

**Undergraduate Research Proposal:
42nd Annual NCECA Conference
March 19th-22nd**

J. Nicholas Roudebush

Narrative:

Through the generosity of the Undergraduate Research Grant I am requesting funds to attend the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts' 42nd Annual conference held in Pittsburgh, PA on March 19th to March 22nd. The goal of NCECA is to promote and improve the ceramic arts through education, research and creative practice. (See Excerpt) I will attend the conference alongside Professor Joseph Gower, a long-time member of NCECA, in hopes of expanding my knowledge and skill in the field of Ceramics.

My work as an artist is heavily focused on the technical process of kiln building and experimentation, and through this process I strive to create interesting conceptual ceramic sculptures. I have recently constructed a downdraft barrel kiln that functions somewhat like a wood-burning stove and I am currently in the process of collecting used firebricks from a retired brick foundry outside of Crawfordsville with plans to create a small-scale soda kiln. This firing process involves the introduction of ash into the high-temperature kiln environment to create desired surface effects. I intend to incorporate these techniques into my senior thesis exhibition next spring and plan to continue my studies in the field of ceramics after Wabash. My future goals include graduate school and a career as a professional artist and instructor.

The NCECA conference will directly benefit my work as an artist and improve my ability to achieve these set goals. The conference includes a plethora of lectures, demonstrations, and discussions in the field of ceramics, many of which relate directly to my work. Over the four days, there are planned discussions on topics such as "Salt Firing vs. Soda Firing," "Kiln Maintenance," "Choosing a Graduate Program" and "Writing an Artist Statement;" technique demonstrations by experienced artists; and various informative lectures, including a talk on firing techniques by Eduardo Lazo, an artist who has directly influenced my work. (See Bio and Images) Everyday there will also be representatives from graduate programs across the nation available for questions, exhibition openings all around Pittsburgh and a community of dedicated students, artists and professors enabling me to enrich connections, share ideas and enjoy a comfortable art environment.

With the knowledge gained from this conference, I will continue to enhance my work as an artist in the field of ceramics. I intend to display and discuss my work in the celebration of student research as well as my senior exhibition. Also, the technical skills gained in kiln building will allow me to construct a permanent soda kiln in order to expand the options and resources of our Art department so that future students will have the ability to explore new techniques currently not available here at Wabash.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

J. Nicholas Roudebush
Class of 2009
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Timeline:

-Wednesday, March 19th:

Depart from campus 8:00AM and arrive in Pittsburgh, PA around 3:00PM.

Check in and Registration.

Opening Ceremony.

-Thursday, March 20th - Sunday, 22nd:

Various daily lectures, demonstrations, discussions, exhibit openings

Depart Sunday and arrive back on campus

-Spring 2008-Spring 2009:

Apply learned knowledge to continue work in ceramics.

Present and discuss work in Celebration of Student Research.

Senior Thesis Exhibition.

Budget:

Travel Component:

Mileage

406 miles both ways (x) \$.505/mile	\$410.00
(Driving my vehicle so that I will have transportation around the city)	
(mapquest.com)	

Accommodations

4 nights at \$150/ night Average	\$600.00
(oritz.com)	

Food

5 days at \$30/day	\$150.00
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Total	\$1,160.00
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Conference Costs

Membership Fee	\$30.00
(Reimbursement)	

Registration Fee	\$145.00
(Reimbursement)	

Total	\$175.00
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GRAND TOTAL	\$1,335.00
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Relevant Information:

NCECA Mission Statement:

The purpose of NCECA is to promote and improve the ceramic arts through education, research, and creative practice. NCECA offers programs, exhibitions and publications that are uniquely beneficial and rewarding to its membership of artists, educators, students, patrons, retailers and manufacturers. As a dynamic, member-driven organization, NCECA strives to be flexible in its programming and responsive to the changing needs of its constituency.

<http://www.nceca.net/aboutus/index.html>

Eduardo Lazo Statement and Images

My mission as a ceramic artist is to create museum quality vessels and sculptures that reflect a vision of the contemporary while radiating presence. The pieces should speak to the viewer, enhance their environment, and evoke the changing moment. This does not mean that they will always be interpreted as beautiful but I do hope they will impart a wow factor, causing contemplation. I want people to touch my pieces while being touched by them. In honoring ceramic traditions (East and West), I strive to elevate the ordinary, exploit perfect imperfection, and acknowledge the creative process. My focus is the home and office decor market.



Eduardo Lazo: *Saggar Closed Vessel*, 16"x15", 2003



Eduardo Lazo: *Pitfired Vessel*, 16"x15", 2003

<http://www.eduardolazo.com/closeup/pitfired04.html>

My Recent Statement and Images:

This current series attempts to engender vessels and their components by commenting on their inherent sexual interactions through form, surface, and arrangement. Feminine sexuality and behavior is presented and addressed through the form and surface of the slip cast ceramic vessel, while the mule deer antlers interact in ways and have characteristics which may appear sexually masculine. The vessels are low-fired in a downdraft barrel kiln; giving them to nature for surface decoration through smoke and fire. The vessels hold stereotypical sexually feminine qualities such as seduction, innocence, vulnerability, chastity, or submission. In contrast, the antlers are taken from their natural state, whether it is through ceramic casting or the addition of industrial materials such as spray paint and rubber, and arranged in ways which interact with the vessels. The antlers represent stereotypical masculine sexuality traits such as control, force, competition, persuasion, promiscuousness or protection. My work further exaggerates these aspects and the interaction between gender roles within a vessel. Though these vessels stress ancient stereotypes, through combining the age old practice of low-firing with modern techniques like slip casting and the addition of industrial materials; I am attempting to successfully examine these gender and sexuality stereotypes evident in both the old world and the new.



Untitled, 12"x11", 2007



Untitled Arrangement, 24"x13", 2007



Untitled, 12"x12", 2007