

In 1992 and 1993 I had the privilege of studying at The Barnes Foundation in Merion, Pennsylvania. Each week I took the train from Washington D.C. to Philadelphia to study amongst arguably the most extensive, highest quality collection of modern art in the world. If you're not familiar with this collection and are interested in art, be sure to [check it out](#) [make this a live link?].

It was the genius who amassed the collection, Dr. Alfred Barnes, and his way of looking at art and the world around him, though, that forever changed my view. For example, he talked a lot about "transferred value." It's a difficult concept to explain succinctly, but essentially it means that a great piece of art will remind the viewer of other values that are important. One distinct example I remember from class was a lovely little Renoir painting of a vase of flowers. But when I looked at it, it was also like looking at the sun because of the brush strokes and the "plastic" quality of the paint. As a result, the painting was about more than just a vase of flowers and was more powerful as a result.

Similarly, I think my best ceramic pieces have transferred values, for example, a night sky, gemstones, views from under a microscope, or something dug up from antiquity.