

ANNUAL ²⁰¹⁹ REPORT

EXHIBITIONS | EDUCATION |
SALES GALLERY | ARTIST SERVICES



A look back at 2019 at Northern Clay Center

2019 was in many respects, the most dynamic, demanding, and inspiring year that Northern Clay Center (NCC) has experienced in our nearly 30 years of existence. Made possible by generous support from so many individuals and entities, Northern Clay Center’s 2019 roster of programs challenged audiences through thought-provoking works showcasing a spectrum of ceramic artists—from traditional to contemporary makers; they ignited new connections with clay makers and enthusiasts throughout the state, region and country; they sparked conversations about contemporary clay and innovative studio practices; they created genuine opportunities for dialogue between makers alike around social topics impacting the arts community and country as a whole; they introduced the tactility and immediacy of clay as an art medium to thousands of community members; they celebrated the ceramic arts and makers of handmade fine craft objects; and, they brought Northern Clay Center into country-wide focus through our leadership and participation in the national NCECA (National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts) conference that took place in Minneapolis in late March.

What follows is a summary of select highlights and expansions of our programming that occurred during our 2019 calendar year. Attention spans are too short to merit inclusion of all of our most memorable 2019 moments, so we’ve done our best to include a healthy sample. Read on!

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Left to right: Valerie Zimany and Yana Payusova appreciate artist-designed wall covering by Patrick Coughlin as a backdrop for works by Ardmore during *Horror Vacui*. Tanner Coleman of AnT Sculpture and Design, LLC encourages a workshop participant in the creation of a permanent ceramic mural for the space above the NCC kiln room door. L to R: Molly Uravitch, Yana Payusova, Valerie Zimany, and Virgil Ortiz join forces in a panel discussion for *Horror Vacui*.

NCC's 2019 exhibitions showcased a wide spectrum of artists, processes, techniques and voices, including long-time favorites produced in conjunction with our emerging and mid-career artist grants programs; a celebration of, and homage to, the late Mary Roettger (1956 – 2017) for her lifetime of creative contributions to the local and national clay community; graduates of NCC's 6th cohort of the MN NICE (Minnesota New Institute for Ceramic Education) program; and numerous co-exhibitions that cultivated an unprecedented number of partnerships with new and exciting community organizations through our NCECA conference affiliates and partner sites. Our special exhibitions explored a myriad of conversations and concepts, including the growing trend in the craft world of creating opportunities for social engagement and meaningful community conversation through the process of making; they explored shared histories and studio practice through written and visual experiences revealing artists' insights of value, individual preservation, and responses to clay as a material; they examined the human species and how we bounce between borders of extremes in pursuit of balance, as evidenced in our politics, society, psychology and reflected in our art; and they used community engagement, collaboration, and the making of a public artwork to create a cultural narrative specific to NCC's community to be shared into the future by all who visit our facility.

The 2019 schedule of exhibitions, due in part to the additional opportunities presented by the Minneapolis hosting of the annual NCECA conference was the Center's best and most challenging to date. Select exhibitions were accompanied by public, accessible events at NCC, including demonstrations, curator-led discussions, and mentor-based critiques. As per our tradition, we accentuated select exhibitions with a gorgeously-produced catalog, which included essays by our curators, professional images (including exhibition installation) of each artist's wares, and additional artist information. Our extensive roster included:

1/11 – 2/24 Gallery M | *Three Jerome Artists*

Minnesota recipients of emerging artist project grants awarded in 2018, including Heather Barr, Alex Chinn, and Mitch Iburg.

Emily Galusha Gallery | *Fogelberg, Red Wing, and Anonymous Artists*

Fogelberg, Red Wing, and Anonymous Artists featured the work of Katie Bosley and Olivia Tani, 2017 recipients of the Fogelberg Studio Fellowship; Evan Hauser and Austyn Taylor, 2017 Anonymous Artist Studio Fellows; and Katharine Eksuzian, the 2018 Red Wing Collectors Society Foundation Award recipient.

3/8 – 4/28 Gallery M | *In Service: Engaging and Connecting Through Clay*

Curated by Ursula Hargens. This exhibition underscored a growing trend in the craft field: creating opportunities for social engagement through the process of making. We highlighted artists committed to creating meaningful community dialogues and included ceramic work made those sitting at the table as well as those who benefit from this outreach. We pursued a new iteration of the *Democratic Cup: Land of 10,000 Stories*, in collaboration with Ayumi Horie, during which we co-hosted community conversations across the state of Minnesota, led by clay ambassadors. Conversations were sparked by custom ceramic cups, designed by four Minnesota potters and illustrated with decal prompts that highlight current issues facing Minnesotans. During the exhibition, visitors will have the opportunity to connect with others in the exhibition space over coffee and pie.

NCC's own 20+ year history of engaging community through clay under its *ClayToGo* program was highlighted, and, specifically, the creative results of our multi-year collaborative outreach with the East African immigrant community, recently settled in the surrounding neighborhood. Additionally, we celebrated the efforts of an international organization, Potters for Peace, and their implementation of The Water Filter Project in 35 countries, which provides clean drinking water through simple ceramic technology. We shined light on our local community, Powderhorn Potters, and their annual Empty

EXHIBITIONS



Left column, top to bottom: Executive Director, Sarah Millfelt in the moments before NCECA 2019. L to R: Kyle Rudy-Kohlhepp, Tippy Maurant, and Steph Lenertz at NCC's Gallery Expo satellite gallery during NCECA 2019. Guests sharing conversation, pie, and coffee in The Democratic Cup alcove as part of *In Service*. Center column, top to bottom: Guests and contributing community artists attend the reception for *In Service*. Ursula Hargens welcomes guests to *MN NICE: Ideal Made Real*, an exhibition celebrating graduates and contributors and one of the hundreds of concurrent exhibitions produced for the NCECA conference week. Right column, top to bottom: L to R: Chotsani Elaine Dean (curator), Monica Bock, Undine Brod, and Jill Foote-Hutton from *Trading Post*. Tippy Maurant and Emily Romens installing *Under the Black and Baltic Deep* in the NCC loading dock "gallery". Sarah Millfelt and Tippy Maurant taking a moment to pose during NCC's reception for NCECA 2019 attendees.

Bowls initiative, which has raised over a quarter million dollars to date. We honored local legend and potter, Warren MacKenzie, and his philosophy of pots for the people. Finally, we'll brought Jeff Schmuki (Savannah, Georgia) to the Midwest for an installation of portable hydroponic community gardens, using a recycled ceramic substrate.

Emily Galusha Gallery | *Trading Post: Exchange and Sojourn*

What is a trading post? The general term for Trading Post as defined by Cambridge Oxford, "a small place, especially in the past, far from other places in which people live, where goods can be bought and sold or exchanged". However a Trading Post is not limited to aforementioned definition. In Hartford, CT, a trading post established by the Dutch in early 17th century. Early America had various kinds of Trading Posts, some well documented that remain today and others that were temporal, vague and sadly forgotten. The many Dutch Trading Posts and the Dutch participation in the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Abolitionist movement are significant to the communal ancestry to the curator, Chotsani Dean, who is an African American raised in New England and now residing in the South; the reality has provoked many divergent feelings, experiences and inquires. This exhibition reflected Dean's desire to establish a Trading Post, with artists who are important in her life—not only artists but trusted friends. In this show, five artists shared their history and studio practice through written correspondence, resulting in a visual experience that shares insights from their discussion of value, preservation of experience, and response to the material. Artists included Monica Bock, Undine Brod, Chotsani Elaine Dean, Dawn Holder, and Jill Foote-Hutton.

On-site NCECA Exhibitions

3/25 – 3/31 *Staff Infection*

Northern Clay Center itself has long been considered a utopic place in which an individual can learn, share, grow, contribute, heal, and work. For almost 30 years, we too have played a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of clay in the Twin Cities, across the great state of Minnesota, and increasingly across the country. Inside our walls and out into the greater world, our efforts to advance the ceramic arts for artists, learners, and the community have been made possible for so many years by the efforts of dozens and dozens of loyal, talented, and creative individuals who have served as staff members of Northern Clay Center. When these individuals were not serving the organization and the greater field of ceramics, they were toiling away in their studios, expanding their skills, deepening their inquiry into the elusive material we call clay. NCC staff's larger contributions to the cause are infectious, with each new voice on staff bringing a new energy, skill set, and devotion to advancing the ceramic arts. All the while, honesty, integrity, and respect are guiding their efforts in the office and in their studios. This exhibition paid homage to the very individuals who currently, and previously helped to make NCC what it is today, a *Claytopia*, and we proudly presented select current work from staff members who served the organization in the calendar year leading up to NCECA 2019. This exhibition was organized by NCC staff members Emily Romens and Bobby Lieder.

Artists of NCC

For almost 30 years, Northern Clay Center has supported ceramic artists in the expansion of their artistic and professional skills. One of the ways we do so is through our studio artist program, which annually provides private and shared studio space and access to kilns, equipment and materials to over 50 artists. The facilities are designed to allow artists to work in an environment that encourages individual expression, as well as artistic and professional growth. NCC's studio artist populous includes a mix of artists, spanning different stages of experience and specific expressions in clay. We foster a lively working environment, wherein artists feel free to develop and exchange ideas with their peers. NCC is proud of the commitment and support shown by each maker in our studio program; it is an example of what the Minnesota ceramic community can be at its finest: hard-working, supportive, communal, and mindful. This exhibition celebrated the very individuals who have helped to make NCC what it is today, a *Claytopia*. This exhibition was organized by Kyle Rudy-Kohlhepp.

Under the Black and Baltic Deep

*This exhibition was previously on view at NCC in fall of 2018, but was re-imagined in conjunction with NCECA in spring 2019.

Off-site NCECA Exhibitions

3/25 – 3/30 *Alternate Endings 2: Contemporary Ceramic Bookends*

This exhibition brought together diverse artists who have each created a set of bookends, presented in a public library setting. Curated by Bryan Hopkins, the show took place at the University of Minnesota's Architecture & Landscape Architecture Library Gallery and the Wilson Art and Design library. Participating artists included: Susan Beiner, Mark Burns, April Felipe, Ron Geibel, Brian Harper, Courtney M. Leonard, Matt Nolen, Virginia Scotchie, Malcolm Mobutu Smith, and Dustin Yager.

3/8 – 4/7 *MN NICE: Ideal Made Real*

This exhibition took place at the Vine Arts Center Gallery, in the Ivy Arts Building in Minneapolis. It was an exhibition of Alumni and Affiliate Artists of the MN NICE program, an NCC-led ceramic certificate program that provides rigorous, personalized instruction. It was curated and organized by Ursula Hargens and featured affiliate artists Linda Christianson, Joel Froehle, Hargens, Mike Helke, Kate Maury, Emily Murphy, S.C. Rolf, Denise Rouleau, and Todd Shanafelt, as well as graduates of past iterations of the MN NICE program.

3/1 – 12/31 *Duck, Duck, Grey Duck* | Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport

This is a uniquely Minnesotan name for the childhood game called Duck, Duck, Goose in every other region around the country. Likewise, in the ceramics community, no matter the title, some things are inherently the same across regions. Ceramics, ceramist, potter, clay work, and maker are all words employed to describe the artists working and the objects made in the community of clay. No matter the moniker, the reality in each of our Midwest states is also the same: there is incredible diversity and talent in the myriad ceramic artists in our region, seemingly unmatched by any other in our country. This

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Left to right: Chotsani Elaine Dean, curator of *Trading Post*. Adina Burke, poet, reading for the McKnight Summer Open House. L to R: Alexis Gregg, Karen Brown, and Tanner Coleman discussing the new kiln room ceramic mural.

exhibition celebrated the regionally unique field of ceramics and highlighted over a dozen makers from the area who push the boundaries of the material, honor the unparalleled lineage of ceramics in the Midwest, and expand the viewers' understanding of the importance of this area's place in the world of clay. It was an exhibition of contemporary ceramic makers—primary sculptors—from across the region, one that encompassed all ilk of making—functional pottery, sculpture, and tiles—by makers of varying ages, locals, and training. Those flying in to attend the 2019 NCECA conference and the Final Four Tournament were greeted by highlights of this great state's talented pool of ceramic artists. This exhibition took place at the Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport, Terminal 1 Foodcourt. MSP staff and collaborators estimate the number of views of for the *Duck, Duck, Grey Duck* exhibition to be well over 11 million impressions.

One of the exhibiting artists in *Duck, Duck, Grey Duck*, Brad Bachmeier, is also Program Coordinator and Professor of Art Education at Minnesota State University-Moorhead. As a result of the relationships built during the formulation of the exhibition at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, Northern Clay Center created a lasting partnership with MSUM's exhibition program. Moving forward, they will be a Traveling McKnight Exhibition site, meaning students and the public in that part of Northern Minnesota will have access to an exhibition not available historically. NCC curates, documents, and delivers/retrieves the exhibition. In addition, this means the six artists in the exhibition will gain exposure for their work and career in additional counties in outstate Minnesota. Those interactions often also result in lasting professional relationships and are impactful beyond the scope of the exhibition.

3/27 – 3/30 *Bonspiel* | Parallel Café and Hennepin Made

Bonspiel was an exhibition of fourteen contemporary Canadian artists whose creative mission is to incorporate the theme of winter and/or winter sport into their works. From ice hockey to icicles, and snowmobiles to snow bunnies, the vast conceptual tundra that encapsulates winter is the limit. Some of the artists rolled up their sculptural sleeves to tackle the task at hand, while others put their functional tendencies to work. A display of drinking vessels was also part of the show; they were wintry in theme and served as a cheering section for the main event. Participating artists included: Amelia Butcher, Pattie Chalmers, Dawn Detarando, Carole Epp, Michael Flaherty, Christopher Reid Flock, Marney McDiarmid, Chris Pancoe, Mariko Paterson, Carly Slade, Martin Tagseth, and Andrew Tarrant.

KITSCH BITCH WITCH | Parallel Café and Hennepin Made

By using horror, the figure, and monstrosity, each artist in *KITSCH BITCH WITCH* communicated Mingei ideologies of 'Art of the People' and Folk Art through a vernacular of subculture and resistance. Artists included Roxanne Jackson, Lindsay Montgomery, and Meghan Smythe. Organized by Lindsay Montgomery.

5/10 – 6/23 Gallery M | *NCC Members Exhibition*

In the summer of 2019, NCC turned its exhibition spotlight on our incredibly talented members (comprised of students, educators, professional artists, and novices) with a juried exhibition.

Emily Galusha Gallery | *Helix: Mary Roettger Retrospective*

Through examples of a lifetime of making and educating, this exhibition will celebrate the incredible talent and passion for living of the late Mary Roettger (1957 - 2017). A dynamic educator, her students spanned the globe—from Seoul, Korea to Boston, Massachusetts, to Minneapolis). She received her MFA from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University after receiving her BFA from the University of Minnesota. Her ceramic art explored forms inspired by nature, including variations of pattern, scale, convolutions and their axes. She said of her work, "I do not want to distract from the form, but desire a sensual balance between the two, where the glaze and structure simply reflect one another. Evoking a climate or directional event upon the form that is transient, vital and visually tactile."

7/13 – 8/25 Gallery M and Emily Galusha Gallery | *Six McKnight Artists*

The annual exhibition, *Six McKnight Artists*, featured new work by the 2018 recipients of the McKnight Artist Fellowship for Ceramic Artists, Brett Freund (Minneapolis, Minnesota) and Donovan Palmquist (Farmington, Minnesota), as well as by the 2018 recipients of the McKnight Artist Residency for Ceramic Artists: Derek Au (New York), Linda Cordell (Pennsylvania), Ian Meares (Arkansas), and Bryan Czibesz (New York). This exhibition, supported by the McKnight Foundation, showcased the success of each artist's fellowship or residency.

9/6 – 9/8 *American Pottery Festival*

The 21st iteration of Northern Clay Center's annual fundraiser and celebration of the art of the pot, 2019's APF did not disappoint! From a collector adventure that explored the personal creative and living spaces of ceramic artists, architects and a fiber artist, to intimate conversations with artists, to after-hours networking and socializing for our guests, to over a thousand stellar examples of contemporary pottery—2019's event will go down in the books for its richness, its entertainment, its introduction of so many new makers to our community.

9/20 – 11/3 Gallery M | *Horror Vacui: Across the Margins*

Mario Praz, an Italian-born critic, used a Latin phrase, horror vacui, to confront the Victorian fetish of visual clutter. Since that time, more than 100 years have passed with Minimalism as sentry, guarding the margins of good taste in design. High culture has been mostly synonymous with restraint. However, the rabble has been known to bubble up from time to time: consider the Ashcan school of painting, the Maximalism movement of the '70s, the more recent visual cacophonies of Sarah Sze, and the 2015 curatorial concept, coined by Kaloust Guedel, Excessivism.

As a species, we seem to always bounce between the margins of excess and restraint in pursuit of balance. The same movement is present in our politics and our psychology. These margins of extremes are seemingly always reflected in our art, regardless of which side of the abyss we find ourselves. Horror Vacui: Across the Margins, curated by Jill Foote-Hutton, was a celebration of visual excess, as much as it is also an examination of it and a reflection of our world.

The dense presentation of artists included, from South Africa, Ardmore Ceramic Art (courtesy of Pascoe & Company in Miami, Florida), with additional objects by Patrick Coughlin, April D. Felipe, Benjie Heu, Lindsay Montgomery, Virgil Ortiz, Yana Payusova, Melanie Sherman, Molly Uravitch, and Valerie Zimany. The visual intended to exacerbate and inspire tensions in the exhibition space. At what distance does an intimate viewing become too close for comfort? When we are overwhelmed, what truths are revealed?

Emily Galusha Gallery | *AnT Sculpture and Design, LLC*

Alexis Gregg and Tanner Coleman are AnT Sculpture and Design, LLC. Their motto is, "Changing the way people think and interact with artwork one brick sculpture at a time!" As a collaborative team creating public art and architectural ceramics with brick and tile, they have worked in China, Taiwan, South Korea, Australia, Italy, Turkey, and at numerous locations in the US. They formed their company, in 2012, after four years and nearly a dozen large-scale public art works gave them the confidence to assert their experience with a viable business plan. As a team they are as aggressive in their play as they are in their work. Traveling with an active lifestyle, they soak up culture eagerly and infuse the landscapes they engage with permanent records of their presence.

During the installation of their work, in complement to their concepts on community and art, small groups were welcomed to visit and observe the construction/installation process. Gregg and Coleman held an all-day workshop during which they collaborated with members of NCC's community to create the tile pieces for the installation of dynamic low-relief architectural tiles, inspired by the culture of Minnesota. Gregg and Coleman also offered a free public lecture/presentation focusing in conversation to relate what it is like to seek public art commissions, and create works of art that seamlessly interact with the public.

11/17 – 12/29 Gallery M | *2019 Holiday Exhibition and Sale*

Emily Galusha Gallery | *MN NICE Graduates*

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In 2019, we produced 20 exhibitions that demonstrated the range of expressions in clay, created by accomplished, emerging, and established ceramic artists. The onsite exhibitions included the works of 204 artists; 129 of these artists were from Minnesota, 75 were non-Minnesota artists, 25 of the artists were international, and 11% were BIPOC.

In addition to producing the onsite exhibitions and catalogs, the Center continued off-site exhibition collaborations when we toured the annual McKnight exhibition to Winona State University, Macroctie Art Center, and Bemidji State University.

We published three catalogs, including the annual McKnight exhibition publication. While we do not have an explicit sales objective for our exhibition program, we were very fortunate to sell a great number of pots and sculptures from various exhibitions, well surpassing our budget, with over \$42,700 in sales.

2019 EXHIBITION ARTISTS

204 individuals, 129 from Minnesota.

Andriana Abariotes	Alex Chinn	Brian Harper	Ian Meares	Jeff Schmuki
Clarice Allgood	Soojin Choi	Evan Hauser	Lotte Melman	Kathryn Schroeder
Jaime Anderson	Linda Christianson	Juss Heinsalu	David Menk	Debbie Schumer
Marion Angelica	Logan Chyla	Mike Helke	Lucy Miller	Sue Schweitzer
Ardmore Ceramics	Corey Clemetson	Benji Heu	Ernest Miller	Virginia Scotchie
Derek Au	Elizabeth Coleman	Lisa Himmelstrup	Keisuke Mizuno	Todd Shanafelt
Brad Bachmeier	Tanner Coleman	Rachael Hoffman-Dachelet	Lindsay Montgomery	Melanie Sherman
Xilam Balam Ybarra	Kelly Connoles	Dawn Holder	Jim Mulfinger	Juliane Shibata
Kosmas Ballis	Linda Cordell	AL Holen	Ari Nahum	Ginny Sims
Heather Barr	Patrick Coughlin	Norman Holen	Risa Nishiguchi	Chris Singewald
Anna Beadle	Bryan Czibesz	Maia Homstad	Matt Nolen	Carly Slade
Casey Beck	Peter D'Ascoli	Ayumi Horie	Mike Norman	Audra Smith
Alison Beech	Nicolas Darcourt	Mitch Iburg	Claire O'Connor	Phil Smith
Susan Beiner	Becky David	Roxanne Jackson	Polonia Odahara Novack	Kate Smith
Pamela Belding	Chotsani Elaine Dean	Peter Jadoonath	Virgil Ortiz	Malcolm Mobutu Smith
Bradley W.M. Benn	Andrea Leila Denecke	Danutė Jazgevičiūtė	Donovan Palmquist	Meghan Smythe
Sue Bergen	Dawn Detarando	Audrey Jellison	Chris Pancoe	Anthony Stellaccio
Ieva Bertašiūtė-Grosbaha	Amanda Dobbratz	Ani Kasten	Erin Parker	Mic Stowell
Emily Murphy Bicking	Susan Dunwell	Debra Wiitala Keyes	Jamie Parrish	Martin Tagseth
Vered Binyamini	Katharine Eksuzian	Nick Kosack	Mariko Paterson	Oliva Tani
Andy Bissonnette	Carole Epp	Eva Kwong	Yana Payusova	Andrew Tarrant
Monica Bock	Susan Feigenbaum	Mika Negishi Laidlaw	Liz Pechacek	Austyn Taylor
Kim Bogeman	Sara Fenlason	Kris Lemsalu	Robyn Peterson	Beth Thompson
Diana Boitmane	April D. Felipe	Stephanie Lenertz	Marjorie Pitz	Heather Tietz
Summer Hills Bonczyk	Elsbeth Fischer	Courtney M. Leonard	Potters for Peace	Kowk-Pong (Bobby) Tso
Chris Bond	Kate Fisher	Forrest Lesch-Middelton	Emily Price	Anne Törn
Pam Bonzelet	Michael Flaherty	Glynnis Lessing	Dainis Pundurs	Molly Uravitch
Katie Bosley	Christopher Reid Flock	Rob Lieder	Egidijus Radvenskas	Doug Van Beek
Heather Nameth Bren	Jill Foote-Hutton	Keather Lindman	Marty Rehkamp	Zach Van Dorn
Paul Briggs	Jill Franke	Lee Love	Juta Rindina	Julie Van Grol
Undine Brod	Brett Freund	Spencer Ludtke	Andrew Rivera	Joan Vande Kamp
Jamie Brogdon	Joel Froehle	Darah Lundberg	Mary Roettger	Lynn Wadsworth
Evelyn Browne	Allessandro Gallo	Kirk Lyttle	Jen Rogers	Jared Walhowe
Lisa Buck	Margaret Gavin-Hanner	Warren MacKenzie	Leo Rohlin	Mary Ann Wark
Mark Burns	Ron Geibel	Dawn Malcolm	S.C. Rolf	Jenny Weber
Shelli Burns	Alexis Gregg	Marta Matray	Emily Romens	Dustin Yager
Lynda Buscis	Gerit Grimm	Katie Mattis	Peter Ronan	Judith Yourman
Amelia Butcher	Gruchalla Rosetti Pottery	Michaela Maupin	Kathryn Rosebear	Valerie Zimany
Amy Cass	Guillermo Guardia	Kate Maury	Denise Rouleau	
Matthew Cawley	Carol Hansen	Marney McDiarmid	Ann Ryan	
Pattie Chalmers	Ursula Hargens	Matt McLeod	Brenda Ryan	

Northern Clay Center offered classes and workshops for all ages, stages, interests, and levels of investment of students. We led summer clay camps for children (396 participants in 2019), and special, short-term workshops for adults, children, and families. We offered special workshops with visiting artists, who taught a particular technical topic or lecture on their work in conjunction with an exhibition. In addition to our ongoing classes, the Center contracted with other schools and institutions to offer classes and workshops at NCC or at other venues.

MN NICE (Minnesota New Institute for Ceramic Education)

Northern Clay Center continued to cultivate success with the MN NICE program. With six participants graduating in 2019, the cumulative list of program alumni from our graduating classes now totals 36. Continuing into the program's sixth year, we maintained our commitment to tailoring the educational experience to each student's needs by providing access to intimate dialogues with established artists in the local community and visiting exhibition artists, through onsite studio visits, and technical demonstrations.

Even in the face of challenge and growth, and as other alternative ceramic education programs crop up, the quality of programming available to students in MN NICE remains an exemplar throughout the country. Again, the level of work produced for the MN NICE graduation exhibition demonstrated a level of risk-taking that is only possible when supported by a cadre of engaged teachers. In MN NICE, teachers take on many guises and give students real-life experiences that they continue to unpack long after the program has ended.

In the fall, we welcomed our sixth MN NICE class of seven participants and our studio program was able to

accommodate workspace for each of the seven that requested on-site studios. Two of this year's participants have specific work exchange agreements with NCC. By the end of 2019, they had already participated in multiple group firings in both gas and electric kilns and seem to have a highly effective dialogue going. The group ranges from recent graduates and ceramic artists with existing professional experience to individuals who are reinventing themselves after a life in another pair of shoes. They are K-12 art teachers, gallery assistants, business professionals, medical professionals, and community classroom students; some have traveled to NCC from other states such as Arizona and Connecticut to compose a strong geographical, socioeconomic, experiential and generational spread.

Starting again in the fall of 2019, Northern Clay Center brokered an opportunity for program graduates to further their technical understanding of materials and firing. Through an existing relationship with Matt Katz, Adjunct Professor at Alfred University, we saw seven participants enroll in the Ceramic Materials Workshop to learn to develop glazes through a stronger understanding of the individual materials used in their composition. With this refined understanding of ceramic materials, participants become better prepared to continue on their path as fully independent makers that are both aware and in full control of their process from beginning to end.

I don't have an academic background in clay and being surrounded by so many incredible artists was overwhelming at first. My fellow MN NICers, Ursula and the rest of NCC have been great at meeting me where I'm at in my work and made me realize I have something to bring to the table.

—Jamie Parrish, MN NICE 2018 – 19



Top to bottom: Art Educator Weekend workshop during MEA.
Student John Cisney checking the leather-hard status of a new piece.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



Left to right: CrafterBrewery workshop participants enjoy a pint of cider while learning how to create their own steins at Sociable Cider Werks. Jan McKeachie Johnston leads an in-house workshop with students from John Marshall High School.

I have attended various ceramics workshops at Penland School of Craft as well as Arrowmont School of Arts and Craft. These workshops were great for intensive skill development. However, they require you to learn in an environment that is removed from normal everyday life. To be a part of the MN NICE program, you continue to maintain a normal life. On top of attending a weekly four-hour class, I spend about 20 hours a week in the studio and work a full-time job. Having spent 2 months learning and working in this way, I have been able to see how to have a serious studio practice while working full-time. I have been able to learn, make mistakes, and have full control over every aspect of the process. All of this while also having a very supportive instructor, great mentorship, and a community to help make smart choices and talk about ceramics.

—Chris Salas, MN NICE 2019 – 20

Ursula is very approachable as a teacher, but has high expectations. This is a serious program that doesn't compromise. Which is exactly what I sought when I began to explore programs more advanced than community classes.

—Billy Hicks, MN NICE 2019 – 20

ClayToGo

ClayToGo programs for schools and community groups were produced in partnership with Twin Cities' schools and other arts organizations. Our ClayToGo program engaged over 8,500 youth, families, and school children in 2019, with school age children receiving more contact hours with clay overall than any single year in our history. Longer programs provided a more comprehensive clay experience and ensured a better experience for the participants and efficiencies for NCC. We continued long-standing relationships with

dozens of Minneapolis/St. Paul and first ring-suburb public schools, as well as special learning programs within these schools, and as part of after-school programming. We maintained our program quality and continued to expand the depth of our collaborations with both new and returning programs. 2019 was a wunderkind of a year, with residencies with 20 unique schools (many with activities in two separate academic years) and 16 organizations, for a total of 48 unique partnerships, 510 clay sessions throughout the year and more than 15,000 hours of contact with clay among all participants.

NCC's ClayToGo program was featured in the exhibition *In Service: Creating and Connecting Through Clay* that coincided with the NCECA conference in Minneapolis in spring of 2019. Projects made in 2018 with NCC's diverse Seward and Cedar Riverside neighborhood participants expressed the wonderful power of clay as a medium through which cultural connections and friendships can develop. This exhibition showed the culminating creations from classes that were subsidized by a 2017/2018 MSAB Arts Access award, conducted with the help of interpreters so students could learn in their native language. During the course of the year, Oromo, Amharic, Somali, and Korean clay vocabulary were used at the nine class locations. The exhibit offered a unique opportunity to the artist makers as it shared NCC's outreach and ClayToGo endeavors with the greater clay community.

Art Educators

In 2019, NCC continued, for the fourth year, our series of multi-day workshops designed specifically for K-12 art educators. During the year, NCC supported educators by facilitating a spring session that coincided with the end of the NCECA conference, a fall series for area educators, and provided scholarships to attend the NCECA conference for arts educators, supporting 51 educators (both local and visiting from out of state) to develop their clay expertise and ignite their individual studio practice.

National Clay Week

On October 7, 2019, the first day of National Clay Week, NCC digitally streamed video of two artists as they demonstrated projects, outlined lessons, and answered questions as they arose from the digital audience. We also used this opportunity to add some new lesson plan materials to the existing stock on our website as a growing resource for art educators. Throughout National Clay Week, NCC engaged studio artists, staff and teaching artists in the sharing of information, techniques, and inspiration. Staff shared a behind the scenes look at gallery operation. By week's end, over 2000 individuals were engaged via social media. Comments from the attendees included:

Seeing other artists work and learning about their techniques and inspirations. I enjoy hearing about the path which led them to where they are at in their own lives.

—Pat Fair, Art Teacher, Armstrong High School

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



Left to right: Students critique greenware with wheel instructor Lisa Himmelstrup. L to R: Katie Bosley, Amanda Dobbratz, and Virgil Ortiz during the reception for *Horror Vacui*.

Being in the space and seeing other artists' work is inspirational and helpful to take back to my classroom. Even seeing how things are organized and sorted and labeled at the NCC studio gave me great ideas for studio flow and clarity of information.

—Jennifer Latuff, Art Teacher, White Bear Lake High School South Campus

Cumulatively, our education programs reached some 42,500 people through NCC classes, workshops, lectures, tours, clay events, and outreach residencies in 2019, a decrease of 32% from our reported 2018 numbers, but that particular year included a major partnership with the American Swedish Institute, during which their staff (much larger in comparison to NCC's) recorded numbers of actual visitors. Please note: our 2019 numbers include conservative and trackable attendance at the NCECA conference, but there were many others whose presence couldn't be formally recorded given limited staff resources. And, attendance to our NCECA/MSP airport exhibition was a projected 11.5 million impressions (MSP produced numbers), which is not included in our statistical reporting. Our previous record year of attendance was 2017, with 39,000 recorded.

Onsite Events

During the 2019 calendar year, 1,259 individuals came to Northern Clay Center for a tour, demonstration, or handbuilding or wheel workshop. Birthday parties, Girl Scout troops, corporate groups, and bachelor/ette parties all toured our exhibitions, facility, and many created clay masterpieces at NCC. This was in

addition to all the groups guided through NCC during the NCECA conference week. Another national organization, the Alliance of Artist Communities, made sure to make NCC an off-site tour opportunity during their conference in the fall of 2019. We have had a blast showing our national artists community all the great opportunities that exist at NCC in Minnesota.

Several students were B L O W N A W A Y with the tour and all the work at different stages. It's opened their eyes to a reality they didn't know existed.

—Grant Boulanger, Teacher, Open World Learning Community

With unexpected, yet generous, support via a sponsorship from the Minnesota State Arts Board, NCC was able to provide scholarships to the NCECA 2019 Conference in Minneapolis, which enabled us to increase access for constituents across the state. Ultimately, the MSAB Sponsorship Fund allowed us to reach three Greater Minnesota artists (including one POCl artist), three college students (including two Greater Minnesota students and one POCl student), two Greater Minnesota arts administrators, three BIPOC artists (with one of three receiving the BIPOC-specific scholarship), seven Greater Minnesota art educators, and 68 Greater Minnesota students (including 58 high school students and 10 middle school students). Additionally, we covered the costs of bussing to help Greater Minnesota schools travel to the conference. With the additional inclusion of NCC's Metro Art Educator Scholarship created with our internal

outreach funds, we were able to reach an additional eight art educators from the Metro area and 55 Metro students (including 51 high school students and four elementary school students). Ultimately, 50 Minnesota high school students were served through NCECA's own scholarship funding.

Overall, between the two programs, we were able to reach a total of 15 art educators and 140 students. Individuals who wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity given lack of time, financial resources, transportation, etc., were able to attend the conference and NCC's myriad specialty exhibitions. And, those who were not familiar with our programming prior to this conference and opportunity are now part of our community!

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



Left column, top to bottom: Facepainting and young volunteer at the Holiday Open House. Rob Lieder and Audra Smith delivering wheels to the Minneapolis Convention Center for the *Make In* hands-on activity area during NCECA. Guests at the Uptown Art Fair outreach event. Artist applying engobe to her project during an outreach residency at Aurora on France.

Center column, top to bottom: Young artist trying their hand at clay during the free hands-on activity during the McKnight Summer Open House. Susan Obermeyer works with a student during a residency at Jones-Harrison Senior Living. L to R: Emily Romens, Casey Beck, Rob Lieder, Tippy Maurant, Kyle Rudy-Kohlhepp all helping, in their own way, to unload a trellis wheel for the NCECA *Make In* event. Students enjoying just another manic fun day.

Right column, top to bottom: Lucy Yogerst teaches the basics of ceramics at CLUES: Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (Latino Communities United in Service). Young artist showing off a proud creation. Outreach student artists learn and laugh together.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



Left to right: L to R: Kevin Caufield and Rob Lieder educate and entertain audiences at the American Craft Council St. Paul show. Meet MPLS corporate workshop participants.

2019 TEACHING & GUEST ARTISTS 127 individuals

John Acre	Jill Foote-Hutton	Mark Lusardi	Brad Schwieger
Ted Adler	Jil Franke	Kirk Lyttle	Todd Shanafelt
Clarice Allgood	Brett Freund	Tippy Maurant	Sandra Daulton Shaughnessy
Dan Anderson	Joel Froehle	Kate Maury	Melanie Sherman
Marion Angelica	Alessandro Gallo	Brady McLearn	Juliane Shibata
Ryan Archibald	Margaret Gavin-Hanner	Candice Methe	Max Silver
Heather Barr	Alexis Gregg	Cassi Miesner	Chris Singewald
Casey Beck	Bianka Groves	Sarah Millfelt	Joe Singewald
Alison Beech	Guillermo Guardia	Emily Murphy	Audra Smith
Andy Bissonnette	Lily Hammer	Risa Nishiguchi	Mic Stowell
Chris Bond	Nancy Hanily-Dolan	Claire O'Connor	David Swenson
Katie Bosely	Ursula Hargens	Susan Obermeyer	Emma Symanski
Nathan Bray	Evan Hauser	Jeff Oestreich	Olivia Tani
Heather Nameth Bren	Mike Helke	Virgil Ortiz	Austyn Taylor
Bob Briscoe	Lisa Himmelstrup	Donovan Palmquist	Priya Thoresen
Lisa Buck	Autumn Higgins	Jamie Parrish	Hidemi Tokutake
Shelli Burns	AL Holen	Yana Payusova	Sandra Torres
Kevin Caufield	Erin Holt	Liz Pechacek	Molly Uravitch
Pattie Chalmers	Maia Homstad	Joanna Powell	Leandra Urrutia
Alex Chinn	Bryan Hopkins	Angie Renee	Doug Van Beek
Linda Christianson	Franny Hyde	Angela Rangel	Zach Van Dorn
Mike Cinelli	Mitch Iburg	Austin Riddle	Joan Vande Kamp
Sunshine Cobb	Peter Jadoonath	Colleen Riley	Lynn Wadsworth
Eileen Cohen	Tom Jaszczak	Chloe Rizzo	Kurt Brian Webb
Elizabeth Coleman	Samuel Johnson	S.C. Rolf	Jenny Weber
Tanner Coleman	Jan McKeachie Johnston	Emily Romens	Ashley Williams
Abigail Cooper	Sophia Kielas-Jensen	Peter Ronan	Keith Williams
Elliot Corbett	Nick Kosack	Kyle Rudy-Kohlhepp	Lucy Yogerst
Leila Denecke	Jennica Kruse	Chris Salas	Valarie Zimany
Amanda Dobbratz	Baoan Le	Ted Saupe	
Joel Edinger-Willson	Rob Lieder	Tricia Schmidt	
Katharine Eksuzian	Keather Lindman	Jeff Schmuki	

ARTIST SERVICES



Left to right: BISQUE resident artist, Donna Ray and Jill Foote-Hutton. Sharing the residency studios during Global Day of Clay. Fogelberg Studio Fellowship recipient, Katie Bosley, at opening night featuring works created during her residency.

Individual grants, funded by the Jerome and the McKnight Foundations and private donors, provided projects, residencies, and fellowship support of \$6,000 to \$25,000 respectively for nine artists from Minnesota.

The 2019 grant recipients and respective jury panels included:

Jerome Ceramic Artist Project Grant

Three grants of \$6,000 were awarded to Erin Paradis (Minneapolis), Zoe Powell (St. Paul), and Lynn Wadsworth (Minneapolis), for unique research/travel/exploration in the field.

Emerging Artist Residencies (EAR)

The EAR awards provide a furnished studio space for one year, plus a materials/firing stipend, a group exhibition, employment opportunities, Sales Gallery exhibition opportunities, and other benefits. The 2019 Anonymous Artist Studio Fellowships were awarded to Alyce Carrier (Minneapolis, MN) and Nat Nicholson (Iowa City, IA). Under the Fogelberg Studio Fellowship program, we welcomed Minneapolis, Minnesota artist, Chris Singewald.

Red Wing Collectors Society Foundation Award

The 2019 Red Wing Collectors Society Foundation Award, valued at \$1,000, was made to an emerging potter, Nick Earl (selected through a nomination process). This award is supported by an endowed fund at NCC.

McKnight Artist Fellowships for Ceramic Artists

The 2019 McKnight Artist Fellowships were awarded to Kelly Connoles (Northfield) and Guillermo Guardia (St. Paul). Each McKnight Artist Fellow received a \$25,000 cash stipend, and was featured in an exhibition in July of 2020. Four awards were made for the 2019 McKnight Artist Residencies, for artists to be in residence in 2020: Pattie Chalmers (Carbondale, Illinois), Rebecca Chappell (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), Jin Cho (Fort Collins, Colorado), and Marcelino Puig Pastrana (Guaynabo, Puerto Rico).

McKnight Artist Residencies for Ceramic Artists

In 2019, NCC's McKnight studio hosted artists from across the globe, with 2018 residency award recipients: Ted Adler (Wichita, Kansas), Alessandro Gallo (Helena, Montana), Hidemi Tokutake (Kariya, Japan), and Leandra Urrutia (Memphis, Tennessee).

Three individuals comprised the selection panel for both 2019 McKnight programs: Dr. Sequoia Miller is chief curator of the Gardiner Museum in Toronto, Canada. After nearly fifteen years as a full-time ceramic artist in the Pacific Northwest, Miller's path took an unexpected turn in 2010 when he enrolled at the Bard Graduate Center to investigate persistent questions about the nature of the work of potters, earning an MA in Decorative Arts and Design History. Dr. Sharif Bey is an associate professor of art at Syracuse University and is a teaching artist with extensive experience in

ceramics, sculpture, art community programming and art teacher training. His studio work ranges from decorative/functional pottery to conceptual ceramic works that are influenced by ritual and identity. Linda Lighton has had over 60 solo shows since 1979 and participated in over 150 group shows. She is the founder and director of the Lighton International Artist Exchange Program which has sent 150 artists to 53 countries and the Arctic Circle.

Warren MacKenzie Advancement Award (WMAA)

We made the fifth year of awards under the WMAA, a travel/study grant for current students, recent college graduates, or recent apprentices to continue their education in any number of ways. Two grants of up to \$4,000 were awarded to Aaron Caldwell and Elliot Corbett. Awardees contributed to our online blog: www.northernclaycenter.blogspot.com. This grant program complements our emerging artist residencies, project grants, and mid-career residencies and fellowships, by providing important funding for current students and recent graduates around the country, while honoring an American master potter, Warren MacKenzie. The jurors for the 2019 iteration of the program included: XXX

...this grant opportunity has given me the chance to travel to places I could only dream of prior to the award. I am a very in-person, hands-on, on-the-ground kind of learner. I grow through experiences that I get in person, so I knew being able to travel to various museums and visiting historic all-Black towns and Black sites would feed its way into my artistic practice. It has allowed me to travel to Richmond, DC, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Allensworth in California. Each stop has been extremely eye-opening, the lack of Black



Left to right: Valerie Ling, Anonymous Artist Studio Fellowship recipient, with her piece, *Blow*, during the opening night reception for the emerging artists exhibition. Donna Ray, BISQUE Residency recipient, offering up her work and her studio surroundings.

queer history and culture in all the Black history and culture museums I visited and has impacted the work I want to make in ways I did not expect to be impacted. The work I am currently creating and experimenting with could not have been realized without this experience with WMAA.

—Aaron Caldwell, 2019 WMAA Recipient

NCC workers give constant support to artists who plan to get a lot done in a short amount of time. Almost immediately after my arrival at the center, I began working in the studio. This was possible because NCC employees helped me get set up and acclimated to my new surroundings from the start. The fact that I realized the intentions of my original proposal so fully is a testament to the strength of the Northern Clay Center's McKnight Artist Residency for Ceramic Artists program, its support staff, administrators, the board, the stipend, the equipment and facilities, and 24-hour access. This institution consists of generous and deeply supportive people who bend over backward to accommodate the needs of their McKnight residents and other studio members of their community. As far as residency opportunities go, this has been one of my favorites. I will continue to share my positive experiences with other ceramic artists who seek exemplary residency programs for time and space to make their work. Thank you for this opportunity!

—Leandra Urrutia, 2019 Summer McKnight Ceramic Artist Resident

I feel that the combination of NCC and the financial support of the McKnight Foundation make a difference. It certainly made a difference for me, happening in a time of my life that was complicated personally and very busy professionally, by allowing me to work in a beautiful studio and a supportive environment that is serious and fun at the same time, offering inspiration and motivation when it's most needed. I'm already encouraging friends that I think would be eligible and deserving to apply for this amazing opportunity.

—Alessandro Gallo, 2019 Winter McKnight Artist in Resident

BISQUE Residency

In 2019 NCC instituted the BISQUE Residency, an experimental pre-emerging artist residency, the future of which will be dependent upon funding. Our decision to create this experimental residency was spurred by several mitigating factors, not the least of which was our desire to build inclusivity in the field of ceramics and provide an opportunity for a pre-emergent maker who was in active pursuit of professional development opportunities.

BISQUE stands for Believe, Include, Sustain, Question, Understand, and Evolve. BISQUE was inspired by our desire to cultivate new voices in the field and is also a metaphor for makers in the early

stages of development. As a community-based ceramic art center, we are in a unique position to have the opportunity to become familiar with pre-emergent talent and the BISQUE Residency will offer time, space, and professional development resources for one-year, plus participation in a group exhibition in January and February 2021. Our 2019 recipient was Donna Ray, a long-time community member of NCC, who got her start in clay at Bloomington Art Center.

ARTIST SERVICES

2019 GRANT ARTISTS

39 artists, 18 from Minnesota

Ted Adler
Derek Au
Heather Barr
Katie Bosley
Bri Burke
Aaron Caldwell
Alyce Carrier
Pattie Chalmers
Rebecca Chappell
Alex Chinn
Jin Cho
Soojin Choi
Elliot Corbett

Kelly Connoles
Linda Cordell
Bryan Czibesz
Nick Earl
Katharine Eksuzian
Brett Freund
Alessandro Gallo
Guillermo Guardia
Evan Hauser
Maia Homstad
Mitch Iburg
Keather Lindeman
Ian Meares

Nat Nicholson
Donovan Palmquist
Erin Paradis
Zoe Powell
Marcelino Puig Pastrana
Donna Ray
Peter Ronan
Chris Singewald
Olivia Tani
Austyn Taylor
Hidemi Tokutake
Leandra Urrutia
Lynn Wadsworth

Studio Program

Studio space and access to equipment such as wheels, kilns, and glaze booth, are provided to an average of 50 – 60 artists a year. The studio program is a community of makers with a breadth of life experience and background, bringing a chorus of unique voices to clay.

The populous of local artists who license studios for extended tenures has provided ongoing opportunities for dynamic exchange. Their conversations are punctuated by a regular influx of resident artists from around the country and across the globe, visiting artists who arrive to present lectures in concert with our exhibition schedule, and an annual turnover of students in our MN NICE program (referenced in education).

2019 was the first full year NCC implemented new activity measures for the Studio Artist Program, instituting better transparency of organizational expectations for our community members. Studio artists have a flexible accountability system wherein they are expected to perform service to the organization, participate in a variety of professional development activities, and be members in good standing of the organization. The activity measures support an active studio environment and an engaged community which fully

embraces a range of ceramic artists from hobbyist to professional. At the end of September 2019, we reached the end of the first tracking timeline and all participants in the Studio Program met or surpassed the requirements to continue their licenses in 2020.

Professional development opportunities for Studio Program Artists were continued in 2019 with quarterly opportunities provided to further develop the research and conversations about the work of individual artists. Most notable of the sessions that were provided were individual critiques with winter McKnight Resident Artist Alessandro Gallo, a private discussion with artists Alexis Gregg and Tanner Coleman of AnT Sculpture and Design surrounding their practices of community engaged public sculpture, and the collaborative project hosted by NCC as part of Clay Week that was hosted and promoted through the social media channels of the organization and promoted by both NCC and Clay Week.

In the early months of 2019, the Studio Program was featured in one of NCC's numerous NCECA-related exhibitions through their collective show Artists of NCC. As one of the most frequented stops for conference-goers, this exhibition gained a great deal of

exposure for the artists participating and the program in general. Of the incredible influx of traffic, studio artists took note of the visitors to their specific exhibition through the use of a world map and small adhesive stickers. Through their efforts to track the notable exposure received through the opportunity, it was documented that there were visitors from a confirmed 33 countries on six continents of the world.



Left to right: Katie Bosley and Donna Ray discuss Katie's process of carving pattern on double-walled vessels. Guests at *American Pottery Festival* opening night, including MN NICE graduates Joy P Newmann (center), and Paola Evangelista. (right)

2019 STUDIO ARTISTS

64 artists, 49 artists from Minnesota

Ted Adler	Rachael Hoffman-Dachelet	Peter Ronan
Clarice Allgood	Maia Homstad	Kathryn Rosebear
Marion Angelica	Molly Horton	Chris Salas
Heather Barr	Nick Kloforn	Debbie Schumer
Sue Bergan	Rob Kohlmeyer	Chris Singewald
Chris Bond	Rylie Lawrence	Audra Smith
Pam Bonzelet	Rob Leider	Kate Smith
Liane Bromer	Keather Lindeman	Phil Smith
Evelyn Browne	Spencer Ludtke	Mic Stowell
Bri Burke	Dawn Malcolm	Olivia Tani
Shelli Burns	Marta Matray	JacobThill
Lynda Buscis	Kate Maury	Beth Thompson
Alyce Carrier	Matt McCleod	Brenton Titcomb
Alex Chinn	David Menk	Hidemi Tokutake
Soojin Choi	Ari Nahum	Leandra Urrutia
Elizabeth Coleman	Joy Newmann	Doug Van Beek
Joel Edinger-Willson	Nat Nicholson	Zach Van Dorn
Katharine Eksuzian	Claire O'Connor	Joan Vande Kamp
Paola Evangelista	Marni Oberpriller	Lynn Wadsworth
Sara Fenlason	Jamie Parrish	Mary Ann Wark
Alessandro Gallo	Robyn Peterson	
Mariah Greenhoff	Donna Ray	

SALES GALLERY



Left to right: Holiday Open House guests, including Will Hopkins (right) and Mary K. Baumann (center), try to master the difficult task of choosing just the right piece by artist Mike Cinelli. During a special featured artist show in the sales gallery, regional legend Jeff Oestreich discusses his personal history with clay beginning with his apprenticeship at Leach Pottery in St. Ives, England.

Northern Clay Center's Sales Gallery continued to represent a variety of makers ranging from emerging to established and represented a wide scope of ceramics including clay bodies, firing methods, functionality, and aesthetic approach. Special Featured Artist shows focused on the work of artists not typically seen at NCC such as one featuring the work of emerging artists in the region who all have dedicated service hours to the field of ceramics through volunteerism. We continued to accept donations from desirable collections and raised over \$3200 through *ReCollect*, a secondary market sale of pottery, proceeds from which support NCC's Emerging Artist Residencies program. Part of the success of this program is the continued support of generous donors of ceramics and a featured show during the spring. *ReCollect* is proving to be a sustainable program and will ensure the generous funding of our grant programs, and, while other for-profit gallery entities are pursuing similar models of secondary sales, ours remains the only one whose profits go to building the next generation of prolific makers.

We continued to balance the national reputation and artists served through our gallery with our local community interest and neighborhood activities, as we partnered with neighborhood

businesses, supported Seward Neighborhood's Open Streets Festival, the local Somali community, and the Franklin Winter Frolic. The gallery partnered with other community organizations such as American Swedish Institute, our Annual Chili Cook Off featuring local distilleries, food purveyors, and chefs, and a reception for the board of directors for NCECA with local ceramic artists and collectors on the guest list. The gallery employees worked alongside five interns in 2019 to teach and share transferable leadership and business skills through all aspects of gallery business such as inventory, shipping, photography, social media marketing, publications content creation, customer service, writing, editing, and special events management.

One of the Center's incredibly impactful partnerships of 2019 was the fourth and final year of collaboration with the James Beard Celebrity Chef Tour. U.S. Bank FlexPerks Rewards sponsored the project, which provided a small ceramic salt cellar to each of 2100 guests at James Beard dinners and US Bank constituents across the country. NCC commissioned eight Minnesota artists to create the small pots and paid them an 80% commission rate. Cards were designed to introduce each dinner recipient to all five of the artists and NCC. Over the life of this collaboration,

we put the Minnesota arts directly into the hands of 10,300 people in new markets and not only raised visibility for each artist (23 in total) and the Minnesota clay community in general but showed guests and leaders in the restaurant industry how art could be functional in everyday life.

In addition to the James Beard project, NCC also partnered with U.S. Bank FlexPerks to sponsor our annual American Pottery Festival. This increased our annual opening night party attendance by over 40 people. Throughout the weekend we had guests repeatedly share that they had never been to NCC before and had heard about the event through U.S. Bank. People returned throughout the weekend, and this new audience was an opportunity to share NCC, local artists, and education opportunities, and increase sales for invited artists, sales gallery artists, and local studio artists.

In 2019, NCC's gallery continued to extend its representation of high-quality ceramics beyond its own store and website. Over 1200 hundred pots by Minnesota and Wisconsin artists (as well as others from outside the region who are guests of our upcoming *American Pottery Festival*) were for sale at the ceramic conference of NCECA in Minneapolis. 2019 was the sixth year our sales gallery has been accepted



Left to right: APF guest artists Kurt Brian Webb and Bianka Groves. A weekend hands-on workshop with Ted Saupe. Fogelberg Studio Fellowship recipient, Olivia Tani, and volunteer Hunter Brown on APF Opening Night.

to exhibit in the highly competitive NCECA Gallery Expo. Between both of our gallery locations, the Center sold over 1300 pots, totaling over \$90,000 (a \$60,000 increase over our average sales!)

Off-site and special events, created to engage new audiences in new ways, included our 2019 Maker-To-Table (M2T) fundraising dinner held at NCC and featuring the table wares of over 15 ceramic artists, our presence at the NCECA Gallery Expo in downtown Minneapolis, and a Pop-Up Sales Gallery at RBC Plaza for the holidays. The M2T event addressed the natural progression of the conversation from the "Farm to Table" movement to addressing the source of one's dinnerware. Place settings from over 15 artists were featured and offered as a gift for each of our guests in attendance. The Gallery Expo represented approximately 1200 pots from over 60 artists, many of whom hail from Minnesota. The Pop-Up Gallery in RBC Plaza in downtown Minneapolis was a three-day affair and featured over 500 pots by 25 artists.

Our year-end gallery sales totaled over \$278,551, a 5.5% increase over 2018 sales, and our highest year on record. Considering the increased competition from online galleries, a national slump in retail sales the last three quarters of 2019 in the US, the continued increase in the number of independent artist home sales, and myriad craft-themed pop-up shops (in and around the Twin Cities, across the country, and online), NCC was very pleased with the increase.

SALES GALLERY



Left column, top to bottom: Glynis Lessing and Al Hohen. Betsy Williams and Ted Saupe. Andrea Leila Denecke, Sandra Daulton Shaughnessy, and Lindsey Lewis. APF Saturday panel event with guest artists Dan Anderson, Ted Saupe, Al Hohen, and Jan McKeachie Johnston.

Center column, top to bottom: APF guest artist, Sunshine Cobb. Liz Pechacek works on display. Wayne Branum and Mark Pharis host a stop on the APF Collector Tour.

Right column, top to bottom: Ted Saupe and Sarah Millfelt at her final *American Pottery Festival* as Executive Director. Bryan Hopkins and Sandra Torres during a Saturday demonstration. Zach Van Dorn, Christopher Salas, and Olivia Tani enjoy opening night. Bryan Hopkins, Sunshine Cobb, and Bianka Groves sit for a spell in the APF galleries.

2019 SALES GALLERY & AMERICAN POTTERY FESTIVAL ARTISTS

232 individuals

Melynn Allen	Marc Digeros	Richelle Huff	Kent McLaughlin	Hide Sadohara
Clarice Allgood	Amanda Dobbratz	Bob Husby	Melissa Mencini	Ted Saupe
Dan Anderson	Maria Dondero	Cheryl Husby	Jenny Mendes	Pete Scherzer
Jacob Anderson	Justin Donofrio	Clary Ilian	Branan Mercer	Tricia Schmidt
Linda Arbuckle	Paul Dresang	Janel Jacobson	Candice Methe	MJ Schmith
Derek Au	Robin Dupont	Peter Jadoonath	Ron Meyers	Debbie Schumer
Andrew Avakian	Kowkie Durst	Sarah Jaeger	Ernest Miller	Deborah Schwartzkopf
Posey Bacopoulos	Gary Erickson	Maggie Jaszczak	Megan Mitchell	Brad Schwieger
Heather Barr	Paul Eshelman	Tom Jaszczak	Masayuki Miyajima	Johanna Severson
Tom Bartel	Andrea Falconer	Danutė Jazgevičiūtė	Robin Murphy	Laurie Shaman
Sue Bergen	April D. Felipe	Eric Jensen	Nikita Nenashev	Mark Shapiro
Jason Bige-Burnett	Marty Fielding	Samuel Johnson	Edward Neu	Sandra Daulton
Randy Bill	Robert Fishman	Lydia Johnson	Mike Norman	Shaughnessy
Andy Bissonnette	Donna Flanery	Shirley Johnson	Robert Nothhouse	Andy Shaw
Nick Bivins	Jill Foote-Hutton	Jan McKeachie Johnston	Jeff Oestreich	Grace Sheese
HP Bloomer	Jill Franke	Randy Johnston	Ken Olson	Joseph Sherman
Margaret Bohls	Brett Freund	Doug Kaigler	Lisa Orr	Melanie Sherman
Birdie Boone	Julia Galloway	Hannah Kane	Walter Ostrom	Sandy Simon
Katie Bosley	Willem Gebben	Peter Karner	Ben Owen	Chris Singewald
Bob Brady	Brian Geier	Ani Kasten	Brent Pafford	Joe Singewald
Jessica Brandl	Ernest Gentry	Matt Kelleher	Linda Painter	Audra Smith
Wayne Brantum	Steve Godfrey	Gail Kendall	Greg Palombo	McKenzie Smith
Nathan Bray	Bill Gossman	Maren Kloppman	Liz Pechacek	Zac Spates
Andy Brayman	Katharine Gotham	Karin Kraemer	Doug Peltzman	Albion Stafford
Heather Nameth Bren	Sylvie Granatelli	Matthew Krousey	Rafael Perez	Will Swanson
Richard Bresnahan	Alexis Gregg	Greg Lamont	David Peters	David Swenson
Bob Briscoe	James Grittner	Jamie Lang	Craig Petey	Olivia Tani
William Brouillard	Martha Grover	Lynn Latta	Ian Petrie	Alex Thullen
Lisa Buck	Bianka Groves	Peter Leach	Mark Pharis	Sue Tirrell
Troy Bungart	Richard Gruchalla	Forrest Lesch-Middelton	David Pier	Kyla Toomey
Bri Burke	Adam Gruetzmacher	Simon Levin	Joe Pintz	Sandra Torres
Kevin Caufield	Guillermo Guardia	Rob Lieder	Joanna Powell	Bernadette Torres
Pattie Chalmers	Rampini Gubbio	Lung-Chei Lin	Liz Quackenbush	Jason Trebs
Sarah Chenoweth-Davis	Perry Haas	Keather Lindman	Ron Rael	Molly Uravitch
Alex Chinn	Ursula Hargens	Suze Lindsay	Brittany Rea	Amy Von Bargaen
Soo Jin Choi	Vivica Heino	Lee Love	Matt Repsher	Marjorie Wade
Linda Christianson	Otto Heino	Lily Lund	Austin Riddle	Holly Walker
Sam Chung	Jus Heinsalu	Elizabeth Lurie	Colleen Riley	Kurt Brian Webb
Mike Cinelli	Mike Helke	Kirk Lyttle	Andrew Rivera	Christy Wert
A. Blair Clemo	RH Hensley	David MacDonald	Molly Rivera	Kat Wheeler
Sunshine Cobb	Jill Hinkley	Warren MacKenzie	Georgina Riveros Pi	Matthew Willhelm
Michael Coffee	Dane Hodges	Gail Markiewicz	S. C. Rolf	Betsy Williams
Dick Cooter	Hoi an Hoard	Ruth Martin	Peter Ronan	Tara Wilson
Elliot Corbett	Butch Holden	Andrew Martin	Carrin Rosetti	Michael Wisner
Guillermo Cuellar	AL Holen	Sharlyn Martin	Monica Rudquist	Dustin Yager
Leila Denecke	Maia Homstad	Kate Maury	Brenda Ryan	Judith Yourman
Josh DeWeese	Bryan Hopkins	Linda McFarling	Amy Sabrina	

HIGHLIGHTS, CHANGES, AND CHALLENGES



Facilities

The Clay Center wrapped up a multi-week, mini building renovation just days before the NCECA conference, which yielded refurbished gallery walls, a new entryway, a fresh coat of paint in numerous areas, and newly renovated and higher functioning (and visually pleasing) restrooms. In summer of 2019, the exhibition gallery floors were refinished. And, post NCECA, NCC acquired a new, state-of-the-art kiln, which required over a year of planning and design and logistical management. This kiln is one of few in the region and, in addition to the level of precision, ease in firing and efficient use of resources, it will help continue to draw new voices in clay to our facility.

NCECA

As included in numerous sections above, in 2019 NCC played a leadership role in the development and production of the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts—NCECA—Conference, which brought the Center further into the national spotlight and shown a brighter light on the ceramics and greater art communities in Minnesota. Some 5,900 persons—artists, educators and appreciators—registered for the 2019 conference, which included 4 days of education programs, artist lectures and demonstrations, and over 120 exhibitions at 80+ venues across the state. We were hopeful that our investment of financial and staff resources would garner a larger network of supporters, increased exposure to the international community of makers and clay appreciators, and financial gains for NCC, but we were blown away by the ripple effect of our efforts.

- NCC had a major presence with an offsite gallery expo at the Convention Center (one of just 8 national galleries juried into that space); qualitative reports suggested ours was the most impressive gallery given the diversity and quality of our represented artists, the professionalism with which we managed the preparations and sales during the event, and the physical design and installation of our gallery.
- We staffed a resource table in an effort to promote all of our programming to audiences, which enabled us to reconnect with literally 100's of artists whose careers we supported and advanced in past years and who then pledged to be ambassadors for NCC in future.
- We produced and staffed a makers' space at the Convention Center, wherein makers of all ilk and ages shared their techniques with the public. It was an information exchange unlike any other we've facilitated, with academics, public school art educators, hobbyists, professionals, apprentices, and the list goes on—all working in a pop-up studio, sharing inspiration and techniques.
- Back at our Minneapolis location, years of facilities improvements and preparations enabled us to host a record five exhibitions and we supported another five out in the community through logistical planning, financial underwriting, and co-curation and installation. We provided a free workshop for art educators at our facility following the close of the conference. We produced an event at NCC in conjunction with the conference that celebrated the thoughtful pairing of handmade pottery with delicious food during a Maker to Table event, which had record attendance. We had 100+ individuals engaged as volunteers supporting our efforts. And, we sold 1367 ceramic art objects through over \$90,000 in sales.
- And, while we were helping to create what is still being referred to as “the best NCECA in the books!”, we expanded the reach of the conference, with support from the Minnesota State Arts Board and Aroha Philanthropies, to provide conference scholarships and transportation to the conference to over 155 individuals from greater Minnesota.
- Finally, in the days following the conference, we installed a state-of-the-art kiln, which was specially designed for NCC, for our space, and which required the coordination of some half dozen entities and trades persons.



Top to bottom: An NCECA attendee contributing to the experience in the *Make In* space at the Minneapolis Convention Center during NCECA week. NCC hosts the NCECA edition of our Maker-To-Table fundraiser event, catered by NCC Board Member and Chef Nettie Colón of Red Hen Gastrolab. Sarah Millfelt with the new NCC custom Blaauw kiln, Major Tom.

HIGHLIGHTS, CHANGES, AND CHALLENGES

Our 2019 NCECA experiences are not likely to be repeated for some 15+ years, given the reality of the NCECA organization and its selection process for host sites and cities. However, this exercise solidified our reputation in the field for being innovative thinkers, risk takers, quality service and facilities providers, and a strong community who, under fair and transparent leadership can come together to realize a common goal, with a strong work ethic, and a desire to be trend setters and forward thinkers in the ceramics field.

Leadership Transition

The organization began a major leadership transition in 2019, with the Center's long-time staff and then-executive director, Sarah Millfelt, leaving her post end of October. She worked closely with the board during the executive search and since her departure has worked as an independent contractor to support the senior staff and Center's hire at that time, Leah Hughes. Millfelt stayed on in a consultant capacity through the end of the year.

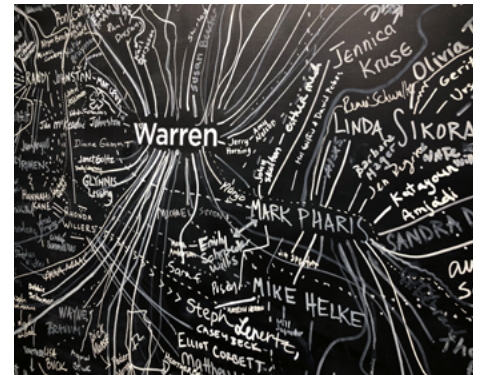
Finances

Northern Clay Center's 2019 earned income increased by 6% from 2018's levels. The primary contributors for this increase were in relation to the NCECA conference, with increased sales of exhibitions/APF/sales gallery works of art (with an increase of some \$50K total in these areas); the rest can be attributed to increased payments from our outreach partners to offset the grant

dollars we were able to award. Our total expenses increased 3%, primarily due to the increased cost of NCECA-related programming (exhibitions, increased cost of goods sold, programmatic preparations, and staffing). Additionally, the Center incurred some \$21K in leadership transition costs (overlap and staff training, search fees, etc.).

The Clay Center ended the year in the red for a second year in a row (our budgeted deficit was \$129,855; actual was \$74,090). NCC treats both building and equipment depreciation as cash expenses in an effort to plan for future and necessary acquisitions of equipment and building modifications. Our year-end depreciation expenses totaled \$116,503; if we didn't treat these as cash expenses, our year-end would reflect a gain of \$42,413. In May of 2017, NCC invested \$1 million of its reserves into an RBC Wealth Management Brokerage Account; since such time, the market has obviously experienced major fluctuations, but NCC ended 2019 calendar year with a gain of \$162,405.

In 2019, NCC paid out some \$624,000 in support to artists (highest year on record!), bringing the total paid to artists since 1995 to \$9.9 million. In 2019, we increased the number of artists served by 41%. Of these 444 artists served through studio facilities / teaching / exhibiting / selling wares / grants, 8% were artists of color and half were from the state of Minnesota.



Top to bottom: In honor of Executive Director Sarah Millfelt's last day, staff dresses up as their favorite version of her. Sequins, spreadsheets, Italian pastries, boas, athleisure wear, blazers, and a McDonald's drive up mic all made the cut. L to R: Joel Willson, Heather Barr, Zach Van Dorn, Jessie Fan, Audra Smith, Alison Beech, Jennifer Tatsuda, Mackenzie Catton, Sarah Millfelt, Tippy Maurant, Emily Romans, Amanda Dobbratz, Casey Beck, Kyle Rudy-Kohlhepp, Steph Lenertz, Leah Hughes, and Rob Lieder. A community interactive project to document the sphere of influence of the unequalled Warren MacKenzie. Volunteer Niels Sabin and Galleries Manager, Emily Romans, lending their talents to last minute reception prep.

2019 YEAR-END BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS	
Current Assets	\$1,075,114
Noncurrent Assets	\$2,910,298
TOTAL ASSETS	\$3,985,412
LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable	\$78,283
Other Liabilities	\$243,039
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$2,860,524
Without donor restrictions	\$2,860,524
Without donor restrictions	\$803,566
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$3,985,412

PEOPLE

STAFF

Sarah Millfelt, Executive Director (to October)
Pat Barnick, Building Maintenance Technician (to August)
Heather Barr, Education Materials Technician (to September)
Sales Gallery Associate (from September)
Casey Beck, Sales Gallery Associate
Alison Beech, Manager of Community Engagement
Mackenzie Catton, Program Associate
Amanda Dobbratz, Marketing and Technology Manager
Jessie Fan, Bookkeeper
Jill Foote-Hutton, Coordinator of Storytelling and Artist Services (to November)
Leah Hughes, Executive Director (from October)
Stephanie Lenertz, Sales Gallery Coordinator
Robert Lieder, Outreach Technician
Samantha Longley, Education Coordinator (from December)
Tippy Maurant, Director of Galleries & Events
Emily Romens, Galleries Manager
Kyle Rudy-Kohlhepp, Manager of Education and Studio Artist Programs
Audra Smith, Studio Manager
Jennifer Tatsuda, Business Manager
Zachary Van Dorn, Building Maintenance Technician
Joel Edinger-Willson, Education Technician and Resident Artist (from September)



Top to bottom: Chairman of the Board, Craig Bishop and Cathy Bishop, his incredible wife and partner. L to R: Jill Foote-Hutton, Kyle Rudy-Kohlhepp, Steph Lenertz, Alison Beech, Casey Beck, Jennifer Tatsuda, Rob Lieder, Heather Barr, Audra Smith, Amanda Dobbratz, Sarah Millfelt, Stef Grundy, Mackenzie Catton, Emily Romens, and Tippy Maurant.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (served all or part of 2019)

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Nan Arundel	Patrick Kennedy
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Craig Bishop	Kate Maury
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Evelyn Browne	Debbie Schumer
Nettie Colón	Rick Scott
Sydney Crowder	Paul Vahle
Nancy Hanily-Dolan	

VOLUNTEERS 199 individuals

Volunteers remain critical to our ability to advance the ceramic arts. Be they overseeing access to the Center's growing library and resource center, assisting our lead teaching artists during the Center's wildly popular summer clay camp season, tending to all manner of tasks to help NCC staff pull off its annual American Pottery Festival or Holiday Open House, lending their expertise to help shape future programming, to buttressing the Center's staff and board in myriad professional pursuits—Northern Clay Center benefited greatly from the talents of these individuals. In 2019, we were supported by over 230 volunteers, whose contributed hours totaled over 5,070, an organizational record! (That's the equivalent of 2.5 full-time staff members!) We are so very thankful for their time, passion and talents.

Clarice Allgood	Sydney Crowder	Michael Hutton	Gary Moore	Rick Scott
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PEOPLE

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NCC's 2019 programmatic and organizational pursuits was no easy feat. The months of March and April in particular saw a tenfold increase in our exhibition and education-related programs with NCECA hosted by the city of Minneapolis. The spreadsheets alone required to keep our house in order, our priorities straight, our artists supported, and our facility prepped would overwhelm any accountant! We entered the year with optimism, nervous tummies, and an overwhelming desire to showcase NCC to the world (or at least to those who attended the NCECA conference); we wrapped up 2019 with pride in our accomplishments, new leadership at the helm, and sincere thanks to so many for the seemingly endless supply of good cheer, flexible dollars, and consistent faith in what we do.

Thank you, sincerely, to all of the individuals and entities who aided NCC's 2019 efforts to advance the ceramic arts for artists, learners and the community. Every pinch pot pinched, every youthful and elderly set of hands that found joy and comfort in the touch of clay, every new body of work inspired, every grant awarded to an emerging or mid-career maker, every inspirational moment imbued onto an artist by our work—these are all made possible because of your support. You've ensured Northern Clay Center is an uncompromising and unstoppable force in the field for many years to come!

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