamblin

In my functional work I explore my relationship with something I have lost, or experience something that I never had, by creating pots with the purpose of bringing people together. These pieces are often designed with the intent of prompting a shared experience and pausing to enjoy a moment. - Jessie Kristy



I have selected both of these pieces for the Strictly Functional Pottery exhibition as they took me a minute to understand what I was looking at; I had to stop and look, I couldn't assume I knew what I was seeing. When looking at Timothy's jar I thought, ok, it's brightly colored (and how does he get those color looking like high fire and low fire at the same time), this is a jar, and then I get to the lid and - oh - this is a butterfly! I get it! Beautiful! Then, I am looking at Brooke's piece and I see, ok, there are feet on it, that's the bottom, and this "S" on the table has parts that go up and opens, an s pot with two smallish openings, ah ha! this is a bud vase, a little like a tulipiere! Ok-I get it! Nice! These pots don't already exist in this world so I must I go on a little journey to figure these things out. These pots are not obvious, however, the artist has given me clues, a few bread crumbs to help me along with these objects of discovery. Thank you for this reinvention, and pushing my mind to expand and be patient to see, when I do not know what I am looking at.

Conventional components of clay construction, such as coils and slabs, allow exploration of the boundary between what is built and what is grown. The coil in particular is a recurring element. Mold making of the simple form preserves the mundanities for reproduction as a jumping off point for improvisation with the language of the pot. - Brooke Cashion

I have been working in high-fired porcelain for the last 16 years. My focus has been to develop a rich glaze palette with a flexible application approach and the firing techniques to support the creation of highly controlled sensuous surfaces. At the same time, I've worked to advance my throwing, forming and design skills to produce strong platforms for those surfaces. I'm very interested in line and color, nuance and subtlety. I want the work to reveal itself over time and to compel re-examination. - Timothy Sullivan



This artist has some miles on their hands and can make nice pots. This artwork is a blend of intuitive handling of the clay, letting shape and slip come together, retaining structure of the form and clarity of use. This teapot is ready to go, it looks like I could grab it - it is easily accessible physically and psychically, the function is clear and the thumb print on the side of the piece says 'touch this'. There has been an interesting shift in how we take images of pottery, I think this is a reaction to seeing/selling work on line; many artists are showing images of their pots in context - a beautiful mug filled with hot chocolate sitting on a country wooden table with mittens in the distance, a bowl of berries on the edge of a picnic table with fresh daffodils casually cast aside just so. I think this is about the fantasy of use. However, this image seems different to me. Here Dryden instinctively knew to take a photo of the piece: the piece has been touched in the making, and he is touching the piece. The photo is about his experience with the piece itself, and possibly yours. I am seeing actual touch as well as implied touch. He is reaching into the frame of the photo, showing us his pride and joy, 'see this pot', the gesture says, 'look inside here, beautiful, eh? notice the fine craftsmanship, check out this excellent teapot'. Dryden is showing us how the teapot and jar are real.

In one-off items, sculpture and production work, I am captivated by the union of craft, problem solving, ingenuity and creation when working with clay. While ideas associated with oppositions and dichotomies have and continues to be a driving force in my work, I find that the subtleties and surprises of the creative process have the most influence. Both in my thrown forms and sculpture, I am interested in the act of construction, deconstruction, reconstruction. I believe that it is this process of making that creates an understanding of the object and resulting evolution of the artwork. - Dryden Wells



What I enjoy most about these two pots is their quiet chaos. The handling of the material is soft but insistent, the glaze surface, random from melt, and still structured. Both pots have parts of them that are just a little bit out of control, however, are reasonably restrained. It is from this combination, that the work is elegant. Some of this elegance comes from the undulating lips, some from how the clay still looks just a little bit wet, though it is fired and glazed, and some from the underlying structure of the form which is gingerly holding together the modest hurricane of glaze moving across the surface. These are the humming birds of pottery, elegant and graceful, and quietly busting with energy.

Most of my work is thrown on the wheel and glaze fired in a gas kiln with a reduction atmosphere, allowing for the asymmetry of human touch conferred in the making and chance in the coloration, both of which help to distinguish handmade from mass-produced pots. I am also interested in the implications of labor and traditionally masculine methods of working and their translation into domestic wares and labors of homemaking. - Esther Mech

I am a utilitarian potter. My goal is to create pots that are visually pleasing and unique in character, but also useful in everyday life. I enjoy making pottery that brings delight to the daily activity of eating, setting the table and enjoying a meal. I spent many childhood weekends observing and participating in the traditions of my paternal Italian-American family and the preparation of elaborate meals. I observed how tableware and the type of serving pieces were as important as the planning, preparation and enjoyment of a meal. This served as the foundation for my interest in utilitarian pottery and my love of creating elaborate surfaces and forms. - Jennifer Mecca



What is it about atmospheric firing that we continue to be drawn to – be it wood fire, salt, soda, or raku, this technique still piques our interest, and for many, an unwavering devotion. What staying power! Is it rooted in trying to control the uncontrollable? or just letting the kiln and the path of the flame have at it? I am most interested in these pieces because the story behind the firing process is telling us about the shape of the pot. On Isaac's very handsome pitcher, the boldness of finger marks down the side of the piece forces such a radical shift of color and surface, due to its interaction with the atmosphere in the kiln. Harrison's lovely dramatic bowl set is telling us clearly about the path of the flame, and where the flame had to squeeze between the sides of two bowls, leaving a triangle shaped shadow in its path. The atmosphere in the kiln effects the planes, valleys and volume of the forms, and both of these artists have so thoughtfully glazed their work through the firing process, using the mark of fire and breath from the kiln to bring drama and chance to their pots.

My current body of work is an exploration of using soda firing to describe how we, as a community of individuals, interact with each other and ourselves. We celebrate our triumphs as a group and mourn our losses together, we enter partnerships and form relationships, some fleeting and some permanent, and, finally, we seek peace and solitude in the interstices of an increasingly chaotic world. The quiet conversations in these moments of introspection seem to be a balm for the savagery of existence. It is my hope that this collection of objects creates a conversation where these moments can exist. - Isaac Howard

I make functional, atmospherically fired pottery for daily use. I hope that by choosing to use thoughtfully handmade objects as opposed to thoughtless and sterile disposable or factory-made wares, we can add a layer of depth and appreciation to our daily routines and communal gatherings. - Harrison Levenstein



These cups are remarkable. Often 3D printed work is a bit sterile on account of its regularity. However on Jessi's cups, the printed lines are roughed up, seemingly folded and weathered. In my imagination I travel all over the place with these cups, newspaper or paper bag, shower curtain or pool, tin cup or dodge dart. They are such a clear marriage of (wo)man and machine, predictable lines of a mechanical act, and the human touch, soft and hesitant. Bravo, Jessi, for combining these different aspects of our world without being too clever or on the nose. I find a great deal of hope in these small unassuming cups.

These mugs were designed using the 3d modeling program Rhino and they are created using a combination of 3D printing and slip casting methods. The walls of the mug are 3D printed as a bottomless cylinder and the round-bottomed foot is slip cast and joined to the cylinder. I enjoy the slight wobble the rounded foot creates when placing the mug on a surface- it brings a playfulness to what could otherwise feel like a rigid form. The original handle prototype was 3D printed in two parts and made into a mold, allowing me to cast the handle as a single piece. The handle ties together the mug as a whole: the body is 3D printed, the foot is slip cast, and the handle is a slip cast form camouflaged as a 3D printed handle. - Jessi Maddocks



When jurying the entries for Strictly Functional, these two cups stuck in my mind. I went through the list of images again and again, and just couldn't get away from these two; and finally, oh they made me laugh when I put them together. Jacob's cup, through the mystery of atmospheric firing, the surface looks like the milky way – and then John's cup, well, there is the pilot. Nothing more clever or deep or learned. Simply a spaceman, looking for the stars to guide him home. I realize now that I am often drawn to pots that allow for a fantasy, a narrative, a story larger than the piece itself, a story I can join in with, a story I can add to by using. I start the story each morning, selecting a mug for coffee, to prepare me for the adventures of the day.

I always get the question, 'why astronauts?' – my response is always, "there's a lot of reasons, but to start, they're funny..."! I use humor to draw the viewer in and I find the astronaut image speaks to people on different levels; for some, it's scientific or about exploration, others see a nerdy outsider or a space cadet. People find aspects of themselves in these quirky illustrations and are surprised when they see themselves reflected in the gold luster face shield! I hope that my Astroware pieces uplift the user, bring a smile to their face, and offer a moment of intimate self-reflection...literally! - John Cohorst

My pots are designed to show the history behind their making. I intentionally include tool marks, brush strokes, exposed connections, and finger marks to highlight the processes that each pot goes through. I want my pots used, but also explored. Leaving my finger marks or throwing lines is a way for me to connect with the user and help guide them through the creation of each pot. My hope is for my pots to integrate into everyday lives. I want my pots used at a table to nourish ourselves both physically with food and mentally with conversation. I am happiest when someone expresses their enjoyment in using one of my pots. - Jacob Meer



I first saw Jim Connell's pottery when I was a student and was seduced by the beauty of the form and glazes. Still today, I am taken with the work. Many potters are moving to more stories based on surface or floral decoration. Some of this is a product of seeing pottery online, and in the absence of touch perhaps the viewer is more drawn to narrative. Or it could also be that we are living in challenging times and we are attracted to things we can understand quickly, without having to struggle through emotive responses. However, if we can be still, and just look for a minute, the pure phenomenon of the green glaze, melting and moving, breaking different colors white to brown to black; the red on the cups, shifting from white icy fingers of glaze settling down to the cool ox blood red, we can find joy in the beauty of abstraction and in the viscosity of melt. This is what the best of high fire glazes are, this beauty of chemistry and melt still seduces me, again and again as it is mystery; I am drawn to something so far outside of myself and still can relate so instinctively.

I strive for beauty and elegance in my pieces. On my very best days in the studio I get glimpses of it and it keeps me going. It is all about that eternal elusive quest for beauty. My work is inspired by nature and guided by historical precedent. I was taught, and now I teach my students, to look to the past for ideas and inspiration. I have always looked to China for my main source of inspiration. My love of Chinese ceramics was originally centered on the work of the Sung Dynasty. I deeply admired the great porcelain pieces of this period and they profoundly affected my understanding of form and proportion. - Jim Connell



L: Jonathan Steele Gonghu Tea Set featuring 200ml Kyusu
R: Pitcher by Jesus Antoshka

These pots are traditional form and surface. They look authentic and are familiar, and in some way represent the best of east meets west, Japan meets England. These absolutely beautiful pots are iconic and have come to represent something in the field of ceramics that has tremendous staying power. As far as I can tell, and this is in no way a judgement on these pieces, more people make teapots and pitchers, than people use teapots or pitchers – so there is something about these forms which is still essential. Even with teabags, tea balls, milk cartons and juice in a can, we still make these pots and they continue to be quickly absorbed into people's homes. This is not other things affected by 'progress' though many of us read online - we still like to have books around, or the perforated edges of the self-sticking stamps. These things continue to mean something to us, though their use for many is that of comforting decoration, rather than the daily function of their ancestors, they are brought forward for ceremony, or simply are a feast for the eyes.

Overall, I want my work to give society a reason to bring handmade objects into their homes during a time when there is so much emphasis placed on speedy production and mass quantities. In a sense, pottery almost forces people to slow down and appreciate the craft while also putting the work to good use. Instead of observing my work from afar, people get to actually utilize and interact with it, which I highly encourage. My pieces are made to be used in the home and on the table -- to drink your coffee out of, to serve your dinner guests with -- whatever use you see fit! - Jesus Antoshka

I choose to look at the world with the eye of an artist, finding profound and poetic content in the simplest facts of nature. My ceramic works are my engagement with material as I find beauty in observing and placing my hands into the phenomena of the earth. It is about curiosity and the joy of wonderment in discovery. Physical accumulations and changes over time are as much my media as clay is and wood firing my functional vessels is an expression of that. I provoke sensitivity to a material dynamic that is ever present in the world and strive to create a moment of considerate pause for my viewer. - Jonathan Steele



Mug and Plate
by Maddie Fowler

Included in 2020 Strictly Functional
National Exhibition

I juried two pieces of Maddie Fowlers work in the Strictly Functional Pottery National exhibition as the artwork has a keenly unique voice in surface design that is particularly timely. I saw the surface design as computer boards and computer chips – that worked with the relativity square shape of the cup and pour over. However, after the jury process I went to her website and I saw that she is influenced by the birdseye view of landscapes, rural and urban, and that fits also. I am now interested in how this relatively simple decoration can simultaneously reference something so small, and something so big, and both about making connection.

The core of my work revolves around a keen interest in the history of ceramics and a fascination with intersection of food, ceramic vessels and culture. I seek to make direct forms that allow for layers of decoration. The surfaces of the vessels I make represent a visual intersection of urban and rural built environments. Lines that make up windows and doors, houses and stores, paved paths and rails, are paired with crop rows, distant fence lines and solitary barns. My work is intended to be used on a daily basis and also an object of intrigue when not in use. - Maddie Fowler



L: Cup by Kaila Guilmet
R: Indian Paintbrush Yunomi
by Lauren Karle
2020 Strictly Functional
National Exhibition

This pairing of cups is a study of opposites and similarities. Both cups, small, hand held, with a sense of lift and shift in form about one third left to chance here. Kaila's cup is made from rough and tumble clay with feldspar spits and burnt out indents. This cup moves from raw to finished. Lauren's cup is almost the opposite, the bottom corners folded gently, like tucking in a sheet, the surface, mysterious, rapid drawing, messy, wild, frantic energy. This cup moves from light to dark. I am unreasonably picky about the mugs I use, I have well over 250 cups in my collection, I use the same one or two until they break. And when this happens, it is a dark day, I stomp around the house, gnashing my teeth, I cradle the shards gingerly, I bite my dog without remorse, I write the potter a hand written love letter, streaked with tear stains, swearing my allegiance to this fallen mug...well,no, however, we all have lost favorites, and the memory of that moment, the sounds when it breaks, when a daily routine is altered, it leaves a hole the next morning where, in a sleepy daze, I go back and forth from cupboard to dish drainer looking for the old friend.

I am a potter and social artist inspired by people – our food, traditions, and place. My goal is to have my work serve a purpose beyond its utilitarian function by designing it for who and how it will be used. My aesthetic is inspired by the two and a half years I lived in Guatemala and evolves with the people I meet and places I go. I currently live in Minnesota making, writing, teaching, collaborating, and always learning. - Lauren Karle

I've been thinking of edges lately. This cup has edges. It is built of two bodies: a stoneware wedged with a local feldspar and a porcelain slaked together with a manganese alumina stain. One additive gathered and sifted by hand, the other manufactured to a stable precision. Edges of bright and dark emerge where the two bodies meet. The world these days feels all edges. All sharp and anxious. But looking at this cup - I'm reminded of the moment just before a rainfall when the scent of silica fills the air with a profound earthiness - I feel more calm. Dark sits on each side of morning after all. - Kaila Guilmet



L: Floret Storage Jar by Mike Gesiakowski
R: Large Serving Bowl by Kirsten Bassion

Clearly with this pottery, I must talk about pattern – domestic pattern. It's symbiotic to put domestic patterns on a piece of pottery meant for the home. First on Kirsten's large bowl, this surface references fabric, sheets, hand stitched pillows and duvet covers. The combination of colors and patterns are perhaps more like when you make your bed, but do not have sheet sets, so the pillow one color and pattern, bottom and top sheet, different – a lovely conglomeration. With Mike's piece, both the pot and the slip pattern (glaze slowly running down the pot vertically) is much more like wall paper – it has a formality to it which takes me to architecture of the room, rather than what's in the room. These are perfect for domestic space – they look like where they go. In addition, neither pot is finicky, both absolutely built for use, to knock about in the kitchen or backyard at a barbecue. These curated styles can move into our lives with ease.

I create functional pottery for daily use. I hope that it catches the eye through the use of bright colors, intricate patterns, and satisfies the user through generous forms and tactile surfaces. For years before that I was a quilter and that has also informed how I divide up the space on each form and lay down patterns as well as color and texture. I strive to create work that I enjoy making and that is fun to use and share with others. This is part of the joy of being a potter. - Kirsten Bassion

I draw inspiration from the degraded and weather worn ornamentation of architecture. The degraded surfaces of my work are metaphors for our individual memories and how, like the structures around us, they decay over time. The two-dimensional imagery in the work is a flattened representation of three-dimensional architectural ornamentation. This diminished dimensionality conveys the transformative aspects of our experiences from real world existence to the stored information in our minds. - Mike Gesiakowski



First off, this artist, Lane Chapman – this gal can really draw. The line quality of her imagery shows a sensitivity and understanding of the material. Her drawings have a very specific ‘touch’. In addition, the pottery itself is clearly made by hand, and she has left the story of making process for the user to understand. Now specifically, this work is about narrative. In the place set she is tell you right there through the drawing and title about her concerns. The dead bird with the trash leads one to make up a story themselves as to what has happened here – both referring back to eating, on, a plate. It-is-what-it-is, is-what-it-looks-like, is-what-it-is-about, is-what-it-is-telling you. I very much enjoy that I respond this the work through my eyes, the skill of the drawing, through my hands – empathetically due to the touch of the hand, intellectually with the combination of the surface and the larger concept as well as aesthetically.

Touch is powerful. It can be used as a source of communication and conveyer of emotion. I believe we crave intimacy and connection to the world, which I strive to achieve with my pottery. I explore the intimacy between object, user, and their natural surroundings through the interaction of function, form, and surface design. There are parallels with our daily domestic routines and the rhythms found in nature, and my work celebrates this connection. Nature and my childhood influence my surface designs. By bringing into play living organisms, I am interested in the beauty of the “small” world, the life cycles of insects, and humans’ varying views on beauty. I feel connected to nature when working with clay. - Lane Chapman



These pots – it’s a lot of action. More is more and these pots are so energetic! Wow! Knock my socks off. I love this work – no holding out, or holding back, just going for it!! These are all complicated in form and surface. Be it a teapot with a tall handle, and spout and lid and foot and how fantastic are the red dots on the handle! Or a multipiece center piece – so many fabulous functions stacked up to rule over the table with swirls and ripples and even a bonbon bowl!! How about a vase up on claw feet, with many arms and eyes, and every single inch full of vigor. Wow and wow, these are amazing things – gutsy and brave, these potters leaving it all out on the field, my hats off to them and their enthusiasm and love of the material and making.

Lisa’s pottery pieces bring garden color to the table. Sturdily crafted, they will withstand decades of use and enjoyment. She delights in working in her studio exploring her newest form and glaze ideas. Every piece is made its unique best as if she were keeping it; afterward applying layers of flowing glazes to give rich, jewel-like color tones. Though rooted in the deep history of ceramics, her forms are fluid and often gently asymmetrical: a combination of the clay’s natural expression and her own inspiration in the moment. - Lisa Orr

I am driven to make refined, elegant pottery that sparks happiness when used or seen. Handmade vessels are a manifestation of my own dreams and personality, and hold meaning that goes beyond pure appearance. The tactile way clay moves in my hands and the puzzling of patterns and colors on the ceramic surface is a continuous game with limitless options. Pottery is an art form that rebels against single-use paper plates and mass-produced, uninspired tableware. It is both sustainable and unique. I believe that my instinctive drive to create beautiful, joyful, functional objects recalls age-old and familiar daily food rituals that satisfy body and soul. - Lillian Babcock

Consistent themes in my art are color, pattern, texture and a sense of whimsy. I draw influences from the natural world, flora and fauna which have unusual forms and surfaces. I am continually inspired by ‘more is more’ style of Baroque and Rococo architecture and art objects and the sense of awe one feels when overly stimulated by intricacies. My utilitarian functional work provides an excellent canvas to display carved patterns and shapes which express a personal narrative. - Molly Uravitch



I am interested in how it takes time to discover what is going on in artwork, and with pottery – this is made even richer on account of its actual use. Here, I so enjoy how Matt’s beautiful pitcher shifts from extremely tight four or five sided bottom, then, on the shoulder relaxed soft geometry, and then at the top – almost a circle. The surface Matt put on it, this satin matte either sig or slip-glaze or what I am not sure – it pulls tight over the form – like skin. This pot is all about the human body. Michael’s five-sided cups have a wonderful detail of a small slab piece added to the side for our fingers to find in use. This added piece is basically a similar five-sided slab, as if the slab had been the top of the cup, pulled back onto the side. The glaze on Michael’s cups is thick and white – like a flannel sheet pulled up and tucked in.

Pottery is a continuous curiosity: how it’s made, how it feels, its shape, its surface, how it exists in a home as an object, or a tool, or maybe an image. When making pottery, I search for poised forms that suggest sculpture, respect utility and perform well; they should be confident and handsome. Aware of the tendency to put parameters around my work, of what is “good or bad”, I do my best to give the ideas room. It is important to pursue the clues that linger on the periphery of my pottery, which are often sculptural and beyond the scale of tableware. The process each new idea reveals drives me forward. - Matt Kelleher

Michael is a professional art wrangler living in Albemarle County, Virginia. He specializes in creations of concrete, stone, or clay. His style is distinctively twenty-first century with a dab of Japanese aesthetics. Michael’s relationship with clay is one of conflict and resolution; he wrestles slabs of clay into dynamic shapes which balance the positive with the negative. The result is human-scaled functional pieces with a monumental sense – as if they were maquettes for outdoor public sculpture. That’s what Geisert’s art is about – his furious transformation of material into striking constructions. He refers to them as his NeoCretion©. - Michael Geisert



These pots are a display of and an homage to the finest of clays: porcelain. What passion both these artists have for this purest and valuable material! I do not think that any other clay could be as liquid, as fluid as Noel’s dish, and also hyper articulated and durable as Mike’s astounding vase. I love that this clay can be both wiggly or structured, modern or historical, soft or hard. This afternoon I have jumped down the rabbit hole when reading through footnotes of the Wikipedia page on porcelain – what a journey around the world, if you have a six hour layover in the airport – this could be for you! In these pots I enjoy that both Noel and Mike are inspired by the clay itself, and from this they show us what they think is beautiful, how they speak with and through the material and ultimately they reveal their innovation and artistry.

I am a potter, I am in love with the material and the process. My practice and ideas evolve through making. My work is strongly influenced by the natural environment that I live and play in, with the various forms and processes associated with water composing a central, resounding theme. I am drawn to serene, fluid, and graceful forms, which I find abundant in vertical ice and water-carved rock. What fascinates me are the rhythms of freeze and flux, ebb and flow, erosion and deposition. My process engages these transformational cycles; the resulting dynamic surfaces convey a narrative of movement and change. - Noel Bailey

Mike Stumbras makes ceramic vessels that are inspired by 18th and 19th century European production ware. His work is created primarily on the potter’s wheel with the immediacy and individuality attributed to hand processes and alternative firing methods. As an educator, Stumbras is passionate about equipping his students with a developed conceptual and technical framework for art making, as well as a personal method of inquiry that can extend beyond the classroom. - Mike Stumbras



Looking at these two dishes I am taken by the simple (and not so simple) act of decorating. I remember when I was in Art School, in 2D/3D Design classes I would think, why is this important? - I just want to make pots and fire in the salt kiln!!! Ah so, I spent a long time after college on my own trying to learn the principles of design I had so quickly dismissed; how to visually activate a piece of pottery by adorning the surface, and the aesthetic, intellectual and emotive response to how I see order. We see in Christine's plate that there is focused energy in symmetrical order, black on white and patterned getting smaller as it moves from the rim to the center of the plate - drawing me inwards. On Ruth's plate there is a vigor of 'stem to leaf to flower'; the white flowers floating on a black surface, across from each other, pulling the oval of the dish even wider, with that little bit of yellow glaze in the center of the flower, bringing me back to center. Nice job, gals!

I make pottery as an active participant in the coming together of people, sharing and the enjoyment of food. Eating a beautifully prepared meal creates a celebration. I make pieces of service and I make interaction. Decisions in design facilitate containing, presenting and service in the daily lives of others. My detailed surfaces enhance the importance of a moment-attentive handling that leads to discovery and pleasure. - Ruth Easterbrook

In her works, Christine Goh seeks a merging of fluid and static elements, a tactile connection in the space between boundaries. Boundaries of land and water, manmade and nature, unusual creatures and objects shaped by the environment and passage of time. She explores aesthetic possibilities of clay by designing, throwing, carving forms. These forms are canvases for slip and glazes. - Christine Goh



These two pieces have an overwhelming sense of historical influence. Scott's carafe is rooted in Asian Ceramics, and Seth's tankard is clearly Greek and Roman. Why is it that so many of us absolutely love historical pottery? Is it simply the WOW factor; that such amazing work was made with the crudest of tools? Is it nostalgia - that some have a delightful fantasy of what it meant to be the village potter? Is it that we see ourselves in history, we speak this same visual language? Is it a collective unconscious? Is it that historical pottery is familiar, we have seen parts of this pot before and harkens back to another time? At some point, all pots came from one pot, which I guess started with cupping our hands together. Most pots are made with our bodies in mind, and reflect our rituals, our technological developments, what we eat, what we value and what we think is beautiful. I myself spent a great deal of time in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, as a kid and walking through the large collections of Greek, Korean, Chinese and Iranian pottery, it pleased me, I found the reference to home, to gathering, to a soothing beauty of something familiar.

Embracing irregularities, my work lifts with fluidity and movement allowing each object to give a unique tactile experience. This is echoed in swooping marks that accentuates my forms. These vessels become compositions that are simultaneously rugged but elegant. - Scott McClellan

Capturing clean lines and continuous curves that produce striking silhouettes, strong negative spaces, and distinct profiles around architecture, primarily drives my creative decision making in the studio. Specific forms of inspiration are Baroque and Romanesque cathedrals, palaces, and other architectural references of the Czech Republic and Islamic mosques, that are topped with domes, spires and finials that pierce the sky and reach heavenward. Luxury or ceremonial wares, that were used in a palace to celebrate a momentous occasion or in a place of worship to enhance the sacredness of a ceremony, also influence my work. Rather than the specifics of rituals or ceremonies that these objects were used for, I am intrigued with the sense of importance and sacredness that my pouring, drinking, and lidded vessels convey. - Seth Green



What a delight to compare and contrast these two pots. Scotts Jennings' jar is soft and loose, the clay rising up from the throwing rings, it seems as though I can see the pot rise due the compression from the act of throwing. It looks like how it was made. Scott Jelich's pitcher's throwing rings are skillfully symmetrical, and the sense of uplift is coming from the addition of the lovely spout and the vertical lines of slip/glaze. Jennings' pot happens to be and then is, and Jelich's pot is planned and then becomes. The creative process itself, so curious how we get from a lump in the middle of the potter's wheel to an object, by chance or by plan, both these pieces soft and gentle and unassuming, come into our homes.

Forming, shaping, and cutting on the potter's wheel tends to be a discipline in repetition and consistency. When working at the wheel, I allow myself the latitude to balance the rhythm of rote labor with interludes of exploration. Choices occur throughout the making process in reaction to how the material responds to my touch. I shape the work with my hands, starting from the inside out. Swelling the form, wider and wider, I push the limits of the material. The marks made on the surface may be different depending on the tool I use or speed at which the wheel is turning. I strive to create a personal arrangement of form, texture and color that exists as both a functional object, as well as poetic narrative that conveys a sense of motion, volume, and structure. - Scott Jelich

I am interested in utilitarian vessels and find that they provide endless avenues to explore form and surface design. The dialogue with the form is what motivates me to get in the studio each day and to do the work. The work informs itself and slowly evolves over time; I revisit the same forms over and over, making changes as I achieve a new level of understanding the details of a piece. When I look at a form that I've been making and it no longer looks as "good" as it once did I know that I've crossed into new territory. - Scott Jennings



Stunning, this blue vase is stunning. It is a sumptuous experience of blending no tech, low tech to high tech in processes, idea and aesthetics. When I look at the form I can't help but follow the surface with my finger - my finger as a pencil in the air, no tech, I am drawing around the piece, moving it around in my mind, I can turn it as if it's in Rino. This surface decoration that articulates the form references units that fit together, parts that shift and move around and mechanically, a fractal geometry, expanding or contracting symmetry, a pattern of building blocks shifting in space to articulate form. This vase is slip cast, the original carved from a solid and then made into a mold - this is low tech processes making high tech patterns. Colors, these are primary colors, rooted in modern design; these are colors we know however, usually not in context of studio pottery. This work is about transformation, marriage of low tech and high tech through aesthetics rather than process. This vase is fresh, new, futuristic and still familiar - an inspiring dichotomy. This vase is not trying to redefine functional pottery, it already is. Bravo.

I try to understand a pottery form by drawing a grid on its surface and drawing a design within that framework. I did this with glaze for many years as a way to keep the surface design reacting to or describing the form on which it sits. In my current work I am investigating what happens when the surface design becomes primary and the form secondary. This idea can come to fruition as a sort of extreme relief surface on an archetypal pottery form, or can leave a pottery form behind to become a shape that is derived from the design itself. - Adam Spector



BUTTER! Say it loud say it Proud! **BUTTER!** Butter on bread, butter on corn and butter melting away in a cast iron pan waiting for two eggs, sunny side up. The Butter Dish – this is the prize, this is the gold trophy of ceramics. A butter dish!! Not everyone has one, and certainly not everyone has one like these. This is the theater, the crème de crème, the Broadway stage, a dramatic moment of unveiling that soft golden rectangle of butter. Though almost opposite in aesthetics and process, both of these butter dishes are for the delectable experience of reveal. Whether it be highly detailed carved porcelain with celadon-esque glaze, or a crown for a king topped by a clay kiss - these butter dishes are champions, trumpet sounds as the curtain pulls back, as we celebrate our morning toast.

My life experiences and cultural background are the inspiration for my work. I create ceramic objects that reflect traditional Korean culture and western contemporary style. Eastern and Western cultures are symbolically expressed through this language. Like Yin and Yang, my work encompasses the influence between traditional Asian values and modern Western society. I use graceful flowing lines to reveal a harmonic balance within my work. - KyoungHwa Oh

I am inspired and challenged by the art of pottery and strive to make work that is successful on multiple levels. I want my pots to be well designed and comfortable to use; to be rich with ceramic wonder, and seductive to behold; and to have reference to history and the field of ceramic art to spark the imagination. Perhaps pottery's greatest power lies in its association with the human body. The language of pottery is the language of the body, with necks and feet, bellies and shoulders, and lips to touch our lips. The intimate relationship that develops with use strengthens this association. A personality develops, and the pots become our friends. In this friendship they become reflections of our humanness, and help give meaning to our lives. - Josh DeWeese





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