

# GALLERY GUIDE

## Visions in Clay 2023

### LH Horton Jr Gallery August 28 - September 21

Gallery Reception August 31 • 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Zoom Reception: September 9 • 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Exhibition Juror: Joan Takayama-Ogawa  
Professor of Ceramics and Product Design  
Otis College of Art & Design, Los Angeles, California

Thank you to our Award Sponsor



San Joaquin  
Potters Guild

# Visions in Clay 2023

The Horton Art Gallery presents the 14th Annual Visions In Clay Exhibition, August 28 – September 21, 2023.

This year's exhibit features 55 works by 46 artists from around the country, including **five Delta College Alumni students**, Abraham Alvarez, Bonny Barker, Samantha Holcomb, Zoe Nelson, and Melodie Sidhu. We are all so very proud of our Delta art students - Go Mustangs!

Visions In Clay was founded by the San Joaquin Potters Guild in 2002 through 2007, and turned over to the Horton Gallery in 2010 to continue presenting the ceramics based exhibition. Visions In Clay is the largest exhibition of ceramic works in the San Joaquin Valley.

Joan Takayama-Ogawa, Professor of Ceramics and Product Design at Otis College of Art & Design in Los Angeles, was this year's guest juror who selected the artwork and awards for the exhibition. The awards were given for a body of work in three award categories (Best of Show \$800, 2nd Place \$600, 3rd Place \$400) sponsored by the Horton Gallery Foundation, and the San Joaquin Potters Guild presents a \$300 Founders Award each year. There is a fifth award for \$800 funded by San Joaquin Delta College for a Regional Artist-in-Residence selected by Ceramics Professor Shenny Cruces. The Regional Artist will present a ceramic art demonstration and artist talk to the ceramics and sculpture students.

The artwork in the exhibition and show awards selected by the juror was based on creativity, quality of execution, unique content and form, as well as technical skill. Sculptural forms and exquisitely decorative functional works make up the body of the exhibition.

# Visions in Clay 2023

## Visions In Clay Awards

Bonny Barker, Best of Show \$800

Joe Schumacher, 2nd Place \$600

Suhn Lee, 3rd Place \$400

Lois Harbaugh, San Joaquin Potters Guild Founders Award \$300

Ianna Nova Frisby, Regional Artist-In Residence Award \$800

## Award Sponsor



**San Joaquin  
Potters Guild**

## 2023 EXHIBITING ARTISTS

Amber Aguirre

Abraham Alvarez

Stuart Asprey

Bonny Barker

Amanda Barr

Kenneth Baskin

Brad Blair

Ariel Bowman

Richard Chung

Derek Decker

Kevin Eaton

Claire Elise

Linda S. Fitz Gibbon

Sandy Frank

Ianna Frisby

Vicki Gunter

Michael A. Hall

Lois Harbaugh

Bill Heiderich

Samantha Marie Holcomb

Pancho Jiménez

Crystal Kamoroff

Judith Berk King and Bryan Hiveley

Lucien Koonce

Ren Lee

Suhn Lee

Anthony Maki Gill

Rene Martucci

Marianne McGrath

JoElla Mendez

Zoe Nelson

Cornelia Nevitt

Cathi Newlin

Becky Olvera Schultz

Elaine Quave

Joe Schumacher

Sonya Schumacher

Elizabeth Shriver

Melodie Sidhu

Lucy Snow

John Tobin

Minee Yu

Sarah Zeigler and Matthew Skelly

Robert Zumwalt

To view the exhibition on-line and for links to the Zoom reception, visit the Gallery website at [gallery.deltacollege.edu](http://gallery.deltacollege.edu) and link to Current Exhibitions, Visions In Clay.

# Visions in Clay 2023

**Exhibition Juror Joan Takayama-Ogawa** is a Professor of Ceramics and Product Design at Otis College of Art & Design in Los Angeles, California, where she studied with renowned artist, Ralph Bacerra. As a teacher, she pushes students beyond traditional boundaries by integrating clay with digital technologies.

Since the 15th century, Takayama-Ogawa's family has been creating ceramics in the ancient kiln city of Tokoname, Japan. Despite her historically significant lineage, Takayama-Ogawa's technically diverse ceramics blend unexpected methods to create contemporary environmental, social, and political commentary. She sees beauty and playfulness held in check with American commentary of the absurd. Her work has been shown nationally and internationally and is in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian Institution, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, DeYoung Museum, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Cantor Art Museum, Stanford University, Long Beach Museum of Art, Oakland Museum of California, the American Museum of Ceramic Art, World Ceramic Exposition Foundation, Icheon, South Korea, and the Princessehof Leeuwarden Nationaal Keramiek Museum, The Netherlands, among others. In 2023, The Craft in America Center in Los Angeles mounted her first 30-year survey. She previously served as a Pasadena Design Commissioner, and on the Board of Directors for the American Museum of Ceramic Art.

*"Creative people know that what is 'work' is nothing of the sort. To understand what an artist does is to consider the whole of their existence. The dedication borders on obsession."*

— Joan Takayama-Ogawa

## **Juror Statement**

It was an honor to be invited to be the juror for Visions in Clay 2023 at San Joaquin Delta College. Peter Voulkos once said, "I called it the way I saw it," and I would like to share with you how I selected work for this show. First, I conducted a formal analysis of each entry.

1. Form came first, especially looking at negative and positive spaces.
2. Did the surface follow form?
3. What was the scale? (Size mattered.)
4. Did each element on each piece work together? Did contrasting forms create dominant and subordinate proportions?
5. Could I see small, medium, and large elements working together with the placement of forms and colors?
6. Was the color mixing working harmoniously?
7. Was color theory and design working together to enhance the piece?
8. Was 3-D composition working around the piece even when frontal? (The figure is frontal in many ways.)
9. Did expert use of temperatures, firing, and glazing demonstrate the best of what comes out of the kiln?
10. Did the concept visually read clearly?

# Visions in Clay 2023

During the jury process, I could hear the voices who came before me. My late father, Hideo Takayama, who was a Modern architect, used to say, “Repeat the form, repeat the shape, repeat the color, repeat the line. Vary the form, shape, color, and line. If you don’t, you better have a darn good reason.” Renowned ceramics instructor, the late Ralph Bacerra, use to question, “Is there a spirit in the piece?”

Lastly, I focused on the “wow factor” and sought an authentic voice. That is why the awardees were awarded for their body of work, as I was looking for future leaders in American Ceramics.

To Jan Marlese, Gallery Coordinator of the LH Horton Jr. Gallery, and Delta students thank you for annually mounting one of the largest clay competitions in the US.

To all of you in this show, CONGRATULATIONS.

To all visitors, when there is a ceramic show, “You will come.”

—Joan Takayama-Ogawa

## Exhibiting Artists Statements

### Amber Aguirre

I am a ceramic sculptor living on the Big Island of Hawaii. I primarily work with porcelain and my work is primarily narrative that explore the human condition. I use animals as a vehicle to present the typical associations of its' nature with that of people. I use this idea to express humor at the foibles of humanity but I also use it to focus on serious. This piece explores the idea of the plague/Covid and the people who do not believe in the use of masks and continued to party in groups when Covid was killing so many people.

To accentuate the narrative, I use various surface treatments to emphasize different aspects of the work. Along with a minimal use of colorful glazes and stains, I use a surface technique that I developed known as "Naked Fauxku". This approach reproduces a likeness to Naked Raku but is created in a high fire, oxygenated atmosphere with no reduction. The advantage of this technique is that it creates a cracked and painful looking surface that adds subliminal meaning to the work, while technically imparting it with a durability that is unattainable from un-vitrified raku work.

### Abraham Alvarez (he/him) — Delta College Alumni

Through coil building methods I use the clay medium as a form of meditation. As if I am passing mala beads through my fingers, I create a texture that captures every moment with the clay. The process reveals itself through the form and texture and makes me, the artist, question how much I control or allow the clay to guide me.

### Stuart Asprey

Stuart Asprey is a nationally recognized studio artist and educator. He works for the University of Oklahoma where he is currently an Associate Professor of Ceramics and Undergraduate Coordinator in the School of Visual Arts.

His artwork uses ornamentation and narrative as artistic allies in the creation of VOCOs (Vessel Oriented Ceramic Objects). These objects are graphic clay canvases that question our past actions, events and people. They can be irreverently witty, gut wrenchingly serious, or filled with parody. They use history for arsenal: our folklore, politics, science, human geography, and most importantly, our popular culture.

Over the past 10 years he has participated in over 100 art exhibitions including solo shows at the Morean Center for Clay in St. Petersburg, Florida, the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in OKC, and the Belger Art Center in Kansas City, Missouri. During the same period, he was awarded Best of Show award in nine invitational and juried exhibitions highlighted by Un-Wedged in Seattle, WA and Visions in Clay from the San Francisco Bay Area.

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Bonny Barker — Delta College Alumni

Bonny Barker is a ceramic artist from Stockton, California. She fell in love with clay at San Joaquin Delta College in 2019, as it provided her with a meditative outlet to process and heal mental illness. In 2022 she obtained her BFA in Spatial Art from San Jose State University, and is currently pursuing her MFA at University of Washington, focusing in ceramic sculpture.

Barker uses hand building techniques to construct large scale animals from coils and slabs, sculpting in fine details to achieve a sense of realism. Her work explores the relationships and similarities that humans share with the creatures of this world. The current works display reptiles overcoming consequences of coldblooded human behavior, acting as vessels to discuss and overcome the uncomfortable. These reptiles stretch their spines and break away from their confines, desperate to escape and stay alive in their plight. While sculpting these forms and carving their scales, Barker evaluated her own scales and scars, reflecting on how our skin always re-heals, our tails can grow back, and how there is much to be explored outside of our own confinement.

### Amanda Barr (she/her)

I use my own history of trauma, abuse, and disability to create objects that are at once culturally recognizable and highly personal; it is my hope that each viewer will recognize the overarching themes and identify them within their own experiences, thus encountering a moment of reflection, empathy, or even catharsis. My work is meant to be uncomfortable, to evoke a sense of anxiety or disquiet. Trauma is a disruption, so my work is created to be eerily beautiful, delicate and fine porcelain and glass formed into shapes with unsettling evocations. Society may prefer we not address this, but only by confronting and addressing them can we move forward.

"Lost in Translation" addresses the issues that trauma can create in communication; whether that be a physical trauma that damages ability to speak, think, or understand language, or mental and emotional trauma that significantly effects abilities to process, connect, and manage interpersonal relationships. My work is my voice, and a way to help others connect, to feel heard, and to even help them begin to communicate.

### Kenneth Baskin

The investigative properties of the Mechanical Movements series are focused upon the mechanical objects or artifacts derived from the advent of the industrial revolution. Through our capacity for invention the anatomy of the machine, laying bare its individual yet integrated mechanical components, became the means of mass production and an accelerant in the performance of human tasks. This interdependence of humans and machines altered cultural conceptions and the two became intimately conjoined.

Within this current body of work, I am exploring the integration of actual and abstracted machine parts into homologous interrelationships. Metaphorically, my sculptures reflect aspects of these interrelations through: balance and instability, domination and submission, tension and ease, opposition and compromise. It is through this dynamic of push and pull, give and take, that the spontaneity and structuring of these interactions takes place.

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Brad Blair

The unknown, uncertain and unexplained are the driving forces behind my creative process. Primarily made from wheel thrown earthenware and stoneware clays, my sculptures also include other elements carefully added with great attention to detail. These non-clay parts adorn the works and either blend seamlessly with the ceramic base, or contrast it, adding visual interest. My otherworldly artworks provoke wonder and examination, generating an intangible human experience through curiosity, caution, attraction and fear. While some are symbolic of situations encountered around our world, all of these obscure oddities help convey a message regarding this mysterious life we live, in a universe yet to be fully explored.

### Ariel Bowman

I make sculptures of prehistoric animals that represent the wonder to be found in natural history. I am intrigued by animals that evolved with distinct features, such as unfamiliar tusks, strange, elongated limbs, and unusual proportions. I use clay to bring these extinct creatures back to life, sculpting folds of flesh and filling their bellies with air. The goal of my work is to bridge the gap between art and science. In my work I use reflective nostalgia and imaginative realism to place extinct creatures in the context of human history.

The Timekeepers series presents these extinct creatures as decorative objects inspired by 18th century French mantle clocks. This period in history represents the age before the discovery of fossils that changed our perception of time and our relationship to nature. The clocks tick backwards presenting a challenge to the viewer's expectations and understanding of time. Prehistoric animals are from deep time, the geologic time scale used to measure the age of the earth. These millions and billions of years are like hours and days to the minutes that have been human history. As the clocks tick infinitely backwards the mysterious animals of the past return, grow more powerful, and soon sit atop the remains of time itself.

### Richard Chung

I am drawn to the human figure due to its familiarity and accessibility. Clay, as an immediate and responsive medium, allows me to explore the delicate balance between representation and expression. The ultimate challenge is to infuse an inanimate material with emotion and gesture, imparting a sense of vitality and life into it.

The ceramic surface offers a unique blend and process of chemical reactions, heat, glass, and color. Constantly experimenting and developing various techniques and methods to treat the surface, I often involve multiple glaze firings in my work. On average, my pieces undergo 4-6 firing cycles, usually reaching Cone 04, with occasional Cone 5 firings.

My sources of inspiration and subjects vary. Sometimes, I reference pictures or draw from memories. Other times, a figure or face emerges organically as I handle a chunk of clay, and the creative process revolves around revealing the rest of the subject. This approach allows me to work in different modes, at times taking full control of the steering wheel, while at other times, it feels like I'm going for a ride.



# Visions in Clay 2023

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Derek Decker

I am representing ideas culminated from my observations about our dependency on raw materials that shape technological objects that we think we need and use every day (or used to use). These materials can be natural or man-made. The cause and effect, and their historical significance is iconic, which is why I am inspired to replicate these materials in objects as art and in a gallery setting. Beyond the inspiration of these works, I also ponder the question: "What is Art?"

### Kevin Eaton

Incorporating my love of comic books and science fiction, I create ceramic sculptures that are humorous, thought-provoking, and beautiful. While exploring society's reaction to gay sexuality and culture, I have cultivated a somewhat subtle presentation of erotic content. I want the viewer to be drawn in to look, and then either laugh or be horrified.

### Claire Elise (She/Her/Hers)

My work is a collection of self-portraits that surmise past moments, feelings and memories from my childhood. Reflecting from having grown up in a stifling, emotionally abusive, and neglectful environment, I seek to encapsulate these personal struggles in order to discover who I am, and who I have been, and who I can become.

My work in this exhibition, *Crucified*, emulates my feelings of being constantly belittled and antagonized while growing up. Specifically feeling as though I was stuck – trapped without any control, persecuted by my own family. All for one key difference – being a girl. While *Crucified* represents very personal experiences for myself, it also relates to what a lot of women are currently experiencing due to recent events and relevant to the current political and social climate.

### Linda S. Fitz Gibbon

My work, *Time Transfixed*, is an homage to Rene Magritte's painting of a locomotive blasting out of a fireplace. It was created during the COVID-19 pandemic, which drastically upended everyone's perception of reality. The composition retains Magritte's key elements but changes the mantle clock to a gold pocket watch – a personal memento and nod to Dali, and the two empty candle stick holders to a singular Wedgwood version, with lit candle falling over the edge. The train becomes a child's toy adding to the twisted feeling of being in a surreal period of change with time stopped in its tracks.

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Sandy Frank

Classically trained, Sandy Frank uses live models to continue to find ways to keep her work fresh, seeking to create beauty with intrigue so the viewer will wonder and want to look again.

*HandWork*, the recently developed series by Sandy Frank, focuses on the variety of expressions found in hand gestures. She has created a visual language depicting internal psychological struggles, spiritual energy or pressures from community and interpersonal exchanges or conflict. From observation, Frank finds the quiet communication of the hands to be non-judgmental and non-cultural. In this way, they convey a universal and direct expression that can be interpreted on many levels. Whether there is holding on, letting go or a simple gesture of support, *HandWork* is deliberate. Each piece is an original ceramic artwork which much time is spent to make it energetically and anatomically breathe and feel alive.

### Ianna Nova Frisby

Perhaps the pandemic had something to do with it. I've noticed clay is going mainstream in a way not seen since Demi Moore and Patrick Swayze cinematically explored its erotic potential. Instagram hosts a growing number of pottery channels. New studios have popped up nearby in real life. Artists like Roberto Lugo and Virgil Ortiz have broken through in a way ceramic artists infrequently do. Even celebrities like Seth Rogan and Brad Pitt are getting into the act.

It inspired me to design this series of scenes highlighting four supremely awkward and magical moments in the ceramic process. Here, playful pop aesthetics combine with the time-honored technique of cuerda seca — a wax-resist process from the 10th century al-Andalus. Living in a time when the default mood can feel so heavy, I found it refreshing to focus on technique, design, style and humor.

### Vicki Gunter (she/her)

My work, *One Nest*, of a starving fledgling and human infant nested together, formed upon hearing about the Yemen famine in 2017 “the worst famine in the world in 100 years”. Its intent expanded and was finally created during COVID-19—nesting in lock-down.

I love birds...There visits thrill me in my garden of native plants, that attract the insects that thrill them. They won't all make-it. They have to survive feral cats, pesticides in neighbors' yards, droughts, floods and loss of habitat for the next nest. Yes, this piece is shaped like a STOP sign! Plastics (grocery ties here), climate crisis, are invading all life's nests and food. Native plants attract the most critical bird-baby-food, yummy, soft, caterpillars! The entire food web depends on insects for all who eat.

*One Nest*, from my *Canary & Elephant* Series, with its, yellow-canary-in-the-coal-mine, alerts us to different social and ecojustice issues. The challenge— the BIG choices we need to make to remove the profit-driven Elephants-in-the-Room.

I sculpt clay using: slab, solid, wheel and coil techniques. I research in the field, with curiosity, ruler, sketches, online and my own photos. I often make patterns. I paint with underglazes, stains and love finishing with beeswax as well as glazes. I often handwork and seamlessly attach copper and brass to clay. Improvisational surprises are always welcome.

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Michael A. Hall

My work references personal history while maintaining a universal visual language. I think the world can be overwhelming and ugly sometimes and I want people to have a moment of peace through their experience with the objects I create. I chose a tattoo-style depiction of fish and flowers to connect the body of the object and our bodies. I use times of day for background. The gold is added precisely and carelessly to reflect the history of humanity's relationship with the metal.

### Lois Harbaugh

The two plates of "Figuring Out Ceramics" literally took a decade plus to make: low-fire drawing and underglaze decoration were added to slab plates high-fired long ago. The high-fired parabola image came from margin imagery in an old dictionary. The low-fire line drawing of handles and spouts came from the discovery that it is fun to draw vessels as well as build them.

"Cut Cup" came from an experiment of altering my signature cup into abstraction. How much could I slice and dice my cup and still have it read as a cup? Could I alter my cup —possibly losing function — and hit that territory where something is freshly seen, but has the ring of the archetype? Could I make my abstraction iconic?

### William R. Heiderich (Bill)

Making objects with my hands gives me immense pleasure. I have always been fascinated by fabrication, building and construction, as well as a broad range of materials, and techniques.

For my work, craft is a part of the art, the process is included in the final forms. From the seed of an idea, to determining composition, color, balance, texture, and finish, there has to be a dynamic interaction of each element in order to form a cohesive "whole." I often work in series or thematic groupings. This iterative process helps me better explore my ideas and bring them to fruition. My current work reflects a variety of style and processes. Some images are born out of memory and whimsey. Some pieces are classic design studies and exploration of materials. Right now, I am enjoying my skill as a craftsman, my creativity, and the opportunity to investigate a variety of images.

### Samantha Marie Holcomb

I have always been a creative person and tend to show my love by making art for friends and family. I love to work with 2-D mediums because they are readily accessible to me, but I have grown to love 3-D mediums including clay. I did not have access to clay or a kiln until I took a sculpting and 3-D Design course at Delta. Professor Carlos taught his course in incredible detail and was always willing to offer extra sculpting hours and advice as we worked. I find myself spending hours at a time on a single piece, there is this feeling when everything starts coming together that does not let me stop. I aim to express my own emotions and beliefs while leaving room for my sense of humor. I enjoy hearing what other people believe my work is expressing without giving them context. I love that people can look at the same piece of art and have completely different reactions.

# Visions in Clay 2023

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Pancho Jiménez

Santa Clara-based artist Pancho Jiménez explores the elusiveness of dreams and memory. Joining together molded forms, Jiménez transforms various elements into complex pieces with a rich and relevant focus. The juxtaposition of shapes in his sculptures is intentionally crafted to mimic the elusiveness of memory, dreams, and experiences as they advance and recede over time. In this particular work, he explores humanity's interdependence.

### Bryan Hiveley & Judith Berk King Collaboration

In this body of work, form and surface are combined to meld complementary narratives. They are living things, but do not exist in the past or in the present. The imagery recalls the work of scientific illustrators of the past, transcending time. Through re-imagination and distortion, the viewer is invited to examine and interpret the ambiguous (and sometimes disquieting) forms and images that inhabit these works. The complete drawing can only be seen by examining it from several sides, reminding us that there is more than one point of view necessary to imagine the whole.

### Lucien M. Koonce

I approach the composition of my work with spontaneity and immediacy, discovering the form during the process of making it. My alteration and manipulation of the clay emphasizes the plasticity and gestural qualities of that material while achieving asymmetry. I seek to push the disorganization and the subsequent reorganization of the vessel from being a member of the "pot" realm to becoming an abstract object in the sculptural realm while retaining its function. Beginning with a solid mass of clay, I use a metal and/or wooden blade to shape the exterior surface. While I may have preconceived notions of the form, it is through spontaneous manipulation that the exterior of an object is derived. Once the clay stiffens, I hollow out the interior by hand with a carving tool, a process known as 'kurinuki'. Recently I have added throwing forms "off the hump", and I alter the vessel in order to break its symmetry.

The majority of my work is wood fired, which adds another dimension to the composition, ultimately helping to define an interpretation of the whole. The inherent nature of continuous flame, intense heat, and ash upon the clay, whether glazed or unglazed, adds color and textural effects that are congruent to each piece. The unpredictability of the firing, juxtaposed to the implementation of as many controlled variables as one can, creates random visual beauty, or landscape, which harmonizes with the physical form. Subsequently, the form, whether functional or non-functional, has become like a diary, recording the thoughts and process of the maker and the kiln's fire.

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Ren Lee

I work in clay which is very elemental stuff: earth, fire, air, sometimes water, and it is an epic, journey. What I make is most often sculptural and has elements of mystery, embellished with bits of personality, or attitude. The end results, whether fair or foul, are determined by many factors, some random, some predetermined, some totally unexpected and not least having to do with the kiln gods—so the process from conception to completion is fraught with endless opportunities to fly or die, blow up, melt, become a miracle, or act normal. 'Dark Star' evolved from a series of celestial bodies I created during lockdown, designed as wall installations. I experimented with building something in the round that would be stable and reveal a dual nature. I have created several moons reflecting light and dark sides, and wanted to push that further and create a radiant form that appeared to float in space. Technically challenging to build as well as to fire, "Dark Star" exudes a calm and soothing demeanor and a pervasively quite presence.

### Suhn Lee

Suhn Lee's work examines time, psychology, repetition, and the tension between our inner and outer worlds. Her practice is influenced by her Korean American upbringing and is a silent rebellion against society's obsession with productivity, efficiency and status. Growing up in Los Angeles, there was an enormous amount of emphasis placed on image and results. Self-worth was not obtained from within, but rather hinged on performance and external validation.

Her sculptures are an effort to prioritize process over results. The repetitive and intense labor required in creating the work is used as an entry point to cultivate a state of awareness in only the here and now. Many pieces are intentionally left unglazed, leaving the raw clay body exposed. The compulsion to cover up blemishes and present a polished exterior is restrained in honor of accepting imperfections not as flaws, but as part of an authentic wholeness. Other pieces, however, are embellished with beads intentionally covering what is underneath.

### Anthony Maki Gill (he his they them)

My work in the exhibition, 'Oumuamua (pronounced oh MOO-uh MOO-uh) is Hawaiian for "a messenger from afar arriving first."

We belong to millenniums of mark makers, builders and curious creators. Or, we are part of some grand simulation - actors within computer coded multiverses. The work presents questions about human existence, time, and whether or not, reality and creation are emergent from the same source. The work intends to connect to our mythologies, our origins, and what it means to belong to this collective human history. It is the soul expressed - consciousness made visible. Some believe this interstellar object that crashed through our solar system two years ago—might in fact be alien technology.

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### René Martucci

I am a figurative artist, focusing on people, animals, emotions, simple truths and states of mind as my themes. Investigating the ordinary is the pervasive theme in my work. I use accessible images as I look to represent states of mind. In using common place objects and unexpected arrangements, like the dog on a stack of boxes, I am creating an experience in the moment. It can represent observation of the world around, an uncomfortable situation, taking on a challenge or facing fears. In using ordinary objects in odd combinations, I am expressing personal meanings and my interest in shared stories as we navigate through life.

My sculpture process involves building up coils and slabs out of clay and shaping the work by hand. The sculptures are hollow like a pot inside. I use underglazes as the first layer. Once bisque fired, I add a wash of color glaze and sponge off so that the texture is emphasized. I add more glaze layers and fire to cone 5. My sculptures can be installed outdoors in temperate zones.

### Marianne McGrath (she/her/hers)

My work is a contemplation on material, process, and object metaphors that juxtaposes the medium of clay with reclaimed and industrial materials to create works that speak of the recollection of both physical and conjured landscapes. Mainly inspired by the landscape of my agrarian childhood home now covered by suburban sprawl, I strive for these works to be spaces and scenarios the viewer can physically or psychologically enter and inhabit, and perhaps consider how spaces they're able to recall from their own personal histories compare to the landscape that surrounds them today.

I employ the medium of clay in unconventional ways to accent the metaphorical capacity of the medium to communicate a sense of memory, ephemerality, and loss. Based primarily on forms and processes from the now lost landscape of my childhood, the clay objects I create may be unfired and preserved in wax or fired unconventionally with raw or surprising surfaces. I present these objects as physical tributes to a memory, and to the actual tangible process of object making. I rely heavily on the inherent metaphors that exist within the materials and processes I employ in my works, inviting the viewer to experience the immense capacity to communicate that these materials and processes hold in and of themselves.

The resulting works may be quiet contemplations of the materials and processes that created them, or entities that present pairings that are symbiotic yet impossible – balancing what can be seen now, and what may have been seen before. These works speak of the human idea and need of both home and memory, and the perhaps necessary yet chaotic change that natural, rural, and suburban landscapes relentlessly undergo. They are meant to leave viewers questioning, perhaps considering the role they play in the landscapes that surround them and the memories of these spaces that carry within themselves.

### JoElla Mendez

My work is an exploration of the intersection between painting and ceramics. When I paint, I burn, cut and sew my canvases to create unique texture and depth. Working with clay empowers me to further explore this method of expression. I create abstract paintings on clay by forming slabs into a box as a canvas to work with. Creating my own canvas shapes leads to endless undiscovered possibilities. Pressing and tearing the slabs of clay and then forcing them back together creates different textures, allowing the scars of the damage to show in the final product. In life, scars often carry deep personal meaning. Similarly, in my art, I celebrate the uniqueness of the scars. Furthermore, alternative firing methods, underglazes, slips and different glazing techniques bring additional layers to my surfaces. Each piece I create is truly one-of-a-kind, and all of my work synergizes the beauty of multiple artistic methods. My creations invite each viewer to interact with art that is singularly individual in its expression zones.

### Zoe Nelson (they/them + she/her)

Zoe Nelson completed their undergrad in Spring 2022 with a BFA in Ceramics at CSU Sacramento where they explored technique, process, and finding one's ever-growing love for clay. During the summer of 2022, Zoe worked for the Mendocino Art center where they helped host several making and firing workshops; Through this, they received training, knowledge, and crucial experience in wood-firing as well as working closely with several visiting artists. With an interest in design, Zoe likes to work heavily with implied texture in both the sgraffito and Mishima techniques. Using the ceramic body as a canvas for design they continue to experiment with form, firing types, and different genres of imagery in their work.

### Cornelia A. Nevitt

My media was printmaking and painting. I fell in love with clay and have never looked back. I have been immensely inspired by the character of President Zelenskyy. He is a courageous, passionate leader who has shown devotion to his country and people. He is sculpted as a soldier, fighting for the causes of good and freedom.

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Cathi Newlin

Humans are not my artistic focus. Truth be told, I'm not feeling very charitable towards my species right now, but if I want to address ideas that resonate with me, I'd best go at it head on I suppose.

I've been drawing and creating for most of my life. As a teen, I painted Christmas scenes on store windows for extra money. I studied drawing, printmaking, sculpture and ceramic arts at Golden West College in Huntington Beach, Ca, American River College in Sacramento, Ca. and Southern Utah University, though I think it's my love of animals and my years as a zookeeper that most inform my work.

In 2004 I began my life in clay in earnest by apprenticing to Master Potter Darlene Beverlin, and have been taking some time to develop my own aesthetic and voice. Beginning in 2011, I began transitioning from functional pottery to sculptural ceramics and have been exploring that medium ever since. Currently, I work primarily in midrange stoneware clay, with oxides and underglazes, throwing in some mixed media as needed.

### Becky Olvera Schultz

I have directed my consuming interest in the native peoples of the Americas into my own personal art expression. I derive immense satisfaction from putting life into the materials I work with. My art is an extension of my spirit, a piece of my personal vision and a constant source of comfort and healing for me.

This particular clay mask, Northwest Coast, is inspired by the wood carved masks by northwestern coastal native cultures. It is kiln fired clay, painted and mounted on a painted wood panel adorned with turquoise and feathers.

I am an indigenous artist who is of mixed blood. I was born in El Paso, Texas and raised in Southern California but for most of my adult years my home has been in beautiful Santa Cruz County on the north central coast of California in the small town of Aptos.

My Southwestern beginning would eventually influence my artistic expression. I credit much of my natural talent to my parents who both were very creative people. I've traveled extensively in the Southwestern and Northwestern states to learn more about the native cultures of which I'm very fond. My own indigenous bloodline, natural talent, research, and travel experiences have brought about my specific style of artwork.

Originally an art major in college, I didn't resume my art career until early 1993, shortly after the death of my brother. An acquaintance I met while on a powwow committee suggested taking a drum class as therapy. I experienced a centering working the wet rawhide of the drum and realized I had forgotten how good it felt to create with my hands. Soon I began creating with clay. Motivated by grief and reflecting on my own life, I found working with clay to be a very healing and satisfying experience.



## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Elaine Quave

In my work I subjectively consider human physiology and psychology while objectively analyzing our connection/relationship to the natural world.

The human lens through which we experience the world is an inescapable circumstance. It compels one to see the world in relation to the self. Though our bodies are animal in nature, we perceive our minds as not, resulting in an unresolvable conflict that epitomizes the human condition. Scientific inquiry of our physical substance shows we don't completely understand the human body. New research on microbial life found on and within the body is revealing that humans aren't just human cells and tissue but that we coexist and depend on a multitude of other living organisms, many of which heavily play into our health and well being. Research on many disorders and diseases are beginning to suspect missing microbes or lack of biodiversity of these microbes as contributing factors. My work takes the structure of the body and makes it unfamiliar and foreign in order to describe this gap in knowledge about our own bodies and minds.

In my art, porcelain replicas of human bones are arranged to look like plant life in order to illustrate the extent to which humans have impacted ecosystems around us. We are currently living in a geological age referred to as the anthropocene. In this new age humans are potentially having more effect on the earth than ever before, relative to natural forces. Every other living being on this planet feels the affects of our presence through the changes we have made to the air, the water, and the soil. Biodiversity is crashing at an alarming rate and we are left trying figure out which species are important to preserve. We are gardening the wilderness, deciding how much to leave, where to leave it, and for what reason. In my work the sparsely placed life of butterflies and flowers represents this dwindling biodiversity, and seeks to create an impact reminiscent of a bleached coral reef; the initial feeling of beauty and serenity dissolves as the resulting loss is recognized.

The work I make is a memento mori – a reminder of mortality - yet it also serves as an expression of universal connectivity. By representing plants from the bodies of humans, the work seeks to erase our human perception of divisiveness where we recognize the entities we name and define as being separable. My goal is that this realization of our intimate connection to nature can help lead to changes in the way we reflect on ourselves as human and the ways that we treat our planet and the other animals with which we coexist. In my art I want to lead the viewer to a place where the reflection of self can have a terrifying beauty and an ethereal sensation, a place where the familiar becomes unfamiliar, a place where we ponder the beauty of the world around us and recognize our inseparable connection to it.

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Joe Schumacher

The inspiration for “Bob’s Bait Shop” and “20 miles north of here” comes from my experiences growing up in northern Colorado, watching Saturday morning cartoons and summer fishing trips that always seemed to include a stop at the local tackle shop. My hope is to tap into the viewer’s similar experiences while inviting them to explore the work with a sense of humor and nostalgia.

### Sonia Peterson Schumacher

My work is inspired by looking at nature. I believe that by observing nature one can learn many things that help further our own humanity. By capturing those moments in an art piece, I hope to share a common feeling or connection with the viewer. I have been through about 3 distinct phases in my career thus far. While working on my undergrad at Humboldt State in the late 80s, I was in a Zen hand-building phase, very influenced by Eastern philosophy and Japanese ceramics. Next came my organic vessels that echoed bird, plant, and floral forms. My early work consisted of coil-built vessels that captured bird postures and ocean patterns in an abstract way. I moved on from that to floral, plant, and vegetable forms infused with the female figure.

We moved to Galt in 2013, near the Cosumnes River Preserve. I began to go to the Preserve often, spending time in nature and watching and learning about the birds. I had begun to explore using the Sandhill Cranes as subject matter a bit before we moved. There was something there calling me.

I have always made functional pottery to sell that echoes the sculpture work I make, as a way to give someone an affordable piece all can take home with them. Also, it was a way to make some money to keep my art habit going. After about a 3 or 4 year hiatus from working in clay, I started by making bird themed pottery. As I was at the wheel, the ideas would flow for the sculptures. I have been a big fan of the work of Akio Takamori. His influence was what made me think “vessel art” making was a possibility. Once he started closing up his figurative vessels and making them purely sculpture, I had an “aha” moment that I wanted to do that, too.

So came the birth of the wheel-thrown and assembled Sandhill Crane sculptures. I strive to capture a nod of the head or posture of birds, the actions in their mating rituals, or the moment just before they pounce on their prey, to find common ground in our struggle to survive and to thrive in this world. We don't share the same language, but behavior and body language can tell a story with observation. The cranes also have a mate and communities, so making them in pairs or groups to show relationships continued to be important.

While throwing the forms on the wheel, the clay moves through my fingers. I feel there is a metaphor there for that, which I want to bring out when I am assembling the parts into a whole figure(bird). They are difficult forms to get through the process, many don't make it. When they do it is glorious. As if your vase could get up and fly to the air, becoming a crane.

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Elizabeth Shriver

I am a native Iowan and a 1987 graduate of the University of Iowa. My interest in art began during my childhood, when I often spent my free time painting and drawing. My focus turned to clay in 1985, when I took my first course at the University of Iowa Ceramics Department. I became fascinated with the malleable properties of clay, and the sculptural possibilities inherent in the medium. Though not an art major, my newfound interest compelled me to complete all four semesters of undergraduate studio ceramics.

I enjoy creating organic vessels and sculptures in clay, all of which are inspired by different elements of the natural world. I am particularly interested in the delicate beauty of undulating corals and undersea life, which I find more precious as they are threatened by pollution and climate change.

My ceramics are constructed out of stoneware clay without the use of a potter's wheel. I typically combine hand-building methods, and I construct my vessels with coils that I alter and refine by pinching and adding fins which I then texture with my homemade bisque-fired tools. I deliberately avoid using glaze on the outside of these vessels, because I prefer the natural, earthy color of the clay to come through in the finished piece. Stains, colored slip and a little glaze are used sparingly on my work.

I fire my ceramics in a solar-powered electric kiln, and the most exciting part of the process is the opening of the kiln, when each finished piece is revealed. I consider my work successful if it entices the viewer to peer inside and examine the form with hands as well as eyes.

### Melodie Sidhu (she/her)

I am originally from Stockton and a former student at San Joaquin Delta College, transferring to Cal Poly Humboldt in Arcata California to complete my BFA in ceramics and sculpture. My ceramics practice is an exploration of form and design. It also serves as a reflection of my cultural heritage. Using primarily porcelain, I enjoy the delicacy, its resilience and challenging properties.

I draw inspiration from growing up in an Indian community. Someone was always getting married, so we attended weddings at least three times out of the year. While attending weddings and other cultural gatherings, I was exposed to some of the most beautiful designs and colors. The traditional garbs were decorated with paisleys, mandalas, and flowers with lots of gold and silver accents. Henna played a significant role at these parties, as it is a main ceremony for the bride. Women and children waited in long lines to be adorned by the henna artist. At some point I got tired of waiting, so I bought my own henna cone and started adorning myself. This led me on my journey to becoming a henna artist. Motifs in henna mimic the designs from traditional clothing. "Matha Ji", "mother" in Punjabi, features henna designs on one side and an illustration of an Indian woman on the other. This vessel acts as a tribute to Indian women and mothers for carrying the family without hesitation. The woman on this piece is reminiscent of the mothers in my life. It is an ode to the time that they have spent caring for me.

## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

### Lucy Snow

I'm exploring constructed open forms in ceramic. Precarious experimentation and inventing the process as I go motivate me. Maybe something good that I hadn't quite expected will happen-- it's never completely predictable.

For this piece, I built nested dodecahedron shapes and painted them with underglaze colors inspired by the order of the visible spectrum. I also used black and white to emphasize shape, line, and interior vs. exterior surfaces. Breakage and repair in construction and reconstruction are embraced. Layers expanded, contracted, connected, and disconnected. Cone 6 firing with clear glaze caused more warping and more saturated color and shine, and improved structural strength.

### John Tobin

My first recollection of my clay experience was in the third grade with plasticine or oil-based sculpting clay that we used for making dinosaurs for a diorama. It was a life changing experience; from then on I would have a little amount around the house to create temporary sculptures. From our set of encyclopedias, I discovered ancient Greek and Egyptian articulated dolls that I copied. About this time, I also was making 3-d paper lunchboxes and because of a Cub Scout requirement that I be able to identify car brands, paper cars as well complete with scotch tape windshields. These were safely kept under my bed, sadly no documentation exists. Even while in High School I would occasionally create something but thought it was childish and didn't dare share with anyone. With no art or music in my Catholic High School, French was the class I looked forward to the most.

After the Air Force and on to college thanks to the GI Bill, I took my first art class; sculpture and then I knew this is where I belonged. The next year they had a ceramics class and I became the lab assistant. I learned how to load, and fire the kiln as well as mixing and pugging clay, slab rollers and glazing. With a BFA and artwork children could relate to, I became the artist in residence for Norfolk City Public Schools, this fantastic experience led me to becoming an art teacher and my lifelong career.

### Minee Yu

I've always wanted to be a ballerina and out of that dream came my most recent series of "Angel Dreams" in clay (Raku Firing) and the "Prima Donna" series in bronze, which is influenced by the movement of western ballet.

Working with the human figure in abstract form is my method of expression. To me the human figure (especially the female figure) is the most beautiful thing created by god. When broken down into the elemental forms, just about everything else has the same elements as the human figure, however it's the most emotional aspect that makes the difference.



## Exhibiting Artists ~ Statements

Sarah Zeigler (she/her) and Matthew Skelly (he/him)

Sarah Zeigler and Matthew Skelly have been creating ceramic art together since 2021. While both produce work individually, their collaborative practice is a combination of their interests: pottery and illustration.

Ceramic forms are thrown on a potter's wheel and then decorated with delicate illustrations that envelop the entire shape seamlessly. The drawings often depict stylized characters and occasionally emulate techniques common to comic books and animation - such as panels and "smear frames".

Robert Zumwalt

My ceramic practice is a material investigation guided by process. I create iterative systems of production that result in series or fragments for larger works. Form is often a byproduct or secondary to this practice. My systems are set up to fail. This creates obstacles that compel intuitive making, balancing process and hand and ultimately reflecting humanity. Recurring patterns of nature as well as natural forces make up the bulk of my mark making. I use a modified version of nerikomi to create linework reminiscent of strata in order to describe our existence through entropy.

# Visions in Clay 2023

## **Exhibition Vocabulary**

Following is a list of fine art vocabulary and definitions that specifically relate to this exhibition. The Exhibition Vocabulary is presented to broaden and deepen visitors' understanding of the exhibition.

### **Bisque / Biscuit**

Pottery that has been fired once in preparation for glazing.

### **Burnishing**

A surface treatment in pottery done before firing using a smooth, hard tool made of wood, stone, or plastic, often common tools such as wooden spatulas.

### **Ceramic**

1. A variety of hard, brittle, heat-resistant and corrosion-resistant material, such as clay, that is formed as an object while wet and then fired at high temperatures.
2. Ceramics is the art or technique of making objects of ceramic, especially from fired clay.

### **Cheese Hard or Leather Hard**

Clay that has dried to the point where it is stiff enough to retain its shape but wet enough for further work to be done on it.

### **Cone**

Cones are test pieces inserted in the kiln to indicate the temperature. Cones are made of various glaze materials that identify the melting point of the material it's made from.

### **Coiling**

Rolled clay in flat or rounded forms used to create hand-built pottery or other clay forms by placing one coil on top of another to build the walls, which are generally thicker and taller than with other building methods. The coils bond together when fired.

### **Cuerda Seca**

Spanish for 'dry cord,' cuerda seca is a wax-resist process and technique used in tile-making to maintain color separation between glazes and leave behind 'dry cords' of unglazed tile.

# Visions in Clay 2023

## **Earthenware**

Pots that are porous when unglazed. Usually fired at low temperatures. Earthenware is softer and more easily damaged than stoneware.

## **Glaze**

A substance used to decorate / paint ceramic works and also make the object water resistant.

## **Greenware**

Clay that has not been fired.

## **Hand-built**

Constructing ceramic forms from pre-made parts that are moulded or coiled and built by hand

## **Kintsugi**

The Japanese art of stylizing vessels by putting broken pottery pieces together using gold. It is thought to be a metaphor for embracing one's flaws or imperfections.

## **Oxidation**

The amount of oxygen taken up during the firing process determines the degree in which combustion (burning off of organic matter) is complete, impacting color and surface texture.

## **Pinching**

Taking a piece of clay and pinching around the edges, pulling out and up.

## **Porcelain**

Hard, fine, high-fired material made from china clay, feldspar and silica. It is white and translucent.

## **Pottery**

Vases, pots, bowls, vessels, cups, or plates shaped from moist clay and hardened by heat.

## **Raku**

Low-fired earthenware using a gas fueled kiln.

# Visions in Clay 2023

## **Reduction**

A firing process that reduces oxygen atmosphere. The result is a smoky atmosphere that causes metallics in the glaze and clay to change color.

## **Stoneware**

Clay fired at high temperature will vitrify (form glassy melts) which is non-porous (will not absorb moisture).

## **Salt-Glaze**

Thin glaze produced by throwing salt into the kiln. The salt vaporizes and produces a fine surface texture.

## **Scoring**

To score a piece of clay means to scratch hatch marks into it prior to brushing on slip or slurry and joining the pieces together. The process is also known as "score and slip".

## **Slabbing**

A building technique where flat sheets of clay are formed and joined.

## **Slip and Slurry**

Fluid clay in a creamy texture used for decorating, joining/connecting pieces, and as a material for casting. Slurry is slip with a thick consistency.

## **Slipcasting**

Slipcasting is a technique often used for mass-production of pottery, and for shapes not easily made on a wheel. Slip is poured into plaster moulds to produce the desired form.

## **Terracotta**

Red earthenware, usually unglazed.

## **Terra Sigillata**

A general term for red earthenware with glossy surface slips.

## **Underglaze**

A decoration applied to greenware (unfired clay) for later bisque firing, then covered with a transparent glaze and fired again.

## **Wedgwood**

An English fine China made of porcelain, typically light blue in color and often decorated with hand-painted white, relief figurines.