



# Smithsonian American Art Museum

## ***Staged Stories: Renwick Craft Invitational 2009*** **Artist Biographies**

The following short artist biographies by Josephine Shea are from the exhibition catalogue *Staged Stories: Renwick Craft Invitational 2009*, co-published by the Smithsonian American Art Museum and Scala Publishers Ltd. in London (2009).



### **CHRISTYL BOGER**

Born in 1959 in El Paso, Texas, Christyl Boger went to graduate school after receiving a B.F.A. from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, where she studies painting with a focus on the figure. After graduating she attended ceramics classed at Michigan State University, developing a portfolio that enabled her to study at Ohio University at Athens.

After receiving her M.F.A. in 2000 Boger completed a one-year residency at the Clay Studio in Philadelphia, where she was the Evelyn Shapiro Fellow. During her year there she developed a body of work titled “The Chymical Object” that, in her words, drew “an equation between the figure and the decorative ceramic object to create a metaphorical representation of a human subject shaped by its culture heritage.” In 2003, she was named an Emerging Artist by the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts. She has been an artist-in-residence at the Archie Bray Foundation in Helena, Montana, and the International Ceramic Research Center in Denmark.

Boger is an assistant professor of ceramics at the Henry Radford Hope School of Fine Arts at Indiana University in Bloomington. She teaches workshops across the country. Her working methods and philosophy are shown in the book “The Figure in Clay: Contemporary Sculpting Techniques by Master Artists” (Lark Books, 2005). Her work has been featured in selective exhibitions and is included in important national and international collections.

Photo by John Burgoon; image courtesy of the artist.



## MARK NEWPORT

Born in 1964 in Amsterdam, New York, Mark Newport learned to knit as a child from his grandmother. He later learned simple weaving techniques while in Brazil as a high school exchange student and went on to study at the Kansas City Art Institute, graduating with a B.F.A. in 1986. When Newport returned to school, earning an M.F.A. from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1991, his thesis show featured knotted sculptures inspired by the figure.

While teaching at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Newport re-learned knitting in order to share the technique with his students. By 2002, he moved into knitting his own art, and the superhero series was born. While teaching at Arizona State University, Newport incorporated aspects of performance in his work, staging photographs and videos that portray him in his knitted suits. Prints that evoke comic books also followed.

In 2007, Newport was appointed artist-in-residence and head of the Fiber Department at the Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. His work has been exhibited throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe and is in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City and the Racine Art Museum in Wisconsin.

Photo by Mark Newport; image courtesy of the artist.



## MARY VAN CLINE

Mary Van Cline grew up in Dallas, Texas, her 1954 birthplace. She graduated from North Texas University with a B.F.A. in art and architecture in 1976, completing a master's in art in 1977. She credits her introduction to glass to her experiences at the influential Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina in 1979. Van Cline further developed her knowledge of glass techniques at Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, where she earned her M.F.A. in 1982. It was there she also became intrigued in the possibilities of light, experimenting with prisms and photosensitive glass.

Extensive travel has been inextricably intertwined with her artistic development. One of the earliest of these important journeys was a stay on the island of Crete in 1986. Perhaps most influential was Van Cline's six-month residency in Japan sponsored by the Japan-United States Friendship Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts. Photographic series created during these travels serve as rich resources to be examined and re-examined, and the arts of Japan, including "butoh" theater, have had a lasting impact.

Technical experimentation with photography and light-sensitive surfaces has earned Van Cline a reputation for cutting-edge innovation. But her work is not limited to this combination, and she uses other glass techniques such as "pâte de verre" to create three-dimensional figures and objects based on her photographic images. She has taught classes at Pilchuck Glass School, Penland School of Crafts, and Rhode Island School of Design. Her work is included in both private collections and major museums, including the Corning Museum of Glass. Van Cline maintains her studio in Seattle, Washington.

Photo by Mary Van Cline; image courtesy of the artist.



## SUNKOO YUH

SunKoo Yuh's artistic journey began in South Korea, where he was born in 1960. His creative talents emerged in early childhood as he became proficient in drawing. His aptitude gained him entry into the selective art school at Hongik University in Seoul, where he studied ceramics and learned to paint and draw, earning a B.F.A. degree in 1988.

After Yuh's sister immigrated to the United States to study, he followed her and settled in California. His earlier artistic patterns were shattered when he undertook studies with Tony Marsh at the California State University, Long Beach, where he developed expertise in working with porcelain and high-fire glazes and created a portfolio that earned him entrance into the School of Art and Design at the renowned New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University in New York. There he studied with noted ceramic faculty that included the artist Wayne Higby and received an M.F.A. in 1997.

Yuh's work won the grand prize in the second World Ceramic Biennale 2003 Korea International Competition, and in 2006 he was awarded a grant in sculpture from the Joan Mitchell Foundation. Now an associate professor of ceramics at the Lamar Dodd School at the University of Georgia in Athens, he continues to learn and experiment. Exhibitions have brought him to the attention of curators and collectors, and his work is included in important private and public collections, including the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Schein-Joseph International Museum of Ceramic Art in Alfred, New York, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Photo by Adam Gruszynski; image courtesy of the artist.