

Archaeologists critically assess civilizations through an examination of their shards of ceramics. Pots, bowls, and figurines are, among their other uses, chronological statements of a society's sophistication and evolution. Of course, ceramics are far more than just pottery and plates — included are tiles, pitchers, and even pieces of ornate sculpture. (Today, our personal decor is often accented by ceramic pieces.) Founded in 1990 by Lucy Lacoste, the [Lucy Lacoste Gallery](#) (in the center of Concord, Massachusetts) serves as a showcase for innovative and inspiring ceramics, ranging from pieces with beautiful surfaces to examples of geometric abstraction as well as pictorial and sculptural objects.



The gallery has been committed to clay as an art medium and has chosen to focus on showing contemporary, post-WWII ceramic artists, from the established to the emerging. The venue puts together thoughtfully curated exhibitions along with functional works by a roster of prominent, well-known potters. In addition to its ceramic shows, the gallery is also stimulating a dialogue about ceramics by presenting 2-D art.

The array of the ceramic pieces on display is wide-ranging. Aesthetic approaches vary greatly. The adroit mix of styles, techniques, and artistic character in the gallery's one-person shows encourages knowledgeable and novice viewers to experience — both positively and perhaps negatively — the visceral power of quality handcrafted objects. In other words, Lucy Lacoste doesn't expect everyone to appreciate or embrace all the pieces on view. With ceramics, like other visual arts disciplines, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. In this gallery, ceramic art is supposed to be provocative, challenging, and, at times, prickly.

Given the variety, there is something for everybody. The gallery's prices for the work range from under a hundred dollars to several thousand. Because of the depth, innovation, and inclusiveness of the exhibits, museums continually purchase standout pieces for their permanent collections. Also enhancing the exhibitions: the gallery publishes handsome catalogues of the artworks on display. This is a place that not only adds to our appreciation of ceramics, but also contributes to the visual poetry of our own civilization.

— Mark Favermann, [Arts Fuse 2/1/24](#)