



Paper

The artist uses traditional ink on rice paper to create her Chinese paintings. Images are created from a series of disciplined strokes with bamboo-handled, wolf-hair brushes. An unforgivable medium, the ink-rice paper combination is permanent and is applied with exact precision. Black ink has a base of pine soot and the paper is composed of rice stalks or other organic materials. Special natural pigments are used for the coloring.

Painting images are mounted to flatten the thin painted paper and set the image. A painting is wet completely with water and adhesive is applied to its back. Paper is adhered as backing and the painting dries. Imperfections are likely the result of this traditional mounting practice. Paintings are signed by the artist in calligraphy and with red name seals (above) called chops.

Pottery

Griffith Tso trades her ink and water for underglazes, pigments that are brushed on before adding a glossy coat of glaze.

Her unpainted forms are made by hand, either thrown on a potter's wheel or made from thin slabs of clay draped over plaster molds.

Decorative texturizing and stamping is added, and the pieces go through an initial bisque firing. Compositions are then painted on bisque forms with underglazes. Designs are coated with a clear coat and the exterior is layered with a glaze that matures to a colorful and glassy finish in an electric kiln. This process results in microwaveable and dishwasher-safe durable stoneware — truly functional art.

The Artist



Tracie Griffith Tso painted her first bamboo brushstrokes as a child at a brushpainter's studio in California. She specializes in traditional spontaneous flower-bird painting. The award-winning artist developed her style on paper with a teacher schooled by a Hong Kong master. She learned to throw pots as a child at her neighborhood art center. A skill which, when combined with painting, produces functional clay art.

Griffith Tso is the Chinese brushpainting instructor at the Reston Community Center. A Torpedo Factory associate artist, she sells her pottery at the Torpedo Factory's Scope Gallery in Alexandria. She is a member of the Kiln Club and Washington Ceramic Guild.

