

Diana Kersey

Artist Statement – Studio work

My studio work focuses on the way the urban environment disconnects us from the natural world. When we create a barrier between ourselves and nature, effects like climate change and environmental destruction are easier to ignore. For me, working with clay is a way of reconnecting with the earth itself.

I work exclusively in ceramics, from pottery to sculpture and large architectural installations. Seeking to connect with the viewer easily and immediately, my pieces tend to be colorful and textural, with translucent, earthy glazes. My recent work includes a series of ceramic kiln inspired sculptures that honor the history of my craft. As a contemporary ceramic artist, I employ precise, computer-modulated kilns for the majority of my work. However, for the past 20 years, I have met with other artists in the Texas Hill Country to build—and fire a wood-burning kiln. This requires cooperation and faith, and the result is a kiln that breathes in time with nature.

Artist Statement – Public Art

In 2011, I successfully created and installed my first public art commission. As a public artist, I am always conscious that I work for an audience that will interact with my work for decades to come, and possibly, long after I am gone.

Most of my public art projects incorporate community input as early as the idea development stage. Successful public art projects help to strengthen communities and lower barriers, so it must at least partially originate from within the community that surrounds it. I'm often hired for public art commissions because my work allows for immediate access, enhancing the environment in a way everyone can enjoy.

I have a tremendous amount of respect for the amount of cooperation, persistence of vision, and the tremendous coordination of agencies that an infrastructure project requires. I enjoy the planning process, and find it very rewarding, and ultimately crucial, for the project's success. In the end, my hope, regardless of the subject matter, is to create work that will become an important part of the lives of the community who engages with it.

Biography

When Diana Kersey was a kid growing up in Lubbock, Texas, her parents let her dig a mud pit in their backyard. Thirteen inches down, she hit clay, and she's been working with it ever since.

Kersey is a visual artist working exclusively in clay, from small studio pieces to large architectural installations. Her work has become instantly identifiable, due to the muscular, spontaneous qualities of the material enhances with her colorful, translucent glazes.

Her public works have been commissioned by the City of San Antonio, VIA Metropolitan Transit, The San Antonio River Authority, and the City of Harlingen. She is currently working on two of her largest private commissions to date (over 650 square feet) for a new office tower in San Antonio, Texas.

Kersey earned an MFA in ceramics from Washington State University in 1997, and a BFA in drawing from Texas Tech University in 1994. She serves on the faculty at Northwest Vista College and owns and operates Kersey Ceramics LLC.

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