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## Karen Shapiro

Ceramic Artist

American, b. 1947

Karen Shapiro derives her art from what's already there. It doesn't have to be studied, interpreted or understood. Her ceramic sculpture is what it is. Shapiro's ceramics represent items that are used, and they look it. Each piece speaks to an era or a season, an event or a time when the item belonged in the life of the viewer. Karen takes "everyday" objects, frequently larger-than-life in our memories and presents them to the collector as precious and now larger-than-life in person.

### Statement

*I have been asked to write about my work. This will be short and devoid of "artspeak".*

*My mission is to make work which adds a bit of whimsy and smiles to my customers' lives while making a living for myself.*

*My work is pop art; ceramic sculptures of articles which apply to everyday life from the past to the present. The range is wide, from food products and beverages to cosmetics to automobilia just to name a few. The work speaks for itself. It is all larger than life in size and easily understandable.*

*My process involves hand-built pieces constructed from slabs. There are three firings: bisque fire and glaze fire in an electric kiln, then a final raku firing to yield the crackles and metallic finishes I use. I work with a LOT of color using commercial underglazes and glazes for the first glaze-firing. For the raku firing, I mix my own glazes for the "special effects" like bright silver metal and rusty metals. Everything is done by hand, I use no decals or other "shortcuts", which makes the work very labor-intensive.*

*This pretty much explains it! Hope you enjoy my work.*