



RICHARD WARD

Ceramic and Mixed-Media Artist | Earth-Based and Salvaged Materials

✉ Richard@DirtCreature.com 📸 @DirtCreaturePottery 🌐 DirtCreature.com

My ceramic and mixed-media practice grew from years spent building with earth, stone, and steel, where clay first became a structural material before becoming an artistic one. Working from an off-grid studio in southern Arizona, I combine ceramic forms with wild-collected minerals, rawhide, rusted metal, native copper, and found objects.

My current body of work, Holding, explores what happens when contact becomes transformation, and transformation requires adaptation. Vessels are opened, displaced, stitched, pinned, and braced, with their systems of support left visible. The work considers what can be built when restoration is no longer possible and how something beautiful can still emerge from irreversible change.

SELECTED GRANTS & RESIDENCIES

2026

Artist Opportunity Grant Recipient

Arizona Commission on the Arts

Artist-in-Residence, Wild Clay Residency

Visitor Center Artist Camp • Ewen, MI • July 25–August 8, 2026

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS & JURIED SHOWS

2026

Rio Grande Arts & Crafts Festival • Albuquerque, NM

Recycle Santa Fe Art Festival • Santa Fe, NM

Pieces of Us: The Art of Resilience and Recovery • Tucson, AZ

Upcycling Exhibition • Tubac Center for the Arts, Tubac, AZ

Spring Market • Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson, AZ

Endeavor Gallery • Benson, AZ (Featured Artist)

Art State Arizona Markets • Tucson, AZ

Art in the Park • Huachuca Art Association, Sierra Vista, AZ

2025

Voices of Cochise • Henry F. Hauser Museum, Sierra Vista, AZ

5 C's of Arizona • Ventana Gallery, Tucson, AZ

Rotica • Subspace Gallery, Tucson, AZ

Fall Market • Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson, AZ

Art State Arizona Markets • Tucson, AZ

2024

Art in the Park • Huachuca Art Association, Sierra Vista, AZ

Art State Arizona Markets • Tucson, AZ

Bisbee Art Market • Bisbee, AZ (Regular Artist)

2023

Pit Fire Festival • Cochise College, Douglas, AZ (Public Art Sculptor)

Central School Remake Show • Bisbee, AZ

Solo Exhibition • Cochise College, Douglas, AZ

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Art State Arizona

UNDERCOVER ARTS Magazine • Published Artist (2026)

Cochise College

MIRAGE Magazine • Published Artist (2024, 2025, & 2026)

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Dirt Creature

Founder & Artist (July 2025 - Present)

Founded an independent ceramic and mixed-media practice based in southern Arizona. Develops sculptural work combining ceramics with wild-collected materials, rawhide, rusted metal, native copper, and found objects.

Terraform Together

Nonprofit Founder & Lead Instructor (July 2020 - Jan. 2024)

Founded a nonprofit focused on natural building, trades training, and hands-on education. Taught more than 400 students through community-based programs in earth construction and material practice.

Things Align Design

Independent Designer & Creative Director (Feb. 2016 - Present)

Leads visual identity and communication projects for nonprofits and small businesses. This background in visual systems, storytelling, and presentation informs the documentation and communication of the studio practice.

Professional Design Agencies

Graphic Designer & Art Director (Dec. 2007 - Feb. 2016)

Produced identity, print, and digital work for national organizations and Fortune 500 clients, establishing a foundation in visual communication and disciplined creative development.

Bisbee Arts Commission

Commissioner / Board Member (Feb. 2024 - April 2025)

Supported local arts programming and helped restructure community grant funding and revenue-generating programs.

Education & Conferences

University of North Texas • Denton, TX (2009-2013)

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Communication Design • Minor in Psychology

Cochise College • Sierra Vista, AZ (2022-2026)

Continuing Coursework in Ceramics, Fine Art, and Welding

Winter Count • Phoenix, AZ (2022-Present)

Annual Primitive Skills Conference • Participant & Educator

South West Primitive Kiln Conference • Safford, AZ (2023-Present)

Annual Primitive Pottery Conference • Participant