

# MULTIVALENT

CLAY, MINDFULNESS AND MEMORY MARCH 25-28, 2020 IN RICHMOND, VA

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**PRELIMINARY RELEASE-  
NCECA COMES TO RICHMOND  
IN MARCH 2020 FOR  
IMMEDIATE CIRCULATION**

## **NATIONAL COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR THE CERAMIC ARTS (NCECA) ANNOUNCES HEADLINE PRESENTERS FOR THE 2020 CONFERENCE IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

*54<sup>th</sup> Annual NCECA Conference to be held March 25-28, 2020 at the Greater Richmond Convention Center*

Richmond, VA: *MULTIVALENT: Clay, Mindfulness and Memory*, the 54<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) takes place March 25-28, 2020 in the Greater Richmond Convention Center. NCECA's annual conferences include a wide range of programming and presenters, well established in the field as well as visionary scholars and artists from other disciplines. Outlined below are details on the 2020 conference headline presenters as lecturers, and demonstrating artists.



Sonya Clark, photo by Diego Valdez

### **KEYNOTE LECTURER Sonya Clark**

Born in Washington, DC to a psychiatrist from Trinidad and a nurse from Jamaica, Sonya Clark gained an appreciation for craft and the value of the handmade primarily from her maternal grandmother who was a professional tailor. Many of Clark's family members taught her the value of a well-told story and so it is that she came to value the stories held in objects. Sonya Clark is Professor of Art at Amherst College in Amherst, Massachusetts. Previously, she was a Distinguished Research Fellow in the School of the Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University where from

2006 until 2017 she served as chair for the Craft/ Material Studies Department. In 2016, she was awarded a university-wide VCU Distinguished Scholars Award. She earned her MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art and was honored with their Distinguished Alumni Award in 2011. She earned her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her first college degree is a BA from Amherst College where she also received an honorary doctorate in 2015. Her work has been exhibited in over 350 museums and galleries in the Americas, Africa, Asia, Europe, and Australia. She is the recipient of a United States Artist Fellowship, a Pollock Krasner award, an 1858 Prize, Art Prize Grand Jurors Award, and an Anonymous Was a Woman Award, a Red Gate Residency in China, a BAU Camargo Residency in France, a Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Residency in Italy, a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, a Knight Foundation Residency at the McColl, a Civitella Ranieri Residency in Italy, a Yaddo Residency, and a VCUarts Affiliate Fellowship at the American Academy in Rome. Her work has been favorably reviewed in several publications including the *New York Times*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Italian Vogue*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Hyperallergic*, *Mother Jones*, and *Huffington Post*. Website <http://sonyclark.com/>

Sonya Clark's lecture, *Measuring History*, will take place during the 2020 NCECA Conference Opening Ceremonies beginning at 7pm on Wednesday, March 25 in Halls B and C level 1 of the Greater Richmond Convention Center. Access to the opening event will be open to conference registrants. Members of the Greater Richmond community will be admitted to the opening ceremonies at no charge.



Above: MK Abadoo

## **RANDALL SESSION**

### **MK Abadoo**

Following Sonya Clark's keynote lecture, during 2020 conference opening ceremonies on Wednesday evening, March 25, MK Abadoo will create and perform a movement work for the Randall Session, which honors the memory and wide-ranging intellectual curiosity of NCECA's founding president Ted Randall. MK Abadoo's creative work exists at the crux of dance theater, undoing racism, cultural organizing, and critical education studies. Combining classical American modern and postmodern dance vocabularies, neo-traditional Ghanaian movement, and social Funk styles, Abadoo draws on the tradition of black literature and art that unites past and present in unsparing dialog. MK Abadoo is an Assistant Professor of Dance + Choreography and Racial Equity, Arts and Culture at Virginia Commonwealth University's Institute for Inclusion, Inquiry & Innovation.



Syd Carpenter at work in her studio, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

## **DEMONSTRATING ARTISTS**

### **Syd Carpenter**

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania based sculptor working primarily in clay, Syd Carpenter has created work that is currently included in collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution (Washington DC), Philadelphia Museum of Art, Michener Museum (Doylestown, PA), and the Fuller Craft Museum (Brockton, MA). She is a professor of studio art at Swarthmore College.

Carpenter will be creating and speaking about her work in Hall B level 1 of the Greater Richmond Convention Center from 1-4 pm on Thursday, March 26 and 9am-Noon on Friday, March 27. Conference registration is required to attend these sessions.





### **Suze Lindsay**

A studio potter based in western North Carolina, Suze Lindsay's formal training started as a core fellow at Penland School of Craft. She later earned her MFA from Louisiana State University. Lindsay subsequently returned to the renowned Penland School having been awarded the 3-year residency. She ultimately settled nearby to open Fork Mountain Pottery with her husband, Kent McLaughlin. A passionate educator, Lindsay has presented numerous workshops and lectures, nationally and internationally.

Website <https://www.forkmountainpottery.com/>

Suze Lindsay will be creating and speaking about her work in Hall B level 1 of the Greater Richmond Convention Center from 9am-Noon on Thursday, March 26 and 1-4 pm on Friday, March 27. Conference registration is required to attend these sessions.



### **James Watkins**

Born in 1951 in Louisville, Kentucky, and raised in a farming family in Athens, Alabama, James C. Watkins is a ceramic artist who has worked with clay for over 40 years. His work is held in 21 permanent collections, including the White House Collection of American Crafts at the Clinton Library in Little Rock, Arkansas, the Shigaraki Institute of Ceramic Studies in Shigaraki, Japan, the Everson Museum in Syracuse, New York, the Tweed Museum in Duluth, Minnesota, and the Eiteljorg Museum in Indianapolis, Indiana. Watkins' work has been widely exhibited in 40 solo exhibitions and 164 group exhibitions.

Watkins is a retired Paul Whitfield Horn Professor Emeritus, the highest honor Texas Tech University may bestow on members of its faculty. Before teaching at Texas Tech University, Watkins was an associate instructor at Indiana University in Bloomington and a visiting professor at Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia. Between 1978

and 1983, he was the director and organizer of the Mackenzie Terrace Pottery Center, a City of Lubbock public arts facility. He was a 2005 Senior Fulbright Scholar, teaching in Vietnam at the Ho Chi Minh City University of Architecture. The co-author of three books, *Alternative Kilns & Firing Techniques*, *Niedrigbrand*, and *Architectural Delineation: Presentation Techniques and Projects*, Watkins' work is also the subject of a book entitled *A Meditation of Fire: The Art of James C. Watkins* by Kippra D. Hopper published by Texas Tech

University Press. He has also written numerous articles for national and international magazines, including *Ceramics Monthly*, *Studio Potter*, *New Ceramics: The European Ceramics Magazine*, and *China Ceramic Artist*. He earned his BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute and his MFA from Indiana University. Website: [www.jcwclayworks.com](http://www.jcwclayworks.com)

James Watkins will be creating and speaking about his work in Hall B level 1 of the Greater Richmond Convention Center from 9am-Noon on Thursday, March 26 and 1-4 pm on Friday, March 27. Conference registration is required to attend these sessions.



Kensuke Yamada in his studio

### **Kensuke Yamada**

Having moved to the United States from Japan as a foreign exchange student, Kensuke Yamada's story begins with the limited knowledge of the English language. The artist describes that his primary commonality with others was often conveyed and understood through human gestures: facial expressions, body motions, darting hands, or blinking of eyes. In his struggle to learn English and communicate through speech, he gained strong empathy for the universal experiences that cultivate awareness of the complexities in daily routines and rituals. Yamada's sculptures can be viewed as tangible expressions of these shared experiences through gestures, patterns, textures, colors, and rhythms.

Kensuke Yamada will be creating and speaking about his work in Hall B level 1 of the Greater Richmond Convention Center from 1-4 pm on Thursday, March 26 and 9am-Noon on Friday, March 27. Conference registration is required to attend these sessions.



Winnie Owens-Hart, photo by Daniel McNeal

### **CLOSING LECTURER**

Winnie Owens-Hart

Cultural researcher, ceramic artist, author, curator, and documentary filmmaker, Winnie Owens-Hart's life's work and passion revolves around the creative process, the historical significance of clay workers globally – especially those invisible artists. As a filmmaker, she has produced *Style & Technique-Four Pottery Villages* and *The Traditional Potters of Ghana-The Women of Kuli*. Selected published writings include her curator's statement for *Visual Voices: Truth Narratives*, the 2018 NCECA Annual catalogue; *A Chance of Birth*, 42-49 (New Hampshire: The Studio Potter Journal, 2013) Volume 42 No2; *A Global View: Embracing A Non-Western Approach to Making*, 106, 107, 119, 144 (Colorado: NCECA Journal, 2011) Volume

32; *Ceramics: From Africa to America, REVIVALS! Diverse Traditions* 114-118 (New York: Harry Abrams, 1994); *Traditions: Ipetumodu, The International Review African American Art*, 58-60 (Virginia: Hampton University, 1994) Volume 11 No2. Owens-Hart has over forty-five years of national and international exhibitions with work in the collections of the Smithsonian, the John Michael Kohler Collection, as well as universities and private collections. Her professional honors include: Honorary Member of the Council, National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts; Kohler Arts/Industry, Artist in Residence; McColl Center for Art (Charlotte, NC); Renwick Fellow, Smithsonian Institution (Washington DC); Fellow, Smithsonian Institution Faculty Research Program; National Endowment for the Arts, Individual Craftsmen Fellowship; Honorary Board Member, Renwick Museum, Smithsonian Institution; Lifetime Achievement in the Craft Arts Award – Women’s Museum and Hand Workshop.

Winnie Owens-Hart’s closing begins at 10:50am on Saturday, March 28 as part of the 2020 NCECA Conference Closing Ceremonies which take place in Halls B and C level 1 of the Greater Richmond Convention Center. Conference Closing Ceremonies begin with 2020 NCECA Emerging Artist presentations at 9am. Conference registration is required to attend this session.

### **LEARN MORE ABOUT NCECA**

NCECA, the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts, is a dynamic membership organization that fosters global education and appreciation for the ceramic arts. NCECA’s programs, exhibitions and public events promote and improve the ceramic arts through education, community building, research and creative inspiration. NCECA offers programs, events, and publications to support its membership of artists, educators, students, individual and organizational patrons, gallerists, curators, and providers of ceramic arts products and services. Search for **NCECA** Google Play and the App Store in February 2020 to download a free mobile device app detailing programming and exhibitions surrounding the 2020 NCECA Conference in Richmond, Virginia. Visit [www.nceca.net](http://www.nceca.net) to learn more about NCECA.