

## Christine's Artist Bio

### **Christine LaRue**

Clay Artist

Jewelry Artist

Christine LaRue is an African American sculptor and artist specializing in ceramic, metal and polymer clays. She was born in Chicago, Illinois and has lived also in Utah, Idaho, Colorado and briefly in Mexico. She is of Creole/Cuban descent and was drawn to sculpture as a child, making things out of reclaimed wood, paper and sugar cubes. At the age of 10 she learned how to throw on the potter's wheel and build and fire Raku kilns at the Hull House Art and Music Camp.

Ms. LaRue pursued Latin-American Studies and Ceramics at the University of Denver, Colorado where she earned a B.A. degree in Latin-American Studies and a minor in Ceramics and glaze calculation. She later got an M.S.W. from Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois, and worked as a multicultural family social worker at various child welfare agencies and Chicago Public Schools. She also taught ceramics part time at Creative Claythings Ceramic Studio for 30 years. Ms. LaRue has shown at various art fairs and venues such as the North Halsted Market Days, Around The Coyote, Printer's Row, Washington Park and Seaway Bank art fairs. She was one of the first African American artists in a group show at the Around The Coyote Art Gallery.

Ms. LaRue completed a 6 month residency at the Hyde Park Art Center's Center Program and exhibited there in shows: Fast, Forward, Rewind, Play, Not Just Another Pretty Face Exhibition, Center Program Exhibition, Samsara at Art Supply.com Gallery, Black Clay Exhibition at Chicago State University President Gallery, The Cliff Dweller's Club, Southside Community Art Center and Dixon Elementary School's Cultural Connections Art Fair. She has also shown at the Museum of Science & Industry's Black Creativity Juried Art Show and was awarded Best in Ceramics three years in a row. Currently she has a sculpture in "The Love Affair Continues" at DuSable Museum of African American History - an Exhibition of Contemporary Art of the African Diaspora through Diaspora Rhythms from October 12, 2018 through February 28, 2019.

Ms. LaRue's sculptural work in porcelain and stoneware pull from a deep repository of African and African American and Afro-Latino history. Her ceramics explore historical themes using texture, pattern and visual stories of the African American experience. She references the art of the ancients - the Olmec and Mayan cultures of Mexico, the Māori tattoo art of New Zealand, the sculpture of the Ife, Nigeria, and the Nazca culture of Southern Peru. Ms. LaRue further melds this artistic gumbo of antiquity and modern historical themes with Asian inspired glaze colors, oil paints, waxes and inks to enhance skin tones on sculptural piece, including the use of metal and polymer clay and wire. She works to enhance textural details on faces that are often disparaged by mainstream culture in the Americas through institutionalized racism that consistently rejects the beauty of people of the African Diaspora.