

# Artist's Statement

That feeling you get when you first open a box of oil pastels and scratch meaningless marks across a blank page, or the raw power you experience when you watch a puddle of molten steel form behind a bead of welding wire... These tactile emotions are often forgotten in the rush we experience in reaching a final deadline, or the excitement of seeing a piece in its finished state. How often we forget it's not just the final result, but it's also the first brush stroke, the smell of the oil paints, the blending of multitudes of colors on a glass table top. The *process* is therapeutic, emotional and personal for every human being who touches an artistic medium, whatever his or her intention. Every single piece of art work you've ever seen involves a process, many failures and successes, steps that were successful or unsuccessful, though many artists try to hide it.

I embrace it.

Those failures? Yes, they're there. The steps from start to finish? Yes, I can tell you every damn one. I can tell you how it felt when I reached my hand into that tub of recycled clay, and of my excitement in revealing a piece of Raku-fired ceramic from a can of ash. That piece still contains the memory of how the smoke billowed and burned my nose, made my eyes water.

When I create a piece, those memories and emotions are all there, and visible if you look hard enough. You can see how much fun I had mixing juicy colored slips onto a smooth piece of leather hard clay. You can understand how I stood there and patiently waited for thirty minutes to be over so the delicate wood grain under a fresh coat of mahogany stain would be revealed. You can know how I would always be the first person in the classroom to see pieces from a glaze firing, holding the stoneware up to my face to feel the warmth radiate off the freshly cooled glassy surface. And you can imagine how, every time I look at a piece of my own artwork, these emotions, feelings, smells.... All come rushing back to me.