

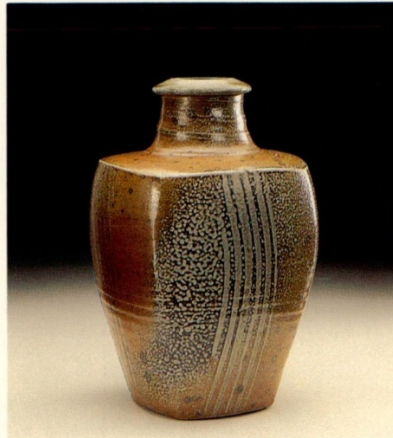
# Ceramic Review

September October 1991 · Number 131 · £4.25



Sandy Brown · Philip Eglin · Clive Bowen · Phil Rogers

## CONTEMPORARY CERAMICS



**PHIL ROGERS**

Woodfired Stoneware & Porcelain

October 1 - 12 1991



**SANDY BROWN**

Ritual Objects: Tableware

October 22 - November 2 1991

**S H O W C A S E**

MAL MAGSON · NEW WORK · September 7-14

RUTHANNE TUDBALL · SALTGLAZE · October 12-19

## **CONTEMPORARY CERAMICS**

Craft Potters Shop and Gallery

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# Ceramic Review

21 Carnaby Street London W1V 1PH September October 1991 Number 131

## Contents

### Letters 4

**Working with Saltglaze Part II** Peter Meanley reveals more details of his firing method 6

**Forms for the Time Being** Elspeth Owen reports on the International Potters Festival, Aberystwyth 8

**Plotting Your Path** Geoffrey Eastop looks back on his work as a potter 10

**News** Ceramic Review brings you up to date 12

**Art School Shows** A survey of the work of 28 colleges 14

**Woodfire Survey 1990** Coll Minogue and Robert Sanderson summarise their findings 18

### In View 20

**The Grand Opera of Pots and Food** Sandy Brown argues that pots and food make ideal partners 22

**Beginning to Lose Your Tail** Emmanuel Cooper appreciates Clive Bowen's slip decorated earthenware 26

**Philip Eglin – Beauty of Continuities** Tanya Harrod investigates Philip Eglin's new work 30

### Book Reviews 33

**The Lure of Wood Ash Glazes** Phil Rogers identifies the delights of working with wood ash 34

### Potters' Tips 37

**International Conference Shigaraki** Maggie Berkowitz writes about the event 38

**Japan Festival 1991** A users guide 40

### Events 41

**Forthcoming Exhibitions** 41

**Small Advertisements** 42

**A Potter's Day** Tony Ogogo pots in Southall, London 55

Cover: Sandy Brown – pots for the table, see article page 22.

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## Mug Shots



Photographs by Morris Freeman

Photographs in a recent London exhibition featured images of well-known philosophers, providing a fascinating opportunity to search for some link between their appearance and their ideas. Five years ago *Potters* started including illustrations of potters at work as well as images of their pots. While generally seen as adding a further dimension to the directory, some commentators thought it smacked too much of the cult of the personality – moving emphasis from the pot to its maker.

Potters are certainly not immune from 'the cult of personality'. *Potters Camps* rely to a large extent on the personality of the MC and the demonstrators. Mick Casson, seen above (centre), is renowned for his friendly wit while Jim Robison is enjoyed for his lively encouragement; both stamp their individual marks on the events they introduce, adding to its interest and accessibility. Potters, too, can be as much entertainers and performers as a source of ideas and information. Paul Soldner's footwork on a freshly thrown bowl at Aberystwyth is memorable, and the grace of the Nigerian women potters remains as vivid as the strength of their handmade pots: this year Katsue Ibata (above left) and Ryoji Koie continued the tradition by taking on the personae of 'Tom and Jerry'.

This all seems a far cry from Hamada and Leach's notion of the 'unknown maker', where personality and individuality are submerged by a desire for anonymity and potters see themselves as part of a living tradition making subtle changes rather than dramatic shifts. The cult of the 'unknown maker' appears ill suited to contemporary culture where the name of the maker is often seen as of greater importance than the object. Within any art there are the vocal, articulate and opinionated, those with the gift of the gab. But in the end it is what is made rather than what is said about it that is important: it is the cult of the object that will endure.

### Next Issue

John Pollex – Slip Decorated Ware  
Devising Classic Song Glazes

# Letters



Ceramic Review 21 Carnaby Street London W1V 1PH Fax: 071 287 9954

Correspondence welcomed but the right is reserved to edit letters unless contributors state they must be published in full or not at all. Pseudonyms may be used but names and addresses must be supplied.

## Seaweed Cure

This question stems from a faint memory of something read long ago.

Have any readers heard about a seaweed which when eaten regularly is supposed to hasten the removal of lead from the body?

I would be glad to hear from anyone with information.

BUNTY O'CONNOR Freeport, Trinidad & Tobago

While it is essential to avoid ingesting lead, do any readers know of the seaweed cure?

Please reply via Ceramic Review. Eds.

## Salt Glaze Ware of Westerwald

I am a Distance Education Student at Monash University College, Gippsland, Victoria, studying for a Graduate Diploma in Ceramics. As a major part of this course I am researching 'The Salt Glaze Ware of Westerwald'. Information on this area of ceramics is very limited.

## Henry Hammond Exhibition



Henry Hammond - bowl 1980

I am preparing an exhibition of work by the late Henry Hammond - to be shown in April 1992 in the Crafts Study Centre in the Holburne Museum in Bath. The exhibition has been commissioned by the Trustees of the Study Centre, to which Henry left all his papers.

I would like to hear from owners of pots and paintings and drawings by Henry Hammond.

I am interested in obtaining any information on: social influence to the growth of Westerwald; clay, decoration and firing techniques; distribution and export, or names and addresses of persons that may be able to help in my research.

Any help that readers may be able to give would be greatly appreciated.

HEATHER HUTCHINSON 'Avalon', Lot 2, Wonga Roo Road, Gulgong, 2852, NSW, Australia

## Musical Mud

I am currently a student at Cumbria College of Art and Design, working towards my final exhibition at the end of June. I am studying Ceramics and Crafts (HND), making clay musical instruments.

After college I am hoping to set up my own travelling business, moving and working from claypit to claypit and festivals all around

different countries.

Currently I am finding out about travelling grants. When I get going I hope to report on and research the different clays and types of firing from each country. I want to work with the people and find out about their culture and music and instruments - a travelling clay musical instrument maker. Impossible it might sound, but it's what I want to do.

I would be very grateful for any addresses of potteries and claypits in Europe (France, Spain, Portugal), South America, anywhere.

MICHELLE DEARDON, 19 Garden Street, Botchergate Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 2JQ

## Ceramic Garden Furniture

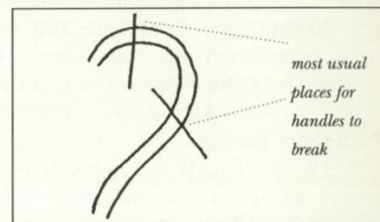
With reference to Joanne Horbury of Barnley's letter in *Ceramic Review* 127 concerning ceramic garden furniture and architectural ceramics, I recently finished a degree course and part of this was to write a thesis, mine was on 'Terracotta in Architecture'.

The list of books, journals and manufacturers which I used may be of help to others interested in this subject.

STEVE RICE Stoke-on-Trent

A photocopy of Steve Rice's 2 page list is available on receipt of a S.A.E.

## Handle With Care



I sell dozens of stoneware mugs (amongst other things) at local craft fairs, and occasionally a customer will come back to me to say that after a few months use - or even a couple of years - all the handles have broken, one after the other, usually on the curve, as illustrated. I use Spencroft Stoneware clay, fired to 1260°C, and try to make the handles fairly broad for added strength, attaching them to the mugs newly pulled. I don't know what else to do to stop this happening.

It has been suggested that repeated use in a dishwasher and microwave gradually weakens the handle.

Has anyone else experienced this problem - and has anyone any suggestions to make?

JUDITH PALMER Kendal, Cumbria

Replies via Ceramic Review please. Eds.

## Misunderstood Marshall replies

I am sorry Anne James found my rhetoric muddled (CR 128, 130). I must confess that my free school education has left me free in spirit but rather lacking in grammatical skills! The point I was trying to make was just the reverse of the impression Anne got. To quote:

"I have the highest respect for craftsmanship although many may see my pots as badly made, patched together in the same manner as Jim Malone's, Patrick Sargent's and John Malby's are."

I do not for a moment believe that these potters are bad craftsmen (including myself!). It's just that so many people mistakenly see them in that way. If Anne has time perhaps she

could battle again with my grammatical errors and realise the high esteem I have for free and spirited pots.

WILL LEVI MARSHALL Diseworth, Derby

### All Good Things

*Ceramic Review* is absolutely the best pottery magazine I receive – bar none.

I would very much like to see 'A Potter's Day' from John Maltby, but of course they are all fascinating. Keep the good things coming, including my bi-monthly shot of *Ceramic Review*.

DOROTHY HOOD (confirmed C Rophile)  
Epping, Australia

### Raw Glazing Research

I am a student at Derbyshire College of Higher Education. I am studying BTEC HND Design Crafts, specialising in studio ceramics.

I am researching the approach of studio potters and the pottery industry to the practice of biscuit firing. I am interested in finding out more about why so few potters and manufacturers once-fire their work.

I have so far found very little documented information apart from the books by Andrew Holden and Dennis Parks. I am currently combing through all the relevant magazines in the library, but if any reader can suggest any further sources of information, or know of other producers who use this method, I would be most grateful.

FRAN TRISTRAM 42 Seymour Road,  
W. Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5EF

### Waiter! My soup's in some art!

When is a functional ceramic object maker not a function ceramic object maker? No seriously! Is there a distinction between function and non-function in ceramic art, and is there a distinction between art and craft in ceramics?

It is asserted that certain functional and non-functional ceramic objects can be recognised as art, with the implication that the distinctions between function and non-function, and art and craft are overridden by certain values that would cause these objects to be recognised as art.

Looking at other materials, it is soon evident that they are used to make art that does not primarily assert the material and technical values present in crafts using those materials, and that there is a formal distinction between art and crafts, and between functional non-functional objects made from them.

Obviously non-functional objects by definition constitute a class distinct from functional objects, and it seems reasonable to treat them in terms that respect the distinction; then if objects are presented as art that cannot be accounted for primarily in terms of material and technical values, it is reasonable to treat them in terms that allow for the distinction and significance of other values.

Given non-functional objects as a distinct class, and given the evidence that without function, material and technical considerations as values in themselves, are modified by other predominant values to make the distinction between craft and whatever; it follows that the art/craft dilemma belongs to the 'functional' potter who is saying, 'there is art in my craft'.

If the distinction between functional and non-functional is denied by the assertion of material and technical values as art, the 'functional' potter is included as a person

making art, and can use those values as 'the measure of significance in functional and non-functional ceramics.

Two difficulties of 'significance' in functional pottery are caused by function and repetition. Function is significant in itself, and repetition in functional pottery seems to reinforce function. Consequently there is a tendency to make 'individual' pots, and pots where function is modified or subverted by other values, and objects where function is discarded altogether.

The final difficulty in asserting material and technical values as the measure of significance in functional and non-functional ceramic art, is the presence of non-functional ceramic objects that are significant in terms of contemporary art, but whose significance cannot be accounted for by those values.

The 'functional' potters' espousal, in their work, of function and material and technical values does not distinguish them from historical craftworkers, but alongside industrial production they become, with their own identity, problematic. The tendency to make 'individual' pots, to modify and subvert function by other values, and to discard function, shows a search for significance. If potters choose not to discard function, they are also accepting limitations of significance, with the inevitable identification of pieces in terms

of function. Perhaps the art/craft, functional/non-functional debate began, being constitutional, became conventional, and ended up by becoming, dare I say, functional!

P. MARLEY Ewyas Harold, Hereford.

### Cleaning Workshop Floors

I have my pottery in what was a chapel, two rooms with wood floors. Has anyone found a really good cleaner for such conditions? I dither between mopping and 'vac'ing – resending the time and inefficiency of both. Really I would like something that would suck up everything, dust, clay lumps etc. From the health point of view it is so important and I feel guilty that I do not do enough about cleaning.

CAROL M SEATON Amberley, Nr Arundel, Sussex

*Both the Editors have found sweeping compounds such as Sealsweep and Dusmo Farinol extremely useful. Details can be found in the Ceramic Review Book 'Potters Tips' available by post from Ceramic Review Books, 21 Carnaby Street, London W1V 1PH. Price £6.95 inc p&sp. Have any readers any other useful suggestions?*

### Saltglaze Legislation

In response to the item in the July issue on the implications to potters, particularly those involved in saltglazing, of the new Environmental Protection Act, the Crafts Council has investigated this and discovered that the Act is not intended to affect small scale craft businesses.

The following information shows how the Act will affect small scale production potters.

#### Environmental Protection Act, 1990, Part 1

##### Introduction

There has been concern over the implications of this new Act, which came into force in April 1991, concerning processes which use potentially harmful and dangerous substances. After consulting the Department of the Environment the Crafts Council has established that the Act is aimed at industry and mass production and not at small scale craft businesses. The official view is that small scale production should not be included as the production levels are insignificant from an environmental point of view – the official term is 'trivial'.

'The exceptions for processes releasing substances in trivial quantity with insignificant capacity to do harm are intended to cover cases where the process has such a low pollution potential as to be inconsequential. Such processes will commonly operate at an extremely small scale and/or only infrequently.' (Act Guidelines).

Although it is unlikely that any craft business will be picked up for control (when it may become necessary to register the process and pay a fee) there are some processes which use potentially dangerous substances where it is necessary to apply for authorisation/exemption from registration. Processes are split into two categories: those which come under the control of the local authority (Part B processes) and others which come under the control of HM Inspectorate of Pollution (Part A processes). Part A processes are regarded as of greater potential harm than Part B. The LA or HMIP decides whether the level of emissions used is

safe using government guidelines. You may be asked to take some action to upgrade the process you use.

##### Applications for authorisation

Applications for operators of existing processes involving ceramic production must be made between 1 April-30 September 1991.

##### Guidelines for ceramists

The notes below give some guidelines on whether the process you use makes it necessary to obtain authorisation/exemption. Those who are required to obtain exemption/authorisation should consult their local authority or HM Inspectorate as appropriate.

The Act aims to pick up on large scale producers of 'heavy clay goods' (bricks, roof tiles, pipes, chimneys etc.) and will normally include pottery (ceramics), fine or bone china. Therefore small operators should not be picked up for control, the level of production being regarded as 'trivial'. However if you are saltglazing, which is regarded as potentially dangerous, you will need to gain authorisation to use this process. This can be done by writing to HM Inspectorate of Pollution, saying that you use saltglaze in the manufacture of pottery but as you feel that the quantity of substances used is trivial would they consider you for exemption. Include a description of the process and scale of operation.

The cut off point for registration for wood firing is very high – 0.4 megawatts (or 1 million BTU's) and it is unlikely that any craft businesses would be firing to this level. Also the Act is only concerned with the combustion of high quality wood, rather than waste wood. However if you are unsure you should contact your local HIMP to seek clarification that no authorisation is required.

For further information and the address of your local HIMP please contact me, FRANCES LORD, Grants Officer, Crafts Council, 44A Pentonville Road, London N1 9BY. Tel: 071-278 7700.



*Peter Meanley – teapot, thrown and saltglazed*

## Working with Saltglaze Part II

In 'Working with Saltglaze Part I', Belfast-based potter Peter Meanley wrote about his teapots and how he made them. Here he describes his kiln and his 'foolproof' firing method.

### Firing the Kiln

Having decided I needed to 'salt' in 1986, I needed a starting point so, initially I read a bit and owe a debt of gratitude to Jane Hamlyn whose rimwash, batwash and colour bases provided the essential starting points. I was also incredibly lucky that some of the 150 slip tests I had been using to develop the colour and tonal range for the bowls I was making fired to 1180°C and worked like magic from the start. Equally the first white body I tried – Pottery-craft 1105 – salted well.

I was also fortunate with my sprung-arch kiln; 8 cu ft in total, with an effective packing area of some 4 cu ft; 2 burners from the back with long flame length and a 6" high castellated bag wall on either side. The low grade insulating brick, though it would just about stand cone 10, would be so corrosively attacked by the salt within a few firings to render it useless. Fortunately a friend suggested a kiln wash high in silicon carbide and alumina to prevent this corrosive attack.

6

My first teapots were pressmoulded and square sectioned and on them I tried out all my existing slip tests, the kiln coated with kiln wash. I pushed the kiln out of the garage on castors, hooked up an 8 ft chimney and had my first firing praying that it would work and the kiln last for 10 firings before disintegration.

That first firing was pretty good with a medium build up of salt, light reduction with good greens and blues. Tests on a mix of 'T' material and St Thomas oxidising were too brown and bitty and I didn't like the 'breakup'! I decided to stick with Pottery-craft 1105. Firing no. 27 has now been completed and the kiln is still holding up. Salt has been reduced from 7kg to about 3kg per firing, depending on the draw rings which I always use. I introduce 4 rings and remove the first at cone 8. These provide a clear indication of glaze quantity, quality and reduction. I am beginning to feel I know the kiln and with any luck it will be good for many more firings.

From the start my salt quality was good and often it's fantastic and I feel there are a lot of small points which contribute to this and may be useful to other potters interested in salting. My kiln is fairly small and it is the sodium in the salt combining with the silica in the clay that

*Ceramic Review 131 – 1991*

gives the saltglaze.

1. I soon realised that the long flame length burners (going the full length of the fire box) needed something to take the flame up. So I cut an insulating brick diagonally and put the two pieces about 9" away from the end of each burner deflecting a lot of the flame upwards and equalising the temperature between the front and back of the kiln.

2. This deflecting brick also provides a platform for the salt, which I introduce continuously in small amounts from cone 3 to cone 9 slightly dampened with water, so the salt sticks together when introduced on the deflecting brick. Dampened also to maximise the vaporisation and dispersion of the resultant steam. I reduce from cone 06 and salt from cone 3 because I want to get at the silica in the body before it vitrifies and I find the residual salt from the previous firing is beginning to re-vaporise as early as 06 – so why wait until cone 6/8 before salting?

3. My deflecting brick platform is only about 6" away from the bottom of the nearest teapot and when I look into the burner port after each salting operation I can immediately see tiny black blobs of salt build-up on the bright cherry-red teapots – they are so close to the burner and the deflecting brick.

4. I find that damper settings are extremely critical as my kiln is so small and oxidation/reduction/over reduction may be affected by variations of  $\pm 1$ mm.

5. The silicon carbide/alumina wash is also obviously very important. I simply do not get the build-up of saltglaze normally expected within a hot-face heavy firebrick kiln. The inside of my kiln is blue/grey and dry with no apparent evidence that it has been used for salt firings. I do not get a build-up of glaze – my wash becomes brittle and after 3 or 4 firings a few small areas may look like separating from the wall. So I rub the inside the kiln gently and if any brittle wash falls, brush mix on the exposed area. After 27 firings I may have lost 2/3mm of insulating brick thickness throughout, which gets pulled away with the brittle wash. The wash is best applied thinly like the consistency of watercolour paint not emulsion. Perhaps two thin coats before the first firing and afterwards only if an area looks as if it is changing colour from grey to brown or is in danger of flaking off.

6. The openness/tightness of pack. My small kiln is only 2 packing shelves (2 teapots) high. A tight pack holds 12 teapots. I leave 2/3cm throughout between teapot and teapot/prop/back wall etc. Ware does have to be stood on salt resistant wads to prevent adhesion with the kiln shelf.

7. Finally and not to be dismissed, the railway sleeper factor. Early on, perhaps by firing no. 6 or so, I found that though I always put in 4 'draw rings', variously removed between cones 8 and 10, because my fuel – L.P.G. is so clean, it is difficult to see the amount of active reduction within the kiln. There was no visible flame/smoke or internal swirl. Two years ago I found a railway sleeper on our nearby beach and lugged this to the car and home. It is now  $\frac{3}{4}$  gone but has given me 20 firings. From cone 06, I introduce into alternature burners small spills of sleeper to augment the reduction achieved by gas through alteration in damper setting. It provides an immediate and obvious reduction soaked as it is in preservative, and I believe the resultant ash blown through the kiln adds sparkle to the final fired teapot.

I always log everything so I can reflect back. Wind direction and speed; tank gas level; cones – top and bottom: 06 (reduction), 3 (first salt), 6 (salt half used), 8, 9, 10; pack – number of pots; quantity of salt; draw rings – normally 4; gas pressure levels throughout; wood and very importantly, damper settings.

My firings are quite fast and the entire cycle is completed within 10/11 hours. Initially slowly for the first hour or two to remove any moisture absorbed into the body, to dry the wadding and clay surrounding the cones, and also to slowly burn off the wax – sometimes used thickly between various slip applications.

From about 300°C, I fire reasonably quickly to cone 06 and then slow the firing down; fine adjustment of damper settings and continuous use of sleeper until cone 9. From cone 3 I reduce and salt constantly – wood and salt alternating every 5 minutes between the 2 burners.

I like to see a bit of flame going past the damper brick inside the chimney continuously because then I know I am getting reduction throughout and with no possibility of reoxidisation. I salt for between one-and-a-half and two hours. Oxidation is usually started when cone 9 is almost flat and 10 is moving. I try to level the temperature for perhaps 20 minutes. During this stage, I find the thick coating of salt on my blue slips will begin to break up and disperse or run a little on the draw rings. This period of oxidation gives brilliance to the glaze and cleans up the colours.

Shortly after I shut down, when cone 10 is almost flat and I cool rapidly with the damper and secondary ports open to remove residual salt until the temperature is about 1100°C. I once got scumming and attributed this to the build-up of residual salt trapped in an enclosed atmosphere with a falling temperature though it may also have been reduction while the temperature was falling.

From 1100°C I close the damper and secondary air ports to reduce the cooling rate. It is usually a further 12 hours before I can open the kiln.

I do get variations between firings, even with the same slips – sometimes the colours are brilliant, sometimes they will break-up a little more. But I now have a reasonable certainty that I will have a range of teapots with good quality salt. I need the reassurance that I can anticipate good pots from every firing. This acts as a spur towards the making of the next pieces.

#### Technical Information

Clay – PotteryCrafts P1105, which stands cone 10 easily but has a high shrink in green stage.

Slips are made with 50% ball clay (SMD)  
and 50% (Airflow 50)

Body stains, oxides etc., added to colour (normally 10-15%).  
A fine spray of rutile on slips can give colours a lift.

**Kiln Wash** – (walls, batts, props. everything)

|                      |                |                  |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Alumina hydrate      | 5              | } applied thinly |
| Molochite 130s       | $2\frac{1}{2}$ |                  |
| China clay           | $2\frac{1}{2}$ |                  |
| Silicon carbide fine | 1              |                  |

**Wad Mix** (Jane Hamlyn)

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Alumina hydrate           | 8 |
| China clay                | 2 |
| Ball clay                 | 1 |
| Grog dust                 | 1 |
| Flour (wholemeal is best) | 1 |

**Rimwash** (Jane Hamlyn)

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Alumina hydrate | 3 |
| China clay      | 1 |

Dampened salt is added in approx. 100 gram amounts continuously from cone 3 to cone 9 (approx 3-3½ kg over 1½ hours/2 hours).

# Forms for the Time Being

## International Potters' Festival – Aberystwyth 1991

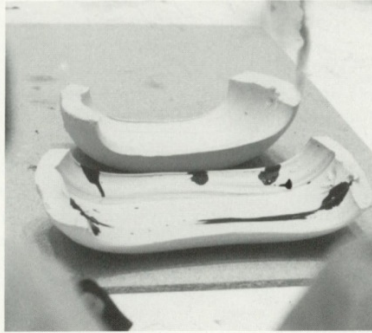
Like everyone else at Aberystwyth for the International Potters Camp in July, I was acutely aware of missing something all the time. North and South Wales Potters Associations have formed an alliance with one of the finest Arts Centre caterers in the country and many people wisely respond to the crowded time-table by dedicating themselves first and foremost to food and drink. Eventually I solved the problem by allowing myself to be seduced by the Japanese example of immediacy and concentration, and I followed wherever they went from then on.

For me, the crucial people were the



anonymous assistants, the graceful providers of clay and tools who danced in and out of attendance like pliant diplomats and the translator with the crinkled eyes whose soft voice relayed the courtesies and delicate commentaries of Katsue Ibata and Ryoji Koei to us with unruffled ease. On Saturday afternoon Ryoji threw his bowls with two centres, his not-round plates, his waltzing plates, his tops for Katsue's red fist-flattened bases, his 'forms for the time being' as he calls them, and Katsue stomped and trod the clay and tossed her head and played with her brush on any available surface.

This session gave its character to the rest of the weekend: dancing, fluent, without thought for the future, making with the whole body, no



LEFT Ryoji Koei throwing thick curved porcelain form (photo Morris Freeman), which is then ABOVE cut once top to bottom, opened out and placed on board. BELOW completed object from the exhibition Thought for Food (photo Stephen Brayne). RICHT Freely thrown and altered pot by Ryoji Koei



words, poking (fun), acceptance of the clay, co-ordination, caution to the winds – I wrote at the time. As happened two years ago when the African women came, we can be released, by lack of a common verbal language, from the need to keep on asking questions (why are potters so obsessed with technical data?). Then we can sink into the uniqueness of the occasion ('can we have the music louder, please' Katsue asks) and delight in the freedom of these temporary nomads to explode our puritanism. I want to smile from ear to ear while daubing my friend's cheeks with Indian ink and still remaining alert to the exact state of the clay. I want to dare to work so fast (trusting there is another time for slow considering).

There was a moment on the following day



when the visitors from Japan were demonstrating again and Takeshi Yasuda was working on pots he had thrown the day before. Takeshi was explaining something in his tangential way when suddenly Janet Leach, who was present all weekend, got up and walked slowly, purposefully over, right up to where Ryoji was turning at the wheel, one of yesterday's tea bowls. Takeshi immediately fell silent and so did we all, as Janet focused intently on what Ryoji was doing. Held there for a few seconds was the drama of a connection being made, between past and present, between here and somewhere far away, between equals. It was electrifying. No one said a word. And the moment slipped away like all the others.

Meanwhile, out in the open, Gerhild Tschachler-Nagy from Austria had built a clay kiln which on Friday she was slowly drying with small fires inside the two fire mouths. The chamber is really a chimney, the purpose of the firing not to mature the bisqued and burnished





Gerhild Tschachler-Nagy's kiln



Claudi Casanovas working on the first stage of his enormous dish forms



Building the paper pot kiln

clay but to make it. The straw, oxides and salt, scattered or wrapped against the jam-packed pots produce local reductions and a subtle range of dashes, dots and swerves, especially on the pots covered in slip. In a saggar four of her boat shapes (which remind me of batons) have been more deliberately marked with bands of copper and iron wire bound tightly round. She keeps a close watch on the wind and the rain as the kiln is stoked through Saturday with pine wood and then left to cool. She reckons to have reached about 950°C. On Sunday she can unpack. I am impressed (almost enviously) by her ruthless destruction of all but a handful of pots 'so that the others can breathe' she says. The friends who came with her from Austria are not so discriminating. With slides later she talks about the relation between her pots and her other clay/mixed media work. Interestingly she says the gallery which shows her installations does not want a pot in sight. She describes how, after a period of making towers or boats or sticks, she needs to return to pots 'to centre myself' before moving on again.

Throughout the weekend I am aware of other people following other continuities than mine. The great big kiln that Patrick Sargent built with a group of students proved stubborn on Saturday night. Flighty by comparison was Dave Cohen's paper kiln. Packed with a generation of paper pots of technical and aesthetic qualities never before seen, it went up in a flash. Bronwen Williams-Ellis's tile project below the cafeteria seemed gradually to take on

Ceramic Review 131 - 1991



ABOVE Nigel Wood throwing 'big ware' RIGHT Takeshi Yasuda adapting a dish (photo Morris Freeman)

an influence from the sea and the Australian Jeff Mincham actually suggested his pots grew better and better after you got them home. Claudi Casanovas described his engagement with clay as like trying to give life to a stone. Bente Hansen quietly revealed that she likes demonstrating but she didn't see how her slow building methods might make interesting viewing for us.

I wish I'd heard Mike Dodd and Rupert Faulkner exchanging Japanese stories and Nigel Wood talking about antiquities - his slide of the 'experts' peering, heads down or poking forward, over the Chinese kiln site was one of the visual mysteries of the first evening's introductory slide show. I wish I'd won Ryoji's



bowl in the raffle. I wish I'd said good-bye to Tanya. I wish. I wish. I saw what I saw. I learnt what I learnt. 'Form for the time being'.  
Elspeth Owen

# Plotting Your Path

**This year Geoffrey Eastop celebrates 40 years as a potter – an involvement which began at Goldsmiths' College and was continued in many different forms. Here he reflects on changes that have taken place as he traces his own progress as a potter.**

In 1951 at Goldsmiths' College after the National Diploma in Design, the old degree-equivalent, those who opted to do a further year for the Art Teacher's Diploma were expected to explore in their spare time another discipline of their choice. Two of the painters, one Colin Pearson and myself, opted for pottery. I had seen a pot thrown once before in about 1947-8 at Croydon School of Art; the potter was Reginald Marlow and I suppose it must have stuck in the back of my mind from that time. Colin seemed more certain than I because he went off to work with Ray Finch and I to paint in France.

The first realisation that potters had a special aesthetic came to me that year when, after much 'hands on' assistance from my tutor Kenneth Clark, I achieved the archetypal jug with thick handle. When the moment came to decorate it I made what I thought were painterly marks only to be pulled up sharply by another tutor who instructed me on making brush strokes which 'echoed the form' – not something we hear much about today!

The name Bernard Leach was not unknown to me but with the likes of Leger and Picasso in mind I failed to see why he was considered important; that appreciation came later with a recognition of the potter's holistic philosophy. In fact, although not approving of it, there were already rebels demanding a break from the Leach tradition and its oriental celadons and tenmokus – when I had yet to understand what



*William Newland – 'Minoan Bull', thrown and assembled, earthenware*

10

it was all about. There were also a number of independents not demanding change but pursuing their own directions.

There were potters working together to produce highly individualistic earthenware. William Newland in particular was making powerful slipware bulls which became a familiar image, Nicholas Vergette developed a sgraffito technique through the glaze, much emulated by other potters, and Margaret Hine, William Newland's wife, was making dishes and figures and highly distinctive pigeons – all innovative and creative work.

After about six months painting in France, including Paris, I had to return to England. I set up in the proverbial bed-sit but painting became increasingly difficult; the white canvas began to haunt me, so there had to be a change. In 1953 I was taken on at the Odney Pottery, Cookham, initially without pay but later at £3.00 per week, which was run by the John Lewis Partnership and managed by John Bew. There were seven of us working there making slipware under semi-opaque tin glazes – a rather unusual combination. The body was dug locally, mixed, pugged and dried (my first job) and fired in two large coke-fired kilns which took about 17 hours to reach 1100°C. The philosophy adopted by John Bew was broadly in the Leach tradition, preparing your own clay and glazes and making your own kilns.

In the early fifties the art/craft controversy existed, but it was not, as I remember, widely accepted that a potter was or could be a 'real' artist, although the term 'artist potter' was sometimes used by those who felt the boundary had been crossed. Galleries as we know them now barely existed. In London there was the British Crafts Centre in Hay Hill; Heals of Tottenham Court Road ran a craftsman's market, and at 149 Sloane Street there was Henry Rothschild's Primavera. These were the places where one could see something of what was going on. Strongest impressions stand out long after the event and I remember now displays of pots at Heals by Hans Coper which fascinated me. On one occasion when I wandered into Primavera there were textiles in the window, and at the back of the shop, stacked on shelves, there was a variety of pots. One quite large white pot with a narrow neck and wide rim I found interesting. I thought of buying it but did not have the cash on me – it was priced at £9 and by Lucie Rie!

Those dry-surfaced pots with unusual, untraditional shapes seemed somehow alien, out of mainstream development, but of course they were pointers to a whole new approach. A good example of this was a large dish I once saw in Hay Hill; it was entitled 'Dish with Firing Crack'. The crack was more of a crevasse, about an inch wide – it was by Ruth Duckworth. I suppose this was the first time I came across a contemporary pot which involved the principle of concept, the essential ingredient of Fine Art.

Influences which affect trends and developments often come from individuals, but they also come from groups and institutions which somehow manage at certain times to fuse together a number of separate strands of development. The influence of the Royal College of Art on changes in ceramics has certainly been considerable, especially since the sixties. It touched me personally in 1953-4 at the Odney Pottery when the new chairman of John Lewis required the pottery to be more commercially successful. A young designer was appointed, Robert Jefferson from the Royal College, which was then in its first phase of industrialisation under Robin

*Ceramic Review 131 – 1991*



Frank Spindler, Odney Pottery – 'Canterbury Tales' c.1951-2

Darwin. As a result, the somewhat bemused potters at Odney were abruptly introduced to the techniques of slip casting and underglaze decoration. It was thought that industrial ceramic designers trained at the Royal College would work in the industry; in fact, this very rarely happened.

Out of this misconception, however, grew in the late sixties and during the seventies one of the most influential movements of more recent times, still very much with us today. An unlikely and certainly unplanned phenomenon which occurred by bringing two more or less incompatible factors together – creative and individualistic people on the one hand, and machinery and equipment designed for mass production on the other. Instead of individuals adapting themselves to the needs of industry, they adapted industrial methods to their own needs – what other constructive outcome could there have been? This resulted in a new kind of studio work which could be called 'hard-edged and kiln predictable' – an industrial aesthetic having little to do with chance effects and subtle variations obtained by reduction and 'home-made' methods. Another important outcome was a closer understanding of what is best done by hand and what can be left to the machine. It must be remembered that this was happening within a much broader context: the ebullient mood of the sixties was very pervasive and had a profound effect on all sorts of ceramists, who saw ceramic possibilities in almost any everyday object; a response, perhaps, to the sculpture of Claes Oldenburg and Pop Art in general.

Most of the ceramic activity directly connected with the sixties trends can be seen as fashion with the same kind of transience, but the mainstream has continued, evolving and absorbing influences and always maintaining links with what has gone before. Occasionally new developments occur which are real, and not part of passing fashion. At first they may seem puzzling and difficult to assess but after a while it becomes apparent that a new source of ideas and influences has been tapped. The last time I was aware of such an atmosphere of change was in the seventies with the emergence of what has been called the 'New Ceramics'.

At the heart of the movement has been a general sense of liberation, in the Royal College of Art in particular, enabling potters to find their own sources of ideas and to develop appropriate techniques. Certainly the kind of industrial relationship already mentioned existed, but there were some potters, like Alison Britton and Elizabeth Fritsch, who in the same free spirit gave hand-built methods a new impetus.

While having been an interested observer of these changes, I have felt relatively detached from direct influen-



Geoffrey Eastop – segmented pot, earthenware, 25", 1971

ces, although no doubt they have had some effect. The need to make manifest one's own feelings and ideas has always been there; what has changed has frequently been due to the investigation of possibilities implicit in different techniques. This is not good for a reputation because it tends to limit the full development of an idea and the emergence of style which, particularly for collectors, is synonymous with a potter's identity. During the fifties and sixties I worked first in majolica with Alan Caiger-Smith and after that in reduced stoneware, using a home-built kiln fired on sump oil.

The seventies were characterised for me by the rapid rise of galleries selling 'one-off' pieces – a further indication of a wider acceptance of the long debated idea that craft can be art. Something else that also happened and which had a widespread effect on the general scene, not always recognised, was the marketing of David Leach porcelain. This naturally resulted in a new exploration of porcelain by many potters who, as it became less precious, discovered its special sculptural qualities.

The position now is that a wide range of styles and approaches exist covering most of the tendencies with which people identify. In my case the painterly use of colour at higher temperatures offers a long-term direction. This general diversity offers choice and enables students in colleges to establish a style of their own so that they can expect to exhibit and sell immediately after graduating, something unknown forty years ago. Being a potter today can also mean being an artist, together with most of the effects on price and quality created by dealers, collectors and galleries which are associated with it. The enhanced status of the potter is of course a good thing, but there is a price to pay which often causes an unreasonable gap of recognition, and therefore value, between those who have been selected and those remaining in the general field.

Geoffrey Eastop will be exhibiting 'A Sequence in Situ' at Contemporary Ceramics, 7 Marshall Street, London W1.

# N E W S

## Craft Potter - Craft Person

At its Annual General Meeting in July, the Craftsmen Potters Association voted by an overwhelming majority to change its name to the **Craft Potters Association** so retaining the familiar CPA initials whilst acknowledging that words can often mean what they say: welcome to a long overdue reform.

## N.V.Q. Craft Ceramics

The **Crafts Occupational Standards Board** (now known as COSBY) organised a first meeting of its ceramic working party at the new Crafts Council offices in Islington on June 26th. Briefed by Liz Edwards of BGM Consultants Ltd, who advised the Ceramic Industry Training Organisation, potters Stuart Whatley (Scotland), Rory Shearer (Northern Ireland) and Eileen Lewenstein (England) now have the task of identifying elements of competence and determining performance criteria. The overall briefing to the craft sector is seen as 'creating items and/or offering services to chosen standards of design, creativity and manufacture using hand skills and other appropriate production methods for the purposes of sale or display'. Whatever is finally accepted for the N.V.Q. will affect all forms of education in ceramics.

## Pyrometry Revised

The **Land Optocouple** is a new and inexpensive system of measuring temperatures in kilns. It combines an infrared thermometer - which has an indefinite life - with a refractory sheath, which may require periodic replacement. Temperature is detected by an optic head focused on a black body target inside the sheath. The received radiation is transmitted by a flexible fibre optics light guide to the signal processing unit sited remotely in a safe environment. Details from: Tom McDougall, Land Infrared, Dronfield, Sheffield S18 6DJ.

## Faking It



A pair of 'Longton Hall' Melon Tureens

Fakes, of only limited value when compared with the originals, have been stolen from Sotheby's 'Black Museum'. Objects stolen include a copy of an Iznik tankard, a majolica pottery plaque and a group of European porcelain. The collection was used to teach experts the difference between authentic works and imitations - classes from which the thieves could well benefit.

## Erotic Ceramics

Cupboard 55 in the **British Museum** houses the remains of their collection of erotica - objects thought too explicit for the eyes of ordinary visitors but available on appointment by anyone

who can demonstrate 'serious interest'. Though most of the *secretum* have been dispersed over the years to the relevant departments a few remain, including a terracotta Roman statue of fertility god Priapus with a huge bunch of phalli slung over his shoulder and a terracotta figure of a satyr making love to a goat. Do potters continue to produce erotic ceramics? *Ceramic Review* would like to be informed.

## Making It

The Crafts Council's 'Making It '91' (November 18-20) is a national staff development workshop to explore new strategies for preparing students in the craft disciplines for life after college. It is aimed at art college staff, and all involved in design education. Full details from Education Section, Crafts Council, 44a Pentonville Road, London N1 9BY.

## The Japanese Influence



**William Plumptre** (above) shown at Spink's Annual Exhibition of 20th Century British Art, June. Having completed a ceramic course at the Chelsea School of Art in 1983, William went on to study still-life and landscape painting under Dennis Ramsay for a two year period. Following the success of this first exhibition at Spink in 1984, William set off for the Far East in order to continue his ceramic studies. Armed with only a suitcase and one telephone number he travelled to the small pottery town of Mashiko in Tochigi county, to the north of Tokyo. For two years William worked in several workshops and apprenticed himself to a local kiln builder. His final year was spent in the workshop of Tatsuzo Shimaoka, a pupil of Shoji Hamada. Before returning to England, William visited the large pottery towns of Japan, as well as those of South Korea and Taiwan.

Back in this country William established a studio in Cumbria on the shores of Ullswater, his experiences in Japan having had a significant influence on his work. In his studio, which is based on Japanese design, he has constructed a 35 cubic foot kiln fired with wood and oil; he throws on a Japanese kick wheel and uses traditional decorative techniques such as inlay and calligraphy. He favours stoneware over porcelain, as it is more suited to his requirements, aiming to produce functional designs pleasing to the eye.

## Ceramic Competition

The **British Ceramic Confederation** has announced details of a new competition for

designers working within the ceramics whitewares industry, open to any designer working for a member-company of the British Ceramic Confederation or the British Ceramic Manufacturers Federation. Entrants are invited to submit a selection of their work which may feature either surface decoration or shape, or both. A panel of judges, drawn from the industry and the retail market it serves, will award prizes to entries showing the best combination of flair, originality and commercial potential. Prizes of £1,000, £750 and £500 will be available. The work of the winners will be exhibited at the International Spring Fair in Birmingham in 1992. Further details from Mr C. P. Hall, Federation House, Station Road, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 2SA.

## Pot Package

Insurance for pots in exhibitions which covers accidental loss, damage and so on always needs to be taken seriously. The **Exhibition Insurance Package** offered by Norwich Union does just that, with work valued at £7,000 costing £35 to insure. Details from a financial consultant or a Norwich Union agent.

## Gallery Award



Congratulations to **Anita Besson** (above) and to **Galerie Besson** which has been elected as a member of the London Society of Art Dealers. Membership is available only to galleries who have been trading for a minimum of three years and is decided by vote by the existing members of the Society. The Society represents the Art Dealers and defends their standards and interests. Recognition by the Society presupposes a high professional and artistic standard.

The fact that a gallery entirely devoted to ceramics has been accepted into the Society shows the high regard ceramics have attained and puts an end to the fruitless controversy as to whether, at their best, ceramics should be a recognised art form.

## Crafts in Suffolk

In the new edition of **Living Crafts in Suffolk** the thriller writer **Ruth Rendell** enthuses about the Suffolk Craft Society, saying, 'what it does is an agreeable contrast to what goes on outside its tasteful and immensely civilised world'. The latest **Directory of Members** gives names and addresses as well as illustrations of work; it is an ideal guide for visitors and for those wanting to commission special pieces. In an A4 magazine format, judicious use is made of space to pack in much information. The sections on ceramics

include pots by Robin Welch (Stradbroke), Reggie Hyne (Walberswick) and Bibby Rose (Yoxford). Living Crafts in Suffolk £3.50 or by post (£4.25) from Suffolk Craft Society, Fairfield House South, Saxmundham IP17 1AX.

### Wood Fired Lead Glazed Earthenware



Exeter City Museums, custodians of a superb collection of traditional Devon pottery over the past 400 years, promoted the building and firing of a simple updraught kiln at the Devon County Show in May. **Ollie Kent**, a Bristol potter and **David Dawson** of Somerset County Museum, fired a replica seventeenth century Barnstaple kiln. This was a scaled down version of a simple updraught kiln, the prototype of which is displayed in the new Museum of North Devon. The kiln was built and loaded on the first day of the show, fired for sixteen hours throughout the second day, and unloaded on the third. The wares included pots made out of red-firing clay, with incised decoration, and dipped in traditional lead glazes. Reduction firing of up to 960°C produced traditional galena green glazes.

Barnstaple and Bideford were the leading centres of production of this type of ware from the sixteenth century onwards, and enjoyed a flourishing trade in the home market and overseas to Ireland and North America. A wide variety of functional and decorative wares were made and the North Devon potters developed their own distinctive designs which included floral and geometric borders, lions, unicorns, maids, and ships in full sail. Harvest jugs were a particular North Devon speciality which often featured pictorial scenes from everyday life, such as hunting or rural festivities.

The Exeter Museums have a fine representative collection of sgraffito, including harvest jugs dated 1687 and 1703, as well as examples by later potters such as the Fishley family of Fremlington, who continued to manufacture wares in the local tradition.

### Crafts for AIDS

The contribution of makers in this country to AIDS awareness has been concentrated on donations to AIDS charities. Making quilts commemorating the lives of people who have died from AIDS has started round the country but no makers have directly addressed the issue of AIDS in their work (as far as we know), nor to the provision of environments designed and made by craftspeople. This is in direct contrast to the US where not only have there been exhibitions of work about AIDS, but at St Vincent's Hospital in New York artists and designers have transformed a nondescript lounge for AIDS patients into a living room that is as functional as it is elegant. The enterprise was led by Archetype, a gallery of contemporary crafts in New York's SoHo district. 'We wanted to create a room that was soothing and tranquil, through the use of texture, colour and light,' said Robert Gaul, a designer and co-owner of Archetype, and the result has been described as 'quietly sumptuous'. A lesson here for us all and

*Ceramic Review 131 - 1991*

an initiative the Crafts Council could usefully emulate.

### Fair's Fare

This year **Chelsea** reinforces its claim as Europe's most exciting Crafts Fair, with a sparkling selection of the best in contemporary crafts. With more than a quarter of the 215 exhibitors (chosen from more than 750 applicants) new to the event, visitors are guaranteed an opportunity to discover new and unusual pieces amongst the fine metalwork, ceramics, glass, furniture, jewellery and fashion on show. **Chelsea Crafts Fair** is held over a two week period with different exhibitors each week - a fair to visit twice. Chelsea Old Town Hall, London SW3, from October 8th-13th and 15th-20th. Closed Monday, October 14th.

### New Broom, New Image

**Sir Nigel Brookes**, Chairman of Trafalgar House and first Chairman of the London Docklands Development Corporation, has been appointed Chairman of the Crafts Council to succeed Sir Nevil Macready. With a background in property development and a committed Thatcherite, the more philanthropic concerns of the Crafts Council may appear to be at odds with his market-based philosophy. But in an interview in the June issue of 'Blueprint' he described the Crafts Council as a 'good deed in a naughty world', and that he has joined it at 'an exciting period of development in a superb new building'. Sir Nigel is keen to help craftspeople make 'decent livings'. As a keen amateur silversmith the new chairman has some understanding of the craft economy, but thinks that the word 'craft' suggests the notion of something amateurish - 'beards, sandals and patchwork quilts which does not accurately reflect the serious image of crafts which has to be put across.'

### Royal Appointment

**Earl Hyde**, commissioned by Maureen Lipman to produce a not too elaborate present for Princess Diana's 30th birthday party at the Savoy Hotel, came up with a set of bone china mugs. These had graphics by Earl Hyde and a verse by Maureen Lipman and presumably now grace the royal tables.

### Future Secured

**Elizabeth Esteve-Coll**, director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, has been re-appointed for a second term of five years. Under Mrs Esteve-Coll the V & A has undergone a major re-organisation involving the loss of some highly respected Keepers. After a time of upheaval the museum is currently enjoying a period of calm. The Tsui Gallery of Chinese Art has been well received while the exhibition on Japan promises to give an exciting perspective on Japanese culture. Mrs Esteve-Coll said: 'I look forward to continuing my work here and to continuing to build still further on what we have achieved in the recent past.'

### News of Potters

**Paul Soldner**, who starred so dramatically at the Potters Camp at Aberystwyth three years ago is the subject of a retrospective exhibition of 75 works which opens later this year. It features pieces from Soldner's career and includes examples of his large scale raku. 'Paul Soldner: A Retrospective' is at California College of Arts and Craft, Oakland, California, USA, November 10-December 29, then tours throughout the States next year.

Congratulations to **Lawson Oyekau** and **Duncan Ross** who got Awards of Merit, and to **Jane Perryman** and **Karen Anne Dersham** who

got Merits in the New Zealand open 'Fletcher Challenge Ceramics 1991'.

**Sheila Harrison** regretfully closed her gallery in Jermyn Street, in June, mainly because of the economic recession and the continuing development of Piccadilly Circus. As yet she has no definite plans but is looking forward to working with potters and artists again.

**Felicity Aylieff** and **Mo Jupp** are showing in the recently opened Bedales Gallery, Bedales School, Hampshire (September 9-28). The large, purpose-built space takes only 10% commission and aims to 'provide greater access to the school and links with the community'.



**Steve Harrison** (above) was given the Queensberry Hunt £500 Tableware Award at New Designs: Steve graduated from Middlesex Polytechnic in July.

### Ceramics at Sudbury

The **Sudbury Hall Pots Collection**, Derbyshire, was started in 1971 by Rollo and Marian Ballantyne, with their purchase of a huge Michael Cardew stoneware stool. The Ballantynes have bought steadily over the last 20 years, giving and loaning pots to Sudbury Hall during this time. At present, 300 pots from the collection are displayed at the Hall, or stored in the pot study centre adjacent to the gallery. East Midlands Arts, Derbyshire County Council and the Area Museum Service for the Midlands have added to the collection. Now a registered charity run by Trustees - David Sorrel (Chair) with Rollo Ballantyne, Marion Ballantyne, Peter Dingley and Paul Barry, the comprehensive collection includes the founders of the studio pottery movement, Lucie Rie, Bernard Leach, Michael Cardew and Pleydell-Bouverie and more contemporary pieces by David, Janet and John Leach, Ray Finch, Takeshi Yasuda, Janice Tchlenko and Jane Hamlyn.

Although the Collection has always been available to members of the public and to potters groups, use of the study centre has been minimal. In a bid to promote the Collection and increase visitor numbers, Josie Walter has been employed by the Trustees aided by a grant from East Midland Arts. After a meeting with representatives from schools and colleges in the East Midlands Area, the most enthusiastic support was for an exhibition on handbuilding. This will feature pots from the Collection by Siddig el'Nigoumi, Mary Rogers, Ian Godfrey, John Ward, John Maltby and Peter Beard, to name but a few. Schools will be encouraged to visit Sudbury Hall for talks on handbuilding, to see the pot Collection and handle the pieces in the study centre - absolutely free.

In November the exhibition is at Derby City Museum and Art Gallery, when seminars will be held, one on the techniques and another on the history of handbuilding, making use not only of the Sudbury pots, but also drawing on the historical collection at the museum. Visitors will be able to handle the more robust pieces.

Full details of the Collection and on the planned educational activities from Josie Walter, *The Pottery Workshop*, via Gellia Mill, Bonsall, Derbyshire.

# Art School Shows 1991

All colleges in the United Kingdom offering full-time courses in ceramics were invited to send photographs of graduating students' work for this year's survey. Ceramic Review would like to thank the 28 colleges who responded to the invitation. Captions to photographs are prefixed by initials for identification as follows:

BA - Bath College of Higher Education, BR - Brighton Polytechnic, BP - Bristol Polytechnic, CD - Cardiff Institute of Higher Education, CA - Carmarthen College of Technology and Art, CE - Central St Martins College of Art and Design, CB - City of Birmingham Polytechnic, CL - Clwyd College of Art and Design, CR - Crewe and Alsager College of Higher Education, DE - Derbyshire College of Higher Education, DU - Duncan of Jordanston College of Art, ED - Edinburgh College of Art, GC - Goldsmiths' College, HG - Harrogate College of Art and Technology, HA - Harrow College of the Polytechnic of Central London, KE - Kent Institute of Art and Design, LA - Lancashire Polytechnic, LO - Loughborough College of Art and Design, MA - Manchester Polytechnic, MI - Middlesex Polytechnic, NF - Norfolk College of Arts and Technology, NE - North Essex School of Art and Design, NW - North Warwickshire College of Technology and Art, RCA - Royal College of Art, ST - Staffordshire Polytechnic, SU - Sunderland Polytechnic, UL - University of Ulster, WO - Wolverhampton Polytechnic.



NW Laura Whittaker - vase, oxidised stoneware



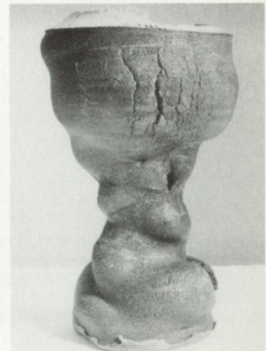
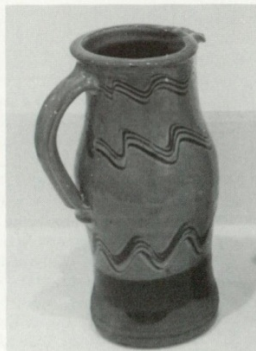
LA Judith Iverson - handbuilt jug forms, porcelain

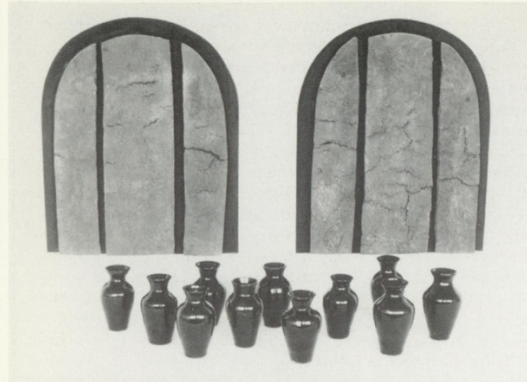


Above: ST Simon Stevens - hotel ware. Below: MA Jim Backhouse - teapot and heater, stoneware

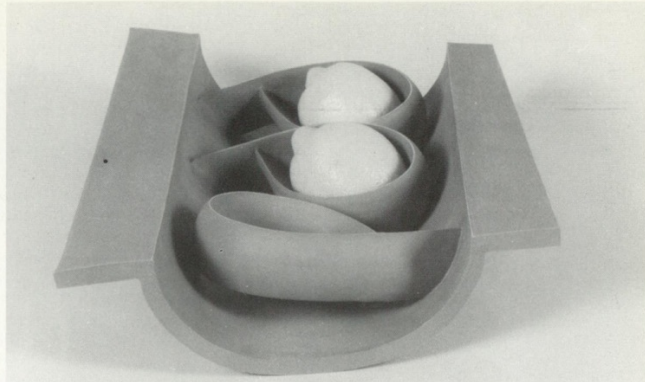


Above, left to right: MA Mary Fellows - rocking boat, earthenware; HA Daniel Boyle - saltglazed teapots. Below, left to right: CB Georgina Warne - Easter celebration dishes; DE Gareth Case - slip decorated wood fired earthenware jug; HG Joan Simmons - thrown form, stoneware

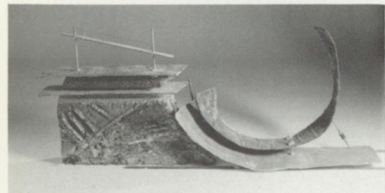




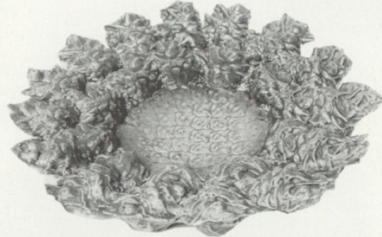
GO Ismene Sakellariedi - 'Libera Me', tiles of crank clay, pots earthenware



BR Peter Smith - Triple fruit holder, red earthenware



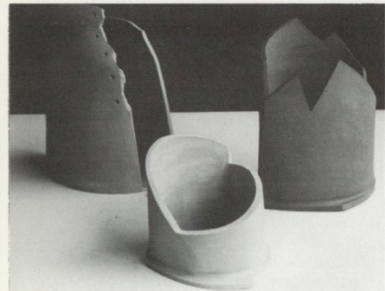
Above: LO Martin Booth - 'Construction, clay and mixed media. Below: NJ Elspeth Fawcett - Three earthenware pots



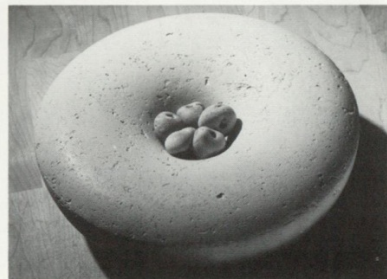
Above: BA Catherine Fletcher - 'Pineapple Bowl II', earthenware. Below: RCA Julie Wood - 'In Good Heart', ceramic



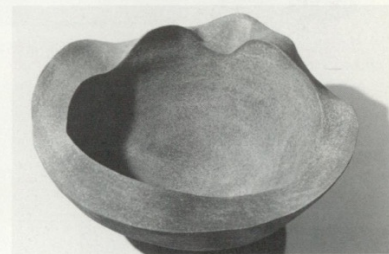
Above: NE Michele Connell - 'Le Silence habité des maisons', red earthenware, white slip, sgraffito with underglaze colours and clear glaze. Below: HA Anne Linder - double walled stoneware bowl



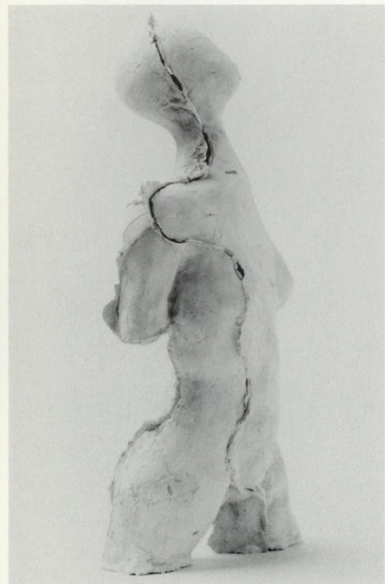
MI Damian Peissel - Figure study



SU Deborah Wardle - high fired unglazed terracotta pots with coloured slip decoration



CA Justin Cansey - Figure 'T' material, h.30"

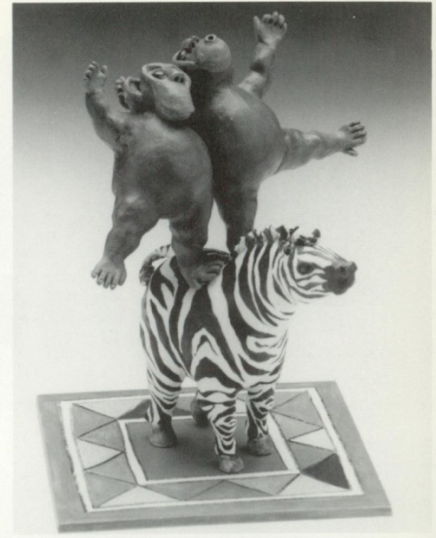


Ceramic Review 131 - 1991





RCA Anna Noel – Horse and Rider, ceramic



CD Mandy Upton – Animal Circus



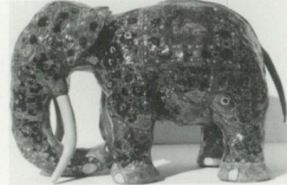
CR Andrew Harris – Figures, raku



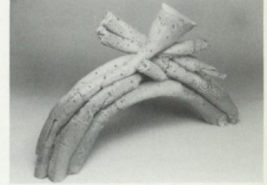
CE Maria Georgakaki – 'Private Silence'



BP Kellie Paterson – dish



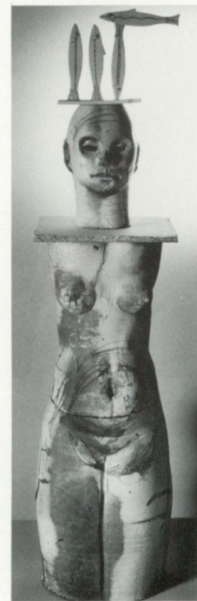
CL Sarah Baker – 'Lusted Tusker'



ED James Lowe – stoneware piece, h. 12"



Clockwise from far left: KE Sharon Potter – saltglaze bird form, h. 17"; WO Hayley Holmes – slab built hollow vessel, earthenware; MI Maggie Cullen – vessel form, h. 14"; DU Susan Briggs – detail from installation 'Womankind', raku, h. 40"; UL Anthony Scott – Wart Hog, buff stoneware clay, fired to 1000°C, length 30"



Ceramic Review 131 – 1991



# CERAMIC REVIEW BOOKS

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### NEW IN PAPERBACK

**Hamada – Potter by Bernard Leach £18.95 (paperback).** The close understanding and friendship between these two highly influential potters gives this book a unique insight into the work of Japan's leading potter. Beautifully illustrated, this new paperback edition has a useful foreword by Warren Mackenzie. Essential reading.

**The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight Into Beauty by Soetsu Yanagi £17.95 (paperback).** Now issued in paperback, this classic text challenges conventional ideas of art and beauty and looks at the role of the maker today. Stimulating and provocative, Yanagi remains one of the major thinkers examining the creative processes of craft.

### P O T T E R S

**Potters 8th Edition £5.95 (paperback).** New and completely revised, this 8th edition of the directory of the full members of the Craftsmen Potters Association provides names, addresses, opening times of workshops and showrooms, as well as illustrations of pots, and the potters in their studios. The section 'So You Want to be a Potter' has been extended and fully revised making it an excellent source of reference. With over 200 illustrations and an up-to-date text, this is an ideal reference book for visits to potters, and a survey of contemporary work.

**Richard Slee: Ceramics in Studio by John Houston £7.50 (paperback).** Published to coincide with Slee's retrospective, John Houston places the work in perspective while Slee's own account provides a fascinating 'inside' view. Beautifully illustrated.

**Alison Britton – Ceramics in Studio by Tanya Harrod £7.50 (paperback).** Published to coincide with Britton's retrospective, Tanya Harrod writes of the potter and her work tracing its development from its beginning in 1970. Lavishly illustrated with many of the photographs by David Cripps.

**Lucie Rie by Tony Birks £32.** A fascinating account of the life and work of this famous and highly respected potter; with many excellent colour and black and white illustrations of pots, this is the definitive book for all potters and collectors.

**Hans Coper by Tony Birks £33.** A complete account of the life and work of this major 20th century potter told in a lucid text and Jane Gates sensitive photographs. An ideal gift for your self or a friend.

**William Staitte Murray by Malcolm Haslam £9.95 (paperback).** A pictorial and written account of this eminent potter, dealing with his life, art and ideas. Excellent photography by David Cripps shows Staitte Murray's work at its best.

**Katharine Pleydell-Bouverie (paperback) £13.95.** Elegantly produced, this is an affectionate account of the life and work of this eminent studio potter. superb photographs by David Cripps demonstrate the riches and subtlety of her glazes, while her recipes enable us to try them out for ourselves. Highly recommended.

**British Studio Ceramics in the 20th Century by Paul Rice and Christopher Gowing £28.** The first full account of this country's leading potters including Leach, Cardew, Coper, Rie, Fritsch, Batterham, Pearson, tracing movements and schools up to the present day; profusely illustrated.

**May Davis – Her Story (paperback) £9.95.** May Davis gives a frank and revealing account of her life as a potter, musician, daughter, wife and mother – potting in Europe, Africa, America and Australasia. Highly recommended for its insights into the studio pottery movement and ideals of self sufficiency.

### A E S T H E T I C S

**Pottery Form by Daniel Rhodes £11.90.** A distillation of the ideas, techniques and philosophy of the much respected American potter and teacher. Thoughtful, stimulating and provocative.

**Ceramic Form by Peter Lane £25.** A wide-ranging survey which explains potters working methods and processes, ideas and source of stimulus for bowls and bottles. An informative and clear text with many excellent illustrations makes this a useful book for reference and inspiration.

**New Ceramics by Peter Dorrner £15.95 (paperback).** This important new book surveys contemporary work of potters in this country and abroad. By concentrating on the vessel rather than sculpture or domestic pots. It brilliantly illustrates the range and diversity of modern work which is so rich in ideas and skilled in its making. With 80 colour pages and nearly 200 black and white photographs it is a fascinating and stimulating volume.

**Studio Porcelain by Peter Lane £32.** A superbly illustrated review of the work of contemporary studio potters in the UK, USA and on the Continent, plus an historical chapter. Visually stimulating with full technical accounts of bodies, glazes and firing.

### K I L N S

**The Kiln Book by Frederick L. Olsen £14.00.** Now in its second edition, this practical guide on construction, maintenance and repair gives sound advice on all aspects of kiln building; it provides a discussion of the subject in general, including latest technical developments and in addition is an excellent handbook for potters who want to build their own kiln.

**Kiln Building by Ian Gregory £5.60 (paperback).** A guide to building basic and advanced wood, oil and gas fired kilns with plans and firing information.

**The Self-Reliant Potter: Refractories and Kilns by Henrik Norsker £11.70 (paperback).** Thinking of helping to set up a pottery workshop in a developing country? Then this could be the book for you. But it could also be useful for the dig your own clay and build your own kiln enthusiast in the West. Good value for money.

### C L A Y S A N D G L A Z E S

**Ceramic Review Book of Clays and Glazes: Body and glaze recipes by potters for potters £6.95 (paperback).** Nearly 1000 recipes (including variations) from leading potters, listed under firing temperatures. An excellent and sound foundation for a wide variety of practical and decorative bodies and glazes.

**Clay and Glazes for the Potter by Daniel Rhodes £22.95.** This classic text is regarded by many potters as their 'bible', comprehensive, sound information, well presented, clearly explained and profusely illustrated.

**Potter Materials by John Colbeck £27.** The book explaining the materials and techniques of pottery clearly written and well illustrated; informative and full of ideas. An excellent source of reference.

**Copper's Book of Glaze Recipes by Emmanuel Cooper £13.95.** A second volume (with over 1000 glazes and variations) of decorative and functional glazes for a wide range of firing temperatures, and their response to a variety of colour slips. Results are given for firing in an electric kiln and in reduction atmospheres. A book for glazers everywhere.

**Stoneware Glazes by Charles Beck £2 (paperback).** A list of recipes for 12451C (oxidised) which includes ash, clear, matt and coloured glazes.

**Stoneware Glazes – A Systematic Approach by Ian Currie £16 (paperback).** Glazes clearly explained and methods outlined for obtaining a range of workable and attractive results. Packed full of information by a potter who knows his materials. Excellent value, an invaluable workshop guide.

**The Potter's Book of Glaze and Recipes by Emmanuel Cooper £12.95 (paperback).** Nearly 500 basic recipes (with many variations) for a wide range of decorative and practical glazes ranging in temperature from 1000-1280°C. With notes on their use, application and firing.

### R E F E R E N C E

**Ceramic Faults and their remedies by Harry Fraser £19 (paperback).** This authoritative comprehensive and clearly written guide to the technical problems of ceramics is long overdue. Harry Fraser with a technical training in ceramics is able to write knowledgeably and sympathetically about the faults and foibles of working with clay, an invaluable book illustrated.

### T E C H N I Q U E S

**Potters Tips £6.95 (paperback).** Practical ideas for potters taken from Ceramic Review are brought together in this useful volume, clearly presented and fully indexed with many line drawings and black and white illustrations – informative and entertaining.

**A Potter's Book by Bernard Leach £8.20 (paperback).** The classic introduction to the skills and aesthetics of studio pottery, regarded by many as their 'bible'. Essential reading, and as relevant today as when it was written over 50 years ago.

**Illustrated Dictionary of Pottery Decoration by Robert Fournier £25.95.** Numerous illustrations and a sound informative text makes this an excellent browse – for inspiration and descriptions of methods and techniques; an eye-opener on the skilled eye and hand of the potter.

**The Potter's Manual by Kenneth Clark £12.95 (paperback).** An imaginatively produced and wide ranging guide to the techniques and processes used by potters today. Practical and clear with an excellent integration of photographic making sequences and descriptive text. Kenneth Clark has drawn fully and creatively on his sound knowledge and experience.

**The Technique of Pottery by Dora M. Billington revised by John Colbeck £12.95 (paperback).** A classic brought up to date, covers all methods of pottery making as well as much excellent advice on glazing and glazes with recipes with 200 black and white photographs.

**A Potter's Guide to Raw Glazing and Oil Firing by Dennis Parks £11.90.** The book combines enthusiasm, knowledge and conviction in a readable and enjoyable way. A potters practical guide to ecological and economic techniques.

**Hands in Clay 2nd edition by Charlotte Speight £33 (paperback).** A highly popular book in print with additional chapters; a sound guide to the diversity of ceramics, covering history, techniques and aesthetics.

**Coiled Pottery by Betty Blandino £11.00 (paperback).** An excellent practical and historical account of coiled pottery which gives clear how-to-do-it advice with a pictorial survey of the best coiled wares. Readable and informative.

**Working With Porcelain by Alison Sandeman £5.60 (paperback).** A practical guide to using the potter's most refined material – complete with body and glaze recipes as well as many handsome photographs.

**Raku by Ian Byers £16.50.** Part inspirational and part practical, Ian Byers produces a lucid account of this fascinating process. Illustrating it with work which catches the full drama and excitement of producing raku.

**Handbuilt Ceramics by Jane Waller £16.50.** For experienced and innovative potters, Jane Waller brings to this book her own electric and inventive approach; a book for the beginner as well as the more experienced potter. Fully illustrated.

**Rolled Potter Figures by Audrey Blackman £5.60 (paperback).** A practical step by step guide demonstrating not only how to use this technique but also gives an insight into discovering its special qualities.

**Animal Forms and Figures by Rosemary Wren £16.50.** An illuminating account of many different methods of making animals in clay – those of the author and also many others including Jill Crowley, Mo Jupp, Jeremy James and Tessa Fuchs. Much inspiration from one of our leading practitioners in the field.

**The Craft of the Potter by Michael Casson £11.20 (paperback).** Now back in print, this is the guide for starting and running your own pottery, with clear advice and much practical information from one of our leading potters. Well illustrated. Excellent value.

**Slips and Slipware by Anthony Phillips £16.50.** An excellent introduction and thoroughly practical explanation of how to set about making slipware. Good historical background.

**The Self-Reliant Potter by Andrew Holden £8.95 (paperback).** Describes how to make your own glazes, how to raw glaze and gives detailed plans for building a variety of kilns, wheels and other tools. A fund of stimulating and useful information.

**Images in Clay Sculpture by Charlotte F. Speight £23.50 (paperback).** This imaginative and comprehensive international survey brings together the work of many sculptors and clay-workers. It is an invaluable guide to current trends and ideas, a must for anyone at all involved and interested in the world of clay sculpture.

**Electric Kiln Pottery by Emmanuel Copper £16.95.** At last a down-to-earth practical book which describes the technical changes and wide range of effects obtainable at high temperatures in electric kilns. Bodies, decoration, glazes, kiln packing and firing procedures are fully written about, plus over 70 recipes. Well illustrated.

**Pottery Decoration, Contemporary Approaches by John Gibson £23.50.** Sumptuously illustrated, combining ideas with information and insight with description; a must for the innovative potter interested in decorative techniques – from low temperature earthenwares, enamel lustres, stoneware, porcelain and saltglaze.

### H I S T O R Y

**Potters and Paintresses by Cheryl Buckley £18.50 (paperback).** The unique contribution women pottery designers have made to the design of shapes and decoration is well documented and illustrated in this fascinating account of the successes of such women as Dora Billington, Hannah Barlow and Jessie Tait. A welcome and enthralling contribution to our understanding of ceramic history.

**A History of World Pottery by Emmanuel Copper £14.95 (paperback).** Back in print, this enlarged edition has a chapter on the 'new ceramics' plus many more colour illustrations. Readable and informed, it makes our history come alive; reading for pleasure and information.

**World Ceramics ed. Robert Charleston £23.** A welcome reprint of this well illustrated authoritative text on the history of ceramics. Great value to potters, enthusiasts and collectors.

**Persian Lustre Wares by Oliver Watson £42.** Dr Watson's book continues the excellent Faber Monograph series. This detailed and scholarly study of pots and tiles demonstrates what a versatile and fascinating technique lustre is. The definitive work.

**The Three Books of the Potter's Art by Cipriano Piccolpasso £97.** Two magnificently produced slip case volumes, one is facsimile of the manuscript in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the other is a translation with many additional practical notes making the text relevant for potters today by Ronald Lightbound and Alan Caiger-Smith. Informative and beautiful to look at. Free prospectus available from Ceramic Review.

**Chinese Pottery and Porcelain by S. J. Vainker £23.95.** Published to coincide with the exhibition at the British Museum, this history includes latest information on techniques and materials.

### C O L L E C T I O N S

**Bernard Leach, Hamada and their Circle £32.** Beautifully illustrated selection from the studio pottery collection of the late George Wingfield Digby. Compiled by Cornelia Wingfield Digby and Tony Birks with an introduction by Michael Webb. A must for enthusiasts.

**Pioneer Studio Pottery by Sarah Riddick £29.50 (£16.95 paperback).** Wonderfully illustrated and annotated account of the Milner-White Collection of studio pottery. Excellent value.



LEFT Coll Minogue and Robert Sanderson. Square downdraught kiln, 34 cu. ft. stacking space, Bourry-type firebox, chimney 15ft 3in.  
 CENTRE David Eeles. Three chambered climbing kiln, 560 cu. ft., one large crossdraught firebox (over 100 cu. ft.), two 12ft chimneys.  
 RIGHT Walter Awlson. Catenary arch kiln, 25 cu. ft., two internal fireboxes, chimney 15ft.

## Woodfire Survey 1990

During the Summer of 1990 Coll Minogue and Robert Sanderson carried out a survey on woodfiring in Britain the primary aim of which was to collect information on wood-fired kilns currently in use so that a comparison could be made with woodfiring practices in other countries. Similar surveys have already been conducted in both the United States and Australia. The surveyors report on their findings.

Every effort was made to contact as large a number of woodfire potters as possible. Initially, a letter outlining the proposed survey was published in *Ceramic Review*. Details of the survey were also published in several of the regional Pottery Associations' Newsletters. Questionnaires were sent to potters whom we knew to be woodfiring. In addition participants in the survey were requested to list in their completed questionnaires, names and addresses of woodfire potters known to them.

While a survey carried out in this manner can never claim to be conclusive, we are of the opinion that the 39 kilns included in the survey, represent a large proportion of the woodfired kilns currently in use in Britain. Of these 39 kilns, 24 are in England, 7 in Wales and 8 in Scotland.

### Kilns

The most popular type of kiln in use is the 'Fastfire'. There are 16 in total represented in the survey, 10 'Olsen Fastfire' and 6 others of various designs. Next in popularity is the 'Bourry Box', of which there are 11, 7 with basic cube shaped chambers and 4 with round chambers. Other kilns included are as follows: Climbing kilns 3; Catenary Arch 3; Anagama 1; Groundhog 1. The remaining 4 kilns do not fit conveniently into any given classification. One of the most significant factors to emerge from this list is the small number of 'large Oriental type' kilns currently in use. In marked contrast, these kilns have become prevalent in both Australia and the US in recent years.

Kilns included in the survey have volumes ranging from 8 cu. ft. to 800 cu. ft. However, the most common size falls within the 20-40 cu. ft. range of which there are 10 kilns. Of the 39 kilns, 32 are single chambered and 6 are double chambered. The remaining kiln has 3 chambers.

Significantly, 7 kilns were built entirely from recycled materials. A further 22 were built from a combination of new and recycled materials, while only 10 kilns were built using all

new materials. For 22 of the potters included in the survey the kiln they now use is not their first woodfire kiln.

The 'Bourry Box' appears to be the most versatile of the fireboxes in use. There are Climbing and Anagama kilns with Bourry fireboxes, as well as both round and cube shaped Downdraught kilns. Further evidence of its versatility is shown by its being used in multiples of two, four and six. The kiln which has 6 fireboxes is a 400 cu. ft. round chambered Downdraught kiln.

### Firing

The firing times for the kilns represented vary from 5 hours for the smallest kiln, to 36 hours for two of the largest kilns. Again there is a striking difference between the longest firing times in this survey and those in the Australian and US surveys, where several potters reported firings lasting for many days up to a maximum of ten days.

Twenty-six kilns are fired to a maximum temperature within the 1250°-1300°C range. The other maximum temperatures are as follows: 1040°-1060° four; 1200°-1250° three; and 1300°-1350° six.

When asked to describe the type of work which they produce, most of the survey participants used a number of different descriptive terms. Stoneware and Domestic/Functional are the terms used most frequently - 29 and 26 respectively. Other terms used included: Saltglaze - 6; Earthenware - 6; Garden pots - 10; Decorated - 9; One-off/Individual Pieces - 6; Terracotta - 3; Lustreware - 2; Sculpture - 2. The Australian and US surveys show a similarly high proportion of woodfire potters producing Domestic/Functional Stoneware.

Eighteen kilns are fired less than 7 times a year, while a further fifteen kilns are fired between 7 and 12 times. The remaining kilns are fired more than 12 times per year, including two which are fired 20 times a year.

Most of the potters in the survey fire with the assistance of one other person. Eight potters reported firing alone. One of the larger kilns is fired by a team of six, working three at a time.

### Fuel

Excluding the preheat period (during which an alternative fuel is used in many kilns), a combination of fuels is used during the main firing period in 4 kilns. For example, the kiln is fired primarily with oil; up to 1100°C and is then fired

to top temperature of 1300°C using wood. Sixteen of the potters biscuit fire their work before woodfiring, with the remaining 23 potters single firing their work.

As regards the type of wood used, most kilns – 24 are fired with softwood. A combination of hard and softwood is used in a further 12 kilns. One potter specifies that he fires his kiln with willow, while another uses oak whisky barrel staves which, impregnated with whisky give added fuel value!

#### General

Of the survey participants, 29 give 'Potter' as their occupation. Additional occupations listed were as follows: Potter/Teacher 4; Potter/Other 2; Teacher 1; Potter/Teacher/Student 1; Other 2.

The majority of kilns included in the survey are located in rural areas – 31. 7 are in semi rural/village settings while only 1 kiln is in what is described as an urban area.

When asked to give their principal sources of information on woodfiring a large number of potters, 17 in all, list 'Own Experience/Trial and Error' as their main source. Other frequently mentioned sources include: The Olsen Kiln Book 13; Michael Cardew 12; Available literature 9; Bernard Leach 6; Ray Finch 4. Experience also came top of the list in the Australian Survey, while Fred Olsen was the source of information most frequently listed in the US Survey.

The single most important question in the survey asked potters why they fire with wood. Many of the answers dealt with aesthetic considerations. These can be summarised as follows. The colours and effects which it is possible to achieve, both on glazed and unglazed surfaces are unique to woodfiring and cannot be achieved by any other means. It is in an effort to achieve these particular effects, that the majority of the potters included in the survey, fire with wood.

For many the process of woodfiring is an added attraction, in addition to the effects achievable. This attraction lies in the total involvement in the firing, which is a necessary aspect of woodfiring. There is for some a sense of seeing the process of pottery making to its ultimate conclusion, by being actively involved in the firing, as opposed to abandoning their pots to kilns which demand little effort in firing.

For a very few potters economic circumstances led them to woodfiring; wood was the cheapest fuel available at the time when they were building their kilns. It is interesting to note that proportionally, in both the Australian and US surveys, a far higher number of potters were influenced by economic considerations, when making the decision to fire with wood.

Participants were given the opportunity to list what they regard as the advantages and disadvantages of woodfiring. The advantages closely resemble the answers given to the question 'why woodfire', while most of the disadvantages related to the labour intensive aspect of woodfiring, compared to other methods of firing. There was general agreement regarding the considerable amount of work involved in preparing, storing and seasoning the wood, in addition to the firing itself.

The question 'What effects are you trying to achieve by woodfiring?' resulted in a variety of similar words and phrases which are best illustrated by quoting a number of examples: natural colour variations; the effect of fly-ash on glazes; an accidental quality; the mark of the fire; warmth and richness; ash deposits; markings which show clearly the movement of the flame through the kiln; a warm toasted effect; subtle colour variations; liveliness.

The final section in the woodfire questionnaire allowed participants an opportunity to make additional comments on the subject. A number of potters availed of the chance to express concern over woodfiring on ecological



Jonathan Garratt. Round downdraught kiln, 7ft across by 7ft high – halfway up dome, four Bourry fireboxes, chimney 25ft tall – 7ft across outside at ground level

grounds. This appears to be an area of growing concern amongst woodfirers in recent years, not only in Britain but also in Australia and the US. Three of the papers presented at the second Australian Woodfire Conference held in April 1989, examined the ecological consequences of using wood as a fuel and considered how the negative effects could best be counteracted.

In this survey a number of potters take the view that wood is the most ecologically sound fuel. It is after all a renewable resource, unlike other fuels. Also the wood used in woodfired kilns is generally waste wood, which may not be used otherwise. One potter makes the point that if a woodfire kiln is fired properly and there is efficient burning of fuel, then chimney emissions can be kept to a minimum.

In the past 15 years or so there has been a marked increase in the number of woodfired kilns in use in both Australia and the US. Evidence of the popularity of woodfiring in these countries can be seen in the many articles on the subject which have been published in the various ceramics magazines. The specialist conferences and exhibitions which have been held, further substantiate the position of woodfiring in both of these countries. There appears to be an increase particularly in the number of 'long fire Oriental style' kilns in use.

In the past, specific styles of woodfire kilns have been developed or made popular in one country, later the use of these kilns spreads to many other countries; such was the case with the Fastfire Kiln. Perhaps the 'long fire Oriental style' kiln, with its accompanying aesthetic, is set to become more generally widespread in the near future – including here in Britain.

*We would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Crafts Division of the Scottish Development Agency, towards costs incurred in carrying out this survey.*

The potters who participated in the survey are:

Mick Arnold, Walter Awlson, Svend Bayer, Shirley Bracewell, Alan Caiger-Smith, Seth Cardew, Mick & Sheila Casson, John Davies, Peter Dick, Mike Dodd, David Eeles, Ray Finch, Jerry Fryman, Alan Gaff, Jonathan Garratt, Alastair Hardie, Des Johnson, Charlotte Johnston, Ollie Kent, Rodney Lawrence, John Leach, Chris Lewis, Christine McCole & Roger Brann, Coll Minogue & Robert Sanderson, Mick Morgan, John Nuttgens, Lionel Ousdine, Douglas Phillips, Andrew Richards, Phil Rogers, Micky Schloessingk, Carole Shearman, Michael Skipwith, Claire Sutcliffe, Sutton Taylor, John Teiser, Mark Titchiner, Stuart Whatley, Gary Wood.

# IN VIEW

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS, NOT colour prints or slides, are welcome for possible inclusion in 'In View'. Please indicate on reverse of photographs name, size of object, making, firing and glazing, as well as relevant exhibition or event. For return of photographs enclose stamped addressed envelope. No responsibility can be accepted for accidental loss or damage, nor can Ceramic Review acknowledge receipt of photographs. Ceramic Review, 21 Carnaby Street, London W1V 1PH. Next copy date for In View, September 16th.



**Eamonn McGovern** - 'The Blind Fish', stoneware, with red slip and oxides, 19" tall. To be shown at 'One Hundred Years', Dovecot Art Centre, Cleveland, October 1-31.



**Amanda Spencer-Cooke** - Head, white stoneware with rubbed oxides, 40cm tall. On show at La Galerie, Fontvieille, until October.



**Mariette Voke** - planter, stoneware, slab built, 20" x 12". To be shown at The Black Swan Guild, Frome. August 26-September 30.



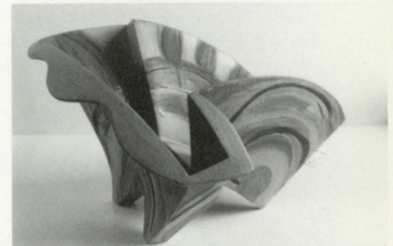
**Igor Mitoraj** - 'China Moon', head with bronze patina, 70 x 72 x 90cm. Shown at JGM Galerie, Paris, May.



**Joan Doherty** - Raku cat, porcelain and stained clays, 21cm tall. To be shown at the Courtyard Gallery, Cheltenham, September 3-28.



**Inke Lerch-Brodersen** - vessel, thrown porcelain with geometrical pattern. On show at Kunst and Keramiek, Deventer, Netherlands, until September 19.



**Rachel Eaves** - 'Green Vessel with Four Feet', slab built stoneware with layers of slips and glazes, 10" tall. Shown at Orleans House Museum, Twickenham, June.



**Deborah Masuoka** working on sculptural forms 'Rabbit Heads', earthenware. The heads were shown at Mark Masuoka Gallery, Las Vegas, March.



**David Clamp** - lidded container. To be shown in 'Five Years On', recent glass and ceramics from Staffordshire Polytechnic, September 7-October 12.



**David Daly** - 'Green Woman', stoneware, 30cm. On show at Haworth Art Gallery until September.



**Masutaro Murata** – 'Narcissus I', crank and slip, 1080°C, 5cm tall. To be shown in 'Japan at Smith's', Covent Garden, London WC2, September 9-21.



**Douglas Kenny** with one of his large earthenware plates and vase forms. He showed his ceramics at Turquoise Coyote Gallery, San Antonio, Texas, July.



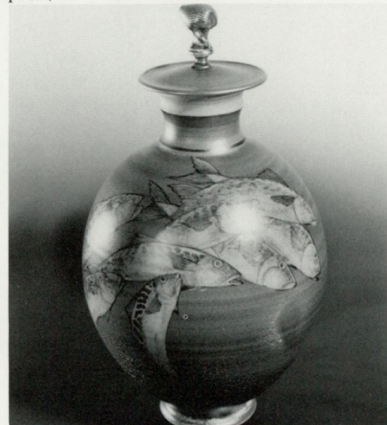
**Mieke de Groot** – vessel, stoneware, 20cm tall, reduction fired stoneware. Shown at Galerie Argile, Brussels.



**Tove Hørberg** – bowl, handbuilt carved porcelain, 15cm. Shown at Gallerie Kampe, Løkken, Bornholm.



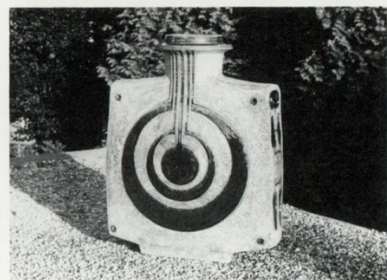
**Staffordshire slipware dish**, dated 1790, 13¾", Sotheby's sold July 16, lot 150, £4,500 (hammer price).



**Barbara and Michael Hawkins** – lidded bottle. Shown at Open Eye Gallery, Edinburgh, July.



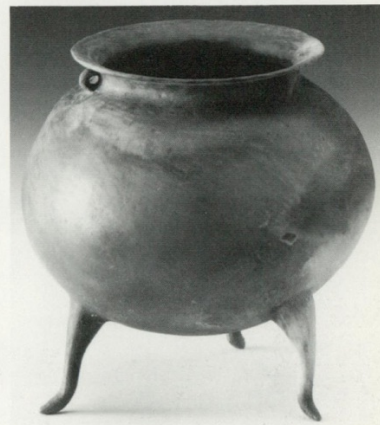
**Petri Voet** – bowl, red earthenware with white and grey slip and black metallic glaze. Shown at Gallery Terra, Delft, Holland.



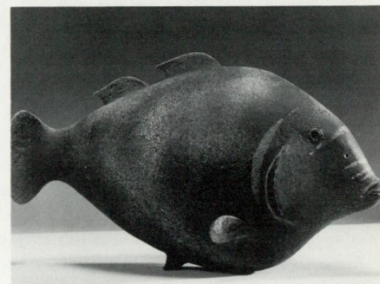
**Victor Priem** – pot, 66cm tall, 1981. Shown in 'A Tribute to Victor Priem', Manor House, Ilkley, June.



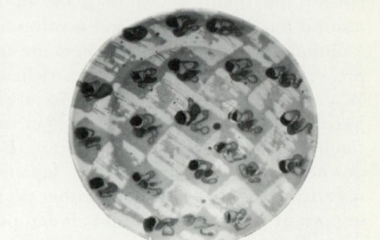
**Nancy Rothwell** – raku, 28" tall, 1991. Shown at Williamson Art Gallery, Birkenhead, May.



**Sophie Milburn** – vessel, handbuilt burnished reduced stoneware, smoked-sagger, 10" tall. Shown in 'A Green Celebration of Crafts', Suffolk Craft Society 20th Annual Exhibition, Aldeburgh, August.



**Ann Campbell** – Fish form, earthenware, 16". One of the pieces shown in 'Fish'. Amalgam Art, Barnes, London, July.



**Liz Gale** – plate, reduction fired stoneware, 14". Shown in Southern Ceramic Group Exhibition, July.



*Sandy Brown – 'Criss Cross', softly thrown dish with handles*

## The Grand Opera of Pots and Food

**Food and pots seem like natural companions, yet pots by well known makers in the West are tucked away in cupboards to be looked at but not used. This, as Sandy Brown points out, is very different from the custom in Japan; she argues here for a fuller appreciation and understanding of pots through use.**

In Japan still, in spite of incursions of new ceramics called by the horrible word 'objects' (yet somehow it does seem to convey the pointlessness of many of them), pots revolve around food. Or, rather, food revolves around pots. Japan is a nation of gourmet foodies. Pots are used imaginatively by the cook to make meals into a rich aesthetic experience. When I returned to live in England in 1973 after five years in Japan I had very little opportunity in my own culture to be reminded of my original inspiration. Food magazines here do not use studio pots as all Japanese cook books do; restaurants certainly do not, neither do many individuals. So important is the relationship between pot and food that one of the best ways to learn about Japanese contemporary pots is to look at glossy cookery magazines. What I mean by using pots imaginatively is that a Japanese cook is very open about what is a functional pot; ANYTHING can be functional if it will support a piece of fish or hold liquid. The cook will look

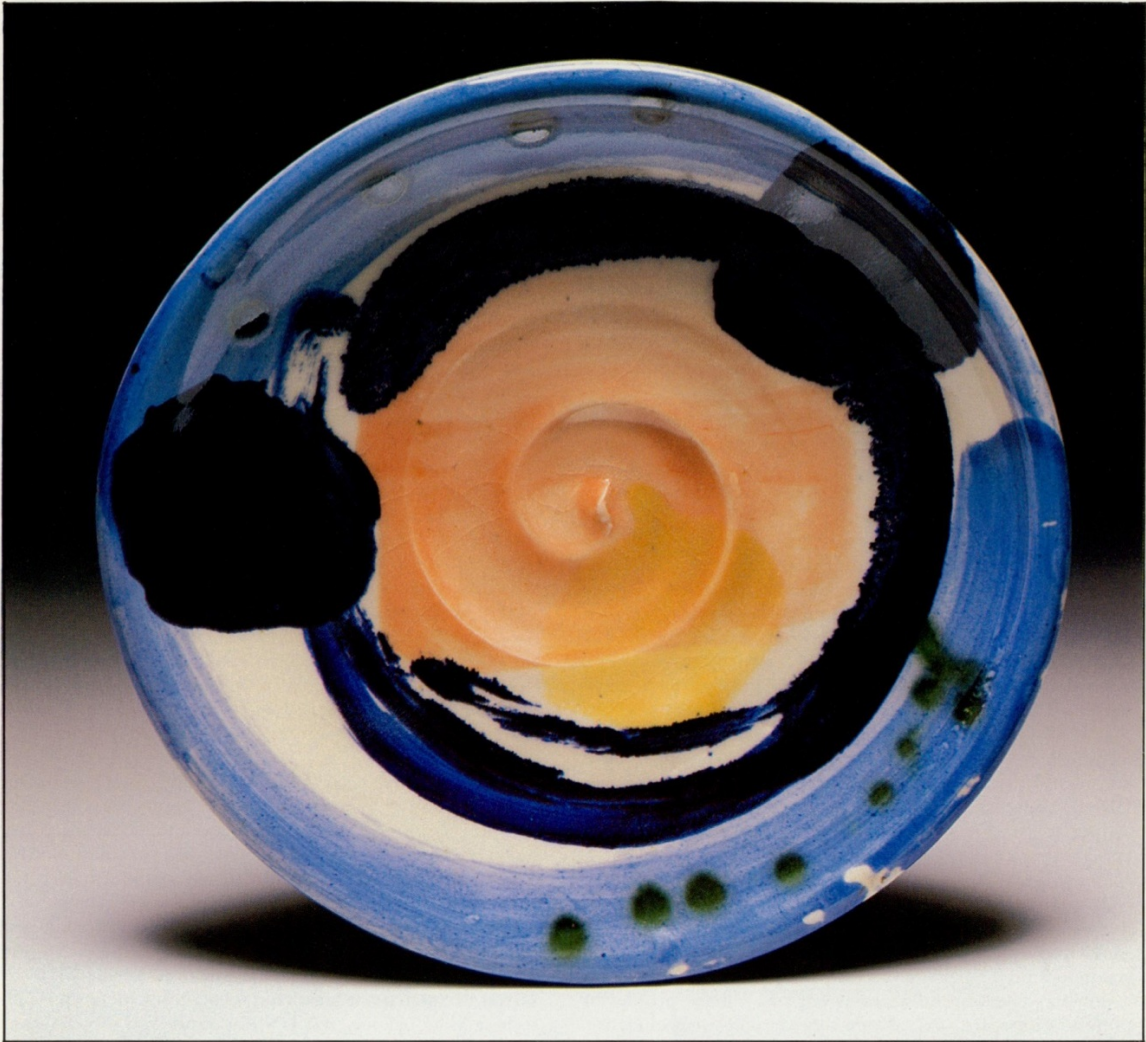
for the pot to display the food, is not afraid of strong individual pieces, instinctively combining colours and texture, harmonising the two together; and will do so freshly each time. Japanese chefs love and collect pots. In fact, one of the top chefs in Japan has recently produced a book of his favourite pots which he likes to use in his restaurant. Richly individual studio pots naturally.

Pots in Britain generally seem to be something to be kept separate; apart from us, too good to use (cheap ones are for use); not embraced in our daily life; they are in danger of becoming 'objects'. Can you imagine going to an opera at Covent Garden with no stage set – just a grey blank? No rich visual extravaganza to heighten the experience? Well, that is how I feel when I eat from dull pots.

I started making pots in Japan, where the food opera has rich opulent stage sets made by artists. That was my first impression of the place pots occupy, of how they can enrich daily life. It is still disappointing to me that in my own culture it is different. It's no use whingeing; I am going to try to enthuse everyone to use pots every day.

There is one place I know in this country where you can see pots used as an exciting living art form; Geoffrey and Pat Fuller's pub in Derbyshire. Geoffrey Fuller is a sensual mediaeval potter with a strong streak of the rurally bizarre;

*Ceramic Review 131 – 1991*



*Sandy Brown – ABOVE Softly thrown plate. BELOW LEFT Large square platter. RIGHT Lasagne dish*



he has a tame chicken who accompanies him on his shoulder, a striking auburn bantam, the sort used in cock fights. I visited them in the house they lived in before they moved to the pub, and he and Pat created a wonderful atmosphere of primitive austerity; generous in pots, solid furniture and food, austerity in the lack of visual clutter, each object chosen because it is loved. I hear the pub is just the same. Good food, good pots, old oak furniture, beer, fun and laughter.

About the fear of using good pots:

1. We spend thousands of pounds on cars. Do we say they are too good to use? No, we park them in the street! We drive them on the M25! And, they depreciate dramatically, as well as getting scratched and worn. We have a relaxed attitude to cars, we know how to enjoy them. We know how to appreciate the pleasure of going somewhere in comfort and style in something extremely expensive and know it will not last for ever. We are able to love the joy of travelling in, and simply being in, a good car. We need that philosophical attitude towards pots.

2. When used with care pots will outlive us all. Archaeology exists largely because of pots.

About function:

All this fuss about teapot spouts and throwing them anti-clockwise and them unwinding etc. and the angle of pour etc. Shoji Hamada said he did not mind whether a teapot poured well or not. If he loved it he would use it anyway.

In 1990 I returned to Japan, my first visit for seventeen years. I rediscovered the source of my inspiration. I know there is Clive James's Japan, of kitsch and silly games; yes, that is all there; kitsch in Japan seems more rubbishy than anywhere else because it is completely over the top. There are huge fruit-machine parlours which are built like gigantic fairytale palaces; neon lit extravaganzas where you can sit staring at a fruit machine for hours and win a tin of peaches and a vibrator as I did. Yes, that is all there too.

There is MY Japan.

The Japan I know and love consists of food and pots. In the Japan of my romantic imagination all restaurants have some studio pots. (That is not far from reality.) Each time you go out for a meal you will see pots. Each time you pick up a women's magazine in a newsagent you will see profiles of potters. There are several monthly ceramic magazines for sale everywhere. In the annual Dento Kogei Ten (Traditional Crafts Exhibition) which is huge and prestigious there is tremendous publicity in the press and there is a great rush to buy, there is tremendous attention given to prizewinners: and all potters in Japan, unless they are completely useless, are making piles of money. My peers are earning around £60,000 to £250,000 a year from functional pots. Mind you, they are good, and they are real artists. The best will get to be designated Human National Treasures by the government; an honour reserved exclusively for artists working in the CRAFTS. (Painters and sculptors have a hard time.) I want to show that in a rich environment like this you get good exciting functional pots, which are the best works of art alongside anything in the world. If you think functional pots have to be dull then you are dull.

Japan is an extremely hospitable culture; during our five week visit last year nearly every day we had invitations from old friends to go out for meals. We had more invitations than meal-times. In fact, that is what greases the wheels of society; deals are done, employees are flattered, bosses are joked with, lovers are flirted with, friendships are developed; nearly always in restaurants. And, during that season, I had the best meal I have ever had in my life. Ito-san, the owner of the Green Gallery where I was showing in Tokyo, took us out for a meal. We had many courses; the food was wonderful, and what made it outstanding was that the

restaurant uses only pots made by famous potters. It was a stupendous experience.

It was beautiful. A traditional room, reserved for us as a group so that we could be private. There was a low black simple wooden table, cushions around for us to sit on the floor, but as a concession to modern trends there was underneath the table a carpeted pit, so that we could put our feet down in it. The only other item in the room was an arrangement of a branch of fruiting bright orange kaki (persimmon in English). The branch was in a pot set in the alcove in the wall, the pot was a reduced greyish colour, hand built by coiling, the coils obvious and untidied, a soft generous uneven form, with good dollops of thick white slip brushed boldly over the body, and some strong sgraffito showing through.

We had eight courses, each visual works of art. First was an octagonal ceramic tray, handpainted with bright overglaze reds and greens; on it was another small pinched dish with a shino glaze, in which was caviar with a mustard sauce. Also on the tray were orange roes, large and juicy and glistening fresh, I think from salmon. They were arranged in square parcels held in place by a paper-thin yellow omelet. There was a piece of delicately carved cucumber, and a flower, pink; actually a weed.

We then had a clear soup in which were floating a cluster of tiny mushrooms, some cress, and a piece of octopus. It was served in a contemporary lidded lacquer-ware pot, which means it is painted wood. They can sometimes be not to my taste by being too finicky and tight, but this bowl was chunkily carved and had some substance and some personality; an imaginative contrast with the subtle delicacy of the soup.

Next came a porcelain dish whose edges have been turned up while still soft; painted with cobalt gently, showing all the brushmarks in a simple abstract doodle. As is usual with Japanese food we each had our own dish prepared individually. In it was a bed of powdered ice, on which were four mouthfuls of raw fish, arranged with tiny leaves on top.

Fresh looking, shining. Japanese people know about fish; their fish shops are as clean as operating theatres. The fish was *fugu*; the famous one which can occasionally kill if it is served by amateurs. I have seen it caught; it swells up rapidly to be a huge balloon, this is with poison. You have to have a license to serve it. It was delicious.

After that, because it was a public holiday to celebrate boy-children (girls have their own day), we had a festive dish of simple peasant food. Rice-paste with fish, presented wrapped into a cone-shape in a bamboo leaf. Thin threads of bamboo were used to embroider a wrapping of string around it making it into a food parcel. That was served on a stunning dish; a rough thick oval slab on three simple feet, painted gold. I have usually associated gold with a delicate deadly mean intricate preciousness, and here it was robust and generous and bold. Three cones of bamboo parcels on gold. Peasant food on gold. I sat looking at it all and tears came to my eyes.

We had red sea bream, salted and grilled whole, the pinkness of the fish underlined by being served with a few pieces of young fresh ginger root; which is red. This was set on an oblong plate made with rough clay textured with iron granules and sand, so that the surface was pinky and scaly similar to the fish; in a pot called a *katakuchi* (bowl with a pouring spout) which had a luscious fat creamy-coloured rich-ash glaze there were tiny glazed onions sprinkled with grated orange. The rice-ash glaze had speckles in it very like tiny pieces of orange rind.

For the sixth course there came a small black ceramic box, rough clay, a rich dryish dull pitted black glaze, which was a charcoal stove. It came hot, still cooking the small skewered



fish sizzling on top, alongside a miniature crab and a chestnut. All grilling.

We were chattering and drinking hot sake, served in tiny cups, enough for one big gulp. Loosely thrown porcelain pots, the size of a large thimble. Toddy sizes. The translucency of porcelain is to me rather a boring trick, that makes me want to say, it's translucent? So what! An emotional and creative cul-de-sac. Much more human is the soft buttery gentleness which porcelain can show if you're not afraid of it, and it's thrown thickly, a sign of generosity. These sake cups were. There were nine of us; four potters, Ito-san, his daughter and her husband, plus their two tiny children who were welcomed and loved and played contentedly and quietly. My Japanese is still OK and good enough for me to share the laughter.

The last savoury course was a large clear soup with hand-made noodles; with a large floating leaf of the bittersweet herb *shiso*, and a small piece of fish. The soup was delicately flavoured and served in a large bowl thrown with soft clay loosely, it was irregular, and painted with cobalt squiggles with overglaze red blobs on top, an expression of the potter's joy.

The dessert was plum jelly; a single plum, a sort of fat red damson, had been marinated for a couple of months in *shochu* which is a strong gin-like spirit, and it was sitting on a clear jelly made from the alcoholic liquor, in a contemporary glass bowl over a huge bed of ice. A full bodied plum. A wonderful experience, the richest gastronomic art one could ever hope to participate in.

Pots are vessels to receive food, and so am I one.

Behind all of this is the Tea Ceremony. It is the example and the inspiration in the nation's unconscious for any occasion involving food and drink. The Tea Ceremony is a formal, ritualistic way of making tea. It is choreographed, like a dance. One practises and learns with a master, as one does yoga and *T'ai Chi*. The movements are slow, flowing deliberately, as the hostess takes up the bamboo ladle, using it to scoop the hot water from the cast-iron kettle; then pouring this hot water into the tea bowl onto the tea powder; she graciously whisks the tea into a bright green snowy froth, then takes up the bowl and presents it to the guest. It takes time, and is a form of meditation. The only thing I have seen in my culture to remotely relate to this is the procedure which the priest goes through in church to prepare for Holy Communion by blessing the utensils, the bread and the wine.

It is a very powerful experience to receive a bowl of tea which has been so slowly and beautifully prepared. The heroine in *The Ginger Tree* fell in love with her Japanese count after he prepared her tea.

Imagine. You are handed a tea bowl (which may have cost £200,000). It is bigger than you had expected, more like a generous soup bowl, large enough to hold with both hands and thus to feel a powerful tactile electricity to the soul. You lift it slightly as if to the Gods as a mark of respect to the hostess, and turn the bowl three times. Then you drink the tea, all in one go. It is astringent, bitter. (There is a sweetcake placed on a simple earthy plate in front of you to be eaten to balance the strong taste.) This has emptied the bowl so you are free to cradle it in your hands and lean forward looking into it, admiring the form and the glaze. Your concentration is completely on the bowl. You turn it the right way up and look at the form, from this direction and that, making comments about it, expressing opinions and telling what you like about it. The hostess will tell where she got it, tell something of the potter, and so forth. It is an immensely moving way to appreciate a pot.

There is a particular aesthetic for tea bowls and tea ceremony ware. For some reason they can be WILD. They are often very strongly thrown totally off-centre. In fact, I was

*Ceramic Review* 131 - 1991



*Sandy Brown with paintings and pots*

once handed a bowl to drink from which was made by a Human National Treasure, and to me it looked like someone's first pot. I wanted to laugh with utter joy that a pot which was wobbly, irregular and lop-sided could be so loved. A tea bowl can be rough and awkward, and sometimes is even cracked and been beautifully repaired. That is why I love them; they can be human like me, imperfect and free to crack. I identified with it absolutely, and that probably led me to becoming a potter.

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*Sandy Brown's exhibition, Ritual Objects: Tableware, is at Contemporary Ceramics, 7 Marshall Street, London W1, October 22-November 2.*

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## Beginning to Lose Your Tail



Tradition and innovation may at first appear to be conflicting elements in the work of artist potters, one calling on the long history of the craft, the other posing the challenge of bringing this into our own time. Yet in the slip decorated earthenware of Clive Bowen the two aspects are brought together in a vital and satisfying way. Emmanuel Cooper talked to Clive Bowen about his pots and their place in the modern world.

The American protest singer and songwriter Bob Dylan may seem to be an obscure starting point for discussing the work of Clive Bowen, whose slip decorated, wood fired earthenware seems firmly bedded in a long established tradition rather than in contemporary culture. Yet Dylan's music making has had a significant effect on Bowen who quotes lines such as 'One more cup of coffee' and 'There must be some way out of here' as both humorous and embodying some degree of truth. His eldest son is named Dylan. Tom Waites and Buddy Holly are other musicians mentioned as well as symbolic films of independence such as 'Paris Texas'.

Dylan's accessible music and stirring lyrics epitomise a powerful strand of pop culture in the 1960s when music and an alternative life style were part of a grass roots reaction

*Illustrations. Clive Bowen – slip decorated red earthenware, wood fired. ABOVE Lidded jar, 61cm tall, oval planter with impressed shell decoration, 32.5cm tall, round planter, 50cm high. LEFT Green lidded jar, 71cm tall. OPPOSITE Large platter, 66 cm, jug, 33cm tall. All photographs of pots by David Cripps*





Clive Bowen packing his kiln

against war, inequality and injustice. Becoming a potter was also seen as a part of this movement, an attempt to bring together creativity with something meaningful and relevant. It was at this time that Bowen was reconsidering his life. After four years studying painting at Cardiff School of Art, he found the art world a hard nut to crack and was further deterred by the casual advice from Mr Gimpels to 'Come back in 10 years' – hardly encouragement for an aspiring painter. In the event Bowen decided to train as a potter, becoming an apprentice to Michael Leach from 1965 to 1970 before working for a time as a production potter at Branham's Pottery, Barnstaple. Such a firm grounding in the English artisan tradition and first hand experience of the Leach dynasty was to some extent counter balanced by meeting Michael Cardew and seeing the early wood fired earthenwares he made at Winchcombe in the 1930s.

'Though I never worked for Cardew, for a period in the early 1970s I helped him to fire his kiln,' an impressive introduction to the lure of wood-firing. Wood, flame and the effects of the smoke on the pots caught his imagination and he has, happily, stayed with the process ever since. Twenty years ago Bowen set up Shebbear Pottery in North Devon, inspired by the richness and depth of Cardew's early pots and by the fact that this was a relatively unexplored field; at this time there were few potters firing with wood at this temperature and Bowen was aware only of Peter Dick in Yorkshire. Bowen's large circular kiln, measuring some 8 feet across, is based on Cardew's design and like all large kilns induces a cyclical method of working. At Cardew's pottery Bowen met Svend Bayer who was then working there and the two now help each other fire their kilns. Bowen reckons on about 6 firings each year, each taking some 24 hours while Svend's kiln, which is taken to higher temperature, goes on for longer. The sheer hard work of stoking the kiln and the potential risks to several months of work do not always appear so attractive. 'When I'm bricking up the door to the kiln I have a dream of having a new fibre kiln fitted with a computer with a button to push to make the firing happen. But I also know this would not suit me. I like the effects of the vapour and flame passing across the pots and the rich

colour of the clay caused by the reduction, though I am now beginning to appreciate the lighter, paler qualities of oxidation. You continually have to push things to the edge.'

The influence of the 300 year history of the locally made slipware is readily acknowledged by Bowen. 'The clays, slips and clear glaze used over the years are still around and are little changed. The wares themselves were not only sold across the south west region but exported in large quantities via the port of Bideford to America. So what I'm doing is trying to extend the North Devon tradition in the best way I can whether it's in the making of a rhubarb forcemeat or a ceremonial dish.'

Tradition continues to be a challenge to Bowen who finds the limited palette, the physical toil involved and the endurance needed to fire the kiln spurs to ideas and invention. Like Hamada, he does not see that restricting materials to a few is any bar to creativity. 'Hamada used only a small number of different clays and materials, and like all potters he was engaged in a struggle to get his own style. Tradition can be an enemy or a friend.' For Bowen the earthenware tradition which involves a smooth red clay with contrasting slip trailed decoration and combing under a clear glaze provides a structure within which he finds his own highly distinctive voice. But the tradition Bowen acknowledges is not only that of the area in which he lives and works but also includes European slipware and the influence of Japan, particularly evident in the zen-like quality of the mark-making which adds an abstract dimension to the wares.

On a philosophical note Bowen quotes the diversity and humility of Far Eastern potters who stand as significant role models. 'In G St G M Gompertz's book *Korean Pottery and Porcelain of the Yi Period* there is a marvellous page listing wares identified from their special names, uses and shapes. These range from roof tiles and burial urns to storage jars and ceremonial pots. The book also lists workers at the pottery. As well as one supervisor and 20 clerical assistants it had 10 throwers and, amazingly, 433 general hands. Most potters do it all themselves although at present I have some help: Martin Simpson, a long time friend and part-time thrower helps, Edward the general gardener and handy man has become a skilled fireman and Rosie, my wife, takes care of the office and keeps the whole place going. Like those Yi potters I enjoy making all sorts of pots, from egg cups to large presentation dishes. I like the idea of repeating things, the more you think the less it flows. After 20 years you can begin to lose your tail.' Perhaps this is what Leach, Hamada and the followers of the Mingei Movement meant when they talked about the unknown maker.

Bowen is one of that rare breed – a full-time potter. Apart from occasional demonstrations, workshops and visits to art schools, he has survived as a potter though one well aware of the pressures this carries particularly if a family has to be supported. Like many self-employed people, Bowen has an optimistic belief that even in the slow times something will always turn up. When a water leak resulted in a water bill of £1,000, by some means or other Bowen was able to pay it. 'The winter is a quiet time but this begins to pick up in the spring as people start to buy large garden pots. At present we supply two National Trust houses in Devon with garden pots. Over the last few years the demand for such pots has more than doubled.' The need to make a living has also been a crucial force in making Bowen stay with earthenware and invent within the tradition rather than move to other processes. 'In the end the development of a style has as much to do with fate as any conscious decision – such as for example my inability to feel comfortable with Japanese brushes yet confident when working with slip.

'Some years ago I sent for a range of colours but they are still in their packets. I have a small kiln for salt firing as I like



*Clive Bowen – slip decorated wood fired earthenware, medieval jug, 35.5cm tall, platter, 45cm*

the idea of the soft glaze over lines of slip decoration, but I have yet to fire it. An ancient tile press has still to be used. I just don't follow through experiments.' Nevertheless Bowen's shapes and decoration continue to evolve and change. During a recent appearance on the television programme 'The Great Picture Chase', Kate Adie showed one of Bowen's jugs in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, much to the surprise of its maker. 'I had completely forgotten I had made it though I knew it was one of mine, it seemed to belong to another age. I still make jugs but when recent ones are put alongside earlier pieces the difference is clear.'

One of the more noticeable changes in Bowen's work has been the production of larger items such as the garden pots and tall jars, a trend he wants to continue. 'Though physically unrealistic, I long to make a huge dish 6 feet across'. It is here that his background as a painter has picked up on wider influences. 'In 1985 I saw an exhibition by the American artist Frank Stella whose scale and work I found

truly astounding. I also admire the early juke box pieces of Eduardo Paolozzi such as "Four Towers" (1962) and the luscious New Mexican paintings of Georgia O'Keefe.'

Some of the large pieces will be on show in his exhibition at Contemporary Applied Arts along with smaller and more modest sized pieces. 'I don't make exhibition pots but in addition to saving a few good pieces from firings, I rely on making them very much at the last minute. In this manner they are all related to each other and in some ways are about "the state of the art".' Resistant to labels and the current desire to pigeon-hole artists, Bowen describes his work as 'being in a tradition without being traditional' – a subtle but vital distinction clearly manifest in work which in its quiet way is a protest against de-humanised production and anonymous materials. Pots which continue to grow in size and stature.

*Clive Bowen's one person exhibition is at Contemporary Applied Arts, 43 Earltam Street, London WC2, September 6th-October 5th.*



## Philip Eglin – Beauty of Continuities

'A Staffordshire Tradition?' is the title of Philip Eglin's exhibition at the Royal Festival Hall. Eglin has selected historical English wares from the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and from Stoke-on-Trent City Museum to be shown as a background to his own work, illustrating the sort of pots that have influenced him. Tanya Harrod reports on the potter, his work and discusses his sources of inspiration.

Philip Eglin was born in 1959 in Gibraltar and grew up in Harlow New Town. One of seven children he went to the local comprehensive, but halfway through the sixth form he left to join a Foundation Course at Harlow Technical College. Abandoning art, maths, geography and history A Levels he discovered a new world – paying his first visit to an art gallery, learning throwing and handbuilding and finding especial pleasure in life drawing, taught at Harlow by a then unknown artist called Glen Baxter. A course on the art of the Italian renaissance was an introduction to the richness of Christian and pagan iconography. At that early stage he was not sure that he was a potter – until he saw an exhibition of Alison Britton's work at Harlow Museum. These were early pieces, decorated figuratively, and he remembers them as a revelation.

Eglin did his BA course at North Staffordshire Polytechnic. The museum at Stoke is, of course, rich in examples of English vernacular and early industrial pottery and these were to lodge in his memory, but his degree show in 1982

*Illustrations. Philip Eglin, earthenware. ABOVE 'Dejeuner'. RIGHT 'Expulsion', 79 x 38 x 27cm, 1991. OPPOSITE 'Madonna col Bambino', 65 x 30 x 31cm, 1991*







Philip Eglin – earthenware 'Christ as the Man of Sorrows' (detail)  
55cm, 1990

consisted of a group of handbuilt jugs. When he arrived at the Royal College of Art he decided to work differently. Like many a post-graduate he seems to have been seduced and perhaps a little waylaid by all the lavish equipment and back-up available at the College. He had been studying the photographs of August Sander, the great pre-war chronicler of German society. One memorable early piece he made at the College was a relief based on a photograph by Sander of a group of young boys in uniform. In his second year he went into overdrive – working for his tutor Eduardo Paolozzi, making props for films, learning bronze casting and starting on his thesis which looked at the African artistic response to contact with Europe and Europeans. The RCA course then lasted three years and in his final year he realised that his chief interest lay in work which was figurative and narrative and that he wanted to keep things technically simple and straightforward.

Eglin has a particular gift for finding rich themes to tackle and interesting apposite sources of inspiration. His first big project grew out of his fondness for Picasso's great sequence of prints and drawings that dissected the odd reciprocity between the artist and the model. He made terracotta maquettes to work out ideas and then built the figures hollow, using soft wrap around slabs of clay. He modelled the resulting cylinders by working on them from the inside, fashioning arms and legs and high waisted torsoes. It was, in fact, a return to the handbuilding techniques of the BA years, though the manipulative skill required to create convincing figures was very much greater. His statuettes therefore have much in common with vessels and Eglin argues that their aesthetic roots lie with vessels rather than sculpture. The original pre-Hesiod myth of Pandora comes to mind when we look at Eglin's women – a woman fashioned from clay by Vulcan, simultaneously a woman and a vessel.

Eglin continued to work in relief, but by now the sixteenth century mannerist Bernard Palissy had become an influence and Eglin created a series of plates with relief reclining nudes. Three were explorations of Manet's Olympia, that canny commentary on the nude in art. Eglin's fondness for the populism of Staffordshire industrial wares was demonstrated in two sequences of mould-made figurative groups. These flat-backs were limited mass production with a difference. Each blank was decorated slightly differently with bold

cobalt brush strokes, creating a subtle series of variations on a theme.

After college life was precarious, with teaching jobs at Westminster School and at Staffordshire Polytechnic. In 1987 Eglin moved to a cottage near Stoke-on-Trent with his wife and small baby. A serious car accident took nearly a year out of his and his wife's life but his work was given a fresh impetus when he was invited by Contemporary Applied Arts to contribute to the figurative ceramics show *Clay Bodies* at the end of 1989. For those who had last seen his work in 1986, both at his degree show and at the CAA, his contribution to *Clay Bodies* was a revelation. His figurines of Venuses and Cupids and of suckling Madonnas had a fresh beauty which made his fellow exhibitors seem cautiously half hearted about their commitment to figuration. He had integrated an extraordinary range of influences. There was the northern early renaissance tradition of fecund high breasted nudes with gently swelling bellies. The glazes and decoration alluded to both Staffordshire blue and white and to the soft greens and browns of Whieldon wares. The roughly painted inscriptions on the base of these pieces – *Venus et Amour*, *Madonna* – had more to do with the splashed graffiti Eglin remembers on the wholesome public sculptures dotted around Harlow New Town. The work was not, however, simply a sequence of witty borrowings. The freshness came from the endless drawings which Eglin made and continues to make of his wife and child. All these statuettes were hand-built earthenware and their spontaneous rough finish gave an immediacy which no mould made figurine could possess.

Since 1989 Eglin has been in numerous shows. Over the past two years his work has changed and become less tender and larger in scale. This year at the Oxford Gallery he showed big reclining nudes decorated with bold bands of colour. Some of us may have hoped he would continue to produce an endless stream of *Venus et Amours*. 'I want one' is the natural reaction on seeing some of the most lovely examples. But Eglin is not the kind of artist who would be content to stand still.

His present exhibition at the South Bank Craft Centre gives us a chance to survey his development to date. It is partly a retrospective of some thirty pieces and partly a celebration of the kinds of ceramic that he admires, with thirty further pots and figures from museum collections, ranging from medieval jugs to Whieldon ware to Victorian flat backs to an example of the Victorian Palissy revival. Naturally he is worried that his own ceramics will not stand up in such sturdy pre-modern company. At this *fin de siècle* moment his work will look like what it is – a commentary on the past, on art, its iconography and its modes of production. But Eglin's work is also rooted in his present, in his family and his searching drawings of those close to him. This is sculpture for the home, elevated but touchingly familiar – a powerful lesson in the beauty of continuities.

#### Technical Notes

Both the small and large figures are soft-slab built in a white St Thomas body. Bisc fired to 1140°C and glaze fired to 1040°C.

White slip is sometimes applied at the leather hard stage, as a ground for further painting with oxides and underglaze colours, under, in and over a lead-based glaze.

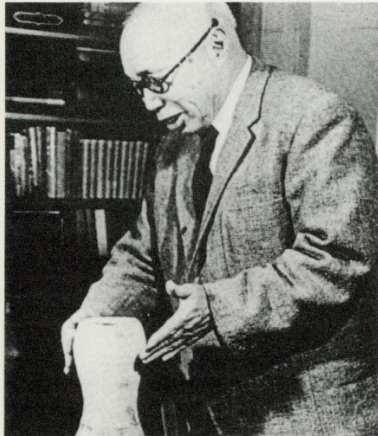
Pieces often undergo numerous firings with more colour added each time.

*Philip Eglin's exhibition 'A Staffordshire Tradition?' is at the Royal Festival Hall Foyer Galleries, South Bank Centre, London, from September 19th to October 20th.*



# Book Reviews

**The Quiet Eye: Pottery of Shoji Hamada and Bernard Leach**  
 Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art



Shoji Hamada

There is a charming statement of Leach's quoted in the introduction to this catalogue. When Warren Mackenzie wrote to Leach in the 1970s about the large number of potters in the American Mid West, Leach replied "I said to myself 'My Goodness, the seed has fallen on good earth in my own lifetime – not me alone but all of us wanting good things'." He was referring in part of course to his friend Shoji Hamada, whose work, together with Leach's, was the subject of a recent retrospective exhibition organised and displayed by Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art and San Francisco Craft and Folk Art Museum. The catalogue serves to underline the exhibition's basic argument of their close friendship and cooperation in the now well documented 'marriage of east and west'.

There are two interesting essays; the first by Susan Peterson, Hamada's biographer, and the second by Leach's former pupil Warren Mackenzie, now the leading 'Leach School' potter in America. Also included is a checklist of the sixty-one pots included, all from American collections, and twenty-one of those are illustrated in colour. There are also outline chronologies of the potters and some interesting documentary photographs of Leach and Hamada and their respective kilns.

Peterson's essay is valuable (despite tiresome plugs made for her other books), mainly because of her coverage of lesser known aspects of Hamada's life. For instance, while financially very secure, he preferred to emulate the life of a 'peasant farmer', growing much of his own food with the same care and attention he gave his pots. The more mundane tasks in one's life are all part of the act of creativity, and so must be treated with equal importance.

Mackenzie writes a piece which is most interesting when it is most personal. Apprenticed to Leach from 1950 until 1952, he and his wife lived in the Leach pottery cottage at this time, and were companions to Bernard Leach after his separation from his second wife. There is a touching account of his last visit to Bernard Leach in December 1978, just months

*Ceramic Review 131 – 1991*

before Leach's death. Despite the loss of most of his sight, he inspected closely pots that Mackenzie had brought with him, 'holding them up to the side of his eye where he still had some peripheral vision, and feeling the form and surfaces with his fingers'.

There are some fine pots illustrated, but the selection as a whole is not first rate. Four pieces stand out; a good tenmoku pitcher and tea caddy by Bernard Leach, both belonging to Mackenzie, and by Hamada, a beautiful tenmoku jar with interesting applied clay design, and a press-moulded plate with crawled 'nuka' glaze.

David Whiting

*The catalogue can be obtained from San Francisco Craft and Folk Art Museum, Fort Mason Center, Bldg A, San Francisco, CA 94123.*

**Prehistoric Pottery for the Archaeologist by Alex Gibson and Ann Woods**  
 Leicester University Press £60

This is a modest size publication of 293 pages, but the first flick through is stimulating as it is full of both photographic and line illustrations. Every important group of British prehistoric pottery is illustrated clearly in the conventional archaeological style. The photographs include several African potters at work as well as experimental firings at Leicester University, but the really new and exciting ones are of photomicrography of thin sections of pottery showing amongst other things the joins of coils as white lines. This highly analytical scientific approach is the strong point of this work and its application to the continuing detective work of 'what happened in prehistory' is truly fascinating. Less satisfactory is the sorting within chapter two where ethnographic studies are interspersed with archaeological discussion, which begs the question 'did identical conditions exist for both African and British prehistoric potters?'

This book is about British prehistoric pottery, and archaeologically it has one very big omission, there are no time charts such as are found in 'Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Pottery' by Alex Gibson, Shire Publication, £2.50. This is essential because of the very great lengths of time involved; we need to be told more about the reliability of such dating methods as thermoluminescence and dendrochronology, both are omitted from the glossary. Some firing charts showing what happens and which pots were fired at different firing temperatures would also have been useful. This is a very ambitious book which could not hope to succeed completely but I recommend it to anyone interested in the early beginnings of ceramics in Britain. The decision 'to buy or not to buy' is largely a matter of price here, and Leicester University Press must shoulder some of the responsibility if it does not sell well. Why, oh why, is this book so expensive?

Richard Coleman-Smith F.S.A.

**Art and Myth in Ancient Greece by Thomas H. Carpenter**  
 Thames & Hudson £6.95 (paperback)

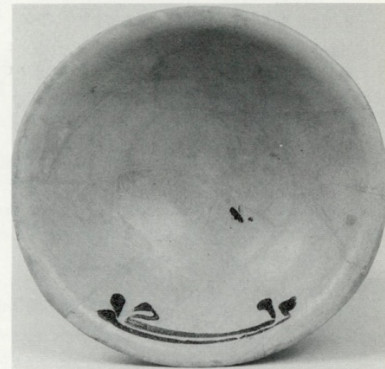
Greek vase paintings have attracted scholarly interest rather than the enthusiasm of studio potters, whose admiration is often for the academic skill rather than a warm emotional response. In fact, Greek vase paintings are a major source of information about Greek life and myths, picturing within the stylized format the many and various activities of the Gods. Thomas H. Carpenter concentrates on Greek vases to look at such events as the fall of Troy or



Vase painting – detail

Theseus and the Minotaur and the way they offer alternative versions to written accounts. Scholarly, comprehensive and copiously illustrated (though none alas in colour) 'Art and Myth in Ancient Greece' gives yet more reasons for looking again at these great masterpieces of art, and appreciating their quality not only for their technical and aesthetic achievements but as primary sources of information about real and imagined events which continue to touch our own lives.

**Islamic Art & Patronage: Treasures from Kuwait, edited by Esin Atil**  
 Rizzoli International £45



Ceramic bowl with inscription, Iraq 9th century, d. 19.7cm

After all the turmoil of the Gulf War 'Treasures from Kuwait' comes as a gentle reminder of the richness of the decorative art in that part of the world, and the diversity of a tradition in which handmade objects have occupied a full position in daily life. In historical terms, though Kuwait is a 'new' country, objects call on many influences. This book presents a selection of the finest pieces from one of the most comprehensive collections of Islamic art assembled in Kuwait. The survey explores four historical periods – early, classical, post classical and late Islam, covering the period AD 622–1800, and includes manuscripts, metalwork, glass, ivories, woodwork, textiles and rugs as well as marvellous examples of ceramics. Large well-produced illustrations make this a visual treat, enabling the reader to appreciate not only the colour of these pieces but their texture and detail. A useful introduction to some of the world's most magnificent decorative art.



Phil Rogers – bowl, saltglazed and ash glazed 1280°C, 5"

## The Lure of Wood Ash Glazes

Ash glazes have a long history, attractive for their simplicity and availability as well as for the rich range of colours and textures. Here Phil Rogers, who pots in Rhayader, Powys, writes about his work with ash glazes and on their continued fascination for potters today.

*"Curiosity and a resilient attitude towards unpleasant shocks, are of more use in the making of glazes than a wagon load of analyses."*  
Katharine Pleydell-Bouverie.

As a potter for nearly twenty years I have been interested in the idea of using whatever is around to create my work. In the beginning this grew from an intuitive notion that these materials were there and were free (or so I thought!). Although these reasons are still valid, I have come to realise that it is only by creating an intimate relationship with a limited number of versatile materials that I have begun to discover new depths of understanding in terms of what making pots really means. Almost without exception the truly great potters, whether in 15th century Korea, 12th century China or 20th century England, had that feeling for and understanding of the materials around them.

As a student I remember labouring under the misapprehension that the three glaze buckets containing the then almost obligatory Oatmeal, Tenmoku and Brown of indeterminate origin were all the choice there was. Finding a dusty, long abandoned copy of Bernard Leach's *A Potter's Book*, it came as something of a revelation to me that the world had been created with potters in mind. From then on glaze making became an exciting adventure. Journeys to the Towy Estuary to collect estuarine mud were followed by visits to quarries and even a coal burning power station. All in the

Phil Rogers – BELOW Squared bottle, 13" tall. OPPOSITE Jar, 26" tall (caption detail on page 37)





pursuit of materials that would lend themselves to being included in a stoneware glaze.

On November 6th, 1970, my travels eventually led me to the smouldering remains of one of the previous night's bonfires and my first bucket of wood ash. My fascination with wood ash has lasted ever since.

I am lucky to do what I do and to live where I live and, like many other rural makers, these two aspects of my life, my work and my immediate surroundings, have become inextricably linked. My pottery is situated 1,000ft above sea level overlooking the Wye valley in deepest Mid-Wales and I have come to rely on the countryside in a number of ways but one of its most important functions is to supply me with my most important glaze material. On all sides we are surrounded by trees of many and varied species, some of which fuel the two wood burning stoves in our house. It is an honest partnership. I take only that which was to be cut anyway or those trees that have simply fallen over. In return I replant seedlings of oak and ash and recently copper beech. I also transplant near to my house seedlings doomed to wither on overcrowded woodland floors.

Potters are often said to have masochistic natures. There are not many areas of human endeavour which require such dedication and obsessive commitment. The hours are long, the work is often physically demanding and the financial rewards are less than exciting. Then why do some of us choose to make things even harder by finding and preparing our own materials?

In days gone by there was no choice. Potteries grew up where the required materials occurred naturally. Potters dug and prepared their clay, made and glazed their pots, and fired them all on the same site. In the Far East, where high fired pots were made some three thousand years before we managed it in the west, distinctly different types of ware evolved due to the availability of raw materials locally. Potters had a pride in their materials while their pots were recognised by geographically induced variations. They also developed a deep and intimate understanding of how these materials behaved. Not the why, but the how was important. The knowledge that a certain material behaved in a particular way was passed on from one generation to the next. The bond between these potters and their materials, whether in the Far East, medieval Europe or in 18th century Staffordshire was complete.

The Industrial Revolution and mechanisation heralded the demise of craft potters in this country. A few hung on tenaciously into the 20th century but inevitably our great hand potting traditions disappeared in a morass of white sanitised china, pretty flowers and sickening over embellishment.

Thankfully, largely due to Bernard Leach, much of this century has seen a resurgence of interest in honest hand made pots. Interest was slow to gather momentum and Leach and his contemporaries struggled in the face of an apathetic public. Ironically it was the war that eventually brought about the beginnings of acceptance for Leach's pots. Shops which could not get the factory produced wares turned to St Ives for their hitherto rejected pots. By the late 1950s a new force existed that attracted many to become potters. Often motivated by *A Potter's Book* and adopting Leach's aesthetics and concerns there was at last a slow move away from industrial standards to a new understanding of what hand made pottery meant. Potters, like their Far Eastern counterparts, came to realise that local geology can offer much once a basic understanding of the nature of clay and glazes has been acquired.

Recently, yet again we seem to be losing that strong link with our materials. Changing taste and sociological trends have brought a movement toward bright colours not easily achieved with self prepared materials, but obtained quickly

and effortlessly with products that pander to the slick and the quick. Laziness and convenience in our easy come, easy go, throwaway society have also played their part. As a result much contemporary pottery says little about the materials of which it is made and potters seem concerned with making the surface of their objects appear to be anything other than what it really is.

It is marvellous that potters can buy all the materials needed to make pots. It frees us from the laborious, time consuming chore of gathering and refining materials, if we so choose. Even the most independent of potters probably will not be able to discover and refine all their own materials, there simply are not enough hours in the day. The pity is that many people who make pots now have little idea exactly what the neatly packaged and labelled powders really are and even less about where they came from and how they were found. This apparent lack of interest and understanding in the potters materials is perpetuated in many colleges. Often ceramics has become an extension to the fine arts department where the idea has become all important and the practicalities that enable that idea to be brought to fruition are left to the ubiquitous technician. Originality has become a god. As Hamada would have said "far too much of the head and not enough of the heart".

Many potters who use ash glazes choose to explore the earth's mineral storeroom for themselves. As people they tend to be fiercely independent with characters as individual as their pots, displaying an almost fanatical loyalty to their chosen methods. Above all they have inquisitive natures, a deep held desire to discover and succeed without having been led. It is my belief that it is only when there exists a sufficient depth of understanding of one's chosen materials that pots can be made that display a quiet confidence and truly begin to glow.

Of all the materials locally available wood and vegetable ashes are there for urban and country potter alike; they are easily processed with little equipment and provide infinite scope for personal development. Katharine Pleydell-Bouverie, an early student of Bernard Leach, devoted the best part of her potting life to investigating the merits or otherwise of the ash of the numerous trees, shrubs and plants that grew in the woods and gardens surrounding her home and pottery at Coleshill. For her the reasons for a lifetime of research were to provide sustenance for an inquisitive nature and to utilise a material that was essentially free and that otherwise would have been left discarded.

I should like to add another reason, fun. Any programme of experiment should be enjoyable. Wood and vegetable ashes vary immensely from plant to plant and from species to species. Results are seldom predictable and very often difficult to repeat but it is the unexpected that provides the excitement. As Katharine Pleydell-Bouverie once said, "The point of using ashes at all, as I have found it, is that they do sometimes produce textures that can be interesting, unusual, with luck, even beautiful. But not always. By no means always."

During the summer months we have run a series of courses for potters here at the pottery. People from all over the world have been our students, many using ashes for the first time. Many have left us enthralled and enthused. I have seen the results of experiments with such diverse plants as vine prunings from a potter in France, glazes made from the ash of the Prickly Pear cactus from Malta. A potter from Belgium used grass; another potter from Malta used the ash from the firebox of a fellow potter's wood fired kiln the firing of which was supplemented with the discarded computer readouts from the Maltese Government which arrive at the pottery by the lorry load. All of these people are exploring a material that is personal to them, each contributing to the greater

*Ceramic Review* 131 - 1991

knowledge, each extracting immense satisfaction knowing that whatever they achieve is theirs alone. And lastly, each feeling that they belong to the great historical ceramic chain of events.

#### Illustrations

*Small bowl.* This little bowl was squared immediately after throwing and later turned. The lower portion was dipped in porcelain slip and then ash glazed inside and out with:

|                 |    |                |    |
|-----------------|----|----------------|----|
| Pine ash        | 50 | Quartz         | 15 |
| Potash feldspar | 25 | Red iron oxide | 2  |
| China clay      | 12 |                |    |

The extra flux supplied by the soda from the salt fire has radically altered the character of the ash glaze which is much more fluid than if fired in the reduction stoneware kiln.

*Squared bottle.* This bottle was squared during the throwing and just prior to closing over the neck. The thick white slip was applied at leather hard and the iron brushwork over the glaze.

|                          |     |                  |      |
|--------------------------|-----|------------------|------|
| Slip: Molochite 200 mesh | 1/3 | Glaze: Beech ash | 53   |
| SMD ball clay            | 2/3 | Cornish stone    | 14.5 |
|                          |     | Feldspar         | 14.5 |
|                          |     | China clay       | 5.5  |
|                          |     | Whiting          | 5    |
|                          |     | Quartz           | 7.5  |

Reduction fired 1280°C. Reduction commences at 960°C and is heavy for one hour. A medium reduction follows until

cone 9 is over.

*Jar.* This jar was thrown in three sections by joining the new partly thrown collar to the stiffened rim of the previous section and then throwing to a new height in readiness for the next section. The pine ash glaze is my most used, standard recipe. Pine is readily available and used to heat our house. Recipe:

|                 |      |            |      |
|-----------------|------|------------|------|
| Pine ash        | 53   | China clay | 6    |
| Cornish stone   | 14.5 | Whiting    | 5    |
| Potash feldspar | 14.5 | Quartz     | 7.25 |

This basic recipe suits many types of wood ash but often requires minor adjustments of the clay, feldspar or quartz depending on the fluxing power of the ash. The clay body will have a marked effect on the glaze quality. My body, based on a Dorset ball clay, has a medium colour which encourages 'burning through' on edges and incised lines.

|                  |     |                        |     |
|------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| S.M.D. ball clay | 25  | White silica sand 40's | 1   |
| Dobles fireclay  | 3   | Grog 60's              | 1   |
| Feldspar         | 1.5 | Red iron oxide         | 0.2 |

Phil Rogers's book 'Ash Glazes' (published by A. & C. Black in September, £17.99) contains over 50 colour and 80 black and white illustrations. It is available from Ceramic Review Books, 21 Carnaby Street, London W1V 1PH, at £18.95, including p&ep.

Phil Rogers's exhibition 'Woodfired Stoneware and Porcelain' is at Contemporary Ceramics, 7 Marshall Street, London W1, September 17 - 28.

## Potters' Tips



Readers are invited to submit their favourite tip – long or short; with or without photographs and diagrams, £5 is paid for those published. Contributions to Potters' Tips, Ceramic Review, 21 Carnaby Street, London W1V 1PH.

#### From Norwich – A Touch of Real Glass

So as to compensate for the warping of an ancient electric kiln door, the gap in closure was reduced by cementing carefully tailored strips of ceramic fibre to the hot-face brick surround, only to find that gapping recurred when the T<sup>o</sup> rose above 1000°C. Consequently, I have for several

years tucked rolls of fibreglass (salvaged from a discarded frig) around the edges of the kiln door when firing at glazing or stoneware T<sup>o</sup>s. Over some ten years the original batch of fibreglass has neither fused to the brickwork nor disintegrated to any marked degree.

Note: when glass fibre is handled it is safe and more comfortable to wear a dustmask and household gloves.

Joseph Neville

#### From Bristol – Mokomai

The Japanese metal working technique of *Mokomai* may be adapted as a decorative technique for use with coloured clays. Virginia Cartwright suggests that one might sandwich together more than one coloured clay and roll it into a flat slab in order to join and thin the colours. Lay the slab on a foam rubber surface and prod it all over with a blunt tool so that the underside has bumps on it. Build a pot with its bumpy side outward. When it is dry, wear a dust mask, sand down the bumps to reveal rings of colour.

Margaret Crump

#### From Den Haag, Holland – Wood Chips

To avoid ugly spots on polished pots when giving them a raku treatment in sawdust to get flame effects and darkening of body etc., I sprinkle some wood chips (gathered in the parks after the gardeners have done their trimming job and a useful machine has cut it all in handsome small pieces for me) on top of the sawdust which I suspect to be very resinous, hence the patches.

Mart Muller

# International Conference – Shigaraki, Japan

Maggie Berkowitz has been spending several months working in Japan. Whilst there she visited the new Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park during the inaugural conference to which members of the International Academy of Ceramics were invited. She reports on the experience below.

It was not easy to make one's way along to Shigaraki, but the Japanese are helpful people. Vast marble and glass halls of an international hotel, overlooking vastness of Lake Biwa, for inaugural meeting. Not quite a potters' camp, but one recognition, consequent introductions, discovery of common acquaintance, it was clearly a potters' world.

It was not easy to get from the hotel to my unofficial *minshuko*, but Koie-san, who will have an exhibition in London this summer, took charge and got me there. Next morning, early, I walked resolutely away from Shigaraki following my Japanese map. The path petered out on a mountainside – I was reading the map upside down.

Something similar might have happened to my understanding of the conference. Simultaneous translation, Japanese/English, does not cope well with ideas. Some papers were already translations. First day talks and colloquium, on **Ceramics as Contemporary Art**, after the polite and political opening addresses, announced the collapse of the market for gallery ceramics; saluted British historical figures (Ruskin, Morris, Leach, Read) and US cultural impact. Mention was made of new sort of Japanese ware – *Tokuyaki* – for the first time in Japan, ceramics made without a base of local material. Martina Margetta waved a small sober flag for contemporary Britain, dropped the name 'Post Modernism' – nobody picked it up. US critic Matthew Kangas seemed to be prescribing a course of action for ceramists in hard times to make 'gallery vessels' since real clay vessels were not relevant in a world where families no longer ate together. 'Irony' was a word much used. But whilst US and UK critics were talking about the art market, the Japanese participants were talking about a contemporary



Left to right: Maggie Berkowitz, Mr Hideo Nakai of Shiga Tiles, Mr Hirano and Mr Okumura of Noohi Tiles taking a moment to reflect on an art object

art based on traditional skills, rooted economically in community appreciation, and fearful of the affects of industrialisation.

Party in the evening at the Museum of Contemporary Art where much of the work on exhibition was of heroic dimensions. It was good to see powerful work I had only known from photographs – Robert Arneson I found more impressive, Carmen Dionyse more haunting. But quietly ceramic objects like Ewen Henderson's were rather lost in the grandiloquence. The party was also rather grand, the Crown Prince and Princess arrived for an unscheduled visit, and were amazingly friendly and approachable.

On the second day **East and West in Ceramics** started none too well. Mr Ikuntaro Itoh of the Museum of Oriental Ceramics, Osaka, having divided the 'ceramics world' into East Asia, West Asia and Europe, compared two historic examples. A Tang ewer was described as having assimilated its influences, an Isnik plate as having merely copied from its source. He did not exactly draw conclusions from this, but . . . The second speaker, Professor Vittorio Fagone had a sore throat, so his paper, very Italian, was read by Mme. Coullery, Secretary General IAC. Some elegant statements came through, and more salutes, this time to the humble clay pitcher, various philosophers and poets, and the Italian predecessors (Fontana, Pomodoro Valentini etc.) of the more advertised US iconoclasts. The US participant, Jeff Perone, was of the Henry Ford School of History and saw no need to do other than share his appreciation of the object, particularly if the object had been disapproved of by Mr Bernard Leach. Mr Perone had been astonished to hear a Turkish plate described as western. Mme. Coullery offered the wine glass as the western equivalent of the tea bowl – as ours is a wine culture. The Japanese potter, Professor Ryosaku Miwa demanded, with some heat 'how do western potters live?' 'can you accept mistakes?' Mr Itoh, from the chair, called unavailingly for a definition of East and West (his own not being acceptable). How do you define them from Japan, with California to the east, China and Korea west, and the southern hemisphere non-existent?

It began to seem to me that broadly speaking the Japanese had a realistic picture of western



The Crown Prince and Princess Takamado no Miya with Australian potter Gail Tregear

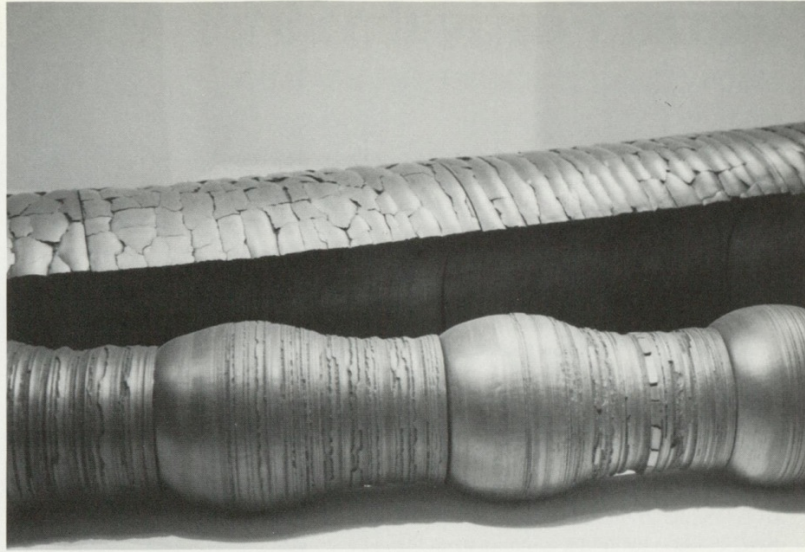
ceramics as industrial production with the art market as an enticing by-product. US and Northern European potters simply ignore the industrial area and see a self-contained world of art moving out from craft traditions. At the conference were people from a Mediterranean tradition preceding industrialisation and still, like the Japanese, largely local, material-based and organised by marketing cooperatives. Professor Perone insisted that (I think I understood) in spite of the fascism of industrialisation, ceramists should learn to control the new technologies and make use of them. He showed some truly horrifying slides of computer generated designs; I think he approved of them.

In retrospect this was quite the most interesting colloquium, with its clashes and disagreements, its airing of assumptions. There was some difficulty in summing up.

The next day, **Environment, Architecture, Ceramics** was very much smoother – architects are more internationally practised communicators – but the regional assumptions underlay the discussion. The first speaker, Dr Hiroyuki Suzuki, stressed contemporary Japanese problems. Whilst ceramics has 'warmth' and 'local relevance' lack of uniformity made the material unsuitable for modern building techniques, although modern environments are in need of that humanising warmth. No reflection on the dehumanising of ceramics in brick, tile and architectural terracotta companies effort to achieve that uniformity. A Japanese architect said flatly that he did not trust ceramists. He enjoyed the

Ralph Baccera – Teapot





ABOVE left: Yoh Akiyama – *Clay Oscillation I and II*; right: detail

plastic qualities of concrete, and for colour and decoration handed over responsibility to a papermaker who he knew would produce something beautiful without need for discussion. His slides were indeed very beautiful. British architect, US resident Andrew Leicester gave the most entertaining lecture. He was concerned that artists be involved in discussion, and not lose control, in the necessary consultations involved in large-scale planning of US % for Art schemes. None of the ceramics shown were particularly remarkable, but they were integral, used and enjoyed as part of popular environments. 'Buildings are not for ever' said one Japanese participant. Indeed not: here 40 years is old for a house. Physical survival of a building means resisting earthquake, and since wood is traditional building material, fire. The survival of so many ancient structures in Europe has clearly conditioned attitudes.

There was a jolly party that night, given by the town of Shigaraki, with drumming and dancing. The Ceramic Cultural Park, and this inaugural conference, are attempts by this traditional pottery town to address an industrial future.

The town is pleasant as a pottery town, full of showrooms and galleries, quiet workshops, hidden factories tucked away in wooded hills, with its little Toytown train chugging in regularly. At first the impact of *Taneki* is a bit off-putting – he is a garden figure, a racoon dog who stands upright on hind legs anything from a few inches to several metres high, clutching bag and sake bottle, straw hat on the back of his head. Rows of him stand in all the pavement showrooms, he is liable to appear in elegant galleries too – and in fact, one grows rather fond of him. He has a wife, who wears a pink bow, and tilts her head in the opposite direction. *Taneki* represents Shigaraki throughout Japan as much as the gritty red pottery. The pots themselves are unglazed, beautifully flashed red and purple, big and simple except where a rather over-enthusiastic acceptance of mistakes leads to rows of elaborately cracked and twisted ware.

From the town a free bus service takes one up to the Cultural Park. Hundreds of tourists emerge from coaches and cars, follow their guides' upheld flag up the steep slope to the entrance then to a sales level. From the valley

and the train, the park is one of the many pointed hills, but shaved of trees, truncated and sliced in layers. When the planted trees grow it will settle back into the hillside, but as yet is raw and new, its buildings stark.

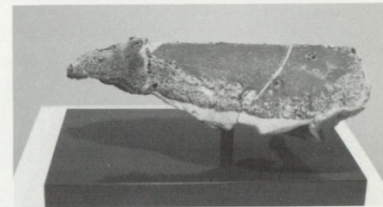
The slope climbs on past small international craft stalls, or there are steep paths and stairways to the central conference hall and restaurant. On the lawn by the hall are various ceramic sculptures to be played on, walked on, sat on for photographs, or to eat your *bento* prettily packed lunch box. The ceramics are the result of cooperation between artists and local industry. The main road leads on up to the main exhibition hall, with its international ceramics and a comprehensive display of modern and historic Shigaraki production. On the way there are various halls currently housing exhibitions of work by the mentally handicapped, of ethnic figurative terracotta. These were much referred to in Tuesday's lectures and discussion whose theme was **Clayworks and People**. An interesting collection of experiences – a scholarly discourse on aesthetic appreciation of a urine pot (only possible by separating form from function); a Geneva ceramist's residence with superstitious North African potters; one Japanese anthropologist's visit to East Africa; a Japanese ethno-arts batik artist's reflections on similarities between batik and ceramics; a ceramics teacher's work in a school for the blind; and New York critic Judith Schwarz trying valiantly to hold on to a common thread of 'the special characteristics of clay that bring us all here together'. The audience had thinned considerably, sightseeing, wheeling and dealing going on elsewhere. In the evening, a farewell party rather sad, given by Ceramic World Shigaraki. Exhibiting potters, gallery owners, architects and academics mostly gone back to their other worlds. I wondered what the students, still there, would make of the conference. What Shigaraki would make of it.

I am now working in a tile factory in Japan. When I go home this summer I have a commission waiting, to do a rather humble memorial to a one-time potting village where old people still remember how the work left them, and their skills were no defence in a changed world.

Shigaraki is fighting to retain its skills and



ABOVE Angus Suttie – *'Rampant'*.  
BELOW Ewen Henderson – *'Object'*



position – and then came the train crash. Being without TV or radio or newspapers I only knew of it from a reference in an English language newspaper bought during a city weekend, and then from potters mourning dead friends.

The conference and symposium were to be the inauguration of a summer of events in Shigaraki, now cancelled. Ironic perhaps that it should be the failure of a machine that caused such damage.

# Japan Festival 1991

The Japan Festival, starting in September, offers a dazzling introduction to the riches of Japanese culture. People in this country will be able to sample the diversity of the Japanese civilisation without travelling half way around the world – from the thrill of Sumo wrestling to the tranquillity of the Japanese Garden in Holland Park, from the treasures of the Fuji Art Museum, to robots that walk, talk and play the violin.

Festival Centres in London, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the North of England, offer a wide range of stimulating and often unprecedented events. However, the Festival is not just a spectacular firework display that will leave no trace behind – its aim is to transform the way people in the United Kingdom view Japan.

## Mingei: The Living Tradition of Japanese Art

An exhibition of the rich tradition of Japanese folkcrafts with over 100 works including ceramics from the collections of the Nippon Mingeikan Museum. This is the first exhibition to offer a comprehensive account of *mingei's* contribution to the intellectual and artistic life of Japan in the twentieth century. Drawn from the collections of the Japanese folkcraft museum, Nippon Mingeikan, founded by **Soetsu Yanagi**, the 'father' of the twentieth century folkcraft movement. One section will record and explain the early history of the movement, including **Yanagi's** early development and his first meeting with English potter **Bernard Leach**; others will show historical examples from Japan and surrounding regions; celebrate the work of artists associated with **Yanagi**, particularly the potters **Kanjiro Kawai** and **Shoji Hamada**. The exhibition has been assembled under the supervision of **Sori Yanagi**, son of **Soetsu Yanagi**, and will seek to dispel the fusty and homespun atmosphere so often associated with the word 'craft' in this country.

Burrell Collection, **Glasgow**, until October 6.

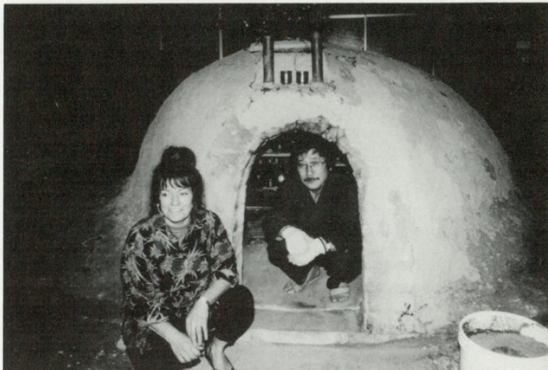
Museum and Art Gallery, **Sunderland**, October 9-November 10.

Crafts Council, **London**, November 21-January 12 1992.

## Japan at Liberty

Work on show will include traditional Bizen ware pottery, fired in wood-fired kilns which produces unique patterns on

*Tatsuzo Shimaoka – vase, 22.8cm tall (Galerie Besson)*



*TOP Yosei Itaka – vessel. ABOVE CENTRE Jill Fanshawe Kato – drinking sets. ABOVE The two potters in front of an anagama (Liberty)*

its brown, unglazed surface. Seventy pieces of work by leading potter, Itaka, will be on show in addition to pieces made by his students. Pots by Jill Fanshawe Kato will also be exhibited.

Liberty, Regent Street, **London W1**, from September 16.

## Contemporary Ceramics in Traditional Styles

The influence of the traditional craft of the Japanese ceramists on European pottery is acknowledged. This exhibition examines how contemporary Japanese ceramists combine traditional craft with contemporary vision.

Harmony Hill Arts Centre, Harmony Hill, Lambeg, **Lisburn**, Northern Ireland, September 5-20.



Ards Art Centre, Town Hall, Conway Square, **Newtownards**, Northern Ireland, September 25-October 11.  
Newry and Mourne Arts Centre, Bank Parade, **Newry**, Northern Ireland, October 17-November 2.  
Theatre Arduwy, Coleg Harlech, **Harlech**, Gwynedd, November 15-December 16.

#### Galerie Besson

**Tatuzo Shimaoka** Contemporary Japanese Potter, September 18-October 18.  
**Ryoji Koie** Contemporary Japanese Potter, October 23-November 29.  
Galerie Besson, 15 Royal Arcade, 28 Old Bond Street, **London W1**.

#### Traditional Handicrafts of Japan

An exhibition and demonstration by 20 craftworkers including potters.  
The Old Horticultural Hall, **London**, September 21-25.  
The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, **Belfast**, September 28-30.  
The Seaburn Centre, **Sunderland**, September 28-30.

#### Japan and Britain: An Aesthetic Dialogue 1850-1930

An exhibition tracing developments within British and Japanese art, including ceramics. It concludes with the beginning at a new exchange between East and West as exemplified in the work of Bernard Leach.  
Barbican Art Gallery, **London**, October 17-January 12 1992.

#### Fire and Clay – Raku firings

Raku firings focusing around a four day open-air kiln firing in **Gateshead**.  
Bill Quay, Community Farm, September 21.  
Saltwell Park, October 6.  
Shipley Art Gallery, November 2.  
Bensham Grove Community Centre, November 16.

#### Thought for Food Contemporary Japanese Tableware

Tableware by nine contemporary Japanese Potters.  
**Wrexham** Library Arts Centre, Until September 28.  
**Gateshead** Library Gallery, October 5-November 9.  
Crafts Council Gallery, **London**, November 22-January 12 1992.

### Events

**September 11:** Jaqueline Norris: coloured semi-porcelain with lino-cut printing on clay. West Forest Potters – further details telephone Reading 418019.

**September 16:** 'Teapots' demonstration by Derek Emms. East Anglian Potters Association – further details Telephone 0223 832617.

**September 17/18:** 2-day Business Skills Workshop. The Polytechnic of Huddersfield. Further details telephone 0484 422288 ext. 2078.

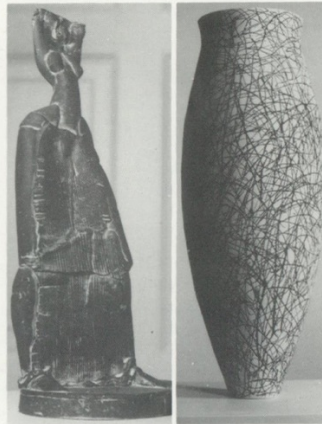
**September 20:** Daphne Carnegie at Central St. Martins School of Art, 6.30pm. London Potters – further details telephone Grazia Gintz 081-946 3282.

**September 21:** 'Master Day' with Sandy Brown at Bore Place, Chiddingstone. Kent Potters – further details telephone 0474 853024.

**October 25:** Alan Caiger-Smith at Central St. Martins School of Art, 6.30pm. London Potters – further details telephone Grazia Gintz 081-946 3282.

**September 27-29:** Autumn Weekend: Highland Stoneware. Scottish Potters Association – further details telephone 047 082 234.

*RIGHT Mo Jupp, sculpture.  
FAR RIGHT Felicity Aylieff – ceramic vessel from the exhibition in the new Bedales Gallery, Steep, Petersfield, Hants*



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### Exhibitions

Standard Listings, space permitting, are free. Special five-line boxed listings, available at £15 (inc. VAT) ensure inclusion – prepayment essential, a black and white photograph costs an additional £15. Exhibitors are invited to send details to Ceramic Review, 21 Carnaby Street, London W1V 1PH, to enable us to present as comprehensive a list as possible. Copy dates for the next two issues will be September 23 (November/December) and November 22 (January/February 1992).

Until **September 14:** Martin Everson-Davis – Raku and Garden Pots. Porticus, 1 Middleton Street, **Llandrindod Wells, Powys**.

Until **September 28:** Jitka Palmer – ceramic pictures. Artemidorus, 27B Half Moon Lane, Herne Hill, **London SE24**.

Until **September 29:** Summer Exhibition of Studio Ceramics. Also selection of work from final year students at Harrow College of Design. Bettles Gallery, 80 Christchurch Road, **Ringwood, Hants**.

Until **September 30:** Work by Mariette Voke. The Black Swan Guild, **Frome, Somerset**.

Until **October 13:** Work by Amanda Spencer-Cooke, La Galerie, 101 Ave Frédéric Mistral, 13990 Fontvieille, **France**.

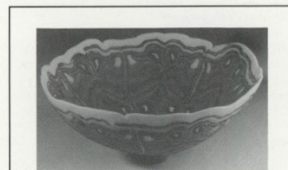
**September 1-30:** Work by Inke & Uwe Lerch, Heidi van Veen, Johan Broekema. Kunst and Keramik, Korte Assenstraat 15, Deventer, **Holland**.

**September 2-28:** 'Landmarks' – thrown and assembled stoneware by Richard Landy. Pyramid, 10 Gillygate, **York**.

**September 3-14:** Work by David Cann. Berlesduna Gallery, Central Library, **Basilidon, Essex**.

**September 3-28:** New work by Joan Doherty. The Courtyard Gallery, **Cheltenham**.

**September 6-October 5:** Clive Bowen – domestic pottery, Contemporary Applied Art, 43 Earham Street, **London WC2**.



**MAL MAGSON**  
September 7-14 (Showcase)  
**Contemporary Ceramics**  
Craft Potters Shop and Gallery  
7 Marshall Street, London W1

**September 7-15:** Ceramics by graduate students of West Surrey School of Art & Design, students of Richmond Adult College. Riverside Barn, **Walton-on-Thames**.

**September 7-October 3:** Ad van Aart – ceramic sculpture. Galerie de Witte Voet, Kerkstraat 149, **Amsterdam**.

**September 9-21:** 'Japan at Smith's' Gallery, Covent Garden, **London WC2**.

**CERAMICS: FELICITY AYLIEFF  
FIRED CLAY: MO JUPP**  
9-28 September 1991  
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**James Wason – 'Burnt Offerings'**  
10th-27th September  
**Sebastian Blackie**  
8th-25th October

**September 10-October 5:** Work by Jane Hamlyn, Richard Phethean, Anna and Sarah Noël. Terrace Gallery, 7 Liverpool Terrace, **Worthing, Sussex**.

**September 12-18:** Wealdon Potters 10th Anniversary Exhibition. The Museum Gallery, Civic Centre, **Tunbridge Wells, Kent**.

**September 13-October 27:** Mike Levy – ceramics. Model House, Bull Ring, **Llantrisant, Mid Glamorgan**.

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French Ceramist  
15th-29th September  
**THE HART GALLERY**  
23 Main Street, Linby, Nottingham  
Telephone: (0602) 638707

**September 17-January 31:** Japan and China – Sources of Ceramic Design. Lady David Gallery, School of Oriental and Africa Studies, 53 Gordon Square, **London WC1**.

**September 18-October 18:** Work by Tatsuzo Shimaoka. Galerie Besson, 15 Royal Arcade, 25 Old Bond Street, **London W1**.

**September 19-October 20:** 'A Staffordshire Tradition' with ceramics by Phil Eglin. Royal Festival Hall Foyer Galleries, South Bank Centre, **London SE1**.

**September 21-October 12:** 'Something Special' with ceramics by Fenella Mallalieu, Peter Starkey. The Ashdown Gallery, 70 Newtown High Street, **Uckfield, Sussex**.

**September 27-October 16:** John Middlemiss – recent stoneware ceramics. Amalgam, 31 Barnes High Street, **London SW13**.

**September 28-November 3:** 'Any Body' Devon Guild of Craftsmen, Riverside Mill, **Bovey Tracey, Devon**.



**PHIL ROGERS**  
Woodfired Stoneware and Porcelain  
October 1-12 1991

**Contemporary Ceramics**  
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Ursula Mommens, Mary Rich,  
Ruthanne Tudball

1st -18th October

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**October 1-December 24:** 'David Queensberry designs . . . - 40 years of pottery design. City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent.

**October 1-31:** 'Form: Coiled and Carved' - Christine Jones, Wilson & Gough, 106 Draycott Avenue, London SW3.

**October 2-November 3:** Takeshi Yasuda - ceramics. South Bank Craft Shop and Gallery, London SE1.

**October 4-13:** Exhibition including ceramics. the Malt House, Walton Road, Aylesbury.

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**October 4-November 17:** 'A Pleace with Sole' ceramics on the theme of fish. The Workshop Gallery, 13 Lower Church Street, **Chepstow**, Gwent.

**October 6-26:** 'Water' - Helen Martino, Sonia Lewis. Gallery on the Cam, **Cambridge**.

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**Pots by PETER BEARD**  
6th-20th October

**October 7-26.** Ruth King - Saltglaze. Pyramid, 10 Gillygate, York.



**RUTHANNE TUDBALL**

October 12-19 (Showcase)

**Contemporary Ceramics**  
Craft Potters Shop and Gallery  
7 Marshall Street, London W1

**October 12-November 16:** Tessa Fuchs - ceramics. Stafford Art Gallery, Lichfield Road, **Stafford**.



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**October 15-November 9:** Work by Colin Kellam, Phyllis Dupuy. Terrace Gallery, 7 Liverpool Terrace, **Worthing**.



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**October 19-November 9:** Work by Robin Welch. Beaux Arts, York Street, **Bath**.

**October 19-November 7:** Jennie Hale - ceramics. The Open Eye Gallery, 75 Cumberland Street, **Edinburgh**.

**October 19-November 9:** Anna Lambert - new ceramics. The Simon Drew Gallery, **Dartmouth**, Devon.



**SANDY BROWN**

Ritual Objects: Tableware  
October 22-November 2 1991

**Contemporary Ceramics**  
Craft Potters Shop and Gallery  
7 Marshall Street, London W1



**HILARY LAFORCE**

Exhibition of Ceramics

October 23rd - November 2nd  
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**October 23-November 29:** Ryoji Koie - ceramics. Galerie Besson, 15 Royal Arcade, 28 Old Bond Street, **London W1**.

**October 26-27:** Jonathan Chiswell Jones - decorated porcelain. Northease Manor School, Rodmell, Nr. **Lewes**, East Sussex.

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20 words for £8. Each additional word 40p. Box No. £1.50 extra. Semi-display £25 per column inch (prices include VAT). All advertisements must be prepaid and copy must be received by Ceramic Review, 21 Carnaby Street, London W1V 1PH, on or before September 23 (November/December issue) and November 22 (January/February 1992 issue).

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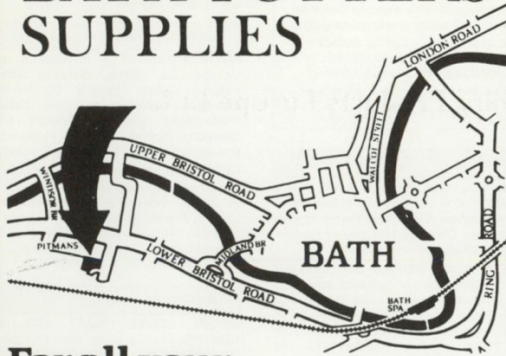
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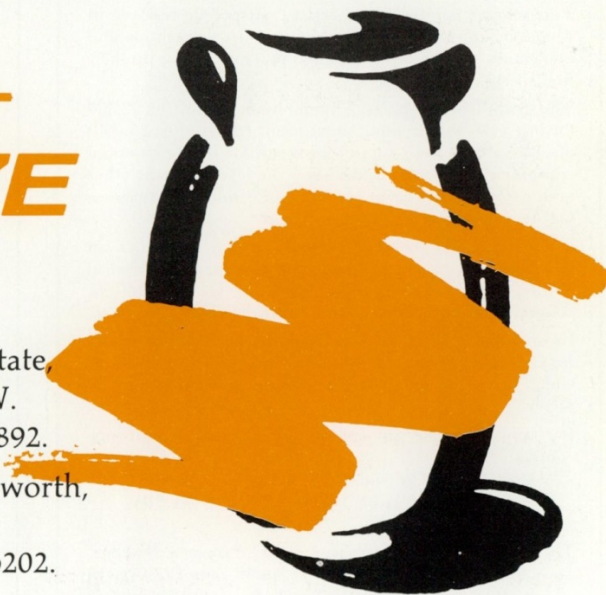
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The grant has two parts: a maintenance grant of £2,200 for one year and an equipment grant (maximum £5,000) of 50% of the cost of purchasing and/or hiring essential equipment and tools. In deciding the level of grant other grants towards the cost of setting up or running the business will be taken into account.

The Council is looking for work which combines an individual approach, originality of design and technical ability. Those craftspeople working in restoration, conservation and reproduction are ineligible.

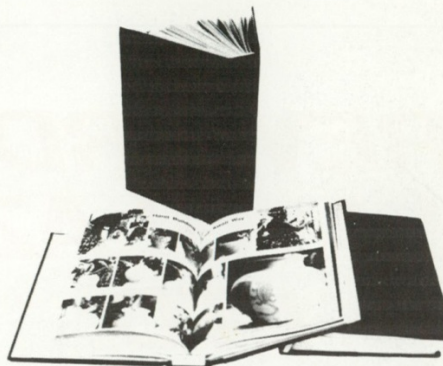
Closing dates are 1st March, 1st June, 1st September and 1st December (except for Musical Instrument applications which are taken only twice a year on 1st March and 1st Sept).

For more detailed information and application forms contact:

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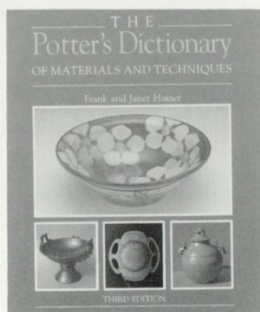


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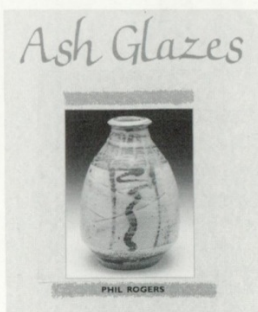
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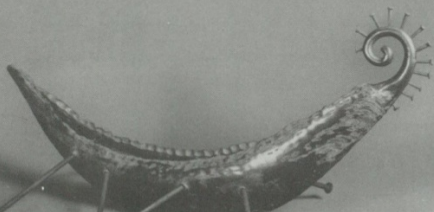
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
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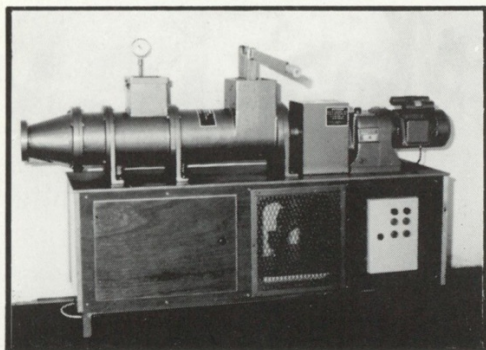
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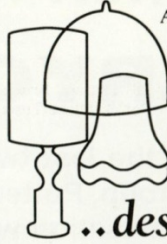
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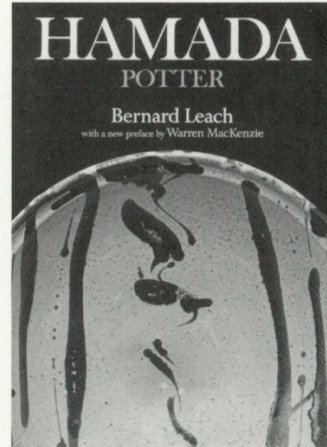
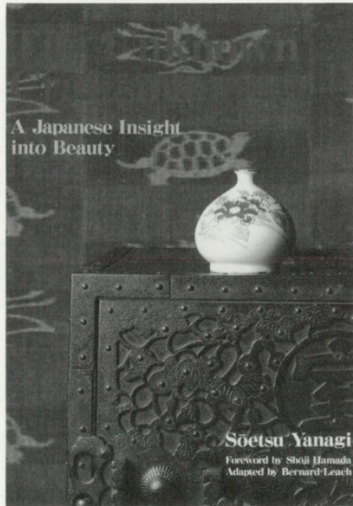
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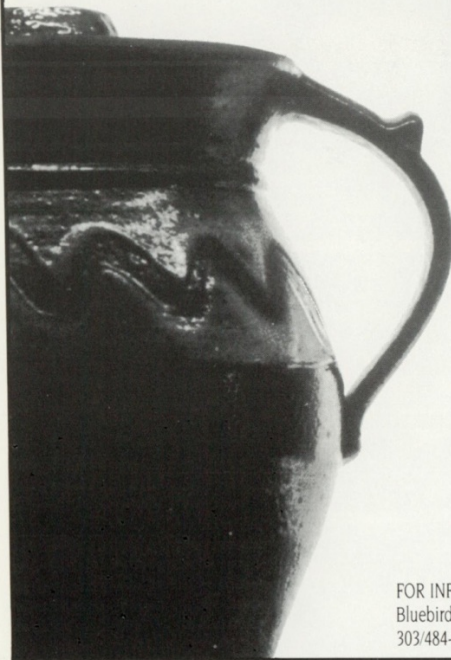
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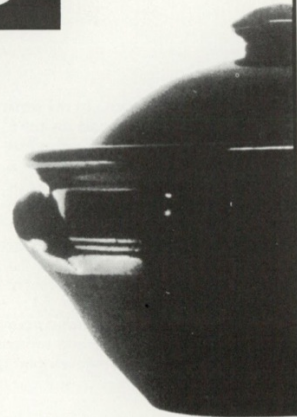
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**THE Potters**

# A Potter's Day

Tony Ojo Ogogo is a potter who also runs Heritage Ceramics in Southall, Middlesex.

No two days are ever the same in my work schedule, however I try to spend my time working strictly to a planned programme. This habit is influenced by a combination of Bini and European work ethics. As an artist of African (Bini) origin, I am able to work in more than one art-form. It is the norm for Bini craftsmen and women to begin apprenticeship at an early age, training in several skill areas for survival purposes and to expand their creature talents.

I work long hours every day and sustain my interest through self discipline and motivation, survival instincts which I have developed in the economically sophisticated environment of Britain.

My attitude to work and perception of the craft industry go back to my childhood days in Benin, Nigeria. I used to accompany my grandmother and sometimes my aunt at about 6.30 in the morning to scout, dig, collect and transport basket loads of clay from the river bank to the family's communal workshop. It was a long trek of about two miles through a narrow village path. Most days we were finally back at the workshop at about 10 a.m. after several trips to collect the clay.

My grandmother in particular worked to a strict routine and programme. Certain days of the week were for clay preparation, others for making, and there were market days for the sale of pots at the village market. Generally, we worked in the workshop till mid-day by which time it was too hot and exhausting to continue. As a child, I looked forward to the evenings when we were taught the art of weaving, wood carving, story telling or traditional dance movements. My favourite activity was the dance movements which I still enjoy today as an 'old' man. These experiences have been useful in forming a disciplined approach to my work and the management of my studio and business.

My day starts at 8 a.m. with the domestic rituals of breakfast and getting ready to brave either the weather or the traffic jam to Southall, a distance of five miles from my home. As the Artistic Director of Heritage Ceramics, my jobs are many and varied; from managing the training and outreach workshop programmes to administration, P.R., potting and discharging those management tasks most artists would probably detest, e.g. accounting, marketing, etc. Between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., I am either running workshops in schools, lecturing, undertaking market research, negotiating business or involved in administration and meetings. I am hardly ever involved in the making process during normal office hours, instead I delegate most work to my assistants.

My own potting starts at 5 p.m. Usually I spend an hour inspecting and correcting the day's production before my assistants finish and leave at 6 p.m. Thereafter I start my own creating and specially commissioned work. I



Tony Ogogo with his smoke fired earthenware pots

prefer and enjoy working on my own without distraction and I find I get a lot done in four or five hours alone in the workshop.

The day's activities end at around 10 p.m. when I normally finish for the day and head for

home. Like my grandmother, I like to do several meaningful things every day which yield results. I am guided by her inspirational words that: PLANNING + EFFORT = MAXIMUM REWARD.

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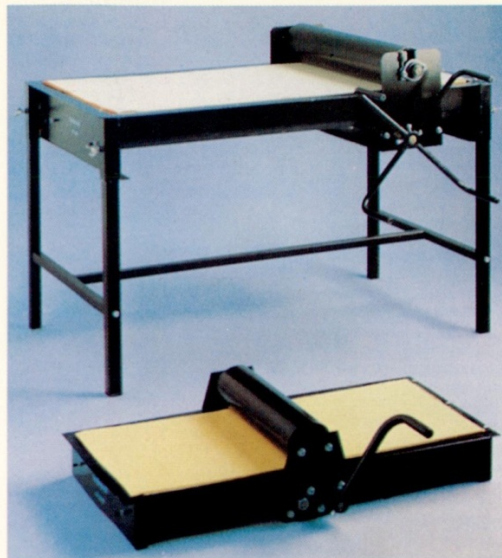
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A large advertisement for Laser Kilns Ltd. featuring a red vertical banner with a 'C' logo and text about the Ceramitec '91 exhibition in Munich, Germany. The banner is flanked by images of several dark-colored gas kilns with 'laser' labels on their doors. The text on the banner includes the company name, exhibition details, and contact information.

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