

LEIGH TAYLOR MICKELSON
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EXECUTIVE LEADER

An arts-minded hard-working detail-oriented achiever with 22 years of experience in non-profit arts administration, executive management, audience and program development. Grew two art centers from small grassroots organizations into vibrant, nationally recognized arts institutions with expansive community impact.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Project & Team Management	Financial Analysis / Budgeting	Community Relations
Fundraising & Grant Writing	Visitor Engagement	Special Event Management
Strategic Planning	Audience Development	Partnerships and Alliances

SELECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Executive Leadership:** Promoted to Executive Director of a national ceramic arts organization. Have been the primary supervisor for full-time employees, consultants, and an indirect supervisor for events related staff, volunteers, and interns. Oversaw growth, development and promotion of exhibitions and education programming. Adept in community building, strategic planning, non-profit administration, audience development, budgeting, and major donor gift solicitation.
- **Budgeting and Financial Management:** Responsible for creation and adherence of budgets ranging in size from a few thousand to over a million dollars. Strong experience in reporting to boards, committees, outside funding agencies, and partnering organizations.
- **Events Management:** Managed events ranging in size from private fundraising dinners, symposia and offsite tours to major fundraising events and festivals. Experienced in all aspects of planning, marketing, logistics, budgeting, sponsorship, vendor contracts, and event reporting.
- **Program Development / Business Acumen:** As exhibitions director and program director, curated calendars of exhibitions and educational programming, including classes, lectures, workshops and symposia with intent to increase audience and expose public to the arts. As executive director, led expansion and development of exhibitions and educational programming for adults and youth, increasing earned revenues by 38% and doubling audience in 6 years.
- **Project Management:** Led successful design and renovation of kiln equipment room, gallery and retail space and led program and budget development for new facility spaces. Led the jury process and coordination of placing 77 curated exhibitions in 69 diverse venues across Westchester County for a county wide celebration of clay, *All Fired Up*, in 2008; and the placing of over 200 exhibitions in diverse venues for a state-wide celebration of clay in Baltimore, *Tour de Clay*, in 2005, in conjunction with an international conference.
- **Board and Committee Management:** Served as lead staff member for full board, fundraising & finance committees, programming committees, and strategic planning committees. Prepared and presented budgets, financial reports, status updates, and policy recommendations to committees, boards, and supporters.
- **Strategic Planning:** Have successfully managed strategic planning and visioning processes and plan writing for a national ceramic arts organization, working with a committee and outside consultant. Have worked with funders, external consultants, organizational constituency, staff, and leadership.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Executive Director

November 2012 – 2019

Clay Art Center, Port Chester, NY

- Led growth of unearned revenues by 142%, earned revenues by 38%, and doubled staff and audience in a 6-year period of accelerated growth and change
- Led in 2017 the center's celebration of its 60th anniversary as a ceramic art center, 10 years as a non-profit organization, and its first year surpassing a \$1 million budget
- Nurtured business management and program development through a team of program managers, enhancing and expanding exhibitions, artist, education and community arts outreach programs

- Implemented a donor database and guided expansion of contributed income through individual and institutional donations, grant writing and membership
- Led organization through strategic planning and visioning exercises to help determine future objectives
- Nurtured and expanded nationally competitive artist residency program for emerging artists

Program Director

September 2006 – 2012

Clay Art Center, Port Chester, NY

- Responsible for all adult educational programs, including classes, lectures and workshops including recruitment and management of instructors, staff, volunteers and interns
- Expanded and enhanced youth educational programs, initiated and developed a new summer camp program
- Curated, designed, managed and installed a calendar of exhibitions, featuring emerging, mid-career and established ceramic artists from across the nation
- Developed and nurtured relationships with nationally and internationally respected exhibiting artists
- Directed program and budget development through a 4000 square foot expansion of classroom and gallery space in 2010
- Established and developed the SHOP at CAC, showcasing utilitarian and decorative ceramic art by Clay Art Center artists and invited artists
- Responsible for PR, marketing and communications, including website development, social media and all press materials
- Coordinated 73 ceramic exhibitions at 60 venues across Westchester county for a county-wide celebration of clay, “All Fired Up!” in 2008. The exhibitions featured regional, national, and international works of art that explored the breadth and depth of ceramic expression

Board of Directors, Exhibitions Director

March 2014 – 2018

National Council on Education of Ceramic Arts (NCECA)

- Served as a board member and executive committee member for a nationally respected 501(c)3 organization that engages and sustains a community for ceramic art, teaching and learning and cultivates the next generation of ceramic artists and enthusiasts through programming that affects professional artists, K-12 schools, community centers, universities, museums, galleries, businesses, organizations, collectors and enthusiasts of ceramic art.
- Co-curated and coordinated NCECA sponsored exhibitions, hosted at various institutions and organizations across the nation for their annual national conference, which attracts over 6000 attendees
- Participated in board led strategic planning, fund development, program development, and served on the executive committee

Exhibitions Director

Sept 2000 – May 2006

Program Manager

July 1997 – Sept 2000

Baltimore Clayworks, Baltimore, MD

Developed, directed, implemented and executed all education (adults and youth) and exhibition programs, then focused on exhibitions as full-time curator and exhibitions director after an expansion of the center

- Curated exhibitions of contemporary ceramic art featuring emerging, mid-career and established artists from the US and abroad
- Led programs through accelerated growth over a 9-year period
- Managed all PR, marketing and communications for the organization
- Developed, curated and managed the center’s Shop featuring high end utilitarian and decorative ceramics
- Coordinated over 200 ceramic exhibitions for a region-wide celebration of ceramics “Tour de Clay” while acting as host liaison for the 2005 NCECA conference in Baltimore, MD

CURATORIAL EXPERIENCE

2016	<i>Unconventional Clay: Engaged in Change</i> , NCECA Invitational, Co-curator, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO
2006-12	Chief Curator, Clay Art Center, curated/managed exhibitions featuring 100s of emerging, mid-career & established artists
2011	<i>eARTh</i> , Arts Westchester, White Plains, NY
2010	<i>On Earth</i> , Rockland Center for the Arts, West Nyack, NY
2010	<i>Gift It</i> , Pelham Art Center
2009	<i>Home Sweet Home</i> , Pelham Art Center
1998-2006	Chief Curator, Baltimore Clayworks, curated/managed exhibitions featuring 100s of emerging, mid-career & established artists
2005	<i>Rhythm & Breath: Revealing the Invisible</i> , Loyola College Gallery
2005	<i>Richard DeVore</i> , Baltimore Clayworks
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AFFILIATIONS / COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT / ARTIST ACHIEVEMENTS

1997-present	Member, National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts
2016-19	Business Member, Business Council of Westchester
2015-19	Organization Member, Nonprofit Westchester
2012-19	Organization Member, Association of Development Officers
2016	Judge, The Crafts Festival, Bruce Museum, Greenwich, CT
2012	Judge, Nita Lowey High School Art Show, Music Conservancy of Westchester
2003	Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist Award

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2013	LURE , Hammond Museum & Japanese Stroll Garden, North Salem, NY
2011	Apiary , Baltimore Clayworks, Baltimore, MD
2010	LURE: Leigh Taylor Mickelson , Sherrie Gallerie, Columbus, OH
2008	Botanical Attraction: Leigh Taylor Mickelson , Greenburgh Nature Center, Scarsdale, NY

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GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2018	Alternate Endings , Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh, PA
2017	Rewind , Clay Art Center, Port Chester, NY
2016	In Form , Rockland Center for the Arts, Nyack, NY
2016	Natural Shift , Fort Collins Museum of Art, CO
2015	Revisiting Arcadia , ArtsWestchester, White Plains, NY
2015	Botanica Ceramica , Roger Williams Botanical Center, Providence, RI
2013	Duo (Anat Shiftan & Leigh Taylor Mickelson), Saratoga Clay Arts Center, Schuylerville, NY
2013	Nature as Metaphor , Gallery 66, Cold Spring, NY
2011	We've Got to Get Back to the Garden , Kenise Barnes Fine Art, Larchmont, NY
2011	Natura , West Tampa Center for the Arts, Tampa, FL
2011	Flowers, Follies and Other Rites of Spring , Rockland Center for the Arts, West Nyack, NY
2010	The Things Themselves , Pelham Art Center, Pelham, NY
2010	Nature/Culture , Castle Gallery, New Rochelle, NY
2010	Modern Morphism , Delaware Museum of Art, Wilmington, DE

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PUBLISHED ARTICLES

2009	Small Organization, Big Ideas, <i>Ceramics Monthly</i> , March
2008	Enjoying the Still Life of Anat Shiftan, <i>Ceramics Monthly</i> , September
2007	Ship Happens, <i>Clay Times</i> , Nov/Dec (co-authored with Mary K. Cloonan)
2005	Reconnecting: The Expressive Utilitarian Wares of Andy Shaw, <i>Ceramics Monthly</i> , October
2005	Centering: Community, Clay and Culture, NCECA 2005 Conference Preview, <i>Ceramics Monthly</i> , Feb

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EDUCATION / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT / TECHNICAL SKILLS

Rochester Institute of Technology, School for American Crafts, Masters in Fine Arts Degree

Ceramics/Ceramic Sculpture; Minor in Metals

Hamilton College, Bachelor of Arts Degree

Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa, Studio Art/English Literature Double Major

CEO Learning Lab, 2019

A 5-month professional development initiative focused on identifying the tools and leadership strengths needed for advancing organizations toward greater impact and sustainability

Westchester Leadership, 2012

A rigorous, 9-month curriculum designed to sharpen leadership skills and give an in depth understanding of how non-profits works

TECHNICAL SKILLS - Adept in Microsoft Office Suite; Salesforce CRM; Squarespace & other website platforms; Adobe Photoshop, Acrobat & Elements. Savvy with all aspects of exhibition installation, so good with lighting, tools, basic maintenance & repair of equipment, etc. Practicing ceramic artist – www.leightaylormickelson.com – and handy with general upkeep of a non-profit facility. A foody and experienced home cook, with high expectations for museum cafés and dining experiences in general.