



Noyes
Museum of Art
STOCKTON UNIVERSITY



Education Guide

April 12 - June 23, 2019

Collective Identity: The Legacy of Apprenticeship Under Toshiko Takaezu

**Free Opening Reception:
Second Friday, April 12, 2019,
6:00 – 8:00 pm**



Toshiko Takaezu

Toshiko Takaezu (1922-2011), a Japanese-American ceramic artist known for her closed vessels, became internationally influential by presenting her pots as sculpture. She is celebrated as a formidable modernist whose style is epitomized by unrestrained brush strokes and splashes of glaze over her signature ceramic forms. Takaezu taught for 25 years at Princeton University and, for 35 years, she was an annual visiting artist at Skidmore College where she made her largest works. From her students, she shaped a generation of artists and selected the majority of her apprentices.

The impact of Toshiko Takaezu on the field of ceramics and contemporary art is well documented, yet her role as mentor, equally important to her, is too often overlooked. From the mid-1970s until the last year of her life, Takaezu chose one apprentice each year to live and work at her home and studio in Quakertown, New Jersey.

Featuring work by seventeen of her former apprentices and committed disciples, *Collective Identity: The Legacy of Apprenticeship Under Toshiko Takaezu* celebrates Toshiko's dedication to mentorship and helps communicate her excellence as a maker and educator. The breadth of Toshiko's influence can be recognized through the variety of personal vision of her student's work throughout the exhibition.

Featured Artists:



Hoyt Barringer, *Bouillabaisse Bowl*

Hoyt Barringer works towards a balance of movement, gesture, simplicity, and sound craftsmanship to present the natural properties of clay, stone and ash. The process of growth is slow, and he has developed his ideas through many years of apprenticeship with various teachers. Takaezu had a profound effect on his life by nurturing in him a strong sense of self and an appreciation for those mysteries not understood. Barringer believes that understanding local geology and working with impure, raw materials imparts a sense of time and place in his work that may resound through the ages.



William Baumbach,
Garden Seat

William Baumbach began his work in ceramics as a student at Princeton in the 1970s under Takaezu, who had just moved from Clinton to her home/studio in Quakertown, New Jersey. She later invited Baumbach to become an apprentice in her studio in 1978-79. During that time, they built the kiln that is still in use, 400 firings later. He subsequently combined a career in science (molecular biology, pharma, and medical devices) with intermittent work in ceramics centered around Takaezu and her studio. His work uses many of the techniques and glazes that have been used for decades at the Takaezu studio. Since Takaezu's passing in 2011, Baumbach has provided modest support to Don Fletcher, who purchased the studio and has been working toward a permanent art/education center and museum to perpetuate the essence of Takaezu's life and work, through the Toshiko Takaezu Foundation.

Geoff Booras' practice brings together traditional ways of making with emerging digital fabrication technologies. His works incorporate ceramics, photography, sculpture, and 3D printed elements. He was an artist's apprentice under Takaezu. Booras lives and works in Cambridge, MA where he holds the position of Instructional Ceramics Technician and Instructor at the Harvard Ceramics Program. He assists with ceramics collaborations and materials inquiries throughout the university and acts as project consultant for the GSD Material Processes and Systems Group. He is a Master of Education candidate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

<http://geoffbooras.com/>

Tim Clark is intrigued by how simple forms juxtaposed can conjure myriad responses. He says that one's individual experience of life alters and enhances the way they observe and interpret objects, and groupings, at a quick glance, may be immediately understood and when taken in over time may be comprehended in an entirely new way.

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



Geoff Booras, *Pink (eyelet) Void*, glazed ceramic, 2018



Tim Clark, *Shoots of Hope*

Ben Eberle focuses on making straightforward, well-made, functional pots which retain their material 'softness' even after the firing process. Color, texture, and surface movement are all aspects he enjoys putting into his pots. He is most interested in having his work find new life in cupboards and on tables where they will become family wherever they end up. Eberle has been working in clay for over 20 years. He has worked and taught in many studios and art centers around the northeast, has written for *Ceramics Monthly*, and shown his work in juried exhibitions all over the United States. He is currently a studio potter located in Western Massachusetts, where he does board level work in his free time for the *Studio Potter* journal.



Ben Eberle, *Soda-Fired Teapot*

<https://www.snowfarm.org/workshops/faculty/ben-eberle>



Donald Fletcher,
Tango

Donald Fletcher's engagement with art was triggered by unplanned, if not entirely accidental, encounters with some of the great museums in Europe while travelling to the US for college, from his home in India, and during a summer work exchange in Germany. He had been exposed to art by masters of many traditions, including Indian, Korean, American, and European. His first experiences in clay were a compelling, nearly hypnotic, introduction to art and craft. Fletcher joined an ungraded, non-credit ceramics class with Takaezu, and after graduating with a degree in anthropology, started a pottery studio near Portland, Oregon. After twelve years in Oregon, he moved back east, and Takaezu urged him to come to the Quakertown studio and make pots while he looked for work in New York.



Curtis Fontaine

Curtis Fontaine "I've had the fortune of working closely with nature for many years. At an apple orchard, I saw the functioning diversity. On an alpaca farm, I learned of the strength of life in the face of the elements and death. I am grateful to witness the passing seasons and create and reflect accordingly.

Process: Each clay body comes with its own limitations and abilities. Coarse clay made with lots of sand can support itself in ways porcelain cannot. The choices made during the formation and finishing of sculptures are in response to how the type of clay behaves. In high-fired reduction kilns, glazes and clays reveal their true potential. Finishes are tied to the atmosphere of the firing allowing for a large range of natural colors and blushing effects." <https://www.curtisfontaine.com/>



Fitzhugh Karol,
Keynote

Fitzhugh Karol is a sculptor based in Brooklyn, NY. Working in wood, metal, and clay, he creates work that ruminates on man's imprint in the landscape. He combines abstract shapes and carved forms that reference familiar landscapes and invite interaction. Karol's practice ranges from work that can be contained within a gallery setting to large-scale public sculptures that create an inviting and unconventional way to experience art. Karol previously lived and worked as an apprentice with ceramic artist Takaezu in Quakertown, NJ. His large sculptures and public works have been installed and exhibited in several parks and art centers across New York. Karol was awarded the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Process Space Residency, The Edward Albee Foundation Fellowship, Wassaic Project Residency, and the Socrates Sculpture Park's Emerging Artist Fellowship. <http://www.fitzhughkarol.com/>



David Kaufmann, *Fermenting Crock*, Stoneware and glaze

David Kaufmann learned to throw pottery at a young age and has continued to work over the years with a spirit of humility and pride for the tradition. He has had many influential teachers, but perhaps his greatest stroke of luck was the opportunity to apprentice with Takaezu in 2007, and her intuitive influence runs strong in his studio practice. He currently lives in Homer, Alaska where he shares Paul Dungan's studio, another member of the Takaezu lineage. As a potter, his job is to humbly infuse everyday objects with human sensitivity. He hopes that the pottery he makes is easy to live with and exists in a way that winks subtly from life's periphery, bringing those who handle and use it a sense of where it came from: a fellow creative spirit on a path. <https://www.dkaufmann.com/>

Yuichiro Komatsu's work is influenced by the simplicity and reductive nature of Minimalism. Komatsu explores the tactile nature of materials and the processes of making objects. One of the fundamental elements of ceramics is the notion of contained space. This space relates to the Japanese spatial concept of *Ma*, which can be roughly translated into "empty space" and shares the idea found in a "less is more" philosophy. *Ma* also refers to the simultaneous awareness of form and non-form and a particular consciousness of place. Thus, it can be extended further to suggest or imply an emptiness full of possibilities and a continuum, that spans both space and time. Komatsu's work is a search for forms and surfaces that work between the ideas of fragility and permanence through the pursuit of a palpable yet elusive idea of ephemeral beauty.



Yuichiro Komatsu, *Minima II*, 2017, White stoneware and earthenware with color stain

Nicholas Newcomb was born in upstate New York and raised in the Hudson Valley. He grew up playing in the woods and building forts out of found materials. MTV and trips to MoMA piqued his interest in pop culture. After sculpting clay creations in summer art classes, Nicholas looked to the arts to explore the overlap of design and nature. Years of study at the potter's wheel led Newcomb on a journey of apprenticing and working under master potters, commercial product development, and teaching ceramic arts. Today, Newcomb utilizes time-tested production techniques to make collections of whimsically decorated tableware and elegant accessories. Each item is made using a combination of slip casting, wheel throwing, and hand building techniques in his Brooklyn, NY studio. <https://www.nicholasnewcomb.com/>



Nicholas Newcomb, *Set of Three Prickly Vases*, 2019, ceramic and chrome wire

Frances Parker uses nature as a springboard to produce "subtle textures and rich and powerful shapes." Her sculptures relate to nature rather than mimic it, and are intended to evoke a response or feeling in people. Living in the desert of New Mexico has influenced Parker's use of color, evolving over the years, into a punctuation rather than a dominant element in her work. As her



Frances Parker, *Aphrodite's Bowl of Golden Apples*

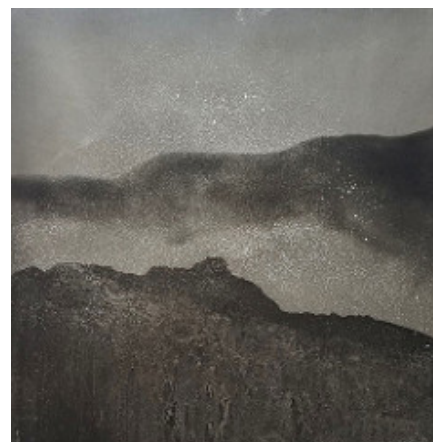
ceramic sculptures are so closely tied to nature, the garden is often the perfect place to view her work. The addition of her sculpture to a garden complements the hardscape and plants, thereby completing the outdoor space. <https://www.parkerceramics.com/>

Andy Rahe is interested in the relationships between people, how we communicate, how we grow, how we change, both apart and with others. His 2D and 3D works emphasize the importance of placement, mark-making, and form to create tension, cohesive surfaces, and relational narrative. Rahe was Takaezu's apprentice in 1999 and continued to make large thrown forms with her until 2005. From 2004-2018, he was an upper school art teacher at Columbus Academy, in Columbus, Ohio. During those years, he continued to exhibit at many open house shows at the Takaezu Studio, as well as curate shows of both his and Takaezu's work in Columbus. Currently, his clay work is shown at Stump Plants, both in Columbus and Philadelphia. <https://andyrahe.com/home.html>



Andy Rahe, *Bowl for Both*

Kate Randall is an artist working in a variety of modalities including sculpture, installation, photographs and works on paper. Currently, she is working on a project inspired by the idea of a lover's discourse, exploring polarity in relationships and the whimsical phenomenon of love, through both text and image. She has exhibited her work at Southern Exposure, Kala Art Institute, and Ampersand International, among others. She has been an artist-in-residence at Kala Art Institute and an affiliate artist at The Headlands Center for the Arts. She holds a bachelor's degree in Comparative Literature from Princeton University and a master's degree in Fine Arts from California College of the Arts. She has been teaching art in the Bay Area for over 20 years and is now teaching classes for adults in her beautiful SOMA studio. Her teaching style is supportive while also leading people to move beyond limitations and find their way into making work that is authentic and aesthetically sophisticated.



Kate Randall, *Liminal 1*, 2018, Unique intaglio print on gampi paper chine-colle



Elizabeth Smith,
Vase Set 3

Elizabeth Smith is both an artist and an educator, splitting her time between her students at the University of Central Arkansas and her home studio in Little Rock. She views both jobs as equal in their importance, as each influence and energize the other. "I have always wanted to teach at a university from the moment I began to understand the ceramic material and all of its complexities. I love teaching as much as I love making my own work; I find working with students and young artists to be challenging, inspiring and rewarding. ...these same adjectives fit my experience when working with the ceramic material in my own studio." Smith's work is a combination of throwing on the potter's wheel, slip-casting and hand-built porcelain construction fired to mid-range in an electric kiln. She makes both functional and sculptural work, unified by a love of surface and decorative patterning. Her work has been included in many national and international exhibitions. <http://lizsmithsceramics.blogspot.com/>

Michael Steelman's work focuses on timeless shapes and hand building. The anomalies and quirks arising from that process are an important feature of his work. Steelman enjoys the physicality and the challenges of mastering simple age-old techniques, and is drawn to the transformational aspects of the firing process. Texture is a prominent feature in his work. He draws inspiration from nature, printmaking, mandalas and Japanese textiles. Steelman started seriously working with clay at Princeton University, where he studied with Takaezu. After graduating, he was invited to utilize and support the resources and needs of her studio in Quakertown, New Jersey, on a periodic basis. Closely associated with The Takaezu Studio Project, he regularly contributes to its open house events and workshops.

<https://smsteelman78.wixsite.com/smsclay>



Michael Steelman,
Trioid Vase #4



Skeffington Thomas,
Container with Target,
2017, stoneware

Skeffington Thomas is a potter and ceramic artist, and professor of art on the faculty of Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ. After receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree from Lewis and Clark College, he worked as an apprentice for Toshiko Takaezu. In the Takaezu studio and home, his art-making and daily life commingled happily with the garden, the kitchen, the university, the art community in the studio and beyond. He aims to maintain this sensibility when creating objects for daily use as well as forms of a monumental scale. With simple, strong forms, covered by a luscious glaze, not only are fingers massaged by the surface, but also the hand and eye. The distinction between functional craft and sculptural art becomes blurred, and the viewer is intended to have an experience of a visceral nature. <https://skeffthomas.com/>

The Takaezu Studio, in Quakertown, NJ, continues to invite ceramic artists to create work. Open houses allow the public to view Takaezu's work as well as that of other ceramic artists. For further information about the legacy of Toshiko Takaezu and The Toshiko Takaezu Foundation go to:

<http://www.thetakaezustudio.com/welcome.html>

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The Noyes Museum of Art of Stockton University // www.noyesmuseum.org // (609) 626-3420

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