

# Richard Hess

Artist biography



Richard Hess never expected he would become an artist. He grew up in a small town in New Jersey where art in school or the community was mostly nonexistent, yet he was still drawn to the idea of working with clay from a very young age.

Upon graduating from college, he spent two years in the military and then ended up making a living in social service jobs in New York City. In his twenties, Richard took his first formal lessons with clay in Greenwich Village. He found his passion was working with slabs of clay, but didn't think he could make a living with his art.

His life journey then took him into education. He earned a graduate degree and became director of a school in New Jersey. He finally came to the realization that he wanted to work with his hands, so he left the education field for carpentry. It wasn't until age 50 that his life changed course yet again when he moved to Ithaca, New York, and decided it was time to make pottery his life's career. In the beginning he worked a night job to support his day job as a potter. He did craft shows throughout the northeast and eventually gave up his night work and started to believe he could make a living with his hands.

Another move brought him to Austin, Texas, for 20 years where he opened up a teaching studio and continued to work full-time as a potter. In 2015, he moved to Galena, Illinois, where he set up a new studio.

Over the years Richard has experimented with many different artistic forms. His most recent work has brought his love for horses and his clay work together. Richard's stylized horse pieces are hand-built, non-functional and characterized by alternative surface treatments and firing techniques including the use of horse hair, raku, and ferric chloride.

