

## Greenwich Collector Establishes Pottery/Ceramics Database

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A Greenwich collector has established the Internet's first free searchable database for American studio ceramics and pottery produced since the end of World War II.

She is Martha Vida, a one-time interior designer who converted a lifelong interest in ceramics into "The Dictionary of American Studio Ceramics, 1946 to Present."

The registry is an illustrated encyclopedia of American studio ceramics, assembling for the first time in electronic form a listing of ceramic artists, active and departed, with the marks and signatures commonly found on the bottom of their work – enhanced with images, biographies, bibliographies and a directory of museums and galleries where the pieces are on display.

Under a non-profit structuring, the site carries no advertising, has no fee to ceramic artists for documenting their work on the site and no costs are incurred for searching. It is also not a valuation tool. Nor are any items appraised critically.

Vida characterizes the realm of ceramics and pottery as "an insight into understanding our culture."

"What the site does," she says, "is make all of the listed ceramic artists visible to a larger audience, giving wider exposure to a circle of talented people who have remained largely anonymous to the outside world. In the past you might come across a fantastic piece but there was really no readily authentic way to identify the maker."

Donald Clark, the research coordinator, brings a 25-year gallery background to the assignment. He points out that the electronic dictionary can be updated continuously and expanded with the evolution of the artists.

Vida, Clark and Ali Baldeneboro, the project director, estimate up to 10,000 artists might ultimately be listed and emphasizing that the directory is not a valuation tool. Only U.S. clay artists are included.

Additional information is available from Martha Vida, executive director, at [marthavida@themarksproject.org](mailto:marthavida@themarksproject.org) or by calling 203-622-9059.

*Martha Vida with a variety of pieces from her personal collection of American studio ceramics.*