

PENLAND GALLERY

TOM JASZCZAK

Shafer, MN

CLAY | Functional ceramics

Penland Affiliation | Penland Resident Artist 2015-2018, Penland Instructor 2018

Artist Information | Studio artist; education: BA and BS Bemidji State University, Oxford University; teaching: Penland (NC), Greenwich House Pottery (NY), Diablo Valley College (CA); exhibitions: *Minimal* Carbondale Clay Center (CO), *Two Young Minnesotans* Lacoste Gallery (MA), *Boundary Lines* Trax Gallery (CA), *Recent Works* Jane Hartsook Gallery (NY), *Recent Works* Artisan Gallery (WI), *Still Life, A Minimalist Exploration*, Abel Contemporary (WI)

Artist Statement | *My work is rooted in the wonderful studio pottery tradition of Minnesota. I grew up in Minnesota, went to university in Minnesota, and the pots I handled and admired in those formative years were those of local Minnesota potters. The work of many of these potters had a way of showing the materiality of clay, which was attractive to me. Often, the pots had an inventiveness in form as well – as they were relatively minimal, the forms had to be ‘just right’. And so, my first interest in clay was in developing my own inventiveness in form. I am constantly seeking a balanced proportion and a gentle angularity to accent the changes in direction of rims, feet, and body of my pots. With its planes and clean lines, my work has moments of design and craftsmanship, while retaining strong moments of the hand and process – my own personal version of that materiality which I have so admired.*

My pots are minimal but show depth and richness through this materiality – first, with the scrapes, small pits, and ruggedness of the red brick-like clay I use; then with a layer of poured slip, which adds fluidity, and a rich depth in surface picked up both from the iron clay underneath, and the spontaneity of the atmospheric soda firing in which I fire my work. Finally, a bright, flat, decorative element, painted with underglaze, sits in the foreground, and often gives the pot a sense of orientation. This cumulative journey of the pot tells a story, and the story brings the user into the moment of making and firing. Slips, trimming lines, finger marks, edges, wad marks, drips, scratches, and shadows capture a moment in time and tell more of the story.

Technical Information | Low temperature soda firing

Penland School of Craft | Penland Gallery & Visitors Center
3135 Conley Ridge Road, Bakersville, NC 28705
gallery@penland.org | 828 765 6211
penland.org/gallery