



# i am a craftsman

# 40at40

CELEBRATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CRAFTSMEN'S  
GUILD OF MISSISSIPPI WITH 40 OF ITS EXHIBITING MEMBERS



*Foreword by  
Patti Carr Black*

*Photography by  
Roy Adkins*

*Text by  
Robin C. Dietrick*



# claudia CARTEE



Covered Stoneware Jar, Ceramic, 19" x 9" x 9"



Pedestal Bowl, Ceramic, 16" x 18" x 18"

Claudia Ka Cartee, of Ka Pottery, is her father's daughter. Her parents Claude Mackie Newton and Dorothy "Dobie" Dobson operated a successful pottery studio in southern California where Cartee was born. She grew up in the studio, working for her father in various capacities, always watching him handle clay, enthralled with what she saw.

Cartee pursued ceramics in her youth, even winning an award at the Orlando ceramics show as a teenager when the family lived in Florida. Practicality took over, and she entered into a corporate career in San Diego as a young adult. It did not take long, however, for Cartee to pursue her true calling. She left her full-time job to become a full-time art student. When she received her BFA, Cartee called her father who was living on family land in Seminary, Mississippi, to ask if she could return home. It was there she set up her first studio.

Cartee's studio is still on family land in Seminary where she finds complete happiness and a multitude of natural inspirations to nourish her creative spirit. Cartee and her husband Troy, her business partner, find further inspiration in Colorado in the summers, working in the small cabin and studio they built by hand over sixteen years. There, Claudia absorbs a much different landscape, full of rocks, mountains and rivers containing an infinite color and texture range, which often informs her artwork.

The Cartees create both functional and purely artistic work in clay, each aspect providing a balance for the artist. Claudia is aware the long-standing vessel-making tradition has been a necessity for cooking, serving, eating and drinking. While some artists could not bear the thought of making multiples, Cartee enjoys the repetition, finding her own rhythm, and in the process, she is able to rejuvenate the creativity on which she relies for her clay sculptures. Mississippi may be home to her utilitarian pottery, but Cartee's purely artistic work is born in Colorado—like her portly, abstracted human figures, or "River Dolls," based on the shape of stacked river rocks. She ships those back to Mississippi to receive their glazes and other finishing touches after being bisque-fired in her little cabin.

In her studio, Cartee placed a memorial to her father composed of his likeness and a few of his tools. Cartee loves to remember what her father, in his seventies, proclaimed to her as he drove away from his studio in his truck, "I'm the happiest man I know!" Claudia now experiences his sentiment personally saying, "I feel humbled by the joy I feel being an artist, working in clay. I have loved clay all of my life ... I love the challenges, the endless creativity and possibilities of it. I love being creative and loving where I live and finding such joy and happiness here."

*Claudia Ka Cartee*  
2012



