

Creating Community



A workshop at Haystack can be a life-changing experience. Many artists who come to Haystack end up relocating to Maine.

MARK BELL

Mark Bell is a full time potter who has maintained a studio and gallery in Blue Hill, Maine since 1990. He received his B.F.A. from University of Wisconsin Oshkosh and his M.F.A. in Ceramics from Arizona State University. Mark first came to Haystack as a scholarship student and because of his experiences here decided to move to Maine and open a studio. He has been involved with the school in many capacities, teaching and mentoring to local teens. His work is in the permanent collection of the Currier Museum in Manchester, New Hampshire and he shows at the Lacoste Gallery in Concord, Massachusetts.

Haystack came highly recommended. I was at a New Year's Eve Party in Baltimore and asked Mary Nyburg "Where should I spend my summer learning about clay?" She replied "Haystack" as if the answer was obvious.

In 1985, I was clay monitor for John and Andrea Gill in their workshop entitled Craft Colloquium of the Future. I asked John what tasks he would like me to do for the workshop. His reply was "make good art". I went to work on slab constructed three sided vessels and really struggled with them. John watched quietly for two days. Nothing that I was doing was working. The third day John politely asked for my fettling knife. He made a few cuts and added a chunk of clay. With that I was on my way, I finished the vessel that day and made two others in the workshop. This was my strongest and most unique work at the time. This three-sided slab vessel made at Haystack led me to a whole new body of work which became the foundation for my Masters thesis at Arizona State University.

Haystack provided an amazing teacher and an inspiring space that lead to breakthroughs and new beginning in my craft. The natural beauty, focused time and encouragement allowed for the creative process to unfold. Mary Nyburg knew this; I was grateful for her one word answer.