

NAOMI TEPPICH Art Statement/BIO 2022

Looking at plants, shells, sea creatures, fungi, bark, and cacti inspire my art. I build small to medium-sized ceramic mixed-media sculptures, and also large public ferro-cement sculptures. My materials are combinations of soft and hard organic substances. Clay is soft to work with, but turns into a permanent and hard medium after firing. I use hand and electric tools to design my works. I also fire them in either an electric kiln, a reduction kiln, or an anagama wood firing kiln which requires a longer firing and cooling period. Firing my work in these different kilns allow me to explore different results.

My surrounding environment inspires my ideas. I am influenced by rural settings and observations from my travels. I have created enlarged ceramic shell pieces that look like real shells and organic mushroom forms. Often I form shapes that are meant to hang on the wall. My clay sculptures sit on cement, wood, metal or stone bases. I use different textures, glazes, and clay colors to make these pieces. The challenge of almost duplicating these organic forms that I find in nature or in photos is enjoyable for me. I have traveled to Western Canada and Western United States where I viewed various fossils in geology museums and visitor centers. I also traveled to places where I viewed unusual landscape formations and ancient art.

My intention is to lend a feeling of preciousness to these natural objects that I view. They are beautiful when found in their natural environment. Since our planet is vulnerable to entropy and all kinds of change and destruction, we must preserve and cherish our planet as best as we can. By focusing on this theme my work can touch others and bring awareness to these natural wonders. I like to explore different themes of these vulnerable organisms.

I was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York and received my BA from Brooklyn College in 1971, where I was fine arts major. My welding skills were developed at Pratt Institute (MFA 1975), and I later worked with slate and metal as well as carved stone forms. I studied ceramics at Parsons School of Design in 1995 and taught ceramics and sculpture in New York City for many years. I currently live and work both in Damascus, Pennsylvania, where I have a sculpture and ceramics studio and New York City where I do other types of art projects and visit museums and galleries. My sculptures both large and small have been included in numerous solo and

group exhibitions in and around upstate New York, Pennsylvania, New York City, New Jersey, and other places in the United States and abroad. I won a Puffin Foundation grant in 2009 (collaborative) for “Ocotillo Patch” (shown in Summit, New Jersey and the Bronx, NY), and in 2015 for “Desert Agave” which was exhibited in Beacon, NY (www.beacon3d.org) in 2016. I continue to exhibit my outdoor pieces in Brewster, NY , Leonia, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Recently my indoor sculptures were displayed in several venues in Sullivan County and Beacon, New York in 2019, and at the Gallery 222 Windows in Hurleyville, New York during the pandemic. My sculptures were also displayed in a virtual exhibition at www.hammondmuseum.org/virtualgalleries, North Salem, New York.

www.naomiteppichsculpt.com

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