Paul Bogatay belonged to a noted group of Ohio ceramic artists whose work and community efforts transformed this Midwestern state into a noted center for ceramic arts. As a member of the Cleveland School, Bogatay and others brought attention to the arts and established both an art school and an art museum in that city. Along with Arthur Baggs, Edgar Littlefield and Carlton Atherton, Bogatay was a major faculty member at Ohio State University whose recognized ceramic department produced such outstanding artists as Jack Earl and Howard Kottler. As a designer Bogatay worked with numerous potteries, enhancing both design concepts and techniques, and as a studio artist he was a noted sculptor whose works are included in numerous prestigious collections. Over the course of a long career he was the recipient of many awards and honors, among them 3 scholarships from the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, an American Ceramic Society/Rockefeller Foundation Grant, a Fulbright Fellowship, and the Binns Medal.

ARTIST’S STATEMENT – PAUL BOGATAY

RESUME – PAUL BOGATAY

1905  Born, Ava, OH
1924-1928  Cleveland School of Art, Cleveland, OH
1928  Seaman, S.S. Bessemer City
1928, 1929, 1930  Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Studio, Oyster Bay, NY; summer scholarship
1929-1930  Designer, Cowan Pottery, Rocky River, OH
1930  American Ceramic Society/Rockefeller Foundation Research Grant
1930, 1932, 1933  Designer, Marblehead Pottery, MA; (summers)
1934-1970  Professor, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH
1936  Robineau Memorial Ceramic Exhibition, prize winner
1936-1941  Co-founder Ford Ceramic Arts Company, Columbus, OH
1946-1950  Artist, Littlefield Kilns, Columbus, OH
1953  Binns Medal
1955  Fulbright Fellowship for study in Japan
1970-1972  Professor Emeritus of Ceramics, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH
1972  Died, Hyannis, MA

**BIOGRAPHY – PAUL BOGATAY**

Born in Ava, OH, near Columbus, Paul Bogatay was the son of eastern European immigrants. He was educated in the Cleveland public schools, graduating from East Technical High School. Already showing signs of artistic ability, Bogatay was encouraged by a wealthy supporter, Eva Palmer, to pursue his studies in design at the Cleveland School of Art (later the Cleveland Institute of Art.) Following graduation he worked on ore boats in the Great Lakes and sailed around the world, working as a seaman on the S.S. Bessemer City. Images from those years, particularly animals he sketched during visits to zoos all over the world, would later appear in his work. Returning to Cleveland, Bogatay applied for and was awarded three scholarships from the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, spending the summers of 1928-1930 working at their studios in Oyster Bay, NY.

In 1929 Bogatay began working as a designer with the Cowan Pottery in Cleveland, OH, which was founded by R. Guy Cowan and flourished during the 1920s and early 1930s. The pottery produced high quality commercial pottery and was carried by such stores as Marshall Field of Chicago and Wanamaker’s of Philadelphia. At the height of its success Cowan Pottery had a staff of 35 and was producing 175,000 pieces a year. Bogatay and Cowan were also associated with the Cleveland School, a group of artists, craftsmen and others interested in the arts who organized with the goal of founding an art school, building an art museum, giving exhibitions, and encouraging the arts in the Cleveland area. While the Cowan Pottery faltered and ultimately closed in 1931, the Cleveland School achieved many of its goals and continued as an association until 1960.

During his time at the Cowan Pottery, Bogatay renewed the acquaintance of Arthur Baggs, whom he had met several years earlier at a workshop. Baggs served as a mentor to Bogatay, inviting him to spend the summers of 1932 and 1933 working at the Marblehead Pottery in Massachusetts. Then in 1934, at Baggs’s invitation, Bogatay moved to the Columbus area and accepted a position as a temporary instructor in design at Ohio State University. He was to remain on the faculty, becoming a full professor of ceramics, until his retirement in 1970. The department was a strong one with a faculty at that time that included Edgar Littlefield and Carlton Atherton in addition to Baggs and Bogatay and graduated such noted artists as Jack Earl and Howard Kottler.

In addition to teaching Bogatay also did free-lance work for other potteries such as Robinson Ransbottom, Steubenville and Harker. The work is generally characterized by monochromatic glazes with a contrasting color in the intaglio designs. Then, in the mid-1930’s Bogatay joined with Walter Ford to found the Ford Ceramic Arts Company in Columbus, OH, an enterprise that lasted until 1941, with Ford as president and ceramic engineer and Bogatay as art director. The first plant was located on the Ohio State University campus and produced dinnerware, art pottery, and specialty items. Bogatay was interested in taking dinnerware designs in a new direction, a project he had pursued as a Rockefeller Foundation Fellow in 1930, but the
Depression prohibited his ideas from being brought into production. When Walter Ford moved to Pittsburgh to join Pittsburgh Corning in 1941, the company dissolved with his move. However, the techniques which the company developed of duplicating photographic images on ceramic surfaces and mass production were incorporated into Bogatay’s teaching, and in 1952 he wrote an article “Ceramic Production Laboratory” for one of the university’s engineering journals.

The period of the 1930’s to 1940’s was very productive and rewarding ones for Bogatay. He was exhibiting and winning a number of awards and was considered a primary leader of Ohio ceramic sculpture. By the late 1940’s, however, both Bogatay and the public were losing interest in representational sculpture, and he began looking for a new direction for his work. A Fulbright Fellowship allowed him to study in Japan where he became very interested in the mingei movement, producing tea ceremony ware influenced by this style and collecting an impressive number of mingei ceramics which he ultimately donated to Ohio State University.

Throughout his varied career Bogatay continued his individual studio work. Following his retirement in 1970 as professor emeritus, Bogatay became a full-time studio artist and was working on his final sculpture at the time of his death from cancer in 1972.

Over his long career his work was recognized with a number of awards, among which are: Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship; Fulbright Research Grant; Tiffany Foundation Scholarships; numerous national and international expositions; chairman of the American Ceramic Society’s Design Division and Fellow of the Society; and the Binns Medal for outstanding achievement in ceramic arts. His work is included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, Butler Art Institute, Wichita Art Association, Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY – PAUL BOGATAY**

**Books and Catalogs**


**Periodicals**


**Video and Other Media**


**GALLERY REPRESENTATION – PAUL BOGATAY**

Secondary market

**WEB SITES – PAUL BOGATAY**

http://www.vasefinder.com/paulbogataygallery1.html
Todd Bogatay, son of Paul Bogatay, maintains this gallery of his father's works

http://www.cowanpottery.org
Web site about Cowan Pottery; Paul Bogatay was employed at this pottery early in his career


Evelyn Theiss/Plain Dealer Reporter. “Cowan Pottery's Legacy as a Cleveland Institution and an Art Form.” January 26 2009

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleveland_School
Wikipedia article on the Cleveland School of artists.


February 2010