

S N Y D E R M A N - W O R K S G A L L E R I E S

Irina Okula

Bio

Irina was born in Wolfen, Germany during WWII. The US Army brought her father and family with other scientists and engineers to West Germany. She lived on an army base in Landshut, Bavaria. In 1948, her father was brought to Wright Patterson Air Force base in Ohio. Irina, her mother and brother came over to Dayton, OH in 1949. She knew from an early age that she had a talent for art. She grew up in St. Louis, MO, attended high school at St Joseph's Academy, and received a BA from Fontbonne College. After teaching a few years, she went to graduate school. She studied with Jack Cannon and Dan Anderson at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville and received an MFA in ceramics. She had to take a ceramics class to enter the graduate program and once she tried her hand with clay, she knew this was what she wanted to pursue. She moved to Marlboro, MA and started a pottery studio. After marriage and raising two children in Ipswich, MA, she took art courses at the Boston Museum School, and then started a teaching career at The Governor's Academy, Byfield, MA and continued doing her own work in clay. In 2004 she started her own pottery business, CLAY SHARDS. She still loves clay and never gets bored with it and continually learns new and fascinating things about the medium. Irina received the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards of 2012. The Alliance for Young Artists & Writers recognizes her as an outstanding educator whose dedication, commitment, and guidance are represented by student work selected for national honors.