

## Catherine L. Ceva

### Art Statement

I believe that through the means of art it is possible to point out the importance of environmental concerns. My artwork aims to bring about an awareness of the Syngnathidae. The Syngnathidae include seahorses, sea dragons, pipefishes, and sea moths, which are endangered marine species. In my work, I explore the research that supports a wide range of current conservation projects for this threatened species.

Using various methods of drawing and ceramic techniques, I create artworks that convey realism based on images and information provided by research by the *Conservation of International Trades in Endangered Species* (CITES), *International Union for Conservation of Nature* (IUCN), and the *Seahorse Project*. In drawing, I represent these images by utilizing colorful pastels, chiaroscuro, and composition techniques to emphasize the dramatic and often dreadful issues concerning these wonderful creatures. I also pursue this theme in ceramics. I create functional pieces and sculptural forms that explore a variety of specific marine creatures that I attach to these the outer surfaces of these vessels. My purpose is to bring them to the forefront of our everyday lives so they are no longer “out of sight, out of mind”. My art aims to be more than just decoration that is pleasing to the eye, but rather serve as a document to the concerns of human interaction to nature. I aim to produce an emotion in the viewer’s eye that will bring a change in human responsibility to nature and its preservation.

I have loved studying and exploring sea life since I was a young girl, and I have found seahorses and pipefishes to be extraordinary and unique unlike other kinds of fish. I have spent many years creating them using drawing, painting, and ceramic handmaking through my extensive research of all endangered animals such as Siberian tigers, rhinos, sea turtles, etc., I have learned that the syngnathid creatures are also included among the endangered animals. Many of them are threatened by pollution, habitat loss, climate change, other invasive species, mass global trades, and direct exploitation in the form of overfishing and bycatch, according to these marine conservative organizations. I want to demonstrate how remarkable and importance the Syngnathidae species is the fact that they are so “cute, whimsical, and mythical looking like a Greek myth hippocampus or unicorn”, prepare they have been targeted for having “healing or magical powers” My goal is to give a scientific understanding of the species and to educate the public on the uniqueness of them. I aim to inform the public of the decline of this species to instill a human desire to alter their human activity to preserve their and their environment. I hope to use my art to create as greater awareness and appreciation for these creatures through my own love and concern for the ocean.

I want to pursue the BFA because I have been focused on my studio practice more than focusing on a liberal arts education for long time. I knew I could not be able to combine a liberal art education with my studio practice, so I changed BA to BFA degree. I believe the BFA program is the best possible option for my studio art career. To completing the program, I wish to strengthen my art resume to analyze concepts of meaning for myself in a manner that is both intellectually and technically sophisticated. I suppose the BFA program at Converse is the most detailed art program offered, completion of the program would be my first major step in personal refinement as an artist, leading me towards a hopefully successful future as a pastel artist and ceramicist.