

Mari Emori

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BIOGRAPHY

I'm a ceramic sculptor based in Berkeley, California, creating bold, abstract forms with richly textured surfaces. My *Drop Series* draws from the beauty and power of nature—a single drop symbolizing life, the environment, and our deep connection to the natural world. Building on that theme, my *Portal Series* explores the transformative nature of change—whether chosen or unexpected. Each piece features a central opening, a symbolic portal that evokes both uncertainty and possibility. Through this work, I invite reflection on time, transition, and our place within the greater rhythm of life.

I grew up in Japan and moved to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1989. My creative path began in Kyoto with kimono design, then evolved through floral, interior, and graphic design before I found clay in 2014. Each of these disciplines continues to inform my ceramic practice through a shared foundation of precision, visual storytelling, and aesthetic sensitivity. Time spent hiking and observing nature is essential to my process, offering endless inspiration in its patterns, textures, and quiet wisdom.

My sculptures have received notable recognition, including *Selections from the Crocker-Kingsley Exhibition 2025*—one of just seven works chosen from more than 2,500 submissions—and First Place at *Off Center 2023*, an International Ceramic Art Competition. My work has been exhibited at leading museums and art centers such as the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, the de Young Museum in San Francisco, The Clay Studio in Philadelphia, and the Workhouse Arts Center in Virginia.

I currently serve as Board President of the Association of Clay and Glass Artists of California (ACGA), a statewide nonprofit with over 350 members. In this role, I advocate for artists, help shape programs that support our community, and work to elevate the visibility of clay and glass art across California.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

2018–present ACGA (Association of Clay and Glass Artists of California) – Festival-Eligible Member since 2018, Board of Directors since 2021, Board President since 2023 www.acga.net
2017–present Berkeley Potters Guild – Active studio artist and Guild member; participate in Saturday Open Galleries, Annual Spring and Winter Shows & Sales, and East Bay Open Studios.
2017–2022 NCECA (National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts)
2017–present ICAN (International Ceramic Artists Network)

EDUCATION

2021–2023 Ceramics & Sculpture Independent Study – Chabot College, Hayward, CA
2014–2018 Ceramics & Sculpture Coursework – Chabot College, Hayward, CA
2012 BFA Graphic Design with Honors – Massachusetts College of Art & Design, Boston, MA
2005 AS Interior Design – West Valley College, Saratoga, CA

AWARDS

2025 Crocker Selection, *Crocker-Kingsley Exhibition*, Blue Line Arts, Roseville, CA
2024 Solo Show Award, *Lottery for the Arts*, Blue Line Arts, Roseville, CA
2023 1st Place, *Off Center*, Blue Line Arts, Roseville, CA
2022 3rd Place, *Off Center*, Blue Line Arts, Roseville, CA
Juror's Award, *California Clay Competition*, The Artery, Davis, CA
2019 2nd Place, *Clay from ACGA*, Epperson Gallery of Ceramic Art, Crockett, CA
2018 Juror's Award, *California Clay Competition*, The Artery, Davis, CA
2017 Award of Merit, *Ceramic Innovations*, Wayne Art Center, Wayne, PA

JURIED EXHIBITIONS / COMPETITIONS

- 2025 *Art Auction*, Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA
2025 *Selections From The Crocker-Kingsley*, Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA
2024 *Off Center*, Blue Line Arts, Roseville, CA
2023 *The de Young Open*, de Young Museum, San Francisco, CA
2022 *ACGA @ NCECA Gallery Expo*, SAFE Credit Union Convention Center, Sacramento, CA
2021 *Workhouse Clay International*, Workhouse Art Center, Lorton, VA
Menagerie, Epperson Gallery of Ceramic Art, Crockett, CA
What Remains, Radius Gallery, Santa Cruz, CA
Off Center, Blue Line Arts, Roseville, CA
The State of Clay, Lexington Arts & Crafts Society, Lexington, MA
2020 *The Clay Studio National*, The Clay Studio (online), Philadelphia, PA
California Clay Competition, The Artery (online), Davis, CA
ACGA: Ceramics in Focus, Davis Arts Center (online), Davis, CA
What Lies Beneath, Epperson Gallery of Ceramic Art, Crockett, CA
2019 *Craft Forms*, Wayne Art Center, Wayne, PA
Visions in Clay, San Joaquin Delta College, Stockton, CA
Workhouse Clay International, Workhouse Art Center, Lorton, VA
Off Center, Blue Line Arts, Roseville, CA
Clay Matters, Epperson Gallery of Ceramic Art, Crockett, CA
2018 *Workhouse Clay International*, Workhouse Art Center, Lorton, VA
Off Center, Blue Line Arts, Roseville, CA
ICAN (International Ceramic Artists Network) Exhibition @NCECA, Pittsburgh, PA
Fahrenheit, AMOCA (American Museum of Ceramic Art), Pomona, CA
2017 *Craft Forms*, Wayne Art Center, Wayne, PA
Workhouse Clay International, Workhouse Art Center, Lorton, VA
Visions in Clay, San Joaquin Delta College, Stockton, CA
Off Center, Blue Line Arts, Roseville, CA
2016 *Rare Earth*, Cabrillo College, Aptos, CA
Visions in Clay, San Joaquin Delta College, Stockton, CA
ACGA Clay & Glass Festival, Palo Alto, CA: 2018, 2019, 2022, 2023, 2024
ICAN Calendar Contest, Online: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022 (cover), 2023
CCACA (California Conference for the Advancement of Ceramic Art), Davis, CA: 2016–2018

RESIDENCY / WORKSHOP

- 2019 *5th Hongguang Ziqi International Ceramic Arts Exchange Week*, International Ceramic Artists Association – Invited Artist, Yixing, China

PUBLICATIONS / MEDIA / NEWS

- *Art Auction*, Crocker Art Museum – Exhibition catalog, May 2025, p. 25
- *Crocker-Kingsley 2025*, Blue Line Arts – Exhibition catalog, February 2025, p. 56
- *Off Center*, Blue Line Arts – Exhibition catalog, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
- *Interview: Clay and Glass Festival to Be Held in Palo Alto*, KPIX | CBS News Bay Area – President's interview, July 13, 2024
- *Open Gallery @ Berkeley Potters Guild*, Berkeley Times – Featured artwork on the front page (full page), Vol. 13, No. 23, December 2023
- *Fine Arts*, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco – Featured artwork on the cover (centerpiece), Fall 2023
- *Ceramics Monthly*, Ceramic Arts Network – “Exposure,” October 2019, p. 14
- *5th Hongguang Ziqi International Ceramic Arts Exchange Week (Symposium / Workshop)*, International Ceramic Artists Association – Symposium catalog, 2019
- *ICAN Calendar* – 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022 (cover), 2023