

Ren Elias

Creative and adaptable ceramic artist with a passion for arts accessibility, education, and community engagement. Strong communication and organizational skills, with experience in program development and grant writing.

Education

Bachelor of Arts | Duke University, Durham, NC

Major: Gender, Sexuality, & Feminist Studies

Sept 2019 – Dec 2023

Work Experience

AmeriCorps VISTA

Yellowstone Art Museum, Billings, MT | Feb 2024 - Feb 2025

- Developed and led K-12 arts programming for low-income and underserved youth
- Co-founded and facilitated a museum accessibility advisory council
- Established partnerships with diverse stakeholders to expand arts access
- Authored successful grant proposals to fund arts initiatives

Artist & Shop Associate

The Zen Succulent, Durham, NC | May 2023 - Jan 2024

- Designed, created, and sold a handmade ceramics collection inspired by the shop's aesthetic and botanical themes
- Curated product displays and assisted with visual merchandising
- Managed sales, customer relations, and business operations in an independent creative retail space

Programming Committee Member

Girls Rock NC, Durham, NC | Feb 2021 - Aug 2022

- Organized and led arts programming for LGBTQ+ and gender-expansive youth

- Provided administrative support, including agenda prep, meeting minutes, and action tracking
- Coordinated program logistics, including venue selection, scheduling, and resource management

Volunteering

Ceramic Artist

Empty Bowls Project, Billings, MT | Sept - Oct 2024

- Handcrafted high-quality, functional ceramic bowls to support local food insecurity initiatives
- Coordinated project logistics, including inventory management, transportation, and distribution

Technical Training

Functional Handbuilding

Claymakers, Durham, NC

Instructor: Nate Hood

May 2023

Ceramics & Wellbeing

Istituto Lorenzo De Medici, Florence, Italy

Instructor: Isabella Fazzo

Sept - Dec 2023

Intermediate Wheel

Claymakers, Durham, NC

Instructor: Katie King

March 2023, April 2023

Introduction to Wheel

The Art League, Alexandria, VA

Instructor: Elizabeth Molinari

March 2019

Awards

Race and Gender Research Award | Duke University, 2024

Awarded for "Topographies of Becoming: Sensorial exploration in Margarita Azurdia's *Quítese Los Zapatos Por Favor*," a research paper on Azurdia's 1970 performance piece and its impact on transnational feminist art.