

ITALIAN STUDIES

Margaret Bohls

Second Floor Gallery

May 4 - June 22, 2024



Artist Statement:

My work is grounded in an abiding interest in historical vessel forms, and in the social context of these objects. My methodology for creating new work often begins with a study of a particular set of historical vessels. I strive to identify a set of physical, formal attributes of these objects that visually communicate something about the culture that produced them or the era during which they were created. I do this through a close visual examination of the objects and by making drawings of the objects. In these drawings I attempt to distill the objects down to what I consider to be their critical visual and formal characteristics. These drawings become the basis for the creation of a series of ceramic forms of my own.

The “Italian” series is based on an examination of several types of historical ceramics produced on the Italian peninsula: Etruscan Bucchero and Impasto ware, Medici Porcelain, and Italian Majolica Antica. After traveling to Italy and London and visiting a number of museum collections, I have spent the last year producing drawings and vessels based on my understanding of these forms and the particular form language embedded in them. These particular groupings of vessels are based on objects from the Villanovan and Etruscan civilizations, both the coarser Impasto ware and the more refined Bucchero ware, and on vessels from ancient Apulia on the southeastern part of the Italian peninsula. These still-life-like groupings in some ways mimic the didactic, catalogic museum installations I have been studying. I see these pieces as sculptural “sketches” or studies.

Bio:

Margaret Bohls makes hand-built pottery and vessel forms that she shows and sells both locally and nationally. She received a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design in 1989, and an MFA from Louisiana State University in 1995. She has been teaching ceramics at the college level for over twenty-five years. She is currently an Associate Professor of Art at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. She has exhibited her work throughout the country in both solo and group exhibitions. She has written articles for the Journal of the National Council for Education on Ceramic Arts, Ceramics Monthly, Pottery Making Illustrated, and Studio Potter Journal.