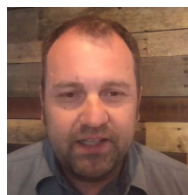




Judges 2020

Michael Carlson feels equally at home digging clay for making architectural tile, teaching vector graphics to a room full of teens, or preparing for an eight hour meeting on community arts programming. Twenty years as an art educator developed his fluency for the expressive potential of diverse materials, and a passion for making art accessible to all. "I might teach pinhole photography, gif animation, loom weaving and watercolor wash all in the same day and come home to read three or four grants in the evening. All so I can jump on the wheel and throw pottery for a couple of hours on the weekend." says Carlson about his arts practice. "Time to make my own work is rare and precious." He and his wife Amy



have their own studio where they hone their aesthetics making functional ceramics and conceptual art using the intaglio process. "I started teaching throwing as a volunteer in the basement of a community arts center. Most of my early work was lost when the gallery it was in went out of business. Thanks to that experience I've committed most of my creative energy to developing community capacity for the arts. Now, years later I'm happy to see the arts are woven more completely into our society. Artists are able to

explore ideas they want to bring into the world, the infrastructure is there. We're creating the kind of community I want my students to inherit." Michael lives and works in Central Minnesota, has a MA in Studio Art from SCSU, served nine years on the board of directors for the Central Minnesota Arts Board and is a member of the White Earth Nation. He likes to make work that requires connections to other artists, other generations, and to daily life.

Melissa Gohman is a Central Minnesota based artist with a MA in Ceramics/Drawing from St. Cloud State University. She is a teacher and working artist that has led multiple successful large-scale public art installations. She is a ceramic artist, primarily working with figurative sculpture, pottery and occasionally cement forms layered in glass mosaic. "Clay is alive - it starts soft as flesh, responding to my hands and fingers and recording their imprints as I shape it. Clay hardens and the bones and branches I have sculpted into the female form become visible reminders of the provisional, delicate relationship we have with the natural world. Out of the abundance of life comes death. In paying close attention to structure, our imagination escapes. My work rejects easy formulations of beauty and grace; instead it finds power in revealing paradox.", Melissa says of her artistic medium. Her focus of interest for several years has been narrative female figures or gowns created from clay. Her artistic practice is separated between the intimate narrative of her personal work and community building activities of public art.

