

Volume 46 Number 2 | Fall 2022

FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS



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FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS

Editor: Lucie Grys

Design & Production: Derek Chung Communications

Date of Issue: Fall 2022

FUSION CLAY + GLASS ONTARIO

FUSION Magazine is published three times yearly by FUSION: The Ontario Clay and Glass Association © 2022. All rights reserved. ISSN 0832-9656; in Canadian Periodical Index. The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of FUSION. Digital links are based on best available information as of issue date.

Please address editorial material to fusion.editor@clayandglass.on.ca or to FUSION Magazine, 1444 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4L 1E1.

FUSION Magazine subscription is a benefit of FUSION membership and is included in membership fees.

FUSION is a not-for-profit, registered charitable organization (122093826 RR0001).

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Address: 1444 Queen Street E.
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M4L 1E1

E-mail: fusion@clayandglass.on.ca
Website: www.clayandglass.on.ca
Instagram: [@FUSIONclayglass](https://www.instagram.com/FUSIONclayglass)
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FUSION gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture, Tourism



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IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the President	5
Susan Card: A Lifetime Achievement Recognized	6
CONNECT ONLINE: FUSION's First Online Exhibition	9
A Fragile New Light: Notes on The Rose Window	10
MAKER PROFILE: Jane Garcia	14
Hamilton Potters' Guild: 50 Years of Sharing Clay	20
Laughter and Glazes with John Britt	25
The 2022 Clay and Glass Show	28
Established Artist: Clay Spotlight on Mary McKenzie	32
Tips, Tricks and Hacks Photography 101 with Dale Roddick	37

ON THE COVER

Mary McKenzie's work is currently featured in the Gardiner Shop. *Metamorphosis* runs to December 31, 2022.

Mary McKenzie, *Metabolous*, ceramic vase, glaze, wires, repurposed textile, 39"h x 18.5".



Karine Giboulo

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Photo: Bernard Brault

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President's Message

Dear FUSION Membership,

FUSION magazine is celebrating its fourth member-based edition with this Fall issue.

The summer was taken up planning our AGM in September and finalizing bylaw changes that were ratified by the membership. With the help of pro-bono professional legal counsel, we are working towards rendering our bylaws compliant with new government legislation, as well as easing day to day operations. If you are interested in finding out more about these bylaw changes, please refer to the Annual Report on the FUSION website. Having been voted in at the AGM, two new members have joined the FUSION Board. We welcome Dana Dallal from Sheridan Ceramics and Adeline La, the Gardiner Shop manager to our team.

In October, a collaborative venture with the Ottawa Guild of Potters created a 3-day Creative Directions workshop with Glaze Master John Britt at the Nepean Cultural Centre in Ottawa. The workshop was sold out in a matter of days and proved to be a huge success. John's easy-going personable way and never-ending humour coupled with delicious lunches and snacks kept everyone going through the challenging material. Over 1000 test tiles were produced and the attendees went home with a new wealth of knowledge. Thanks to Danielle Skentzos from the FUSION board and Amy Bell from Ottawa for working tirelessly to bring this workshop to life. Plans for future Creative Directions programs are on the horizon - please stay tuned for more information.

I hope you had a chance to check out our new website which has been designed professionally and made possible by a private donation to FUSION. You will find links to all programs on the What's On page. This change will be more economical while providing us with all the services we need. Please bear with us as we all learn about the changes. There will be no more log in necessary to access event registrations. All FUSION members are transitioning towards a common April 1 member renewal date. New members will be automatically emailed their membership card and store coupons once they take out their membership. If you need your membership card from the old website, please get in touch with the office.

Please spread the word that the membership coupons will more than make up your membership payment! In order to offer programming to you, our members, we need to grow in numbers! If you are not a member yet, take advantage of our 50% off

membership drive and sign up today. Your clay will pay!

In November, FUSION had another successful FUSION Clay and Glass Show at the historic Wychwood Barns in Toronto. We want to thank the 40 clay and glass artist members who came out and sold their wares in this beautiful setting! For the first time we also had food vendors as well as a soap and beauty products booth who joined us for Saturday and Sunday. For the first time we participated in a private Friday night party by Wychwood resident and glass artist Minna Koistinen which brought in private customers who were able to shop from the artists. The show was open to the public for Saturday and Sunday and a multi-pronged marketing and promotional campaign ensured a steady flow of customers.

On Saturday evening the traditional FUSION reception took place with deliciously catered food from Longo's, live music, and awards ceremonies. Again, we provided a central wrapping station in order to help our artists to focus on their beautiful displays and customer relations without having to deal with wrapping and cashing out. FUSION also only took 15% commission this year in order to maximize artists' profits.

FUSION's Connect Online Exhibition was the first online exhibition that FUSION organized this year. The exhibition will be hosted on the new FUSION website until February 28, 2023 and was opened at the Clay and Glass Show by being projected on a beautiful large screen during the show.

Looking forward to next year, FUSION is going to replace the annual conference with offering a trip to NCECA in Cincinnati in March. We have reserved a limited number of hotel rooms for members who are interested in joining. We will start taking reservations for this trip before Christmas - please keep your eyes peeled.

We are very excited to let you know that the bi-annual Fireworks Exhibit will be back with its inaugural exhibition at Neilson Park Creative Centre. The exhibition will travel from there to the Gardiner Museum, Burlington Art Gallery and the Rails End Gallery in Haliburton through the year. Applications will be accepted soon - watch for an email announcing the Call for Entry.

As always, we welcome your input and suggestions, please drop us a note. Tag [#fusionclayglass](https://twitter.com/fusionclayglass) on social media and send us your announcements to post.

Catharina Goldnau

Susan Card: Recipient of the John and Barbara Mather Award for Lifetime Achievement



Susan Card is not only an accomplished internationally recognized artist in her own right, but she has been a driving force in the clay community since she embarked upon her career in 1989.

After her initial education (University of Manitoba, Sheridan College, Metchosin International Summer School), she worked as part-time faculty at Sheridan College from 1996-2003 while teaching pottery classes for the City of Toronto and Cedar Ridge Creative Centre from 1994-2005.

Susan's range of ceramic work reflects her interest in art history, exploring forms, motifs, and processes, from functional domestic pieces to expressive abstract sculptures. She has developed and produced her *Garden Series* of colourful functional pottery, shown at the Gardiner Museum since 1989. She creates Asian influenced, reduction-fired porcelain and in her Muskoka studio, she creates decorative smoke fired bowls and jewelry, inspired by Neolithic artifacts. Her abstract sculptural forms reference the duality of strength and fragility existing in families, communities and life.

Her ceramic work has been recognized with awards from the Potters Guild of Hamilton and Region and the Art Gallery of Burlington. She has created numerous private commissions and her work can be found in private and permanent collections, such as the Art Gallery of Burlington.

Susan's educational and professional approach to everything she does has made her a valued curator. Susan has participated in, curated, or acted as a juror for over 150 exhibitions including TOAF, Nuit Blanche, Mississauga Living Arts Centre, FUSION, and the Art Gallery of Burlington.

As well, Susan is a prolific writer, with articles that can be found in a wide range of publications. She works tirelessly: writing grants and applications in support of the clay community, advocating for funds or support for exhibitions, facility development and artist recognition. With her generosity of spirit, boundless energy, and dedication to creating enriching opportunities for the craft community, Susan can be counted on to make things happen. Her leadership and commitment to advancing the craft is widely respected in the ceramic community.

As a teacher and mentor, Susan has taught, given workshops or lectures to many working in clay today; as a guest speaker, she illustrates a painterly approach to clay surface in her recognizable style. It is this enthusiasm for teaching, and her community-building expertise that gave her the energy and commitment to work towards establishing a permanent facility for the Toronto Potters. In 2017, Susan spearheaded a group to locate a facility and set up a clay studio, which would serve as space for members to work or for the public to take

Susan Card was recently presented with the John and Barbara Mather Award, one of the highest markers of exceptional lifetime commitment to the development of craft in Ontario.

lessons in the heart of downtown Toronto.

One of Susan's long-time volunteer commitments was to FUSION from 1989 to 2011. Her primary focus was to organize and deliver conferences where clay artists from around the world would demonstrate their technical skills. Susan worked closely with guilds in various regions of Ontario, using facilities at colleges and universities to serve the larger population of ceramic artists throughout the province. These conferences were no small undertaking with demonstrations, exhibitions, vendor rooms, pre-conference workshops, as well as opportunities to socialize and network. In 1998, FUSION recognized her volunteer work with an Honourary lifetime membership.

In 2006, Susan Card opened "DISH

GALLERY + Studio" in the Distillery District of Toronto. This permanent location allows Susan to teach as well as retail her work and that of several Ontario clay artists.

Today, Susan continues to be an extremely active volunteer. She is the Programme Coordinator for both Toronto Potters and the Burlington Potters Guild, organizing monthly meeting presentations. She also coordinates a community booth at the Toronto Outdoor Art Fair to encourage and support individuals interested in learning more about the craft fair experience, including mentoring new artists.

Susan's energy, dedication and passion for clay is second to none and we are blessed to have her in our community.

www.dishgalleryandstudio.com

[@dishstudio](https://www.instagram.com/dishstudio)



SEVENTH TRAVELLING EXHIBITION OF HANDCRAFTED CLAY AND GLASS WORKS
Fireworks
2023
Organized by FUSION: The Ontario Clay and Glass Association

An Exhibition with a 40 year history

Fireworks symbolizes the best in contemporary clay and glass by FUSION members and is displayed in galleries throughout Ontario.

2023 Galleries

- Neilson Park Creative Arts Centre
- The Gardiner Museum Shop
- The Art Gallery Of Burlington
- The Rails End Gallery, Haliburton

Call for Entry
Submissions open December 15, 2022

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Barbara Banfield / Fireworks 2017

Courtney Downman's work was selected for The Best in Show Award. Cherry Red Saw Carved Orb, 20 x 20 x 20 cm.



ARTISTS

Frith Bail
 Andy Berg
 Bhavna Bhatnagar
 Emma Bickers
 Alison Brannen
 Andrea Charise
 Alyson Chasse
 Megan Cole
 Dana Dallal
 Terri Del Signore
 Courtney Downman
 Karen Franzen
 Jane Garcia
 Zara Gardner
 Catharina Goldnau
 Bill Greaves
 Reza Hosseiny
 Kathryn Irwin
 Minna Koistinen
 Arlene Kushnir
 Patricia Lazar
 Alana Marcoccia
 Annie McDonald
 Heidi McKenzie
 Silvana Michetti
 Wendy Nichol
 Keenan O'Toole
 Jean Paull
 Zoe Pinnell
 Darlene Pratt
 Monica Protacio
 Bill Reddick
 Jennifer Rodger Mediratta
 Kim Ross
 Gaby Scope
 Danielle Skentzos
 Chris Snedden
 Joe Speck
 Brenda Sullivan
 Salina Szechtman
 Silvia Tagusagawa
 Nadia Tasci
 Catherine Thomas
 Vanesa Trillia
 Kathy Verbeek
 Natalie Waddell
 Peidi Wang
 Sydni Weatherson
 Mary Louise White
 Renee Woltz

CONNECT ONLINE: FUSION's First Online Exhibition

Open to all clay and glass artists, **CONNECT ONLINE** is FUSION's first online, open juried exhibition featuring new work by both members and non-members from across Canada and beyond. It will run online until February 2023.

The exhibition was launched at The Clay and Glass Show and projected on a large screen for the entire weekend event. Included in the exhibition are artist statements reflecting their inspirations, their successes and how being an artist gives them a sense of belonging: a connection.

FUSION founder, well-known artist, teacher and community builder, Donn Zver, juried the entries.

"I was pleased to be asked to jury this exhibition and found it both enlightening and encouraging. I was amazed at the quality and diversity of the work of our

members and impressed with the number of entries. We should be very proud of the work currently done here in the province and encouraged by the high standards of the pieces. I was also very pleased to see the number of glass entries. They were outstanding.

My hope is that our development as potters and glass artists will continue to be of a high standard and that those who view these works will delight in the quality of our members' work."

To view the exhibition, visit www.clayandglass.on.ca





A Fragile New Light: Notes on "The Rose Window: Revisited and Reimagined"

The Rose Window Revisited and Reimagined was a recent exhibition at the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery from May 21 – September 11, 2022

Teresa Seaton, John Highley, Siobhan Lynch, John Martin, and Joe Speck. *Hope Grows*, six petal window with a handmade oak frame, 53" x 53" x 3". (Detail)

I felt confident enough in my Art History that I could write a short article on the exhibition, *Rose Window* without 'Davinci Coding' my way into a conspiracy theory. When thinking about it, I started envisioning spiraling turrets, incensed air, carved wooden tables, golden chalices and velvet upholstery. A space, minus the crucifixes, that may have been curated by Dracula.

Upon entering the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, I quickly realized my mistake on two levels. After a nod to the original rose windows of Gothic architecture, the exhibition quickly slipstreamed into the present. Hence the 'Reimagined' part, I somehow overlooked. Secondly, my Art History textbook seemed to have shoved a bookmark in at the medieval period and then closed the book on glass. Although glass has never received the credit it deserves, it is an artform with a 3600-year-old history. The human/glass relationship is a living one. The longer I stayed and listened the more I would understand.

The rose windows we think of in cathedrals were used to communicate religious messages, depict biblical imagery and beautify the sanctuary, giving the congregation a little sample of the divine. A paradise. Possibly one with seating more comfortable than a pew bench.

But the pieces in this exhibition were free from the sturdy mason edifices of the past. Instead, they hung weightlessly from overhead timber beams, brightening the breezy gallery space, like a floating glass garden. Such was the case with the large six petaled piece, *Hope Grows* which was a collaboration done by Teresa Seaton, Joe Speck, John Highley and Siobhan Lynch.

Here was a world brimming with life. Layers of lilacs and leaves, roots and knots, poppies, grapes and harvest mice spill forth. It is a celebration of nature and the passage of time.

Like the seasons, glass is the art of continuity, but one that is in constant flux. Liquid and molten. Fragile but durable. A window that is inside and outside. Hovering in a state of neither and both. Glass is the permanent in-between. *Hope Grows* is this frozen moment of transformation.

There are those of us that buy the adult colouring book with the overpriced pencil crayons, use them for 14 seconds, then shove the whole experience under the coffee table. Then there is John Highley. Looking at his bold and vibrant glass mosaic, *Strasbourg Cathedral* is like looking at a peacock feather through a kaleidoscope. John has been crafting in glass for 28 years. The mosaic technique allows his creations to be extremely detailed and intricate. Each tiny fragment of glass is placed like a memory until the work, like a well-lived life, can be fully appreciated looking back.

Taking 80 hours to complete, Highley's work is a chromatic journey which is as much an artform as the completed piece. A master-class in patience, John trusts that every piece will eventually come together in the end. His is the craft of being present. The art of thinking on your feet, problem solving, learning, improving, evolving, failing and succeeding and failing again. If there are times you can't think your way through the puzzle, you must feel your way.

It was this 'feeling' that caught me off guard when I encountered Joe Speck's piece titled, *Single Petal*. Here is a single red petal of a rose. A singled-out panel of the rose window. On its surface is a cheerful bouquet uninterrupted by copper foil. The fused glass technique that Joe employs gives the appearance of being rather solid. Two wires, thinner than a shoelace on a brogue, hold this 20-pound piece of glass. My first feeling was how unfortunate it is that I will never trust anyone or anything as much as Joe Speck trusts his nichrome wire. My second feeling was that this piece genuinely brings joy



Joe Speck, *Single Petal Rose Window*, fused glass. 19" x 27".

to the soul.

After selling the poultry farm, Joe got into glass. Actually, jumped into the deep end is probably more accurate. Following an intensive glass course and kiln purchase, Joe began climbing the steep learning curve. Like one of those avant-garde restaurants that has 'Fusion' in the title, and is run by a mad scientist, I'd started to question if these juicy candy-coloured flowers in front of me were edible. Joe's delectable creations are formed from sheets of glass, dashed with colourful fruits, or fettucine-like stringers, or some other process that sounds like it involves frozen kiln garnishes. Glass is a job for an alchemist and written into that job description is trial and error. A good alchemist believes in the magic of discovery. They have an insatiable curiosity, an elastic heart and nerves of steel. Joe's fused-glass work brings real joy. We have all experienced a global pandemic and to bring joy in this climate



Installation shot at the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery. Teresa Seaton, John Highley, Siobhan Lynch, John Martin, and Joe Speck. *Hope Grows*, six petal window with a handmade oak frame, 53" x 53" x 3".

is like making gold out of sand, as only a true alchemist can do.

A vivid sapphire blue flirts for my attention from the corner of the gallery. It is Teresa Seaton's *Feathers for the Fallen - Part II*. Glass is a story-telling medium and I could tell, even from a distance, that Teresa is a master story-teller. The title of her work tells of an incident that happened in 2015 when 30 herons died in Syncrude's Mildred Lake. The colony was found in a run-off pond, having died from the contaminated residue that clung to their plumage. You can feel the strength of these birds as their glass wings burst from the frame. At the same time, the oily black-red pond reminds the viewer their mighty wingspan was not enough to save them. It is a graceful but saddening story of how our actions impact the lives of the other earthlings we share this single planetary home with.

While the subject is disturbing, Teresa's work is breathtakingly beautiful. Glass has a luminosity that is inherently alluring. This coevolution of colour and light makes glass an artform that speaks directly to the heart. As with any classic tragic tale, it is this beauty that allows the message to be more palatable. It brings you

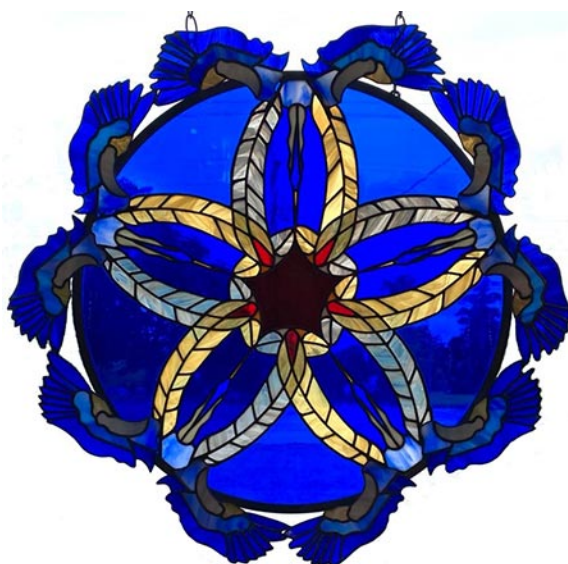
close so the story can unfold, even though, in the end, it reveals an inconvenient truth.

Communicating through glass requires experience, a trust in the material and a great deal of intuition. Teresa knows the effect of a carefully planned pause. As with a story told around a campfire, she crafts with intention, then sits back and allows the light to work its magic.

Glass can be an unforgiving material. The wrong cut. The wrong pressure. To work with glass is as much a science as it is an art. Siobhan Lynch has been working with glass for 20 years. She was a reluctant convert eventually embracing the medium and finding a freedom in endlessly exploring how the complexity of glass could be interwoven into her own intricate knotwork designs.

Many of her patterns have survived from times long past. Times that held no distinction between astronomy and astrology. The rhythms of the year and passages of time still held something of mystery. Siobhan's piece, *Almanac*, depicts the lunar calendar as described by *The Witches Book of Days* where thirteen different trees represent the thirteen different lunar cycles. The piece is modeled after the South Rose Window of the Lausanne Cathedral, a window known as the calendar in glass and stone.

The flowing lines and movement of the



Teresa Seaton, *Feathers for the Fallen Part II*, 2021, 24" diameter.

Celtic Imagery are reminiscent of illuminated manuscripts. As light filters through, Siobhan's work is truly illuminated. As the sun moves along its arc in the sky, light dances across her piece in a way that makes me certain that I could stand in front of it every day and never see the same piece twice.

The 'Rose Window' was transformative, absolutely. Not in the way I'd thought. I suspected there would be religious imagery, a 'Garden

of Eden'. Amongst the knotted brambles and rugged escarpments, glimmering fish and vibrant pansies, I found a glass garden of the here and now. I could sense

fragility and a boldness. I could recognize the challenges and heartbreaks, the curiosity, the sense of wonder and discovery, the joy, the mourning, and the endless relentless change. The Rose Window was not a glimpse into an imagined divine future, but rather a story. One that felt familiar- and one that felt very human.



Siobhan Lynch, *Almanac*, 2022, stained glass and copper foil, 20" diameter.

Bethany Scott is a functional potter based in Orillia, Ontario. Her first introduction to clay was

through her Grandfather, a potter who immigrated to Canada from the Netherlands. A love of the craft led her to pursue a Degree in Art History from McGill University followed by a Degree in Fine Art from Emily Carr University. When away from the wheel she explores her passion for Ceramic History.

[@rockpaperpoison](#)

Jane Garcia



Ben. 6 x 4.5 " Image by the artist.



Jane Garcia was the 2022 recipient of the Mary Lou Gilchrist Award offered by FUSION in support of a clay or glass artist in their first ten years of professional practice.

How did you discover clay?

I have been an artist all my life, both as a hobby and as a professional, but I was casting about for a change of pace in 2014. I wanted something that was very hands-on in contrast to the graphic design I had been focused on in the latter stages of my career. At first I thought I'd revisit my old friends, watercolours – but even with fresh paints and fresh paper I found I couldn't get started. Then, remembering that I had enjoyed a couple of years of Raku and hand-building night-courses back in the 1980s, I searched for more of that and found the Mississauga Potters Guild.

Where did you receive your training?

I took one intermediate class at the guild but immediately went off on a tangent of my own. My poor teacher! I started working on little

sculptures at my kitchen table, taking them back for firing on class day and then racing back home to work some more. I am more or less self-taught in clay but I have an extensive background and education in design, figure drawing, graphics and illustration to back me up. I was obsessed with clay and I was relieved to be doing something with a path that I could follow to completion. Salina Szechtman and Ann Allen at the guild helped me to start planning my work as cohesive groupings to be accepted into exhibitions, how to run a kiln and how to navigate craft shows and farmers markets.

I quickly knew that functional ware was not for me. I don't seem to be able to make the same thing twice, but it was still a huge hurdle for me to actually "abandon the vessel". After all, if a thing has no real function, would anyone want it? So my first series was 23 sculpted vases called *Un Soupçon de Steampunk* which borrowed heavily from Victoriana and steampunk for design ideals. These were well received and juried into several exhibitions. Eventually the entire series was picked up by one gallery. At that point, a third of the work would still fail either on the bench or in the kiln. Next, I tackled a lifelong fascination for military canteens, and spent the next couple of years sculpting a line of 21 vases I called *Heroes*. My stats for success improved a great deal. Both of these series were ornately designed and relied on precision handwork, but were still, essentially, functional pieces.

My third and current series, *Fallen Angels*, came about in 2019. The subject had been suggested to me for several years because any of my vases that featured wings sold immediately. I rejected it both for personal reasons and because angels have to be the single most over-exploited idea in the world. But I liked the first one I ever attempted, and I thought this tragic brute I had produced bore little resemblance to gift shop angels.



Tin Hero. 6 x 4 " Image credit: PHOTOHOUSE

What are your recent awards, exhibition shows and accomplishments?

I annually submit work to a few exhibitions that work with my production schedule, or perhaps are associated with a venue that I particularly enjoy visiting, like the Carnegie Gallery in Dundas or the Rails End Gallery in Haliburton, which where I most recently exhibited one of my Fallen Angels in their POV (Point of View) exhibition. Sometimes I am successful, sometimes not, so it's still a happy surprise to hear that I've received recognition, like the Craft Ontario Best Collection prize from an MPG show/sale, or People's Choice from a social media competition hosted by Pottery Supply House. Most recently, I was honoured with the Mary Lou Gilchrist Award for Clay, which is a monetary prize that will help me to expand my current practice.

What are your inspirations as an artist?

I love all turn-of-the-20th-century poster artists – primarily Alfons Mucha for his effortless use of line, composition and balance in a then-new arena – but also William Blake, for his very serious approach to fantastical subject matter, John Williams Waterhouse for his ability to portray the ethereal, Gustave Caillebotte, who makes the mundane fascinating... I could go on (I have quite the list!) but I think these four guys show up most in my thoughts while I work.

Tell us about your process.

Everything starts with research. I read, scour thrift shop shelves for just the right thing, look for images and take lots of photos. Without fail, the best work follows planning, even if it's all in my head. I usually start three pieces, several days apart, and work on them in rotation. For the Fallen Angels, the initial form is created from about 3 kilograms of smooth



First Angel. 6 x 5 " Image by the artist.

white clay in a couple of marathon workdays, followed by weeks of refining the details, as each stage of drying lends itself to different methods and tools of refinement. I shoot and post the wet work to social media. There are issues that arise throughout the drying process, like cracks and mold, that also need to be addressed as they pop up. Twice a year, I fire several loads using a 5-day/8-ramp program that took a fair bit of research and experimentation to develop for thick, heavy pieces. I fire them once only to cone 5 and finish them using enamels, watercolours, coloured waxes, gouache or other finishes a given piece may demand. Some will be mounted on natural slate bases if they are particularly delicate. I divert any pieces I want to submit to exhibitions, but once I photograph the rest and post them to my website and social media, the gallery collects them and they are gone for display and sale.

Describe your studio - what is your work flow like?

I work out of my home. My very supportive husband, Freddy, has fitted my subterranean space with lots of cabinets and counters to help me stay organized in two rooms. One room is for my bench and sadly neglected wheel where I work everyday and give the odd lesson or hold a clay-date, and a second room for my kiln, where a few pieces can also be set safely to dry. It's very well lit and well ventilated and I like being able to work the minute inspiration hits me. Since I'm something of a night-owl, there are a lot of late nights, which is when I really appreciate the added peace of mind of working in a home studio.

What are you working towards now?

I have a solo show coming up in the fall of 2023 in Niagara-on-the-Lake. It will require 30 Fallen Angels, and I still have 23 to go.



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NEW Professional Development Online Workshops

FUSION and **Craft Ontario** have partnered to offer professional development online workshops for our members.

Insurance 101 and Taxes 101

Have questions about what you can claim at tax time or how you should insure your work and studio? Join us to learn more.



Taxes 101

with Zoe Klein

Wednesday, January, 25
7-8:30 p.m.

Zoe opened her practice in 1984 in the heart of Queen West. Many of her first clients were the artists and musicians who lived in the area. From Queen Street to Bay Street, Zoe has been involved in the tax lives of her clients ever since. Zoe is an affirmed member of the Association of Tax and Accounting Professionals.

Zoe is available after the workshop for any follow-up questions.



Insurance 101

with Jenny Rushforth

Sunday, February 26
2-3 :30 p.m.

Jenny Rushforth is a great supporter of the craft community. A ceramic artist with a home studio, Jenny has been providing life insurance, auto insurance, home insurance, fire insurance and commercial insurance as a Desjardins agent for over twenty years.

Each workshop is \$25 plus HST.

Registration is online at www.craftontario.com

If you have specific questions you would like answered, please submit them when registering.

Spaces are limited.





Ike Wet. 6 x 4.5" Image by the artist.

Because they take so very long to dry, the actual sculpture phase needs to be completed by April 2023. It's challenging, somewhere between double and triple my normal output, but I'm really excited to be working on such an amazing opportunity!

Where do you show and sell your work?

I have been working with Gina Edward at the King Street Gallery in Niagara-on-the-Lake for five years. We have built a solid working relationship and I get the individual attention that is sometimes difficult to ask for at larger galleries. Gina has cultivated steady collectors of my work, in Ontario and the U.S.

What advice would you give to an emerging artist?

Being self-taught, I have holes in my skill-set, so I think that reaching out to experts in various fields has served me best. For instance, when my first Fallen Angel blew up in the kiln, I found artists in England and the U.S. who made similarly thick pieces and I fired off emails to ask them about firing. Several of them responded, and I gathered valuable tips to develop and improve my own routines. I've also approached an auto body shop, a jeweler, several hobby-modelers, a chemical distributor and a furniture designer, among others, to learn about enamels, body fillers, crystals, putties, adhesives and tools that I now can't do without. Whenever I encounter a finish or a form that captures me, no matter where I see it and whether it's art or not, I incorporate it into my research and ask questions. Most people are happy to discuss their work, and you just never know where that game-changing bit of information is going to come from.

[@clayexpectations](#)



Steampunk Sampler from "Un Soupçon de Steampunk", 4 x 5". Image credit: PHOTOHOUSE



An early meeting of the guild, demonstrating mold making (Participants unidentified).

Hamilton Potters' Guild: 50 years of Sharing a Love of Clay

The early 1970s was the golden age of pottery in Canada. It saw a coming-of-age with the influences of modern functional potters such as Steve Heinemann in Ontario, Robert Archambeau in Manitoba, John Chalke and Les Manning in Alberta, and Robin Hopper and Walter Dexter in British Columbia.

In that environment, a group of 32 potters in the Hamilton area established the Potters' Guild of Hamilton and Region as a way to strengthen their community and grow their craft through continuing education. Meetings were informal and usually held in member homes around a potluck meal.

That group of 32 is now a vibrant organization with nearly 400 members across the Hamilton region – and beyond. Membership runs the gamut from professionals to hobbyists. While the needs of each may be different, they all come together

to share ideas and techniques.

The guild's mandate of furthering the clay community with educational opportunities remains strong. Regular member meetings include presentations by members or others from south central Ontario. The guild also offers annual workshops by speakers from across North America. During the pandemic lockdowns, the guild continued to meet virtually. They were able to take advantage of the videoconferencing platform by expanding its speaker roster, presenting potters and artists from across North America. Moving forward, the guild is exploring a hybrid model of meeting presentations: some in-person and some virtually, to continue bringing a more diverse group of speakers to the membership.

The guild also organizes mentorships from time to time, one of which has just finished. A well-respected and experienced member will



Participants of the guild's 2022 mentorship program, at the opening of the exhibition "Our Voices" during the 50th anniversary weekend. Left to right: Sandra Zuidema, Jill Graham, Crystal Warner Hawley, Jacqueline Cowden-Scott, Craig Fairley (in rear), Andrea Vuletin (program mentor), Sophie Wang, and Fiona Wheelband. Absent: Kristina Wimmers and Natalia Buchok.

mentor a small group of participants who meet regularly over a year. They are stretched and encouraged by the mentor to explore new ideas for their work. The program concludes with a group exhibition of work by participants to showcase their learning.

Every second year, the guild organizes its biennial exhibition. This is a juried show with members encouraged to submit works for judging by well-respected artists. The judging is followed by an evening of critique. Works selected by the judges are exhibited at the Carnegie Gallery, in Dundas. This is extremely popular among members, drawing many excellent submissions.

A portion of every year's budget is allocated to sponsorships and bursaries to members who wish to attend workshops, conferences and residencies. In return, recipients must share their learning by writing an article for the guild newsletter or presenting at a meeting.

The guild also has a lending library of books and magazines – and even includes a wheel – which members can borrow. It also has a membership in FUSION to encourage participation in their activities.

The guild is also engaged in the wider clay community, by providing to organizations in the region who are in need of temporary support, perhaps for buying equipment, especially during a time of transition. For example, funds were given to a neighbouring guild to purchase a wheel when opening a new studio for members.

Many people in the Hamilton region only know the guild for one thing: the semi-annual sales for the public. The first sale, thought to be very successful at the time, brought in about \$2,600. Today's sales, still run on a volunteer basis, can bring in \$250,000 or more, with 80-100 members participating. Revenue from sales is the primary source of funding for the guild to be able to carry out its mandate.

This past September, the guild celebrated its 50th anniversary in a big way. After more than two years of planning, the celebrations revolved around the weekend of September 16-18. Most of the activities were held at Dundas Valley School of Art. Activities included four exhibitions, a two-day workshop, a gala banquet and a Pottery Day open house of family-friendly activities.

The four exhibitions included "The First 50," a retrospective exhibition of 50 works from the guild's permanent collection; "Our Voices", the exhibition of the 2022 mentorship; and "The Full Cup", an open exhibition and sale of drinking vessels from members. But the flagship show was "Memory and Rebirth", an exhibition curated by Jonathan Smith, former director of the Art Gallery of Burlington, home to the largest collection of contemporary Canadian ceramics. Smith selected 33 pieces from 29 artists for the show, held at the Carnegie Gallery, in Dundas, very near to the other anniversary activities.

The workshop was presented by Matthew Scheimann, from North Carolina. He had the group mesmerized by his throwing and underglaze decorating. He also held their attention with humour and a wide-ranging conversation that included art vs. craft, pottery as a career and the highs and lows of running an art centre. On each of the two days, participants were treated to a "Clay Talk", a short, thought-provoking presentation from a member of the wider Ontario clay community. On the first day, we heard from Susan Collett, who spoke on her sources of inspiration. On the second day, we heard from Steve Irvine, who spoke of his life as a potter and how his career has evolved over the past 50 years.

The banquet was a time for people to gather over great food to reminisce, renew friendships and hear from guest speaker Donn, Zver, who counts himself among those founding members. He spoke of the coming together of heart, mind and hand as the foundation of our work.

Finally, the guild presented a fun day of activities for the general public in a Pottery Day open house. There were wheel-throwing and hand-building activities that adults and children enjoyed. Equally popular was the raku firing: anyone could select a pre-made bisque pot, glaze it, watch it being fired, then take it home. One hundred pots were fired that day, thanks to the hot work of many volunteers.

A point of pride for many members is the guild's ability to look beyond itself. Its permanent collection, acquired over its entire history and on display at the Juravinski Cancer Centre in Hamilton, allows people in the wider community to enjoy the ceramic. Its annual Empty Bowls charity fundraiser, which sells soup bowls donated by members, is held in conjunction with its fall sale. The sale raises about \$25,000 for the local food bank each year. As well, donations are frequently provided for clay activities for children in neighbourhoods in the Hamilton region.

But when most members ask what the Hamilton Potters' Guild means to them, the word that comes out most often is "community." Here is how several members put it:

"The Hamilton guild is about community ... The support we offer one another is mutual, we know our community, we are in each other's glaze kitchens several times a year ... we bring each other along, whether it's technical support, or an honest critique about a piece you are developing."

– Scott Barnim

Being a member of the Guild has provided me many opportunities to learn and grow as an artist, but most importantly, it has allowed me to foster some great friendships with other like-minded people.

– Jill Graham

I started potting 30 years ago and shortly after joined the guild. I was immediately welcomed and, over the years, have had the opportunity to sit on the board, create lasting friendships, and of course, learn more about clay. The guild is one of the few organizations that gives more than it takes.

– Crystal Warner Hawley

[@hamiltonpotters](https://www.instagram.com/hamiltonpotters)



From left to right: Donn Zver was the guest speaker at the 50th Anniversary banquet.

Guild member Richard Mund demonstrating wheel throwing at the Pottery Day open house.

Matthew Scheimann demonstrating his technique for making a pitcher at the two-day workshop held as part of the 50th anniversary weekend.

Tea bowls from the raku firing demonstration at the Pottery Day open house.



Laughter and Glazes with John Britt

Renowned glaze expert John Britt gave a hands-on workshop in Ottawa this past October at the Nepean Visual Art Centre. FUSION's Creative Directions program and the Ottawa Guild of Potters worked together to offer this in-person opportunity to learn about making and testing glazes. Potters with a wide variety of glaze making experience attended from across the province, sharing laughter and a wealth of learning.

John's focus is on helping potters learn to get the glaze results that they want, using simple systems to track the work and the results. He began by teaching about the three basic components of glazes: fluxes, glass formers and refractories. John followed with explanations about how different glaze ingredients relate to those components and work together on the clay body, to produce a wide range of glaze outcomes. Questions were welcomed throughout the workshop which helped everyone get a good understanding of John's approach. "He has a great sense of humour. He wanted to help everyone in the room understand glazes better, see the fun in the possibilities and not get bogged down in a complex process," said one workshop participant.

By late morning of the first day, participants started making glazes. Each person chose a base glaze from the list of recipes John provided. Each recipe was measured carefully and mixed, then divided

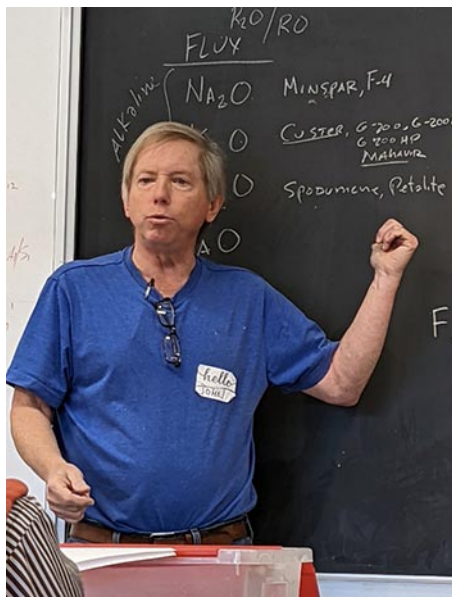
into 10 portions. In a workshop setting, the glazes are mixed in plastic cups using hand blenders. Each portion was coloured with ten different colour variations to test such as 4% rutile or 0.5% red iron oxide. Each potter glazed up to 40 test tiles and they were loaded into a kiln and fired. For this workshop, Tucker's provided four of their popular clay

bodies: CCSS, Mid Smooth Stone, MCS and Dark Mid Cal 5 cl Ottawa Guild members extruded and bisqued over 1000 test tiles.

The following day, there were 25 additional participants for a day of glaze instruction, discussion and question and answers. John's easygoing style and mastery of the topic allowed for great conversations as he demystified glaze chemistry, engaging beginner glaze makers and experienced ones

alike. John included a demonstration about deflocculating slip.

On the final day of the three-day workshop, the smaller group reassembled. The glazed tiles were finishing their cooling time in the kilns at the Nepean Visual Art Centre, under the watchful eye of Doug Moir, longtime technician, teacher, and potter. Participants happily peeked at the incredible assortment of tiles when the kiln lids were opened. Everyone participated in arranging all of the tiles in rows, by base glaze recipe, to show how the colourants affected each glaze. Having four clay bodies to test showed the fit between the glazes and clay bodies, which is





such an important part of the testing process. The room was filled with conversation, note-taking and photography to capture as much information as possible from the array of over 1000 test tiles. After a good discussion about the glaze test results, John gave an introduction to www.glazy.org, an online, free database of glaze recipes.

When asked what she has taken away from the workshop, Ottawa potter Barbara Minish said, "You can create an extensive colour palette using a couple of base glazes and a handful of colourants. John makes it clear that you can do this, it isn't rocket science." "I finally understand what flocculating and deflocculating are, and how I can adjust a glaze," another workshop participant noted.

John encourages potters to do their own glaze testing often. The best way, he explained, is to reach out to another potter, or find a group, or start an informal glaze club, even just for a month. John suggested choosing a base glaze, or one base glaze per potter, and get started with a base glaze and a few variations. Make a plan and meet once a week to encourage each other, help take notes together and enjoy the process.

About John Britt

John Britt is a studio potter in Bakersville, North Carolina with over 30 years' experience as a potter, educator and author. John is

primarily self-taught and has worked and taught extensively around the world including at the Penland School of Crafts where he served as the Clay Coordinator and as the Studio's Manager.

John was the juror for the book, 500 Bowls, and was Technical Editor for The Art and Craft of Ceramics, and the Ceramic Glaze: The Complete Handbook by Brian Taylor and Kate Doody. He has written numerous articles for ceramics publications including: Ceramic Review, Studio Potter, Clay Times, Ceramic Technical, New Ceramics, The Log Book and is a frequent contributor to Ceramics Monthly.

To learn more about John and his work, visit www.johnbrittpottery.com, or his YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/c/johnbrittpottery.

Watch the FACES of FUSION interview with John Britt and Catharina Goldnau [Link](#)

Amy Bell is a potter, pottery teacher and writer/editor based in Ottawa, ON. She is the Program Director for the Ottawa Guild of Potters and led the team that put the workshop together. You can find her on Instagram [@shorebird_pottery](https://www.instagram.com/shorebird_pottery).

Working Together to Make it Happen

A complex, hands-on workshop needs many components to succeed. Amy Bell, (Program Director, Ottawa Guild of Potters), Lucie Grys and Danielle Skentzos from FUSION began planning a workshop in Ottawa in April 2022, seven months in advance of the workshop date. The Ottawa Guild of Potters is a strong organization with over 100 members, and sought out a partnership with FUSION to make this workshop a success. The Ottawa Guild worked with John and organized the site, glaze materials, test tiles and food. FUSION, under its Creative Directions program, contributed its great administrative system, sponsorships, registration system and publicity.

Many thanks to Tucker's Pottery for their generous support.

Amaranth Stoneware generously gave gifts to each participant.

Thanks to Ottawa Guild of Potters members Liz Fournier, Barbara Minish, Natalie Gosselin, Fiona Jarvis and Rachelle O'Keefe for their hard work and support.

Thanks to the Nepean Visual Art Centre for hosting the event.

SELSOR BASE RECIPE

(high sodium, cone 6)

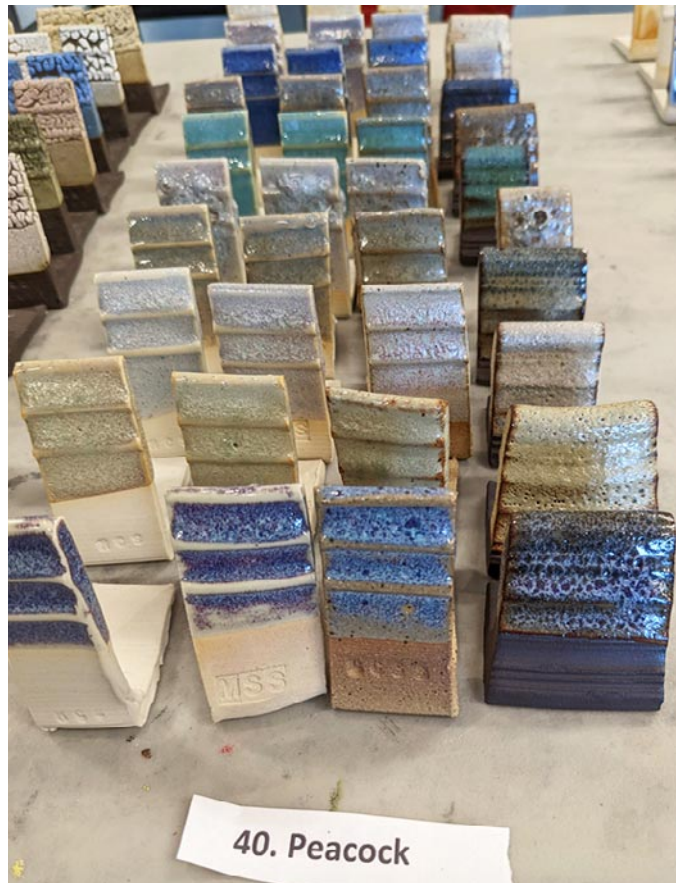
56.25	Minspar
12.50	Gerstley Borate
10.41	Whiting
20.83	Silica

V.C. MATTE RECIPE

24.00	Nepheline Syenite
40.00	Silica
4.00	Whiting
7.00	EPK Kaolin
11.00	Dolomite
12.00	Gerstley Borate
2.00	Zinc Oxide

BARIUM BLUE BASE

57.52	Nepheline Syenite
6.19	Ball Clay
7.08	Silica
26.55	Barium Carbonate
2.65	Lithium Carbonate





The 2022 Clay and Glass Show artists.

The Clay and Glass Show at Artscape Wychwood Barns

November 19-20, 2022

The 24th Clay and Glass Show was back in full force this year. After a two-year hiatus, it was apparent that all of the artists and customers were excited to connect again – in person. Online is great – but the ability to hold an object and meet the maker is irreplaceable.

The show was extremely well attended at Artscape Wychwood Barns on both days. With the addition of other vendors and clay and glass demonstrations, the public was able to see wheel throwing, hand-building and glass-blowing and ask questions about the process. Karen Franzen, Chair of this year's show, notes, "The addition of clay and glass demonstrations, live music, a beautiful slideshow, delicious food and lively conversations aided in brisk sales! It was so wonderful to finally connect with the public once again. Bravo one and all!"

With work from a diverse group of participating artists, FUSION was pleased to create an opportunity for students at Sheridan College featuring work from Monica Protacio, Emma Bickers, Dana Dallal and Silvia Tagusagawa. The show offers a supportive forum to learn first-hand from established artists how to design and set up displays, price pieces and market your work.

Zoë Pinnell notes, "Being part of the FUSION Clay and Glass Show was an

incredibly rich experience. Having a strong dynamic of makers brought energy, passion, inspiration, and so much love to the show, truly highlighting the importance of community in our craft. I'm honoured to have won Best Functional Award during this show and was surrounded by only love and support. Both FUSION and receiving an award helped boost my confidence as a maker and really allowed me to think, 'this is the right path for me.' I can't wait for next time!"

The Clay and Glass Show also featured the launch of FUSION's first online exhibition, *CONNECT ONLINE*. Images were projected on a large screen for the weekend event and gave the public more background on each artist in the show. Juried by Donn Zver, 50 artists from across Ontario and Quebec were featured – showcasing the diversity of work being created in clay and glass. The exhibition is now online at www.clayandglass.on.ca until February 2023.

Thank you to sponsors D'Amico Group, Longo's, Tucker's, Pottery Supply House and some very special anonymous donors for their tremendous support.

Lastly, thank you to all of the artists – your success is our main focus. FUSION will continue to work hand in hand to support you.

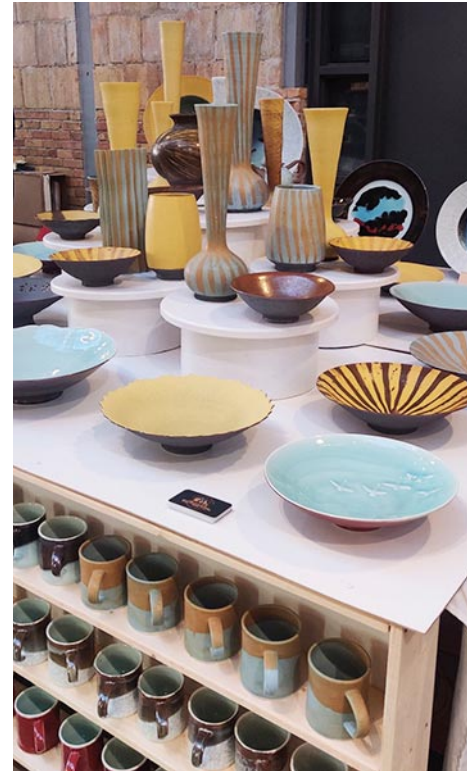
"I had the pleasure of participating in The Clay and Glass show this year, which happened to be my first show with FUSION. As an emerging artist, it can be intimidating putting yourself out in the world but the FUSION community welcomed me with open arms and were all so supportive. The other artists were amazing to be around all weekend, helping each other out, chatting, and taking photos of everything. The FUSION team put on an incredible show, bringing everything together so seamlessly. They all made my first show such a positive experience, I can't wait until we get to do it again." – Sydney Weatherson is an emerging glass artist and Artist-in-Residence at Harbourfront Centre.



Zoë Pinnell was the recipient of the Best Functional Award.



Darlene Pratt won Best Sculptural and People's Choice Award.



Bill Reddick won Best Display at this year's show.

FUSION gave out \$3000 in awards and gift cards from Tucker's and Pottery Supply House at this year's event including a People's Choice Award that was voted on by the public.

Adeline La, the Gardiner Museum's Shop Manager was this year's juror and announced the awards at the FUSION opening on Saturday night. "Each year, FUSION highlights each artists' craftsmanship, expertise, and knowledge to the community. It is a privilege to be invited by FUSION to jury both entries and awards for this year's Clay and Glass Show of 2022," she notes.

Congratulations to all the winners.

BEST FUNCTIONAL: Zoë Pinnell

BEST SCULPTURAL and PEOPLE'S CHOICE: Darlene Pratt

BEST DISPLAY: Bill Reddick



From left to right: Silvia Tagusagawa demonstrated hand-building for the public. Glass artist, Sydni Weatherson and Sheridan College ceramic student, Monica Protacio. Brenda Sullivan has been working in clay for over 50 years and shared her expertise with others on the wheel. Port Elgin area resident, Terri Del Signore was a first time artist at The Clay and Glass Show. Brighton, Ontario's Annie McDonald showcased large-scale new work at this year's show. Glass-blowing demonstrations in Minna Koistinen's studio at Artscape Wychwood Barns. Chris Snedden returned this year and offered his amazing support.



ESTABLISHED ARTIST

Mary McKenzie

Radiance

Notice the vase how light pulls form from shadow as low-angled sunlight nose-dives off the windowsill, cascades over sofa, stretches across oak floor-boards, grasps the table's front leg, climbs till it plateaus the table top, engages the foot, then hip, belly, shoulder, the neck.

Growing semblance darkens the wall behind even as the vase brightens, its glaze a glossary of under and over exposures. Chromatic bleach-points grace the extremities, halo the lip. Colour revelations modulate and circumscribe, but ultimately it's light that breaths, enunciates vessel.

Light is the language of form, ushering transitions of darkness and brightness, drawing and redrawing, defining contours, volume and space in its travels. Observing dawn-to-dusk repetitions... I wonder? What if you too, as light, could rise again? So I wait, I watch.

I watch as direct sunlight bypasses the window, rises above the house to fall on the roof and beyond. As twilight descends to a conjuring dim, while drowsing in moonlight's flowering, a malleable radiance, perhaps memory, heaven or will pulls semblance from the dark, contours foot, hip, belly. Night flowers shoulders, corolla-illuminations and forsythia-lips.

Our mouths full of petals, a chase of words.

As a visual thinker, interested in gesture and words, I often quickly sketch working concepts rather than conclusions. For me creating is a flexible-exploration that allows for aesthetic variations and technical issues.

As a practicing artist with a visual arts BFA, from University of Alberta, I was thrilled to be shortlisted for the 2002 Royal Bank's New Painter's Award. However, in 2007, when gifted a brand new Shimpo wheel and a single box of clay, I detoured to ceramics and its tactile potential. I spent six months throwing, smashing and recycling that box of clay. Then I enrolled in Craft + Design (Ceramics) at Sheridan College.

Excited by the morph-ability of clay, I explored its vulnerabilities and strengths to address survival/success/failure themes. I was intrigued by Linda Sormin's work and how she accessed near-collapse, expressed emotions and engaged narrative, this led to my independent research paper *Accumulation*. To my delight, later, in 2016, I was included in

the FUSION mentorship program with Linda Sormin.

Accumulation was relevant to my work with invasive species where I dipped plants in clay slip and then fired them. With much trial and error, I achieved ceramic facsimiles. Ideas of no-trespassing referenced gardens and fences and how we guard what we deem to be "ours". *Perimeters* was featured in Undergraduate Showcase 2010, Ceramics Monthly Magazine.

The Gardiner/Sheridan Exhibition Award, provided the opportunity for me to create *Adaptations: Gestures For Survival*^[i], a narrative questioning of our, often misguided, survival strategies. This installation balanced small sculpted-figures precariously on hollow-construction bricks. The hybrid-figures were pinch-modeled and slip-dipped.

Going bigger, I dipped household objects such as tea towels, dolls and laundry. This led to domestic narratives within spaces that implied rooms. In two installations about absence, ghost-like ceramic



Moonlight's Flowering, ceramic vase, glaze inside and out, wires, recycled and hand dyed textile, thread, 42" h x 15".



Emerging, small ceramic figure, ceramic leaf, borax chrystals, 3.5" h x 5.5" x 3.5".

objects sat on actual carpets, chairs and tables. *Saturday Morning*^[iii] was an abandoned kitchen, with half empty coffee cups, an opened envelope and letter on a table, laundry baskets on the floor. The second *Departed*^[iii], was set in a charred and fractured, World War II apartment, after a bombing. Laundry baskets and diapers scattered, a knitting bag strewn, a crocheted afghan and baby toys on the floor.

During the process of making this work, I suffered an accident in my studio that resulted in a traumatic brain injury. I lost the ability to comprehend and understand three dimensional construction. Despite this devastating result, I began the slow process of reclaiming my ceramic skills by mimicking YouTube instructional videos.

In the mentorship with Linda Sormin, I returned to my painting roots by using recycled glaze, wire, shards and adding frits to anything that might melt to create ceramic-paintings. Then in Anton Reijnders's^[iv] professional workshop, along with 14 other artists, chosen from across Canada, I learned step-by-step coiling techniques that my brain accepted. This meant I could finally move beyond shallow forms and create a new body of work. With this positive outcome I reached out to Alix Davis and Hana Balaban-Pommier to collaborate on the 2019 exhibition *Vessel/Elaborations*^[v]. This new action pushed me beyond coiling to lifting large soft-slabs into tall vessels that would eventually max out at my kiln height.



Reconciling Fragments, ceramic figure on shard of clay and glaze, 12.5" h x 7.5" x 8".

Then the world stopped for COVID. Exhibitions were postponed or canceled. *Altered Elements*^[vi], Hamilton Potters Biennial; *Confluence*^[vii], Mississauga Potters/LowBeer mentorship/exhibition; *Flux*^[viii], Toronto Potters' Biennial exhibition, were all postponed.

When the biennial resumed, I received the Gardiner Museum Shop Award, as featured artist. Devastated by events during the COVID 19, I stopped working in clay and turned to writing for self-expression. The shop award motivated my return to the studio. In a chaotic world where outcomes feel beyond our control, I was inspired by the butterfly, an endangered species, and its strategy of dissolving within a chrysalis and its reconstruction of self.

The entire exhibition relates indirectly to my poem/text on the shop wall. In *Metamorphosis*, I destroy-reconstruct-create to navigate chaos in a process that integrates the varied mediums of ceramics, textiles and text. Material-integrations and writing, as a means of accessing narratives, continues to hold my attention going forward.

Metamorphosis runs to December 31, 2022 at the Gardiner Shop.

Notes

[i] *Adaptations: Gestures For Survival*, Gardiner Museum, Toronto, Ontario. 2011.

[ii] *Saturday Morning, Hot Mud*, *Emerging Canadian Ceramic Artists*, at the Art Gallery of Burlington, Burlington, Ontario. 2013.

[iii] *Departed, War: Light Within After The Darkness*, Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo, Ontario. 2013-2014.

[iv] Anton Reijnders is a ceramic artist, author and teacher from Amsterdam, the Netherlands. 2017.

[v] *Vessel Elaborations*, CO Space, Craft Ontario, Toronto, Ontario. 2019.

[vi] *An Octopuses Garden*, received the Anne Heath Best in Show, *Altered Elements*, Hamilton Potters 2020 Biennial, Dundas, Ontario. 2019-2020.

[vii] *Confluence*, Mississauga Potters/LowBeer Mentorship Exhibition, Gardiner Museum Shop, Gardiner Museum, Toronto, Ontario. 2022.

[viii] *Flux*, Toronto Potters' Biennial, Gardiner Museum Shop, Gardiner Museum, Toronto, Ontario. 2021.



Within: Search for Centre, ceramic figure on shards of clay and glaze, 11.5" h x 16.5" x 15.5".



Radiance, ceramic vase, glaze, stains, tulle, thread, 21" h x 18".

FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS

FUSION MAGAZINE

Volume 46, No. 3

Issue: Spring 2023

Editorial submissions deadline:
February 1, 2023

Advertising booking deadline:
February 1, 2023

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FUSION MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

FUSION is moving to a one-year
automatically renewing membership
platform with an April 1 start date.

We invite everyone to renew together
on April 1, 2023.

Thank you for your patience
during the process.

If you have any questions,
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Jenny Rushforth
CIP, Agent
3569 Cawthra Rd
Mississauga ON
jenny@rushforthinsurance.ca
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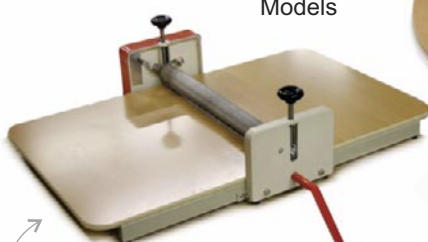
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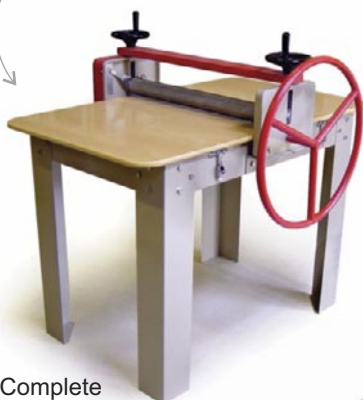
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Photography 101 By Dale Roddick

Pottery photography is product photography.

There are many ways to photograph a product. Some are more dramatic than others. My approach is on keeping the focus on the piece and not to distract from it with dramatic lighting or background lines and textures. This method keeps things simple, consistent and cost effective.

TIP 1

Begin by setting up a surface you will photograph on. Using a simple table placed against a wall and a piece of light gray or white paper as a background. The size of the background will depend on the size of your work.

Set up a seamless sweep so that the background is smooth and continuous without a horizontal line.

Position your subject on the sweep.

TIP 2

Use a tripod. It allows the camera to stay in a fixed position and eliminates the need to re-position the camera every time you want to take another photograph. A tripod also eliminates camera shake so you can use a slower shutter speed than you would if you were holding the camera in your hand.

TIP 3

I use a single light and place it above my subject to illuminate it. For ceramics, a single light is often all you need - which makes photographing your work even easier. You will set up your light stand and angle the light straight down. Then, position the light so it is directly above or slightly in front of the subject. This will create a nice shadow under the bottom edge and will help ground the object. Visually, a strong shadow provides a sense of weight to a piece, allowing one to imagine how it would feel in their hands.

I use a softbox as a diffuse light source but diffusion material such as frosted Mylar or tracing paper works as well to get soft light shadows. A bright overcast sky outside gives a similar effect.

Your object may look like it is floating in a nondescript grey or white space. To fix that, we can create a gradient on the backdrop that fades from grey to black toward the top of the image. This



gradient will help define a space and give a sense of depth. This is done by lighting a grey backdrop from above and using a piece of cardboard to block some light from reaching the background.

As a professional photographer I have a lot of expensive camera equipment. A digital camera is preferable but not necessary especially if you know how to use the camera on your cell phone properly. 12 megapixels is all you should need if you don't crop and have good exposure controls.

I am fortunate to have access to processing tools and can make adjustments to my photos with post production software like Lightroom and Photoshop. Apps exist that allow you to make adjustments to your photos on your phone. Adjustments in exposure and colour balance can be made using them but try not to crop or process too much or you will lose detail and clarity.

Dale loves carving images of stylized animals on his functional pottery and is an active member of the Thorncliff Potters Studio. He captures magnificent pictures on his canoe and camping trips in Northern Ontario.

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