

FUNCTION, FORM & FANTASY

Ceramics from the Dr. Robert & Deanna Harris Burger Collection

This exhibition offers a unique look at the recent history of ceramics—from the 1960s to present day—highlighting the diversity of styles and intense creativity of expression in the medium of clay. The exhibition is divided into three sections that explore this exemplary collection:

FUNCTION

In this section, the ceramic works are traditional forms or shapes (vase, bowl, or plate) that are essentially functional, even if their techniques are experimental.

FORM

Free of the need to make a useful or “utilitarian” object, ceramicists instead experimented with the properties of clay and the chemistry of glazes. Using a sculptural approach, ceramicists often began with familiar shapes but manipulated the forms so that the original shape is no longer recognizable.

FANTASY

While some ceramicists used this new freedom from function to push the possibilities of form, shape, and color, others ventured into figuration, narrative subject matter, and manipulation of historical and traditional forms. Using the term “fantasy,” this section encompasses a diversity of artistic approaches, from the literal and comical to the surreal and futuristic.

The ceramics in *Function, Form, and Fantasy* range from bold, expressionistic forms to simple, elegant motifs, and from sizes smaller than 3-inches tall to larger-than-life. The works by such well-known artists, including Peter Voulkos, Viola Frey, Adrian Saxe, and Patti Warashina, can be both thought-provoking and mysterious, blurring the lines between craft and fine art.