

# Clay Statement

Clay fascinates me. I've had the luxury to try many different forms and approaches, to work towards perfecting an aesthetic ideal to suit myself before branching off towards a new ceramics goal. Sometimes I'm working on forms, sometimes textures or images, sometimes on glaze and firing finishes. I explore how my current aesthetic goal fits within and expands the range of my previous work. I always feel as if I'm heading towards a goal instead of feeling stuck doing what I've done too many times before.

I tend to like to start with a simple form then develop details to complete the piece. I focus on making sure I add a foot that lifts, a rim that will feel good to the hand and lips, and a weight that is appropriate for the piece. How does it all balance? How will it feel to hold it and use it? What surface? What glaze? These are all considerations that I put to my work as I bring it along to completion. When the pieces come out of the final firing, I'm using those results to chart my direction for the next batch in the studio.

One of my favorite forms is the cup. I have spent many years considering my work in the context of the larger ceramic dialogue, being drawn from contemporary tumbler to the more complex and elusive yunomi aesthetic. I don't want to simply recreate what others have already attained. I am trying to find my voice, my perspective in the conversation.

While I always work towards control, I am fascinated by the uncertainties and nuances of gas, soda and especially wood fired kilns. I feel that good (even exceptional) results from atmospheric firings are the way in which my craft gives directly back to me. When I chase an ephemeral result and duplicate it, it becomes an exciting treasure hunt.

# Pottery Tool Statement

I appreciate and celebrate the small things I use and handle everyday. Creating something with my own hands using finely crafted tools elevates the value of the moment. I like to jump into my creative zone quickly. Picking up a quality crafted tool readies me, gets my mind and body in focus to create a fine work.

Woodworking became a winter pursuit for me when the studio became too cold for clay. It's challenging to switch from a malleable medium to a solid one. With woodworking I find I work backwards through the steps: I find a section of wood grain and I know from the start exactly what the finished surface will look like. Then I have to decide the form that will capture that surface. It's a perspective I can take back to clay to envision the end from the beginning.

Being able to work in two studios naturally had me wondering how to mix the media. I spent time on wooden serving utensils - spoons and spatulas. However, the urge to wed the two materials more intimately was strong; I knew I wanted to use handmade tools at the wet clay stage. My tools, I figured, could be as fine as I wanted my pottery to become. No rough edges, smooth transitions, sharp here, gradual there. Made to last. Made to be beautiful to look at and hold and use.

It's been such an honor to be able to share my tools with other potters. I thrive on the excitement people express over finding a creative connection. I can't think of anything more rewarding as a potter than to help my fellows elevate the enjoyment of making pots. I can put tools into the hands of hundreds. Like I said: It's an honor.

# Handmade Brush Statement

There is so much potential in a paint brush. It is hard for me to see it as just a functional tool whose only purpose is to move paint from palette to canvas or from bucket to ware. I've discovered that a brush has weight, personality, feeling and form, and that these create a world of possibilities and interpretations in every uniquely crafted paint brush. Before I made my own paint brushes all I expected of a brush was that one would serve me exactly as another would if it had the same manufacturer and labeling. I was happy when a brush didn't deviate from my expectations of it.

I've had handmade paint brushes on my radar for most of my adult life. When I started focusing on high quality pottery tools it was natural for me to challenge myself to a much higher degree of excellence in making paint brushes. Why couldn't they be made with exceptional quality and care, each one unique, with an expression and a life of its own? The brush head, ferrule, handle and display materials open creative possibilities. While I like the traditional simplicity of bamboo brushes, I also want to take the brush a personal direction, so combining wood and clay has been a natural direction to pursue. I turn wooden handles and make brush ferrules out of clay, firing them alongside my other pottery. My brushes become an integral synthesis of what I'm doing in my other studios.

As a potter I acknowledge how functionality and artistic aesthetics are compatible. I envision paint brushes that stand on their own as works of art without compromising functionality. I like that many dedicated handmade brush makers have gone before me, that I am part of a quest to build the better paint brush. I hope to inspire others on the path. I aim to make a brush that reveals its secrets and strengths through the experience of using it. I want to provide a richer experience to those who want to have the joy of using a handmade brush in their work -- and to those who would add a beautiful and functional item to their art collection.