

# **EARTH TRANSFORMED**

## CERAMIC ARTISTS INVITATIONAL

Joann Quiñones  
*Toussaint of Ward Avenue, 2019*



CITY OF KETTERING

PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL ARTS DEPARTMENT



rosewood centre

arts

# FOREWORD

*Earth Transformed: Ceramic Artists Invitational* is a remarkable convergence of artworks created by contemporary ceramic artists living and working in and around southwest Ohio. Organized on the occasion of the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts 2021 conference, *Earth Transformed* presents a wide breadth of ideas, techniques, and possibilities, reflected in each artist's significant mastering of material. On view in Rosewood Gallery and online through the month of March 2021, this exhibition speaks to the enthusiastic ceramics community of the Dayton region, and reflects Rosewood Arts Centre's role as a preeminent destination for all people to experience arts education, interpretation and presentation.

Well before Rosewood Arts Centre opened its doors as an arts facility in 1985, residents lined up to take clay classes during their leisure time, most notably in the now-demolished Rose E. Miller school basement, which students remember as a historic space coated in "coal dust." When the City of Kettering Parks and Recreation department took over the former Rosewood Elementary school building and transformed it into a community arts center, a ceramics program was the first program established. Since then, ceramics has flourished in the Kettering community, with more classes and activities offered than ever before. An upcoming renovation of Rosewood starting later this year will almost double the ceramic studio footprint, with more space dedicated to education, independent studio facilities, and specialized systems to support the artistic and educational output of our residents.

Also on view is the exhibition of our most recent artist in residence, Nicki Strouss, who was able to push through the challenges of the pandemic shutdown of 2020 in the middle of her residency, including the postponement of her residency exhibition until

2021. Experimenting with clay, material and form, **Nicki Strouss: New Work** demonstrates the creative talent flourishing in our own community.

I am deeply appreciative of our small team at Rosewood Arts Centre, in particular Paula Willmot Kraus, our gallery coordinator; Brandon Lowery, our ceramics coordinator and Andy Dailey, our program supervisor. For **Earth Transformed** and **Nicki Strouss: New Work**, Lowery's knowledge, passion and commitment to ceramics made this all possible. I would also like to thank the City of Kettering team, including Sara Thomas, Leah Cultice, Janet Roeckner and Amanda Wheatley. We are also incredibly grateful for our distinctive leadership through Mary Beth O'Dell, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts, and Mark Schweiterman, City Manager, as well as our elected officials Mayor Patterson and Council members Bruce Duke, Tony Klepacz, Jacque Fisher, Joe Wanamaker and Bill Lautar. The residents of Kettering continue to make opportunities like this possible through their overwhelming support for the arts. Every day we see new faces and old friends walk through our doors, eager to engage their senses and intellect through creativity – and for that we thank you.

Shayna V. McConville  
*Division Manager of Cultural Arts, City of Kettering*

# **EARTH TRANSFORMED: CERAMIC ARTISTS INVITATIONAL**

Rosewood Arts Centre  
Kettering, Ohio

March 1 - April 2, 2021

[www.playkettering.org/gallery](http://www.playkettering.org/gallery)

## **PARTICIPATING ARTISTS**

Tom Bartel

Kyle and Kelly Phelps

Juliellen Byrne

Joann Quiñones

Scott Dooley

Shoji Satake

Peter Christian Johnson

Brad Schwieger

Carrie Longley

Justin Teilhet

Brandon Lowery

Steven Thurston

Geno Luketic

Matt Wedel

# EARTH TRANSFORMED

Clay, a humble substance dug from the Earth's crust, has attracted artists as a medium for millennia. Its ability to yield to the artist's hand yet hold resolute is unparalleled. Versatile yet distinctly finite, clay offers the artist and craftsperson alike a vast field of creative possibilities. Whether bringing to life a form from the mind's-eye or a functional necessity of the everyday, clay as a vehicle for human ingenuity has few rivals. It is through this transformation from nature to hand-wrought object that the Earth has given voice to artists and makers through the centuries.

When the exhibition, *Earth Transformed*, was conceived we sought out artists whose work collectively demonstrated a wealth of possibilities using simple mounds of clay. We did not have to look far to find artists who excel, not only in the craft, but also at the sheer art of ceramics. We concentrated our search efforts on artists living in Ohio and adjacent states; Artists who share that common heritage of the land, its rivers and tributaries. It did not take long to find a roster of 15 artists in the region whose work exemplified the quality and diversity achievable with that simple mound of clay, a little heat, and a lot of imagination.

Artists whose forms, both functional and sculptural, push the concepts of what a teapot could be, as seen in Scott Dooley's whimsical *Two Teapots* or challenge our notion of what the figurative sculpture is with Juliellen Byrne's centaur-like amalgamation of man and dog in *Seeing Eye God*. It is an exhibition that offers something for everyone — ceramics with clean designs, flawless surfacing, and lush glazing — ceramics with wit and depth and meaning that push our concepts of identity — ceramics small and large — ceramics delicate and robust — ceramics that inspire and explain — ceramics that ask questions and some that simply showcase the beauty of form.

*David and Goliath*, by Dayton's own Phelps brothers, shows us the power of art, its ability to take what we read in the headlines or see on the news and place it solidly in front of us. In this ceramic relief, heavy with symbolism, we continue the dialogue playing out in the public domain.

Joann Quiñones's *Toussaint of Ward Avenue* draws us in to analyze racial identity. Her life-size sculpture imbued with multiple layers of cloth, newspapers and other media over a serene figure (the face live-cast from her son) adorned with a crown of gold-plated hands creating a saint-like presence. Look for her video artist statement for an explanation of this powerful piece.

In other figurative work, Tom Bartel's *Stumpy* is a doll-like figure whose multi-layered coatings and missing appendages draws on our many feelings. Steve Thurston's *Lost in Translation – Ben* is a bust of Ben Franklin resting on a pillow of wood. The green ceramics of the head contrasting with the smooth wood of the pillow contrasting with our knowledge of one of our favorite son's spins us around not sure where we stand. *Portrait*, by Matt Wedel is again a bust but in primitive form where Wedel states "the known-ness of the thing then becomes a process of understanding rather than something that is understood." Rounding out the figurative work is Brandon Lowery's *Council of Charlatans*, a bust portraying a body in mid-decay. The piece is eerily beautiful with its gold skull resting atop a torso of melting flesh.

Working in black porcelain, Yellow Springs artist Justin Teilhet, and Brookville artist Carrie Longley, give us two different visions in this smooth, rich clay. As Justin describes his *Composition #9*: "I consider this body of work to be an example of composition through density, similar to that of pointillism. Relying on repetition and progression as my guiding design principles, I use these individually handmade elements to compose a piece greater than the sum of its parts." In Longley's *Geum rivale*, and *Magnolia grandiflora*, the artist pulls from her fascination between the "relationship of science and art" in the two floral inspired sculptures.

In Shoji Satake's *AFS12.01.2020*, a rich blue floral design speaks to his desire to create a piece where "the floral attributes speaks of the beauty, sexuality, and frailty that is inherent in all living things, the rock bases suggests the foundation and strength we all identify with as a sense of belonging."

In what may appear to be a nod to more traditional ceramic pottery we have Brad Schwieger and Geno Luketic creating jars, vases, and vessels — but these are anything but traditional. Schwieger’s three artworks, **Cut Vase**, **Cut Jar**, and **Vase** are prime examples of his desire to ...“examine utility; however, I feel my work can also function as a decorative object.” And Waynesville artist Luketic’s installation **Still:Life** consists of clay vessels, sculptural elements and found objects resting on two hand-made shelves. It may make us think of our kitchen pantry but although these are items may look functional — they function as objects of art.

Lastly, is **Tilted Arc** by Peter Christian Johnson. This porcelain structure utilizes the inner bones, its scaffolding, to represent Johnson’s “Arc” which he describes as exposing “the relationship between soft and hard, the fluidity of a membrane, and the moment of intersection between these contrasting elements. Ultimately they are a metaphor for the human condition, paradoxically both broken and at times beautiful.”

These are just a brief introduction to the stories told by the 15 artists included in this exhibition, an exhibition that will explain, demonstrate, and inspire all the facets possible with clay, fire and glaze.

In partnership with **Earth Transformed** we are excited to present the work of Rosewood Arts Centre’s second Artist in Residence, Nicki Strouss. In **Nicki Strouss: New Work** we see Strouss’ playful exploration of strangely figurative vessels vary in size ranging from her twelve-piece dinner set to larger multi-layered urns she can, has, and will crawl into. Meant to be an interactive exhibition, her “stacked” dinner sets can be unstacked and reconfigured making for an exhibition which changes depending on the day.

Paula Willmot Kraus  
Gallery Coordinator  
Andy Dailey  
Cultural Arts Program Supervisor



Tom Bartel

*Stumpy*, 2012

Multi-fired earthenware with cone 04 oxidation

21 x 9 x 12 inches





Juliellen Byrne

*Seeing Eye God*, 2015

Ceramic, electric fired at various temperatures

24 x 26 x 9 inches



Scott Dooley  
*Two Teapots*, 2020  
Handbuilt porcelain with cone 5 oxidation  
12 x 16 x 6 inches



Peter Christian Johnson  
*Tilted Arc*, 2019  
Porcelain fired to cone 9  
18 x24 x12 inches



Carrie Longley

*Geum rivale*, 2020

Handbuilt porcelain with low fired glaze and high temperature wire  
12 x 6 x 5 inches



*Magnolia grandiflora*, 2020

Handbuilt porcelain with low fired glaze and high temperature wire  
10 x 6 x 5 inches



Brandon Lowery

*Council of Charlatans*, 2021

Ceramic, glaze, oxide washes, luster, cone 6 firing and luster firing  
18.5 x 12 x 9 inches



Geno Luketic

*Still:Life*, 2021

Commercially mixed industrially mined mineral blend, wild clay and found objects Fired in electric oxidation (partial fossil fuel origin)

30 x 24 x 5 inches





Kyle and Kelly Phelps  
*David and Goliath*, 2016

Standard 182 stoneware, wood frame, American flag, oil paint  
36 x 22 x 11 inches





Joann Quiñones

*Toussaint of Ward Avenue*, 2019

Osnaburg, linen, coffee stained muslin, Dutch-wax prints, digitally printed organza, ruff, indigo, porcelain, terra cotta, gilding, pearls, electric firing

84 x 48 x 48 inches



Shoji Satake

*AFS12.01.2020*, 2020

Handbuilt stoneware cone 10, slip-cast altered earthenware cone 04,  
multi-fired soda and electric kiln

18 x 9 x 8 inches



Brad Schwieger

*Cut Vase*, 2020

Wheel thrown and altered stoneware, soda fired

16 x 8 x 3 inches



*Vase, 2020*

Wheel thrown and altered stoneware, soda fired  
18 x 9 x 4 inches



*Cut Jar, 2020*

Wheel thrown and altered stoneware, soda fired  
10 x 6 x 6 inches



Steven Thurston

*Lost in Translation – Ben*, 2019

Porcelaneous castable fired to cone 10 reduction,

English black elm, resin

14 x 26 x 20 inches



Justin Teilhet

*Composition #9, 2021*

Black porcelain, oxidation fired

30 x 48 inches



Matt Wedel  
*Portrait*, 2020  
Stoneware, cone10 oxidation  
22 x 19 x 20 inches



# ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Rosewood Arts Centre Artist in Residence program offers professional and emerging ceramic artists an opportunity to create new work in a vibrant artistic environment. In addition to having a dedicated studio space and access to specialized studios, resident artists engage with the public through regular open studio hours, assist in ceramics studio operations, and leading public programs. The residency culminates in a solo exhibition at Rosewood Arts Centre Gallery.

## **Arthur Kettner**

Artist in Residence, 2019-20



Arthur Kettner  
*AE 27, 2019*



**Arthur Kettner** (Kettering, Ohio) creates ceramic work referencing his days spent aboard a Navy ship and his fascination with how humans influence, and in turn become influenced by technology. Kettner received a BFA at Bowling Green State University and MFA from Tyler School of Art.

<https://www.arthurkettner.com/>



Arthur Kettner

## Nicki Strouss

Artist in Residence, 2020-21

**Nicki Strouss** (Dayton, Ohio) creates large-scale installations. Strouss graduated from Columbus College of Art and Design, and has taught the Columbus Academy, Ohio Craft Museum, Penland School for the Arts, John Bryan Community Pottery and Stivers School for the Arts.



Nicki Strouss

*Dinner Setting for Six to Twelve, Figure D, 2021*



Nicki Strouss  
*Time Out Jar*, 2020

# ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

**Tom Bartel** (Athens, Ohio) creates fragmented figures influenced by various explorations of humanity, from antiquity to popular culture. His sculptures have been exhibited around the world, including in solo exhibitions at the Roscoe Ceramic Gallery in Oakland, CA and the Canton Museum of Art in Ohio, and his practice has been featured in many publications including *American Craft and Ceramics Monthly*. Bartol received his BFA from Kent State University and his MFA from Indiana University at Bloomington. He is currently a Professor of Ceramics Chairperson at Ohio University in Athens, OH.

<https://tombartel.net/>

**Juliellen Byrne** (Columbus, Ohio) creates narrative based figurative work that often comments on social and political issues within society. Byrne is the recipient of several awards, including the Ohio Arts Council Individual Arts Award and a residency at the Koehler Artist in Industry. She is represented by the Not Sheep Gallery in Columbus. Byrne earned her MFA from The Ohio State University.

<http://www.juliebyrneceramics.com/>

**Scott Dooley** (Springfield, Ohio) creates functional modular vessels using slab built parts. His artwork has been exhibited internationally in Spain, Switzerland, Australia, South Africa, China, Croatia, Portugal and Taiwan as well as throughout the United States including New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. His artwork has been published in *Ceramics Monthly*, *Claytimes*, *Pottery Making Illustrated*, *Revista Internacional Ceramica*, *Kerameiki Techni*, *The Chinese Potters Newsletter*, *Ceramics: Art and Perception* and *The National Ceramics Quarterly*. He is the recipient of the Ohio Arts Council Individual Artist Fellowship. Dooley received his MFA in Ceramics from Kansas State University, and is currently a Professor of Art at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio.

**Peter Christian Johnson** (Kent, Ohio) creates porcelain sculptures exploring the tension between acts of labor and collapse, between precision and failure, which are encouraged to warp or collapse in the firing process. His work has been exhibited in Canada, China, Australia, Korea, and throughout the United States. He has received the first place award in the 2018 Zanesville Prize for Contemporary Ceramics and an Honorable mention at the 9th Gyeonggi International Ceramic Biennale. He has received the Oregon Arts Commission's Individual Artist Fellowship, the Ohio Arts Council's Individual Artist Excellence Award, and was a Matsutani Fellow at the Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts. He earned his MFA from Penn State University and a BS in Environmental Science at Wheaton College. Peter is currently Associate Professor of Art at Kent State University.

<http://www.peterchristianjohnson.com/>

**Carrie Longley** (Brookville, Ohio) investigates the relationship between art objects and scientific specimens, abstracted and metamorphosized into new forms through her ceramic art. She has exhibited throughout the United States and has received awards including from the Ohio Designer Craftsman, the Penland School of Crafts, MCACD Individual Artist Fellowship, and the William and Dorothy Yeck Young Sculptor's Award. She holds a BA in Studio Art from Wittenberg University and a MFA from Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. She is currently Chair of the Fine and Performing Arts Department and Assistant Professor of Fine Art at Indiana University East in Richmond, Indiana.

**Brandon Lowery** (Dayton, Ohio) creates sculptural narratives exploring misinformation and anonymity, resulting in a polarized population and dehumanization. He has exhibited his work in solo and group exhibitions throughout the US, including in New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Indiana. He received his MFA from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio and BFA from the University of Dayton.

<https://www.brandonlowery.com/>

**Geno Luketic** (Waynesville, Ohio) creates work focused on sustainability and ethical material sourcing practices. He teaches at the University of Dayton.

<https://www.luketicceramics.com/>

**Kelly and Kyle Phelps** (Centerville, Ohio) are an artist team and identical twins that collaborate on figurative sculptures on timely topics, including race relations and everyday struggles of the blue collar working class. The Phelps share numerous grants, regional, national, and international exhibitions, and commissions. Their work has been included in *Ceramics Monthly*, *Sculpture Magazine*, and *American Craft Magazine*. Kelly Phelps is a professor at Xavier University in Cincinnati and Kyle Phelps is a professor at the University of Dayton.

**Joann Quiñones** (Richmond, IN) creates figurative work around the narratives of the domestic, family, and womanhood and the historical ties to slavery, stolen labor, and racism. She has exhibited her work around the United States, including in Virginia, Indiana, Mississippi, California and Ohio. Quiñones was selected as a 2020 Emerging Artist by *Ceramics Monthly* and will be featured in the forthcoming publication *Black Hands in Clay* through Shiffer Publishing. She has an MFA in Studio Art from Indiana University, Bloomington, and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Iowa. She currently teaches African American, Caribbean, and U.S. Literature at Earlham College in Richmond, IN.

<http://www.joannquinones.com/>

**Shoji Satake** (Morgantown, WV) creates ceramic functional objects and sculptures reflecting his Japanese heritage and American upbringing. Satake has served as one of the Directors-at-Large for the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) Board, and has conducted workshops, given lectures and exhibited nationally and internationally. His notable exhibitions include solo exhibitions at Paul Fisher Gallery in Palm Beach, and Peking Fine Arts in Beijing. Shoji received his MFA from the University of Indiana-Bloomington, and BA from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. He is an Associate Professor at West Virginia University School of Art & Design and Coordinator of the School's ceramics in China program.

<https://shojisatake.com/>

**Brad Schwieger (Athens, Ohio)** creates work based on the formal elements of design, including the implied and actual functions found in nature and architecture. His work has been in multiple exhibitions throughout the USA, also international exhibitions in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, England, Germany, Czech Republic, Lithuania and Spain. His work has been published in *Ceramics Monthly*, *American Craft*, *Clay Times*, *Ceramics Art and Perception* as well as several textbooks. Schwieger received his MFA degree from Utah State University and his BFA degree from the University of Iowa. Schwieger is a Professor of Art at Ohio University.

**Justin Teilhet** (Clifton, Ohio) transforms porcelain into vessels and large scale wall installations, exploring surface tension and simplicity. He has exhibited his work in solo and group exhibitions around the US, including recently at the Zanesville Museum of Art, and regularly participates in prestigious art festivals, including Art Miami Context, Art Palm Springs, SOFA Chicago American Craft Council Architectural Digest Design Show, American Society of Interior Designers.

<http://justinteilhet.com/>

**Steven Thurston** (Columbus, Ohio) uses material processes and digital fabrication to create his unique sculptures. Thurston has received numerous awards for his research, including the prestigious Pollack-Krasner Fellowship, a NEA Regional Fellowship, Ohio Arts Council Individual Fellowship, and Greater Columbus Arts Councils Individual Fellowship. He has exhibited and lectured nationally and internationally on his work and on the integration of new technologies within a studio setting. Thurston received his BFA from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and his MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, MI. He is an Associate Professor at Ohio State University.

**Matt Wedel** (Athens, Ohio) creates his own mythological narratives through porcelain, stoneware and terracotta, evocative landscapes, flora, animals and classical figuration in his fantastical forms. His work has been exhibited in solo exhibitions at the L.A. Louver in Venice, CA, Erskine Hall and Coe, London, England, and in group exhibitions internationally. Wedel received a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois, and a MFA from California State University, Long Beach, California.

<https://www.mattwedel.com/>

# ABOUT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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**Thank you to the City of Kettering team that made the  
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Janet Roeckner, Designer, Administrative Systems  
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Brandon Lowery, Ceramics Coordinator  
Sara Thomas, Communications Coordinator  
Amanda Wheatley, Assistant Facility Coordinator  
Claire Zook, Operations Coordinator

Rosewood Arts Centre  
City of Kettering, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts  
2655 Olson Drive  
Kettering, OH 45420  
937-296-0294  
[www.playkettering.org](http://www.playkettering.org)