

Susanne Stephenson  
*Sculptural Paintings in Porcelain*

Selected works from the late 1960's through the early 1980's  
February 10th through April 13th, 2024



Stephenson Ceramic Studio, Ann Arbor, MI  
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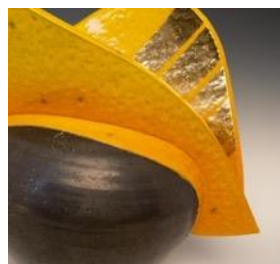


PC: Susanne Peterson

We invite you to immerse yourself in this collection of Sculptural Paintings in Porcelain created in the late 1960's through the early 1980's, where each work tells a story of exploration, experimentation and the enduring allure and challenge of porcelain.

This carefully curated collection showcases Susanne Stephenson's mastery in porcelain. From tall vase forms, to covered plates, to soup tureens and bowls perched atop extravagantly balanced feet, Susanne once again pushes clay to its limits. Influenced by Pop Art, Susanne "got tired of browns" and began exploring iridescent and brightly colored lusters. The lusters required up to 4 firings, resulting in many casualties along the way. The difficulty of this process made the works that did survive very precious. In this exhibit, you'll see the transformation from sharp geometric forms to undulating gestural sculptures marked with soft desert tones.

Whether you are an avid collector, art enthusiast, friend or student of Susanne or John, or someone simply curious to experience ceramic history, we encourage you to come visit the studio and lose yourself in the symphony of forms, colors, and textures.



## Museum Collections

American Ceramic Art Museum at FLICAM, Fuping, China  
American Craft Museum, New York, NY  
Ariana Musee, Geneva, Switzerland  
Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece  
Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburg, PA  
Cranbrook Museum of Art, Bloomfield Hills, MI  
Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA  
Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, MI  
Downey Museum of Art, Downey, CA  
Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY  
Foshan/Nanfeng Museum, Foshan, China  
George R. Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art, Toronto, Canada  
Icheon World Ceramic Center, Kyonggi, Korea  
International Ceramic Center, Skaelskor, Denmark  
Loket Porcelain Museum, Loket, Czech Republic  
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY  
Mint Museum of Craft and Design, Charlotte, NC  
Museum of Decorative Arts, Prague, Czech Republic  
Victoria and Albert Museum of Art, London, England  
San Bao Collection, Jingdezhen, China  
Tsinghua University Art Museum, Beijing, China  
University of New York, SUNY Fredonia, New York, NY



#1 PEJ-24-01. Untitled. Porcelain and dry glaze. 21"ht x 15" x 11". \$1,600.



#2 PV-24-01. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 19.75"ht x 13" x 12". \$1,800.



#3 PFB-24-01. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 12.5"ht x 12.5" x 14". \$1,400.



#4 PV-24-02. Untitled. Porcelain and dry glaze. 15.5"ht x 10" x 6". \$1,000.



#5 PV-24-03. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 13.5"ht x 6" x 9.25". \$800.





#6 PJ-24-01. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 11.5"ht x 11" x 13". \$1,300. (J-80-51).



#7 CEV-24-01. Untitled. Porcelain and dry glaze. 21"ht x 12" x 14.5". \$1,000.



#8 PV-24-04. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 11.25"ht x 5" x 7". \$450.



#9 PV-24-05. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 17"ht x 8" x 11". \$900.



#10 PV-24-06. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 14.5"ht x 9" x 8.75". \$900. (FB-84-3).



#11 PV-24-07. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 13.75"ht x 9" x 8". \$900.



#12 PV-24-08. Untitled. Porcelain and dry glaze. 19.5"ht x 9" x 8". \$1,000.



#13 CP-24-01. Covered Plate. Porcelain and luster. 12.25"ht x 12.25" x 10". \$1,400.





#14 CEV-24-02. Small Volcano. 4"ht x 9.5" x 9.5". \$400.



#15 CEV-24-03. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 9.5"ht x 9.5" x 4". \$800. (PV-22-20).



#16 CEV-24-04. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 12"ht x 9.5" x 15.25". \$800. (SB-79-18).



#17 PEJ-24-02. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 17.5"ht x 13" x 11". \$1,300. (V-78-17).



#18 DB-24-01. Donut Bowl. Porcelain and glaze. 9.75"ht x 14" x 20". \$1,200.



#19 PS-24-01. Sled. Porcelain and Glaze. 9.25"ht x 10" x 6". \$1,000



#20 PV-24-09. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 26"ht x 13" x 13.5". \$2,200.



#21 CP-24-02. Covered Plate. Porcelain and glaze. 8.5"ht x 13" x 13". \$1,000. (CP-22-2)





#22 PV-24-10. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 23"ht x 11" x 11". \$2,200.



#23 DB-24-02. Donut Bowl. Porcelain and glaze. 8.75"ht x 13.5" x 16". \$1,100.



#24 PV-24-11. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 17"ht x 12" x 6". \$900.



#25 PV-24-12. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 23.25"ht x 10" x 13". \$2,200.



#26 CP-24-03. Covered Plate. Porcelain and glaze. 14.5"ht x 14.75" x 14.5". \$1,600.



#27 PV-24-13. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 27.5"ht x 11.5" x 12.5". \$2,200.



#28 ST-24-01. Soup Tureen. Porcelain and glaze. 10"ht x 12" x 12". \$1,200.



#29 PV-24-14. Untitled. Porcelain and glaze. 13.75"ht x 9.5" x 9.5". \$1,000.





#30 GL-24-01. Green Globe. Porcelain and luster. 11.25"ht x 11.25" x 9.5". \$900.



#31 GL-24-02. Yellow Globe. Porcelain and luster. 12"ht x 16" x 9". \$1,400.



#32 GL-24-03. Purple Globe. Porcelain and luster. 11"ht x 13" x 11". \$1,200.

## Related Writings

### Excerpt from Martha Keller Interview with Susanne Stephenson, 1986

Soon I got tired of the brown tones and I wanted to use some color. I tested porcelain at Cranbrook and found it hard to work with. But I got some grogged porcelain (English kaolin) in which you can bend and push and throw on a large scale. So I started using some of the colors I used at Cranbrook like copper reds and copper blues and black on the white of the clay.

We went to Penland one summer to teach and worked with lusters using a fuming technique. The pots were iridescent in certain parts. The problem is that it was sometimes too spontaneous. But I liked the iridescent. And that's how I got into Lusters. At this time, in the late 60s, there were a lot of people using bright colors and Lusters in different ways. Partly a pop art influence. At Cranbrook, I had seen a few examples of Elizabeth Stratton's iridescent pieces from Pewabic pottery. These were deeper into the surface of the glaze done in a reduction technique. I did some hard edge things, round globes with pin striping and very bright colors. Sometimes there were flaps on top that stood up with a coil and would reflect into the flaps. Not only did I use the luster to work with reflection, but I used low fire glazes to get some of these very bright colors. I fired these pieces three or four times. So in a sense, they became very precious.

At this point, I put the idea of function into the back of my mind. With all this luster, you really couldn't deal with function. I made the pieces simple and I used black and white and gold luster with iridescence airbrushed in the gold and it would be put on in one firing. And then I'd re-fire an airbrush green pearl or blue pearl into that. You could spray some into the white and would get one effect and then into the luster and get a halo effect on the white. They seemed so precious, highly colored and with the luster, even though I was making functional pieces - cookie jars and covered plates and soup terrains - some people looked at them and didn't want to use them. Not even for a special occasion. It was also convenient to be working with lusters at this time, because I could do them in stages. I had to schedule my work at fragmented times, while our daughter Tara, born in 69 was napping. Every artist who has kids has to adjust to different ways of working.

**Related Writings Cont.**

**Excerpt from Susanne Stephenson: “Color and Form” 1988, Dolores Slowinski**

In the late 1960s, Susanne turned to porcelain. She needed a white canvas to work on. She revived the colors she had used at Cranbrook and worked red, blue and black against the white ground. The pop art influence at the time, lured many ceramists into working with bright colors and crisp shapes. Lustres with their rainbow hues began appearing in Susanne's work in 1968, as a result of some experimentation with fuming techniques she had done while teaching that summer in Penland, North Carolina. The fuming however, produced a luster that was a little too unpredictable to suit her. Wanting the security of a more controlled situation, she began to make pin striped, non functional globes in bright colors with upright rigid flanges along the top to get the reflective lusters and bright colors she wanted. She had to airbrush the lusters onto the pieces between three or four successive firings, making the survivors very precious. Each firing could result in the loss of several pieces.

While the fragmented firing schedule may have fit in with her caring for her young daughter, the planning, rigidity of the forms and designs on the surface, airbrushing etc, had destroyed the immediacy and sensuous quality, which has attracted her to clay in the first place. The work was too tight. She was restless, dissatisfied and needed a break.