



40 Beech Street, Port Chester, NY 10573  
[www.clayartcenter.org](http://www.clayartcenter.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**Clay Art Center GALLERY**

40 Beech Street  
Port Chester, NY

Opening Reception  
06.22.24  
6:00-8:00pm

**ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE**

Concurrent Solo Exhibitions → June 22nd - August 3rd, 2024

**EVELYN MTIKA**  
**SCHUYLER FORSYTHE**  
**JESS LEVIN**

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## Clay Art Center is pleased to present: Concurrent Artist in Residence Exhibitions

Three solo exhibitions in the gallery and online at Clay Art Center.  
**June 22<sup>nd</sup> – August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024**

**Please join us for an Opening Reception on Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm**

We will be celebrating the artistic achievements of our current Artists in Residence **Evelyn Mtika** (Rittenberg Artist-in-Residence), Schuyler Forsythe (Artist-in-Residence ) and **Jess Levin** (second year Artist-in-Residence) in

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concurrent solo exhibitions in the **Clay Art Center Gallery**. Each year the residencies culminate in year-end exhibitions that highlight the recent works from each artist. This is a great opportunity to view the work of these emerging talents. The Opening Reception will feature gallery talks by all three Artist-in-Residence on Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 6 – 8pm.

Clay Art Center's nationally recognized artist-in-residence program was started in 1998 by Director Emeritus Reena Kashyap. The Residency program, which commences each year in September, is designed for emerging artists to have the time and space to develop their voices. Residents gain invaluable experience working in a community environment, teaching classes, sharing their technical knowledge and expertise, and managing many jobs around the studio. Through a competitive process, these artists come to Port Chester from across the country and are now thriving in their careers around the globe.

[Learn more](#)

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## Chasing Echoes

Evelyn Mtika

**Evelyn Mtika** (Rittenberg Artist-in-Residence) Evelyn Mtika has been working with clay for just shy of 3 years. Her work includes portraiture, figures, text, and is focused on exploring intertwined cultural connections and differences. She often pulls her inspiration from different aspects of her own background, having grown up within the crossroads of intersectionality - between a Black and African diasporic household and as the oldest and only daughter. She is currently a resident at Clay Art Center. She received her BFA from University of Hartford with a focus in ceramics and painting.

Evelyn states, "Chasing Echoes captures my deep desire to know my

predecessors- specifically other black artists who were part of art history but were disregarded as unimportant or simply had their stories untold. Just as it is sometimes difficult to find the original source of an echo, it has been difficult for me to get access to the history of other black ceramic artists. Despite that, the echoes of those artists still have an impact on my work.

My body of work is related to my understanding of how I navigate the world, holding myself to the close connections I make with my family and friends, while also defining my experience of living within the Black and African diaspora and as a Woman. Through my work, I contemplate the nature of growing into my identity as well as the struggle of bridging myself to others.”

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## Arms Outstretched

Schuyler Forsythe

**Schuyler Forsythe** (Artist-in-Residence) is a Hudson Valley native who received her Bachelor of Fine Arts at the State University of New York at New Paltz with a concentration in Ceramics. She has worked as a studio assistant for artists throughout the country and her works have been exhibited bi-coastally in group shows and markets. Schuyler's work has been greatly inspired by her life growing up in rural America, and imagery from her travels spent exploring the vast American landscape. Through this most recent body of work, the artist is exploring lost ancestral narratives through figurative sculpture and ornamentation. The clay becomes a vessel for exploring the intrinsic qualities of the human experience, collective and yet completely alone. Schuyler's work pays homage to the lineage of craftspeople who endured and persevered in order for her to be here today. She continues to explore the bounds of the ceramic medium, and challenge the notions we hold about the possibilities of ceramic art.

Schuyler states, "In my current body of work, I am examining the complex and fleeting qualities of the environment around me. I use these sculptures to examine and explore the Intersection between self-identity and the natural world. In the Welsh language there's a word for a type of homesick nostalgia, hiraeth, meant to describe the yearning and grief for the lost places of your past. A longing for a home to which you cannot return, a home which maybe never was. I often think about those who have come before me, those who experienced the same landscapes and the same sky, but in a time mostly now forgotten. Both our current surroundings and ancestral memory impact and question what it means to belong in our environment. Our histories continue to inform our present as our changing surroundings are a constant reflection of us and our pasts."

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## Dreamscapes

Jess Levin

**Jess Levin** (second year Artist-in-Residence) Jess Levin earned a BFA from the State University of New York at Purchase, NY, concentrating in ceramics with hints of fabrics to show the balance between the soft and the fragile. They are currently a second-year resident at Clay Art Center. They use a bright, colorful, cartoonish sculpting style to bring to life a narrative of self-exploration and expression.

Jess states, "The colorful yet quiet animal-human hybrids I create communicate a sense of serenity and relationship between fauna and human. The horned animal carries a sense of power and masculinity which I soften using a more feminine anthropomorphic form. Imagination is an essential part of any child. Playing pretend as a child is a gateway into self-exploration. With this in mind, I take a more mythical approach with my practice by taking these horned animals and imagining them in a

more whimsical way, often shown through the vibrant colors chosen for them. These friendly creatures act as companions for the larger and more animated personified animals that they are created alongside."

Learn more about our 2023-2024 Artists-in-Residence from a recording of a [Virtual Meet & Greet](#) in December, 2023.

Please join us for an **Opening Reception** on **Saturday, June 22nd, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

**Clay Art Center is a nationally recognized non-profit center for the advancement and practice of ceramic arts offering exhibitions, clay classes for adults and children, studio spaces for clay artists, and outreach programs in the community. It is located in the heart of Port Chester at 40 Beech Street, Port Chester, NY 10573. Join Clay Art Center classes, and exhibitions, and shop online at [www.clayartcenter.org](http://www.clayartcenter.org).**