

ARTIST STATEMENT

My work is rooted in a fascination with materials and the natural world. I am drawn to the ability of ceramic glazes to create colors and surfaces that mimic the beauty of natural stones, to the malleability of silver, and to the endless variety that nature offers.

I work primarily in sterling silver, creating each piece entirely by hand from sheet or wire. Handmade ceramic cabochons serve as focal points in much of my work. Each pottery stone is individually formed and goes through multiple processes and firings to develop its depth of color and unique surface. More recently, I have begun incorporating torch-fired enamels into my jewelry. Working with crushed glass has opened another avenue for exploring color, transparency, surface, and the transformative power of fire.

Clay, minerals, stains, glass, glaze, and metal all have their own histories, and I love bringing these materials together in ways that honor those histories while creating something distinctly my own. Traditional metalsmithing techniques—hammer forming, piercing, roller printing, etching, and reticulation—provide the foundation for my work, while experimentation continually pushes it in new directions.

I am mostly self-taught, and that has allowed me to approach the process with curiosity and a willingness to follow an idea wherever it leads. I may begin with a drawing, but more often I find myself responding to the materials and allowing the piece to evolve in the moment. Fire is particularly exciting to me because there is always an element of anticipation: I know the process will transform the materials, but I cannot always predict exactly what will emerge.

Ultimately, I want my jewelry to encourage people to wear handmade art and to appreciate the beauty found in small things. I create pieces to be worn often, dressed up or down, treasured, and hopefully passed on. Each one carries a little of my life, my curiosity, and my love of making. My hope is that, long after I have made it, the piece will continue to tell its story—and that I will have left behind a mark of creativity.

Jennie Lorette Keatts