

JENNIFER C. McCURDY



Wheel Thrown Porcelain

Artist's Statement

Andre Gide says, "Pay attention only to the form; emotion will come spontaneously to inhabit it. A perfect dwelling always finds an inhabitant."

Emotion fills me when I see perfect forms in nature, from the cracked conch shell on the beach revealing its perfect spiral, to the milkweed pod burst in the field, its brilliant airborne seeds streaming into the sunlight. The ordered symmetry and asymmetry of nature's forms reveal the growth of life, the movement of life.

Living on Martha's Vineyard, island time, especially in the winter, seems to conform to nature's cycles. As a potter, I strive to make my work reflect the balance of life around me. It is important that the patterns I see around me are integrated into my forms.

I use a translucent porcelain body because it has a beautiful surface, and it conveys the qualities of light and shadow that I wish to express. After throwing my vessel on the potter's wheel, I alter the form to set up a movement of soft shadow. When the porcelain is leather hard, I carve patterns to add energy and counterpoint. I fire my work to cone 10, where the porcelain becomes non-porous and translucent.

Some of the finished pieces hold elusive glimpses of the balance between the convex and the concave, and light absorbed and reflected. In further exploration, I marry the fine porcelain with the ancient art of gilding. The 23 carat gold leaf illumines the interior of the vessel, to reveal new curves and patterns.