

The Banff Centre's prestigious Creative Residencies programme played an extremely important role in the development of the careers of Canadian and international ceramic artists. Les Manning, a seminal figure in the development of the residency, was Director of The Banff Centre Ceramic Studio from 1974 to 1994. He is credited with organizing and facilitating a sophisticated programme of studio practice, conceptual development and lively artist-interaction. The residency programme literally put Canadian ceramics on the world map.

## A Sense of Place

### The Banff Centre Ceramic Studio

The Banff Centre Ceramic Studio redesigned development opportunities for ceramic artists. This was an inclusive partnership with all other visual, media, music and performance based studios at the centre.

In 1980 The Banff Centre received autonomy as a stand alone institution, with the concept and will to create a new genre of artistic interaction and exchange toward the growth of the individual. This utopist horizon allowed many artists to re-enter the contemporary dialogue and test drive their creative ideas within a challenging professional environment. Prior to the emergence of The Banff Centre Ceramic Studio there were few venues for such scholarship available across the country. The artist residency program elevated the contribution of The Banff Centre Ceramic Studio to one of the top four such programs in the world.

This process of mutual exchange of ideas, philosophies and skill shared among participants, increased awareness and a more global attitude formed as we witnessed a migration of artists from their original sense of place and cultural roots.

The ideals espoused and practiced at The Banff Centre Ceramic Studio are now practiced around the world at many new venues, in ever increasing numbers and will remain vital to progressive artistic and cultural understanding for some time to come.

Les Manning  
Ceramic Artist  
Program Director - The Banff Centre Ceramic Studio 1974-1994



**Les Manning, Post Modern Landscape** 22cmW x 16cmH x 31cmL  
Laminated stoneware and porcelain. An abstract impression of our Canadian Rocky Mountain landscape.  
Photo: Dianne Finch

Born in Provost, Alberta, Les Manning studied at the Alberta College of Art in Calgary and majored in Ceramics (1966). For twenty-five years he developed Ceramics at The Banff Centre: from a Summer School into an internationally respected Artist Residency Program and was Director of Ceramic Studio - The Banff Centre from 1974-94. He continues to make ceramics and is currently the Artistic Director at Medalta International Artists in Residence Program.