

Painting
Catherine Cook
Randy Hayes
Denzil Hurley
Robert Yoder

Ceramics
Doug Jeck
Peter Olsen
Akio Takamori
John Taylor



2008 NEDDY ARTIST FELLOWSHIP

May 31–August 24, 2008

TACOMA **ART** MUSEUM

The fifth anniversary of the opening of Tacoma Art Museum's Antoine Predock-designed building serves as a reminder that we have gained far more than glorious galleries and handsome public spaces. Since May 2003, we've developed a whole new vision of ourselves as an institution dedicated to the art and artists of the Northwest. This vision is realized, in part, through our partnership with the Behnke Family and Behnke Foundation in hosting the Neddy Artist Fellowship exhibition honoring Northwest artists.

Our new building also has made it possible to present more of the art of the Northwest more frequently. In 2005, we marked the tenth anniversary exhibition of the Neddy in our spectacular Annette B. Weyerhaeuser Gallery and brought together all the fellowship honorees. This year, we host the Neddy exhibition for the fourth consecutive year.

The Neddy is a prestigious honor and the largest unrestricted monetary award in the region, providing critical financial support for individual artists. The exhibition of artwork by nominees raises the profile of contemporary Northwest art and allows the local community, as well as visitors from outside the area, to learn about the vital work

being done here. Gifts and purchases of artwork by Neddy Fellows to Tacoma Art Museum's permanent collection have helped create a lasting legacy for Northwest art.

This year's nominees for painting and ceramics are some of the most active and exciting artists in the region. Several of them have been included in recent exhibitions at the museum and are represented in our permanent collection, while others are presented here for the first time. We thank all of the artists for their willingness to share their work with the community.

This exhibition is made possible by the unique vision and generosity of the Behnke Family and the Behnke Foundation. We thank them for their unwavering support of our region's artists and for partnering with Tacoma Art Museum to share the story of Northwest art. As always, Michelle McBride, Director of the Behnke Foundation, was key to bringing this exhibition to fruition. We greatly appreciate Chris Bruce, Director of the Washington State University Museum of Art, for giving his time and expertise to select this year's Fellows. Finally, the hard work of our curators, Rock Hushka and Margaret Bullock, and the leadership of our Trustees, have allowed us to present this important exhibition that connects people through art.

Stephanie A. Stebich
Director
Tacoma Art Museum

Chris Bruce

Selector, Neddy Artist Fellowship

Director, Washington State University Museum of Art

The selector's job is to meet with the nominated artists in the setting of their studios, and ultimately, determine who gets the year's Neddy Awards. It is a rare opportunity to be in an artist's environment and learn about his or her intentions, process, and hopes. It's a little like being some nosey real estate agent who knocks on the door of a house admired from the outside and then talks the owner into touring the interior spaces, closets and all. It's not a job everyone feels comfortable doing, but it is immensely rewarding.

Each artist I visited was unique, each one accomplished, and each one incredibly generous with sharing his or her art with me. I felt privileged to be allowed into each individual space, to be surrounded by one artist's work, to have the time to really look at it, and hear from the person who made it.

I was incredibly impressed with all the nominees. The final selections were much harder than I wished they were. I was particularly struck by the range of expression each artist was able to uncover within an area of intense focus. I was also impressed by the range of work from one artist to another: the intimate, meditative abstractions of Denzil Hurley; the exquisite collage work of Robert Yoder, Catherine Cook's rigorous shape paintings, Peter Olsen's traditional ceramic vessels and John Taylor's narrative ceramic vessels, Akio Takamori's

figurative sculpture, Randy Hayes's photo-based paintings, and Doug Jeck's drawings, photography, and video, in addition to his clay figures. Seattle is fortunate to claim these artists as its own.

Clearly my choices for the Neddy were not in default to perceived limitations in the work of those who were not selected, but rather the feeling that Randy Hayes and Akio Takamori stand out in any arena. They have both found highly individual means, over extended periods of time, to engage the world outside their studios and channel those engagements through their art in ways that can communicate to a broad and wide-ranging audience. Both exhibit an ambition to take on highly specific subject matter regarding culture, history, and place. They possess special abilities to engage their viewers with the immediacy of recognizable forms, which also encourage extended viewing. Their work serves both as a private, personal expression and as a forum for public contemplation.

All of which is to suggest the function of this Neddy recognition program. It is both a means of commemorating the memory of a beloved individual family member and a way of contributing to the civic good. This is a meaningful thing to do: it acknowledges and encourages those who toil in the very private field of visual art, and it helps to make Seattle a city that understands where the core value of "creative community" begins—with individual artists.

**2007 NEDDY
ARTIST FELLOWS**
Whiting Tennis and
Charles Krafft



Whiting Tennis

Nomad, 2006

Acrylic on canvas

36 x 24 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Greg Kucera Gallery, Seattle



Charles Krafft

Fragmentation Grenade, 2005

Hand-painted slip-cast porcelain

5 x 3 inches

Courtesy of the artist

NEDDY ARTIST FELLOWS 1996–2008

Michael Spafford, painting, 1996
 Juan Alonso, painting, 1997
 Lauri Chambers, painting, 1998
 Benjamin Wilkins, photography, 1998
 Jeffry Mitchell, painting, 1999
 Doug Keyes, photography, 1999
 Mary Ann Peters, painting, 2000
 Claudia Fitch, sculpture, 2000
 Mark Takamichi Miller, painting, 2001
 Cris Bruch, sculpture, 2001
 Donnabelle Casis, painting, 2002

Dionne Haroutunian, printmaking, 2002
 Susan Dory, painting, 2003
 Claire Cowie, painting, 2004
 Joseph Park, painting, 2005
 Brian Murphy, painting, 2006
 Barbara Robertson, printmaking, 2006
 Whiting Tennis, painting, 2007
 Charles Krafft, ceramics, 2007
 Randy Hayes, painting, 2008
 Akio Takamori, ceramics, 2008

Rock Hushka

Director of Curatorial Administration and Curator of Contemporary and Northwest Art
Tacoma Art Museum

Established by the Behnke Foundation in 1995, the Neddy Artist Fellowship—known as the Neddy—honors local artists who have earned the respect of their colleagues and have demonstrated their artistic excellence. The Neddy is one of the rare awards that provides substantial, unrestricted cash grants to visual artists in the Northwest.

The Neddy was established as a memorial to Robert E. (Ned) Behnke (1948–1989). Ned Behnke was a respected painter and a dynamic personality in the Seattle art scene. His passionate embrace of life and his dedication to his art serve as the model for selecting each year's Neddy Fellows. Artists are nominated using criteria that mirror Behnke's life and art: a strong and distinct artistic vision, passionate commitment to their career, artistic excellence, and activity in the art community.

The importance of the Neddy Artist Fellowship includes significant financial support, critical acclaim, and the prestige of a museum exhibition and publication. This type of broad recognition and cash award makes the Neddy unique in the Northwest.

Each kind of recognition is important in its own right. The large cash award provides support to

the Fellows, giving each recipient a measure of financial freedom to take risks and make investments in their future careers. In the past, some artists have used their grants to purchase supplies, make extensive travel and research trips, or purchase studios or homes. The critical recognition is equally important. Receiving a fellowship, and even a nomination, reinforces the success of their careers. It also signals an awareness of their role in sustaining the creative community in the Northwest.

Because Ned Behnke was a painter, the Neddy Artist Fellowship was initially conceived as an award solely for painters. The first fellowship was awarded in 1996 to Michael Spafford. The Behnke Foundation added a second fellowship in 1998 to recognize and support the work of artists who specialize in other media. Each year a painter receives a fellowship, and on alternating cycles, the Foundation grants fellowships to photographers, sculptors, and printmakers. This year's categories include ceramics for the second year.

Artists are nominated by a committee of local artists, curators, collectors, and arts writers, all selected by the Behnke Foundation. The nominees next meet with an independent juror, who selects the year's Fellows. This process helps to ensure fairness as well as the overall excellence of the nominees.

Because each artist is nominated individually, the 2008 nominees display a characteristic variety of artistic styles and themes, representing the strongest work being created in the region. The works range from figurative ceramics to minimalist-influenced paintings. This recognition of the breadth of themes and styles is one of the strengths of the Neddy and reflects the ongoing dynamism of Northwest art.

Catherine Cook

Catherine Cook creates drawings or stencils of newspaper stories and photographs as the basis for her images, altering and combining the shapes to compose formal abstractions. Though her titles often refer to the dates of the newspapers from which her images were originally drawn, her paintings do not reference their content. For Cook, the news stories are simply part of the fabric of the world around her from which she draws her inspiration. Ultimately, the subject of her works is the act of painting and their slow evolution toward completion.

Catherine Cook graduated from the University of Washington in 1990 with a bachelor of fine arts in painting. She has had solo exhibitions in Seattle at Lisa Harris Gallery, 4Culture Gallery, Mazey-Hickey Gallery, University of Washington's Cunningham Gallery, Ag47 Gallery, and Bailey-Boushay House. Her work has been included in group shows at Seattle Art Museum's Rental Sales Gallery, Eyre/Moore Gallery, and the Seattle Arts Commission Gallery, as well as in juried exhibitions such as Tacoma Art Museum's 2001 Biennial, *Pleasure Craft*, Kirkland Arts Center's *Annual* in 1993, and Bellevue Art Museum's 1999 *Pacific Northwest Annual*. She received an award from the Seattle Arts Commission in 1995 and a Pollock-Krasner Grant in 2001.



Top: *Thunderhead*, 2007. Oil on board, 44 x 44 inches. Bottom: *June 17, 2007*, 2007. Oil on board, 12 x 12 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Lisa Harris Gallery, Seattle, Washington.



Randy Hayes

Randy Hayes has been a Seattle resident for over three decades, but his work generally references his travels in Europe, Asia, and the southern United States. In 1990, after working in a variety of media, he began to paint directly onto grids of photographs, exploring the relationship between painting and photography. He questions the commonly held belief that photography is strictly factual and therefore a more accurate record of a time, a place, or an object. For Hayes, the varied echoes created by the layering of printed and painted images suggest the workings of memory and its shifting and fragmentary nature.

Randy Hayes earned a bachelor of fine arts in sculpture from Memphis College of Arts. He has had numerous one-person exhibitions at museums, including Boise Art Museum, Tacoma Art Museum, Seattle Art Museum, the Oglethorpe University Museum in Atlanta, the Cheekwood Museum in Nashville, Cheney Cowles Museum (now the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture) in Spokane, and Bellevue Art Museum. His work also has been exhibited in group shows at Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, and the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago. His work has been collected by Tacoma Art Museum, Seattle Art Museum, Mississippi Museum of Art, Microsoft Corporation, and Boise Art Museum. He received the Betty Bowen Award in 1982 and a Flintridge Foundation Award in 2003–04. His work has been reviewed in *Art in America*, *Artnews*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *Artweek*, in addition to numerous Northwest publications.

Top: *Ruins, Aphrodisius, Turkey/Pass Christian, Mississippi*, 2008 (diptych). Oil on pigment prints on canvas mounted on canvas, 48 x 72 inches, each panel. Center: *Aphrodisius, Turkey* (detail of diptych). Bottom: *Pass Christian, Mississippi* (detail of diptych). Courtesy of the artist.

Denzil Hurley

For Denzil Hurley the process of artistic creation is an end in itself. He approaches his work as an ongoing engagement with the act of painting, an accumulation of marks resulting in a dense and concentrated series of relationships. His scraped, pitted, and layered surfaces with grids of painted marks are rich in associations but ultimately reject narrative or symbolic solutions. Instead they ask the viewer to focus on the act of seeing rather than interpretation, to truly experience the work not seek its explanation.

Denzil Hurley earned a master of fine arts degree from Yale University. He has had solo exhibitions at the Weatherspoon Art Museum in Greensboro, North Carolina, the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, Missouri, and Francine Seders Gallery in Seattle. His work has been included in group exhibitions at Seattle Art Museum, Henry Art Gallery, Southern Methodist University, Yale School of Art Gallery, and the Wright Exhibition Space in Seattle. His work was also included in Tacoma Art Museum's *8th Northwest Biennial*, in which he won the Juror's Award. He has received numerous grants and awards, including two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and a Pollock-Krasner Grant. His paintings have been acquired by the Brooklyn Art Museum, Yale University, Henry Art Gallery, and Portland Art Museum. Hurley has been a visiting artist at Princeton University, Yale University, Hampshire College, Dartmouth College, and Reed College. He has taught painting at the University of Washington since 1994.



Top: *Redact-10*, 2003–05. Oil on canvas, 15 x 13 inches. Bottom: *Glyph-D-2*, 2005. Oil on canvas, 72 x 68 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Francine Seders Gallery, Seattle, Washington.



Doug Jeck

Ambiguity is a key component of Doug Jeck's ceramic sculptures. His figures reference classical forms while simultaneously subverting the tradition: they mimic stone but are made of clay; fragments are sometimes missing or recombined to unsettling effect; the inclusion of hair, fabric, and bits of organic material blurs the line between living flesh and its facsimile. Many seem vulnerable, uncertain, even distressed at finding themselves thrust forward into the public eye. Jeck has described them as remnants of the heroicized past confronting and often confounded by the complexities of the anti-heroic present.

Doug Jeck attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and earned a master of fine arts in 1989. He has had one-person exhibitions at galleries in Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago, and Atlanta. His work is in the collections of the International Museum of Ceramic Art in Alfred, New York, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Renwick Gallery at the Smithsonian Institute, the Mint Museum of Craft and Design in Charlotte, North Carolina, Tacoma Art Museum, and Seattle Art Museum. His work has been reviewed in numerous journals including *Art in America*, *New Art Examiner*, *Sculpture*, *American Ceramics*, and *Ceramics Monthly*. He has received several fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and awards from LaNapoule Foundation and the Virginia A. Groot Foundation. He has taught ceramics at the University of Washington since 1996.

Top: *Young Prince*, 2006. Clay, paint, fabric, boots, concrete, 68 x 34 x 13 inches. Courtesy of the artist. Bottom: *Cain and Abel*, 2000. Stoneware, paint, concrete, plastic foliage, wax, hair, and wood, 77 x 20 x 16 inches. Tacoma Art Museum, Museum purchase with funds from the Howard Kottler Testamentary Trust, 2001.16. Photo: Richard Nicol.

Peter Olsen

Ceramicist Peter Olsen works with traditional vessel forms exploring the sculptural potential of simple shapes and the layered meanings they can suggest. The surfaces of his works are marked with firing flashes, accretions, and subtle color and textural shifts that detail their long, slow journey through the volatile and unpredictable wood-firing process. These memories of their creation history become an inherent part of the finished work and lend further depth to its evocative potential. Simultaneously vessel and sculpture, Olsen's works move tracklessly between craft and art, utilitarian and artistic, plain-spoken and subtle.

Peter Olsen earned a bachelor's degree in music from Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, and attended the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee's Institute of Chamber Music Masters Program. He apprenticed with noted ceramicist Dick Lehman in Goshen, Indiana. His work was shown in the exhibition *Looking Forward, Glancing Back, Northwest Designer Craftsmen at 50*, which traveled to Bellevue Art Museum, Northwest Contemporary Crafts in Portland, Oregon, and the Whatcom Museum of History and Art in Bellingham. He has had solo and two-person exhibitions at Kobo Gallery in Seattle and participated in group exhibitions at the Midwest Museum of American Art in Elkhart, Indiana, and Honeychurch Antiques and Phoenix Rising Gallery in Seattle. Olsen built and operates a wood-fired kiln in Index, Washington. He is the Executive Director of the Seward Park Clay Studio in Seattle.



Top: *Bowl*, 2006. Woodfired stoneware, 4 x 16 inches. Bottom: *Gourd Vase*, 2006. Woodfired stoneware, 2006. 12 x 11 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Akio Takamori

Akio Takamori's ceramic sculptures explore human relationships. His three-dimensional figures are drawn from both contemporary society and his memories of characters from his childhood village in Japan. Some depict ordinary people going about their day-to-day lives while others evoke archetypal or mythical figures. Whether alone or grouped in dialogue, they are theatrical and deeply emotive. For Takamori, the figures manifest his interest in cumulative memory—the many shifting perspectives that form individual and group identities through the lenses of time, culture, or race—and also reflect his own search for personal and cultural identity.

Akio Takamori earned a master of fine arts in ceramics at Alfred University in New York. His exhibition history includes a mid-career survey organized by Arizona State University Art Museum. Entitled *Clouds of Memory*, the exhibition traveled to Tacoma Art Museum, Marylhurst University's ArtGym in Portland, Oregon, and Racine Art Museum in Wisconsin. He also has had one-person exhibitions at Garth Clark Gallery in New York, Frank Lloyd Gallery in Santa Monica, Grover/Thurston Gallery in Seattle, Tempe Arts Center in Arizona, and European Ceramic Work Centre in The Netherlands. His work is in national and international collections including the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, Taipei Fine Arts Museum in Taiwan, Museum of Contemporary Ceramic Art in Shigaraki, Japan, Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts in Helena, Montana, and local collections, including the City of Seattle, Microsoft Corporation, and Tacoma Art Museum. His work has been included in numerous books and reviewed in *Ceramics Monthly*, *Artnews*, *Sculpture*, and the *New York Times*.



Top, left: *Yellow Karako* (detail), 2008. Stoneware with underglaze, 30 x 28 x 18 inches. Top, right: *Empress and Queen*, 2003. Stoneware with underglaze; Empress, 53 x 23 x 17 inches; Queen, 42 x 32 x 17 inches. Bottom: *Princess*, 2008. Stoneware with underglazes, 42 x 27 x 27 inches. Courtesy of the artist and James Harris Gallery, Seattle, Washington.

John Taylor

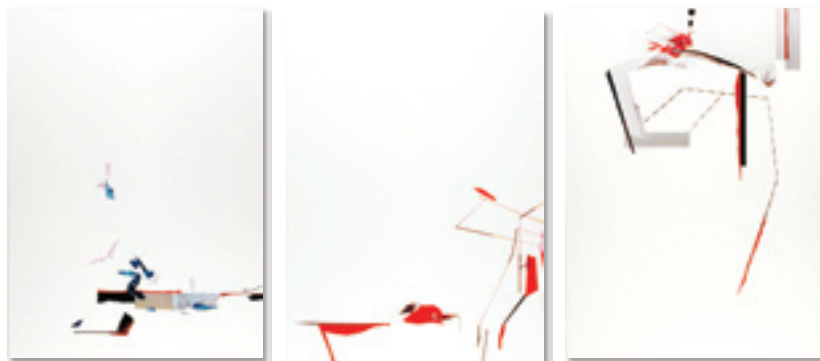
John Taylor uses traditional techniques and materials to create large stoneware vessels that serve as stage sets for narratives about modern life. The forms of his vessels reference classical traditions as well as American folk pottery, a connection further reinforced by the deliberately naïve style of the figures and objects on their surfaces. Taylor's loosely autobiographical stories use wry humor and parody to add a contemporary twist to works that address the ups and downs of city life or update classic texts to reflect today's ever-shifting moral views.

John Taylor earned a master of fine arts at the University of Massachusetts. His work has been shown in exhibitions at the Northwest Craft Center, the Herter Gallery at the University of Massachusetts, King County Arts Commission Gallery, the Kirkland Arts Center, the Museum of Fine Arts in Springfield, Massachusetts, and the American Craft Gallery in Cleveland, Ohio. He has received awards from the King County Arts Commission and the Artist Foundation in Boston, and a grant from Artist Trust. Taylor has been an artist-in-residence at Moshier Art Center in Burien, where he also teaches, and has curated exhibitions at the Northwest Craft Center in Seattle, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, and the Herter Gallery at the University of Massachusetts. He is an Instructional Technician in the Ceramics Department at the University of Washington.



Top: *Seven Sin Series—Sloth*, 2007. Stoneware, slip, stain, glaze, 29 inches tall.

Bottom: *Seven Sin Series—Gluttony*, 2008. Stoneware, slip, stain, glaze, 29 inches tall. Courtesy of the artist.



Robert Yoder

Robert Yoder uses thin, graceful arcs and complex geometric shapes constructed from vinyl tapes and magazine photographs to create collages of richly colored motifs that float within vast areas of white space. His forms bustle and jostle, playfully interact, or tenuously connect within their weightless environment suggesting ideas set free from the constraints of the physical world. Intrigued by how overhead views distort spatial relationships and reduce detail to pattern, Yoder minimizes the elements within his images as if seen from above, opening them to a wider range of associations.

Robert Yoder graduated with a master of fine arts from the University of Washington in 1987. His exhibition history includes one-person exhibitions at galleries in New York, Houston, Santa Fe, Santa Monica, Portland, and Seattle, and group exhibitions at Seattle Art Museum, Bellevue Art Museum, Center on Contemporary Art in Seattle, Tacoma Art Museum, the Schneider Museum of Art in Ashland, Oregon, the Chazen Museum of Art in Madison, Wisconsin, and Sawhill Gallery at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. His work is in public and private collections in the Northwest, including Tacoma Art Museum, Portland Art Museum, the City of Seattle, Microsoft Corporation, Boeing Corporation, and Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. He has received grants from Artist Trust and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation and awards from the Seattle Arts Commission and Washington State Arts Commission. His work has been reviewed in *Art in America*, *Sculpture*, *Modern Painters*, and *Artweek*, and selected for *New American Paintings*.



Top: *Marine Girls*, 2006 (triptych). Vinyl and collage on paper, 30 x 68 inches overall. Photo: Fred Muram. Bottom: *Batten*, 2007. Vinyl, collage on paper, 30 x 22 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Howard House Contemporary Art, Seattle, Washington.

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST



Catherine Cook

born Port Angeles, Washington, 1950

Thunderhead, 2007

Oil on board

44 x 44 inches

Courtesy of the artist and

Lisa Harris Gallery, Seattle, Washington



Randy Hayes

born Jackson, Mississippi, 1944

Ruins, Aphrodisius, Turkey/Pass Christian, Mississippi, 2008 (diptych)

Oil on pigment prints on canvas mounted
on canvas, 48 x 72 inches, each panel

Courtesy of the artist

Denzil Hurley

born Barbados, West Indies, 1948

Glyph-D-2, 2005

Oil on canvas

72 x 68 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Francine Seders
Gallery, Seattle, Washington

Doug Jeck

born Jersey City, New Jersey, 1963

Cain and Abel, 2000

Stoneware, paint, concrete, plastic foliage,
wax, hair, and wood

77 x 20 x 16 inches

Tacoma Art Museum, Museum purchase with
funds from the Howard Kottler Testamentary
Trust, 2001.16

Peter Olsen

born Chicago, Illinois, 1959

Bowls, 2008

Woodfired stoneware

Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist

Akio Takamori

born Nobeoka, Miyazaki, Japan, 1950

Female Dwarf, 2000

Stoneware with underglazes

29 x 15 x 12 inches

Princess, 2008

Stoneware with underglazes

42 x 27 x 27 inches

Both courtesy of the artist and

James Harris Gallery, Seattle, Washington

John Taylor

born Waltham, Massachusetts, 1956

Seven Sin Series, 2007–08

Stoneware, slip, stain, and glaze

Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist

Robert Yoder

born Danville, Virginia, 1962

Marine Girls, 2006 (triptych)

Vinyl and collage on paper

30 x 68 inches overall

Courtesy of the artist and Howard House

Contemporary Art, Seattle, Washington

THE BEHNKE FOUNDATION

601 Union Street, Suite 3016
Seattle, WA 98101
www.BehnkeFoundation.org

TACOMA ART MUSEUM

1701 Pacific Avenue
Tacoma, WA 98402
www.TacomaArtMuseum.org



Cover: Rose diptych by Robert E. (Ned) Behnke. Title and date unknown. Back: Robert E. (Ned) Behnke, *Imperial Lily*, 1984. Oil on canvas, 35½ x 36 inches. Tacoma Art Museum, Gift of the Behnke Family. Photo: Richard Nicol.