

## Creatures: Wild and Woolly

### Artist Bios and Photos

## **Anne Andersson**

St Petersburg, FL

Anne Andersson's realistic life-size animals are made using fibers and extracted from the agave plant; their noses are sculpted in clay and painted with oils and the eyes are made out of glass. It is a combination of unique materials and remarkable artistic vision that brings these sculptures to life. The animal sculptures Andersson creates combine her talents in painting and weaving with her attention to the smallest, most telling detail.

A passion for art and an equal desire to explore nature has always marked the life of Anne Andersson. Born in Sweden, Andersson worked as an illustrator and painter while completing studies for a degree in science. She later graduated, with honors, from the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Her diverse talents and interests led her, ultimately, to successfully create an artistic vision that unites both art and nature.

Andersson's artwork serves as her homage to wild animals experiencing diminishing habitats along with populations as each year passes. Each sculpture she creates embodies the artist's dedication to conservationist ideals and the goal to preserve these species in the wild. While the creation of most species is within her oeuvre – it is the wild cats that have always stirred Andersson's deepest passion.

Anne Andersson first met with great initial success exhibiting her sculptures in New York, Miami and Los Angeles. This led Andersson's animals to become highly sought after by a variety of collectors. She has created a White Bengal Tiger family, commissioned by Siegfried and Roy, to be displayed at the Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. Her African Lions were featured at the grand opening of the Fine Arts gallery at the MGM Grand Hotel. Her Siberian Tigers and African Lions are on display at Busch Gardens in Tampa, Florida. Her animals are in countless private collections and prestigious public displays across the country.



**Lauren Beach**

Palm Harbor, FL

My artwork is primarily inspired by animals and the natural world. My goal is to portray the beauty of nature through fiber arts, a form of art that is often undervalued and under-represented in the fine art world. Fiber arts have long been considered “woman’s work,” and as such, have been downplayed as fine art. I hope to challenge that assumption by creating detailed and beautiful works of art using wool fibers and ribbon and thread.





**Raymond Bennett**

Riverview, FL

I think dragons are awesome! I wanted to capture the essence of a dragon through sculpture, and needed them to look as life like as possible. I want you to feel like one of these dragons will take a snap at you. I was inspired to make these after discovering Dan Reeder, a premier papier mâché artist. After seeing how well he creates dragons; I discovered I had many dragons inside me that needed to come to life. I built these trophies out of paper and cloth mâché; I also used some polymer and air-dry clay. The structures were made with papier mâché and cloth mâché was utilized as scales and plates on the neck and underbelly of the dragons. Papier mâché clay was used to create different horns and scale patterns. The large horns are air dry clay covering a paper core, and the teeth are sculpted using polymer clay. All of this is held together with tape glue and cut up wire coat hangers.







**Kelly Berning**

Port Orange, FL

My work reflects my life experiences as a woman and as a mother. My ceramic and steel-legged figures function as catalysts for living vicariously through a child's innocent eyes. They are directly influenced by a child's world and the constant worry a mother carries keeping a child safe and raising them to be good respectable people in this perilous society. My figurative sculptures draw upon the viewers own reflections of their inner child, with its use of bright colors, animal imagery, playful symbols and its whimsical nature. After closer examination however, one's innocence is intermittently surrendered from childhood to the world of adult emotions. I find these areas of mental transition and growth intriguing, and the collaborative interactions of the subconscious and conscious forces to be metaphorical illustrations of our own conversion to individualism.

One of the greatest loves of Kelly Berning's life is working with clay, and for over 20 years, she has poured her heart and soul into her work. Kelly received her Master of Fine Arts Degree in Ceramics at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and her Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Ceramics, at California State University, Chico. Between 2001 and 2012, she taught college level ceramics in Tennessee and Southern California. She currently lives in Florida where she teaches adjunct sculpture classes and works as a fulltime mom and artist. Through the years, Kelly's work has evolved into whimsical figurative sculptures. She has exhibited nationally and has been the recipient of several awards including 1st Place in the ACGA Clay and National Juried Competition and has had various publications including Larks 500 Figures book, Ceramics Monthly, Clay Times Magazine and Dick Blick Artist's Resources. Kelly also enjoys making functional work.



**Travis Blanton**

Vero Beach, FL

I fell in love with clay the first time I touched it. There is something both sensual, yet childlike about pressing your hands into it and feeling it squish between your fingers. I have always loved the three-dimensional quality of clay, which allows my imagination to explore narrative themes in my work. My love of color and storytelling comes from a childhood enriched by art and fairytales. Both human and animal foibles offer a rich and endless wellspring of new ideas. My skewed sense of humor finds delight in both the ribald and absurd expressions of daily life and I hope that my viewer is provoked, titillated, confounded and amused.





**Sarah Butz**

St. Petersburg, FL

Sarah is a fiber artist that also makes necklaces. All things fiber and textiles have been her passion since she was a child. Her mother passed on her love of sewing to Sarah, who has tried her hand at many areas of textiles: weaving, sewing, embroidery, dyeing, spinning, and quilting to name a few. Sarah currently works as a graphic artist for an embroidery company, another branch of the huge textile family. Color has always been her inspiration and guide; currently she is fascinated by altering the surface of fabric by dyeing, discharging, printing, and stamping designs during her creative process. Her creations can be hand washed when needed.





Sarah Ruiz  
St. Petersburg, FL  
Where Have All the Zebras Gone?  
Fiber  
hand-dyed,  
screen printed cotton \$400

**Dorothea Calvert**

Sarasota, FL

My interest in art began early. While my friends played with dolls I built dollhouses, preferring my father's workshop to fantasy play. Fortunately, my elementary school had an Art Curriculum and an inspired art educator, my mentor, Eleanor Lambert. She encouraged experimentation in mediums such as clay, wax, recycled paper, even styrofoam packaging. Our imaginations were the only limit. Through high school, art was my focus and my therapy. My portfolio and application were accepted and I was college bound until life took an unexpected turn.

For the next six years, I kept my hand in the arts doing commissions and taking night classes at local community facilities. However, the responsibilities of single parenthood forced art onto a back burner. Three careers later, with my child successfully completing college, I finally gave myself permission to take a class at Ringling College of Art Design's continuing education program. As I sat in terror staring at a piece of drawing paper, I thought, this is it, I've either lost it or I'll find it again and then nothing will be the same because I won't stop this time.

My first drawing in twenty years lives in my studio as a reminder that art is what feeds me. While at Ringling I learned of the Wildacres Retreat in North Carolina and it was here, in 1995, that I rediscovered clay. It is a medium that affords the dual satisfaction of both two and three dimensions, the body as form, the surface as a painter's palette.

Today I work in my home studio. Inspiration for my work comes from daily life, the pure joy of observation. Clay demands an attentive relationship and I am happiest during those quiet studio hours when time ceases to exist. I would not have known this happiness; I would not have known myself without the support and encouragement of the educators, the institutions and the clay community who so generously share their knowledge.

My functional work serves as a three-dimensional palette. My sculptural work demonstrates the juxtaposition between organic and inorganic form, pattern and texture. I hope to entice the viewer to interpret the object through their own personal filter, to suggest rather than state to which group these forms belong. The dynamic nature of a familiar yet undefined form provides timeless pleasure and fascination. I work in porcelain to take advantage of its plasticity. Its delicate surface provides a clear canvas for glaze and receptive surface for detailed carving. Most work is fired in oxidation; others are raku or reduction fired.



**Joan Carew**

Coral Springs, FL

Being the mother of a veterinarian, I am constantly bombarded by images of puppies, cats, reptiles, and birds. Our home has become a refuge for unwanted or sick animals. How can I not be influenced by these images? I look at them and fall immediately in love and I want to nurture them all. So, I dream about them and they emerge in my work! What is a mother to do?

Joan works primarily in low fire clays, terracotta being her favorite. She loves the red of the clay coming through her surface treatments and giving the work warmth that white clay does not impart. For her series pieces, she usually makes a master out of clay, then makes a plaster mold and moves on from there. Her work is whimsy mixed with realism. She draws from the people she has met and places she has been. Her inspiration comes from her family, her spiritualism, her journeys and her experiences. She is most proud of receiving the Best in Show Award for a figure she made for the South Cobb Artist Association Show in Georgia in 2012.





## **Chris Chomic & Peter Meder**

St. Petersburg, FL

Our design process starts with an attitude. Interesting faces encountered on our travels, outrageous hairstyles, centuries old religious icons and ornately embellished wax effigies; these are the creative seeds for many of our figures. When we come across an interesting item, we wonder, "Who would wear such a thing?" and design a character that would.

Chomick & Meder describe their work as figurative art and automata: Art with Attitude. Non-traditional, contemporary -" bit on the edge." They recently began working with resin clay; since it is an air-drying medium, it requires planning which is a very different technique than polymer clay. They find inspiration in strange and unusual imagery; beautiful but disturbing, intriguing yet provokes feelings of uneasiness. People with interesting faces, outrageous hairstyles, are the inspiration for many of our figures.

Peter attended Loyola University in Chicago, graduating with degrees in Fine Art and Communication, which eventually led him to a profession as a Model Maker, creating special effects for national television commercials. Chris studied Commercial Art at Tomlinson which led to a career as an advertising production artist and is currently a freelance graphic artist specializing in web design and book publication.

We have heard our work described as 'scary', 'weird' or even 'creepy' and do not see what elicits this response but suspect it might have something to do with the eyes. We like our figures to have eye contact; creating the sensation that the figure is observing the viewer and perhaps making them wonder what is going on when their back is turned.

We recently began working with resin clay; since it is an air-drying medium, it requires planning which is a very different technique than polymer clay. Resin clay has exceptional versatility in that it has the fine grain structure and modeling properties of paper clay; water can be used to smooth and refine the surface. It does not require an oven to cure, and has the rock-hard strength of polymer resin when dried.

Our choice of materials depends on if the figure is still or moving and the character, if it is more conservative or extreme. As far as constructing the figures/automata we use resin clay, cast resin, silicone, brass, wood, glass eyes, horsehair, radio control parts. Still figures can use a wider range of fabrics, while an automaton requires light fabrics that won't restrict the movement. We like to use vintage or unusual trims and buttons to accent the costumes.

We find inspiration in strange and unusual imagery; beautiful but disturbing, intriguing yet provoking feelings of uneasiness. People with interesting faces, outrageous hairstyles, are the inspiration for many of our figures. We are greatly influenced by the 15th century art seen in the German museums and churches specifically the religious figures with their haunting faces and piercing eyes.

We also added cloth figures to our line of characters, which are digitally printed cloth doll patterns based on our color-pencil illustrations and merged with photomontages, then sewn and assembled by us. We see many possibilities in working with digitally printed textiles of our own design.



**Jamie Cloud Eakin**

Mount Dora, FL

Jamie Cloud Eakin has been a professional bead artist and teacher for over two decades. She sells her work in galleries across North America. She is the author of books on bead embroidery including the best-seller "Beading with Cabochons." Her other books include "Bead Play with Tassels," "Bead Play with Fringe," "Guide to Beading with a Loom" plus several holiday beadwork books.

I create art jewelry using bead weaving and bead embroidery techniques. Many of my pieces are embellished with nature's art including shells, coral, twigs and uncut/unpolished stones.

My art jewelry is both functional and beautiful. Many of my necklaces are "statement pieces" and considered to be "wearable art".

I receive inspiration from the world around me, especially mother nature. Other art has influenced my work such as paintings, color choices or sculpture and the composition and lines. My work has evolved over time. I am constantly striving to incorporate new creative ideas and improve the technical aspect of my work.

2013 Merit Award - Florida State Association of the National League of American Pen Women

Retired as an educational administrator, Detroit Public Schools. I hold an Ed. Specialist Degree and I am a registered Histotechnologist.

Please use a jewelry cloth to clean the sterling silver or gold filled/plated components of my jewelry.





## **Kimberly Cummings**

Tampa, FL

Kimberly began her love for pottery at Tampa's Clay Factory in 1991. Originally, it was to heal from a broken marriage. On her daily drive home, the clay store's sign blared the words "Come on and call, you know you've always wanted this!"

That was the first 'sign' that this was the right path to follow. There, she was able to study with many local and internationally recognized potters. She learned to RAKU (in Japanese, means 'to have fun') with Robert Piepenberg, make raw, organic forms with Paul Soldner and Peter Voulkos (American Modern Masters), structure and form from Hyde Park Studio's Scott L. Aubrey and paint fantastic creatures with colorful glazes by her favorite teacher, the late Rudy Autio (Archie Bray Foundation). This summer, she learned to master her Majolica art form from the best; Linda Arbuckle.

These days, Kimberli has traded her dark, brooding glazes for happier times, shown by her depiction in Majolica glazes of Florida sunsets and gardens of fruit. Her happy marriage to Bill is evident in her landscape of fish (whether swimming or broiled!), apples, lemons and tango dancers. Kimberli was recently chosen to represent Tampa on National television as a potter on HGTV's That's Clever! On March 27, she demonstrated how to make her Tango Dancers dance!

Born and raised in Tampa, Kimberli attended Gorrie Elementary, Wilson Middle, Plant High and University of South Florida. After an extended acting career both in Tampa and Los Angeles (among a few; Gidget's best friend on The New Gidget Show, Knot's Landing, Enos, Ace Crawford; Private Eye with Tim Conway, Superboy and Second Noah ) she moved back to Tampa, allowing her children Shadia and Tarek to graduate from Plant High School, also.



**Tom Davis**

St Petersburg, FL

My work marries the best qualities of both pottery and wood. In regards to pottery, I make traditional raku, porcelain, and other forms of clay body. I currently work at the Morean Center for Clay and spend much time on the wheel with some diversions into hand building. Of late I have embellished my wheel work with applied appliqué, some of which hangs on the wall and others best placed on tables, both of which find their places in home decoration. My glazing technique includes both commercial glazes and self-developed glazes. I often turn wooden bases and lids for the larger bowls and pots that I make, using various tropical woods found here in Florida. Some of those wood turnings are decorated with inlaid turquoise, coral, lapis lazuli, malachite or other crushed stones. My current interest is also creating wooden charcuterie boards with inlay. I let the random pieces of tree trunks dictate how the board will be shaped. I display my clay and wood works at the Morean Center for Clay and the Florida CraftArt Gallery in St. Petersburg, and the Lasting Impressions Gallery in Dunedin.

During college, back before the beginning of time, I studied drawing, design, water color, print making, art history and related subjects. I ended up being the Cadet Commander of Air Force ROTC, which started me on my military career. In regards to art, when assigned to South Korea in the U.S. Air Force, I met Dr. Angelo Garzio, the Head of the Ceramics Department from Kansas State University on a sabbatical to study Korean pottery techniques. We became friends and for the next few months I spent every free moment studying with him. That was in 1972 and I have been throwing pots ever since. As to life before retirement, I spent 27 years in the Air Force, assigned first to Viet Nam from 1965 to 1966. Fortunately, I got out of there with no holes in me and moved on to South Korea where I gained an appreciation for Asian art. My next assignment took me to Honolulu, Hawaii, where I completed a Master's Degree in Public Personnel Administration and a Doctorate in Educational Administration. After that on to California, followed by West Germany where I was promoted to Colonel. The Air Force then sent me back to Hawaii for a command, followed by another command in West Germany followed by a final assignment back to California. We then spent a couple of years in Seattle getting adjusted to civilian life. My wife was selected by the State Department Foreign Service and off we went again for another 22 years to postings in Austria, Bangladesh, Uganda, Washington, Ghana, Pakistan, Indonesia, Nepal and Washington, DC. After many years of living and traveling around the world, we find ourselves quite happily relocated and retired in St. Petersburg since May 2012.



**Luciano Deandrade**

Fort Myers, FL





**Alicia Diem**

St Petersburg, FL

I am always fascinated to include creativity in my lifestyle. My passion exists in fantasy multimedia creations of clay, paintings, metal and wood – emulation of life. My perception of nature transfers to inner thoughts and imaginations, creating art with detailed expressions. Fantasy and realistic sea life sculptures occupies my current creations.

Thomas Diem is a second-generation designer and potter. Born in NYC but living in Ireland since he was a child, his first taste of pottery came in his own father's studio. Having completed the DCCOI Pottery Skills Course and spent time perfecting his craft, Thomas established his own studio in 1997. [www.diempottery.com](http://www.diempottery.com)





**Dawn Ferguson**

Winter Park, FL

I am in love with the art of making and have called myself an artist ever since I could grasp a crayon. Growing up on a lake in rural Virginia, I spent countless hours designing clothes, painting my bedroom walls, and playing in the nearby forest and garden. I create functional porcelain pottery that reflects the colorful memories of my youth. Each piece serves to live in a home, be lovingly used, and enliven the spaces they inhabit. My pottery exhibits my love for design and my years spent helping my mom cultivate a love for growing things. These memories are buried in my heart and are my home. I am interested in the connections we make to physical objects and how their use influences mood and informs our sense of place. My forms are voluminous, the deep breath before the exhale: their shapes reminiscent of ripening fruits and blossoming flowers, their curves echoing the soft fluttering of a dress lifting as it turns. My surfaces are a marriage of the textures and patterns of textiles and creeping vines and fresh blooms. The design flows across the surface so that the piece is most fully appreciated once it's touched and turned by hand. Both hand built and thrown, my pieces reflect joy and celebrate the beautiful spontaneity of nature.



**Judy Freeman**

Tampa, FL

I have been sculpting in clay for over 30 years, using ceramic clay or polymer clay. I mix my time between working in polymer and working with stoneware and the combination of both keeps my creative juices flowing. I've migrated to polymer over the past few years because of its immediate gratification, in that you can form the piece and quickly pop it in the oven to cure, add more to the piece and bake again, over and over. It's forgiving nature makes it a great medium for my purposes. I will always love working with stoneware clay but I now have two loves. With polymer, I can also be assured that the bright colors that are part of my life, will be guaranteed to be as bright as they are coming out of the tube. I have grown to love polymer but it hasn't been without pain. I love that there's always something new to learn and continue to try to think up new ways to take a block of white clay and transform it into something fun, wild and wooly! My inspiration has always come from nature and for the longest time, my themes were primarily fish and cats. Now I branch out in honor of April the giraffe who recently gave birth and whose very long pregnancy was watched and monitored by the world. I try to put these wonderful creatures in an anthropomorphic light with traits that are human, such as long eyelashes, a touch of lipstick, and any other accessorizing that fits the bill.





## **Donald Gialanella**

St Petersburg, FL

Donald Gialanella originally from Maplewood, NJ, now works out of his studio in Pinellas Park, Florida. Donald apprenticed with sculptor Louise Bourgeois after earning a BFA from The Cooper Union in New York City. He worked as a graphics producer at ABC-TV in New York in the 1980's and received an Emmy for his work on Monday Night Football in 1990. The Dali Museum in St. Petersburg commissioned Donald to create a 17-foot-wide steel mustache sculpture for the permanent collection in 2016. He is known for his larger-than-life animal sculptures in public and private collections across the US.

**Artist's Statement:** My current artistic practice is concerned with the life-cycle of mass produced consumer objects in our culture. I work with a wide range of unconventional materials incorporating "green" salvaged and reclaimed objects into the amalgam of my sculptural matrix, ranging from plastic to steel, toys to pots and pans.

In this recent series of sculptures depicting iconographic animals I try to create realistic dimensional representations using a subtly organized visual vocabulary.

The process of adding odd shaped pieces together to fit into an anatomical framework is the process which defines the work. Forming each individual section to the desired shape at the anvil before welding it into position gives me direct spatial control of the sculpting process. Construction begins from the ground up, I literally start with the feet and work my way upwards. After the limbs are connected to and support the body I build up the complete animal "in situ" using the real time visual feedback of seeing the anatomy unfold. Sculpture that embodies an animal is a metaphor for man's sense of imminent domain over the natural world and our domination of its existence. They satirize the persistent arrogant superiority fantasy to possess the creatures of myth and legend, frozen in time for us to exhibit, examine and admire. The sculptures may also serve as memorials to the beauty and variety of life on earth and an aesthetic reminder of our precarious relationship to the animal kingdom.

The work deals with ecology, economy, and community in intent and execution. The midden installations will serve as time-capsules that symbolize how mass-produced objects are changing our world. These encapsulated objects from the local culture are "frozen" in time to be explored and contemplated in a new context. They bring up issues of our consumer-based culture and what that means for our society and for the environment.



**Brenda Gregory**

Tampa, FL

Starting my career as a scientific illustrator I have always loved insects. Their shapes and patterns are so interesting and inspired this creature. I designed it to look like it has just flown in from a land of misfit toys. At first it looks like it makes sense and then you see that it is made of toys and found objects. I was born in Miami Beach, FL but grew up in the Orlando area.

I work with precious and base metals as well as found objects to create my jewelry. I started my professional career as a medical and scientific illustrator and then as a graphic designer, and found that for my personal work, metalsmithing and jewelry design allows me to encompass all my skills in a new and exciting way. Although I am a serious artist, my work is influenced by the many young people who I teach. I now think that all of life's actions as creative pursuits. Expressing your creativity thru craft is just one way.





**Amy Kluth**

St Petersburg, FL

Originally from Ohio, Amy has moved all around the country and now makes work from paper and found objects in her St Pete home. Her work spans both 2-D and 3-D collage, and is created through the elements of shape, texture, line, movement and color. Influenced by the livability of art, she makes paper craft to find the uplifting energy of creation, and has even found herself in a career of theater and prop and wardrobe design. Her top three accolades are; American Watercolor Society award while at Stetson University, Holiday ornament in the President Bill Clinton White House Collection, and Blue Castle Badge awarded from Castle in the Air, Berkeley, CA. To maintain her artwork, keep away from water and prolonged direct sunlight.



**Ed Knudsen**

Tampa, FL

I am a self-taught sculptor with over 50 years of fabrication and manufacturing experience. All my sculptures are hand created utilizing a wide range of materials and fabrication techniques. I consider myself half craftsman and half artist. I am eclectic in that I conceive and create wildlife, abstract, sea life and figurative sculpture. My challenge is to bring beauty and motion to life in a three-dimensional media with a detail and texture that can be enjoyed not only visually but also through touch.





**Nancy Lauby**

Palm Harbor, FL

It is my mission to celebrate the magnificence of wildlife and the natural world through my art. My passion for wildlife and the spirit and beauty in each animal is the driving force behind all my work. For many years I painted with acrylics on canvas. However, my commitment to look beyond the traditional has created my Sculptural Palm Frond Art. Preserving nature is central to my work; therefore, integrating a natural product into my art was essential to that objective. Using a palm frond as my canvas, I consider the unique dimensions of each frond and carefully select the wild life image that is most suitable for the frond's curves and shape. Each realistic painting captures the essence of that animal, encouraging an appreciation and intimate connection with nature. Prior to painting, each palm frond goes through a meticulous preparation process to ensure longevity and strength. The humble queen palm frond is then transformed into a lasting work of art. In the final stages, the finished artwork is further preserved with layers of varnish rendering its placement suitable for indoor or covered lanai. This art form combines fine art and fine craft in an exceptional way. Each piece is an inimitable, dramatic work of art.

Nancy is a mixed media painter who paints portraits of Florida animals and palm fronds. Each piece is an inimitable, dramatic work of art. Prior to painting, each palm frond goes through a meticulous preparation process to ensure longevity and strength. The humble queen palm frond is then transformed into a lasting work of art. In the final stages, the finished artwork is further preserved with layers of varnish, rendering its placement suitable for indoors or covered lanai. Nancy's palm frond work is her homage to Florida wildlife and nature.







## **Alyssa Ligmont**

North Lauderdale, FL

Alyssa's pottery is inspired by nature and fantasy, combined with the use of rich color and watercolor techniques. Using a combination of wheel throwing, coil, and slab methods, Alyssa transforms utilitarian forms into exciting and beautiful contemporary stoneware. Her sculptural forms strike the counter balance to the functional pottery. The forms are loose, even whimsical, juxtaposing seemingly dissimilar and even absurd elements and ideas into a single object. Since a sculpture is no longer bound by the constraint of function, she takes creative license filling the sculptures with imagery from stories, music, her dreams, and ideas about human nature, and mankind's relationship with nature. Her work is thoughtfully spontaneous striving for a non-manicured organic look.

I make wheel thrown and altered functional and sculptural ceramics. The pieces are glazed and high fired. Multiple glazes are layered to produce the rich brightly colored surfaces.

I love the way the clay feels in my hands. I love the versatility of working with clay; you can turn it into anything you can imagine. Clay can mimic the most realistic colors and textures of the natural world, and be formulated to be so strong and durable that it is used in space exploration on the space shuttle. I love the idea that clay is infinitely reusable until the application of great heat, and then it is permanent and can last for thousands of years. I am fascinated by how much we have been able to discover about past civilizations through the ceramic artifacts that have been excavated around the world.

I love the idea that a functional piece becomes a treasured part of your life through every day use. My forms are influenced by the type of piece I am making; it must function flawlessly for its intended use. I am always experimenting with shapes, textures, and glaze colors. My work is always evolving. I have opened my own business, making ceramics full time. I have expanded my studio and been able to increase the production of my functional and sculptural work. I have been able to teach budding artists about the love of art, and to encourage their passion for creating. I have an art degree, but had found myself working in the aquarium and exhibitory manufacturing industry for 15 years. I had a creative outlet there working with clients from the major theme parks, and even got to travel around the world for installations. I also found myself working in the operations and accounting world, procuring the raw materials needed for production and negotiating contracts with vendors.

My functional items are meant to be used in today's modern kitchen. I have been using them with food, the microwave, and dishwasher for many years. Any sculptural items can be dusted with a clean, soft cloth.



**Diane Lublinski**

Pembroke Pines, FL

I was born in New York City and grew up in South Florida where I continue to make my home. Born of Cuban Spanish parents, I had a rich multi-cultural upbringing. I am drawn to the figurative form influenced by a childhood love of fantasy, expressing the absurdity of things while drawing influence from unexpected sources like the lyrics of music and nursery rhymes. As a self-taught artist, I am sensitive to proper technique. I have a clear idea of what I want before I start a new piece. However, I do not make sketches but immediately get started with a combination of wheel thrown pieces, coils and slabs. I alter by pinching, cutting and adding clay until my idea emerges. My work is decorated with colored slips and underglazes while still wet and then fired to 1830°. After adding pigmented washes and glazes, my final firing to 2232° completes the process.









**Vadim Malkin**

Orlando, FL

Life brings many changes and, as a person ages, they find that many ideals will evolve. Working with clay is a very personal and deep connection that I have found to help me explore my ideas and make sense of the fluctuations. The pieces I create are very immediate and impulsive, and become something greater than anything I originally foresee. I create work from a combination of wheel thrown pieces which morph into various creatures and come alive in their own stoic ways. This body of work helps me channel those life changes and is motivated by the evolution of my thought process. The pieces are finished with stain and underglaze and are fired many times to achieve the desired aesthetic.





**Victoria Rose Martin**

Lake Worth, FL

Victoria was brought up in Alexandria Bay, New York, in the Thousand Islands area. Though she has dabbled with many art forms, clay always calls her back. Sculpting clay comes very easily to her. Her ceramic figures are whimsical figures with a dark under current. Her influences are primarily from childhood memories, past travels, and aged crusty objects. She loves archeological artifacts, and while she enjoys bright colors, she likes them juxtaposed with a bit of a time-worn feel. Her figures have been featured in Digital Studio Magazine (2014), Doll Quarterly, and Ceramics Ireland. She has had a solo show in Davis, California, and her pieces have also been acquired by a museum in Armenia.

Why did you choose the medium you work in? Clay chose me. I dabble with other media but clay always calls me back. When I sculpt clay, it comes so easy. I was asked to join NIADA. My figures are going to be featured in 2014 in Digital Studio magazine. Lately I have been putting my figures into Photoshop and creating surreal environments.

I work as a Professor of Fine Arts and Graphic Design. My favorite class to teach is Photoshop. There are times when I shut the computer down and do something in "real life" and immediately try to Command Z (or control Z for the PC people). You would not put your Picasso into the dishwasher, and for my sculptures I ask the same. Treat them like your children. Don't leave them out in the winter snow, don't hit them or leave them at the bottom of your pool. They're art, treat them kindly.





**Melissa Menzer**

Spring Hill, FL

My imagination is my biggest talent! As long as I can remember, I have loved to sculpt people and animals. My parents were both artists and antique dealers, thus my love for combining sculpture with antique jewelry, tins, buttons etc. My artwork does not make any political or social statement. It simply makes people happy.







**Ryan Michel**

St Petersburg, FL

My appreciation for animals has influenced my current body of work. My boyhood heroes Jack Hanna and Steve Erwin, expanded my understanding of the natural world and fueled my particular interest in arthropods.

Through altering and assembling wheel thrown shapes I create invented creatures. My sculptural work is focused on the construction of made-up camouflaged insects. I depict these insects in a replicated nature museum display; they are creatures in a transitive state, evolving to match their environment. Through visual connections to the actual world the camouflage and narratives allow me to make social and environmental commentary. I hide my insects in camouflage as a reflection of myself, and how I adapted to what life throws at me. The narratives my sculptures create unfold insight about my personal experiences and life changing choices I have made. I fabricate museum-like cases around my sculptures to encapsulate that moment in my life. My life changes and my sculptural work is my way of showing my timeline.







**Jill Oldenski**

Gulfport, FL

I began with cloth, as I love every color and type of fabric and fiber, and with my one of-a-kind dolls I could play around with all of these. I gradually experimented with paperclay, paint, found objects, old books and text. I am a storyteller and love attempting to express the intangible through the tangible. What inspires me most includes; story, myth, archetype, talismans, nature, faces, and personalities. I have, over time, learned new techniques, discovered new materials, and stretched my imagination in myriad ways. I used to be a social worker.





**Nicole Paulina**

Chicago, IL

I am interested in objects that demonstrate the passage of time. Weathered, worn or rusted are descriptive words that call to mind a previous existence and are the inspiration to my process as an artist. By creating objects that appear to have been left out in the rain for a spell or buried in an attic for a time, I attempt to document my personal nostalgia for the past. By using clay, each mark and detail made by my hand documents the precise moment of occurrence and attempts to merge the present with the past.





**Stuart Peterman**

Odessa, FL

As an artist, I have spent my life refining my own personal skills and style. My sculptures are created one at a time using a variety of metal forming techniques to produce a life-like yet artistic quality. By designing and fashioning many of my own tools as well as hand hammering and hand cutting each piece, I achieve a look that cannot be attained by mass production. My interest and enthusiasm for experimenting with surface results in rhythmic lines and inventive patterns which remain unique and distinctive creations. My work has found its way to homes, restaurants and museums around the US and as far away as Europe and Australia. I pride myself on quality craftsmanship and the use of quality materials. I hope you enjoy my original art.

I was intrigued with the endless possible shapes and textures that can be created with metal. Most of my work is related to nature. I am inspired by creating work with a natural feel combined with an artistic flair. My sculptures were selected for the show "Shark" at the Ft Lauderdale Museum of Art. I was chosen to provide trophy sculptures for the "Madfin Shark" series on the Outdoor Television Network. I was asked to design and create a number of sculptures for an upscale resort in Ireland. I have made a living working with metal for the past 20 years, even though I have a degree in business.









**Eleanor Pigman**

St Petersburg, FL

Before Eleanor started making arts with beads she was primarily a watercolor artist. She fell in love with the world of beading after doing an apprenticeship with a jewelry designer. The shop closed, and she inherited thousands of seed beads. She was then faced with the task of turning these beads into art.

Her work began with portraits and then moved into the marine world. She states, "the medium is limitless and I love to try to create the impossible." After being published and receiving a congressional honor for "Keeping Hope Alive Through Art" she began to push the medium even further. Eleanor's work is all embroidered by hand with thread, needle, on felt with beads. She combines several different traditional and non-traditional stitches to create a unique sculptural effect. Paper, fabric and mesh can also be found in her work.

Eleanor Pigman is originally from New York City. She received her BFA from the Art Institute of Chicago and her masters in Art Therapy from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is a self-taught embroidery artist, currently living in St. Petersburg, Florida.







**Marilyn Rackelman**

Winter Haven, FL

We all have stories to tell. As an artist, I try to tell mine through my sculptures. Using clay, wood and copper and, sometimes, found materials to form my creatures, they are conglomerations of the amazing wildlife and plant life that I find so fascinating here in my home state of Florida. Each piece is my own reflection on the beauty and mystery of the natural world, the interconnections between us, and the need to take care of what we have left.







**Daniel Riner**

Sarasota, FL

Looking to combine my love of nature, technology and light, I've come up with a wall sconce with a nature theme. I use the shape of the leaf and strategically placed openings to direct the light onto the wall and the frog to create interesting plays of light and shadow. The inside of the leaf is coated with a metallic glaze to reflect the light from 20 LEDs that are battery powered and remote controlled. By day you have a charming sculpture and at night an interesting spatter of light on the wall with a frog lurking on top





## Taylor Robenalt

Sarasota, FL

My new body of work features clusters of animals and flowers constructed out of porcelain with glaze, gold luster and underglaze applications. In these pieces, the animal heads appear to be bursting out of a heavy cluster of flowers. With each piece created in the series, the flower clusters become more abundant and ornate, and the animals seem to multiply as if the work itself is alive and fertile. The overall black and white color scheme and the pops of color in the pieces are all important to the work. These color motifs attempt to express all the emotions that I personally face on a daily basis. The coloring of the entire body of work is a comment on how life can become so rigid in the midst of the fluidity of growth, death and rebirth. The bright colors of the flowers illustrate the blossoming of life and offer a contrast to the rigidity of everyday responsibility. The final touches of gold luster offer an overall sense of purity to the body of work and allude to the strong sense of achievement and pride that comes with positively facing life on a day-to-day basis. I view the work as a metaphor for how life is always transforming itself – constantly bringing forth a new chapter of unforeseen existence.





## Edrian Thomidis

Wellington, FL

My work focuses on the human condition and our strong connection to nature and the world around us. Sometimes, my creative exploration emerges from a personal experience, and other times it comes from a sort of collective consciousness. In both instances, each work invites the viewer to engage and make their own association while questioning the story and meaning behind each figurative ceramic sculpture.

As an artist, I am interested in the essential situations that make us human, such as birth, growth, conflict, mortality, emotionality and spirituality. I often focus on characters that are expressive, whimsical yet slightly odd to portray each theme. My figurative ceramics are all about storytelling. Each detail has personal meaning. However, it is up to the viewer to interpret and connect with the artwork in his or her own unique way. In many instances, my own ancestry, family history and life experiences have motivated many of my pieces.

My current series, Mystical Creatures was born from a deep belief in a relationship between our human condition with our spiritual self and nature. I am particularly interested in the link we have with animals and nature, so each figure takes on some wild animal characteristics. The colors are earthy. The textures are quite organic while the markings are geometric as a reminder to the viewer that these creatures are not of this world. Just as we have energy running through our bodies, these creatures have energy currents represented in the markings and Swarovski crystals. Each creature manifests a spiritual connection, yet it does not have the traditional spiritual symbols or markings as it is not meant to be a literal interpretation but rather a surreal take on each individual's spiritual journey. It is up to the viewer to deepen and personalize the interpretation of this work.

Clay is the main material for my work. However, the use of, underglazes, glazes and oxides is calculated. I often look for visual interest and unexpected combinations. Found objects are often carefully incorporated to the work to help tell the visual story of each character.









## Karla Walter

North Palm Beach, FL

As an artist, it is important to recognize a message and seize that moment. The themes of my work concentrate on interactions observed in nature, humans and society. My work is informed by my life surroundings, observing nature and the natural interactions between animals and man. On my daily walks, I observe vultures and crows in our park and they are part of an ongoing body of work. Hares are often used as a symbol of fertility or rebirth. Their role as a prey animal also communicates itself as a symbol of innocence. The hare frequently appears in folklore as the trickster archetype as does the crow. She uses her cunning to outwit her enemies. Young hares are adapted to the lack of physical protection. They live in a burrow and are born fully furred and with eyes open. They are able to fend for themselves soon after birth. In numerous traditions, hares are symbols of women, femininity, female deities and women's magic. As a woman and an artist, I personally connect to the cunning and innocent hare.





## Roseline Young

Cape Coral, FL

I am an environmentalist, a lover of nature and all its creatures. Living on my sailboat for a number of years gave me time to observe creatures in their native habitat and see how our complacent attitudes wreak havoc on their environment. In my "Save Me" work I tried to plead with humanity with the sad eyes of my panther begging for help, protection and love. We must become much better stewards of our environment and take proactive steps wherever possible to leave our earth better off than how we found it. As our Indian ancestors may have said, "We do not inherit the earth, we simply borrow it for a while."

"In Who are you?" my little wild friend bobs his head in time with my head as we communicate without words. He is as inquisitive as I am, wanting to know more about this staring creature. Starting with his photograph, I evoke the patchwork clutter of the burrowing owl's home using woven and painted fabrics, layered and combined in a quilted fiber artwork. His world is my world.





