

EARTHWORKS: EVOLUTION



THE FUTURE OF CERAMICS IS ON DISPLAY IN UMBRELLA ARTS CENTER'S BIENNIAL EXHIBITION

BOSTON -- April 20, 2026 -- **The Umbrella Arts Center** in Concord, Mass. presents its second Ceramics Biennial Exhibition, titled **"Earthworks: Evolution"** featuring 50 exceptional artists from New England whose work marks the rich history, cultural expression, and ongoing innovation of contemporary ceramics. Running **April 29th through June 28th**, the exhibition highlights the ways in which artists continue to expand the field, while honoring both regional and industry traditions. "Earthworks: Evolution" was juried in a blind process by **celebrated American potter Lisa Orr**.

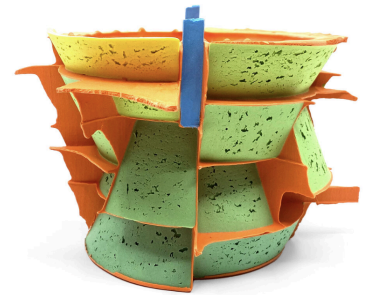
The Umbrella's **Ceramics Program Manager Zachary Mickelson** says the artform is having a moment in New England, with rising national stars making work in the region. The Umbrella boasts one of Massachusetts's most robust ceramics programs for working artists and part-time or hobbyist makers; it offers extensive course offerings and state-of-the-art studio spaces, both planned for expansion to meet demand. That commitment to the medium is reflected in this year's exhibition, which includes several works by artists who began or continue their practice at the Center. The theme, "Evolution," leans into the Center's concerns for sustainability and embraces innovations and new technology in the field.



"There's really something special happening in ceramics nationally," Mickelson says, "and Concord is an uncanny epicenter of that movement. This exhibition brings together a wide cross section of hugely talented artists working in ceramics right now, emphasizing New England's deep love for this ancient but ever-evolving medium."

In addition to their regional representation, the artists chosen for the Biennial represent a broad range of ages, backgrounds, and artistic visions. Highlighted artists in "Earthworks: Evolution" are below.

- Born in Haenam, South Korea, [Yeonsoo Kim](#) is a full-time studio artist in Exeter, New Hampshire. His childhood on a small island without electricity instilled a deep reverence for the natural world, informing his creative work and drawing him to the liveliness and vigor of clay. Kim focused his artistic practice on Onggi, traditional Korean earthenware vessels, and trained with an Onggi master to refine his technique and point of view.
- [Andrew Robinson](#) (r. *Rowboat Graveyard*) is a self-taught ceramics artist based in Maine and Rhode Island, whose work depicts raw clay bodies and structural forms that explore the concept of deconstruction. Inspired by a lifetime of exploring the woods and coasts of New England, he developed a distinctive style utilizing non-traditional hand-building and finishing techniques.
- Massachusetts-based studio potter [Katie Fee's](#) work has led her to kiln pads and clay studios around the world—most recently to France and Japan—as a visiting artist, wood firing specialist, instructor, and project manager. Currently, she teaches ceramics at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University, and is the 2025-2026 Ceramics Artist-In-Residence at The Umbrella Arts Center. Her work is inspired by experience growing up, working on, and exploring the landscape of wetland South Carolina.
- Vermont artist [Leslie Fry](#) creates public sculptures, drawings and ceramic artworks that seek to bridge the natural and constructed world, often using her own hands as inspiration and representation of the self and various states of being (e.g., acceptance, release, etc.).
- Sculptor and potter [Hillary Kane](#) splits her time between Bali, Indonesia and Concord, Mass., where she has taught at The Umbrella ceramics studios. Her creative process is focused around the alchemy of the *anagama* (a Japanese kiln) for firing functional, sculptural and figurative works. Her passion for wood-fired ceramics drives work that is visceral, organic, and inextricably linked to the natural process of creating the work.
- Massachusetts-based [Kyle Johns](#) (r. *Yellow Bowl*) was the 2023-2024 Ceramics Artist-in-Residence at The Umbrella, and is currently on staff as Ceramics Studio Technician. His work pushes the boundaries of ceramic slipcast pieces, resulting in forms that preserve evidence of the creation process, and sometimes suggest a colorful version of Brutalist architecture.



Lisa Orr judged the applications blind, bringing 40 years of experience as a studio potter and working artist to bear on the talent pool.

“Each piece creates a world all to its own, some representing the powerful expressions of emerging artists, and others clearly showing virtuosity in handling tricky materials and incorporating poetic ideas,” Orr says. “So many excellent works were submitted, but my selections were made based primarily on their relevance to the theme of the show.” Orr’s own commitment to sustainability informed this year’s biennial theme, with many exhibition artists focusing on environmentally-friendly practices, waste reduction, integration of new technologies, and natural shapes.

RECEPTION AND PROGRAMMING:

An opening reception in Umbrella's Allie Kussin Gallery kicks off the biennial, **April 29th from 6pm to 8pm**, with light refreshments and beverages. More details and RSVP instructions are available at theumbrellaarts.org/earthworks-evolution. Additional programming associated with the exhibition includes: A full-day workshop with Lisa Orr, "Form and Narrative on Elegantly Embossed Ceramics," **April 30th from 10am to 5pm**, including a free Artist's Talk from **4:30pm to 5:30pm**, with registration and details available [here](#). Umbrella's annual **Open Studios, May 2 & 3 from 12 noon to 5pm** offers visitors a chance to learn more about the artists, engage in fun activities and live music, and includes a Spring Ceramics Sale. Details [here](#).

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CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: The Umbrella Arts Center presents "Earthworks: Evolution," its second Ceramics Biennial Exhibition, featuring 50 exceptional ceramics artists from New England, and highlighting how artists continue to expand the field of contemporary ceramics through innovation and reinterpretation, while honoring tradition.

WHEN: April 29-June 28, 2026.

WHERE: The Allie Kussin Gallery, Umbrella Arts Center, 40 Stow Street in Concord, Mass. Info at 978-371-0820 and theumbrellaarts.org.

MEDIA CONTACT

For advance interviews with Earthworks: Evolution artists and Umbrella representatives, and for video and photo assets, contact **Jennifer Astin**, ja@jmkpr.com / 424-333-1718 or **John Michael Kennedy**, jmk@jmkpr.com / 212-842-1752.

Images this page (l.-r.): *Reach*, Leslie Fry; center, *Venus*, Ellen Schon; *Bog Basin*, Katie Fee.

