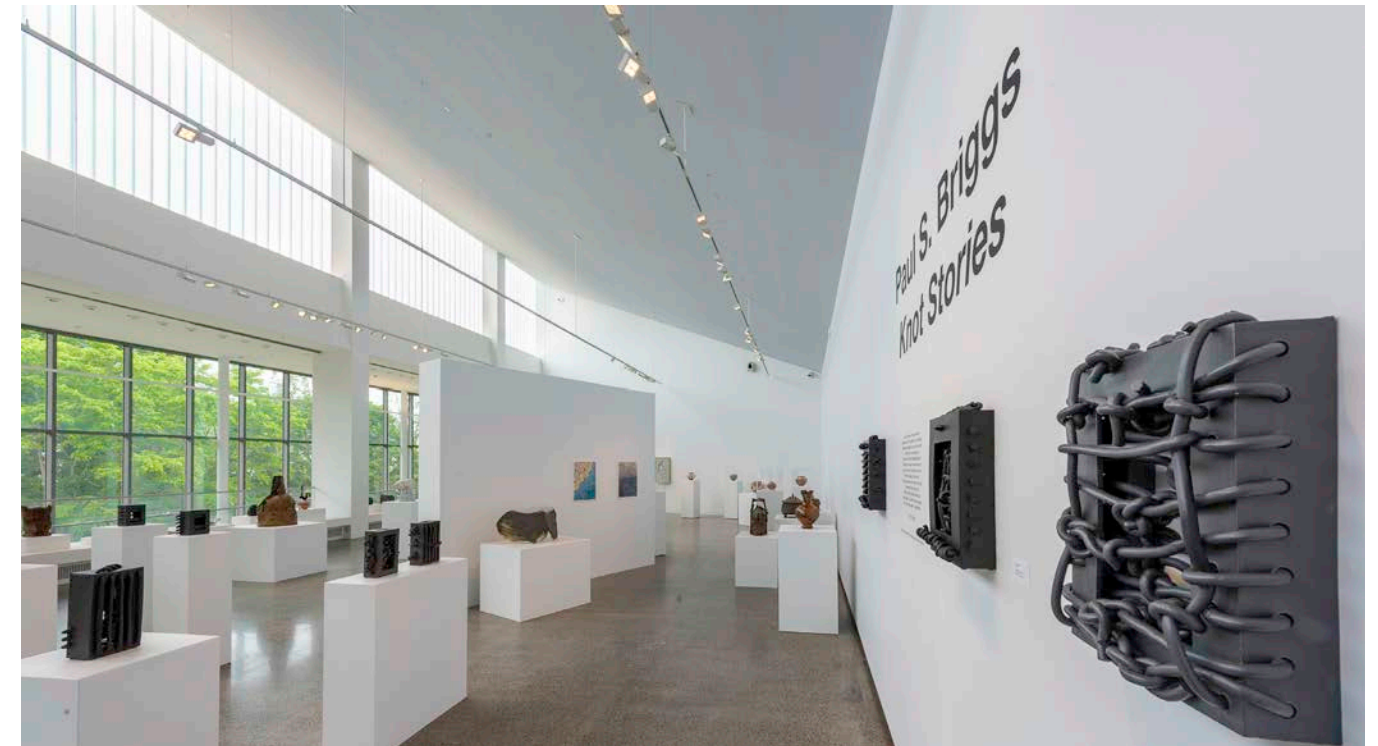


Ceramophile

Alfred Ceramic Art Museum





Cover – Paul S. Briggs, Alfred Ceramic Art Museum portrait for his exhibition Knot Stories, February 23 - July 30, 2023.

Back Cover – Reuben Nakian, Voyage to Crete, c. 1964, terracotta, colored wash, 9¾ x 11½ x 2 inches. Collection of the Reuben Nakian estate.

Facing Page – Selections: The Archive, exhibition installation of ceramic art works from the permanent collection of the Museum. Image features a vessel by Peter Voukos with sculpture, 2021, by Linda Cordell to the left and in the background to the right a Zia polychrome jar c. 1920 by an unknown artist from the Zia pueblo north central New Mexico.

Above – Exhibition Installation view of Knot Stories (close up) by Paul S. Briggs and Selections: The Archive, February 23 - July 30, 2023.

All the photography for Ceramophile is by Brian Oglesbee unless otherwise noted.

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Director's Remarks

The cover of this issue of *Ceramophile* features a photo of Paul S. Briggs who stands among his ceramic artworks, which were featured in the Museum's spring 2023 exhibition *Paul S. Briggs: Knot Stories* that opened February 23, 2023, along with *Selections: The Archive*, which was a view into the permanent collection of the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum focused on recent acquisitions in context with other major works. Please read more about these two exhibitions in this issue.

As I write this, I am thinking about Paul S. Briggs who, this fall 2023, joined the faculty of the New York State College of Ceramics School of Art and Design as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Ceramic Art. Alfred University is very fortunate to have him joining the faculty. The students in the art school will be greatly informed by his presence, artistic expertise, and devotion to education. The Museum's exhibition developed out of several conversations with Briggs beginning in 2021 which were an ongoing extension of many conversations that I have had with Paul Briggs since he studied at Alfred University 30 years ago. I am looking forward to many more of those conversations. My hardy congratulations to him on his new faculty position as he begins his life in Alfred.

The Alfred Ceramic Art Museum opened two new exhibitions on September 21, 2023. One of these *Reuben Nakian: The Impassioned Gesture* had been in the schedule since the Museum opened in 2016. The other one *Ashley Lyon: Super Real* became an opportunity in 2022 that could not be overlooked. I invited Anne Currier to co-curate both exhibitions with me. From 1984 until 2016, Anne was a professor of ceramic art at the New York State College of Ceramics, School of Art and Design at Alfred University. Anne retired as Professor Emeritus from Alfred University in 2016. It was wonderful to be back together working on these exhibitions. You can read more about these two exhibitions in this issue of *Ceramophile*.

Recently, as I was trying to reorganize my computer desktop, I came across a video conversation I had with Marlin Miller that I had completely forgotten about. His gift to the University of the extraordinary, Michael McKinnell designed Alfred Ceramic Art Museum building is a dream come true. The video was made October 28, 2016, the day the new Museum building opened with its first exhibition. During that conversation Marlin and I talked about the original vision for the Museum and Marlin credited Robert Turner for that vision quoting him as saying to Marlin, "We need to have a museum at Alfred." Thus the inspirational collaboration of a new era in ceramic art at Alfred University began to dawn. See the photo of the ribbon cutting moment in this *Ceramophile* section *From the Archive*. Seven years later the museum has mounted 21 major exhibitions, sponsored numerous scholar and artist lectures as well as published seven editions of its new expanded *Ceramophile* news magazine and increased the important holdings of the permanent collection significantly. Seven has been for centuries considered a magic number with much positive energy. We like to think of it as an auspicious number in light of our plans for the future.

The Museum's publication *William Underhill: Casting a Legacy*, in all its hard copy glory, arrived at the Museum in late August. To celebrate the publication, a book party was scheduled at the Museum November 10, 2023.

William Underhill: Casting a Legacy was published by the Museum in collaboration with Arnoldsche Art Publishers, Stuttgart, Germany. It serves as a comprehensive catalogue for the Museum's retrospective exhibition of the same title held April 20 to December 30, 2022. The book was edited by Wayne Higby, the Director and Principal Curator of the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum who also wrote the introduction. The book contains the magnificent photography of Underhill's work by his good friend Brian Oglesbee as well as an important biographical essay by Edward Lebow (AU BFA 1976). Also included is an insightful essay as a walk through the exhibition at the Museum by Mary Drach McInnes. *William Underhill: Casting a Legacy* tracks the life and career of William (Bill) Underhill who taught sculpture at NYSCC School of Art and Design at Alfred University, 1969-1997. The detailed chronology is written by Edward Lebow with numerous, historical photos restored by Brian Oglesbee. I wrote for the book's dust cover: "I am reminded of the mythic ideal of the philosophers' stone and the transmutation of base materials into an elixir of life and immortality. William Underhill's magnum opus was the result of his deeply personal devotion to his alchemical enquiry into meaning. He found that his philosophers' stone was hand and mind, emotion and spirit engaged without unnecessary interruption toward the goal of understanding the power of art."



William Underhill: Casting a Legacy, Alfred Ceramic Art Museum publication, 2023

The book is dedicated to the memory of William Underhill and to his family who have become, so lovingly, the central caretakers of that memory. William Underhill was an extraordinary artist of major importance who passed away on February 16, 2022. He lives on in his art.

In drawing to a close my Director's Remarks each *Ceramophile* concludes with a salute to those who have passed beyond the boundaries of mortal life as they have surpassed time and place to reside in our collective memory. Jack Eugene Earl, Aug. 2, 1934 - July 17, 2023, was closely connected to the Museum through exhibitions. The Museum mounted its first exhibition of his work *Jack Earl Ceramics*, January 13 - March 30, 2000. Visit the *Upcoming Exhibitions* section of this *Ceramophile* for more about Jack Earl and the Museum. Jim Melchert, December 2, 1930 - June 1, 2023, was an Alfred University Ceramic Art Division friend.

His brilliant work as a ceramic artist will, no doubt, continue to inspire countless future generations. He gave the Museum Perkins Lecture in 2007, titled *Once a Potter, Always A Potter*. Léopold L. Foulem, April 4, 1945 - February 18, 2023, will especially be remembered at Alfred University and the Museum for his provocative Dorothy Wilson Perkins Lecture *Ceramics Paradigms and Paradigms for Ceramics*, October 24, 2000, sponsored by the Museum when it was known by a different name as the Schein-Joseph International Museum of Ceramic Art at Alfred University. Ed Eberly, October 3, 1944 - September 26, 2023, was an Alfred MFA graduate of 1972. He went on to build one of the most significant careers in 20th century ceramic art. It has been artists like Ed Eberly who made Alfred Ceramics a brand of unsurpassed excellence since Chares Fergus Binns became the founding Director of the New York State School of Clay Working at Alfred

University in 1900. Here I want to mention Mike Dodson who was a good friend of the Museum and of the Alfred ceramic art summer school program. These words are from Matt Kelleher the current Division Chair of Ceramic Art: "Mike attended our summer workshops for many years, dating back to the legendary Val Cushing days. He studied ceramics with Rudy Autio in Montana. It is very sad to know Mike will not be with us this coming summer."

These ceramic artists with connections to Alfred Ceramic Art and the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum will live long in our memory as the architects of American ceramic art history, which we continue to revere and celebrate here at the Museum.

Exhibitions 2023

Two thousand twenty-three was another exceptional exhibition year for The Alfred Ceramic Art Museum. During the course of 2023 the Museum mounted four major exhibitions: *Paul Briggs: Knot Stories*; *Selections: The Archive*; *Reuben Nakian: The Impassioned Gesture* and *Ashley Lyon: Super Real*. The stories behind these exhibitions are compelling. In accordance with the timing of this Museum publication Paul S. Briggs is now an Associate Professor of Ceramic Art at the NYSCC School of Art and Design at Alfred University.



Paul Briggs: Knot Stories February 23 – July 30

Paul Briggs: Knot Stories was what the Museum terms “A Showcase Exhibition” as it was part of a series of special exhibitions under that title made possible by a generous funding gift from D. Philip Baker and David R. Bender. This exhibition featured the work of Paul S. Briggs and reveals a particularly powerful and eloquent body of ceramic sculpture inspired by Black Poetry. Briggs shared the following words about this work:

I was compelled to make the works represented in this exhibition by the suffering, injustice and violence in our country over of the last few years. I was inspired by Black Poetry which transmutes stories of suffering into songs of perseverance and also by the efforts to mitigate the impact of mass incarceration on Black lives. All of these pieces employ knots as symbols of unearned suffering and yet as climbing holds to personal liberty and social justice, for 'justice is what love looks like in the public sphere' Cornell West.

Born in Beacon, NY, Briggs grew up in the Hudson Valley region of New York. He has studied educational theory and policy, art education, theology, sculpture, and ceramics. Along the way he graduated from Alfred University with an M.S.ED degree in 1995 with concentration in ceramic art. He holds an MFA and a PhD as well.

Museum director and principal curator, Wayne Higby, comments: “Today, Briggs is one of a group of stellar, contemporary ceramic artists doing highly personal and momentous work. The Museum is honored to have the opportunity to exhibit his remarkable sculpture.” Read more about *Knot Stories* and *Black Poetry* in the *Backstory* section of this *Ceramophile*.

Top: Knot Stories, exhibition opening, February 23, 2023. Left to right Hope Briggs, Paul S. Briggs and Anne Currier, professor emerita of ceramic art, NYSCC Alfred University.

Bottom: ACAM installation of the exhibition Knot Stories, February 23 - July 30, 2023



Selections: The Archive February 23 – July 30

Selections: The Archive was a view into the permanent collection of the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum focused on recent acquisitions in context with other major works. The Alfred Ceramic Art Museum at Alfred University houses nearly 8,000 ceramic objects ranging from small pottery shards recovered from ancient civilizations to modern and contemporary ceramic art. The primary mission of the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum is to collect, preserve, conserve, research, interpret and exhibit ceramic art for aesthetic and educational purposes. This exhibition along with *Knot Stories* by Paul S. Briggs revealed art of the current moment with windows into the flow of history.

Recent acquisitions include the magnificent *Head with Colored Paper* by Gertraud Möhwald, the seminal *Racing Ghost Jar* by Jim Melchert, *Caged Birds* by Paul S. Briggs and Patti Warashina's *After the Catch*. Also new to the museum's collection are extraordinary works by Judith Salomon, Linda Cordell, Nancy Carman, Lidya Buzio, Mary Frank, and Anne Currier. *Boat-Genoa-Ohio* by Jack Earl was on view along with two pieces by the legendary Fred Bauer. A major piece by Howard Kottler was on view that many will recognize. Closer to the influential history of Alfred ceramics, on view was a new to the Museum ceramic vessel by Ted Randall and two examples of the wonderful drawings by William Parry that were a recent gift to the Museum from his daughters, Amanda Parry Oglesbee, Wyn Parry Frechette and Megan Parry Brill.

List of Artists in the Exhibition:

Tony Baker, Fred Bauer, Charles Fergus Binns, Paul S. Briggs, Lidya Buzio, Nancy Carman, Margeaux Claude, Linda Cordell, Anne Currier, Val Cushing, Jack Earl, Ruth Easterbrook, Lucas Easton, Ken Ferguson, Kelcy Chase Folsom, Mary Frank, Nick Geankoplis, Lyla Goldstein, Lea Griggs, Chris Gustin, Jackie Head, Tony Hepburn, Liet Heringa and Maarten van Kalsbeek, Will Hinton, Satoru Hoshino, Chunmao Huang, Howard Kottler, Jean-Pierre Larocque, YehRim Lee, Hongwei Li, Corwyn Lund, Jim Melchert, Gertraud Möhwald, Fannie Nampeyo, Jolie Ngo, William Parry, Pravoslav Rada, Ted Randall, Stanley Rosen, Judith Salomon, Erin Smith, Tom Spleth, Irma Starr, George Timock, Kaneshige Toyo, Robert Turner, Joan Tweedy, Peter Voulkos, Patti Warashina, Nick Weddell, George Wesp, Brian Westrick, Russel Wright, Malcolm Wright, Kelsey Zwarka.



Bottom: Howard Kottler, Message Gestures Pot, 1970, earthenware, glaze, decals, luster, 28 x 14½ x 5½ inches. Roger D. Corsaw Collection, Museum Purchase, ACAM 2022.5

Top: Selections: The Archive installation view

Exhibitions 2023

Reuben Nakian: The Impassioned Gesture

September 21 - December 30

Curated by Anne Currier and Wayne Higby

Reuben Nakian: 1897-1986

Reuben Nakian was born in Queens, NY, to Armenian immigrant parents. As a young man Reuben Nakian could draw. His parents encouraged him. At the age of 12 he discovered New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Around that same time, he acquired a copy of Bulfinch's *Mythology*, originally published in 1867. Greek Myth became a touch stone. At 15 Nakian graduated from high school. He took a job in New York determined to find his way to being a professional artist. When he died at the age of 89, the *New York Times* acclaimed him as "one of the most distinguished American sculptors of the 20th Century" (*New York Times* obituary, 12/5/86).

Reuben Nakian is best known for his large-scale bronze sculptures. However, Nakian left for posterity a large, highly significant body of work in the ceramic medium. It is this less recognized, but unquestionably important work the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum celebrated with the exhibition *Reuben Nakian: The Impassioned Gesture*. In a 1981 interview for the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art speaking of ceramics Nakian remarks: "You don't have to cast it. When you cast, things are lost. You put it in the kiln, and it has got the thumbprints. They are still there. It is a great medium." Early in his career Nakian apprenticed with legendary sculptor Paul Manship, perhaps best known for his sculpture, *Prometheus*, at Rockefeller Center, NYC, who modeled with plasteline, a non-drying clay not suitable for firing. Nakian said: "Clay has got life. Plasteline is alright, but it is not life. Clay is the real thing."



Reuben Nakian: The Impassioned Gesture installation view

Anne Currier, curatorial statement:

The ceramic and bronze sculptures selected for the exhibition, Reuben Nakian: The Impassioned Gesture, conjure parallel links to 18th c. porcelain figurines. The similarity of their dimensions and small scale insinuates their presence within a domestic space, conducive to discovering the lyricism and diversity of their figural compositions and narrative allusions.

Nakian's ceramic sculptures reveal the agility of his hands working in wet clay. Using only his fingers and a few tools, primarily a knife, Nakian reconciles representation and abstraction. Transitions of incised lines, pinched surfaces, rolled coils, masses and voids, pokes and punches reveal the audacity and fluency of his touch to capture the essence of a fleeting moment. The choreographic dynamism of Reuben Nakian's small sculptures and ink drawings transcend generations and styles, affirming the rhythmic grammar of gesture and its power to delight.

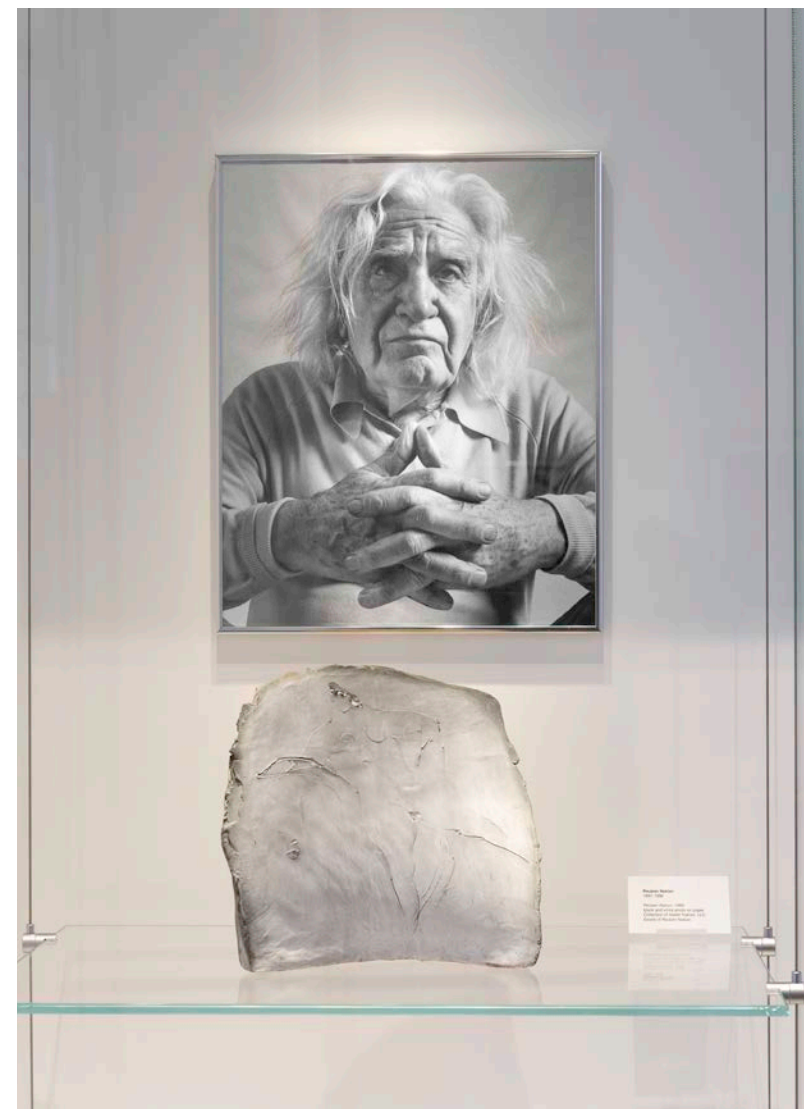
Wayne Higby, curatorial statement:

The vigorous and eloquent gesture so remarkably manifest in Reuben Nakian's ceramic work begins with drawing, the matrix of his emergence as a world-class artist. Gesture became Nakian's signature transferred to the immediacy of the ink brush and to the tool and the clay.

His understanding of the clay is heartfelt. Timing is the essence of working in clay. Clay is often too wet, too soft, too dry, too hard. Knowing exactly when to make a move is a twofold gift of empathy and experience. Reuben Nakian's art resonates with enlightened intuition arising from a merging of his vitality and the material at hand. This is most constant, personal, and substantially evident in his ceramic work.

Anne Currier is an internationally recognized ceramic sculptor and professor emerita of Alfred University. She taught at the New York State College of Ceramics, School of Art and Design at Alfred University from 1985 until her retirement in 2016. Her website can be visited at annecurrierceramics.com.

Wayne Higby is the current director and principal curator of the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum and a professor of ceramic art at the School of Art and Design at Alfred University since 1973. A retrospective *Infinite Place: The Ceramic Art of Wayne Higby* was held at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C. in 2013. It was accompanied by a book of the same title published by Arnoldsche, Stuttgart, Germany.



Reuben Nakian: The Impassioned Gesture installation view



Co-Curators Anne Currier and Wayne Higby

Exhibitions 2023

Ashley Lyon: Super Real

September 21 - December 30

Curated by Anne Currier and Wayne Higby

Ashley Lyon's words "Super Real" used in the title of the exhibition are carefully chosen and revealing. Real is one thing: Actual, Nonfictional, Factual. Then add the word super: Super Actual, Super Nonfictional, Super Factual. Is this then the real beyond the real?

The following is an excerpt from the essay *Ashley Lyon: New Territory* by Mary Drach McInnes.

Ashley Lyon's current work draws on her recent parenthood to create unexpected narratives. She highlights aspects of maternal life—some celebrated, some brutal—that she often combines in a single sculpture. She explains,

"Turning my attention to motherhood's rich and complex territory of changes that intertwine the psychological and physiological, my recent work seeks to reveal the simultaneity of contradictory emotions and thoughts inherent in the birth of a mother. I hope to visually illuminate the complexity of the mother experience, breathtaking, beautiful, confusing, and grueling all at once."

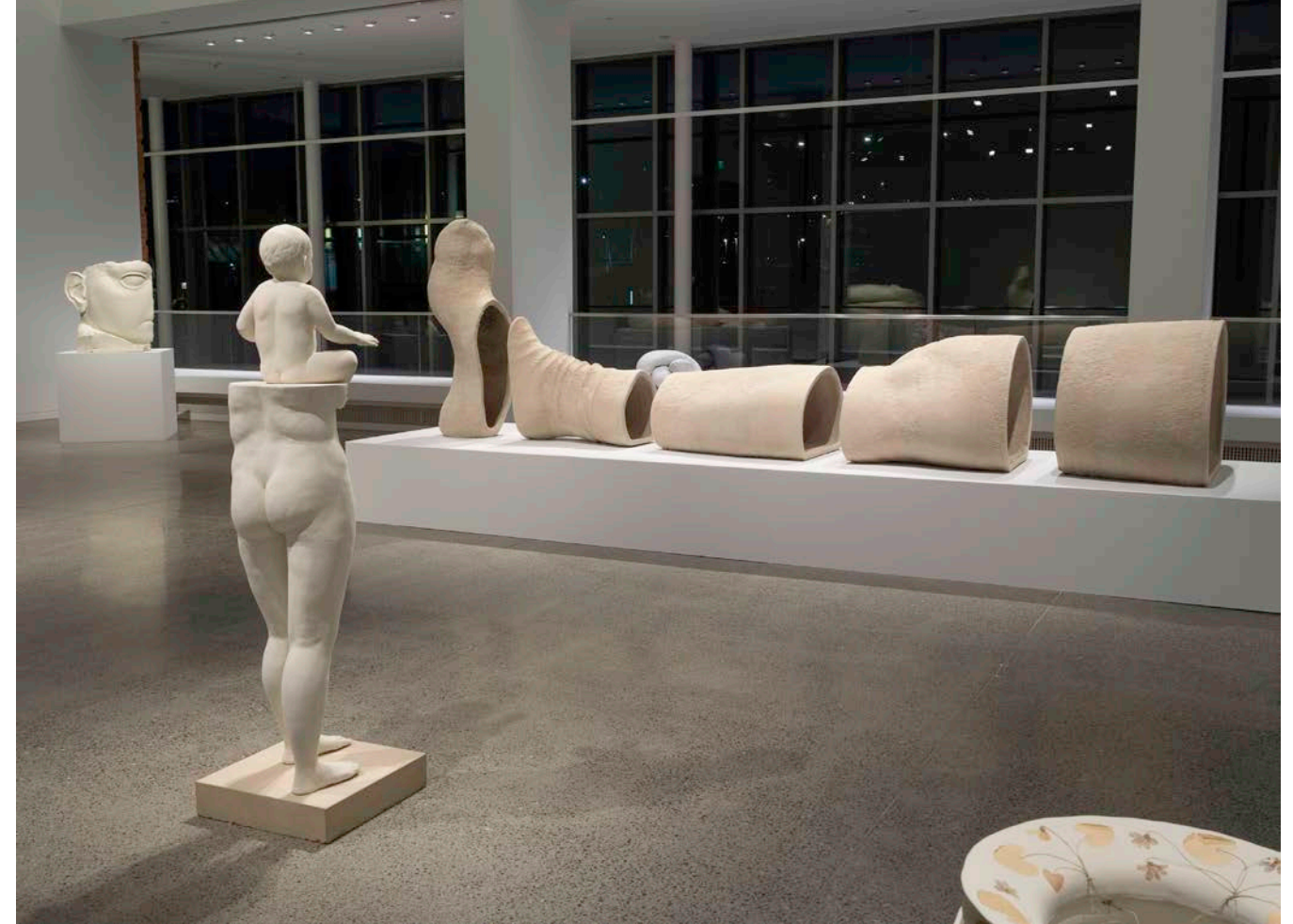
In pursuing this inquiry, Lyon is part of a growing number of women artists and writers who address the contradictions of maternity. Her figurative sculpture offers us complex narratives of contemporary motherhood by using the conventions of realism, then upending them through the elements of scale and fragmentation. Through her persistent and passionate engagement—the need to describe her child's physical presence and her own emotional reality, Ashley Lyon creates work that delights and provokes us.

Ashley Lyon received an MFA in Sculpture + Extended Media from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2011 and a BFA in Ceramics from the University of Washington in 2006. Lyon has been awarded residencies at the Archie Bray Foundation, Anderson Ranch Arts Center, the European Ceramic Workcentre and Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts. She is a 2023 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellow in Craft/Sculpture from The New York Foundation for the Arts and an Elizabeth Greenshields Grant recipient (2011 and 2014). She is currently an Associate Professor of Art at New Jersey City University and lives in Newburgh, New York.

Mary Drach McInnes holds a Ph.D. in Art History and is a recently retired Professor of Art History at the New York State College of Ceramics, School of Art and Design at Alfred University focusing on sculpture. Recently, she contributed to the book, 2023, *William Underhill: Casting a Legacy*. McInnes has served as a consultant to the Nanette Laitman documentation project for the Archives of American Art. Her essay on Ashley Lyon's work will be published by the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum in the upcoming catalogue documenting Ashley Lyon's exhibition *Ashley Lyon: Super Real*. Mary Drach McInnes's website can be visited at www.marymcinnes.com.



Ashley Lyon: Super Real
installation view



Ashley Lyon: Super Real installation view

Anne Currier, curatorial statement:

The exhibition, Ashley Lyon: Super Real, offers a selection of Lyon's sculptures that portray the artist's dual identities as woman and mother envisioned through an autobiographical lens.

An encounter with one of Lyon's sculptures is inescapably palpable. For Ashley Lyon, ceramic materials and construction techniques are tantamount to meaning and metaphor. Her large, unfired clay sculptures share elements of fabrication, segmentation and scale traditionally associated with architectural terracotta units whose individual characteristics are fully revealed when dislodged from a building's façade. The wet clay sculptures of Lyon's cropped hands and the partial face of her daughter, Vivian, capture her keen recollections of cherished moments. Fabricated specifically for this exhibition, their size approaches the monumental, proportionate to the museum's high ceiling and open floor space. Conversely, Lyon's smaller sculptures depict objects of personal significance that simulate human proportions and activities. Proximity induces a focused awareness of subtle details that overrides a consciousness of peripheral vision. The non-reflective, monochromatic surfaces of Lyon's sculptures exude a subliminal softness that absorbs our gaze and induces memories of touch.

Ashley Lyon is irrefutably omnipresent in this exhibition. With impressive tenacity, she has negotiated materials and engineering to create sculptures that openly invite us into the privacy of their domains.

Wayne Higby, curatorial statement:

Ashley Lyon is a gifted artist and a highly skilled sculptor. Her ability to handle the materials and processes of ceramics is unquestionably impressive. However, what I admire most is her artistic integrity. Ashley Lyon's exceptional artistic skills are rooted in a rare ability to omit disrupting values, trends, and the latest genres of artistic fashion. In the midst of inevitable artistic doubt, she does not compromise authentic vision. With refreshing candor, she reveals wise, compelling insight into the veracity of life. Her sculpture is a vivid engagement with experiential truth that can only be accessed through art.

Visitors



From left: Mark Danes, Vice President for Marketing and Communications Alfred University with ACAM's Curator of Collections Susan Kowalczyk. staff photo



Jim and Carmen Brush viewing the Museum archives. staff photo



Hope Briggs visited the exhibition Selections: The Archive. The camera caught her admiring a Laguna Pueblo polychrome pottery jar c. 1940, which was a gift to the Museum from David and Ann Shaner. staff photo



Bill Giese the Museum's Operations Manager welcomes visitors from Canterbury Woods retirement community, Buffalo, NY. staff photo



From left: Brendan McMahon, Kevin McMahon, Elizabeth McMahon, Ashley Lyon and Vivian with Ian McMahon, Mark Epstein. staff photo



From left: Alfred University President Mark Zupan with Paul S. Briggs. staff photo



From left: Robert P. Metzger, Anne Currier, Paul Nakian, Wayne Higby, Marlin Miller. staff photo

Upcoming Exhibitions

Bill and Jack and Other Friends

February 22 – July 31, 2024

Bill and Jack and Other Friends honors the late Jack Earl (Aug. 2, 1934-July 17, 2023), a major figure in American contemporary ceramic art. ACAM recently received eight of Earl's sculptures as gifts to the Museum's permanent collection from the Crown Equipment Corporation. This major gift forms the basis for the exhibition.

Earl was born near the small town of Uniopolis, Ohio. His sculpture celebrating the American vernacular of the Ohio mid-west became central to his career as an artist. Acts of daily life featuring a fictional, composite figure of the ball cap-wearing "Bill" reveal a romantic idealism in Earl's work associated with common place wisdom.

"Other Friends" in the Museum's exhibition title refers to selections from the Museum's permanent collection --- functional, object or sculpture --- that complement the art of Jack Earl and offer a continuing opportunity for the Museum's audience to see into the holdings of the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum at Alfred University.



Jack Earl (1934-2023), *It's About Time*, 1983, ceramic, painted, 16¾ x 21 x 17½ inches, Gift of Crown Equipment Corporation, ACAM, 2023.21

Constructing Radiance: Sculpture by Li Hongwei

September 26 – December 29, 2024

Li Hongwei (b.1980) is a contemporary artist. He works and lives in Beijing and New York. His works have been acquired by The British Museum, Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, The Art Institute of Chicago, The Israel Museum, Harvard Art Museums, Philadelphia Museum of Art. His works have been exhibited in a number of international art institutions, including the National Art Museum of China, The US Embassy, The New Mexico Museum of Art, The Fox Art Gallery of the University of Pennsylvania, The Art Institute of Chicago, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and The Dublin Castle, Ireland. Hongwei holds a bachelor's degree in sculpture from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing and a Master of Fine Arts degree in ceramic art, 2007, from the New York State College of Ceramics at the Alfred University, Alfred, NY.



Li Hongwei in his studio Beijing, China, December 2022.
photo Li Hongwei studio

Recent Acquisitions



Ashley Lyon, *Lovers' Knot*, 2021, ceramic, terra sigillata, 15 x 24 x 18 inches, Museum purchase, ACAM 2024.1

Recent Acquisitions continued

The Museum has been fortunate to be on the minds of numerous collectors. Recently, the Crown Equipment Corporation of New Bremen, Ohio offered the Museum a selection of pieces by the renowned ceramic artist Jack Earl, 1934-2023. The company's generosity was extraordinary allowing the Museum to choose from works of considerable range. The Museum acquired eight pieces, which has inspired the upcoming exhibition *Bill and Jack and Other Friends*. See the *Upcoming Exhibitions* section of this *Ceramophile*.

In addition to these important pieces of ceramic sculpture the Museum purchased a number of pieces from the dispersal of the Robert L. Pfannebecker collection. A selection of these works is featured here. Two of the pieces are by Fred Bauer who was a major force in ceramic art of the 1960s-70s. He was one of the most respected potters of his time. With astonishing skill he developed his work to include some brilliant ceramic sculpture and works that teased irreverently at ceramic art and pop culture. Bauer's pieces in the Museum collection dated, 1966, are classic examples from his early period.

This edition of *Ceramophile* features a story about the fall 2023 exhibition *Ashley Lyon: Super Real*. See *Exhibitions 2023* in this issue. From an impressive body of work the Museum purchase Lyon's *Lovers' Knot* from the exhibition. Lyon is a sculptor of remarkable gifts as a maker and conceptualist of biographical intent. *Lovers' Knot* is a mysterious-magical piece. Its illusionistic nature projects a formidable puzzle---how did the artist create that object? It seems so real yet clearly impossible as it is fired ceramic and definitely hard not soft like the knotted pillow it resembles. This visual and mental conundrum is poetically revealed and intellectually layered by its title *Lovers' Knot*.



Jack Earl, *Boat-Genoa-Ohio*, 1971, glazed porcelain, 5 1/8 x 8 1/4 x 6 inches, Museum purchase, ACAM 2022.6ACAM 2022.6



Jack Earl (1934-2023), Humphrey Bogart, 2002, ceramic, paint, 27½ x 23 x 14 inches,
Gift of Crown Equipment Corporation, ACAM 2023.26



Jack Earl, Two Dog Men, 1992, ceramic, paint, 11½ x 13 x 10 inches,
Gift of Crown Equipment Corporation, ACAM 2023.25



Jack Earl, *It is True but only for a moment. Morning comes with dew. It is time to go.*, 1988, 24 x 16½ x 16 inches, Gift of Crown Equipment Corporation, ACAM 2023.22, front view



Jack Earl, *It is True but only for a moment. Morning comes with dew. It is time to go.*, 1988, 24 x 16½ x 16 inches, Gift of Crown Equipment Corporation, ACAM 2023.22, back view



*Fred Bauer, Bottle, circa 1966, stoneware, glazed, 21¼ x 21¼ x 7 inches.
Roger D. Corsaw Collection, Museum purchase, ACAM 2022.8*



*Fred Bauer, Lidded Jar, circa 1966, stoneware, glazed, 23½ x 11½ inches.
Roger D. Corsaw Collection, Museum purchase, ACAM 2022.7*

Museum as Classroom



Matt Kelleher Chair, Division of Ceramic Art, Associate Professor of Ceramic Art, NYSCC School of Art and Design at Alfred University with his class in the Museum archive. staff photo



Above: Susan Kowalczyk, ACAM Curator of Collections and Director of Research with Paul S. Briggs and his students in the Museum archive. staff photo

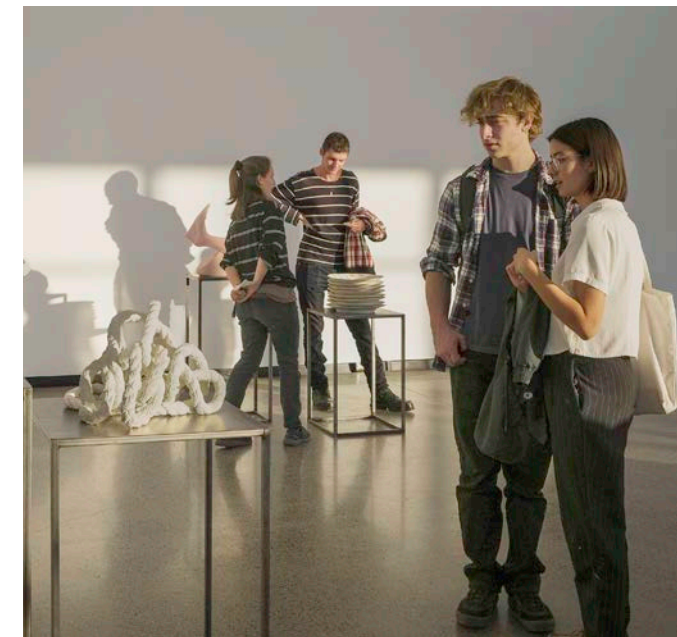
Left: Paul S. Briggs, Assistant Professor of Ceramic Art, NYSCC School of Art and Design at Alfred University with his class in the Museum archive. staff photo



Anne Currier, Professor Emerita of Ceramic Art NYSCC, School of Art and Design at Alfred University offers gallery talk to Museum visitors in connection with her co-curatorship of the exhibition Reuben Nakian: The Impassioned Gesture. staff photo



Ashley Lyon offers students of the NYSCC, School of Art and Design at Alfred University at a gallery talk about her work in connection with her one-person exhibition Ashley Lyon: Super Real. staff photo



Alfred University students focus on conversation about the sculpture of Ashley Lyon in the context of her exhibition Ashley Lyon: Super Real. staff photo

The Ackerman Internship, Fall 2023

Alfred Ceramic Art Museum awards Jerome Ackerman Internship.

The Alfred Ceramic Art Museum awarded the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum at Alfred University's Ackerman Internship to Gabrielle Williamson for the spring semester and to Emily Woo for the fall semester, 2023.

The Jerome Ackerman Internship is a paid internship that supports the Museum's mission as an educational resource for Alfred University students. The Ackerman Internship offers undergraduate students from the School of Art and Design in-depth exposure to museum professional practices as well as deep insight to creative processes across history. The Internship is also designed to further each intern's professional goals while helping the Museum address its multifaceted organizational needs. Each intern works directly with the Museum's Curator of Collections and Director of Research Susan Kowalczyk.

Laura Ackerman-Shaw established The Jerome Ackerman Internship at the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum in honor of her father, Jerome "Jerry" Ackerman (MFA '52) a designer-craftsman whose artistic collaboration with his wife, Evelyn Ackerman, was at the heart of California's Midcentury Modernism movement. The couple established the Jenev Design Studio in West Los Angeles, and as highly visible artists participated in every edition of the influential California Design shows at the Pasadena Art Museum, from 1954 to 1976.

Applications for the Ackerman Internship are accepted in person at the Museum's front desk or by email – applications must include a letter of interest, resume and two professional letters of recommendation. Applicants should have good organizational skills with strong attention to detail as well as good written and oral communication skills and a proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite and Adobe Photoshop. For additional information, call the Museum office at 607-871-2421.



Gabrielle Williamson receives the Ackerman Internship for spring 2023. staff photo

Gabrielle Williamson

The Alfred Ceramic Art Museum at Alfred University wishes to congratulate Gabrielle Williamson the spring semester 2023 recipient of the Museum's Jerome Ackerman Internship.

Williamson was a senior in the School of Art and Design at Alfred University majoring in Art History and Art Theory. She graduated with her Bachelor of Science degree in May this year. Originally from Utica, New York she was a member of the National Honor Society at Holland Patent High School, Holland, NY. Williamson also had an early exposure to museum work by taking classes and job shadowing at the Munson-William-Proctor Art Institute in Utica, New York.

Williamson wrote in her application for the ACAM position: "I am pleased to be applying to the part-time Jerome Ackerman Internship position at the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum. This exposure to the museum allows in-depth experiences with the professional practices and the creative processes across history that I have been searching for. My main goal for my career is being an art historian and a curator. New windows will open for me starting with this position. I am confident and excited that this internship opportunity can help shape the future for me with my field."

Alfred Ceramic Art Museum director Wayne Higby comments that when he asked Gabrielle what she liked best about the internship. She answered by first mentioning the inspiration she has received by working closely with the Museum's Curator of Collections Susan Kowalczyk. She then explained how much she enjoyed and learned from helping to prepare the nearly 100 labels for the artwork in the current exhibitions *Selections: The Archive* and *Knot Stories*. Higby explains that for many this work would be tedious. It requires in-depth research into the collection that only a true scholarly mind would relish.

Emily Woo

Emily Woo, a third-year student in the School of Art and Design, New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University with a concentration in ceramic art, was awarded the Jerome Ackerman Internship at the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum for the fall semester 2023.

Woo is a past recipient of the Willian D. Parry Memorial Scholarship from Alfred University as well as the Fred H. Gertz Award for excellence in writing. She also is studying for her master's degree in Business Administration.

"The Alfred Ceramic Art Museum has been a principal source of inspiration for me since I began attending Alfred University," Woo wrote in her letter of application for the Ackerman internship. Her many interests involve the exploration of art museum operations including curatorial, archival, and administrative dynamics.

She is enjoying her behind-the-scenes work at the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum, according to Wayne Higby, ACAM director. During the recent installation of the ACAM exhibition *Ashley Lyon: Super Real*, Woo was excited to meet Lyon as well as help with the installation. Higby says she worked directly with Lyon, helping to uncrate the work and participate in the logistical effort necessary to the installation of several large sculptural pieces. Additionally, Woo worked in the archive to prepare the labeling system for the exhibition.



Emily Woo receives Ackerman Internship for fall 2023. staff photo

From the Archive



From left, Wayne Higby, Marlin Miller, Ginger Miller, and AU President Mark Zupan cut the ribbon at the inaugural opening reception for the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum on October 28, 2016. photo Rick McLay

Staff Profiles



Top left to right: Daniela Murphy and Bryce Keaton; Center left to right: Ashlin Cheyenne and Ben Deutsch



Susan Kowalczyk, Curator of Collections and Director of Research. Staff photo



Ashlin Cheyenne helps Bill Giese to install Glaze Drawing No 111 by Margeaux L. Claude, Alfred MFA 2022, for the Museum's exhibition Selections: The Archive, February 21 – July 30, 2023. Staff photo

Daniela Murphy

Graduated from the NYSCC School of Art and Design Alfred University with her BFA in 2022. While a student she curated a Group Show for Turner Gallery titled *Constructing [Gender] Identity*. She also worked for the theater costume shop and designed costumes for *Suzette Who Set to Sea*. She oversaw a team of 46 work-study students as the Covid-19 front desk manager. Subsequently Daniela was hired to be an admissions attendant for the Museum.

Kenneth Keaton

Kenneth came to work for the Museum with a background in English and Film Studies including study in the areas of Literary and Critical Theory, Creative Writing and Philosophy. Previously he worked as Assistant Production Coordinator for No Other Way Productions, Los Angeles, CA and Assistant to the Production Coordinator for *Songland*, Season 2 on NBC.

Ashlin Cheyenne

Ashlin graduated from Penn State University in 2017 with a degree in Structural Engineering and in 2021 with a BFA degree with Ceramic Concentration from Towson University. Her multiplex, can do, approach to her Museum job came from a background that included inventory stocking, UPS truck loader as well as imaging technician. As a Museum attendant she often worked behind the scenes as an assistant to the Museum's preparator.

Benjamin Deutsch

Ben will graduate in May 2024 from the NYSCC School of Art and Design at Alfred University. Ben has been working toward his BFA with a concentration in ceramic art. He grew up in Alfred and is happy to say that both his parents are successful artists who graduated from Alfred University. He plans on a career in the ceramic arts and is well on his way to his own success as an artist.

Susan Kowalczyk

Susan Kowalczyk often talks about labels and how important they are as information for the Museum's audience. Labels are one of Kowalczyk's serious concerns with important curatorial-philosophical thought behind them in consideration of record keeping and content pertaining to the archives of the Museum.

Bill Giese

Bill Giese doubles as the Museum's Operations Manager and as the Museum's Preparator. This requires multi-tasking with much attention to detail. Giese exhibits a deep well of patience which is, no doubt, the key to his ability to keep the Museum running and the exhibitions installed with distinction.

Backstory



Paul S. Briggs, Hyperbole: Knot Story, 2022, glazed stoneware, 18¼ x 15¼ x 6 inches.

The following is a preamble to a sharing here in the *Backstory* selections of the Black Poetry that inspired the recent work of Paul S. Briggs. Briggs writes of the sequence of sculpture made beginning with *Cell Personae* and *Poetic Justice*, 2021, a body of work leading up to the Museum's exhibition *Knot Stories*:

"The *Poetic Justice* series came about as a way to look for hope and strength during these difficult times and their impact on people of color. It is my way to find courage in light of my ongoing work concerning legal violence and incarceration, the disproportionate number of people of color impacted by the pandemic, and the awakening the siege on the capital brought about. What was especially troubling was the different treatment in which people protesting under the banner of #Black Lives Matter received versus those flying banners of white supremacy. What became clear for me was the degree to which Black Poetry includes so much pain and power."

(The Museum was fortunate to acquire a piece from the *Poetic Justice* series when it was shown at the Lucy Lacoste Gallery, Concord, Massachusetts, in the exhibition *Intuitive Responses: Poetic Justice in Clay* held in 2021. The Museum acquired Paul S. Briggs' sculpture, *Caged Birds*, which was inspired by Maya Angelou's renowned poem, *Caged Bird*.)

Briggs wrote the following additional words about *Knot Stories*:

"*Poetic Justice*, *Cell Personae* and *Knot Stories* make up three series of works represented in this exhibition under the title of *Knot Stories*. *Knot Stories* looks to our use of language rooted in Protestant Reformation thinking about material shapes, living images and rhetoric of prejudice against shapes as ideas. *Poetic Justice* looks to Black Poetry."

As part of the programming for the exhibition *Knot Stories* the Museum held a poetry reading during which Briggs and students from the NYSCC School of Art and Design at Alfred University participated.

Among those poems read are three printed here, which can be found in the public domain.



Paul S. Briggs, *Celebrate: Poetic Justice*, 2022, glazed stoneware, 11½ x 10½ x 4 inches.

The poems of Lucille Clifton are important to Briggs. In particular her poem, "won't you celebrate with me" from *Book of Light*. Copyright © 1993 by Lucille Clifton. Paul writes: "Lucille Clifton's *Celebrate* is quite special....she was from Buffalo, NY." Clifton (June 27, 1936 – February 13, 2010) was born and raised in Depew, NY, part of the Buffalo-Niagara metropolitan area.

Caged Bird

A free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
and dips his wing
in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky.
But a bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
can seldom see through
his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and
his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.
The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.
The free bird thinks of another breeze
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright lawn
and he names the sky his own
But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.
The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

Maya Angelou - 1928-2014

The Negro Speaks of Rivers

I've known rivers:
I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than
the flow of human blood in human veins.
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.
I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.
I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.
I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln
went down to New Orleans, and I've seen its muddy
bosom turn all golden in the sunset.
I've known rivers:
Ancient, dusky rivers.
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

Langston Hughes - 1902-1967

American Heartbreak

I am the American heartbreak—
The rock on which Freedom
Stumped its toe—
The great mistake
That Jamestown made
Long ago

Langston Hughes - 1902-1967

Paul S. Briggs offers the additional poems that inspired him as follows:

Gay, Ross. (2020) *Be Holding*. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh.

Poems in this book: This is one long epic poem by which the piece *Gravity* is inspired.

Ward, Jerry W, ed. (1997) *Trouble the Water: 250 Years of African-American Poetry*. Penguin Books, New York.

Poems in this book: "Power" by Audre Lorde, p. 284: "Lift Every Voice" by James Weldon Johnson, p 75.

Young, Kevin, ed. (2020) *African American Poetry: 250 Years of Struggle and Song*. Library of America Press, New York.

Poems in this book: "won't you celebrate with me" by Lucille Clifton

Friends of the Museum

Listed below are individuals and organizations who renewed, increased, returned or joined as new members, contributed to an acquisition, memorial, or capital campaign fund, provided in-kind services or contributed ceramic work to the permanent collection, from the period of March 1, 2022 – February 28, 2023.

It is not too late for you to join and help us provide a broader funding base for the Museum. Your membership contribution helps to fund our changing exhibition program, care of the permanent collection, and special educational events.

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Choichiro and Nanako Yatani

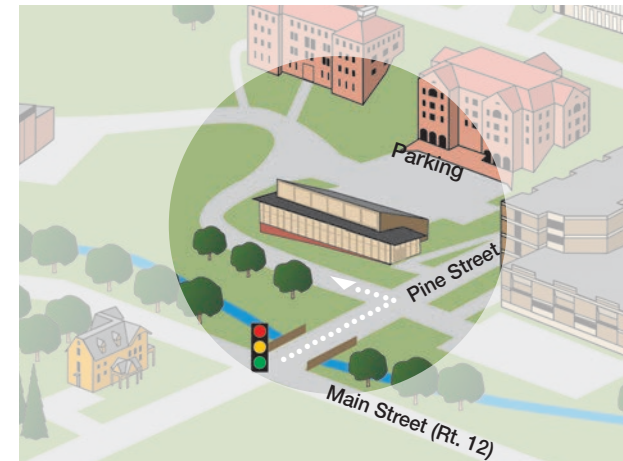
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Directions

From Interstate 86, Exit 33 in Almond, follow signs to Alfred University. From Main Street in Alfred, turn left onto Pine Street at the traffic light, proceed across the bridge over the stream of consciousness and turn left immediately. The Museum will be on the right, and parking is behind the Museum.

Hours

Tuesday	10am – 5pm
Wednesday	10am – 5pm
Thursday	10am – 5pm
Friday	10am – 5pm
Saturday	10am – 5pm
Sunday	10am – 5pm

Closed Mondays and major holidays.

Please call for exhibition information and closing announcements.

Admission

\$7	Adults (18-54)
\$5	55+
\$3	Local Residents, non-Alfred students with ID, alumni, AAA and Military
FREE	17 & Under, AU and A-State faculty, staff and students (with ID)

Admission is FREE for Museum members, ESMRP and NARM members year-round.

Tours: Group tours should be scheduled two weeks in advance.

Cameras: Photography is permitted only with handheld cameras and electronic flash in permanent collection exhibit areas only. No photos may be taken of traveling exhibitions. No photographs taken in the Museum may be reproduced, distributed, or sold without permission from the Museum.

Checkroom: All umbrellas, parcels and bags must be checked

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Design: Christine Stadler

Text: Wayne Higby

Editor: Susan Kowalczyk

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@alfredceramicartmuseum
607-871-2421
ceramicsmuseum.alfred.edu
ceramicsmuseum@alfred.edu

For membership information, please visit us at ceramicsmuseum.alfred.edu or see our Membership Card




Alfred Ceramic Art Museum

Alfred University

1 Saxon Drive

Alfred, NY 14802

ceramicmuseum.alfred.edu