



THE MARKS PROJECT
The Dictionary of American Studio Ceramics: 1946 to Present



1. What is The Marks Project?

The Marks Project, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit online research hub for American studio ceramics, www.themarksproject.org. It is a free service to ceramic artists and researchers alike. This research hub will help answer the questions: Who made this ceramic object? How and where can I learn more about them and see more of their work?

2. Who can be listed?

Ceramic artist working independently of a factory setting who produce functional, conceptual and/or sculptural work using any clay based materials, who has worked in the United States during the period 1946 to present.

3. What are we doing with the information/images we gather?

There is no commercial use of images or information. The material The Marks Project collects is used to create artist pages and, occasionally, to publicize the website. Examples of publicizing the website are: The website home page has an array of marks that changes randomly with each new view. From time to time the home page is imaged and that image is used on our table banner for NCECA and other venues, as this is a random array, a mark may appear on the banner; and TMP may write or lecture or have a ceramics specialist write an article for publication on marks or give a lecture and a mark and images of objects may be used. It should be noted that TMP does not make any commercial use of images or information, we are a free site to users and artists alike, we do not sell TMP products. Personal contact information, telephone numbers and/or e-mail addresses are not published online or shared with others (unless artist makes a specific request to do so). TMP creates links from artist's pages to their own websites. Ceramic artists can link from their websites to their TMP artist page.

4. Why be listed on www.themarksproject.org?

Educator and artist, Susan Beiner, Associate Professor at Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona says, "The Marks Project ... becomes a way for a student (ceramic artists) to create a brand and date their works from the beginning."

TMP increases accessibility to the public, curators, gallerists, other makers, and the possibility of consideration for private commissions and inclusion in articles, exhibitions, acquisitions. TMP creates a record of work that becomes a legacy tool for ceramic artists and their heirs.

5. Who are we?

Martha B. Vida, Founder and Executive Director, is a collector who has focused her collecting on American studio ceramics. In 2006 she returned from the United Kingdom (UK) with the book, *British Studio Potter's Marks*, a marks dictionary for UK studio ceramics. She was frustrated by not being able to identify marks/signatures of American studio ceramic artists and seeing the artists listed as “Anonymous” in collections and in print. Vida began to develop The Marks Project as a way of making clay artists visible and increase their ability to establish a presence in the larger marketplace of collectors, writers, researchers, curators and gallerists.

Donald Clark, Project Manager, began his career as an art teacher. He moved on to manage a building where Pinch Pottery was a tenant. Clark became a friend of the potters there and in 1989 became a partner in Pinch Pottery-Ferrin Gallery. He continued as a partner in Ferrin Gallery until his retirement in 2011. Soon after he joined Martha Vida to build themarksproject.org. He has been a life-long collector of studio pottery.

Ali Baldenebro, Research Coordinator, holds a MA in Decorative Arts, Design History and Material Culture from the Bard Graduate Center. She completed an internship at the Metropolitan Museum where she compiled research on American art potteries in the Robert A. Ellison Collection. Baldenebro joined The Marks Project as a consultant to assist with the technical development of the website and database and in 2014 joined TMP responsible for coordinating all aspects of research and database development.



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