



DIANA JOHNSTON



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LEFT: DIANA CARVING ONE OF HER SIGNATURE PATTERNS INTO A THROWN BOWL

Just the Facts!

Diana Johnston - [Brewery Pottery](#) - Mineral Point

Artist medium: Pottery, Mixed Media, and Painting

Primary method of working:

Pottery: Both throwing and hand-building.

Mixed media: Welding and figuring out how to join things together that I can't put together by welding

Painting: Watercolor, cold wax and oil

Equipment used:

Wheel, slab roller, gas kiln, pug mill, mig welder, torch, drill press, metal saw.

I love using tools to create!



OPEN BANNER AT THE TOP OF THE DRIVEWAY



INSIDE THE GALLERY



AUTUMN AT BREWERY POTTERY

Artist Conversation!

Let's Learn a Little More...

Do you have a favorite surface or technique treatment?

I love working with different textures in all three mediums.

I will roll just about anything in clay just to see what happens.

What are some of your favorite tools to use when you create your artwork?

All kinds of textiles. I use many different wooden pieces.

I also make one-of-a-kind bisque fired stamps that I then roll in the clay.

One of my most cherished pottery tools is a handmade brush I made from a tuft of

red hair from our huge Irish Setter, Barney, in 1976. I've been using it to decorate our line of "Barney Bowls" for over 40 years now!

Do you have any favorite music or a "studio playlist" that inspires you when you work?

Audio books of all kinds.

I love podcasts! Some of my favorites include: This American Life. On Being. Death, Sex & Money. The Moth. Heavyweight. This is Love. Story Corps. The Memory Palace.

And an eclectic mix of different music, which always includes some John Prine.



BLUE & GRAY SIGNATURE PATTERN ON A BOWL



THREE COFFEE MUGS



NEW POTS FRESHLY UNLOADED FROM THE KILN



TEXTURED SERVING DISH



THROWING A BOWL ON THE WHEEL

Tell us a little bit about yourself and how you came to be living the life you are living today?

Tom and I grew up in the Chicago suburbs. High school sweethearts, we married in 1972 and moved to California! While we were there I fell in love with clay at a raku party in a wooded canyon midway between Carmel and Big Sur, right off of Highway One. That life changing experience led me to a community college night class where I learned to throw pots. I loved it from the start and obsessively began making pots which I continue to do with the same enthusiasm today. After a few night classes and some weekend pottery demonstrations by professional potters things began to start to come together. Over time my biggest teacher has been the daily practice of making pots and trying new things. In the late seventies I was a member of several pottery co-ops where I learned to fire a gas kiln and began to sell pots at art fairs. By 1981 Tom and I had established our own studio in a former general store building in the small hamlet of Edmund, WI. We made our living selling our pots at art fairs and wholesaling to galleries.

Opening Johnston Gallery in Mineral Point in 1989 led to beginning to cut back on art fairs and starting to imagine the possibility of working in some new mediums. In the early nineties I began painting and welding. We bought an 1850 brewery building in Mineral Point in 1991 where we live, work and have our gallery, Brewery Pottery. During these adventures we raised our children Parrish and Claire. Mixing living and working together blends everything into a mixture which feels just right for us.

What is your studio like?

Our primary pottery making space is in the former bottling room of the brewery. This space joins the gallery so we able to throw pots, roll slabs, hand-build pots and glaze while we are having conversations with visitors. The pots are fired at the far end of the building in the old boiler room, located by a fermentation room. The pots are first bisque fired in the electric kiln then carried back to the studio where they are glazed. After glazing they are carried back and loaded in the gas kiln for their final firing at 2400 degrees.

The welding studio spreads out across the bottom of the building where the spring

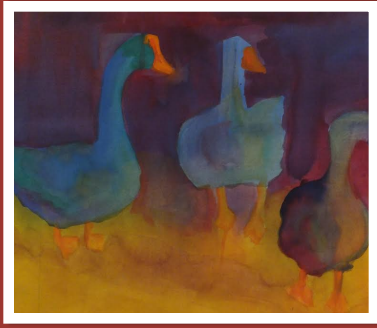
flows through. The tools, countless gears, horns, grates, wooden shoe forms, rusty burners, springs and thousands of various metal parts line the room and surround the work tables. Overflow parts are in rows of white plastic buckets in the adjoining fermentation room (a.k.a. the vampire room) where bats make their home during the winter.

The painting studio is in our living space right off the dining room where grain was once stored.

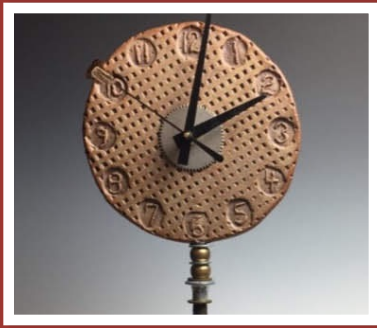
Where do you find your Inspiration?

The shapes, patterns and colors of nature bring me endless inspiration. I am inspired by people who put their heart and soul into what they make or do. I am inspired by people's passion and determination to bring positive changes to this world. Kindness. The cast off bits and pieces of old things whose beautiful designs and conception are building blocks to new things. I am inspired through the process of making things, one thing leads to another. I am inspired by using hand made pieces that carry the essence and spirit of the person who made them.

RIGHT: DIANA USING A BLOWTORCH TO ADD COLOR TO AN OLD TROMBONE THAT WILL BECOME THE BOTTOM OF A SCULPTURAL BIRD BATH



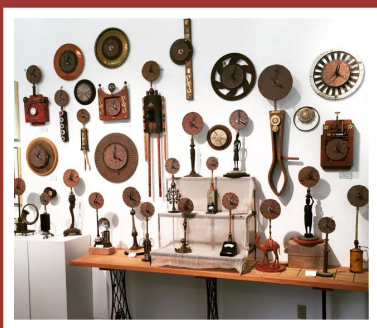
WATERCOLOR "THREE BLUE GEESE"



DETAIL OF WELDED CLOCK



OIL PAINTING OF THE BREWERY BUILDING



GROUPING OF CLOCKS ON DISPLAY

How do you keep your mind fresh?

Meditation, writing, reading, gardening, sitting outside and long winding conversations with my family and friends.

Where can we find your work and learn more?

Our work is available at both of our galleries in Mineral Point, [Johnston Gallery](#) and [Brewery Pottery](#). We carry our work as well as the work of 300 other artists between the two galleries. Since the Covid-19 pandemic began, we have

been closed at both of our retail spaces.

After thirty plus years of being open seven days a week it has been heartbreaking to miss the wonderful visits and the ability to share the large variety of beautiful work made by the talented artists whose work we carry.

We are continuing to make things even though the doors are currently closed. We have been working on an online store which will feature our work and the works of many of the artists that we carry. It will launch soon.

You can also find us on both [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

We've been on the Fall Art Tour since it's beginnings. Each year we meet so many wonderful people and make such great connections. Not having the in-person Fall Art Tour is so hard. I love that the Studio Stories are now a part of the Fall Art Tour site so we can all still share some of the behind the scenes views and experiences that make the Fall Art Tour so much fun! I hope you will join us virtually this year and we will look forward to *seeing* you all in 2021!