

Robert Wallace



Biography

I received my B.F.A. in Painting and Art Education from Ohio University in 1999. Shortly after that, I moved to North Carolina and I discovered the art of bonsai at the 1999 Carolina Bonsai Expo. I realized that instead of painting from nature's inspiration I could sculpt using trees and plants from nature. Having some knowledge of clay from my undergraduate degree I started exploring how I could make containers for bonsai and other horticultural plantings. When I went back to school to receive my master's degree I chose to explore ceramics further and In 2007 completed my M.A.E.d. from Western Carolina University focusing on ceramics, bonsai, and their connections to art education. This is also where I learned about wood firing and soda glazing techniques that I often use in my work.

I currently live in Columbus, NC, with my beautiful wife and two sons. I teach high school and art and enjoy growing a collection of bonsai, competing in endurance sports, and running a pottery out of my house. I recently built a new hybrid kiln that I can fire with wood and gas, and am enjoying using that along with my electric kiln to create one of a kind high quality bonsai containers.

Artist Statement 2023

I have always been inspired by nature from the sublime views from our mountain tops, to the quiet beauty of lichens growing on a rock. It is the beauty of age and natural layers formed in ways our hand can never emulate that draw me in. More than just a scene or image it is the story that nature tells that I want to emulate in my pottery.

My work typically begins on the potters' wheel and is decorated with a variety of surface techniques and a balance of refined and rugged components. I want to maintain evidence of the once soft and malleable clay and the feeling of hand made but also show the skill and technique of an experienced potter. I work in many different firing processes from electric, to gas, wood, and the addition of soda vapor. Each one has its own qualities but with all of them I want to build my glazes, stains, and additive fluxes to create an unpredictable finish often having multiple options for a front, and variation all around. In the end it is this not knowing what will come out but the anticipation and variation that every firing brings that makes it all worthwhile.

<https://www.wallacewoodspottery.com/>