

Marilyn Zurmuehlen

Marilyn Zurmuehlen died November 19, 1993, at her home in Iowa City, Iowa. People with whom Marilyn was a colleague and teacher, while she was head of Art Education and Professor of Ceramics at The University of Iowa for twenty years, and on the faculties of The Pennsylvania State University and The University of Missouri, know how fortunate they were to have worked with her. Marilyn received her Ph.D. from The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA; and studied at Osaka University of Arts, Osaka, Japan; Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Deer Isle, ME; The Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland, OH; Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH; Ball State University, Muncie, IN.

A larger community of art education, who remember Marilyn as an inspired teacher, will remember how she chose to present to the field a particular vision of research with the emphasis on faithfully rendered meaningful experience. Marilyn was a researcher who let life's curiosities have their full dignity. She is the author of **Studio Art: Praxis, Symbol, Presence** and a co-author of **Understanding Art Testing**, as well as numerous articles published in **Art Education**, the **Canadian Review of Art Education Research**, the **Journal of Multi-Cultural and Cross-Cultural Research in Art Education**, **Studies in Art Education**, and **Visual Arts Research**, among others. In 1993 Marilyn was honored by being elected a Distinguished Fellow of the National Art Education Association. This honor was added to her being awarded, in 1990, the June King McFee award for her continuing achievement in scholarly writing, research and professional leadership in the field of art education.

On December 19, 1993, The University of Iowa held a memorial service in the Old Capitol. I read the acceptance speech, "Living by Narratives in Art and Art Education," that Marilyn gave when she was presented the McFee award. Perhaps it was because her speech was an autobiographical account, complete with anecdotes of painting baked mud as a child and remembrances of people who contributed to her life's story, that I kept thinking of how no one knows for sure where great teaching comes from. Her story seemed to me a captivating record of events and circumstances relaying to listeners and me a purpose, an element of which was teaching. I was reminded how Marilyn so profoundly understood herself as a part of a larger cycle of doing and remembering, that her students became aware of good reasons to be more attentive and more reflective. It struck me that Marilyn first came to know me as a storyteller and that I learned from her that history was immediate experience and so, in turn, Marilyn is present while I'm telling stories. And for this reason, it is probable that her contribution as a teacher may rise anonymously in the life of a grandchild.

The maintenance of dutiful reflection in the making of essential artifacts brought Marilyn to an inescapable stance toward teaching and making: "Choosing from the vantage of the present, a particular view of a personal aesthetic past, we find a center from which to teach."



Figure 1. Marilyn Zurmuehlen, "Untitled," Ceramics.