

February 7- March 15, 2026

Fire + Form

Contemporary Ceramics of El Dorado County





Fire + Form: Contemporary Ceramics of El Dorado County

This exhibition brings together the work of three prolific local ceramicists: Sigrid Benson, Cristina Arizmendi, and Katie Morris; whose practices reflect both the elemental roots and evolving possibilities of clay. United by material but distinct in voice, their work demonstrates how fire and form remain active collaborators in contemporary ceramic art. Each artist engages clay not only as a medium, but as a language; one shaped by touch, time, and transformation.

Ceramics is among humanity's oldest art forms, emerging alongside the earliest civilizations as both necessity and expression. From utilitarian vessels fired in ancient kilns to ritual objects and sculptural works across cultures, clay has long bridged the functional and the symbolic. In the modern era, ceramics has increasingly claimed space within fine art, expanding beyond tradition while still honoring the alchemy of earth, water, air, and fire. This lineage, ancient yet continually renewed, forms the quiet backbone of the works presented here.

Within this deep history, Benson, Arizmendi, and Morris offer contemporary interpretations rooted in El Dorado County's creative landscape. Their works range in scale, surface, and intent, yet all reveal a sensitivity to process and material that speaks to ceramics' enduring power. *Fire + Form* invites viewers to consider how these artists shape raw matter into objects of resonance; works that carry both the weight of history and the immediacy of the present moment.

We acknowledge and honor the original stewards of this land, the communities of Nisenan and Miwok people who thrived and continue to thrive here. We honor their stories and ongoing contributions to our communities.



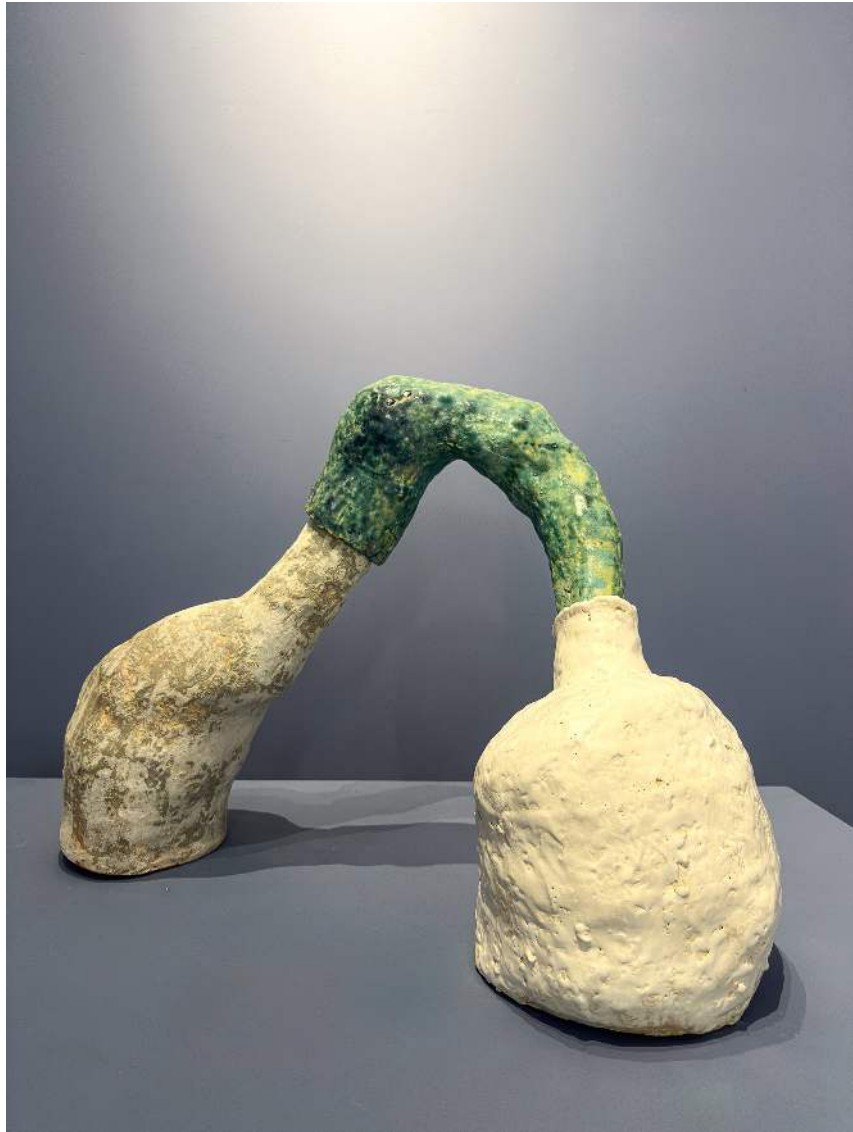
Sigrid Benson is a three dimensional, mixed media artist with a love of clay, fiber and form. Residing in the Sierra Foothills on unceded Nisenan lands, the artist is inspired by neolithic technologies, utilitarian cultural arts, and heritage resources. Her work incorporates materials and influences deriving from the land and peoples of her pan-American upbringing. Sigrid bridges time and space through basic human practices such as cordage making, twining, and natural dying in the creation of her conceptual finery.

Sigrid Benson

Titánide

Clay

2008



Sigrid Benson
Manantial
Clay
2009



Sigrid Benson

Sierva

Clay

2010



Sigrid Benson

Mano y Obra

Stoneware, Cotton, Quebracho,
Black Walnut

2025



Sigrid Benson

Pajaro Cantor

Clay, Cotton, Turkey Feathers

2010

Cristina Arizmendi is a ceramic artist and educator based in Placerville, California. She studied visual communication at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising as well as studio art with an emphasis in ceramics at California State University, Sacramento. Her professional background includes working as a personal assistant to master potter Forrest Lesch-Middelton, an experience that deeply shaped her approach to studio practice.

With over 18 years of professional experience, Cristina's work spans both functional and sculptural ceramic forms rooted in craftsmanship and daily ritual. Drawing from a nomadic artistic path through Sacramento, Sonoma County, the deserts of Utah, and the Sierra foothills, her work reflects a deep respect for process, material, and community. She owns and operates a ceramics studio where she maintains an active practice and teaches ceramics to adults and children.



Cristina Arizmendi

Chica
Clay
2025



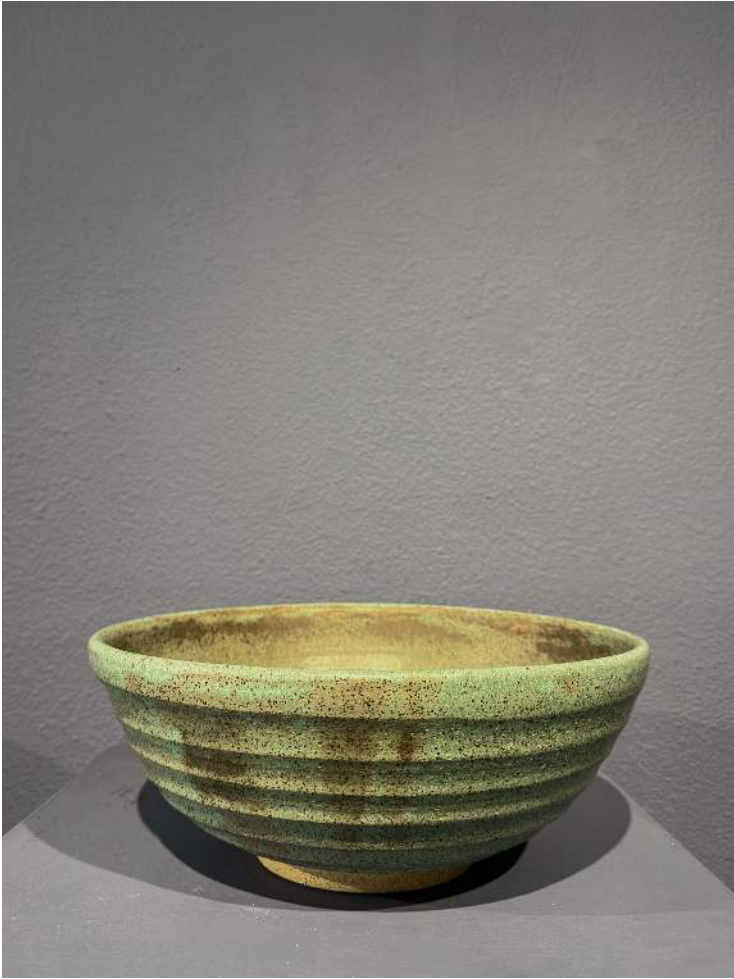
Cristina Arizmendi
Stretch
Clay
2026



Cristina Arizmendi
Luna Libations
Clay
2025



Cristina Arizmendi
Resist Goddess, Resist Vase,
Resist Lidded Jar
Clay
2026



Cristina Arizmendi
Turquoise Bowl
Carved Clay
2025



Cristina Arizmendi
Lamp
Raku Clay
2025



Cristina Arizmendi
Vase
Raku Clay
2024

Katie Morris

Ceramic art has long been Katie's primary means of self expression. Clay draws her in, invites her to create in an intuitive way. Katie started playing around with clay at a young age and the love of making and forming things from scratch got her hooked. There has always been something deeply primal about the way clay feeds her soul.

She started her art career at the Kansas City Art Institute and is a Graduate of Alfred University School of Art and Design. While on a cross-country road trip, she discovered the Mendocino Art Center and spent two years as artist-in-residence. Those two years at the Art Center turned into a ten year stint, living and working amongst the natural grandeur of the Mendocino Coast. A Residency in Sonoma at the Sonoma Community Center followed that tenure in Mendocino. Today however, Katie lives and makes art in the town of Placerville California along side her husband and daughter.

Her instinct and intuition are the two main drivers that continue to guide Katie each day as she steps into to her home ceramic studio. She is fortunate to have a slice of time in her weeks to create her art unconstrained. This time allows her to dive deep into a piece and be absorbed by it, trusting in the end it will reveal a story, a song, a poem, a bit of beauty, or maybe an unconscious revelation made manifest in clay, color and glaze.



Katie Morris
House of Tears
Ceramic/Red Stoneware
2011



Katie Morris
Bloom
Ceramic/Porcelain
2012



Katie Morris
United in Love
Ceramic/Porcelain
2025



Katie Morris
The King and Me
Ceramic/Porcelain
2012



Katie Morris
Clone
Ceramic/Red Stoneware
2011



Katie Morris
Friends
Ceramic/Red Stoneware
2011



Katie Morris
Chrysalis and Her Inner Child
Ceramic/Porcelain
2024



Katie Morris
Bloom
Ceramic/Porcelain
2011



Arts and Culture El Dorado's mission to promote, connect, and empower arts and culture throughout the county is achieved by targeted programs and services, a vibrant gallery exhibition series, and a focus on initiatives which support and sustain the cultural life of the region.

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Thank you!



SPECIAL THANKS

Cristina Arizmendi
Sigrid Benson
Katie Morris

This exhibition was curated by Loren Christofferson

Switchboard Gallery is supported in part by the California Arts Council,
the City of Placerville, and our generous patrons.

Arenz Family Fund
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Cover photo *The King and Me*, Ceramic, Katie Morris, 2012



Arts and Culture El Dorado | Splitboard Gallery
525 Main Street, Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 295-3496 | ArtsAndCultureElDorado.org