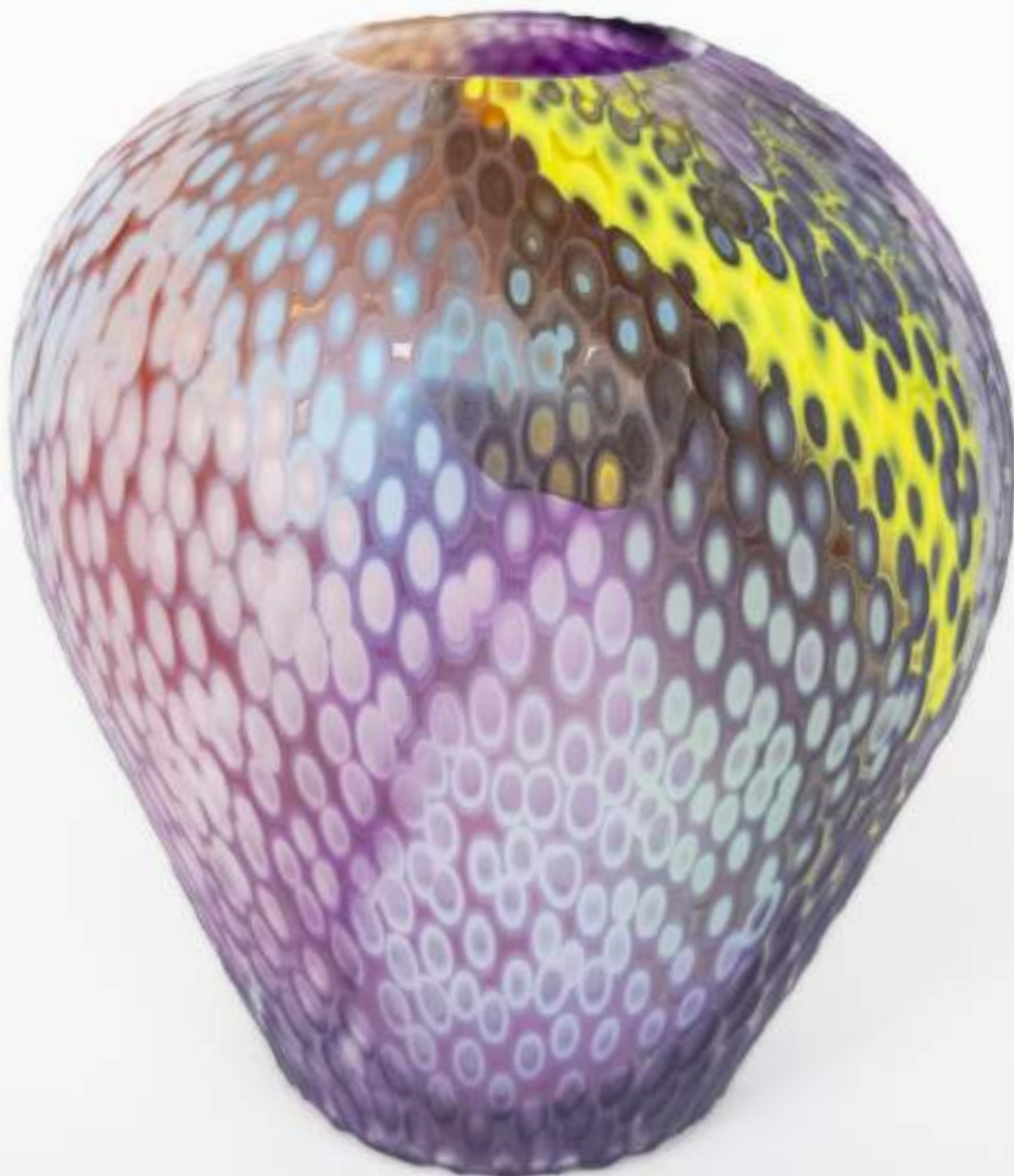
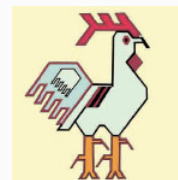


Volume 50 Number 1 | Spring 2026

# FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS





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# FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS

Editor: Lucie Gryś

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Design & Production: Derek Chung Communications

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## ON THE COVER

*Echinacea*, blown and engraved glass, 3.89" x 3.89" x 4.84", 2024. Image by the artist. Sydni Weatherson recently exhibited her work in a solo exhibition at The Carnegie Gallery in Dundas, Ontario. Discover more about Sydni and what inspired her on page 6.



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As this issue reaches you, our long-range plan and framework are serving as FUSION's guiding light. This important work reflects months of thoughtful consultation, discussion, and analysis. Thank you to everyone who contributed their voices and insights.

The plan provides a clear and ambitious roadmap for the years ahead, ensuring that we remain responsive, forward-thinking, and artist-centered in everything we do. FUSION extends its sincere thanks to arts consultant Victoria Steele for her pro bono support and for guiding the organization with such thoughtfulness, dedication, and professionalism over many months. We would not be where we are today without Victoria's help and kindness. We also thank Management Advisory Services (MAS) for supporting not-for-profit organizations and for connecting FUSION with experienced professionals like Victoria.

This spring, we celebrate the launch of the Henry Goodman Exhibition for Emerging Artists. Our sincere thanks to the Art Gallery of Burlington and to Chukwudubem Ukaigwe for serving as juror with such care and expertise. This exhibition highlights the strength and diversity of our community and honours a legacy of excellence that continues to inspire us all. Following its opening at the AGB, the exhibition will tour to the Rails End Gallery in Haliburton this summer and will conclude at the Neilson Park Creative Centre in Toronto/Mississauga in October.

Conference planning is well underway, and registration is now open. We are especially excited about the dynamic afternoon sessions we have planned, designed for meaningful exchange, hands-on learning, and deeper professional connections. We look forward to gathering, learning, and celebrating together.

Looking ahead, 2026 will see the launch of several outstanding professional development programs and workshops. These initiatives respond directly to what we have heard from you: a desire for practical skills, mentorship, and expanded opportunities. We are committed to providing meaningful experiences that support artists at



every stage of their careers across Ontario. Visit [www.clayandglass.on.ca](http://www.clayandglass.on.ca) and explore what FUSION is offering under LEARN. Register early, as these workshops and programs will sell out.

Our membership has nearly tripled in a short time, an encouraging sign of growth and momentum. Still, we know we can do more. Whether you are currently a member or not, we invite you to share your perspective. Your feedback will help shape future opportunities and benefits.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our small staff and Board of Directors for their dedication and leadership. Their commitment continues to move our organization forward in meaningful ways.

Finally, if you are interested in connecting with us to plan a workshop or event with your guild or studio in 2027, we would love to hear from you. Collaboration is at the heart of what we do, and we are excited to build new partnerships across our community.

Thank you for your continued engagement, creativity, and support. The future is bright, and we are building it together.

We look forward to seeing you at the conference in May!

Adeline  
[president@clayandglass.on.ca](mailto:president@clayandglass.on.ca)



*Cedar*, blown and engraved glass,  
3.89" x 3.89" x 4.84", 2024.  
Image by the artist.

## Emerging Artist Feature: Sydni Weatherson

**S**ydni Weatherson's recent exhibition, *The View from Here, with You*, at The Carnegie Gallery in Dundas, Ontario showcased her blown and engraved glass work that explored memory, landscape, and personal symbolism through colour and form. Weatherson is a multidisciplinary artist who graduated from Sheridan College's Bachelor of Crafts and Design program in 2022 and is now an Artist-in-Residence in glass at Harbourfront Centre in Toronto.

**When you think about *The View from Here, with You*, what was the first image, feeling, or memory that kicked this whole body of work off?**

I've been sitting on the name of this exhibition since 2023 when I took my first plane ride. I've always been working in landscape and thinking of my pieces as landscapes, but after this trip to the prairies I began thinking about how we share landscape and space with people, and with that, how are we shaped by these spaces. I had originally meant for the name to be used as a diptych for some forms I had blown out after my trip but when I was applying for the exhibition I decided it was better suited as the title with the pieces each being a landscape that have been shared with "You".

**A lot of these pieces feel like messages to someone, love letters, apologies, things left unsaid. Did that emotional angle show up early on, or did it sneak in as you were working?**

The emotional angle was there from the start. Landscapes have always felt very sincere to me, and the act of recreating a landscape that resonated with you and to share that with the people around you, is a very loving act. The engraved images crept in slowly as I was working.

**You talk about memory being hazy and fragmented. How do you translate that feeling into glass, especially with a material that can be so precise?**

I translate that feeling through the colour choices. I feel like because the colours I use flow across the surface and have so much organic movement it really lends itself to fitting that feeling naturally. That in combination with picking colours that will stretch very thinly to create veils of white or blue or amber over the piece helps encourage that idea of hazy recollection with some key details sticking out.



Sydni Weatherson.  
Image by Becca Gregory, 2025.

**Why the vase? What does that form let you do, emotionally or visually, that another form might not?**

You put it so succinctly, but these pieces are all containers for memory and meaning. There was a period in time that I was primarily making jars, but I've moved away from that a bit as my focus shifted. I personally view my pieces as sculptural vases, with their function to exist as a container for a landscape. It feels as though there are endless ways to explore the form and how very subtle changes in things like shape and size can impact the way the piece feels after it's been carved. I also love the option of creating a "front" face or having



*Varve*, blown and engraved glass, 5.5" x 4.25" x 6.5", 2025.  
Image by the artist.



*Nibiru*, 2025. blown glass, 4.37" x 4.37" x 7.25", 2025.  
Image by the artist.

an image that wraps around the entire form. It changes how people interact with the piece and how the composition feels overall.

**The engraved imagery feels very personal, almost coded. How did your own symbols start to develop, and how much do you want viewers to decode them versus simply feel them?**

They've developed very slowly over the years. I have a sketchbook I carry with me that doesn't get enough attention, but that's where everything has grown out of. I don't read as often these days, but when I do it's mostly classic literature. The symbolism that's so integral to the storytelling is something I've always enjoyed, and has crept its way into my sketchbook. I don't think I would have made these pieces or worked in this style if I wasn't able to shroud the vulnerable nature of these pieces behind vague representations of growth, change, and sorrow. People are always welcome to decode them, or try to. I think it's sweet that they want to. I have always intended to let people ascribe their own meaning to my work rather than me telling them how to enjoy one of my pieces, and this body of work is no different.

**The colours are pulled from real places, including the GTA, the Niagara Escarpment, and Western Canada. Do those landscapes live differently in your body or memory, and does that change how you work with colour?**

Probably. I work from photos often, matching my colours to the photographs I've taken of a landscape, or that loved ones have shared with me. There's also many times where I'll work from memory. Recalling a memory of a landscape and the people I shared it with usually shapes how I remember the colours. Certain things stick out more than others. It may not always be the most "photo accurate", but there is a tenderness in visiting somewhere and being unable to recall specifics but remembering how the soft yellow flowers matched a friend's jacket.

**Glass has a reputation for being fragile but also highly controlled. How does that line up, or clash, with the emotional content you're working through in this exhibition?**

The engraved elements fit in better with the perception that glass is a very controlled practice. It's a very slow and methodical way of working, with long steady hours. This is a very large contrast to the speed of the hotshop and the sense of urgency when blowing glass. The colour mixes that I'm working with tend to clash with the perception people have of working with glass and the feeling of being in control of the medium. I've had peers assist me with creating my forms before and the first comment is always how the colour behaves unexpectedly. The unpredictable nature of the melts and the ability to embrace the outcomes of each piece, or pivot as needed, is probably the best representation of the emotional content of this exhibition.

**You've been working at Harbourfront Centre while developing this show. What has being around other makers and studios given you at this stage of your practice?**

Being around other makers is always the best way to get feedback on things. The glass studio at Harbourfront is such a warm environment, and a very supportive group. There were a number of times over the months while I was working on these pieces that one of my studiomates would comment on something that was in the beginning, and often "ugly" stages of engraving and offer the kindest words of encouragement over elements I was unsure of. Sharing a space with people who work differently than you is also the best way to get feedback on composition and form. They see the pieces differently and can offer a more objective perspective, and will often pick up on certain elements or motifs across a collection that you had never considered.

**When the work was installed at The Carnegie Gallery, what surprised you most about seeing everything together in the space?**

Nothing really surprised me, but it was really special seeing everything together as a group and seeing how the story of each piece complimented each other, and also created a narrative across the entire room.

**After spending so much time with these memories, places, and relationships through this work, what feels different for you now as a maker, and what are you curious to explore next?**

I'm looking forward to continuing exploring engraved imagery, and seeing how those symbols evolve over time. Things still feel the same with my processes and how new works develop, but there is an underlying feeling of slowness now. Engraving is a lengthy process and after spending so much time on each of these pieces I'm embracing the slow steady progression of the image being excavated from the surface. I'm more at peace now with letting things progress slowly over weeks or months, and in the case of *Waiting at the Riverside*, years.

Watch Sydni talk about her recent exhibition [here @sydni.w.art](https://www.instagram.com/sydni.w.art)



**T**he Carnegie Gallery prides itself on the equal representation of fine art and fine craft in our yearly exhibition programming. Our call for exhibition applications happens each year in the window of April 1 to May 31 and we have a jurying committee made up of staff, board members and gallery Artist Members that assemble in June to review all applications for consideration in the following year.

Factors that we consider include quality and originality of both concept and execution. Sydni's work stood out to the committee for its harmonious integration of form and naturalistic colour palette. – *Laura Brandreth, Curator & Gallery Administrator*

# EMERGING DIRECTIONS

featuring CERAMIC ARTISTS FROM HILL POTTERS' GUILD



# Emerging Directions with Hill Potters' Guild

Over a year ago, a group of potters from Hill Potters' Guild began an intensive clay mentorship with master ceramist Angelo di Petta, each exploring a personal body of work that has stretched their creative limits.

Under Angelo's guidance, each potter has tested new forms and surface treatments, delving deeply into their chosen direction. Together, these twelve makers have discovered not only new techniques but new voices, emerging from the studio with work to be proud of.

The mentorship culminated in a gallery show, *'Emerging Directions - featuring ceramic artists from Hill Potters' Guild'*, at Boynton House in Richmond Hill, January 30 to February 1, 2026.

A structured mentorship is one way to nurture those qualities in artists and provide focused support. Mentorship may not be important for every artist. Some artists are able to self-mentor; they constantly question, find inspiration, and evolve ideas on their own, or so it appears.

Many applicants to mentorships do not have formal art education, where some aspects of creativity and critical development are typically introduced. In those cases, a structured mentorship can play an important role in helping artists establish a creative framework for their practice. A mentorship can provide dedicated time and guidance that supports steady creative progress, something many artists find hard to generate on their own. It also allows participants to focus, which is an issue most applicants cite as a reason for applying.

Artists can consider mentorship at any stage in their career. One exception might be if you are a recent graduate of a university BA or MA level ceramics program. After school, it can be valuable to spend time working through and developing ideas independently. But even then, there often comes a point when you hit a creative wall, and a mentorship can provide fresh energy and new perspectives. For artists without formal education in ceramics, a mentorship is especially useful when you are ready to be challenged to rethink your way of working and thinking. I have worked with mentees of many ages and backgrounds; one group, the Hill Potters, included participants in their late seventies, and one was over 80.

The mindset that makes a mentorship most effective is openness. Be willing to explore ideas that may not be familiar or immediately comfortable. Question what you are currently doing. Enter the process without a fixed idea of what you will make. A mentorship is a journey - expect ups and downs and be ready for unexpected directions. Be open to feedback from both your mentor and your peers. Sometimes this feedback will be contradictory. Being able to process and use it is essential to move your ideas and work forward. - Angelo di Petta



**Katie Argyle**

@katieargyle7 Image by Shiva Moghaddasi.

I wanted to be in the mentorship to challenge my ceramic choices and how I work in ceramics. I was able to focus on a few areas that intrigued me and



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# CELINA ECEIZA

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MAY 16 – AUGUST 16, 2026



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## LOCUTIONS: FRAGMENTS OUT OF A DELUGE

MAY 22 – AUGUST 30, 2026



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work toward refining these processes. I found the whole mentorship extremely satisfying. I was able to achieve the goals I set for myself and sustain the creation of a body of work over a full year.

I would advise people to jump in with both feet. Give yourself the gift of time, focus, and support from the others doing the mentorship and from your mentor. It is so nourishing to your art practice to stay with a long-term project and watch it change and grow over time.



### **Tung Bui**

@monty\_ceramics Image by Shaughn Colbran.

The mentorship provided me with a wonderful opportunity to explore new directions and expand my ceramics-making approach. While exploring metal wire in combination with clay, I learned to reflect on my relationship with this special medium and draw inspiration from simple daily joys. This rare experience resulted in work that is far beyond my comfort zone and yet reflects my love of clay. Despite the initial challenge of giving myself complete permission to explore any theme or technique, and staying focused on my creativity at times, this fulfilling experience has prompted new interests with a lasting impact on my future work.

Better time management, especially dedicating time on a consistent basis, would have allowed me to explore ideas and suggestions more completely.

### **Julie Caprara**

Image by Shaughn Colbran.

Through this mentorship, I wanted to discover a new way of approaching and beginning a clay project. I usually start with a fixed idea and then research it before I begin making. I hoped to shift away from



that structured habit and develop a more intuitive, process-led approach, allowing the work to evolve more naturally.

During the mentorship, I learned to give myself permission to create freely. I realized I do not need to confine myself to predetermined concepts or expectations. Instead, I can trust my instincts, let go of unnecessary boundaries, and allow the clay to guide the process. I began to see the material as a partner in dialogue, responding to its qualities and letting it suggest its own direction.

The experience was deeply fulfilling and strengthened my confidence as an artist. It encouraged me to embrace uncertainty and experimentation.

The most challenging aspects were interpreting the theme, translating it into form, selecting the right glaze combinations, and especially navigating the firing process to achieve the result I envisioned.

Although the final outcome was not exactly what I expected, I see it as the beginning of a deeper exploration toward work that feels fully resolved and authentic.

A mentorship can be challenging and demanding, but it is worth it. It pushes you beyond your comfort zone, helps you grow, and teaches you more about yourself. In the end, it builds confidence and leaves you feeling fulfilled and more self-assured in your work.

### **Minda Davis**

@minda.davis.7. Image by Alan Kay.

I was unsure what I was looking for going into the mentorship but was prepared to trust Angelo's leadership. Soon into the mentorship, my husband died,



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which completely channeled my focus to find a way of honoring his life, well-lived, in a creative way.

I learned there was a way to be creative despite, or maybe because of, strong feelings. My advice would be to take the opportunity if it is offered to you. It will give you a chance to take thoughtful risks and move in a new direction, well supported by the mentor and your colleagues.



### Elena Fumagalli

Image by the artist.

I entered this mentorship curious about where it might lead me. I had felt creatively stagnant, repeating familiar approaches, and wanted to broaden my skills and explore new artistic directions. After becoming recently widowed, I found myself navigating profound personal challenges that encouraged me to listen more closely to my own voice. Drawn to figurative sculpture and its ability to convey emotion, I began to engage with my feelings through the work. In doing so, I believe I was able to express those emotions with honesty and simplicity

in these figures.

You will always learn something from a mentorship, of course if it is well guided and the right person is leading it. Go for it!



### Claudia Galletta

@Claud.pottery Image by Anastasios.ca.

I wanted to explore throwing, altering, texturing, and attaching. I was curious to see what being mentored was all about and how it would evolve. I've learned that though I really enjoy the process of throwing, I also enjoy doing things to those pieces that change the aesthetic completely. It was a thoroughly fulfilling experience. I have one piece that I had named "Doomed," but I've decided to rename her "Survivor." She was beaten down twice but still came through.

I had no idea what to expect, but I'm absolutely delighted with what we produced. Give it a try and do not give up. It will be frustrating but very exciting. You'll have ups and downs, but you'll be so happy and proud to come to the finish line with your accomplishments.



### Shiva Moghaddasi

@Shiva\_Studios Image by Shaughn Colbran

I came into the mentorship wanting thoughtful critique and real growth in my ceramic practice. After years of working independently and away from academia, I really missed the kind of feedback and dialogue I experienced at OCAD University; those conversations that help you see your work more clearly, both its strengths and where it can be pushed further. I applied because I value thoughtful critique, peer exchange, and the accountability that comes from being in a committed ceramics community.

Throughout the mentorship, I learned to articulate my intentions more clearly and refine both form and surface. I went through a full 360-degree process with my drafts and monthly assignments, exploring and developing several different bodies of work before

eventually circling back to where I began. It felt like a quiet reminder: what you're searching for is often already within you, right here, right now.

Research became a big part of the work, looking closely at ancient Iranian artifacts and Persian Indigenous pottery traditions, their motifs, landscapes, and material languages. Choosing red clay was a conscious decision, a way to stay close to the material history of home. One of the biggest challenges was returning to Rumi's poetry and finding verses that genuinely echoed my inner landscape. On a technical level, I was also challenged to resolve forms more intentionally, including designing vessels that could be hung on the wall to reveal the interior, private writing and imagery.

Overall, the experience was deeply fulfilling. It gave me both grounding and momentum and helped me arrive at a more resolved body of work.

If you're considering a mentorship but holding back, I'd encourage you to take the leap. Go in with an open mind and a willingness to try new things and approaches. Finding the right mentor for you and your practice is very important; it makes all the difference.

### Florence Ngan

@clovellyceramics Image by Anastasios.ca

I had heard about Angelo di Petta from fellow potters who had taken workshops with him, and the word brilliant came up often. I applied for this mentorship with a few goals in mind: to push beyond my wheel-thrown functional tableware by making concept-driven work, to work at a large scale, and to focus on handbuilding. I wanted to grow both my creative and technical skills by doing the opposite of what I usually do in my pottery practice. I achieved all of these goals,



and I'm surprised and pleased by the final form the work took.

The most challenging part was deciding how the idea would be presented. There were many possible ways to bring the work to life, and I think I would have been satisfied with any of them. Learning to listen to my own inner voice during moments of creative confusion became the key. Be aware of the time involved. This is a major commitment.

This mentorship has been fulfilling and has opened my eyes to the expressive potential of clay. I look forward to continuing to build my sculptural ceramics portfolio.



### Diane Thompson

@dct\_pottery Image by Alan Kay

I entered the ceramic mentorship hoping to discover my niche. After more than fifteen years of working in clay, I felt underwhelmed by what I was making. I wanted to expand the scale and scope of my work but did not know how to begin. When our guild offered a mentorship opportunity, it felt like the right step forward for me at that point in my practice.

What I discovered surprised me. I already had a niche, and I had stronger technical skills than I gave myself credit for. The mentorship revealed that many of us felt uncertain at times. We felt directionless, overwhelmed, and even confused after meetings. Realizing I was not alone in those feelings was powerful.

My greatest challenge was managing the inner voice that questioned whether I was good enough to meet the expectations of the program. You can't learn if you don't participate. Show up, try things, and allow yourself to be uncomfortable.



### Kathy Verbeek

@Kathy\_40321. Image by Shaughn Colbran

I did a mentorship with FUSION led by Lesley McNally a few years ago, and it changed my practice. It advanced my forms and surface decoration. I wanted to take another leap forward by applying for our guild mentorship led by Angelo di Petta.

I was interested in learning how to show natural decaying processes in clay, translating what you may see in nature, like erosion, lichen, weeds, changes, and cracks, into a clay representation. I was also interested in learning what is possible to include in a clay body and how it may fire. Not having experience with additions in clay bodies, I felt I needed guidance, but in a way that would allow me to lead as well.

My experience was very fulfilling. I learned to add different materials, for example wire, sawdust, metal, and glazed shards, to bring out texture and colour changes. I learned how to make my own colours of slip and use them effectively. I also learned how to technically fire this work.

It is always challenging to have people critique your work, and this is a large part of mentorship, but I felt most challenged by translating what you are thinking and making into a clay object.

Technically, I learned a lot, but it has only cracked a door for me. There is much to explore. I am thrilled with the outcome of my work and the work of my colleagues.

My advice is not to hold back. If you feel the need to advance your work, change direction, add new creative processes to your tool belt, or simply explore possibilities, mentorship is a great venue to do this. It is guided, which allows you to receive advice and not be on your own.



# Gallery Feature: Vessels + Sticks



**V**essels + Sticks, located in Toronto, was founded by Jennifer Kerbel Poirier with a clear vision: to create a gallery dedicated exclusively to contemporary, material based art with a focus on ceramics. Showcasing artists from around the world, the gallery exists to bring clay into the spotlight – expanding the ceramic collector base in Canada and beyond, while positioning ceramics, and material craft, within the broader conversations of contemporary art and design.

**What was the ‘spark’ for starting Vessels + Sticks, and how has the gallery’s role in contemporary ceramics evolved since you opened?**

The spark for starting Vessels + Sticks really came during the pandemic, when I suddenly had the time and space to return to something I had always wanted to do which was build a business rooted in the arts. My education is in art, literature, and arts administration but my career moved into corporate roles. When that corporate chapter ended, it gave me the opportunity to refocus and explore what was happening in contemporary art, and I was immediately drawn to ceramics.

What struck me was the range of artists working in clay. Some were coming from traditional ceramic training, others were arriving at it from completely different disciplines, but all were using the material in incredibly experimental and expressive ways. There was a sense of openness and courage that felt very alive, and I was fascinated by how artists’ past experiences shaped their relationship with clay. It felt like a material that allowed for both deep knowledge and real freedom.

From the beginning, the gallery’s role has been to frame ceramic work not simply as craft or object, but as a site of material intelligence and contemporary artistic thought. Rather than acting solely as a space for display, I see the gallery as a space for engagement and interpretation where artists’ ideas can be shared and where audiences can develop a deeper relationship with the work. Ultimately, ceramics hold deep intelligence and real cultural value, and part of my motivation is to help make that visible.

**When you look at work from a new artist, what really catches your eye?**

What catches my attention is work that asks for deeper looking. I need something that holds my curiosity and makes me want to spend more time with it. I’m interested in work that feels like an exploration or a question rather than a finished answer. I’m less drawn to perfection or surface beauty on its own, and more interested in what the artist is trying to understand or push forward – materially, structurally, technically, or conceptually.

In a portfolio, I look for a sense of intention and inquiry. Surface or texture can be compelling, but only when it’s part of a larger investigation, whether that’s pattern, process, chemistry, or form. I’m also looking for work that feels distinct and authored – something that carries the artist’s point of view rather than echoing what’s already circulating commercially. The gallery isn’t focused on trend-based or market-driven aesthetics; I’m interested in work that has a strong internal logic and a clear sense of inquiry. And an artist statement is essential; it helps me understand how the artist is thinking about their work and what’s driving their practice.

**Can you outline how an artist can get on your radar and what the next steps look like?**

Artists are always welcome to reach out by email. The most compelling first contact is one that’s thoughtful and concise. It should include a short introduction that clearly describes what they’re exploring in their work, along with a small selection of images or a link to a well-organized portfolio.

I really appreciate when artists take the time to articulate what’s driving their practice rather than simply sending images. Context matters. It helps me understand how the work fits within a larger inquiry or trajectory.

If the work resonates with the direction of the gallery, I’ll follow up to set up a conversation. From there, we’ll talk more in depth about the practice, the body of work, and whether there’s alignment. I see this next step as a dialogue with the goal of



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understanding not just individual pieces, but how the artist is thinking long term.

**What are collectors buying most right now: functional, sculptural, or conceptual work?**

Collectors are primarily responding to sculptural work, particularly pieces at a larger scale or those that blur the line between sculpture and function. There's real interest in ceramic works that have presence, such as tables, stools, and architectural forms. These works are of interest, in part, because they challenge the assumption that ceramics belong only on a shelf or tabletop.

Conceptually driven work is also resonating, especially with collectors who are interested in the ideas behind the artwork. Those pieces often require more engagement, but there is definitely an appetite for that depth.

We don't focus on purely functional wares like cups or bowls. Most of the work we show is sculpture first, even when it carries a functional element. Overall, what's attracting collectors right now is the material itself: clay's tactility, the evidence of process, and the clear imprint of the artist's hand. That combination of presence, material intelligence, and authorship feels particularly compelling in the current moment.

**Do collectors tend to stick with one artist they love, or do they build eclectic collections from many makers?**

Collectors at the gallery tend to build collections across multiple artists rather than focusing exclusively on one maker, although some do go

deeper into ceramics specifically over time. Many of our collectors are moving across mediums. They're responding to ideas, material, and presence rather than collecting within strict categories.

Interestingly, scale plays a role. With smaller works, collectors may acquire several pieces from a single series to create a cohesive grouping. With larger-scale works, they often look for diversity, choosing pieces from different artists because each work carries such a strong presence on its own.

The decision-making process varies. Some collectors respond very instinctively when they encounter a piece and they immediately know it belongs with them, even before they've figured out where it will live. Others come with a specific spatial intention, searching for something of a particular scale or energy, but ultimately the emotional connection to the work still has to be there.

Generally, conversations are less about long-term investment and more about resonance with the artist's practice. Collectors are interested in the artist's approach, thinking, and the feeling the work creates.

**What's one misconception artists often have about gallery representation, and what's valuable to know up front?**

One misconception I often see is that because we focus on ceramics, any artist working in clay would naturally be a fit. Like any gallery, we have a curatorial direction and, while that evolves over time, it reflects particular interests and conversations we're trying to build through the work we show. I'm always thinking about how



artists sit in conversation with one another, so it's less about the medium itself and more about how the work contributes to that broader conversation.

If an artist's work doesn't align at a given moment, it doesn't necessarily mean it never will. Sometimes it's simply about timing, or where the gallery's focus is at that stage.

For artists, it's valuable to remember that galleries are only one lens. A "no" is rarely a judgment on the quality of the work. More often it reflects fit, timing, or direction. Finding the right alignment is what ultimately creates meaningful opportunities for both the artist and the gallery.

### **How do you see trends in ceramics and material-based art evolving in terms of collecting, making, or where the field is heading?**

I'm really encouraged by the way ceramics and material-based practices are increasingly being recognized within contemporary fine art contexts rather than being confined to traditional craft categories. There's a noticeable shift in how collectors and audiences are approaching these materials. There is less focus on rigid hierarchies and more openness to work that operates across disciplines.

Ceramics are now part of larger conversations at international fairs and exhibitions, and that visibility is helping reshape perceptions. Collectors seem drawn to the immediacy and material intelligence of clay. The fact that it holds evidence of process, time, and touch feels particularly resonant right now.

On the making side, I'm seeing two interesting developments. Some artists are moving fluidly across materials, treating clay as one voice within a broader artistic language. At the same time, artists who have traditionally worked within ceramics are pushing beyond functional or historical expectations and using the material to explore more conceptual, architectural, or sculptural ideas.

Overall, the field feels more open and expansive. It's less defined by categories and more by inquiry and experimentation – and I think this is exciting.

### **What's the best piece of advice you'd offer an artist hoping to build a sustainable career?**

One of the most important things is developing strong technical fluency. Not as an end in itself, but as a foundation that allows you to explore ideas more freely. Once you have that grounding, the deeper question becomes: what are you genuinely interested in exploring? What keeps pulling you back?

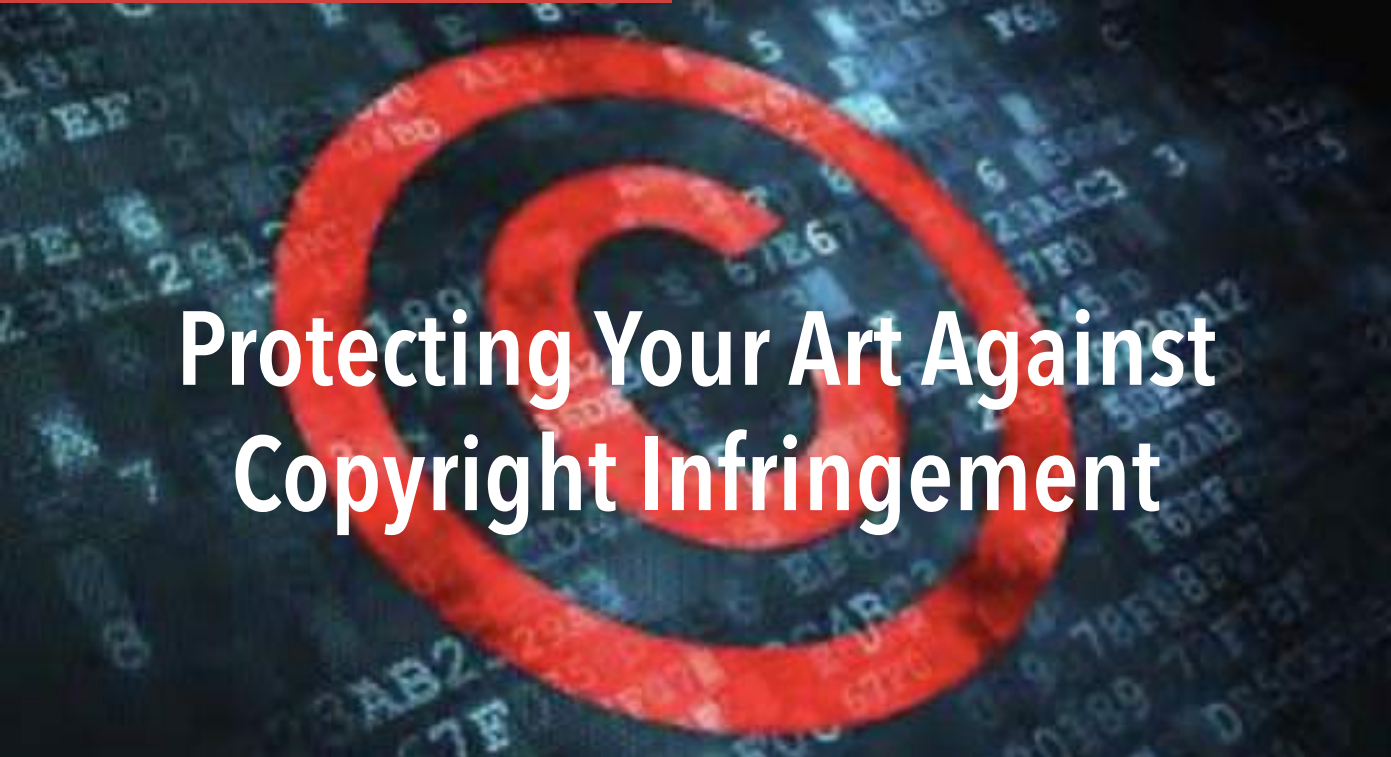
That might be something personal related to memory, place, emotion. Or it might be material-driven, like chemistry, structure, or process. For some artists the surface carries the narrative; for others the form itself becomes the expression. What matters is that the work comes from a place of inquiry rather than repetition.

I would encourage artists to allow themselves to evolve. Don't feel locked into one approach simply because it's selling or feels familiar. Experimentation and risk are essential to sustaining a long-term practice. The most compelling work often comes from artists who continue to question their own language and let it develop over time.

*Jennifer will be speaking on a panel called 'Opening the Gallery Door' at the upcoming FUSION conference.*

[@Vessels+Sticks](https://www.instagram.com/Vessels+Sticks)

All images by Seth Stevenson.



# Protecting Your Art Against Copyright Infringement

## When 'imitation' is not sincere or flattering

In Canada, to secure copyright protection, artwork "must be an original expression created through skill and judgment and fixed in a tangible form, saved, printed, or recorded." What is important is that an artwork "meet the test of originality" (Taxali).

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a challenge to art and artists. It can mimic an artist's style and originality, producing art simulations rapidly and tirelessly. It takes away artists' control, affects their income, and possibly their reputation.

AI is "improving exponentially every six to twelve months. That is why it is important to set limits such as by contracts and public law, but they move slowly," comments Dave Stern, Partner, Blaney McMurtry. "It is like playing cat and mouse with technology."

Copyright laws across the globe are not keeping pace. Canada's copyright law has not yet been updated to provide protections regarding AI. "Judges make decisions based on historical analogies until legislation deals with copyright," states Mark Edwards, Edwards Creative Law. "Until then, they extrapolate answers."

Copyright law varies by country. Denmark wants to "tackle AI-generated deepfakes by protecting people's personal characteristics,

including appearance and voice, through copyright law" (Karttunen). Protecting an artist's face against fakes matters if, for example, they do demonstrations of their art or teach online. Teaching, identity, and art practice are part of an artist's intellectual and creative capital. Protecting that is essential.

"An old-fashioned method," comments Sanderson, Sanderson Entertainment Law, for an artist to protect their art, "is to register their copyright." Artists can do this through CIPO, the Canadian Intellectual Property Office. Sanderson states artwork, branding, and logos should also be trademarked.

"Generally, your original work is automatically protected by copyright when you create it [pursuant to the Canadian Copyright Act]. However, when you register your copyright, you get a certificate of registration that you can use in court as evidence that you own the protected work," as stated on the CIPO website. The artist receives a certificate of registration that gives a presumption of ownership.

The artist's website and each artwork should include: ©, name, and year of creation. The © is a "notice to the public that you are bringing it to their attention," Stern observes.

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The artist needs proof of their creation of the work that is admissible in court, such as business records, records of collaborations, and works in progress, Sanderson states. Contracts are another way an artist can protect themselves, notes Edwards. How the parties behave in regard to a contract is “pivotal.” Emails, written correspondence, and photographs can also establish that an artist created a work first.

Photographs of the artist’s work help establish an artwork’s provenance. It is important to note that photographers who may be hired to record the work are helping to establish provenance. They also acquire copyright in the images they produce of the artist’s work. “Canadian photographers are now, by default, the first owners of the copyright of the images they produce. This applies to both photographs commissioned and paid for by a client” (PPP).

### Digital artwork

Online exposure is a “huge risk” for your artwork, says Sanderson. Everything, such as technique, composition, and materials, can be copied. AI companies call it “learning” or “training” for their algorithms. It can involve dramatic acts, such as when Anthropic destroyed millions of books to train its AI assistant Claude without initially obtaining the authors’ permission or knowledge, crediting their input, or compensating them (Landymore; TR).

A first step to protect art online is using cloaking tools. They make it difficult for AI to scrape an online image. The University of Chicago has created Glaze and Nightshade. The Psyker Team created Mist. There is also Overlai and ArtShield.

“Best practices for maximizing copyright protections for digital artwork,” states Birute Luksenaitė, Portfolio Estate Law, “start with maintaining a detailed catalogue that includes

description, type of digital creation, file type and format, storage location and access credentials, any applicable cloud or platform provider where it is stored, whether it is backed up via different

platform storage that permits post-mortem access by successors, whether the asset is registered in a copyright jurisdiction, whether any copyright interests have been sold or assigned, and whether moral rights are retained or waived.”

Luksenaitė comments, “If digital artwork is arranged to generate income, ensuring that any existing royalty streams and licensing contract details, renewal or termination rights, and non-fungible token (NFT) contract terms are clearly documented is important.”

### Your estate

Consult an estate lawyer to ensure artwork will be protected after death. Be aware, Luksenaitė advises, of the applicable laws. For example, the Succession Law Reform Act applies to wills in Ontario. A legal will must be executed in writing and either witnessed by two qualifying witnesses or entirely in the handwriting of the person making the will. An audio or video recording is not a valid will.

An estate lawyer should provide a questionnaire to help with organizing the artist’s art and asset portfolios, gallery and dealer arrangements, artwork loans, financial and debt information, intellectual property rights, financial asset records, digital assets and their access information, including social media accounts, and legacy instructions. Artists should have a catalogue raisonné prepared.

An artist must decide who can be trusted to take care of their estate. If an artist is thinking of bequeathing artwork to an institution, they should ask whether the testamentary bequest would be accepted.



Birute Luksenaitė is the founder of Portfolio Estate Law Firm.  
Image by Raymond Darzinskas.  
Special thanks to Kathryn Mitchell, Law Practice student.



Paul Sanderson is the principal of Toronto-based Sanderson Entertainment Law.  
Image by Maruf Ahamed.



Dave Stern is an Entertainment Lawyer and head of the Entertainment law group at Blaney McMurtry.



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## After death plus 70 years

Luksenaite notes that “the Canadian Copyright Act preserves a bundle of rights in an original artistic work, which includes digital art, for the artist’s lifetime, the remainder of the calendar year in which the artist dies, plus 70 years thereafter.” This helps protect artists and their successors from other parties unlawfully profiting from their artwork or using it in a way that violates the artist’s moral rights.

While an artist can sell or assign economic rights in an artwork for up to 25 years following the artist’s death, after which time such rights revert to the artist’s estate unless bequeathed in a last will, moral rights cannot be transferred, although they may be waived.

## The future

AI is characterized by rapid evolution, not in terms of years but months. Traditional media is too slow to keep pace with the latest changes. The Rundown AI, The Batch, The Neuron, and TLDR AI are examples of industry newsletters artists can use to stay current and be prepared.

The best defence against the unknowns of AI is to anticipate what others will consider valuable and monetizable, and then have the tools in place to protect the artwork.

*The discussion about the law in this article is for informational purposes only. Please consult a lawyer for advice.*

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Feature in the Craft Ontario Shop,  
at 1106 Queen Street West, Toronto.



## CLAY ARTIST

KATIE LEMIEUX

### How did you first discover clay, and what drew you to working with the material?

Clay didn't find me until my second degree in 2016, after learning graphic design was not a viable path for me. I was profoundly moved by the immediacy of the material after taking a course in University and it's been my primary medium since. My mentors taught me the smallest amount of clay can fundamentally change the entire appearance of a sculpture, and I find that concept wildly enticing.

### Where did you receive your training, whether formal or informal?

My first clay course was under the instruction of Kasia Piech at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay. Her mentorship encouraged me to pursue a Graduate degree and I was later accepted into the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, USA at Peck School of the Arts. Under the guidance of artist Christopher David-Benavides, the three year MFA program allowed me to focus on large, figurative work and atmospheric firings.

### What inspires your work as an artist? Are there themes, ideas, or experiences that influence your pieces?

I've always been fascinated by adult and child psychology and the nuances of communication. We are complex creatures with infinitely different modes of conditioning and as a result, each human contributes something unique to the fabric of society. Translating this into clay is a wonderful challenge and provides an endless supply of inspiration and research. I also work as a Personal Support for individuals that rely on non-verbal communication. After my youngest sibling was born and later diagnosed with autism, I was inspired to learn more about different capacities of connection. This continues to inspire both my work with humans and with clay. Which I then turn into humans.

### Tell us about your process. How does a piece move from idea to finished work?

All Hail the Sketchbook Process! I fill pages and pages of references and illustrations, feeling out the mood of my next piece. I take lots of pictures of facial expressions and body postures and weave them into a narrative to sculpt. A very gestural mock-up or maquette is made to troubleshoot any future issues with gravity and help decide the kinds of armatures I need to build for support. If a finished sculpture still holds the emotional intent of the initial sketches, I am one satisfied artist!

### Is there a particular piece or body of work that feels like a breakthrough for you?

My first life-size, solid build that took place in my first year of grad school was indeed a breakthrough for my sculpting process. It is a diptych of two abstracted figures, both made from incredibly wet clay in a fairly quick moment of great

frustration and maybe a tiny amount of desperation. I was feeling exhausted from the influx of a new country, city, school and life and had the somatic need to sort of "purge" this into some work. This resulted in figures that were purely based off feeling and not overthought. As a result, there was an element of movement and freeness that I continue to try and capture in my work today.

### What is your studio space like? Tell us about your workspace and how it supports your practice.

I have the incredible privilege of being able to work within my parents' home, of which my very handy, wood-working father had renovated for me a sweet room with many beautiful french-cleat shelves and a small space for my kiln. I love having images of pieces I find inspiring around me, so I dug through all my ceramic literature and selected my favourite works and artists to print and hang around my studio. Among the horror vacui are litterings of moquettes, test tiles, tiny sculptures and books. It is my overstimulating sanctuary of research and imagery. And snacks.

### Do you have any recent exhibitions, awards, residencies, or accomplishments you would like to share?

I'd say a recent accomplishment I'm fairly proud of would be my official transition into full-time studio work. Since returning to my home town from grad school, I've been able to establish Studio Lemieux; my little business that splits between commercial/functional ceramics and sculpture and portfolio expansion. I've been teaching workshops, selling wholesale functional pottery and participating in Artist Calls and Exhibitions. While I am still learning the intricacies of balance, I am so grateful for my current situation and the support that got me here.

*Another Rabbit Girl*, Stoneware,  
Underglaze, Glaze, Oxides, ^6  
Electric, 24" x 23" x 13", 2026





*Life's Purpose*, Porcelain, Glaze,  
^10 Soda, 7" x 3" x 3", 2025.



*Assistance Please*, Stoneware, ^10 Salt, 22" x 18" x 11", 2024.

*Fortresse*, Stoneware, Manganese Wash,  
^6 Electric, 26" x 9" x 13", 2026.



**What is on the horizon for you?  
What projects, goals, or directions  
are you excited to explore next?**

I am currently focusing on life-size figures again. I would like to have a new solo exhibition ready by the end of this year or in early 2027, so I'm working on obtaining reference imagery and models. I am also curating my first ceramic exhibition with a total of five artists, set to open this September at Co.LAB Art Gallery in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

**What keeps you returning to clay?**

Clay possesses a similarity to flesh in a lot of ways. I can spend hours attempting deep undulations, folds or creases, or the clay can fall or slump a certain way and achieve the same aesthetic. There is a mystery in this for me, a medium so close to our own physical experience, so much so that it is used in religious lore, historic texts and all sorts of fiction and non fiction. It is infinite and curious, and it has my whole heart.

**What advice would you give to  
other emerging ceramic artists?**

I remind myself of this often and it continues to either teach me things or allow solutions to arise naturally; for us who are privileged to find time to be creative, be wholly present in your practice. Allow yourself time to really feel the clay, the plasticity, the rigidity and softness of the medium. Close your eyes and let the coolness of the clay embrace your skin, even if it is just for a few minutes. Particularly in a capitalist, hustle-push culture, it is so important that one takes time to ground themselves. It might sound a little silly, and I've learned to embrace that too.

**Please also include a few quick  
details about your studio practice:**

Sculptures are built using several techniques including solid sculpting, coil building, pinch and slab methods. Works are typically fired in cone 6 Oxidation, with an odd wood-fire or two in the spring.

[@artist.katielemieux](#)



*What's in a Gaze, Stoneware, ^6 Electric, 20" x 16" x 17", 2024*

**Studio Snapshot**

**Studio location:** Thunder Bay, Ontario

**Clay body you work with most:** This is always changing because I love learning about new clay bodies! Usually mid-fire range stoneware, but I have a deep love for wood fire-porcelain and dark red, sandy terra-cotta's.

**Favourite tool:** Definitely the Kemper 210 Classic Sculpting Tool. I use that sucker for everything, from carving eyeballs to stirring coffee. (Just kidding. Mostly.)

**Dream opportunity:** Lead a demo or workshop at a clay conference and complete a residency at Archie Bray.

**Music or podcasts in the studio?** Podcasts start my day, when the coffee runs out, music keeps me going.



## GLASS ARTIST

PAZ CARDONE

### How did you first discover glass, and what drew you to working with the material?

My journey into glass began in 2020 as a way to cope with the intense stress of working in the social and education sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. When restrictions allowed, I enrolled in classes with local artists to learn the fundamentals of stained and fused glass. What began as a creative outlet soon grew into a deep passion. I was drawn to glass for its transformative nature—how heat, light, and colour interact to create something entirely new. Today, I continue exploring these possibilities in my home studio in Ajax, Ontario, working primarily with fused recycled float glass to create sustainable jewelry and functional objects for everyday use.

### Where did you receive your training, whether formal or informal?

My training has been both guided and self-directed. I began under the mentorship of local artist Wendy

Daly in Pickering, where I learned the fundamentals of stained glass and later fusing techniques using art glass such as System 96. As my curiosity grew, I continued learning through experimentation in my studio and by studying the work of other artists through articles and online resources. Later, I deepened my focus by learning from Argentine artists, including Paula Sampaolesi and Victoria Bone, whose work with enamel on float glass strongly influenced my direction and helped shape the path my work follows today.

### What inspires your work as an artist? Are there themes, ideas, or experiences that influence your pieces?

Nature is a constant source of inspiration in my work. I am drawn to organic shapes influenced by water, flowers, and natural movement. Travel also informs my aesthetic sensibility, as I am continually inspired by the diversity of forms, textures, and colours found across cultures and artistic traditions. I am especially influenced by Latin American glass artists, whose approaches to colour and material resonate deeply with my background. These influences come together in pieces that reflect both natural rhythms and cross-cultural artistic dialogue.

### Tell us about your process. How does a piece move from idea to finished work?

My process often begins with inspiration drawn from nature, travel, or cultural references, which I translate into sketches and colour studies. I then select recycled float glass—sourced from 21 Framing & Art Centre in Ajax, old windows, furniture, or donations—which is cut, washed, and layered with enamels using techniques such as brush painting, stenciling, sgraffito, splattering, and bubble painting. The pieces may undergo multiple firings at varying temperatures and



Blue Trinket Dish, 2023  
Kiln-formed recycled float glass  
8 cm x 8 cm. Image by the artist

schedules, allowing heat and gravity to create subtle textures and depth within the glass. Once completed, some elements are transformed into jewelry, combined with leather, suede, or metal to create one-of-a-kind wearable pieces.

### Is there a particular piece or body of work that feels like a breakthrough for you?

A breakthrough came when I shifted from working with art glass, such as System 96, to experimenting with recycled float glass. While art glass is a wonderful medium, discovering float glass and learning to incorporate solid and transparent enamels opened a new dimension in my work. The enamels create depth, layering, and a playful bubble effect within the glass that has become a distinctive feature of my pieces. This direction allowed me to develop a more personal visual language while staying aligned with my commitment to sustainability.

### What is your studio space like? Tell us about your workspace and how it supports your practice.

My basement studio is carefully organized to support every part of my practice. There is storage for enamels, molds, brushes, and other



Pendant, 2026  
Kiln-formed recycled float  
glass, brass and cotton  
2 cm x 3 cm  
Image by the artist



Pendant, 2025  
Kiln-formed recycled float  
glass, stainless steel and  
leather  
3 cm x 3 cm  
Image by the artist



Pendant, 2026  
Kiln-formed recycled float glass,  
stainless steel and suede  
2 cm x 3 cm  
Image by the artist



Pendant & Earring Set, 2025  
Kiln-formed recycled float  
glass and stainless steel  
3 cm x 3 cm and 2 cm x 1 cm  
Image by the artist



Pendant & Earring Set, 2025  
Kiln-formed recycled float glass and  
stainless steel  
3cm x 1 cm and 2 cm x 1 cm  
Image by the artist

materials, and dedicated workstations for cutting and washing glass, enameling, jewelry assembly, and, of course, the kiln. Beyond using recycled glass, I prioritize sustainability by maximizing kiln space, firing during off-peak hours to save energy, minimizing waste, and repurposing packaging and storage containers. This setup allows me to experiment freely, move efficiently between processes, and develop ideas while keeping environmental responsibility central to my work.

**Do you have any recent exhibitions, awards, residencies, or accomplishments you would like to share?**

I am proud to be a member of *FUSION* and a 2024 scholarship recipient. Since 2025, I have served as a Resident Artist at *Scugog Arts* (Scugog Council for the Arts) in Port Perry, Ontario, where I have become actively involved in the vibrant arts community of Durham Region. Over

the past year, I have also shared my knowledge through master classes and workshops, both in person and online. Teaching has become a meaningful part of my work, allowing me to support others in their creative journeys while deepening my own understanding of glass.

**What is on the horizon for you? What projects, goals, or directions are you excited to explore next?**

I am currently exploring new ways to introduce texture, relief, and volume into glass by incorporating mixed materials into the kiln-forming process, inspired by Argentine artists Daniela Fabián and Victoria Bone. I experiment with ceramic fiber paper and blanket, self-made clay molds, kaolin, metal, plaster, sand, botanicals, and everyday objects such as cotton string. These materials allow me to move beyond flat glass surfaces and create dimensional, tactile forms, particularly in larger projects using thicker glass (4 mm or more, often reclaimed from table tops). Looking ahead, I aim to establish a stronger presence in galleries, private collections, and the broader art market.

**What keeps you returning to glass?**

Glass keeps drawing me back because it is both meditative and endlessly engaging. Working with it allows me to be fully present while exploring its limitless possibilities. I am fascinated by the material's resilience and by the way it supports a sustainable approach to art making. There is also a magical moment when opening the kiln: each firing carries an element of surprise as the glass reveals its final form. I find myself returning to glass for the continued opportunity for experimentation, reflection, and creative expression.

**What advice would you give to other emerging glass artists?**

Don't fear mistakes! They are part of



Sushi Set, 2022  
Kiln-formed recycled float glass  
17cm x 17 cm and 7 cm x 7 cm.  
Image by the artist

learning and growth. I would also advise to experiment boldly and embrace the surprises that each kiln firing brings, letting the process and the material guide you. It's also crucial to connect with a creative community by sharing, learning, and being inspired by others. Let your materials, process, and values shape your work, and trust that your unique artistic voice will emerge naturally through curiosity, persistence, and meaningful engagement with your medium.

[@Glassworks\\_by\\_Paz](#)

## Studio Snapshot

**Studio location:** Ajax, ON

**Primary glass process:** Kiln-formed float glass

**Favourite tool:** Brushes for enamel painting

**Dream opportunity:** Feature my work in a major gallery or international exhibition

**Music in the studio:** Relaxing jazz, '80s hits, and Argentinean pop and rock radio

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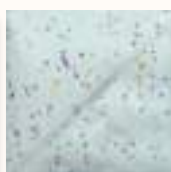
SW229  
**Mood Ring**



SW230  
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SW231  
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