

Volume 45 Number 3 | Spring 2022

# FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS



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# FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS

Editor: Lucie Gryś

Design & Production: Derek Chung Communications

Date of Issue: Spring 2022



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## ON THE COVER

Paul van den Bijgaart is the featured emerging glass artist in this issue. Read more about his work on page 30 or visit his FACES of FUSION interview [here](#).

Please note that, as required by Canadian government and public health directives to prevent transmission of COVID-19, advertisers in this Spring 2022 issue of FUSION Magazine may have changed their retail shopping practices, course and workshop dates, or travel offerings. Please check directly with our advertisers for updates.



## Message from FUSION's President

A new season is about to begin and FUSION is looking ahead.

We are optimistically resuming our in-person programs while adapting to COVID-19 regulations as necessary. We hope we will see you at *Breakthrough PLUS* and at FUSION's Annual Conference in May. You can read more about these exciting events in this issue and on our newly designed website at [www.clayandglass.on.ca](http://www.clayandglass.on.ca)

Our **new logo for FUSION** was designed by Derek Chung, a FUSION member. The logo has three main pillars:

- The **overlap** of the letters references the connection between clay and glass
- The **transparency** of the letters echoes the nature of glass and glazes
- The **overlay** of the colouration symbolizes the layering of glazes and materials

A big **thank you** to those donors who responded to the Annual Giving Campaign at the end of 2021. It was heartwarming to receive your donations and support. The link is still on the homepage of the FUSION website, all donors will receive a charitable tax receipt.

Plans for this coming year include a **Creative Directions Atmospheric Firing Workshop Series with Dan Hill** in collaboration with the Deep River Potters' Guild in April, May and June.

The **Breakthrough PLUS** exhibition alongside FUSION's **Annual Conference** in May and June will bring all of us together again. We are starting with a social gathering on Friday night and Saturday is the opening of the *Breakthrough PLUS* exhibition including work from artists at all stages of their careers.

This year's Annual Conference is titled "Cross-Cultural Reflections" and the presenters are **Julie Moon** and **Joon Hee Kim**. It will take place at **Todmorden Mills** near Toronto's

Brickworks - an area rich in pottery history from May 27-May 29, 2022.

We are also busy working on the popular **Fireworks PLUS** exhibition and the **Clay and Glass Show** in October at Wychwood Barns - and more!

FUSION will continue supporting Ontario clay and glass graduates with awards and scholarships and the tradition of a Grad Newsletter that was first published in 2021.

Guilds are invited to submit applications for the **2022 Design Awards** program throughout the year.

We are also announcing a brand new **Awards and Scholarships** program for 2022 with over \$8000 available. Winners will be announced at this year's conference. Applications are now open online.

The United Nations has declared 2022 the **Year of Glass** and to celebrate this, we are planning even more glass content in the magazine.

The weekly **FACES of FUSION** program on Instagram which I started in the midst of Covid lockdowns, now draws in regulars to watch the interviews. So far over 40 FUSION members, (makers, guilds, museums, schools, exhibitions, studios, supporters and businesses) have been featured. Everyone can view FUSION's Instagram page and follow us at [@fusionclayglass](https://www.instagram.com/fusionclayglass).

A big **thank you to the FUSION Board** for your tireless work. Our monthly Zoom meetings generate many great ideas, connect us socially and are fun.

If you would like to be involved, we are looking for **volunteers**. We would also like to hear from students and new professionals on how we can work together to create more opportunities for you as you launch or pursue your careers. Please contact us by emailing [fusion@clayandglass.on.ca](mailto:fusion@clayandglass.on.ca) or reach out on social media!

Have fun reading and remember to follow the **links** that are highlighted throughout this issue.

Catharina Goldnau  
President



Julie Moon



Joon Hee Kim

# **FUSION** Conference 2022 Cross-Cultural Reflections

May 27 - 29, 2022

Julie Moon and Joon Hee Kim

Papermill Theatre at Todmorden Mills • 67 Pottery Road, Toronto

## Julie Moon

A Toronto-based artist who received her MFA from Alfred University in 2010, Julie has exhibited widely across Canada and the U.S. and participated in numerous artist residency programs, including one at

Anderson Ranch Arts Center. Julie is a recipient of Ontario Arts Council and Canada Council Grants.

Her practice is deeply connected to the process of making, allowing her to connect with objects and ideas which manifest in her work. The results are varied, ranging from figurative and abstract sculpture to functional pottery and accessories.



## Joon Hee Kim

Originally from Seoul, Korea, Joon Hee Kim is a Canadian artist. Her work explores human existence by examining and reconciling diverse identities and heritages, as well as the compelling forces of beauty and desire.

Joon Hee began her artistic journey as a graphic designer and art director, then combined her passion for design with patisserie studies as a chef, which all led to becoming intrigued with ceramics. As the recipient of the Cecil Lewis Sculpture Scholarship, she completed a Masters in Fine Art at Chelsea College of Arts in the UK before undertaking her professional practice in Europe and Japan.

Brimming with personal anecdotes and engaging narratives, her work has been exhibited in the USA, UK, and Germany, including a solo exhibition at the Clay and Glass Gallery. She examines her heritage within the lenses of multiple influences as she travels and experiences national and international artistic residencies.

Joon Hee is the recipient of many awards, including Canada Council for the Arts and Ontario Arts Council grants, the Toronto Outdoor Art Fair's Best of Ceramics and the Winifred Shantz National Award as an exceptional emerging ceramic artist.



Come together as a community once again at FUSION's annual conference at Toronto's historic Todmorden Mills.

Todmorden Mills is a vibrant natural, historical, cultural museum in the City of Toronto. The natural landscape has hiking trails and picnic areas and is in the heart of the city with galleries and restaurants steps away. Free parking available.

Kick Off Party! Friday, May 27  
Conference: Saturday, May 28 -  
Sunday, May 29, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Reception at *Breakthrough PLUS*:  
Saturday, May 28, 5-8 p.m.

As Todmorden Mills is a City of Toronto property, all COVID-19 protocols in place by the City of Toronto at the time of the conference will be followed.

Cost:

- Students: \$150
- FUSION Members: \$160 (early bird before April 25) or \$190
- General Public: \$250

There will be the Annual Mug Sale and Raffle to raise funds for programs.

For more information and to register online, visit [www.clayandglass.on.ca](http://www.clayandglass.on.ca)

FUSION wishes to thank the 2022 Conference supporters



# BREAKTHROUGH

## CLAY AND GLASS PLUS

## BREAKTHROUGH PLUS

May 19 – June 4, 2022

### LOCATIONS

Leslie Grove Gallery  
1158 Queen St East, Toronto

Gagné Contemporary Gallery  
136 Brooklyn Ave., Toronto

FUSION's annual exhibition, *Breakthrough PLUS*, invites student, emerging and established artists to submit new functional and/or sculptural work in clay and glass. The exhibition is open to functional ceramic vessels, sculptures and wall-mounted works. Artists are invited to apply with 3 pieces of art. A set of pieces may be submitted as a single entry.

Submissions will be juried by John Gagné, curator and owner of Gagné Contemporary Gallery. John specializes in artists working in mixed media, painting, sculpture and outsider art. He has curated exhibitions in New York City for the past 10 years and has recently relocated back to Toronto.

FUSION encourages submissions from people of all cultures, racialized communities, abilities, diverse identities, and others who may contribute to further the development of craft through clay and glass. All FUSION members are invited to apply.

FUSION Members fee: \$45 plus HST  
Application deadline: April 20, 2022.  
Successful applicants will be notified by: April 27, 2022

### AWARDS

Awards will be given to clay and glass artists:

- Tuckers Pottery Supply Award of Excellence: \$500 Gift Certificate
- Pottery Supply House Award of Excellence: \$500 Gift Certificate
- Craft Ontario Affiliate Award: 1 year Craft Ontario Professional Membership

For more information and to submit your application, please visit the FUSION website.

# FUSION

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an idea for an article, or have a comment,  
please contact Lucie Grys, Editor, at  
[fusion.editor@clayandglass.on.ca](mailto:fusion.editor@clayandglass.on.ca)



2020 FUSION Scholarship recipients Naomi Clement (Ceramics) and Jerre Davidson (Glass)



2021 FUSION Scholarship recipients Ameer Raval (Glass) and Erin Berry (Ceramics)



# AWARDS and SCHOLARSHIPS 2022

**Deadline for submissions: April 30, 2022**

**Recipients will be announced at the annual FUSION conference on May 28, 2022.**

FUSION announces its most robust Awards and Scholarships program in its history. The new Awards and Scholarships program recognizes the work of clay and glass artists at all stages of their growth and career. Recipients may also be featured in FUSION Magazine.

The program is open to all current paid FUSION members who are residents of Ontario on the date of submission.

## 2022 Awards and Scholarships

- Mary Lou Gilchrist Craft Award: \$2000
- FUSION Award for Clay or Glass New Generation Artist \$1000
- FUSION Award for Clay or Glass Artist \$1000
- FUSION Award for Indigenous artists: \$500
- FUSION Award for Arts Educators and Administrators: \$500
- FUSION Award for Production Artists: \$500
- FUSION Volunteer of the Year Award: \$250
- FUSION Scholarships for Continuing Education (2 scholarships at \$500 each)
- FUSION's Student Awards in partnership with Sheridan College
- Design Awards for Guilds and Affiliates

This year, FUSION is launching new awards to recognise Indigenous clay and glass artists as well as Arts Educators and Administrators who contribute to the clay and glass community through teaching and arts management.

This year also marks the first time an award to honour the life of Mary Lou Gilchrist will be presented in recognition of her commitment to clay and glass and her support of craft as a long-time volunteer and collector.

The awards and scholarships are juried by a peer assessment committee. The jury will have the final decision as to how awards and scholarships are dispersed. In all cases, the decisions of the awards committee are final. The committee reserves the right not to give an award if, in its judgement, there are no suitable candidates.

To apply for the 2022 Awards + Scholarships, please visit [here](#).

## How are FUSION's Awards and Scholarships funded?

- Ontario Arts Endowment Fund
- Henry Goodman Awards Fund
- Scarborough Pottery Guild Fund
- Private and corporate donations
  - Personal donations through FUSION's Annual Giving campaign
  - Proceeds from the Mug Sale and Raffle at FUSION's Annual Conference

If you would like to create an award or contribute to an award in 2023, please reach out at [fusion@clayandglass.on.ca](mailto:fusion@clayandglass.on.ca).

Donations can also be directed online through [www.clayandglass.on.ca](http://www.clayandglass.on.ca)

# Kathy Kranias



*Surge*, Hand built raku sculpture  
clay; 55 cm x 56 cm x 46 cm; 2021;  
Image: Marina Dempster

Pivoting, evolving and re-engaging have become key strategies during COVID-19, but these are nothing new to award-winning Toronto artist Kathy Kranias. Her extensive body of work and her process have always been informed by movement and transformation.

Kathy's dynamic approach merges ceramics, dance, literature and feminism, and it recently brought her Craft Ontario's 2021 Lily Yung Memorial Award. I sat down with Kathy Kranias over Zoom on a sunny winter afternoon to talk about how the Covid pandemic is influencing her work and what is important to her success as an artist.

Kathy talked with me about her education and her early days as an artist. She began by studying modern dance at the School of Toronto Dance Theatre then took a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Concordia University, Montreal in drawing and sculpture. After graduation, she was mentored by Toronto ceramist Josef Roschar. "I really learned about firing from him, and benefitted from spending time working alongside a professional, full time artist." She completed a Bachelor of Education degree at the University of Toronto followed later by a Master of Arts (cum laude) in Canadian Craft History in 2015. Kathy's rich background in theory and history are important aspects of her work; her energy and the high value she places on the creative process shine through as she speaks.

As an emerging artist, Kathy worked to balance work and family commitments, and benefitted from having a home studio where she could work independently without losing time to a commute. "When I'm in the studio, I allow myself to work intuitively within the times

I have allocated." She typically works in the mornings, finding her focus. Her work teaching in the Toronto District School Board allowed her to work with students in visual arts and dance. She was also a drawing and ceramics instructor at Sheridan in the Craft and Design



program, after her children were born. The additional flexibility of her time at Sheridan allowed her more time for her own artistic practice. Teaching also gave her the opportunity to pursue her own artistic directions in a symbiotic relationship. She takes a structured approach to her work schedule, setting regular hours in the studio and deliberately seeking out other

artists for collaboration and sharing ideas. In the studio, with clay in her hands, however, sculptures emerge as she works with the clay. Her work is informed by her experiences, adding them to her materiality rather than separating them. Motherhood, becoming and attachment are a part of her work and her process.

Kathy has shown her work in a wide range of galleries since her first show in 1989. She was one of 27 women artists included in the 2020 *A New Light: Canadian Women Artists* exhibition at the Canadian Embassy in Washington D.C. The show launched an update of the Embassy's art collection by shifting towards gender equity as well as strengthening representation from every region of Canada. The opening was an important event, held just before the first Covid lockdowns. For Kathy, having her ceramic work included in this prestigious collection alongside paintings and photography is also an important example of how fine craft is coming into its own in the art world.

Kathy is a hand builder who uses a range of techniques in her work such as coils and press moulding with her own plaster moulds. Her sculptural handbuilt pieces reflect the imperfections and movements of the human body, and the materiality of clay as it transforms from a soft, dull coloured, malleable material through its stages of fragility and firmness, evolving through the kiln firings to a final product that will outlive us all. "The material is really important to what I make, and the ideas come to me as I have the clay in my hands. I love the additive process of clay, the additive process is organic and different from any other sculptural material."

With a show in Denver, Colorado cancelled, the Washington, D.C. show plus *SOFA Chicago* (now *Intersect Chicago*) moved online, Kathy was disappointed as she saw a few years of work abruptly change. Lockdowns stretched on as she re-examined her work and process, and began to revisit the early days of her career, years of choreography with students. From her home studio, Kathy looked for new avenues to communicate digitally. "When someone experiences sculptural pieces in person, they walk around and are able to get a sense of scale and the movement of one form into another. Two-dimensional images can be excellent, but they can't allow a viewer to appreciate the inside and outside of a piece in the same way."

Through these months of COVID-19 closures and openings, she started to consider discourses of healing, allegories of protection and female empowerment, again reinterpreting Greek myths. In a new multimedia series, Kathy has filmed her own choreography of her hands and her ceramic work, recording expressions of themes of springs, ponds and waterfalls. The piece is an

**"The material is really important to what I make, and the ideas come to me as I have the clay in my hands. I love the additive process of clay, the additive process is organic and different from any other sculptural material."**

**- Kathy Kranias**

experimental response to the mythical Naiads, craft discourses and the concepts inside/outside. "Video allows me to explore the planes of the work, to understand the form and the hands that made it." The video will be released in 2022 and has been edited by Katherine Asals with an original score by producer-songwriter Rob Wells.

Re-interpreting the ancient myths from her Greek heritage from a feminist perspective is a long-standing theme in her work. In 2009, *Becoming The Persephone*, a ceramic installation, was shown at the Art Gallery of Peterborough curated by Janette Platana, for example. That show was reviewed by Gil McElroy in FUSION magazine in 2009 in "*Kathy Kranias: Becoming*

*The Persephone*", FUSION Magazine, Fall 2009, Vol.33 #3, pp.16-19.

Kathy's latest show is entitled *Matriarchy*. This show is curated by Lera Kotsyuba and will take place in the former home of Kathy's great, great grandmother. The home is a Victorian home, built by her great, great grandparents in 1897, located on what is now the campus of the University of Toronto. The work in this show is unglazed porcelaineous stoneware and takes a decolonized look at her matrilineal line, commenting on domestic space from a feminist perspective. *Matriarchy* is scheduled to open in September 2022.

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

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Amy Bell MA, MPA, is a potter, writer and pottery teacher based in Ottawa, ON. She is currently the Program Director and Past President of the Ottawa Guild of Potters and a studio member of Gladstone ClayWorks. You can follow her on Instagram [@Shorebird\\_pottery](https://www.instagram.com/Shorebird_pottery).



*I am a Tree (Daphne)*, Hand built porcelaineous stoneware; 60 cm x 37 cm x 26 cm; 2020; Image: Marina Dempster



Top. *Invisibility Cloaks 1, 2, 3*, Hand press moulded and assembled raku sculpture clay, Screen printed and painted slips, glazes; 56 cm x 28 cm x 28 cm each; 2018; Image: Marina Dempster



Above. *Persephone Emerges*, Hand built earthenware clay, slip, stain, glaze; 4 cm x 34 cm x 35cm; 2009; Image: Marina Dempster

**2021 CRAFT AWARD RECIPIENT EXHIBITION**

October 21 - November 13, 2021

The Craft Awards recognize accomplished and ambitious practitioners in the field of craft and design.

This program is able to take place on an annual basis through the valued support of many generous donors and sponsors. Our thanks go to the following organizations, businesses and individuals: FUSION, the Ontario Clay and Glass Association, King West Supplies Ltd., The Pottery Supply House, Tucker's Pottery Supplies Ltd. as well as members and friends of the Copeland, VanDusen, Gregor, Patterson, Mather, Sharkey, Walker and Young Families.

Please join us in celebrating the 2021 recipients:

Ekko Entoni	Evo Mada
Emily Steiman	Fuzzy Hall
Karla Rivera	Kathy Kravits
Lindsay MacDonald	Rachael Soers
Sami Tsang	

We would also like to thank the 2020 jury: Jerry Davidson, Jeremy Gowan, Joann Hsu Kim, Paula Kozel and Yasmine Louis.



2021 Craft Award Recipient Exhibition, Craft Ontario Gallery, Toronto; Image by the artist



## Kawartha Potters Guild: 28 Years and Still Growing

In 1994, a small group of potters in the Kawarthas came together to exchange ideas and discuss pottery. It was not long before a more formal approach was established which included regular meetings where invited guests showcased pottery techniques, styles and processes. In 1996, the Kawartha Potters Guild (KPG) held their first sale. To ensure a high standard of professionalism, a set of technical standards for the sale was instituted. To the delight of those involved, this sale was an incredible success! These elements continue to be the foundation of the guild.

After holding monthly meetings in various rented rooms, there was a desire to create a permanent home where we could work, teach and sell. In 2012, the KPG found our current home. Immediately upon moving in, a pottery class was started and gallery space created.

The official opening of our guild was in 2013. The following year, the FUSION Conference was held at Fleming College in Peterborough and KPG hosted the reception in our new space.

With our burgeoning education program, more equipment was needed. The guild's application to The Trillium Foundation was successful and in 2015, equipment was purchased and two part-time employees hired. From that point on, the KPG never looked back. A successful teaching program has been established which includes a summer kids camp, monthly meetings and workshops providing continued education for members. The Pottery Shop features the outstanding work of our artists; studio members are supported and annual sales generate revenue. The website [kawarthapottersguild.com](http://kawarthapottersguild.com) offers guild



information such as events, access to our on-line Pottery Shop and a members section. KPG has a presence on social media with our Instagram (@kpgpottery) and Facebook (@kawarthapottersguild) pages.

The guild has created a supportive, educational and creative space for our members, and we are so very proud of our teachers, volunteers, members and space. Some of our guild members were accepted into two FUSION mentorship programs, six members travelled to Korea for a three-week workshop and the KPG was asked to host one of the FUSION mentorship programs. "I have found that the constant immersion of being in the guild, working with talented teachers, members, and inspiring students, along with the opportunities provided by FUSION mentorships, juried shows and the trip to Korea, has been formative for making me a better potter and a better person. Working

with a not-for-profit requires the need to not fear change, which is very similar to the kind of challenges we face working with ceramics", notes Karina Bates, a member since 2006 and also KPG guild administrator from 2015-2018.

The guild is a non-profit organization with approximately 100 members. These members volunteer on our executive, sales committee, programs committee, standards committee, fundraising committee and volunteer in our Pottery Shop. We are a founding member of the Artisans Centre Peterborough (ACP), a collaboration of local guilds including the Kawartha Gourders, the Kawartha Woodturners, and the Peterborough Weavers & Spinners. The KPG supports the many charitable and outreach activities of the ACP, including the Creative Hands On Festival in 2018. We also support the local YWCA with their annual Empty Bowls program donating about 300 bowls yearly and volunteering at



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**CELEBRATE CERAMICS**

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the event. Throughout the year, the KPG supports local organizations and charities such as "Socks Peterborough". In 2017, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Vimy Ridge, the KPG built over 600 Trilliums (one for every local soldier that did not return home). Our summer kids camp supported for five years Camp Oochigeas, a summer camp for children battling cancer, providing them with raised funds for pottery related equipment for recovering children.

Like many others, the pandemic has required the KPG to pivot. We have created an on-line Pottery Shop, learned how to host members meetings via zoom, and when regulations permitted it, held classes with a maximum of six students. We even held two successful Holiday Sales where

shoppers registered for a specific time to shop enabling the guild to abide by COVID-19 protocols.

**"I have found that the constant immersion of being in the guild, working with talented teachers, members, and inspiring students, along with the opportunities provided by FUSION mentorships, juried shows and the trip to Korea, has been formative for making me a better potter and a better person."  
- Karina Bates**

The KPG continues to look forward and on April 8, 2022 will be hosting our first fundraiser. The event is called Celebrate Ceramics and its purpose is to assist the growth of the ceramic arts community by helping to promote and foster the creativity of ceramic artists and the ceramic arts community. Funds raised will also support ceramic arts education for all ages and skills in Peterborough and the Kawarthas. How does our event work? Throughout the evening, tickets will be drawn at random and the ticket holder will be able to choose one pottery item from those displayed to take home. If that is not enough, all





ticket holders will receive a complimentary glass of wine, refreshments and entertainment. To support this fundraiser, the Kawartha Potters Guild has received donations of pottery from our members and from potters throughout Ontario including Teresa Dunlop, Naomi Clement, Monika Schaefer, Anne Chambers, Thom Lambert, Wayne Cardinalli, Thomas Aitken and Kate Hyde. The Guild has also received sponsorship from a number of local businesses. We continue to seek donations and sponsors for this event, so if you want to be part of it, please contact the Kawartha Potters Guild.

We are proud of our members and all of our accomplishments to date. The KPG exists today because of the hard work and dedication of our members who are the backbone of the organization. We could not provide even a small portion of what we do without their help and support.

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

Heather Brooks is a member of the Kawartha Potters Guild.



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## Playing with Fire

**F**USION recently reached out to Minna Koistinen of Playing with Fire, an all-electric glass studio at Artscape Wychwood Barns. Minna was commissioned to design and create the 2020-2024 Scotiabank Giller Prize which is awarded annually to a Canadian author.

### Tell us a little bit about yourself, your work and how you discovered glass.

I was born in Kuusjärvi, Finland and I came to Canada 25 years ago as a working, professional glass artist. I became a Canadian citizen in 2015.

I completed a graphic design degree after high school and subsequently dabbled in various mediums and art schools while still in Finland. In 1991, I got into the department of Ceramics and Glass at the University of Art and Design, Helsinki. After two years of mandatory ceramics, I had my first class in the glass studio and it was instant love. I took a month-long beginner workshop in Orrefors, Sweden, which was the best introduction to glass possible. Pick up a pipe, gather, blow a

bubble, put it in the bucket. Infuriatingly effective.

The glass department in Finland was lacking teachers. Daniel Crichton and Tapio Yli-Viikari, the department heads of Sheridan College and my University had met in a sauna somewhere and created an exchange program. I seized the opportunity to be amongst the third set of students to study in Canada from 1994-1996.

After Sheridan College, I went back to Finland to finish my Masters degree in 1996. In 1997, I was back in Canada to stay.

### How long have you been a part of FUSION and how has FUSION helped you as a maker?

I am a new member to FUSION - and I'm very much looking forward to seeing what the future will bring. I'm excited to hopefully be involved in FUSION's Clay and Glass Show this year at the Barns, which is where my home and studio are located.

### Where has your studio evolved?

My studio #252 in Barn 3 is housed by Artscape Wychwood Barns at St. Clair and Christie area in Toronto. I became a live-in resident in 2008 and built my studio in 2016, when a spot opened up at the Barns. I wasn't starting out at that time, I had run my workshops successfully out of Greg Herman's Studio Crucible in the Junction since 2005. In 2017, his studio building made space for another condo. I consider myself lucky to have found my space at the right time. In 2020, I gained a second space as a studio/gallery #158 so I jokingly say that I'm taking over the building.

Building my studio with the remote and tireless assistance from Steve Sinotte (Electroglass) was a genuine joy as I had worked for 18 years towards realizing my dream. There were far fewer problems than anticipated, which doesn't mean it was all smooth sailing, but I relied on the professionalism of some great people to get me through. Eddi Mascherin for one from Saxx Electrical did an incredible job hooking up an all-electric glass studio.

I must throw in the romantic story of how Steve got into designing glass studio equipment. After

three PhD degrees he met the love of his life, a glassblower, and made it his mission to design better equipment for her. This is how we all have benefited from the highly powerful and energy saving electrical furnaces and glory holes.

### How did the Scotiabank Giller Award commission come about?

In February 2020, I got an email from an agency asking to speak to the person in charge about redesigning a major award. This happens from time to time and you get used to not giving it too much thought since it usually doesn't go anywhere. This time I had been literally picked out and the commission was in progress without delay. A month later, COVID-19 put us in limbo and freed my time to exclusively throw myself into the job, which became the best thing that could have possibly happened in a year of so much chaos in the world. Elana, Daphna and Noni



Rabinovitch were fantastic to work with! Awards are teamwork and you have to pay close attention to your client. We spent months leading up to the final piece by process of elimination. I made drawings, small models and finally a graphite mold, which took the entire month of September 2020 working 12-hour days. My mentors and friends Alfred Engerer and Karl Schantz stood by and helped in every corner. It's a stack of books, it is "cold and icy" clear glass and reminiscent of an Inukshuk. I feel like it was a general consensus that we achieved a distinctly Canadian award.

### Tell us about your practice and your workflow

I started out as an artist with a presence all over North America and made the switch to creating fun and educational workshops for the general public after I had my two children. A good artist knows how to adapt and I have no regrets. I see myself as a performer these days, almost like someone who plays the same part in a popular classic for decades. The people really make the workshops and I love meeting so many interesting personalities.

### What works for you in your space and what would you improve?

No matter how much space you have it's never enough. If I had more time to make improvements, I would do a big inventory and make some big decisions. Also, if I could clone myself a couple of times, improvements would be a lot easier to handle.

### How does your workspace inspire you or influence your productivity?

I have a personal attachment to my studio because it's mine. I talk to my furnace as if it were a person.



A recent high point in Minna's career was the commission for the 2020-2024 Scotiabank Giller Prize Award; an abstract sculpture showcasing a small collection of books cast in solid glass.

"The power of nature's inspiration came to me early in my life. My father, a renowned geologist, worked in several different parts of the world and the whole family followed him to Tanzania and Ecuador when I was young. We viewed the world through a microscope and a telescope, read stories in tree rings and the layers of rock formations. I came to see patterns and forms that unify, which has given me direction in my artistic practice."

- *Minna Koistinen*



It was important to me to build an all-electric glass studio after working with natural gas until 2016. I wanted to show my kids that glassblowing can be done in a cleaner way. I'm not putting out the VOCs that the gas-air mixture causes. My studio is also very quiet and gets less hot from equipment that is well-insulated.

There is always the battle between choosing art or choosing money, and choosing money wins every time when you have a family to support. Before COVID-19 shut the workshops down (three times so far), I felt like I had nothing more to give creatively. The workshop business is not an easy thing to manage and the administration alone can take up all your time. It took me a few months to get used to the down time and then new designs started to appear out of nowhere. Glass has forced me to become a multitasker, but my art comes from a quiet place and suddenly having that space was a revelation. I think artists are the luckiest people for being able to find those wells from the inside even when the outside world is in turmoil.

### **What are your 'must haves' in your studio?**

Spare parts at hand in case something breaks down, always enough colour, everything where I can find it. Usually I manage to have it all but you have to work at it constantly.

### **What advice do you have for people establishing their own studios?**

If you can't do it yourself - or it would take too long for you to do so, don't fret the money but spend what it costs. You will thank yourself later. Hire the best people, be very quick to assess them and if it still didn't work out, count your losses quickly and move on. If you plan to enter a group

setting, make sure everyone is on the same page with studio practices and pulls their weight. Don't be discouraged by setbacks, you will have many, that's the way you learn so enjoy your road to becoming a true professional.

### **How have the workshops you teach helped you and your business?**

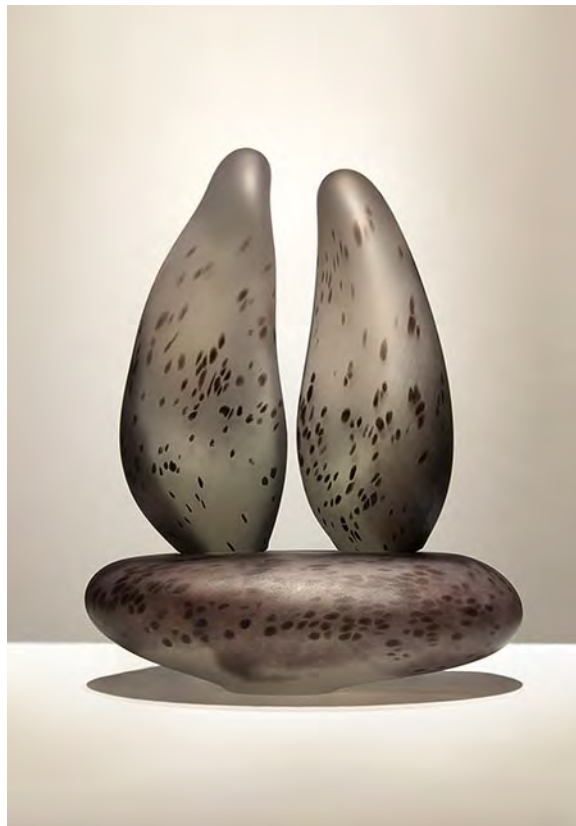
The workshops are designed for beginners only and give you a quick but thorough glimpse into the world of glass. The sessions are 2-3 hours long and I give my students only the tasks that I know they can handle and help them with the rest. Pieces are made one by one after an introduction and there is a pick up date in the following week. People will book individually through the website or book a group like team building or a party. I don't teach 1:1 or skill building, I refer people to places which have the administrative capacity to handle programs like that. I have volunteered my time for workshops for street youth, which has been very rewarding.

I also started teaching in order to treat my extreme social anxiety. I feel like running towards my fears has worked for me and taught me things that I needed to know. People who love learning gravitate towards teaching and I thrive on a challenge even if it feels uncomfortable at times.

I love to see beginners discover first hand how to handle glass in its semi-liquid form in my workshops. With a bit of assistance, anyone can produce a beautiful, one of a kind and highly personal result. This has much to do with the natural flow of the material itself. It's like liquid honey on a spoon.

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

Images: Matt Kassirer [komposit.ca](https://www.komposit.ca)



# FUSION Travels

Frantic Farms,  
Warkworth, ON



**W**hile we may be limited in where we can travel to, take a virtual road trip to Frantic Farms in Warkworth, Ontario, the home of ceramic and glass artists Monica Johnston and Paulus Tjang.

## How did Frantic Farms evolve?

Frantic Farms officially came into being in 1993. We had made our exodus from Toronto five years earlier. The Skydome was being completed and the associated real estate boom was pushing artists and creatives like us out of the city's downtown core. Our separate pottery and glass studios, and creative practices were brought together under the business umbrella named Frantic Farms. The name highlights our belief that craft, creativity, and making should be like nurturing and growing things on a farm rather than production in a factory. It's 'frantic' because we exist in a modern technologically charged world, and we love the impact of alliteration in titles for marketing.

## Where are you located?

We are 1.5 hours east of Toronto, midway between Peterborough and Kingston. We tell people to look for the giant Red Apple on the 401. We have two locations: our gallery and pottery studio is in the Village of Warkworth

and our home, farm and glass studio is 10 minutes southeast of the village. Our Warkworth location is open to the public with seasonal variations for hours. The farm and glass studio is visited by appointment only.

We chose this area, to leave the hustle of Toronto, but to have Ottawa and Montreal a bit closer.



## How has being a FUSION member helped you?

In the beginning, early in our careers, FUSION provided us with a network of like-minded people who helped validate our experiences, provided opportunities to evolve and make our work. There was a shop on Yorkville Ave., in Toronto, which represented our work. Workshops and educational conferences presented prominent guest artists which expanded our knowledge and community network.

Membership in a community of people bound by common experience with tactile material, strengthened our professional identities. In a world, surrounded by technological media, that tends to distill and gist creative activities and their cultural impact, organizations such as FUSION help to broaden general awareness and expound the benefits of working creatively with clay and and/or glass.



## What is your community of Warkworth like to live and work in?

Warkworth is a special little town and surrounding area. There are approximately 600 to 1000 households. The lack of





population provides a quaint familiarity between residents. Call 911 and the first responder is the volunteer firefighter who lives across the road. There is a pride of place which enhances curb appeal, and businesses are often recognized as part of the communities' identity. Shortly after opening our Gallery and Pottery Studio in 2005, Warkworth proclaimed itself as an Arts' Community. It was not just for our sake, but at the time there were three other galleries and a very active performing arts group.

It may be telling what businesses are at the centre of a town. In many cities like Toronto, it's a bank or insurance company. In Warkworth, the largest building at the geographical center of town houses a gallery and pottery studio. Across the street is the farm supply shop to get the feed for your animals and supplies to live on the land.

Our local community has changed much since

moving here more than 30 years ago. It was mostly farming families living around us in the beginning. After three decades, the land still consists of mostly open farming fields, but worked by fewer individuals. Housing lots have sprouted all around towns nearby.

of our immediate neighbours are successive generations of the same family. They have been very supportive of our business and our life in the country. It is beautiful, sparsely populated, isolated from the hustle of the city, but close enough for a visit or meal with friends and family.

"In the beginning, early in our careers, FUSION provided us with a network of like-minded people who helped validate our experiences, provided opportunities to evolve and make our work... Membership in a community of people bound by common experience with tactile material, strengthened our professional identities."

### **How have you weathered COVID-19?**

We were very lucky to have been positioned well to weather the hardships of COVID. We live in the country where there is natural space. The hectic pace of life and business, in the 90s and early 2000s, has led us to cherish and enjoy our alone time together, as a couple. We love each other and





enjoy one another's company. However, we recognised the need for separate studios and a space of one's own. We have lived thrifty lifestyles, with the feast or famine cash flow patterns of the self employed. This made us frugal, keeping our debt load minimal, and hoarding our resources. Not just financial resources, but creative materials, energy, and food. We tend to repair or repurpose things to extend their usefulness. We will wear second hand clothes until they are thread bare and threaten to waft into the wind like butterflies or dandelion seeds.

In 2010, our gallery in Warkworth had operated for 5 years and we began a slow exit from shows and markets. Focusing our promotion and marketing on attracting clients to come directly to us, in Warkworth. From a roster of approximately 20 shows per year, we were participating in one or two by 2018. When COVID-19 came upon us, the cancellation of shows had little effect on business and the desire to support local business brought growth and interest to us in Warkworth.

## What advice would you have for those looking to move to a new community?

It is paramount to be aware of the long game. It is important to know what one is getting into before diving in. Visit a place a few times and get to know it during different seasons, before trying to make a home there. It may be beautiful, and hopping with clients in the summer, but bleak, dark, and cold for 8 months of the year. Services which urbanites often take for granted may be lacking. Knowing how to live without a constant internet connection, keeping warm or having water and lights on without hydro, having stocks with food, and shoveling out of a mountain of snow are as important as getting to know one's neighbours, and who does what in the surrounding area.

Most of our neighbours are not on Facebook, or social media. Always have a Plan B.

## What is on the horizon for the coming year?

Our plans are compartmentalized into 3, 5, 7, and 10 years. Next year's goals are divided into creative development, studio functions, and promotion and marketing.

There will be the installation of a gas fired kiln, which adds to our roster of electric and wood fired kilns. There will be an even broader range of glaze and surface to explore on clay. The series of glass produced for lighting will expand to include illuminated wall lighting and outdoor hanging pieces. Our website is almost 20 years old, though functional, it is very dated in appearance. A new website will present a more complete story of Frantic Farms and comprehensively display our lines of pottery and glass.

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

Watch Monica and Paulus on FACES of FUSION, Wednesday March 9 at 12 noon!



Image: Cristina Liu

## Barb Banfield

When Barb Banfield has an idea for a new project, her face lights up with energy and enthusiasm. FUSION has been fortunate to have her involvement as a Board Director over the past decade, where she served in various positions, including Membership and President. Her responsiveness to the needs of artists in the clay and glass community and her initiative in developing new programming has contributed to the sparkle and drive of this organization.

Following a career in fashion, Barb pursued her interest in ceramics at Sheridan College. After graduating she began thinking about what comes next, not just for herself, but for the many others who are

in between their training and the development of their unique body of work. For artists who need a push, a structured format could help them fully explore their emergent ideas, to refine their body of work, or to branch off in a completely new direction. As a problem-solver and doer, Barb developed plans to encourage creative and professional development among the FUSION membership, found collaborators and facilitators, and rolled up her sleeves to work at making it happen.

What resulted was the first FUSION Mentorship program in 2010/11, with two groups led by Angelo di Petta and Bruce Cochrane. Barb went on to design and deliver seven more Mentorship programs. To meet growing demand from artists who didn't feel they were at the level of working independently in a Mentorship program, but needed a mentor and some instructional guidance, Barb launched Creative Directions, with three successful programs so far, and another in the works. As a mentor in two programs since its inception, Angelo di Petta appreciates the enthusiastic pursuit of life-long learning that Barb exemplifies, her commitment to advancing creative growth and trying

new things, and her confidence in supporting all aspects of the mentorship experience.

FUSION would like to thank Barb Banfield for her selfless dedication to FUSION and for thoughtfully putting into practice our guiding principles with a generous, collaborative spirit. Barb would insist on giving credit to the team effort, but we know how important she was to the success of any project she volunteered for. We will miss her direct involvement on the board, but appreciate her willingness to be an advisor as we forge ahead to continue her good work. I am especially grateful for the opportunity to work with Barb; her positivity and enthusiasm is contagious and she is a fountain of knowledge and good sense. She continues to be an exceptional role model and mentor for me, as a community-focused volunteer and also as an artist.

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

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Silvana Michetti is a FUSION Board Member and Chair, Creative Directions and Mentorship.

# BUSINESS TIPS: INSTAGRAM 101

Over the past two years of lockdowns and restrictions, digital marketing has saved many businesses. Instagram on its own can be a very effective marketing and promotion tool for artists; it is a visual platform where photos and videos are the focus. Instagram provides free features that help you and your ideal customers connect. You're able to research your audience, optimize what you post, and speak directly with your customers. Here are a few tips to help you showcase the best of your practice on Instagram:

## #1 Research your audience

Before you spend time growing your audience, do some research into who your ideal customers are.

Those who like - and buy - your best work at your preferred prices. We can start this research with Instagram Insights.

To gain access to Insights, you'll need to confirm the type of Instagram account you have: Personal, Creator, or Business. The Business Account has full access to Insights, Ads, and Instagram Store features. Switching your account to Business is easy and free. For instructions, check out this [website link](#).

This valuable data allows you to track the growth of your audience. To view insights for your Instagram account, start by visiting your profile. Then, at the top, click the 'hamburger' icon or the three parallel lines at the top and select Insights from the menu. This will show you the number of people you've reached and more.

You can also track which posts are popular via likes, comments, shares. Simply click on one of your posts, and then click on the "View Insights" text link. Now you can see a similar overview, but for this specific post.

## #2 Optimize what you post

Armed with all the research you've done - optimize! Start by editing your Instagram profile. Does your name include your specialty, for

example: Jill Smith Ceramics. What is your username? Is it easy to remember and relevant? Add a Bio description that helps people

understand what you do too. Next, research what your competition is using for their Category and Contact Options. Now add yours too.

Now that your profile is optimized, let's look at your Profile feed. What posts do people see when they go to your Instagram Profile? Is your feed telling a story? Show us some behind-the-scenes posts, and notices of upcoming shows. Keep track of what posts meet your goals and edit out those that miss the mark. Be consistent,

yes, but try out all the Instagram features (photo and video posts, Stories, Reels, IGTV) to keep your audience interested, engaged - and buying!

## #3 Speak directly with your customers

When people comment on your posts, reply to them. Thank them for their comment and ask them a question to keep the conversation going. Invite people to send you a Direct Message if they have questions or commission requests. Try your best to reply to all comments or Direct Messages within hours rather than days. This quick turnaround will impress and keep the conversation fresh. Speak to your audience and buyers just as you may at a show or sale.

## #4 Build community

Instagram is all about sharing, learning and connecting. Take these tips and share your wares. Experiment and learn what works. Have fun and maybe make some new friends. You've got this!

---

Andrew Duff is a mixed media visual artist who helps other artists with their social media profiles.

[@andrewduff](#)

Andrew recently did a Makers Meet Zoom workshop about Instagram and plans are in the works to do more.





Lisa Gwen Robbins in her studio.

## EMERGING MAKER

### LISA GWEN ROBBINS

I have always been drawn to craft and design. I hold two diplomas in Design, one from Seneca College in Creative Advertising/Art Direction and the other from Sheridan College in Craft and Design/Ceramics. I have taken over 35 continuing education classes in various art and craft disciplines. I was employed at Clay Design Studio Gallery in Toronto for 7 years as a studio tech, gallery assistant and pottery instructor.

Twelve years ago, I packed up my clay studio and took a hiatus from ceramics; I chose to focus on raising a family. But I did not pack away my passion to learn and my fascination with the unknown. I spent much of my time away from craft listening to podcasts about Fibonacci and Mandelbrot, watching Ted Talks on Theoretical Physics and Cymatics and reading articles on Metaphysics. My emergent body of work is a culmination of 15 years of studio experience

followed by 10 years of personal study on the strange and wonderful puzzle that is the nature of reality.

I have always marveled at the infinite hidden strings that are woven into boundless complex patterns to make up the exquisite beauty that exists outside our perception. I attempt to expose these hidden patterns, through the language of mathematics, physics, biology, and philosophy. My emergent body of work is an attempt to create a reflection of this hidden universal design through the lens of personal perspective and a mashup of divergent connections.

I begin each piece with a slab of layered colored clays, often in a gradient or wave that mimics the oscillation of energy fields. I then layer slip, silkscreen, decal and stamp patterns to create a vibrant dynamic composition that represents a snippet of the intricate tapestry of reality, while capturing the ordered chaos of continuous vibrational energy that is everything and everywhere. I use accurate representations of cymatics, atomic phases, mathematical sequences, platonic solids and so forth. I use universal symbolic references such as fish, water, and branches. Every element is a human attempt to observe and articulate the mysteries beyond our perception and a point of connection in a metaphysical design. The composition is then cut and hand assembled into individual vessels. Through this creative process I will produce multiple pieces from one composition, resulting in individual pieces that are unique yet connected

"I use universal symbolic references such as fish, water, and branches.

Every element is a human attempt to observe and articulate the mysteries beyond our perception and a point of connection in a metaphysical design."  
- Lisa Gwen Robbins

to an origin, reiterating the fact that everything is connected.

My current body of work focuses on chawan and yunomi designs as these are hand held and represent the intimate relationship between mind and matter. In the future, I plan to further explore our enigmatic reality through the use of scale and form. I hope to consider the balance between everything and nothing and the infinite exchange of information that shapes it all. I will always strive to push the boundaries of ceramics; blurring the edges of art, craft and science by creating work that provokes curiosity and invites interaction.

[@lisa.gwen](#)

Lisa was recently featured on **FACES of FUSION**. Watch the interview [here](#).

All images by the artist.

*Microcosm*, handbuilt, coloured clay, 2020.



*Energy Stream*, handbuilt, coloured clay, 2020.



*432 Hz Amplified*, handbuilt, coloured clay, 2020.



*Awareness@13hz*, handbuilt, coloured clay, 2021.



Paul van den Bijgaart in studio

## EMERGING MAKER

### PAUL VAN DEN BIJGAART

I'm originally from Edmonton, Alberta. I took my first glassblowing class at Red Deer College in 2007. I didn't know it at the time, but this weekend workshop would change the entire course of my life.

The first time I opened the glass furnace door I immediately knew that I had finally found what I was looking for as a creative outlet. Throughout my childhood, I spent a lot of time doing sports. My family was very active growing up and we'd regularly go skiing and mountain biking. Skateboarding was one of the sports that I really gravitated towards throughout my youth. The freedom of expression associated with this simple object that gives each individual an ability for stylized expression was something that I really cherished.

After high school, I worked a bunch of odd jobs as a cabinetmaker and lighting repairman. I knew that I wanted to do something with my hands and needed to be stimulated

and active, but it wasn't until I found glass that my mind just was completely engaged by the creative potential. During those first classes at Red Deer College, I remember being so captivated by the material and the physical process. Hot glass has this ability to bring you into the immediate moment and scold you if you aren't present. Glassblowing is very demanding and many people equate the process to a dance. I tend to view the studio as a sacred space where the glass in the furnace is pure untouched energy. Through the process of your approach, you're able to bring your creations to life. The process of disturbing that energy always holds the potential of disaster, but the creative potential continuously pulls me back.

It took a long time to find my individual voice with glass and it's something that I'm continuously trying to explore and refine. I feel like I have spent 10 years developing skills and am just becoming proficient working with glass. Today, my main sources of inspiration are rituals and lifestyle. The most recent and prominent body of work that I've developed is a series of ink paintings inspired by time I spent in China. I lived



in China for 4 years from 2015-2019 and through this time I was exposed to a history of civilization, dedication to craftsmanship, and ritualistic and ceremonial processes that deeply affected my dedication to craft. I became enthralled with inky landscape paintings, and now I'm trying to approach my work as a reflection of lifestyle.

Through my experiences of extreme sports and activities I take inspiration from natural environments and forces that tower over me as an individual. Mountains are a main source of inspiration since I grew up near the Rockies and spent time in the mountains surrounding Beijing. These natural monuments bewilder me and expose me to a power enormously greater than myself. It's through my craft that I aspire to show reverence and appreciation to these natural forces. For me it's not about capturing a specific moment or place but trying to engage the feeling of wonder that I get when I'm in a place of awe. I believe that this is what many of the ancient Chinese painters were pursuing and it's through my dedication to craft that I associate with this philosophy. It's through these connections that I've been able to invigorate my craft with a new sense of meaning and purpose. I feel honoured to be able to pursue my craft in the way I do and am thrilled to currently be pursuing my MFA at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia.

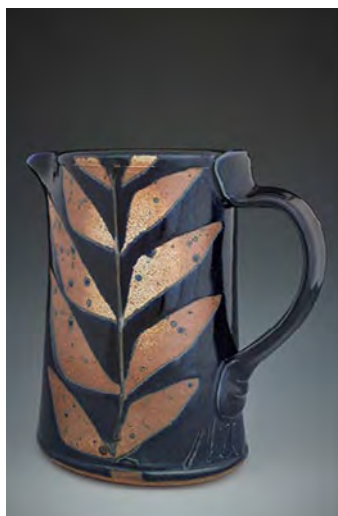
[@bijgaartwork](#)

Paul was recently featured on **FACES of FUSION**. Watch the interview [here](#).



"It's through my craft that I aspire to show reverence and appreciation to these natural forces. For me it's not about trying to capture a specific moment or place but to try and engage the feeling of wonder that I get when I'm in a place of awe."  
- Paul van den Bijgaart

## Atmospheric Firing Workshop Series with Dan Hill



In collaboration with  
**Deep River Potters' Guild**  
this **Creative Directions Workshop Series** will take place over three weekends:

**April 2 - 3, June 4 - 5  
and June 12, 2022**  
10 - 4 p.m. daily

Are you interested in exploring the potentials of the atmospheric firing process?

This workshop series is for anyone interested in learning more about atmospheric firing and surface treatments that activate the form.

Atmospheric changes and the movement of heat and flame within the kiln can have a profound effect on the ceramic form. Whether you fire in reduction, with gas or wood, Dan Hill's knowledge of form development, surface design and glazing will certainly bring a fresh approach to your work.

**Saturday, April 2 - Sunday, April 3**  
at the W.B. Lewis Public Library  
in Deep River, Ontario

**Saturday, June 4 - Sunday, June 5  
and Sunday, June 12**  
at Dan Hill's studio in Wilno, Ontario

**[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)**

FUSION will conduct these meetings with strict compliance to all Ontario Health and Safety guidelines.

Proof of vaccination is required to participate. If the event needs to be canceled, you will receive a full refund.



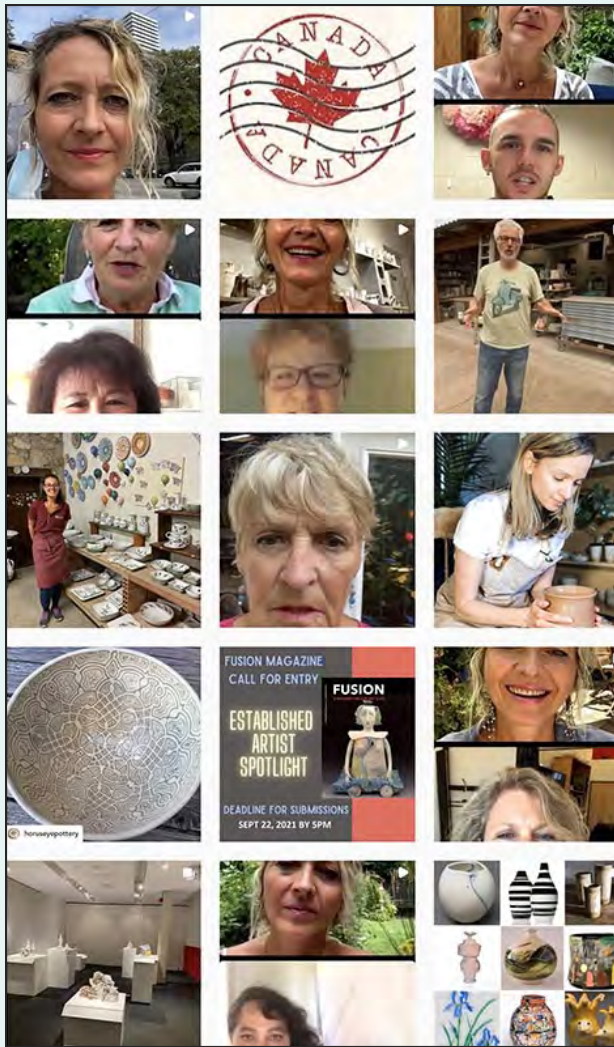
# FACES of FUSION Connect with your community!

FUSION meets with members every Wednesday at noon as they share their work, studio space and businesses.

Come join us and see what others are creating. Can't log on at noon? The FACES of FUSION interviews are stored online and can be watched when you have some downtime.

Learn more [here](#).

To see all of these fabulous interviews, visit [@fusionclayglass](#)



## Artists who have shared their thoughts, studios and practice include:

Alison Brannen	@alison_brannenceramics
Barb Banfield	@barbbanfield
Gene Timpany	@gene-timpany-pottery
Wendy Hutchinson	@studiowendyceramics
Bep Schippers	@ibeamarts
Amee Raval	@nirvanadesigns
Chris Snedden	@clayguy4you
Paul Steward	@paulthepottery
Leslie Putnam	@lputnaml
Lauri Maitland	@laurimailand
Andrea Vuletin	@andreavuletin
Karla Riviera	@karlariviera_studio
Zara Gardner	@zara.gardner.ceramics
Karen Franzen	@karen.franzen
Annie MacDonald	@annie.mcd
Shirley Clifford	@shirleypottery
Natalie Waddel	@claygirlceramics
Yael Novak	@novakrael
Hana Balaban Pommier	@hanabalabanpommier
Darlene Pratt	@prattdarlene4
Danielle Skentsos	@shiraleepottery
La Meridiana (Italy)	@lameridiana
Kawartha Potters Guild	@kpgpottery
Jordan Scott	@scottery_pottery
Brandon Smyth from PSH	@potterysupplyhouse
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Koen Vanderstukken	@koen.77.77
Sheridan Ceramics	@sherindancollegeceramics
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In these photos, Alison Brannen gingerly moves one of her large and heavy vessels safely into the kiln with some help from scarves and bands.

[@alison\\_brannenceramics](https://www.instagram.com/alison_brannenceramics)

Do you have a tip, trick or glaze recipe? Please send them to [fusion.editor@clayandglass.on.ca](mailto:fusion.editor@clayandglass.on.ca)



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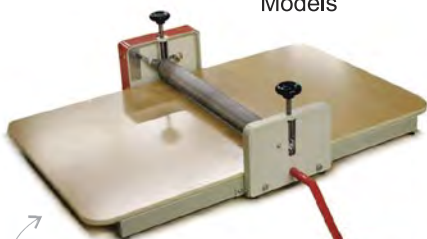
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