

Artist Statement_

Clay (Kla) n. **1.** A firm, fine-grained earth that is soft and pliable when wet, used in making bricks, pottery and tiles. **2.** Moist earth; mud. **3.** The mortal human body. [< OE clæg.]

vessel statement >

Function or dysfunction, vessel or sculpture, utility or uselessness, clay or ceramic, potter or artist; these are words that the “*potter, artist, or ceramist,*” for lack of better term, often use in describing their work and identifying who they are, or what they do.

The idea of vessel or containment is a dominant concept in my work. While “trained as a functional potter,” I have experimented with many facets of clay and a wide range of firing techniques, however, I have always felt a certain obligation to the utility of the vessel.

Antiques and weathered objects of utility that are enriched by the patina of time are of great interest to me. Having a background in Graphic Design, I find old signs, advertisements, schematic plans, numbers and typography quite beautiful in surface, design and color. These influences are apparent in my work.

Pulling from my background as a designer, I am interested in combining “pottery” with an identity that is aesthetically and conceptually complex, while maintaining or referencing its usability as a functional object.

abbreviated bio >

Michael serves as the interim Dean of the College of the Arts at Valdosta State University. He served six years as Associate Dean and four years as the Head of the Department of Art & Design (2013-2016 & 2021-2022). He’s taught ceramics and foundations courses at VSU for over 20 years. His creative works have been featured in more than 200 regional, national, and international juried and invitational exhibitions across the United States and internationally; including China, Korea, Poland, and Germany.

Michael received his BFA from the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater in 1998, studying graphic design, art history, ceramics, and painting. He received his MFA from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania in 2001 in ceramics and sculpture. Much of his creative work involves themes of use, function, industry, and a sense of history.