

Jim Dugan



ARTIST STATEMENT

I have wanted to be an artist since I was a child, my career probably began as a 10 year old on the beaches of Ocean City, New Jersey. There I made many sand sculptures every summer, and sometimes entered contests, and sometimes won prizes for the unusual creatures, people and things I had made in the sand. All of these sculptures had one thing in common, including the amazing work of the adult teams, they would be washed back into the sea by the end of the day. I made these sculptures just because I enjoyed the process of doing it, and I feel much the same about working with clay.

Since those days on the beach I have studied and practiced many art forms, but nothing has drawn me in like the process of working with clay. From wedging to throwing to trimming to glazing to stacking wood to firing there is no part of working with clay that I don't enjoy. I also enjoy the other people who work with clay, their ideas, stories, and work. I wonder if any other medium attracts such a diverse and interesting crowd as ceramics?

I have been influenced by many people along the way, some who I have worked directly with and some who I will never meet, but I try to accept as much as I can and sometimes influence is evident in the object and sometimes it is in the process.

The products of my work in clay are much more permanent than any sand sculptures, but they too must be formed by hand, their design contemplated and executed. They also must withstand their trial by fire, and I must work with the fire to achieve the results desired. It is a long journey of calculated discoveries that leads to the maturity of any artist, and I hope that I am somewhere in the middle of that journey prepared to accept what comes from the next firing, around the next corner.