

Ron Michael

Lindsborg, Kansas

Ron Michael makes imaginative sculpture, vessels, and disks that are inspired by surfaces, forms, and other stuff found in nature. When creating pieces, he embraces an organic quality, weathered aesthetic, imperfection, texture, asymmetry, sense of mystery, and humor.

Michael is a proponent of the slow art movement and frugal art making practices. He employs simple methods and advocates art made at the human scale. Hand tools are the norm and natural materials are used in abundance. His ceramic pieces include a high percentage of Kansas clay formed using hand-built or wheel thrown techniques. During the making process he often brushes or sifts a colored Mason stain on the wet clay to add differing colors.

Once dry, the pieces are single fired in an electric kiln. His sculpture forms are intuitively assembled and incorporate fired clay, regional stone, and upcycled/locally-sourced wood. The circular disks are made by draping clay over farm implement disks. He's an artist prone to mistakes (warping clay, miss-measured wood cuts, broken stone, etc.), but soldiers on anyway and tries to work with his mishaps.

Ron Michael is the director of the Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery in Lindsborg. Prior to being named director in 2014, he served as curator for 14 years and registrar for 3. He has exhibited in many regional and national exhibitions; taught art courses at the high school and collegiate level; juried numerous art competitions; and been involved with several regional arts organizations.

In the spring of 2000, Michael received an M.F.A. in ceramics from the University of Kansas. Prior to working at the Sandzén Gallery and attending school at KU, he served as a reference librarian for the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, California, and taught high school art in Seneca, Kansas.

In 1995, he received a master's degree in Library Science and Information Management from Emporia State University. He also has two undergraduate degrees from Fort Hays State University: a B.F.A. in ceramics and B.A. in communications.