

## Cover Letter – Mayumi Makino Kiefer

Dear Search Committee,

My name is Mayumi Makino Kiefer, and I am applying for the Visiting Assistant Professor of Art position at Whitman College. A current student and alumnus of Whitman referred me to the position.

I have a BFA in 3D Studio Arts - Ceramics, and an MFA in Ceramics and Sculpture. I believe I am highly competent in all aspects of teaching ceramics and related studio arts (See List of Technical Skills Section at the end of my CV/Resume). I am just finishing my third year of teaching ceramics at the adult/college level and have had an additional 3 years at public arts studios teaching students of all ages. College classes that I have taught include: Ceramics 1 & 2, Studio Ceramics, 3D Design, and Soft Sculpture. In terms of service to the college and community, I co-developed and taught GenEd Art (Arts & Humanities) and Wellness classes (classes that combine art and healing) and did outreach to local K-12 public and private schools. I continued my efforts in leveraging the ceramic arts, fundraising for anti-hunger campaigns, homelessness and related programs.

My artistic expertise includes most major production methods, finishing styles and techniques, from wheel throwing, hand-built and sculpted ceramics to press-molds/slip casting and public installations. I can use, repair and maintain most types of equipment used in ceramics (electric and gas kilns, including kiln design and building), including those in wood preparation. I have fired gas (Olsen & Geil) and electric kilns (Skutt, Paragon, Vulcan and others) on my own over 550 times and have led nearly 50 wood-firings (Ittekoi, Train, Anagama, Bourry Box, etc.). I also build and maintain kilns, (including the gas and electric ones mentioned above), and with the permission of the Shigaraki Ceramics Cultural Park in Japan (one of my residencies), I built the first Ittekoi kiln outside of Japan, and just recently completed and fired a fourth iteration. (Examples of the kilns and the work that came from these kilns can be found in my Portfolio).

I am a multi-award-winning artist in traditional and modern ceramics, various sculptural and decorative styles and obtained my BFA in 3D Studio Arts from Ohio Northern University, as a Dean's Scholar. I received my MFA from the University of Oklahoma (GPA: 3.94). The awards for my art are broad and numerous, and a selected list can be found in my CV/Resume on my personal webpage: <https://www.mayumiworks.com/> Major awards, in chronological order, include:

- Excellence in Visual Arts Award from the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio (2012)
- Letters of Commendation from the Ohio State House of Representatives and the Ohio State Senate (2012)
- Several "Best-In-Show" and People's Choice Awards (2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2018, 2020)
- Several merit based scholarships (2010, 2011, 2012, 2018, 2017, 2018)
- The Mobile Foundation Award (2017, 2018)
- 2nd Place in the 2017 Seven-State Biennial (Largest in OK, AR, TX, CO, KS, MO, NM) (2017)
- NCECA Graduate Fellow (2018)
- Juror's Choice Award in 3D - "Art & Soul" (Largest art show in the Pacific Northwest) (2020)

In the ceramics field, it is important to not only maintain good relationships with other artists, not just to learn from them, but to access student opportunities and expand their view. This is why I have built a strong network of well-known ceramic practitioners, who are often firing partners, mentors, advisors and specialists from across the U.S., Japan, Korea, and Italy.

I have much to share...skills, connections, culture, vision, and experience, and I hope that I can add to the skill sets of the staff and professors at Whitman. Thank you for considering my application!

Sincerely,



Mayumi Makino Kiefer