

# OBJECT STORIES

CERAMIC COLLECTIONS

1980-2015

4 private collections

10 artists



**Cover photo:** Kathy Butterly, *Fountains of Youth*, detail, 2000, porcelain, earthenware, glaze, 6.75" x 3" x 2"

## OBJECT STORIES

CERAMIC COLLECTIONS

### **Ferrin Contemporary**

54 Main Street, Cummington, MA 01026

[ferrincontemporary.com](http://ferrincontemporary.com)

[info@ferrincontemporary.com](mailto:info@ferrincontemporary.com)

To learn more about Ferrin Contemporary's work with Collections visit <https://ferrincontemporary.com/collections/>

Catalog design by Isabel Twanmo.

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FERRIN  
CONTEMPORARY

## **DIRECTORS NOTE**

## **OBJECT STORIES** CERAMIC COLLECTIONS

OBJECT STORIES: CERAMIC COLLECTIONS 2025 includes selections from four private collections featuring important works 1980 - 2015 by ten established artists, both living and deceased. This catalog provides an opportunity for collectors and curators to acquire important works previously owned by the collectors or their estates.

Artists and collectors need and decide to downsize at some point. Families make careful decisions to keep, give, or sell. When collections become part of another, its story is retold. In the best of circumstances, the object itself contributes to the process as its origin is revealed, recalling the time and place it was discovered, retelling the moment the decision was made to bring it into the collection. Then, something about it draws the eye, passion and interest of another collector, curator or member of the family.

As we work with collections, we learn about these stories, the people involved - the maker, the social situation, note the location it was acquired at - a studio, art fair, gallery, exhibition or possibly an auction. While researching the provenance, adding data, the objects "resume" is built. The work behind the scenes traces each object's story as it is carried forward. Beginning with the artist, their dealers, the collector who owns them, if there are records to be shared, we research, record and bring to light, connecting wherever possible the analog and digital histories.

This catalog brings together works from four private collections who, over decades, quietly and deliberately assembled iconic contemporary American ceramic art from 1980 - 2015. We are presenting selected works from the estates of New Yorkers Victoria Schonfeld, Debbie and Melvin Neumark, private collector Donald Clark, Massachusetts; and the personal collection of Aaron Milrad and his corporate collection of Surreal Holdings Inc. from Toronto, Canada. The collectors may not have known one another personally, but they undoubtedly crossed paths while acquiring works by the same artists, from their dealers, at the artists' studios, at fairs and on collecting trips.

The thirty one works by ten artists represent significant changes that took place as postwar studio pottery became sculpture, decorative art led to conceptual art and the lively dialogue between craft and contemporary art was ongoing.

While some of the artists have passed on, the collections reveal masterworks from mid-career and represent well known series. For the artists who are still active and creating new works - Kathy Butterly, HAAS Brothers and Mara Superior - they are building on what is revealed by these early, key creative moments and technical achievements. They take the form of abstract and sculptural vessels using color and glaze to define form. Some are literal storytelling objects, such as the delicately lettered dreamscapes of Anne Kraus and iconic type fonts that illustrate Mara Superior's works. Akio Takamori is known for his figural, autobiographical and emotionally poignant sculptures. Coille Hooven is known for her feminist content and domestic critique. There are individual works by women artists who broke glass ceilings during their lifetimes by Toshiko Takaezu, Beatrice Wood and Ruth Duckworth. In the work of Coille Hooven and Mara Superior, examples of triumphant use of porcelain push the boundaries of scale and fragility.

There are great examples of teapots, the iconic form that was the collecting craze of the 90's. Many of these works were acquired directly from the artists or bought from a gallery show, quietly enjoyed in the private collectors' homes and only shared with family and friends. They have not been seen in a public setting since. Now, these works and their stories are being shared with fresh relevance at the gallery, lent to exhibitions and offered for sale in this catalog.

For new or established collectors, curators and specialists, this catalog provides an opportunity to learn about, acquire, and continue the lineage of clay history. We invite you to inquire, connect with us and learn more about the stories these objects hold.

**-Leslie Ferrin**, Director, Ferrin Contemporary

# ARTISTS IN THE COLLECTION

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Kathy Butterly

Ruth Duckworth

Raymon Elozua

HAAS Brothers

Coille McLaughlin Hooven

Anne Kraus

Mara Superior

Toshiko Takaezu

Akio Takamori

Beatrice Wood

# KATHY BUTTERLY

b. 1963, Amityville, NY

“Kathy Butterly has created distinct, evocative sculptures for more than two decades, contributing to and expanding the tradition of studio ceramics. Through her practice, Butterly engages with concepts ranging from materiality and line to the history of the vessel. She uses traditional ceramic forms as her starting point, referring to these historical templates as her “canvas”; however, Butterly contorts and misshapes these forms in ways that veer toward the iconoclastic. She then adds layer upon layer of glaze – sometimes to the point of creating additional volume – and fires the works repeatedly. The colors and textures Butterly chooses and their relationship with each other are simultaneously seductive and jarring. Her strange forms and surprising palette decisions often generate an uncanny awareness in the viewer and produce a visceral impact.”

-James Cohan Gallery



Kathy Butterly, *Soggy Stick*, 2001, porcelain, earthenware, glaze, 7.875 x 3.25 x 2.75"

**\$ 30000.00**

*Made in the Artists' Studio (Kathy Butterly) (2007) Franklin Parrasch Gallery to The Victoria Schonfeld Collection (2001).*



Kathy Butterly, *Fountains of Youth*, 2000, porcelain, earthenware, glaze,  
6.75" x 3" x 2"

**\$ 30000.00**

*Aaron Milrad Collection*

# RUTH DUCKWORTH

b. 1919, Hamburg, Germany

d. 2009, Chicago, IL

"Duckworth produced both freestanding and wall-mounted ceramic sculptures, defining her as one of the most important artists working in the medium. Examination of her work reveals the multitude of influences she draws upon: the natural world, ancient cultures, and abstraction of the human figure. Late works, reveal homage to ancient Egyptian sculpture and to British sculptor Henry Moore (1898–1986), who encouraged Duckworth in her pursuit of abstract sculpture. She admired both Isamu Noguchi (1904–88) and Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957), two of the most significant abstract sculptors of the twentieth century. The minimalist tradition favored by these sculptures is evident in Duckworth's work." [sic]

- Minneapolis Institute of Art



Ruth Duckworth, *Untitled No. 656100*, 2000, porcelain,  
18.75 x 9 x 4.75"

**\$ 48000.00**

*Made in the Artist's Studio (Ruth Duckworth) (2000) to Bellas Artes Gallery to The Victoria Schonfeld Collection (2000)*

# RAYMON ELOZUA

b. 1947 West Germany  
lives and works in Mountaindale, NY

Raymon Elozua is a transdisciplinary visual artist working in the Catskills region of New York. His extensive studio practice consists of large-scale sculpture in ceramic, steel and glass, photography, visual research and archiving, web-based projects, and other forms of documentation. Elozua's work often references the vessel, abstract expressionism, industrial decline and decay, and regionalism.

Elozua has been awarded three grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, a New York State Foundation for the Arts Grant, and a Virginia A. Groot Foundation Grant. His work has been exhibited at The Carnegie Museum of Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Mint Museum of Art and The Mint Museum of Craft and Design, Museum of Fine Arts (Houston), and Yale University Art Gallery, among others. He has taught at The California College of Arts & Crafts, Louisiana State University, New York University, Pratt School of Design, and The Rhode Island School of Design.

-Ferrin Contemporary.



Raymon Elozua, *Wire Teapot #2/WF-1*, 1990, 04 terra cotta & whiteware, glaze, steel wire \* steel nails, 22 x 16 x 12"

**\$ 5000.00**

*Neumark Collection*

# HAAS BROTHERS

b. 1984; Austin, TX

The Haas Brothers—twins Nikolai and Simon—investigate the slippery divide between art and design with humor, whimsy, and inventive originality. While they are best known for their riotously colorful biomorphic forms, genitalia-adorned furniture, and pun-infused titles, an intellectual, conceptual, formal, and technical rigor grounds their practice. Marrying their respective personalities and strengths, the duo's practice integrates a studied, systematic approach to materials and processes with a commitment to dismantling the rigid social constraints, guiding them toward an emotional and spiritual resonance within their work."

-Marianne Boesky Gallery.

Haas Brothers  
*Big Baby Accretion Vase*,  
2015  
porcelain, slip, golf luster  
9.5 x 7.5 x 7.5"

**\$ 15000.00**

*Made in the Artists' Studio (The Haas Brothers) (Los Angeles, CA) (2015) to R & Company Gallery to The Victoria Schonfeld Collection (2015)*



# COILLE HOOVEN

b. 1939, New York, NY

d. 2024, Berkeley, CA

Coille McLaughlin Hooven was born in New York City and grew up on the east coast. Art was already in her genes: her father worked as an architect and her sister, a painter. Her Great Grandfather, James McLaughlin, was also an architect and designed the Cincinnati Art Museum. In addition, her Great Aunt Mary Louise McLaughlin was instrumental in publicizing the American art pottery movement. Among Louise McLaughlin's achievements were writing a book on china painting, which became a best-seller, and the discovery of Haviland's technique for underglazing. In addition she established the Cincinnati Pottery Club, wrote a manual on underglaze decoration, patented a technique for inlay decoration and became the first American working in studio porcelain. The year Mary Louise McLaughlin died was also the year Coille McLaughlin was born; the great-niece has carried on and extended the work of her relative.

Always interested in art, Hooven discovered ceramics when she enrolled in a beginning class at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, in 1959. Her teacher was the legendary David Shaner, then a recent graduate of Alfred University, and he was not only to become her "spiritual teacher," he and his family would become close friends, naming one of their children for her. From Shaner she learned the wheel; later workshops with Peter Voulkos and other artists resulted in looser, more expressive work.

Hooven graduated from Illinois cum laude with a B.F.A. She and her husband, painter Peter Hooven, joined the faculty of the Maryland Institute, College of Art, in Baltimore, MD. Under her guidance the ceramics program grew from a one-wheel, one-room facility to a full department with complete facilities which she headed as Chairperson. During this period she continued her own studio work, but most of her time was taken up with teaching and starting a family.

-Ferrin Contemporary.



Coille McLaughlin Hooven, *Horse Figure Teapot*, circa 1975, 8 x 6 x 4"

**\$ 4500.00**

*Neumark Collection*



Coille McLaughlin Hooven, *Elephant Teapot*, circa 1975, 12 x 7 x 7"

**\$ 4500.00**

*Neumark Collection*



Coille McLaughlin Hooven, *Plate Cup with Horse Figures*, circa 1975, 11 x 11 x 4"

**\$ 2500.00**

*Neumark Collection*



Coille McLaughlin Hooven  
*Shirt*  
circa 1987  
12 x 11 x 1.5"

**\$ 7000.00**

*Neumark Collection*

*\*See condition notes on page 57.*

Coille McLaughlin Hooven  
*Blouse*  
circa 1987  
14 x 12 x 2"

**\$ 9500.00**

*Neumark Collection*



# ANNE KRAUS

b. 1956, Short Hills, NJ

d. 2003 Boulder, CO

Anne Kraus is best known for painterly narrative scenes on traditional ceramic forms, usually in a white reserve and incorporating text. Kraus began her art career as a painter living in New York City. The European porcelains from Meissen, Sèvres and R.S. Prussia that she saw at the Metropolitan Museum captured her imagination and influenced her decision to work in clay.

Kraus' early work was done at her Shining Leaf Pottery in New Jersey. The pieces are built from slip-cast stoneware elements that are combined and recombined in many different ways. Kraus mastered the use of under glaze decoration. The emotional images in her narratives may appear deceptively calm, often drawn from her dream diaries, they frequently present her deeply personal views on political, social and cultural issues. In addition to images, her work typically includes carefully drawn text relating to the images. Toward the end of her career she began making tile paintings.

-The Marks Project



Anne Kraus, *The Book and Other Stories Bread Basket (Shining Leaf)*, circa 1995, porcelain, overglaze (on glaze), underglaze, 3.5" x 11.25" x 5.25"

**\$ 3500.00**

*Aaron Milrad Collection*

# Anne Kraus, *The Book and Other Stories* *Bread Basket (Shining Leaf)*

## **Inner Basket text (3 figures):**

I awake from  
a dream in which  
I work in a steel mill  
in Northern Germany  
in the 1880's

## **Inner basket (volleyball players):**

This entity asks you  
what you are  
waiting for

## **Inner bottom (fire):**

You give me a book  
with pictures of my past lives  
but when I try to read it, a fire starts

## **Side (woods & rifle):**

In this dream you are  
a sentry and for a moment  
you wonder where we buried the love that brought us  
all to this planet  
to begin with.

## **Side (deer):**

The deer spoke  
of another world where  
animals and humans  
are friends.  
But her voice faded  
and I wondered  
if I had heard  
just the wind in the trees

# MARA SUPERIOR

b. 1951, New York, NY

lives and works in Williamsburg, MA

Mara Superior is an American visual artist who works in porcelain. Her ceramic high relief platters and sculptural objects reflect the artist's passion for art history and the decorative arts, and her painterly motifs range from the pleasures of the domestic to serious political and environmental issues as points of departure to comment on contemporary culture and its relationship to history. Superior has received numerous awards including a National Endowment for the Visual Arts Fellowship, the prestigious Guldaggergård Residency in Denmark, and numerous individual artist grants from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

In 2018, through the generous support of the Kohler Foundation, gifts of art by Mara Superior were made to fifteen museums throughout the USA, increasing the public holdings of Superior's artworks and including an in depth collection acquired by the Racine Art Museum, (Racine, WI) and shown in 2020 in Collection Focus: Mara Superior. In 2010 she was interviewed for the oral history program of the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art, (Washington, DC). She is represented by Ferrin Contemporary.

-Ferrin Contemporary.



Mara Superior, *A Teapot - Hot Tea*, 1985, high-fired English porcelain, ceramic oxides, underglazes, Cornwall Stone glaze, 10 x 14 x 14.5

**\$ 20000.00**

*Purchased from Mara Superior to the Neumark Collection, to Ferrin Contemporary (2024)*

## ON MARA SUPERIOR

“Mara Superior’s work, with its romantic whimsy and distinctive style, is a true reflection of the artist herself. Even when tackling some of the most challenging issues of our time, her pieces remind us there is still beauty in the world—and that it is worth fighting for.”

—Kory Rogers, Francie and John Downing Senior Curator of American Art, Shelburne Museum



Mara Superior, *Evergreens*, 1985, high-fired English porcelain, ceramic oxides, underglazes, Cornwall Stone glaze, Pot: 16 x 18 x 3.5" Base: 14.25 x 9 x 1.5"

**\$ 20000.00**

*Purchased from Mara Superior to the Neumark Collection, to Ferrin Contemporary (2024)*



Mara Superior, *A Home Comfort - A Retreat*, 1988, high-fired English porcelain, ceramic oxides, underglazes, Cornwall Stone glaze, wood, faux marble paint, brass pins, Pot: 19 x 25 x 6", Base: 24 x 9 x 4"

**\$ 25000.00**

*Purchased from Mara Superior to the Neumark Collection, to Ferrin Contemporary (2024)*



Mara Superior, *A Cocoa-Pot*, 1988, high-fired English porcelain, ceramic oxides, underglazes, Cornwall Stone glaze, Pot: 19 x 14.5 x 5.5" Base: 16 x 9 x 1.5"

**\$ 25000.00**

*Purchased from Mara Superior to the Neumark Collection, to Ferrin Contemporary (2024)*



Mara Superior, *Trout - Duck - Swan Cylinder*, 1982

**\$ 2500.00**

*Collection of Ferrin Contemporary*



Mara Superior  
*Adam and Eve (Relief Platter)*  
1983  
porcelain, slip, glaze  
13"x 1.5"

**\$ 3500.00**

*Collection of Ferrin Contemporary*

# TOSHIKO TAKAEZU

b. 1922, Pepeekeo, HI

d. 2011, Honolulu, HI

“Toshiko Takaezu (1922-2011) was one of the twentieth century’s greatest abstract artists. Gifted with prodigious drive and vision, she combined inspirations from her own cultural background with currents from contemporary painting and sculpture, arriving at a unique expressionist idiom.

Born in Hawaii to a Japanese émigré family, Takaezu received her early training in ceramics in Honolulu, and then attended Cranbrook Academy in Michigan, when it was an epicenter for adventurous modernism. Already in this early phase in her career, she was able to see correspondences between Abstract Expressionism and the spiritually infused traditions of East Asia, such as calligraphy and tea ceremony. She combined these cross-cultural influences into a powerfully resolved synthesis.

Though made using traditional pottery techniques of wheel-throwing and glazing, the works for which she is best known – the closed forms – are best understood as sculptures, or perhaps as paintings-in-the-round. They are as individual as people are, varying greatly in scale and shape, color and texture, and in their internal tectonic rhythms. Some are vigorously painterly, with splashes and rivulets of color coursing down their sides.

Others are more meditative, sheathed in overlapping veils of hue. They have a close affinity with the work of other postwar expressionist artists, such as Franz Kline, Joan Mitchell, and Mark Rothko.

Takaezu was also a great experimenter. In her early career she expanded the possibilities of the vessel, exploring multiple spouts and lobed forms, and made plates that were essentially canvases for freeform composition. Later innovations included upright cylindrical vessels she called “trees,” anthropomorphic forms with strong shouldered profiles, bronze castings, and slitted-open sculptures (also known as “Momos”) that afford a glimpse into their dark interiors. Throughout her career, Takaezu also pursued media apart from ceramics, including large-scale textiles and paintings, which extended her vocabulary of vivid chromatic abstraction.

Last but by no means least, Takaezu was a profoundly influential teacher and mentor, who trained generations of younger artists at the Cleveland Institute of Art, Princeton University and other institutions. Her legacy lives on in these students and apprentices, and above all in her own work, which both exemplifies and transcends the ideals of modernist ceramic art.”

—Glenn Adamson, Independent Scholar and Curator, Toshiko Takaezu Foundation



Toshiko Takaezu, *Untitled (642)*, 1998, porcelain, 6 x 7"

**\$ 13500.00**

*Made in the Artist's Studio (Toshiko Takaezu) (1998) to Perimeter Gallery to The Victoria Schonfeld Collection (2000).*



\*Toshiko Takaezu, *Untitled (648)*, 1998, porcelain, 6.5 x 4"

**\$ 12500.00**

*Made in the Artist's Studio (Toshiko Takaezu) (1998) to Perimeter Gallery to The Victoria Schonfeld Collection (2000).*

# BEATRICE WOOD

b. 1893, San Francisco, CA

d. 1998 (age 105 years), Ojai, CA

Born in San Francisco, Beatrice Wood was raised in New York City. At the age of nineteen she abandoned her privileged background and went to Paris, where she studied acting at the Comedie Francaise and drawing at the Académie Julian. Returning to New York, she acted with a French repertory company from 1914 to 1916. During these years she made friends with members of the Dada group of artists, including Marcel Duchamp.

In 1928 Wood moved to California. Her first exposure to ceramics was an adult education course at Hollywood High School, which she had taken to learn how to make a teapot to match some luster-glaze plates she had bought in Holland. A deepening interest in ceramics led her to study with renowned potters Otto and Gertrud Natzler.

In 1948 Wood moved to Ojai, California, where she has continued to live ever since, and began to produce the iridescent luster surfaces that have made her famous. Before Wood, luster had generally been a surface decoration on a previously glazed form, but she used in-glaze luster produced during a single glaze firing. Although Wood did not invent this technique, she imparted to it and the ceramic medium a new expressiveness and theatricality.

[-Read more on the Smithsonian \(SAAM\) website](#)

"One of the most fascinating American artists of the last century, Beatrice Wood's influence and celebration extends far beyond the ceramics world. Often called the "Mama of Dada," she was involved in the avant-garde Dada art movement in the early 20th century. In the 1930s, she studied ceramics with the well-known artist duo Otto and Gertrud Natzler. Throughout her career, Wood created works in both sculptural and functional forms, some infused with social commentary. Many of her fantastic vessels are recognizable for their rich, lustrous glaze. Another work by Beatrice Wood, as well as work by Otto and Gertrud Natzler, is on view in Ceramics from the Vault."

- Donald Clark

Beatrice Wood  
*Teapot*  
circa 1990  
earthenware with luster glaze  
6 x 5.5 x 3.5

**\$ 10000.00**

Made in the artist studio, Ojai, CA, Donald Clark Collection



## COLLECTION NOTES | Condition

pg. 22: **Coille Hooven, *Shirt***: Breakage of bow tie, parts not retained. Purchase as is. Restoration possible. Please email [infor@ferrincontemporary.com](mailto:infor@ferrincontemporary.com) for a full condition report.

\*pg. 37 & 38: **Toshiko Takaezu Vessels**: includes unseen ceramic "rattle".

# **FERRIN CONTEMPORARY**

## COLLECTION SERVICES

Ferrin Contemporary manages multiple collections of ceramics, including its own collection built by Leslie Ferrin and those of multiple Private Collectors who use our services to document their artworks as well as place objects in public and private hands.

Private Collections include work by individual, established artists, living and deceased. This provides an opportunity for collectors to acquire unique pieces previously held by the artists or their estates.

**Back cover photo:** Anne Kraus, The Book and Other Stories  
Bread Basket (Shining Leaf), detail, circa 1995, porcelain,  
overglaze (on glaze), underglaze, 3.5" x 11.25" x 5.25"

## FERRIN CONTEMPORARY

For more than 40 years, Ferrin Contemporary has been a leading source for contemporary and modern ceramic art. Ferrin Contemporary serves as both a project incubator and traditional commercial gallery program. Curated exhibitions are presented by the gallery and in partnership with galleries, museums, and educational institutions throughout the country.



You give me a book  
with pictures of my past lives  
but when I try to read it, a fire starts

