

Jennifer Owen

Summary of Professional Development Experience

National Conference on Education in the Ceramic Arts

March 22 - 25, 2017

Portland, OR

The last time I attended the National Conference on Education in the Ceramic Arts, the biggest, most important annual conference for ceramic artists and educators, was in 2010. It is an important experience for me, and I wish that I had the time and resources to attend every year. I always connect with top ceramic artists and educators from around the country, learn the latest in teaching, technology, and tools, and see a lot of inspirational artwork.

In the “vendors” exhibit hall, I learned about a new kiln shelf grinder that we might use with success at UHMC, and would save labor in kiln shelf maintenance. I watched a 3D “clay printer” create ceramic pieces out of wet clay via a computer program. I was able to talk in person to the company that made the pug mill that UHMC just acquired, and watch an informative video showing its operation. I bought samples of several tools I had never seen before, and was already able to show them to my students. On Maui, we are at a distinct disadvantage, not being able to see in person the tools that we have to order from photographs on line. I am looking forward to using my tools on my own artwork, as I work in my home studio this summer.

I watched a demo performed by a teacher from Oahu, who came to Maui on April 8 & 9 to give demonstrations to my ceramics students at UHMC. It was good timing for me to be able to check out his techniques at the conference, just two weeks before he came to visit UHMC. I connected with a lot of other potters from all over the country and even internationally, including Esther Shimazu (also of Oahu), Doug Casebeer (head of ceramics at Anderson Ranch in Colorado), Adam Fields of Montana, and many other prominent ceramists. I made personal contact (at a panel discussion on the effects of global warming on ceramic artists) with two prominent ceramic artists, Richard Notkin and Kate McDowell, who are interested in being visiting artists for UHMC ceramics classes. Their work comments on current affairs, social issues, and global warming, and I would very much like to expose our UHMC students to these artists. I also reconnected with four potters from Eugene, who were my good friends and colleagues when I lived in Eugene from 1977-81. Their work in ceramics is amazing, and I was able to visit their studios in Eugene after the conference, and see exciting work in colored clay, relief carving, and large scale sculptural work.

During the NCECA conference, I took photographs of ceramic artwork in about two dozen galleries showing ceramic art during the conference. I will add the best and most educational of these photos to image presentations that I show students each semester for inspiration for their own work, as examples of the elements of art and principles of design, and as part of a comprehensive ceramic art history presentation that I like to keep current with cutting edge contemporary work. I have already made a preliminary image presentation, to share the new images with current classes. If other faculty are interested, I will share the image presentation in a professional development meeting on campus. I have invited UHMC’s ceramic lecturer, Renee Wilcox, to view the presentation at my ceramics class, and have also invited several

prominent Maui ceramic artists, who contribute in various ways to the college's educational program. The presentations to my classes will take place on Wed., April 19 at 3:15 and on Thurs., April 20 at 7:15 pm. Over the summer I will integrate the best of these into my existing PowerPoints for future classes.

Some of the most exciting ceramics I saw in one particular gallery were spectacular pieces created with a 3D "clay printer" like the one I saw in action at the vendor exhibit hall in the convention center. I have never before seen ceramic artwork created this way, and found the pieces on exhibit to be truly extraordinary and worthy of exhibition. Unlike the small demo piece being created in the vendor hall, these artworks were original, well designed, and well executed.

Best of all, I returned to Maui with new inspiration for my own artwork, as a result of all the remarkable ceramic art I saw in the galleries.