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Artist Spotlight: Brandon Hoida, Edinboro University

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Humans are creatures of habit, continuously falling into routines and existing within any particular space that aids them in their chosen lifestyles. For Brandon Hoida, that space is in front of the kiln.

Hoida is a junior at Edinboro University, majoring in Fine Arts with a dual concentration in ceramics and woodworking, although his passions reside in the craft of ceramics. He was fond of ceramics in high school, and he molded his schedule to fit several classes where he had the chance to explore it. He claimed, “I left high school with a mindset that you can’t get a career in arts or make a living, so when it came time to apply to college, I wasn’t sure what to do.”

Quickly, Hoida realized the functionality of his craft, which further drove his passion. By creating various pots, cups, and plates out of clay, he was creating something that people could use. He stated: “I didn’t really picture ceramics as an art until I came to Edinboro. Here, I realized it’s fun, useful, and still beautiful!”

He explained the different temperatures required per style of craft, such as low, medium, and high-fired work. Hoida then claimed that he mostly worked with high-fire, or Cone 10, which roughly estimates to 2381°F. He stressed the importance of remembering that even though there were lower-fire levels available, their actual temperature was severe and impacted different types of clay differently.

Hoida was also very knowledgeable about the different variety of kilns available: his favorites are soda and woodfire. He described the kilns as “atmospheric,” meaning that there are many wild variations or patterns that can occur in these kilns that would never happen in a regular gas or electric-powered kiln.



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“There are so many colors in nature, and so many derive from the metals we use. The materials lend themselves and leave beautiful results.”

During the Fall 2021 semester, the Clay Club participated in a number of cup and bowl sales, receiving a lot of traction depending where they were located each day. Hoida expressed that while he liked participating in the sales and sending his work out for new people to enjoy, he is more focused on what he can learn in his time at Edinboro: “It’s nice to sell pots, but I love being able to experiment with my work more.”

He does not want to tailor to anyone else’s demands for the craft but his own. He reminisced on some of the people who came to support him in the sales and guest speakers he’s had in the classroom. He mentioned many instances where his peers claimed that they were producing their crafts a certain way because it sells. Hoida then pointed out the problem with that and how worrying about profit takes away from the passion of it all, “You’re here to create and to learn, forget about everything else.”

The only downside Hoida could credit to his craft is how hard the labor is on the body. In order to perfect whatever project he is working on, he must first endure hours in front of the wheel, hunched over and working slowly to prevent error. Then, he must face the outside climate while loading and unloading the kilns.

While at first he was uncertain of what to make of his time at Edinboro, Brandon Hoida has done a spectacular job in finding his community and making the most of his experience.

Cassandra Gripp, Arts Editor | @EdinboroNow

EDINBORO UNIVERSITY ARTS POTTERY

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