



[Interview: Clay and Glass Festival to Be Held in Palo Alto, July 13, 2024](#)

ACGA Clay and Glass Festival celebrates 30 years

by Akhil Joondeph / Almanac

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Glass by artist Cory Ballis is featured at the ACGA Clay and Glass Festival. Courtesy the artist.

For 30 years, local artists and art lovers have flocked to the Palo Alto Art Center every summer for one of the Peninsula's most treasured displays of pottery, sculpture and glass arts. This year's 30th edition of the Clay and Glass Festival promises to carry this tradition forward, cultivating support for talented local creatives and building community between artists and connoisseurs.

This year's festival, taking place July 15-16, will bring over 100 artists to the Art Center to sell their work, ranging from glass sculptures to glazed ceramic vases.

"The festival will feature artists who enjoy both functional and decorative fine art, from the abstract to the figurative, and from the minimalist to the whimsical" [Mari Emori](#), Association of Clay and Glass Artists of California (ACGA) president, said. "We offer a wide range of artwork so anybody can find something that speaks to them."



Ceramic artist Mari Emori is the current president of the board of the Association of Clay and Glass Artists of California, which organizes the Palo Alto Clay and Glass festival each year. Emori creates both sculptural works, such as the piece seen at left, and functional items. Photos courtesy the artist.

The event also will feature interactive demonstrations, where visitors can watch the festival's artists at work and even try out some pottery-making and sculpting techniques themselves.

In 1993, the ACGA under the recommendation of longtime festival supporter and then-Art Center employee Diane Master brought the festival to Palo Alto, after renovations to Golden Gate Park pushed it out of San Francisco.

"I very casually said to a potter whose booth I was standing at, 'Why don't you bring it ... to Palo Alto?'" Master said. "She called me a couple of nights later and said, 'Well, how would you like to bring it down to Palo Alto?' I went to the director of the art center and said, 'What do you think about having this clay and glass festival on the premises?' He said that was fine, and so that was the beginning of it all."

Since then, the festival has become an annual tradition, bringing together a wide variety of artists and customers and creating a unique community of creatives and their supporters.

"There are people who don't miss this," Master said. "There are customers who have been coming for 30 years and have established their own relationships with the artists whose work they really follow. And so every year it's like a big reunion."

For artists, these close relationships with customers and connoisseurs are special and invaluable.

"I love seeing customers who come to this thing annually and check in with us," artist and longtime festival participant [Jan Schachter](#) said. "You get to know them a little bit more. A lot of them I stay in touch with during the year when I have my own studio sale because I live not too far away."

Additionally, Schachter also emphasized the close relationships between the many artists that have been a part of the festival for many years, and the warm community that these relationships have fostered.

"The artists that are participating obviously love to be part of it and to see artists from all over the state of California," Schachter said. "We may not see each other the whole year, so it's a great opportunity for us to gather. We always have a little artists party

Saturday night, and we get to eat and drink together for a couple of hours and that's just a real treat."



Artist Jan Schachter, seen here working on a piece, is a longtime participant at the Palo Alto Clay and Glass Festival. Schachter creates functional earthenware vessels and jugs, such as the piece on the right. Photos courtesy the artist.

Emori, an artist herself who has participated in the festival since 2018, also emphasized the welcoming nature of the festival community, crediting the support that the festival receives from its Bay Area audience to the diverse and highly skilled cast of artists that has populated the festival for the past three decades.

"If you've been there before, you could tell we are different from any other city art fair because of our high quality of artwork," Emori said. "So I think that these people love to come back and then shop from us and support artists who produce something very special and unique that speaks to them. When an artist makes a piece, they put their heart and mind into it. That piece is a unique creation and takes on its own persona. People come to our festival to find those unique pieces that speak to them. That is the value of handmade art."



Ceramics by Fred Stodder are featured at the Palo Alto Clay and Glass Festival. Courtesy the artist.

The 30th annual ACGA Clay and Glass Festival takes place July 15-16, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto. Admission is free.

acga.net/clay-and-glass-festival.



Zilber



Fleming



Aloysi/Graham



Jackson



Lozano



Emori



Alcalá

30th Annual ACGA CLAY & GLASS FESTIVAL In Palo Alto

JULY 15 & 16, 2023



Kliss



30th Annual ACGA Clay & Glass Festival in Palo Alto

July 15 & 16, 2023

Saturday & Sunday, 10 am - 5 pm

Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Rd., Palo Alto, CA

- Fine and functional art from 100+ prestigious clay and glass artists.
- Juried Show
- Valet Parking Available
- Free Admission, Gourmet coffee, food vendors!

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