

Finding the Authentic Self



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Throughout the more than forty years of my career as a ceramic artist, when I incorporate the human figure in my work, it is an exploration of themes of human emotion and human interaction. The idea of looking below the surface of the image and the materials to explore this deeper emotional connection inspires me. The figures I use are often distorted in one way or another. I see this as reflective of an inner state and the act of searching for meaning as I create. I am essentially asking the work to guide my hand in connection with my spirit and emotions.

The fascination I have with the figure is rooted in my drawing background. For all of my adult life I have relied on daily drawing as an act of contemplation and meditation. As a student, I was drawn to the expressiveness of the human figure. The rendering of the human figure offers endless possibilities for expression of what it means to be truly human, truly alive. Over the many years the figure has been a reoccurring element in all my work. When I was introduced to clay, I felt challenged by a third dimension that particularly excited me. As I explored tri-dimensionality further, I became more involved in expressing the emotional element of being human, rather than concentrating on life-like representation. I was influenced, too, by historical and contemporary ceramic work. Staffordshire figures, erotica, Chinese and Japanese brush drawings, depictions of nature, as well as the human condition, appear often in my work.

My father's death from cancer when I was a teen affected me very deeply and has led me to explore grief, loss and solace, especially in my sculptural and drawn pieces. My life as a husband, father and teacher have led me to seek wisdom through introspection as well as the stories told in the making of art. My studio is a place of quiet contemplation where I open myself to the challenge and peace inherent in the process of creative discovery. I seek to reveal myself in an intimate and quiet way through the completed work and to evoke, from the viewer, a sense of empathy and connection.

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