

Mary K. Cloonan

Artist Statement



Give And Take (Bridge Series) 2006 Clay, glass, slip, underglazes, oxides, water-color, yarn

I believe that Art translates the fragile and complex facets of our lives , inspiring us past the surface by illuminating a way beyond our initial impression or expectations.

My own works are narrative constructs of disparate objects interacting to create a metaphor greater than their primary purpose. The figures are on the cusp, at the edge between reflection and action, held by worry and wonderment. Heads become foundations for the thoughts and ideas they create and contain. Hands communicate through the nuance of gesture or touch. Books are both containers for and stages to convey knowledge. Boats become vessels of transformation as well as transportation.

Wielding humor, I am seeking a balance between the events that confound our beliefs or confirm them. I am illustrating those experiences that can blanket us in sorrow or uplift us into undiscovered realms, searching to create a connection with others.

Mary K. Cloonan was born and raised in Western New York State, receiving a BS in education from Nazareth College in Rochester, NY. She then went East to earn her MFA in ceramics from Syracuse University. She has since headed South to become a resident artist and teacher at Baltimore Clayworks in Maryland and is also the ceramics professor at American University in Washington, DC.

National and international art journals have published articles she has written, as well as those written about her own work. In addition to giving workshops to various art centers around the country, she has participated in an artist residency in Taiwan at Tainan University for the Arts. Her work has been exhibited around the country and is in many private collections.

Most artists have a touchstone of artistic epiphany, she blames that salty Play-Doh.