

# New Zealand Potter

Volume 38

Number 1

April 1996





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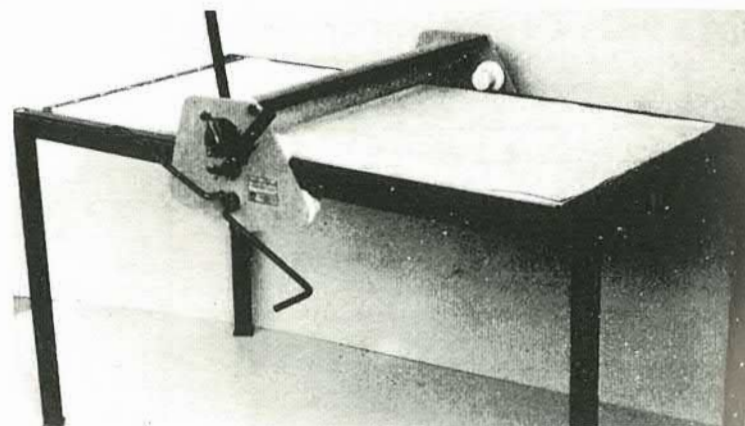
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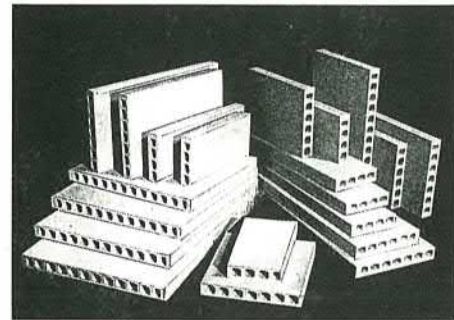
# Through The Filter Press

Howard S Williams

## Whangarei - Korea

Whangarei based ceramic artist **Sandra Storey** has been selected to attend the 6th Annual *JICA* Ceramics and Sculptural Symposium In Seoul, Korea. This is a 20 day hands on experience where ceramic artists from around the world create work for an exhibition and share ideas and techniques. The *JICA* Symposium runs from June 26 to the end of July. Sandra is looking forward to bringing back heaps of information to share. Only 10 people from 28 countries have chosen.

## New Kiln Furniture



*Acme Marls' new extruded shelves*

New refractories have been developed in a revamp of kiln furniture technology. The following extract is reprinted from the British Ceramic Industry's magazine, *Global Ceramic Review*.

Kiln furniture manufacturer *Acme Marls* has just launched a brand new range of extruded batts (kiln shelves) to complement its already extensive selection of both plain and perforated shelves. Representing the very latest in kiln furniture technology, extruded shelves give the same performance as solid shelves of the same thickness, but are only half the weight, leading to obvious advantages.

The shelves are 38mm thick. As the wall thickness is fixed by the limitation of the extrusion process, a thinner shelf would need to have smaller holes. For an extruded shelf that was much thinner, the holes would become so small they would cease to be of significant benefit (weight reduction).

The carrying capacity depends on the cross-section and is very sensitive to the distance of the bulk of the material from the centre line of the cross-section. The greater the distance from the centre line,

the greater the strength of the shelf, with only a small increase in weight due to the longer connecting webs.

These new shelves provide kiln designers and manufacturers of ware with several advantages, including considerably reduced energy consumption levels, faster and more even shelf heating and cooling (giving better thermal shock resistance) longer shelf life, more uniform ware firing and lower ware losses.

*Acme's* extruded shelves were chosen straight away for use in a new sanitaryware manufacturing plant, recently commissioned, which has been achieving lower fuel consumption and higher product yield than normally expected.

## Hopes for 1996

*Keith Stewart - Arts*

The following was first printed in the *Sunday Star-Times*

1. An exhibition of new work from Ralph Hotere.
2. An exhibition of heritage Maori art in a New Zealand art gallery.
3. A public art gallery in New Zealand taking craft art seriously.
4. Advertisers giving credit to their artist sources, and this could start with Telecom buying a Mondrian for the Auckland City Art Gallery. A couple of million should be no strain on its profits.
5. Television giving the arts fair coverage.

6. Positive steps towards establishing a permanent overseas residence for New Zealand artists.

7. Public art galleries making a serious investment in contemporary local art.

8. All public art galleries opening until 7pm every day.

9. More visual arts publishing by local publishers.

10. The arts to "go professional" like rugby, and for the top "players" to be contracted by the Government and paid \$200,000 a year, each. Funds to come from "the surplus".

## Fat Chance Dreams for 1996

1. The Minister for the Arts will take responsibility for his portfolio.
2. A funny speech at an exhibition opening.
3. Television news will make intelligent comment on the arts. On anything.
4. Television news camera crews will learn how to hold their cameras still while shooting arts items.
5. Creative New Zealand will change its name to something less embarrassing.
6. Arts bureaucracy will provide more money for art by providing less for itself.
7. The Aotea Centre will be embellished so it looks less like a bunker.
8. The Prime Minister will be seen at important art events as frequently as he (she) is seen at sports matches.
9. Kim Hill will talk about visual art on her radio show without sneering.
10. Art academies will have opinions, and express these publicly.

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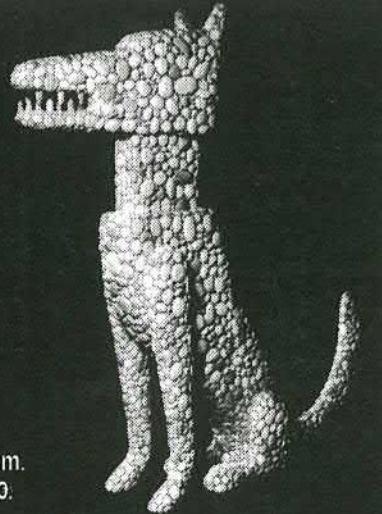
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Large White Dog, 1990. Barry Lett.

## Film and Video

The official *Film Archives* library in Wellington is keen to add to its archival collection of New Zealand movie film, including of course, any dealing with pottery or other crafts, whether professionally made or home movies.

If anyone has such film, they can send it to the library where it will be copied onto video tape. A copy of this tape will be sent to the owner for their use, while the original film will be kept under the correct archival conditions, though the owner retains the right of access to it.

The office is on the corner of Cable Street and Jervois Quay, Wellington. Films can be taken there, or posted (including insurance) to:

**Bill Asher**  
New Zealand Film Archives  
PO Box 11449  
Wellington

## Congratulations

We congratulate **Helen Keen** from Port Chalmers who recently won a Purchase Award in the *Pioneer Potters Mackay Exhibition*, Queensland, Australia, which was judged by Australian potter, **Greg Daly**.

Helen's winning work was a six-piece earthenware coffee set (two espresso



*Helen Keen's Coffee Set*

cups and saucers, cream jug and sugar bowl) decorated in a landscape design and with lustrous rims and handles. The Purchase Award was for NZ\$320.

## Letters to the Editor

Sir

*Wanganui Potters Society* members were delighted with the page of pictures from our annual exhibition in the December 1995 issue - but were surprised to see that the exhibition was, apparently, held in Taupo.

The word "Quay" was inadvertently omitted from the title of the venue "Taupo Quay Arts Centre" which is, of course, in Wanganui.

The mistake was mine. The photographs were by **Rick Rudd**, I merely provided the captions.

*David Calder, Wanganui*

## Bavaria

A request comes from **Monika Herdes** in Germany:

Sir  
I have been a ceramist for some time now and have thought about going abroad in order to gain new professional experiences and work in a pottery for some weeks or months. I certainly know that "on-lookers" are more likely to disturb artistic working in a pottery, but as a ceramist myself I could surely be of some use, so to speak as "maid of all work". If anyone is interested in principle, please write to me. I would be pleased to consider any suggestions and I assure you that I do not expect a real salary. I am especially interested in sculptures, raku and special decoration techniques. Thanks!

**Monika Herdes**  
Pfarrplatz 2  
84130 Dingolfing  
Germany

*If anyone is interested, a copy of Monika's quite impressive CV can be had by sending me a 40c stamp and a stamped addressed envelope for return mail. Ed.■*

## Obituary

**Jill Barton** passed away peacefully after a long battle.

Jill and **Tom** through *Media Gallery* encouraged and supported me and many other NZ Potters to be confident and successful.

She always remained young, taking an interest in everything that younger people were doing.

She will be sadly missed.

*John Parker*

## Pioneer Potters Mackay Inc

The winners in the recent *Pioneer Potters Mackay 1995* Competition in Queensland, Australia were:

### Open Award:

Rowley Drysdale, Kenilworth, Queensland

### Purchase Awards:

Helen Keen, Port Chalmers, New Zealand  
Gwyn Hanssen-Pigott, Finch Hatton, Queensland

Arthur Rosser, Eungella, Queensland

Norma Keen, Brisbane, Queensland

Cindi Birch, Cawarral, Queensland

### Highly Commended:

Helen Taylor, Flagstaff Hill, South Australia

### Regional Award:

Rick Wood, Mackay, Queensland

### Highly Commended:

Carol Rosser, Eungella, Queensland

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# Who Gets Colour?

Howard Williams, Editorial

On page 8 of the *Wellington Potters'* October 1995 newsletter, in *From the Library*, Val asks a question about last August's issue (vol 37, no 2, 1995) of the *New Zealand Potter* with photos from the *Wellington Potters' Annual Exhibition* printed in black and white instead of colour.

## Quote....

"One question I must ask is why *Wellington Potters* only rated black and white photos. I can only presume that our 'accent on domestic ware' doesn't have the same visual impact as the kooky avant-garde; *Dysfunctional Teapot*, p 12, or *Several Attempts at Icarus*, p 36, etc, etc."

Val, your presumption is entirely incorrect.

Our policy is to present what is happening in clay around the country regardless of whether it is for the avant-garde gallery or the homely kitchen table. A simple glance through issues of the *New Zealand Potter* would confirm this, as you will find colour pictures of casseroles and jugs as well as experimental sculpture.

It appears many people wonder why certain items appear in colour while others do not. The answer is complex, but I hope understandable, when explained.

If we select for visual impact in the magazine, it will be where a page of photos has specific colour importance - as on page 40 in the issue discussed, which Val admired for the "blue, bold and beautiful" neo-classic plates of **Kevin Falconer** and **Irene Tuscia-Falconer**. Or it will be where for other reasons the photos would be ineffective if printed in black and white, as on page 16 of the same issue, where **Kelvin Bradford's** saggar-fired, shell-fumed pots had to be shown in texture and colour, the point of the technical descriptions in his accompanying article. If he had not written about colour, but just form, this could have been illustrated in black and white.

So what other parameters decide what goes into colour?

Money is one. Colour reproductions cost a great deal more than those in black and white. *The New Zealand Potter* has no sponsorship. It is a tight-budget, self-supporting production making no profit.

Two is technical. We cannot just put colour pages in wherever we like. All pages are printed in multiples of eight and an issue usually comprises 40 or 48 pages. In this we can have no colour, or 8 pages of colour (or 16, we would if we could!). If anybody will pay \$1,000 for their page of exhibition photos, we will put them in colour every time without fail!

At the moment we print eight colour pages. In a 48 page issue, these are printed on one sheet, which when folded and cut appear as pages 9, 12 - 13, 16, 33, 36 - 37, and 40. It is not possible for us to place colour on other than these. Some stories obviously cannot fit the jigsaw where colour is possible for them.

Then comes our layout task of deciding what material goes on these colour pages.

First, we consider the relative importance of material to hand. The magazine goes to potters, teaching institutions, clubs and libraries in some 20 countries, so coverage of major events like the *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* are naturally given precedence. This internationally important exhibition is given two facing pages of colour in each August issue (this year it will be in December, because of the changed exhibition dates) plus the winner is that issue's cover feature. Even *Fletcher Challenge* does not pay for this privilege, though they supply photos and text at their expense, the same as do all our contributors. It is our responsibility to give this coverage for our readers - and to

hopefully sell more copies of our magazine overseas.

Next in importance come national exhibitions or competitions; firstly the *New Zealand Society of Potters Annual*, the *Royal Easter Show* with *NZSP*, and *XPO*, with *NZSP*, then those not attached to the national society; *Norsewear*, *Cleveland*, *Birkenhead Licensing Trust*, etc. Next come the more regionally-based, though still important shows like those in Tauranga and Hamilton.

The regional societies' shows from the main centres are followed by smaller groups who are important locally, though also internationally in our judgement as we are the sole colour publication which shows the rest of the world what is happening in ceramics in New Zealand - at every level, be it traditional domesticware or cutting-edge conceptual; professional ceramic artist or polytechnic student.

**Brian Gartside** always gets a colour page. As our most consistent columnist over the years and an excellent teacher with interesting technical and aesthetic contributions, we look to him as a matter of course. He is also good value to us in the commercial sense as we know many people buy the magazine primarily to keep up to date with his latest offerings.

A special exhibition will sometimes get special consideration and go onto a colour page, as for instance the *Lopdell House Mug Competition*, even though this may include mugs woven in fabric, made of glued coffee beans, blown in glass, welded metal or mixed media, as well as clay.

If someone supplies magnificent colour photos we may use them in preference to badly taken photos even of good pottery. This is editorial privilege used to keep the visual standard of our magazine high and we offer no apologies when we take this course.

A later article will cover how to take photos to give them a better chance of being printed in colour, but even then someone, unfortunately, will always draw the short straw and finish up in black and white.

As subscriptions rise we plan to increase the number of colour pages, until the *New Zealand Potter* is in full colour. ■

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# The Easter Group

## Coromandel 1996

Jenny Shearer, Coromandel, Hauraki House Gallery, Coromandel

Exhibiting together for the ninth time: Deidre Airey, David and Jenny Shearer, Wailin and Tom Elliott, Barry Brickell (occasionally) and Mike O'Donnell (5th time).

This outfit took off spontaneously in 1988. We share an empathy in our working ideals and are all friends. *Driving Creek Potteries* started as our connection. All of us have worked there, shared studio space and fired one of the wood kilns at some stage.

There was no suitably large space to exhibit in Coromandel then, so we started out in the historic old Courthouse after much delicate negotiation. The local response was great and our work fitted well together, so each year we have carried on, drawing a wider and wider audience.



David Shearer, Jenny Shearer, Michael O'Donnell, Wailin Elliott, Tom Elliott, and Dr Deidre Airey

Easter is a busy tourist time in our town, so our work gets excellent exposure. We are sure the sales would rival any good city gallery.

Six years ago the *Hauraki House Gallery* was created from a large vacant room of the old Schoolhouse (circa 1873) and we have been there ever since. It is a charming space and an asset to the town.

Coromandel boasts a remarkable number of potters, but for all that we are a disparate lot - there is no formal group and we

White stoneware platter 1995. "Mescalita Sunrise". Diam 425mm. Thrown by David, decorated by Jenny Shearer



rarely get together. Basically, most of us are busy tending gardens, planting trees, potting and selling from home and showrooms. Plenty of time is spent working alone. The Coromandel lifestyle is a demanding one!

This focus of our year gives us time together as we all set it up, man-and-woman it, share dinners and discuss a possible theme for the following year.

For Deidre Airey it's her principal outlet. She was the GP in Coromandel for 30 years, befriending Barry Brickell in the early times when she was inspired by some early relief tiles in his possession. She started working in clay for recreation and as a possible way of expressing her interest in religious art. Since retiring it has been her absorbing passion and in spite of painful rheumatoid arthritis she works daily on one her original pieces. Her work can be found in a number of churches and homes as well as the permanent collection of the *National Art Gallery* in Wellington.

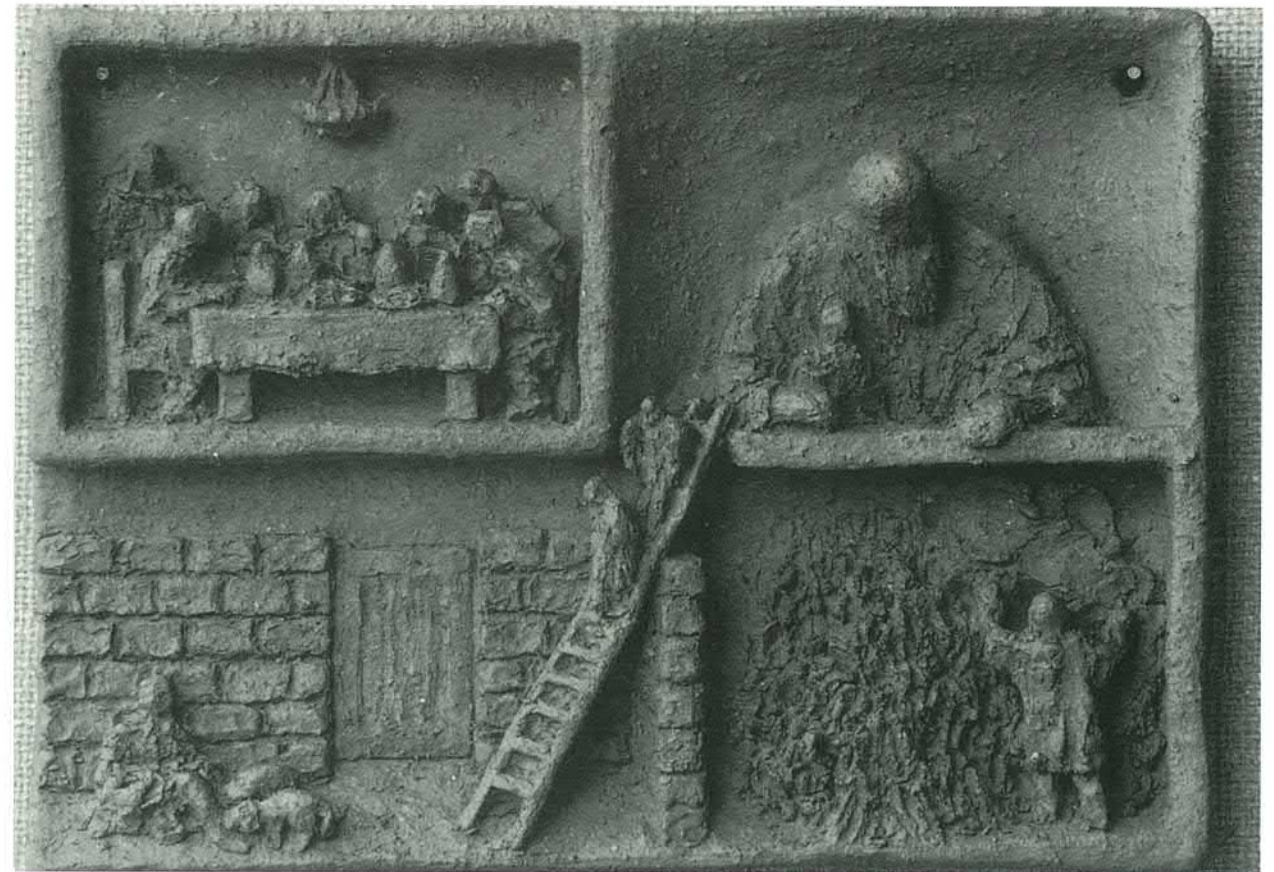
Tom Elliott is the only group member not working in clay. He takes time out from making breadboards and love-spoons to carve wall plaques from demolition kauri, depicting subjects like native plants, trees and fish and a few social statements as well. His wife Wailin is well known for her terracotta figures that grace many a pool-side and garden.

Firmly based on the vessel are the domestic items of Jenny and David Shearer and Mike O'Donnell. Mike is also known for his sculptured *Hauraki Guardians* and his other time-consuming work with *Watchdog* and other anti-mining groups in the Coromandel.

This year, Jenny Shearer is to have a change of direction - to be away from domestic ware and capitalise on a fruitful year in Auckland studying painting, drawing and mixed media at the *Auckland Society of Arts* in Ponsonby.

David Shearer meanwhile, is enjoying making large platters and quirky slab teapots.

For the tenth show next year there will be a celebration - to mark, more than anything, a successful collaboration, of people and pots.



Luke 16 v19  
Parable of the rich man and Lazarus, by Deidre Airey

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# Norsewear Art Awards

Review by Paul Bennett

The *Norsewear Art Award* sets new standards with its 10th exhibition in the *Civic Theatre* at Waipukurau.

A reviewer can get weary of saying year after year that the overall standard has risen again, that the selection is even and the exhibition well presented, but it continues to be true and this year's display is a delight.

A high standard has been set by the one selector, former *Central Hawke's Bay* resident **Grace Cochrane**, curator of the *Powerhouse Museum*, Sydney.

Only 93 exhibits have been chosen from 465 entries. This allows more space and the work in the three sections - painting, ceramics and glass, and wool and fibre - and the flair with which the work has been displayed reaches a new high.

The yardstick for this year's entries, set by the selector, calls for work that shows the artist is developing a personal idea, must be well resolved, and challenge and intrigue the viewer.

This approach means the exhibition assumes real significance. Artists are given the chance to see top quality work and the public of Hawke's Bay sees an exhibition at national level.

It is quite an accolade just to be selected for an exhibition like the *Norsewear Art Award*.

The award enters its second decade with the promise from *Norsewear* that next year's sponsorship is assured.....

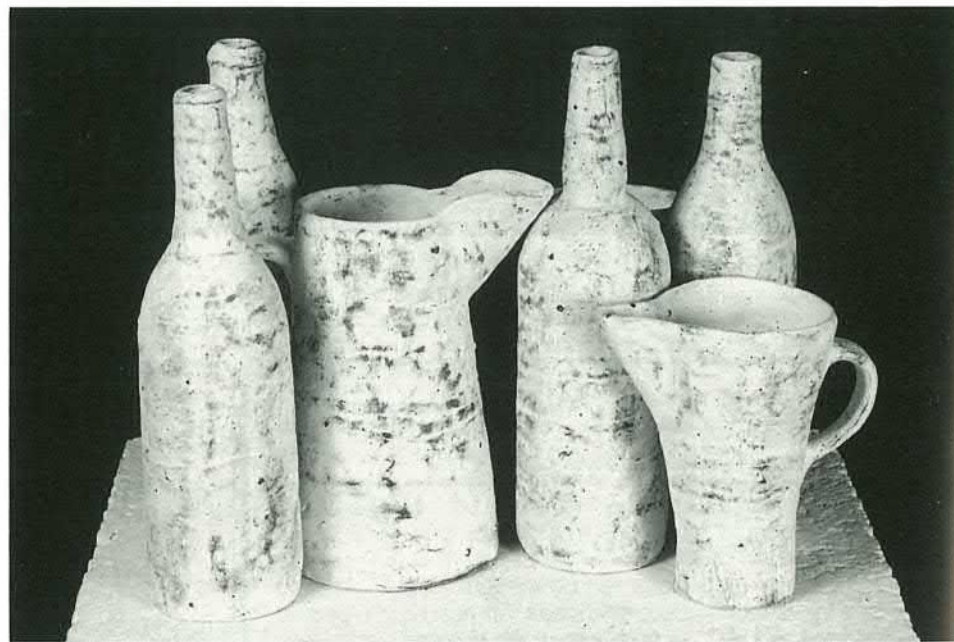
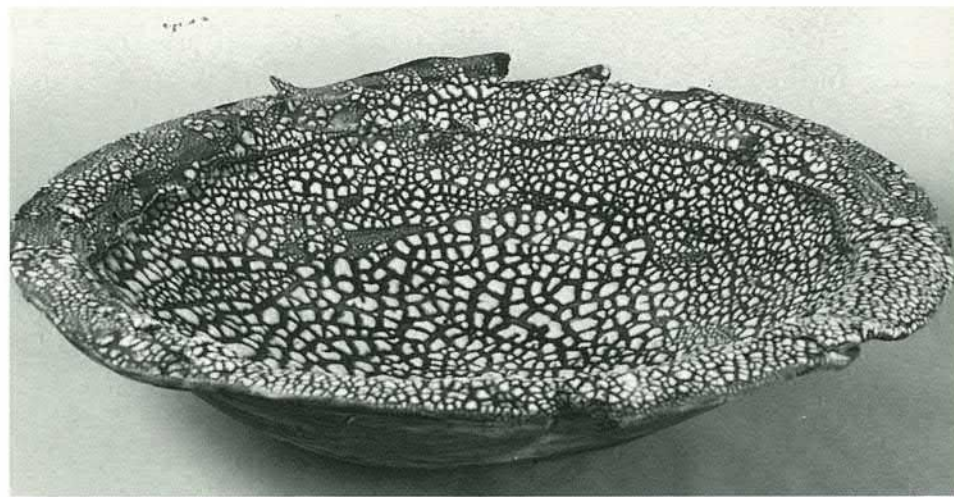
.....The ceramics and glass section this year is outstanding. An Auckland, **Emma Camden**, won the top award with an impressive entry of cast glass in a particularly difficult process. The glowing work is titled *Walking Tall in the Green Grass*.

Merit winners are **Gary Nash**, Auckland, with a beautiful work titled *Stone Vessel* which is actually of free-blown glass, and **Richard Parker** from Kaeo, with a ceramic vase simply titled *Splashed*.

Hawke's Bay artists did exceptionally well this year considering the sheer weight of numbers entering from Auckland, Wellington and all around the country.

The *Norsewear Art Award* has long moved away from a Hawke's Bay exhibition to a well-established national exhibition with \$9,000 prize money that makes it one of New Zealand's most important art events. ■

Photos, top: Gaeleen Morley, Taradale Centre; Ann Verdcourt, Dannevirke  
Bottom: Peter Alger, Whangarei



# Norsewear Art Awards Ceramics and Glass Civic Theatre, Waipukurau

Judge: **Grace Cochrane**

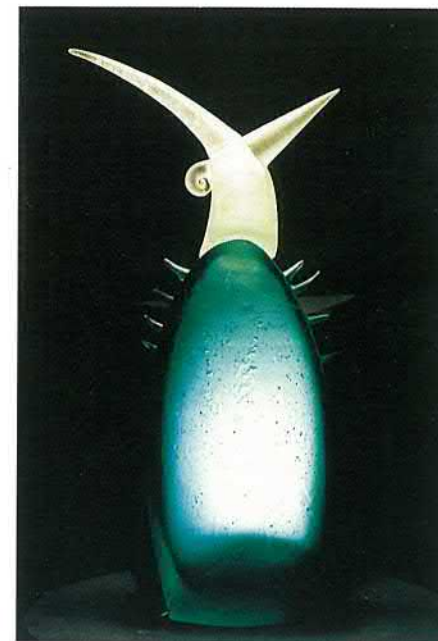
Photos by Howard Williams



Overall Winner: **Emma Camden**, Cast Glass, "*Walking Tall in the Green Grass*"

Glass Prize: **Gary Nash**, Blown Glass, "*Stone Vessel*"

Ceramics Prize: **Richard Parker**, "*Splashed Vase*"



Cast Glass, "*Walking Tall in the Green Grass*" by Emma Camden



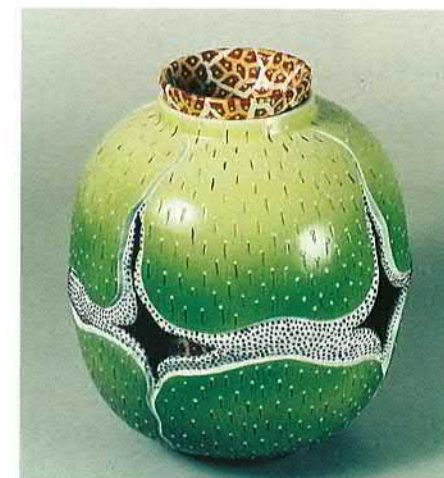
Blown Glass, "*Stone Vessel*" by Gary Nash

Clay, "*Checkpoint*" by Royce McGlashen



Ceramic, "*Splashed Vase*" by Richard Parker

Stoneware Clay Teapot, by Peter Alger



Handbuilt Earthenware, "*Pod VII*" by Rodney Annan

Stoneware, "*Moonshine on River Road*" by Cathy Mintoff







Edna Sheppard, Otaki



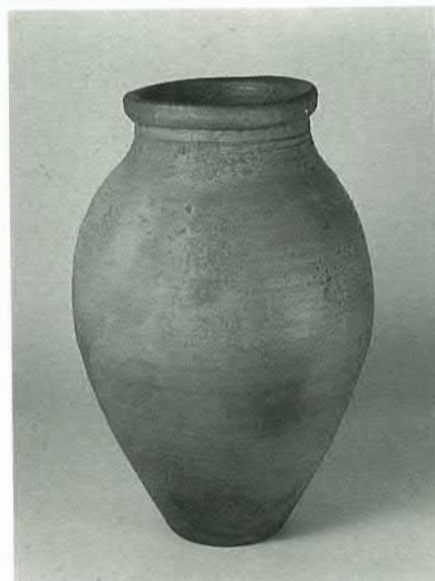
Suzie Mei Gorodi, Napier



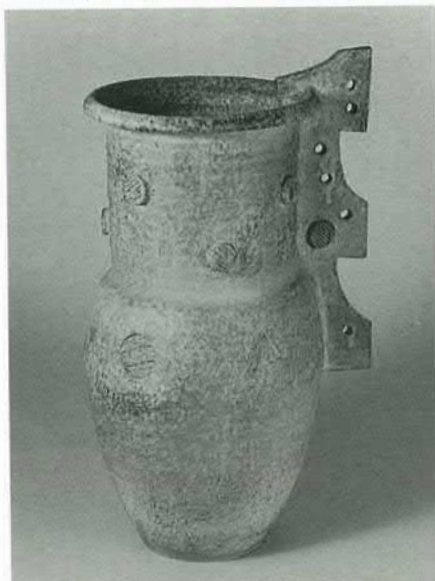
John Lawrence, Dannevirke

## Norsewear Art Awards

Barry Doyle, Palmerston North



Louise Christina Luitjes, Nelson



Ross Palmer, Turangi



Photos by Howard Williams

## Canterbury - California Exchange Exhibition

### Canterbury Museum Exhibition Court

Barry Allom, Christchurch

Photos by Colin Dash



Members of Canterbury Potters Association at the opening of the Exchange Exhibition

This exchange exhibition between the *Canterbury Potters Association* and the State of California and which ran from November 22 to December 1, 1995, was really the *Canterbury Potters* annual show in drag.

The idea of an exchange exhibition came from Californian potter **Patrick Crabb**, when he was visiting in 1993. *Canterbury Potters* had to struggle with practical challenges and solve the fiscal problems, but this made the show's success even sweeter.

This is how it worked:

Potters in Canterbury and California submitted pots for an exchange of 36 pieces from each country. Selectors in California were **Adrian Saxe**, Professor of Art at the *UCLA*, and **Bill Davis**, former president of the *American Ceramics Society*.

Canterbury's pots were chosen by **Noeline Brokenshire**, then director of *Cave Rock Gallery*, currently owner of *Salamander Gallery*. Each potter packed and posted their own work across the Pacific and received, to keep, a piece by a potter from the other side. Some Cantabrians received two!

Meanwhile three guest exhibitors were selecting 120 pots from those submitted by *CPA* members to make up the bulk of this

annual exhibition. So the exhibition was made up of three parts: the 120 members' pots; 28 pieces from guest exhibitors, **Pat Currie**, **Frederika Ernsten** and sculptor, **Llew Summers**; and 34 pots from Californian potters (some bit the dust en route).

A concern that the naturally exotic work of the Californians might over-shadow the locals proved unfounded. If anything, the visitors tended to be swamped by sheer volume, but central placement in the large gallery space may have contributed to that.

It was only the third time the *Canterbury Museum's* new exhibition court had been used. This large exhibition expanded into, and enhanced the impressive space. Many local pieces stood out, but most of the Californian pots were worth lingering over, with the 'piece de resistance' surely being **Rudy Fleck's** *Joyful Box* in paper, oxidised alloy, earthenware, rosewood, slate and metal.

The Canterbury pots were shown in Pomana in November and then in San Diego and Fresno. It was a pity the two groups of exchanged pots could not spar together in the same place - exhibition goers had to be content with a video of the Canterbury exchange exhibits. ■

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# Canterbury Potters Association

## Annual Exhibition and Exchange Exhibition from California

Canterbury Museum, Christchurch

Opened by U S Ambassador : **Josiah Beeman**

Photographs : Colin Dash



**Josiah Beeman**



**Bruce George USA**  
*Untitled*



**Rudy Fleck USA**  
*Joyful Box*



**William Shinn USA**  
*Cantata II*



**Hiromi Stewart**



**Ruth Woodley**  
*Winged Vessels*



**Llew Summers**



**Patrick Crabb USA**  
*Shard Cylinder*



**Hilary Lakeman**



**Frederika Ernsten**



**Averil Cave**  
*Anagama Jar*



**Cheryl Lucas**



**Pat Currie**

# Wellington Potters' Association Inc.

## 38th Annual Exhibition in the IBM Foyer

In association with the International Festival of the Arts

Guest Potter and Selector : **Chris Weaver**

Coastal Ceramics Award for Innovation : **Mark Ayson**

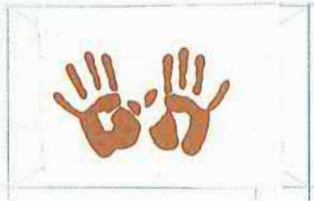
Photos : David Burton



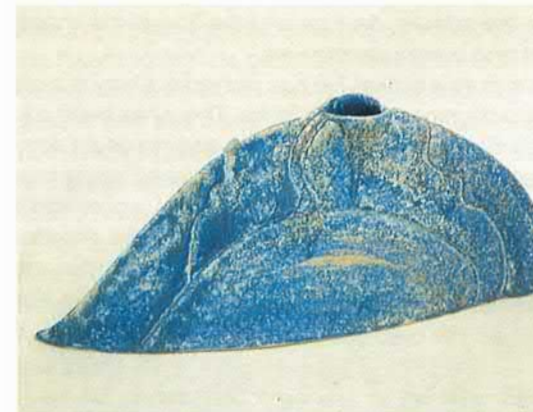
**Mark Ayson**  
*Spiral*



**Chris Weaver**  
*Teapot*



**Mike Atkins**  
*Green Jar*



**Jenny Daysh**  
*Blue Waves*



**Christopher Pease**  
*Earthenware teapot*



**Daphne McKinnon**  
*Floral Piece*



**Ruth Lee**  
*Framed Stoneware Vase*



**Caroline Earley**  
*Bone Vase*



**Flora Christeller**  
*Salt Glazed Lamp*



# Magic Mac

Dana Jackson, Raumati



Thanks to **John Meyer** and the team at *Coastal Ceramics* for organising the weekend, and to the *Kapiti Arts and Crafts Society* for supplying the venue.

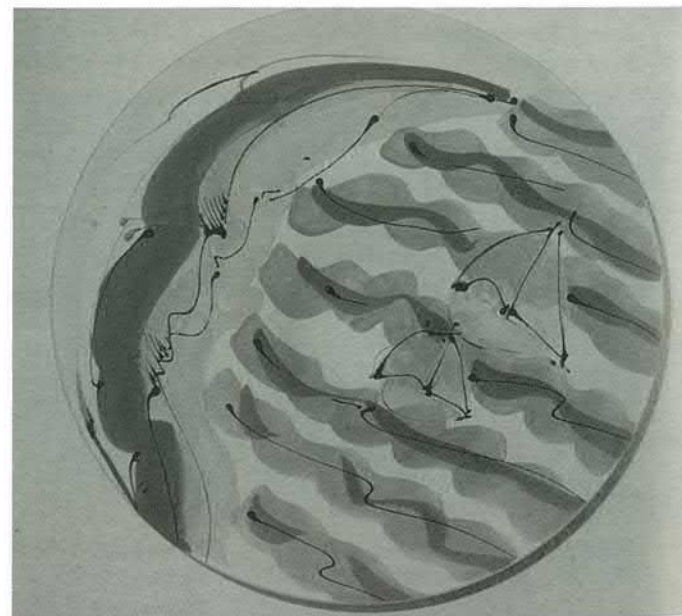
His enthusiasm is contagious. At the beginning of October McGlashen ran the "Show and Tell" weekend at Raumati, just north of Wellington. This attracted more than 30 potters from the region, all on the edge of their seats hoping to capture any gems Royce was prepared to flash at them.

They were not disappointed. He willingly demonstrated, discussed, answered questions, sorted out problems and entranced the crowd. They were riveted by his skills on the wheel. So much so that at one point he looked up, and with a wry smile said, "Remember to breathe!"

McGlashen's skill and temperament are such that he obviously does not feel threatened or intimidated by other enquiring minds. In fact his intention seems to be to inspire - to encourage potters to advance their own ideas by developing them from a conscious thought to a solid reality. His love of nature and sense of humour are reflected in the colours, designs and the flow of his shapes with their bright and breezy decorations.

He comes across as a thinker. He has worked out how to make his own concepts become visual art forms. There has been a lot of experimentation along the way for sure, and no doubt some happy "mistakes" which have been turned to good advantage. His technical knowledge is vast, yet if something works and is efficient, he takes it on board regardless of more purist attitudes.

If potters like McGlashen are keen to travel, enlighten and share, then exciting and innovative pottery must flourish in New Zealand. ■



Concerned by local potters' queries and problems with handling the new vogue of coloured stains, the staff at *Coastal Ceramics* in Paraparaumu decided a "Show and Tell" session was in order. Who better to perform that task than **Royce McGlashen** - an expert potter, designer, artist and a great entertainer too!

Royce McGlashen is to be well respected as an entrepreneurial, imaginative, intelligent and inspiring figure in the sometimes fickle art and craft world of New Zealand today.

He's certainly done his time. Six years at *Waimea* (a pottery, not a penitentiary) gives you a lot of time to think and that was years ago, back in the '60s. Since then, the man has flourished. He has travelled far, exhibited here and abroad and run schools. Now he has his own studio and gallery in Brightwater, Nelson and a closely aligned company called *Mac's Mud* extracting and packaging clay from local cow farms.

Various awards including an *MBE* have been received and recently he has made a successful move into the realms of water-colour and gouache painting. Not surprisingly, you get the impression the man is alive and fizzing, constantly turning over new, creative ideas and working out how to turn them into concrete realities.

# XPO New Zealand Ceramics Award

Events and exhibition organisers, XPO Group have announced its continued sponsorship of the New Zealand Ceramics Award as well as the expansion of the award into Glass Art.

The *New Zealand Ceramics Award* which was first launched in 1995 and sponsored by the *XPO Group*, was originally established by *Art NZ* for New Zealand potters to help ensure the future of New Zealand ceramics and pottery. At that stage it was organised in conjunction with the *New Zealand Society of Potters* and focused solely on ceramics. This year however, the award has been expanded to include the works of glass artists with the support of the *New Zealand Society of Artists in Glass* as well as the *New Zealand Society of Potters*.

This is the first time in New Zealand that such an award has been offered to glass artists.

The total prize value of the *XPO New Zealand Ceramics and Glass Award* is \$14,000. The first prize will be \$10,000. The two runners up, one in the glass discipline and one in ceramics, will be awarded \$2,000 each.

This is the maximum prize money currently offered in New Zealand for a ceramics and glass award exclusively for New Zealand artists.

**Andy Hobbs**, Managing Director of *XPO Group* said, "XPO is extremely pleased not only to continue the relationship forged last year, but also to be involved in the expansion of the Award to include glass art. This is an exciting development for the Award which will now provide recognition of New Zealand glass artists' and ceramists' abilities and achievements and provide funds to enhance their education. It will assist the award winners to continue their current standard of excellence and to build a rewarding career in their chosen field.

"We are in the process of distributing the entry forms for the Award and look forward to seeing the entries start to come in. We anticipate more than 300 New Zealand entries for the 1996 Award and are sure that the standard will be as high as it was last year."

*Art NZ* partner and organiser of the *New Zealand Ceramics and Glass Award*, **Ms Alison Mellsop** said she was delighted to welcome *XPO Group* back as the sponsor for the second year, particularly as this has enabled the Award to expand.

"We are very pleased a company with the experience of *XPO* in the exhibition industry has such a keen interest in the arts and has not only continued their association with the Award, but also assisted us to expand it. We were delighted with the calibre of entries received last year and are sure at least the same standard will be received in 1996".

"The *XPO New Zealand Ceramics Award* was one of the most comprehensive presentations of exclusively New Zealand studio pottery assembled for many years and had the best work of many New Zealand potters on show. We believe that by expanding the Award to include glass artists we will attract a wider range of artists to put forward entries, and encourage more of the younger artists in the country.

The presentation of the 1996 *Ceramic and Glass Awards* will take place at a special Preview and Opening Function coinciding with the opening of *Artex New Zealand*. The events together will provide guests and visitors to the *Ceramics and Glass Award* and *Artex New Zealand* with the opportunity to view a range of

fine art, paintings, sculpture, gold, silver and wood works, design and antiques as well as ceramics and glass.

The *New Zealand Society of Artists in Glass* and the *New Zealand Society of Potters* are both extremely supportive of the Award's expansion.

**Peter Viesnik**, the president of the *New Zealand Society of Artists in Glass* commented,

"It is the first time that I am aware of, that in New Zealand such an award has been offered to glass artists and we are very appreciative of the support, both of *Art NZ* and the *XPO Group*. We are looking forward to seeing all final selection of entries on view at *Artex New Zealand* and are sure the event will be highly successful."

*Artex New Zealand* has traditionally been held at *Princes Wharf* in Auckland. This year it will be held at the *Ellerslie Convention Centre* for the first time. The move is to accommodate the wishes of exhibitors and the organisers for a cleaner environment with more parking and a higher standard of presentation.

*XPO Group* plans to make further changes to *Artex New Zealand* to make the event more like the *New York Artexpo*. Each year *XPO* hopes to launch new awards to different art media resulting in a Visual Arts Festival in Auckland in 1999.

Ceramic sales during the exhibition in 1995 were excellent, with a much higher percentage than usual being sold which was a bonus for the exhibitors. In addition, further purchases from exhibitors were made following the event, with several pieces of work being taken out of the ceramists' home areas, in one case as far abroad as Japan. ■

## COLLECTABLES EXHIBITION

Sunday July 28 to Sunday August 11

High quality historic pieces by New Zealand and overseas ceramists, sought after by collectors and museums

Last day for entries Monday July 1

Curator:  
**Howard Williams**  
PO Box 147  
Albany  
Phone 09 415 9817

**ALBANY VILLAGE POTTERY**  
239 Main Road, Albany, Phone 09 415 9403



# The Royal Easter Show Awards

In association with the New Zealand Society of Potters and the Royal Easter Show Agricultural and Pastoral Society

Selector : Sally Vinson

Photographs : Howard Williams



\$3,000 Award Winner : Tableware  
**Andrew van der Putten**  
Earthenware



\$3,000 Award Winner : Industrial Design  
**Darryl Robertson**  
"Short Coffee Set" White stoneware



\$250 Western Potters Merit  
**Madeleine Child**  
Tulip Wall Vase Earthenware



\$3,000 Award Winner : Sculpture  
**Peter Alger**  
"When the boat comes in" Stoneware



\$250 Western Potters Merit Award  
**Jim Palmer**  
Tri-space Lobes Stoneware



\$250 Western Potters Merit  
**Graeme Storm**  
Sea Iris Stoneware



\$250 Western Potters Merit Award  
**Mike Spencer**  
Dish Stoneware



\$250 Western Potters Merit Award  
**Audrey Wallace**  
Sculptured forms Black Fired



**Rod Davies**  
Tangential Torso  
Wood-fired Terracotta



**Brendan Adams**  
Radio  
Slipcast Earthenware



Student Entry  
**Duncan Shearer**  
Salt Glazed Bottle



\$250 Western Potters Merit  
**Adrienne Smith**  
Platter Earthenware

# New Zealand Society of Potters Royal Easter Show Auckland Showgrounds

Sally Vinson, Selector

This NZSP exhibition is in its 5th year and making its presence felt in the potters' calendar. Its format is a departure from the accepted general collection of all-sorts normally offered in national shows, as it offers prizes for excellence in four categories of clay-work and six merit awards in the form of materials for potters, generously donated by *Western Potters Ltd.*

Also generous are the \$3,000 prizes for excellence provided by the *Royal Easter Show* organisers and awarded for tableware, sculpture and industrial design. Another \$1,000 prize is awarded for excellence in student work.

It was my honour to make the selections this year. There was plenty of work submitted in the category of sculpture and I had no trouble in selecting a suitable recipient for the award from what was on offer.

**Peter Alger's Snapper** is superb in its form, glaze and perfect modelling. It seems to me to have all the prerequisites one might need to explain the difficult label and term "ceramic sculpture".

In the tableware section the work of **Andrew Van Der Putten** shouted out to be loved and used - beautifully made, these pieces have a timeless, classic look and feel. I would welcome them in my kitchen!

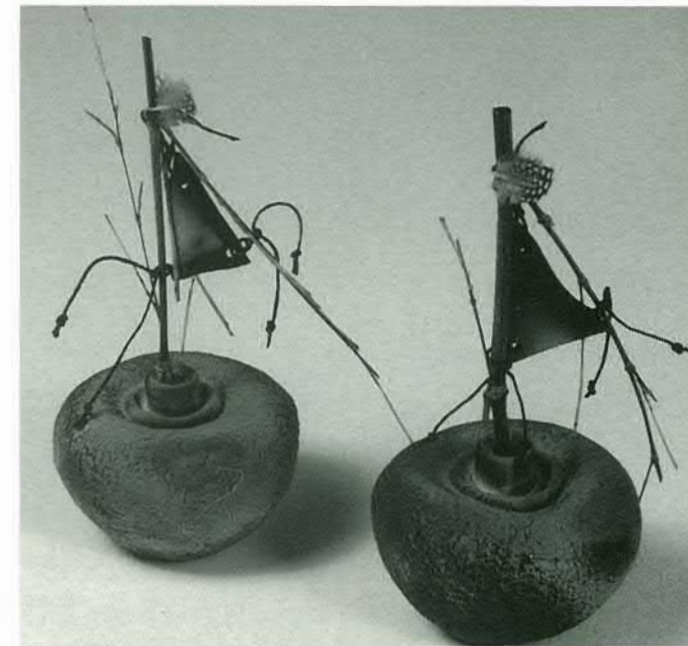
For the industrial design section six coffee cups and saucers by **Darryl Robertson** were chosen for the award.

Because of the very small numbers submitted in the student section and because no one piece was an obvious choice, I felt disinclined to make an award this year. The timing of the exhibition makes it difficult for students to prepare and select work so early in their academic year. The organisers have decided to notify students in the preceding year about submissions, which will hopefully result in many more pieces for the selector to choose from in this category in the future.

I also agree with recent comments by selectors about the small quantity of work submitted in the tableware section. There are a lot of potters in New Zealand making fine pots for eating and drinking, but there wasn't much evidence of their work for selection. And work for the industrial design section was very hard to find!

So, what about it? Perhaps students, tableware potters and those with an industrial bent might like to start planning for next year and give the selector a real headache!

**Cecilia Parkinson** is to be acknowledged as the strength and thrust behind the success of this exhibition. I'm sure the NZSP executive would wish me to thank her on our behalf.



Jan Russell, New Plymouth. "Boats", raku and bamboo

Belinda Paton, Auckland. "Peace Flotilla", clay





# Book Reviews

Review by Sally Vinson, Coromandel

## Pottery, People and Time

by Alan Caiger-Smith



This is not a "how to do it" book, but a book chronicling how one man did do it!

Alan Caiger-Smith set up his workshop in Aldermaston, England in 1955 and in this book he recalls his experiences and those of the potters he employed until 1993.

The subtitle is *A Workshop in Action*. Alan has taken us on a journey that was this workshop with the titles of the thirty-two chapters giving clues about the book's contents. The information contained in each chapter is inspirational and fascinating, and *Bowl, Alan Caiger-Smith 1980, incorporating three movements, inwards, outwards and around*



gives the reader insight into the processes of the making of high quality maiolica ware and especially the firing of lustre. He takes us through his early attempts at this personally researched and experimental work, the first firings and the problem-solving which took him to the Eastern countries where lustre decoration began.

In other chapters he tells us, always with great humour, about the running of his communal workshop with the flow of hopeful and often talented apprentices; clients whose requirements demanded seemingly outrageously difficult outcomes, and the many ways in which challenges and problems were overcome.

Alan studied painting at *Camberwell School of Art*, London and history at *Kings College*, Cambridge before he took to potting. After a chance introduction to throwing by a friend, he enrolled at evening classes at the *Central School of Art* in London.

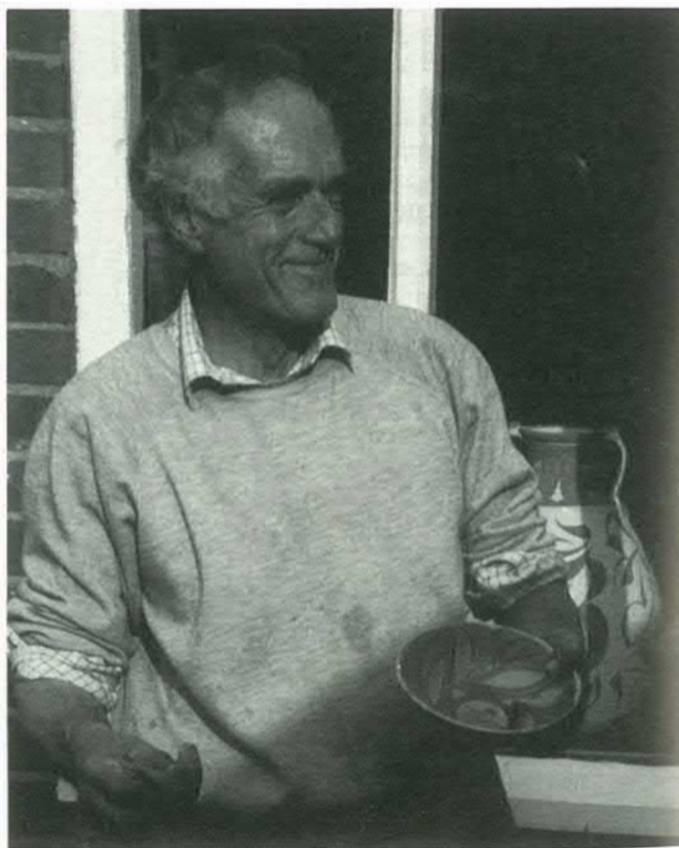
Opening the workshop at Aldermaston in Berkshire, his maiolica and lustre decorated pottery was often exhibited in Britain and overseas. From 1974 to 1978 he was chairman of the *British Craft Centre*, and in 1988 he was awarded an *MBE*.

Alan is also the author of two most instructive and historical books, *Tin Glaze Pottery in Europe and the Islamic World* (1973) and *Lustre Pottery* (1985). In *Pottery, People and Time* his style is eminently readable; he neither lectures nor pontificates, but conveys his philosophies and anecdotes in chapters which are never too long, but always relevant and informative. The stories and situations made me laugh, cry and further understand the common thread of work, frustration, pleasure and joy that makes up a potter's life.

In his attitudes to his work, Alan is both humble and honest and his integrity leaps out of every page.

I found the book hard to put down and thoroughly recommend it to potters and pottery aficionados of all ages and stages. It is sheer poetry!

£28, Publisher; Richard Dennis  
The Old Chapel  
Shepton Beauchamp  
Somerset TA19 0LE



## Review by Howard Williams, Auckland Potters Beware

by Rosemary Perry

First published in 1986, *Potters Beware* is now printed in its third revised edition under the auspices of the *New Zealand Society of Potters*. It is the only health and safety publication specifically researched for, and readily available to New Zealand potters.

As a manual concerning safe workshop practices it should be mandatory reading for every person involved with clay, glazes and firing. Every pottery club, and every class where pottery is taught should have copies of this book constantly to hand. Tutors should be intimately familiar with its contents and should ensure all students study it and have respect for its messages.

Perhaps in places where students or employees are working, some relevant pages of this book should be photocopied and enlarged as wall posters so they may be referred to at any time.

Long gone are the days when ignorance allowed potters to handle materials with no concern for their possible long-term toxic effects, to be oblivious of the danger of fumes from a firing kiln, or to use machinery in unsafe conditions. This is important for each individual's own safety and health, but even more so, in these days of concern for correct working conditions, for other people under one's direct responsibility. Like the second-hand-smoke syndrome; be careful of what you are doing to others.

The booklet is designed as a quick and easy reference to help potters avoid hazards associated with toxic substances. Many potters report symptoms of conditions caused by their involvement with these substances, conditions which would have been mostly avoidable had they had prior knowledge and taken adequate precautions.

Included is *Hazards to Customers*. The law has strict regulations forbidding the sale of food containers capable of imparting toxic substances to any food stored, prepared or cooked in them.

**The seller as well as the maker is liable.** Described are various types of glazes - their vapours during firing, their correct storage procedures, etc - used by potters and china painters. Some materials change with temperature or when they are in certain combinations with other elements and some are soluble in body fluids even if not soluble in acid solutions. Do you know which these are, and whether you are using them incorrectly?

Ceramic fibre is discussed and even the properties of alumina - one of the most common substances in pottery making, to which we are also exposed daily in anti-perspirants, ant-acids, processed cheeses, pickling agents, anti-caking agents as well as packaging, cooking and storage containers.

Further hazards discussed are some more relevant to children and pregnant women and then there are sections on dermatitis, fire, burns, electric shock, hearing loss and musculo-skeletal problems. Dust - respirators, masks, ventilation, and toxic fumes (both organic and metal) are dealt with and then follows charts of the commonest materials used in the pottery studio with the problems they can cause and how these can be minimised or avoided.

This is an excellent booklet - it could save your life or prevent unnecessary exposure to materials ultimately injurious to your health or the health of those working with you, studying under you or living close to you - or even those who buy your pots!

At the very reasonable price of \$12, it would seem irresponsible of any potter not to own and be fully acquainted with this booklet. It can be obtained from:

The New Zealand Society of Potters  
c/o Jennie Russell  
100 Lochhead Road  
RD 6  
Tauranga

## Review by Joan Moon, Christchurch Ceramics; Technical

Editor; Janet Mansfield

Janet Mansfield has done it again! Her new publication *Ceramics; Technical* seems set to repeat the success of *Ceramics; Art and Perception* which she launched six years ago. This latest magazine provides a forum for innovations and the transmission of research conclusions. Its editorial, *HeadLINES*, explains this and encourages such contributions for future issues.

To quote **Carl Andrew** (Senior Curator, Collection Development, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney) in his review of *Contemporary Ceramic Art in Australia and New Zealand*, by Janet Mansfield;

"Janet Mansfield is one of the best known figures in the world of Australian ceramics. She is our foremost salt-glaze potter and the founder, proprietor and editor of *Ceramics; Art and Perception* which since its beginnings in 1990 has become one of the most admired ceramics journals in the world. She also operates a dealer gallery space devoted to one-person and thematic ceramic exhibitions at the *Ceramic Art Gallery* in Paddington."

A previous editor of *Pottery in Australia* for many years, she is also the author of *Modern Australian Ceramics* (1988) and *Salt Glaze Ceramics* (1991). Through international connections built up by her frequent travels and contributions to overseas ceramics events, she is au fait with claywork on the world scene. *Fire-Up Gulgong* held in 1993, and *ClaySculpt Gulgong*, 1995 were amazing international events conceived and organised by Mansfield on her Gulgong property.

The span of material from all over the world in *Ceramics; Technical* is a continual reminder of both the universality and the diversity of approaches to clay. The magazine is a pleasure to handle: quality paper, lavish use of colour photographs and a clear, attractive layout. The articles are nicely distinct, uninterrupted by distractions. The advertisements too are colourful, relevant and well presented, so although these are at the back of the publication, the advertisers are not disadvantaged. They advertise products, equipment, events, books, claynet and videos.

Many New Zealand potters will be familiar with *Ceramics; Art and Perception*, which has been very well received four times each year. Where it has the emphasis on pots and potters, *Ceramics; Technical* biannually focuses more on processes, materials and equipment including electronics.

Topics in the first issue are wide ranging: porcelain and the use of metallic salts; design with computermedia; forming processes including tableware, semi-industrial techniques and slipcasting; slips, colour, salt and soda; wood kiln, pottery wheel for the disabled, and more. Three of the eighteen articles in the 120 pages deal with computers, their potential for designing and the Internet and its uses.

The quirkiest contribution is the *Gulgong Racer* - a **Frederick Olsen** wood kiln which he built at Gulgong to answer his own question, "Can a kiln be sculpture?...Can it have tyres, hub caps, lights and one big tuned exhaust system?"

This new Australian, but international magazine, *Ceramics; Technical*, will be a particularly valuable acquisition for all public libraries, pottery groups and clubs. Offering a continual variety of up-to-date information, it should appeal as well to thoughtful individuals interested in solutions to problems, new slants on clay in all its states, and the endless possibilities for the ceramist today. It has made an impressive beginning.

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35 William Street  
Paddington, NSW  
Australia  
NZ\$18, or NZ\$40 annual subscription (2 issues)  
including airmail postage



# China Exchange

Theresa Sjoquist, Whangarei

"I'm sitting in a DC10 just out of Djakarta beside **Mark Brockie**. Neither of us are sure what has become of **Peter Alger** who didn't board the plane winging its way north to Beijing."

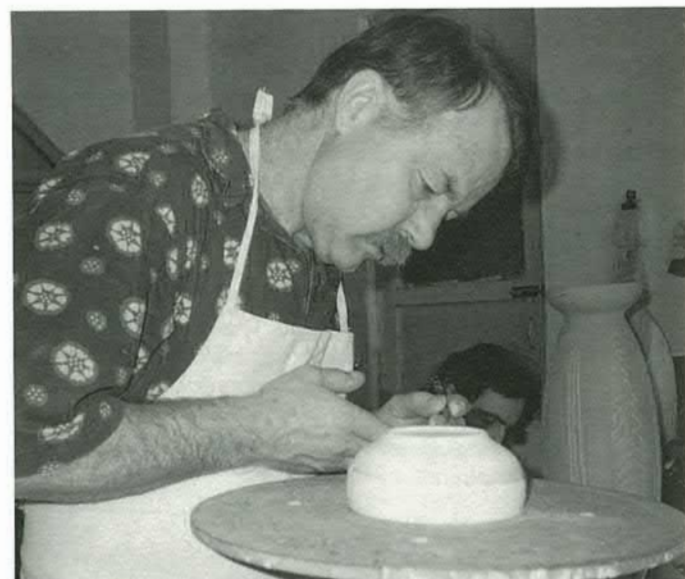
This excerpt from **Greg Barron's** diary continues. "It will create difficulties in China for all concerned if we are separated."

After being diverted to Hong Kong, Peter showed up in Beijing the following day, apparently none the worse for having slept in Hong Kong airport. It was a trying start to the enthusiastically anticipated exchange between potters of the *Northland Craft Trust (NCT)* in Whangarei and those of the *Science and Research Institute of the Zichuan Pottery and Porcelain factory (SRIZPP)* in Shandong Province.

Mark, Greg and Peter took advantage of the exchange opportunity initiated in 1992 during a visit to New Zealand by **Lu Bo**, a noted Chinese sculptor who was here to build a memorial for **Rewi Alley**. Lu Bo's husband, **Bang Zhen**, an eminent Chinese painter, was one of Rewi Alley's adopted sons.



Peter Alger demonstrates his throwing skills in China



Greg Barron does some turning .....  
and Mark Brockie adds texture



Street breakfast in Qufu - home of Confucius

and many small dishes of spicy pickles, plus several cups of ever-present green tea. Some of the more alien dishes offered during their sojourn included deep fried grasshoppers, whole turtle soup, chicken soup which sported the claws and head of the fowl and a variety of unusual fungi.

"Food is a special thing to be enjoyed in China," said Peter, "and there seems to be plenty of it."

While in Beijing, Greg, Peter and Mark were shown the magnificent Forbidden City and the Great Wall. They were also taken to two exhibitions, one being at the *September Gallery* where they saw samples of pottery. The other was an exhibition of Women's Art held at the *China Art Gallery*. This display consisted mostly of paintings and sculpture, including a few works each from Zhang Deidi and Lu Bo.

At midnight on September 20 our potters caught a train to Shandong Province and the city of Zibo, a journey of 11 hours. Here the trio's escort included **He Yan**, an artist and director of the *SRIZPP* factory. At last our potters would see pots being made.

Zibo's main industry is the production of pottery and porcelain. Of the more than two million residents, hundreds of thousands work in some way at pottery production. The concentration of this industry in the city makes sense, with the immediate environs providing not only immense clay deposits, but also granite for glazes and coal for firing.

The enormous number of factories was beyond belief for the Kiwis. They were accommodated in a small pottery factory from where they could see another factory next door, a full acre stacked

Mark and Peter see a rim applied to a planter



with large garden planters, upside-down, three high. Seven tall chimneys for coal-fired kilns dominated the acre.

Our potters travelled every day to *SRIZPP* to observe the processes of the Chinese industry. Modern pottery and porcelain in Zibo is almost all machine produced. The Kiwis saw only one wheel which was operated by a middle-aged man. They were shown slip-casting, jigger and jollying, large planters being press-moulded and the production of sculptured lions towering 2.7m high.

The operation is enormous with hundreds of people working. Clay is processed by the tonne with modern ball mills and filter presses. Most work is fired in giant coal-fueled kilns which produce a lot of smoke, but some gas firing is also done. A continuous firing tunnel kiln was also in use.

A line of mugs produced is exported to America while other items go to Japan, Korea and a variety of European countries. One important department, devoted to experimentation and artistic endeavour, works in close co-operation with the Arts Department of the University.

In the centre of Zibo is a road known as "The Street of Building Materials", most of which are ceramic. It takes several minutes to drive the length of this street, both sides of which are lined with producers of building materials, including hand basins and baths, roofing and floor tiles, big planters and statues.



Loading planters for firing, Zibo factory

"Everything on the street was inexpensive," says Greg Barron. "I think the low prices are a real problem the Chinese need to address, and that Zibo's atmosphere is choked with fumes from the coal-fired kilns."

Peter Alger balances the view. "We in contrast have a very small marketplace and as a consequence everything is very expensive. Also, if New Zealand was as crowded as China, we'd have the same sort of pollution problem. Our population per square kilometre is very small so it's easier to hide the scale of our pollution. We're much less than clean green here."

One area in which cultural difference was very evident was that of toilets, a source of dismay for our potters. These consisted of little more than a slit in the floor over which they had to squat. Human excrement is used as fertiliser and flush toilets are rarely available except in modern hotels. Toilet paper isn't provided and travellers are recommended to carry it.

Now that China is more politically stable the Chinese are discovering that in terms of world markets they can no longer rest on the traditions of thousands of years. Exchange opportunities are thus actively sought with countries which can assist artists with sponsorship.

"They recognise the need for new ideas," said Greg, "and are keen to interact with others."



Mark, Peter and Greg with the Zibo Art School Principal

Having met **Yvonne Rust**, founder of the *NCT*, when Rust travelled to China a few years earlier, Lu Bo, sponsored by the Whangarei branch of the *New Zealand-China Friendship Society*, gave a series of pottery workshops at the *NCT*. It was then the idea for an artistic exchange between the two countries was suggested. Our potters started the exchange with their trip to China in September 1995.

Once the New Zealand potters were all in Beijing, they were shepherded around by a friendly young man named **Zhang Hu** who kept them walking, bussing, taxiing or travelling by rail in his efforts to educate them about China's capital city.

Peter Alger explains, "Zhang Hu's mother **Zhang Deidi**, is a famous Chinese sculptor. Her work adorns the four corners of the **Mao Tse-tung** memorial in magnificent Tianmen Square. Zhang Hu was the model she used for the child in the sculptures.

Utterly solicitous of the New Zealanders' comfort, the Chinese first discussed with them any plans that concerned them and ensured they were always certain of what was happening.

Breakfast in Beijing was the potters' first Chinese meal. It consisted of sweet sesame soup, tofu, vegetables, breads, eggs





Coal-fired kiln in Luoyang

The New Zealand potters were treated magnanimously wherever they visited and were asked to give a lecture at an art school in Zibo. A little nonplussed as to how they might achieve this, the trio agreed and were driven in a black Audi limousine to the school. They were met on the main steps by the principal, ushered into a room and introduced to notable staff members. Next came the lecture hall where 300-plus students cheered and clapped and stomped their feet, many touching the trio as they walked in. They were the first Westerners most of the students had seen.

The lecture started rather rockily through an interpreter who, though a teacher of English, was speaking the language with native English-speakers for the first time. The potters took turns with the microphone, but eventually it was Mark, the nearest to the students in age, to whom they directed their questions. They wanted to know what he did after he finished work and expressed huge interest in the nature of social life in New Zealand.

Greg was surprised to discover during this trip that, "although the western world learnt much of the craft of pottery from China, as craft it has been largely lost in the places we visited. This probably occurred as individuality was dissipated through political upheaval and mass production techniques. Most clay products are machine-made; we saw very few wheels during our entire trip although there were a few in Zhengzhou in Henan Province. The artist/potter movement in New Zealand would be of immense interest to the Chinese."

Peter Alger was also surprised to find relatively little wheel work. "One place," he said, "was producing Chun and copper red glazes and forms of the same quality as existed 2,000 years ago. This was the work that inspired us and the rest of the West. We were somewhat perplexed to discover most work was formed by other means - the wheel is not the god of ceramic art".

A fifteen hour train trip from Zibo saw the potters to Zhengzhou. They were invited to the *Art Academy* of Henan where Lu Bo works, where they talked with a number of other sculptors, although communication was difficult. In Luoyang, a small town nearby, they visited the *Ancient Museum*, where examples of Tang pottery were on display, "mostly sculptured animals with green and treacle coloured glazes freely applied and running".

Everywhere they went in China, Peter, Greg and Mark found something happening on the streets. People nodded to them as they moved about and Peter's big feet attracted bemused attention. He also came in for special attention because he was born under the sign of the Dragon, a particularly fortuitous sign in China.

The main "exchange" occurred at meals. The Chinese are very sociable and hospitable, so the potters found themselves obliged to eat, drink and be merry most evenings. More than encouraged, they were expected to perform with, and for their hosts to

the popular Karaoke entertainment found in many restaurants. Traffic rules went completely over their heads until they finally discovered that the biggest vehicle always has right of way. In Hunan they saw they saw a dead man lying in the middle of the road, the oranges he had carried rolling all around him. Given the crazy traffic it was easy to see how such an accident could occur, but the apparent indifference of the passing motorists, cyclists and pedestrians left a lasting impression on all three potters.

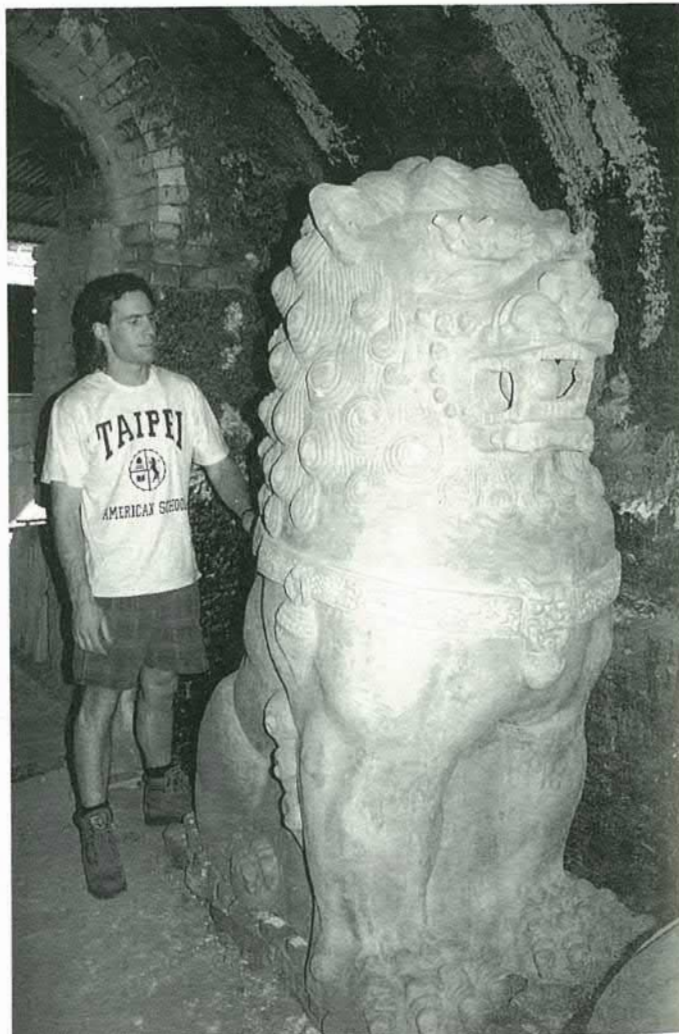
Each of them returned with strong impressions. For Greg it was the resilience of the people following China's recent political history and social turmoil. "Their wonderful hospitality, friendliness and generosity live on in my memory".

For Peter it was, "the numbers of people compared with New Zealand. We have fewer than four million, while Beijing alone has 13 million-plus. The culture impressed me too, the people are descended from those who have always been there. I enjoyed their hospitality".

Mark was impressed by the strength and energy of people who often work in what we would classify as poor conditions. "They maintain an atmosphere of happiness and can always find the means to be generous." He was shocked by the pollution in some areas, but found the people's rich spiritual beliefs a source of inspiration.

A return visit by three Chinese potters, **He Yan**, Director of the **SRIZPP**, **Zheng Yugui**, **SRIZPP** artist and **Fan Min**, Zibo artist, is anticipated in 1996.

Mark inside a Zibo coal-fired kiln inspecting a hand-built lion ready for firing



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# 37th NZSP National Exhibition Canterbury Museum

Selectors and Guest Exhibitors: John Crawford and Chris Weaver

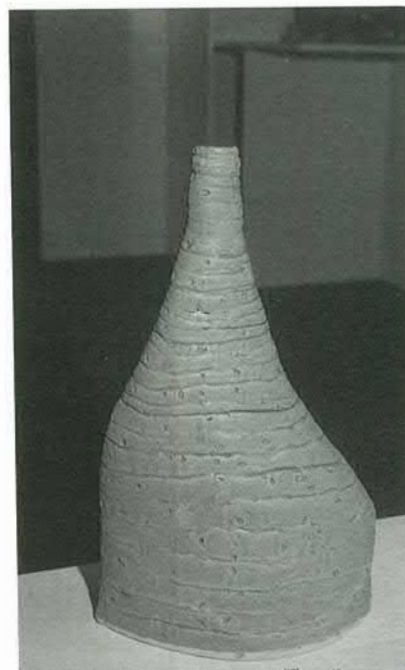
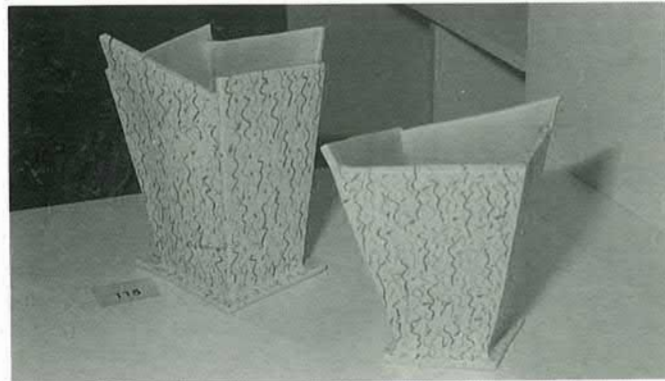
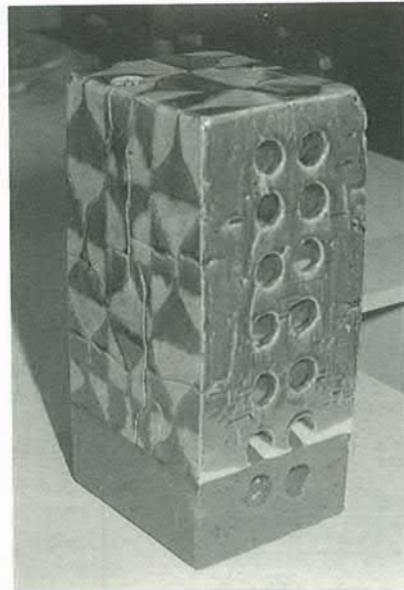
Photos by Colin Dash

## Left to Right:

Top: Philip Jarvis  
Katie Gold

Centre: Margaret Ryley  
Bev Rea

Bottom: Michael Higgs  
Josephine Waring  
John Crawford



# 37th NZSP National Exhibition

Barry Allom, Christchurch

The 37th National Exhibition of the *New Zealand Society of Potters* was opened in the new exhibition court at *Canterbury Museum* on 30th March by the Museum's new director, **Anthony Wright**.

The exhibition court is a large and impressive space with inherent problems. Because of the sheer size and height of the ceiling the 142 pots on display could easily have become lost. There are also two stone walls, previously exterior to the original building, to contend with. **Grant Banbury** and **Margaret Ryley** did a great job. With their use of lighting and by bringing the work away from the walls they achieved maximum impact as well as a degree of intimacy.

English salt-glaze potter **Jane Hamlyn** was guest demonstrator at the accompanying conference and although none of her work was included in the exhibition, a stand of salt-glaze formed the central hub, presided over by **Mirek Smisek's** superbly thrown, large scale, but understated branch pot. Mirek is arguably our best salt-glazer and certainly our most experienced, so his presence was especially significant.

Overall it was a highly sculptural show and full of surprises from the moment you arrived, welcomed by **Hilary Kerrod's** enigmatic shrug, to the moment you left confronted with death, death on a cross. The shadowy presence of **Ann Verdcourt's** *Icarus* watched over your shoulder like a hovering human angel throughout. **Madeleine Child's** garish, gravity-defying earthenware contrasted so completely with works such as **Nicky Jolly's** small, delightfully intuitive ridged dish.

**Tony Bond** explored his love themes on delicious hunks of clay, now adopting a more romantic approach by using brighter colours. Several potters extended the teapot boundaries. **Jo Beckett's** wittily restrained developments in the Canterbury **Luke Adams** tradition contrasted with selector **Chris Weaver's** stylish, contemporary examples.

Fellow selector **John Crawford's** fine upstanding salute to the relationships between animal and human were a highlight, a trilogy in muted earthy colours. Local Canterbury potter, **Gita Berzins'** distinctive and highly structural sculptures were meticulously made, but somehow lacked life. While **Josephine Waring's** carefully built-up *Termes* may not have had universal

appeal, it was a real potter's pot. **Mary Barraclough** added variety with her heart-less *Up and Running* statue; **Patti Meads** added elegance in her tall upstanding "Leaning Vessels".

The charm of **Andrew van der Putten's** little gem of a lipped bowl lay in its simple line and controlled, richly glazed interior. **Rick Rudd's** clean-cut, multi-fired pumice and clay boat forms were particularly evocative of our Pacific place.

**Lynda Harris'** earthy landscape installation provided a visual change of gear, while **Onlie Ong** added a cultural diversity with his enigmatic *Upside-down Bowl Form*. **Kari Shadwell** used lovely textures and the subtlest of subdued stained colours, as well as introducing an architectural element in her little lidded boxes and untitled sepulchral forms.

**Anne Powell's** delicate indigenous porcelain bowls and dishes were enlivened by the use of more colourful blue glaze. **David Brokenshire's** consistently lovely windblown, pulsating porcelain sheets are an asset to any exhibition. **Gayleen Morley** made her presence felt with a spontaneously informal, but generous barium turquoise overlaid with delicate "icing" crater glaze.

**Jeff Brown's** large, "angry" and gloomy *Lifeform* was an impressive statement in clay. Generous in scale, this incredibly detailed sexual piece showed wonderful control and contrasts in subdued colour, texture and surface.

Two groups of pots stood out. **Katie Gold's** rich and colourful clay constructions almost dominated the show, set as they were in front of a lit screen. Meticulously built, these stunning works were finely detailed and spectacularly glazed. "He and She" leaned with delightful nonchalance while the other two had a more formal presence.

**Darryl Frost's** group of clay and bronze trid-like tripods stole the show with their saw-toothed legs and beautifully inscribed, sharply fissured and richly glazed, elevated bodies. Technically impressive, they also had that extra dimension - an aesthetic anima or spiritual presence.

If this was the showcase for New Zealand ceramics now the *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* has become internationalised, some may have found it disappointing. Many of our top potters were not represented, but it was a balanced, dynamic collection of our contemporary pots and Canterbury people revelled in the chance to see them. ■

## Chelsea Art and Craft Community Workshops

The Chelsea Arts and Crafts Workshop is an independent, co-operative community facility run by unpaid volunteers.

Unlike clubs or societies restricted to financial members, it operates for the benefit of everyone and can accommodate 20 students at any one time, with the aim of giving them the chance to learn pottery techniques at an affordable level. Basic courses in handwork are covered in six two-hourly sessions during weekdays, with throwing classes in the weekends and eight-week children's after-school courses.

At the conclusion of a six week basic course, students familiar with the workshop practice and having gained some competence are encouraged to do their own thing. At present some 80 people are using the facilities every week.

The workshop facilities came into being when **Mac Treiving** approached the *Birkenhead Licensing Trust* with his idea. Retiring from years of setting up and monitoring government employment programmes and training schemes all over the country,

Mac wanted to fulfil a long-time vision of providing community art and craft workshops primarily for disadvantaged sections of society. These would include those on limited incomes such as DP beneficiaries, pensioners, one-income families, children and the unemployed.

The *Birkenhead Licensing Trust* supported the idea and supplied the venue. Mac started the workshops with a table, a bag of clay and few of his own pottery tools. Now there are eight wheels, three of them electric, two kilns, ten large work tables and all the ancillary tools and equipment needed for pottery making, decorating and firing.

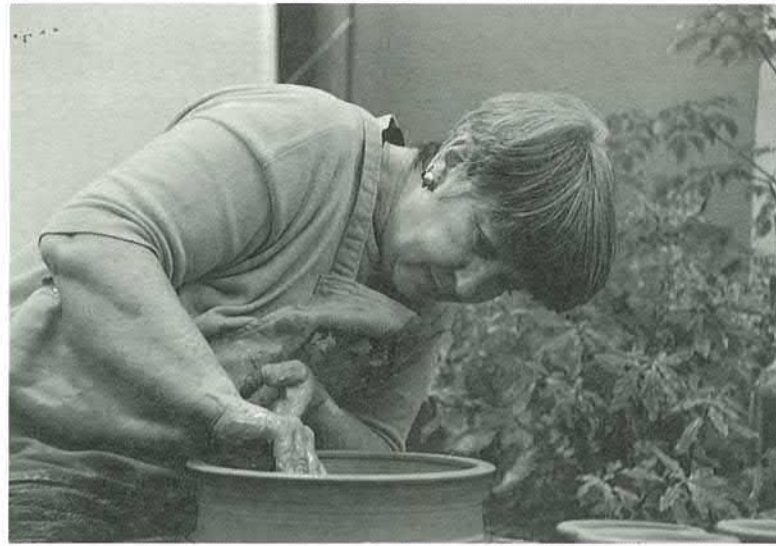
As a successful and ongoing community resource it is non-profit motivated and essentially self-funding, the only assistance being the premises provided by the *Birkenhead Licensing Trust* and strong administrative support from the *Birkenhead Community Facilities Trust*. Auckland's North Shore businesses help promote and sustain the resource. ■



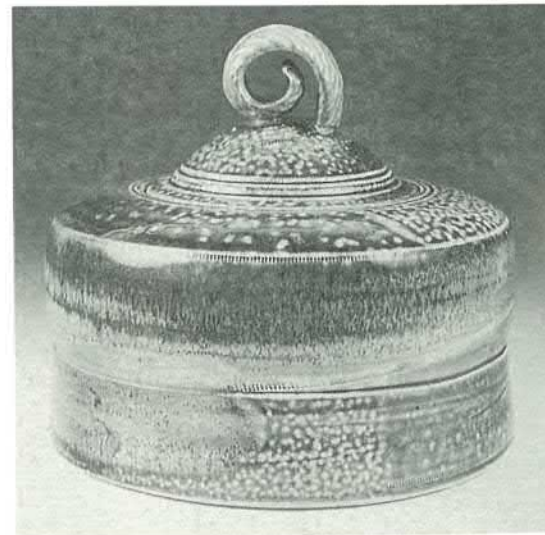
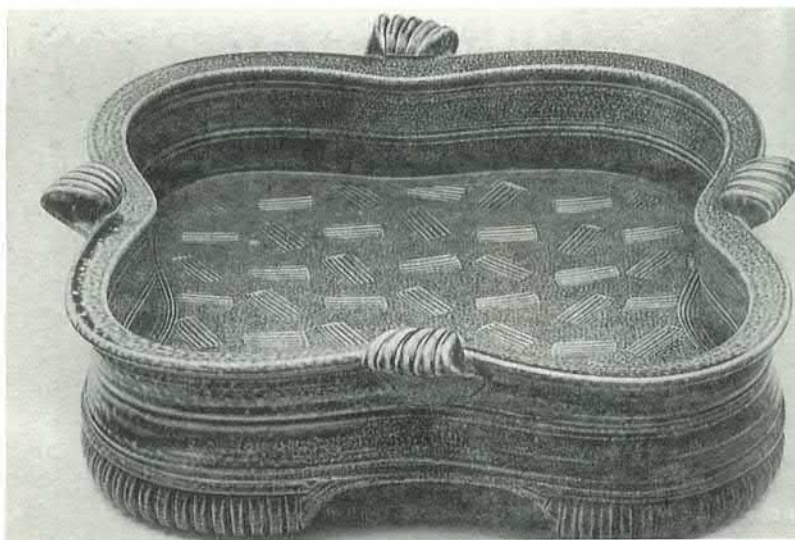
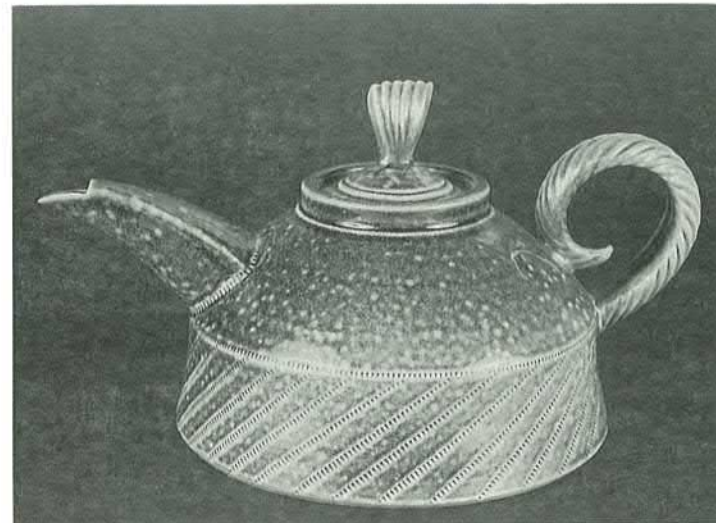
# NZSP Convention, Christchurch

## Canta Clay '96

Guest demonstrator from UK  
Jane Hamlyn, Salt-glaze potter  
Photos from slides of Jane's  
work in England



Photos from Canta Clay  
by Howard Williams



Jane Hamlyn's rapt audience



CantaClay organiser, Dave Barr



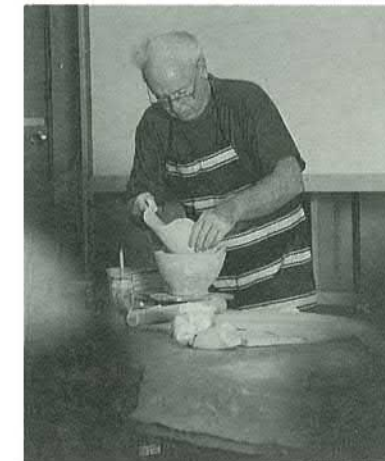
Firing on-site salt kiln



Demonstrator, Tony Bond



Bryce Stevens stokes the  
Hawaiian Drum Kiln



Demonstrator, David Brokenshire

George Halliday fired Jane's mugs...



.....and wedged her clay



Frederika Ersten and George



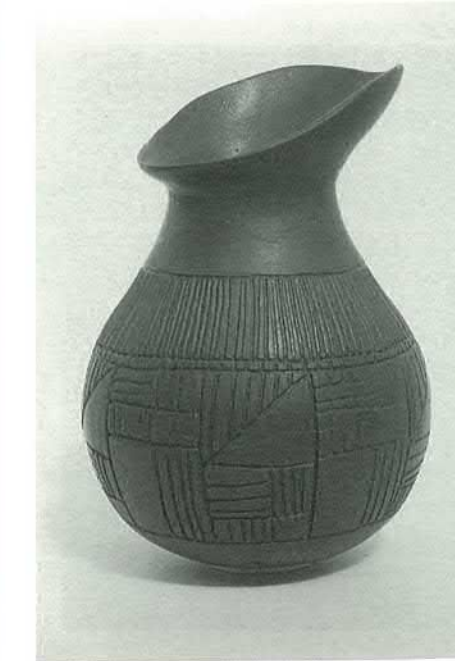


# Otago Potters Group Annual Exhibition 1995

Guest Potters: Hiromi Stewart, Christchurch and Jennifer Turnbull

Photos by Frank Hakkaart

Left to Right: Top: June Sullivan and Christine de Pennant. Middle: Hiromi Stewart, Lorna Isaac and Frank Hakkaart  
Bottom: Jennifer Turnbull, Mitsuko McQueen and Josephine Waring



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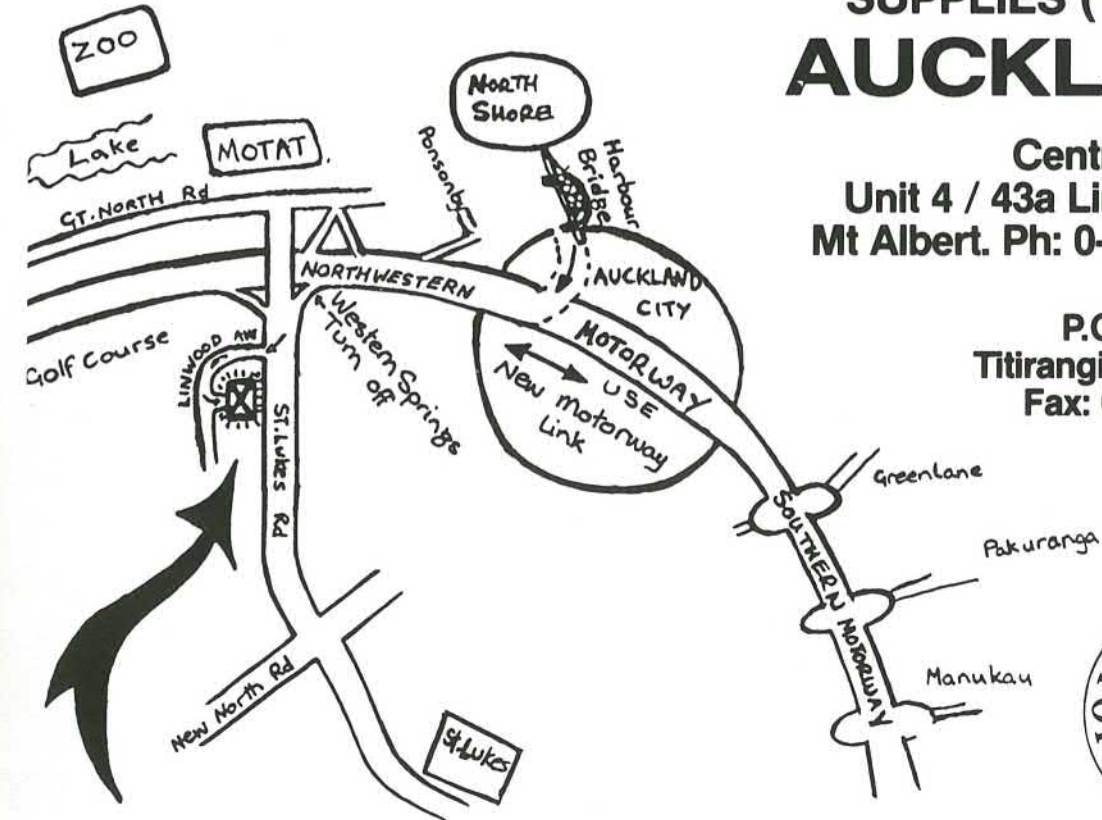
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# John Chalke

Moyra Elliott, Auckland



The 1996, 20th Anniversary, *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* exhibition judge, **John Chalke** of Canada, is a hard one to precisely put my finger on as far as his work is concerned.

He's a ceramic bigamist for one thing, and one with a multifarious past who has wandered numerous pottery cul-de-sacs in pursuit of a range of enticing goals - much as many of us have.

His experience covers areas like electric kiln reduction; pit firing and burnishing; ash; local clay researches; wood kilns; salt-glaze; lead glazed slipware; Egyptian paste with metal inlay; kiln sites far and near; firing by the sun using a magnifying TV lens; raku; enamels; tin strips with glaze as glue; bizarre reduction techniques; speed trials; early experimental use of ceramic fibre - all have born the focus of his attention for a while until tempted into another entanglement.

Two areas have principally held his attention most recently. *Kitchen Things* soda fired in a wood kiln is one. Informed by an attraction to North American and European salt-glaze ware, forms and decoration of 16th and 17th century English earthenware and French country earthenware, they are direct and eminently functional pieces; coffee and teapots, pie plates, pitchers and mugs. Making useful pots and trying to make better ones each time, offers him a sense of grounding, a reminder of a place in history and, more fundamentally, he still treasures the control and tempo of a kick wheel.

He also makes art, mostly plates or works of clay to hang on a wall. They've been called clay paintings, clay drawings, wall plates. His business card calls them "plates too good to eat off". He has referred to them in letters as *Art Plates*.

Finding the right words is indeed difficult. Some of these pieces might resemble plates in that they are round (often) and have a slight concavity, but the edges are often irregular, the glaze or slip coating roughish, cracked, even abrasive. They are not paintings in a true sense, form and image are entirely ceramic fused in yellow-white heat.

There are other pieces too, often for a wall, but also for tabletop or bench. Forms suggestive of wooden trenchers, spoons, sword handles, belt buckles, hasps, lids and potion bottles. Odd units of detritus such as is gathered over years of idiosyncratic fossicking and looking. Pieces scaled to the hand and the body, but always with layered, textured coverings - blistered, bubbled and detumescent, coloured quietly with subtle shifts of tone that need a long read, often contrasted with zones of intense hue or set against areas of focus that lead the eye into and around the work.

Most of Chalke's pieces are constructed by pressing clay into moulds which he casts. In the making, objects are sometimes altered, such as by breaking clay away from, or adding it to the rim, or cutting the object and reassembling it so its contour is not continuous, but slightly shifted. Thus works originating in the same mould become individual in form.

Then begins the quiet struggle to balance form, surface and image so each supports the others, none dominating. During the firing, colours change, glazes flow, erupt, spill into one another. What emerges may vary greatly or only slightly from the original concept, so an evaluative period is required. Every change in form, colour or surface sets up new relationships, and decisions need to be made as to whether these new relationships are the most effective for that piece. If not, then further glazing and firing must follow. Sometimes that means coating entire areas with glaze; other times minute details are added, such as a thin line of gold lustre to delineate a rim, or a touch of underglaze pencil to emphasise one edge of an image.

Building up a surface in successively fired layers results in a richness and depth not normally attainable with single glazing. Each layer is in turn partially hidden by a successive coat; painterly buried decisions suggestive of a **Degas** pastel or the still vibrant walls of Pompeii or a poisonous mushroom. Residues of earlier strata remain as traces, eruptions, deflecting and imposing upon subsequent ones.

One reviewer referred to these layers as containing "vestiges of palimpsests", however, "refire madness" is what Chalke prefers to call it. His use of these atypical coatings is one factor that has attracted much attention to his work. That, and his skills and experience as a workshop leader, conference moderator, speaker and writer. He once, famously, had a cross-Canada radio interview where he talked with a well-known radio personality in Toronto and taught and guided him through the business of throwing a pot, from his workshop in Calgary. The edited transcript made fascinating reading in a *Ceramics Monthly* of two or three years ago.

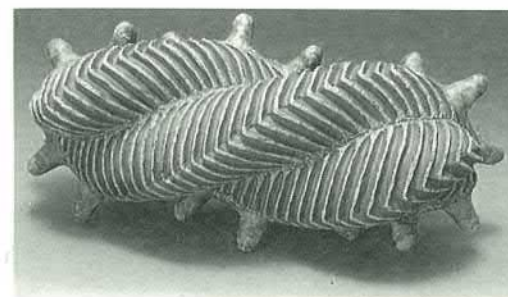
Chalke's titles; *We Three Cows*, *Regarde un Tray Bien*, *The Legend of the Lost Lemon Mine*, *Peering around the Stucco*, *Talking Alone*, disclose a waggish droll nature as well as a love for puns and playing around with the English language. However, while this reveals a sense of fun and humour there runs through his writing an underlying seriousness and dedication to what he does. He is one of the most lyrical of writers on subjects ceramic that I know of and his workshop at the *Auckland Studio Potters Centre* in Auckland, following the exhibition opening on July 25th, will be rewarding on many levels for all who attend, I am sure.

The exhibition he has chosen for the *20th Fletcher Challenge Award* displays love of pots and vessels, both traditional and contemporary. There is a variety of surface interest on many of the pieces and a fair sprinkling of sculpture including the figurative and the political. The narrative and the mythic are there together with some humour and occasionally whimsy. A likeable show with little that will baffle and lots to admire, enjoy and treasure. ■

#### Sources:

*Catalogue essay* by Barbara Tipton, 1988, *Habitat/Shaw Gallery*.  
*"Kitchen Things"*, *Ceramic Review*, 49, 1994  
*"Some Squirring Along the Way"*, *Ceramic Review*, 116, 1989  
*"John Chalke: Throwing on the Radio"*, *Ceramics Monthly*  
*"Surface Thoughts"*, by John Chalke, *Ceramics Monthly Portfolio*  
*"Five Snapshots-in-Progress of John Chalke"*, by Amy Gogarty, *American Ceramics*, Winter 1992-93  
*"The Alchemy Canister"* by John Chalke, *Studio Potter*, Dec, '95  
*Extracts from private writings.*

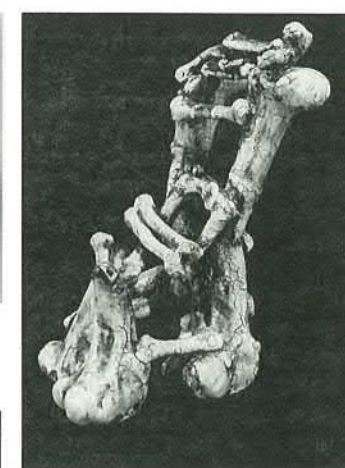
# Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award Entries



**Gary Ericson, USA**  
*Salsa Mysteriosa*  
 H 225, W 525, D 225mm



**Josie Warshaw, England**  
*Enclosed Egg*  
 H 90, W 440, D 350mm



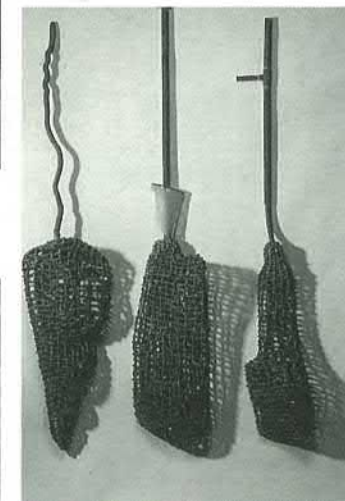
**John Britt, USA**  
*Neolithic Pyre*  
 H 250, D 150mm



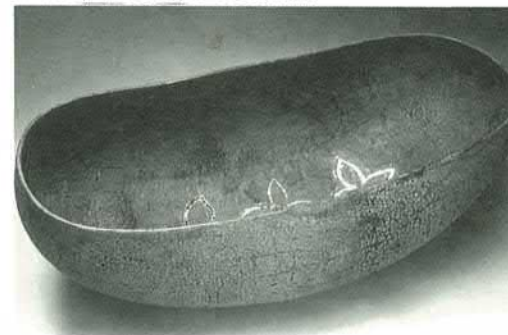
**Pekka Paikkari, Finland**  
*Over the Roofs 1995*  
 H 500, W 1500, D 1500mm



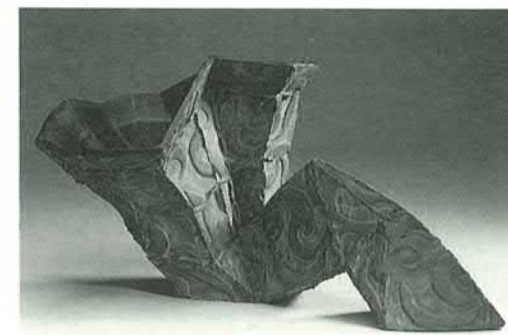
**Jane Dillon, USA**  
*Red / Green Jar / Tray*  
 H 400, W 250, D 450mm



**Phyllis Kudder-Sullivan, USA**  
*Enigma Variation 31*  
 H 1375, W 940, D 155mm



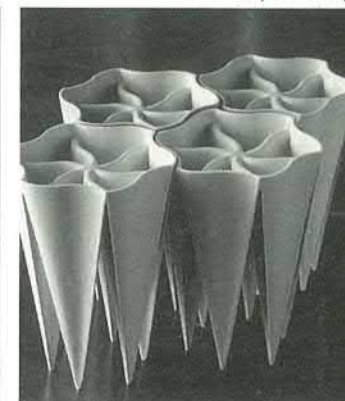
**Steve Heineman, Canada**  
*Untitled*  
 H 250, W 710, D 390mm



**Bev Gallop, Australia**  
*Vessel - a study in form and surface*  
 H 280, W 800, D 200mm



**Jae Won Lee, USA**  
*Indelible Recollection*  
 H 50, W 172, D 175mm



**Sasja Scherjon, Netherlands**  
*Crown / Vase*  
 H 300, W 210, D 210mm



**Johannes Peters, Germany**  
*Pot*  
 H 200, W 160mm



**Yasuhiko Ohsuga, Japan**  
*Fossil Man of Blossom*  
 H 550, W 443, D 255mm



# Too Much Too Thick Too Easy!

Brian Gartside has changed his address to Runciman Road, RD 2, Pukekohe, Auckland. His phone number is 09 238 2393, and his Email address 100232.2741@COMPUSERVE.COM

● I've never given much thought to WHY certain materials act in the way they do, but have to admit putting things in writing increases the desire to explain to myself - and to my readers - what actually happens. According to two friends with scientific backgrounds, crawling in glazes is caused mainly by two conditions.

● The first has to do with SHRINKAGE. Some glaze substances can be applied quite easily when suspended in water. They smooth out nicely when the bisque is dipped into the glaze, or when the glaze is applied by brush, trailer or by spraying. As the glaze coating dries, cracks can sometimes appear. This happens when there is a large proportion of clay in the glaze, particularly when it is ball clay. It must be something to do with materials consisting of very fine particles, because similar shrinking happens when large quantities of some other materials are used. In my experience 50% proportions of zinc oxide or manganese carbonate cause really excessive shrinking. It gives the appearance of cracked mud - as happens when it's been raining hard, followed by a few days of dry, hot weather causing puddles to dry out, or when a creek dries up in a drought. Hundreds of straight-sided platelets are left, curling up in the sun.

● The second condition has to do with SURFACE TENSION. Beads of mercury are the best example of exaggerated surface tension. There's no way mercury will act like a liquid once it leaves the bottle - it's in hundreds of little shiny metallic balls that are impossible to pick up. For some reason, probably electrical, there are molecules which prefer to react with each other rather than the surface on which they rest.

● It seems in both shrinking and beading there is a reluctance for particles to relate to the surface on which - to begin with - they appear to have perfect contact. They seem much more comfortable relating to each other and this is further encouraged by applying the glaze thickly.

● About four years ago I met **John Conrad** from San Diego who has written several books on glazing, including *Ceramic Formulas: The Complete Compendium*. I was quite overawed by his prolific writing and wide knowledge, and was hesitant to broach the topic of my extremely simplified method of using equal quantities of raw materials to create glaze surfaces. I was surprised and honoured when he said he would share with me a deep glaze secret as long as I didn't tell anyone else! I agreed to this condition. The secret was, that to add 50% tin oxide to any glaze would always produce a good crawling surface. Months later I realised he was joking, when I got around to trying his suggestion. The truth is one would need to take out a mortgage to be able to afford it. The truth is also, that it really does produce the most wonderful crawling/shrinking glaze. So there we are - I break my promise not to tell, and anyone reading this has a guaranteed method of obtaining a fabulous surface.

● In my search for clarity of thinking about pottery basics I found myself eliminating virtually every tool and technique - none of them were essential. All I needed were my hands, a spade and a box of matches (maybe an axe as a luxury). In terms of basic knowledge of CLAY, I came over the years, to realise I really needed an intimate feeling for the behaviour of WATER.

● Why does no one ever include the amount of water in a glaze recipe? It is the most common ingredient and control of the water content can make all the difference to the quality of a glaze. Nowhere is this more important than in the creation of crawling glazes.

● I wonder if human beings are born with an instinct for caution? Being careful is what most of us like to be. Unfortunately this leads us to think there are things we can't or shouldn't do. The very idea of using glaze materials in amounts up to 50% is unthinkable - except for feldspar related materials.

● The easiest way to obtain crawl-type surfaces is to add ZINC OXIDE, TITANIUM OXIDE, TIN OXIDE, MAGNESIUM CARBONATE (light), TALC, or BALL CLAY, in 50% amounts to other materials or just ANY GLAZE!

● However, any of these mixtures must be applied THICKLY - and I mean THICKLY - at least 6mm is best! It may be necessary to solve a few problems with vertical surfaces and gravity, I should add!

● The application of this mixture can be by any convenient method. I find making up smaller amounts and dribbling or pouring is best for my designs. The mixture can be applied onto bisque or over another glaze, or over a previously fired glaze. Further subtleties can be developed by applying a crawl glaze over a normal fluid glaze or by experimenting with different water content and slight variations to the 50/50 rule.

● Hard edge and soft edge crawls can be obtained by firing at various temperatures or being flexible about the 50% amounts.

## RECIPES

Glazes fire between 1200 and 1300°C. USE THICKLY. Amounts in volumes - spoons, jugs, buckets or handfuls.

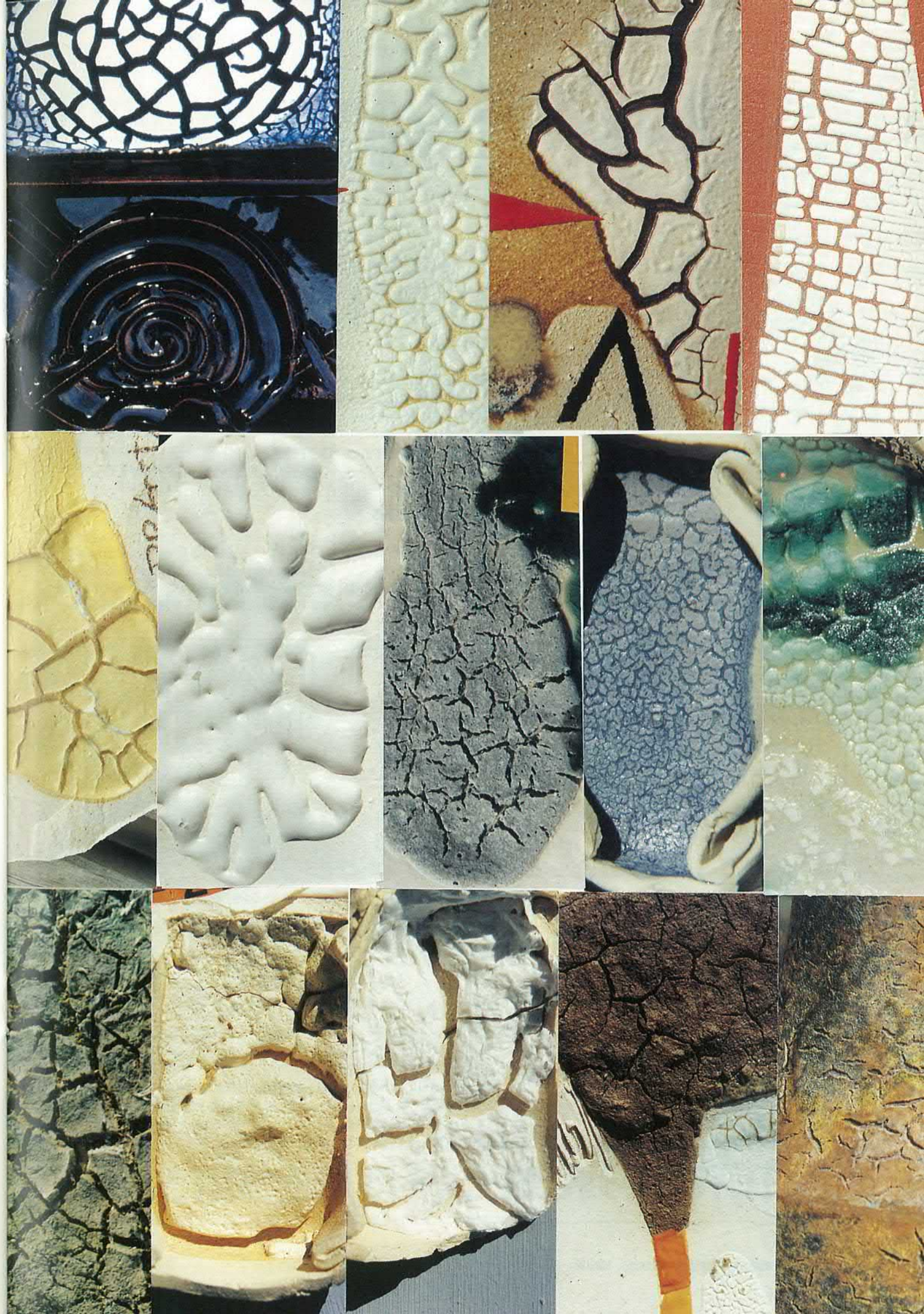
Zinc Oxide 50: Nepheline Syenite 50  
Ball Clay 50: Wood Ash 50  
Titanium Oxide (or Rutile) 50: Any stoneware glaze 50  
Grolleg 50: Any stoneware glaze 50  
Tin Oxide 50: Any earthenware glaze 50  
Magnesium Carbonate (light) 66: Any stoneware glaze 33  
Magnesium Carbonate (light) 66: Nepheline Syenite 33

● Piling up dry feldspar-like materials on flat surfaces often produces crawling in the region of 1260°C  
● Adding oxides and stains yields endless variations.

This article has also been published in *Ceramic Review, UK* ■

## Illustrations by Brian Gartside, opposite:

Top Row: Zinc Oxide/Nepheline Syenite  
Left to right: poured, sprayed, sprayed, brushed  
Centre Row, Left to Right:  
Titanium Dioxide/Stoneware Glaze.  
Tin Oxide/Stoneware Glaze. Magnesium Carbonate/Soda Feldspar. Magnesium Carbonate/Earthenware Clear Glaze/Cobalt. Magnesium Carbonate/Earthenware Clear Glaze/Copper.  
Bottom Row, Left to Right:  
Dried out Swamp Clay. Rutile/Stoneware Glaze. Grolleg/Earthenware Glaze. Ball Clay/Wood Ash. Grolleg/Wood Ash.







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## Profile

### Suzanne Butson, Dunedin

Honours Student,

Photos by Suzanne Butson

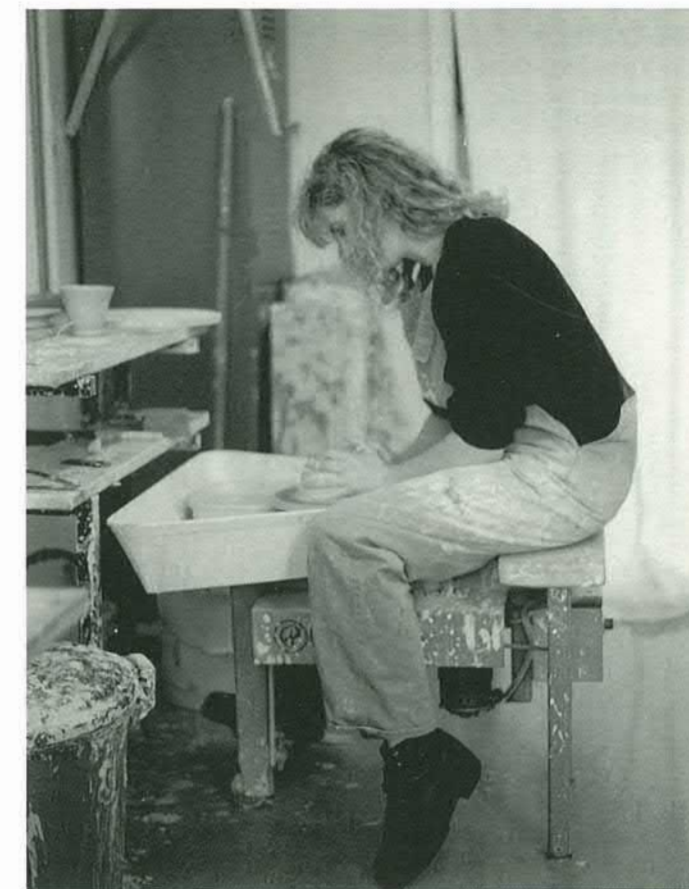
During 1985 I undertook an Honours year of the *Diploma of Fine Arts* at Otago Polytechnic School of Art in Dunedin. This 4th year of study was invaluable, allowing for the accumulation of skills in a supportive environment, with excellent facilities.

Primarily I developed a series of vertical vase-like pieces, though I also produced a number of smaller ceramics - soup tureens, bowls and cups and saucers. I explored a variety of clays, glazes, stains and lustres, with a combination of thrown, hand-built and extruded components. Pieces were usually fired two or three times.

My ceramics reflect various personal points of query. I believe in the limitless quality of clay to realise my aesthetic needs. I found myself repeatedly pushing the clay to conform to my advancing expectations, often exhausting both myself and the clay.

At these times I found it refreshing to overlook enquiry, and simply construct forms. In retrospect, it is possible that this exploration with form is the basis of my expectations.

The culmination of the Honours year of study is each student's individual exhibition. I shared the gallery space with Honours painting student, **Shaun Oughton**. *Trying for Transcendence* was recently held in the *Carnegie Gallery* in Dunedin.

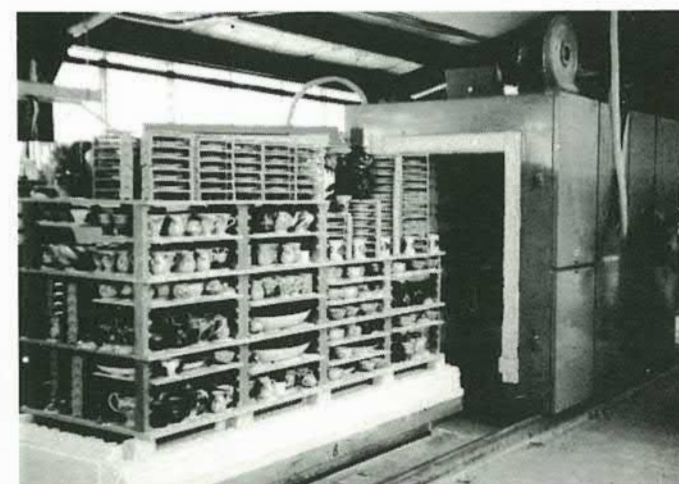


Suzanne Butson at work in her workshop

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# Suzanne Butson

4th Year Honours Student  
Diploma of Fine Arts  
Otago Polytechnic School of Art, Dunedin



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Photographs by Bob Heatherbell



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*The Committee*



Guest Exhibitor : Christine Bell Pearson



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Royce McGlashen  
*Galaxy*



Margaret Woodhead



Erika Aupperle  
*Helmet*



Cathy Durham



Margie Pope



Paul Laird  
*Blue Dog*



Chris Conroy  
*Akio-lights*



Emily Batt  
*Le Bomb*



# Robyn Stewart

Salamander Gallery, Christchurch

Photos : Howard Williams



Healing Stone



Maui



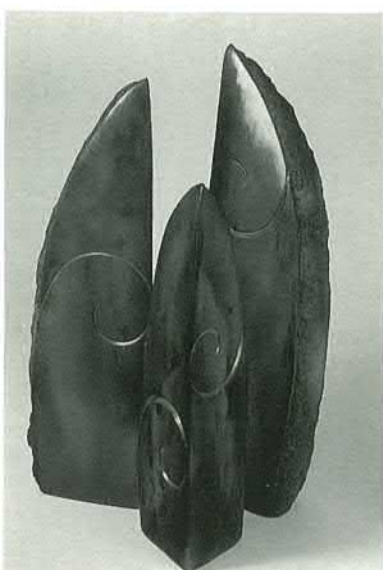
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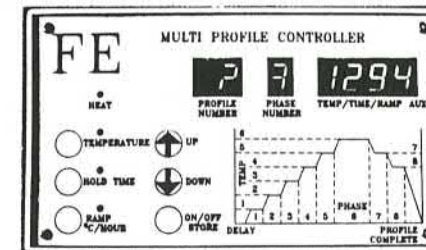
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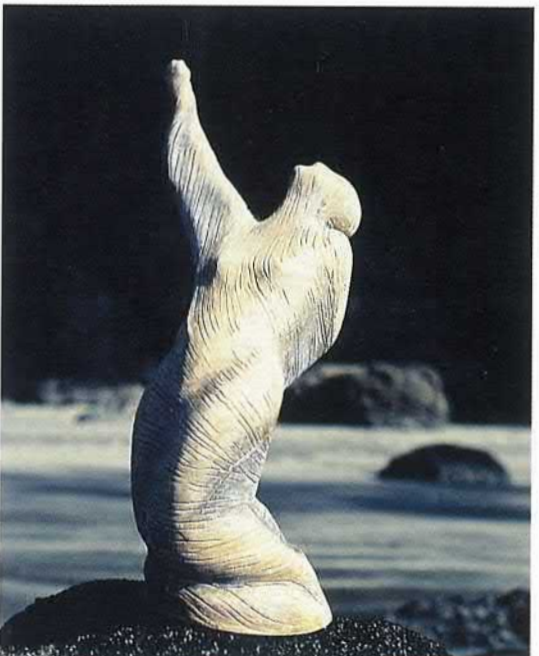
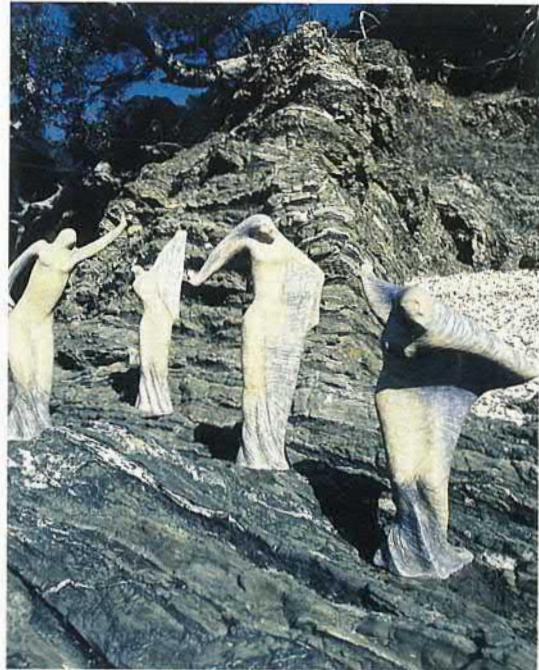
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# Terri Quinn, Ceramic Sculptor

Peter Quinn, Thames

Photos by Peter Quinn



"I'd always admired potters, but pottery was never something I thought I could do myself."

This was **Terri Quinn's** opinion when, in 1987, she entered *Nelson Polytechnic* to study Craft Design for the next four years, intent on a career in Interior Design. However, in her second year, after exploring jewellery, wood and textiles she decided to choose ceramics as aid to understanding form and continued on to major in the medium. "I found I really enjoyed it - it just seemed to be my thing."

After completing the *Polytechnic* course in Nelson, Terri returned to her home town of Westport on the South Island's West Coast and took up an offer to work as artist-in-residence at the *Buller High School*. Here she was given access to equipment and a kiln in exchange for feedback with the school's art students.

About this time Terri's work was exhibited alongside other West Coast artists, during the *Southern Regional Arts Council* conference, held in Westport that year. Because of a very fortunate break she was invited by **Sue Wilson** of the *Eastern Southland Gallery* in Gore to contribute work to their Off-Centre exhibition. This touring exhibition was made up of 27 women artists working in various media, living outside the urban areas of the South Island. It was organised in honour of the *1993 Centennial of Women's Suffrage* in New Zealand.

As the only artist working in clay amongst the exhibitors, Terri's work received favourable exposure and as a consequence she was approached to supply the *Applied Arts Gallery* in Christchurch. This has continued to be an ongoing outlet for her work.

Now living in Thames, in the North Island and with a young

family, her output is limited, but she also manages to supply a local gallery in the town.

"I had a background in dancing - as a child I studied classical and later contemporary and jazz ballet - and I tried to transfer this, to capture the essence of movement, into my sculptures by quite literally using the human form, particularly the figures of female dancers.

"The inspiration for the surface treatment comes from where I was on the West Coast; the landscapes, the rock forms, the sea and sky - just the ruggedness of the West Coast."

Terri achieves this by using a groggy Nelson clay and with a variety of instruments, scratches into the surface of her forms before bisque firing to 900°C. On the bisque she then applies a wash of rutile to highlight areas and cobalt blue stain or red iron oxide in the shadow areas. Over this she will apply an alkaline glaze and sometimes flick on more rutile, giving a mottled effect to the glaze. This adds colour and depth to the overall look.

The piece is then fired to stoneware temperature, between 1270 and 1280°C. Occasionally she will lightly sand back the surface of a fired piece to create a raw, earthier effect, giving as natural a feeling as possible to the finished sculpture.

Although her sculptures are purchased for placement in the home, the accompanying photographs show how strongly the pieces integrate with the environment they have been inspired from.

"I've always wanted my work to be accessible to people, not really something that can only be displayed inside the walls of a gallery. I want them to be simple things people can relate to and feel comfortable having close, and like having around them. ■



# The Mug Show

## Lopdell House, Titirangi

Moyra Elliott, Auckland

Photos by Beth Sergeant



Nicky Jolly, "Splash Cup"

This is a mixed media exhibition and competition held annually. The judge does not select the show - anything entered is shown - but does select a number of prizes in a variety of categories.

Anything that constitutes a mug can be entered. Clay, glass and metal obviously, but also fibre, stone, bone, shell, found objects and even cakes!

Selecting awards from such variety presented me, as the 1995 judge, with fewer problems than I expected because the same parameters of craftsmanship and concept could be applied to all the works submitted.

Most pieces were presented as objects without sculptural concerns. Few really toyed with the "idea" of a mug, to challenge me that way. Clay entries were the most numerous and satisfying and most of these were straightforward renditions of functional or decorative mugs. Most were well made and some were real flyers.

Prizes for mugs in materials other than clay included a gum leaf mug - GUM <-> MUG (gettit?) - that matched the delicacy of material with its form, and a cake that could be construed as a florally embellished nuclear cooling tower or a corseted figure. There was a found-object assemblage, a tongue-in-cheek tear-jerker of such overwhelming sentimentality it had to be a leg-pull (or did it? - I wondered later, but by then I had given it a prize!) and a translucently seductive cast-glass cup form that repelled by its interior containment of rows of spikes.

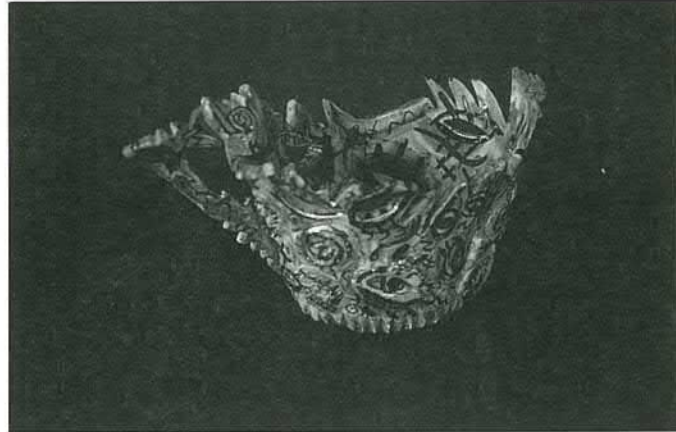
Clay prizes included: *America's Cup* by Madeleine Child of Dunedin. This was awarded Judge's Choice for its topicality and witty reference to a national icon without telling me that I have to smile now, a fresh approach to the idea of a mug, in that the absence of matter was defined by matter. Line and plane described its volume - what was not said became all important. These concerns were coupled with the fact that it was skilfully made with a very deft hand that made light of its expertise.

The award for Waitakere City Artist went to May Loh for *Private Eye* and *Jester*. I enjoy the extreme statement of any sort and liked both submissions from this entrant; *Jester* for the consistent design involved where surface decoration and the particulars of the form melded perfectly with the title. The other, *Private Eye*, went over the top with a surface rendering that still sat well with the form in a way that didn't take over completely, and spoke of the rituals involved with the idea of a cup in a less than obvious manner. May Loh comes from a Hobby Ceramics background which she found too confining as to form, so took a

few classes on making, at the Auckland Studio Potters Centre in Onehunga.

A Merit was given to Nicky Jolly for *Splash Cup*, a cup and saucer set that displayed a casual yet expert handling of the medium. It allowed the process to show in a relaxed way that veiled the skill and understanding involved, together with a surface treatment thoroughly consistent with this attitude.

The other clay prize was for *Best Domestic* and went equally

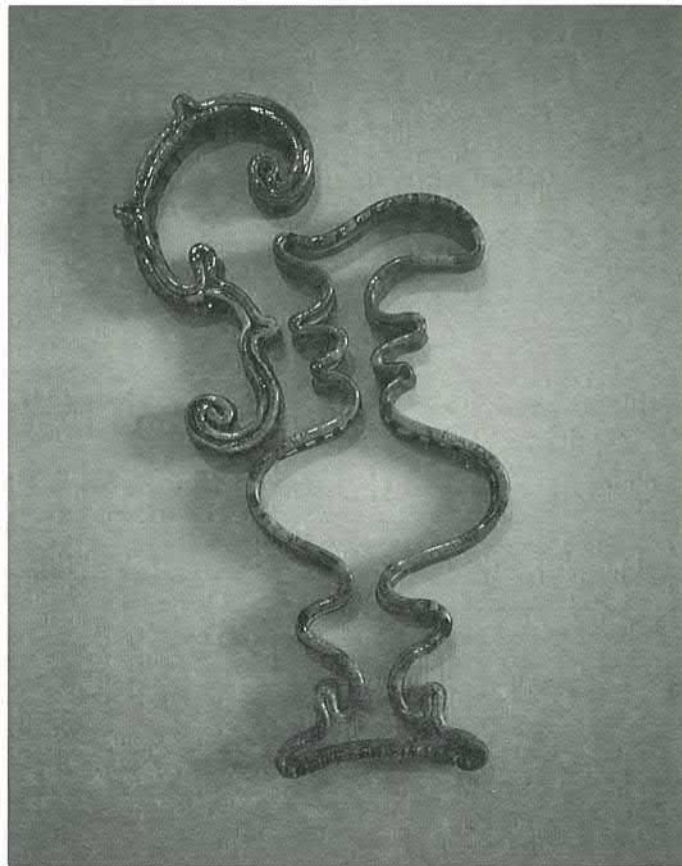


May Loh, "Private Eye"

to Stephen Bradbourne and Lee LeGrice for cups that served their functional intent well, being well-made and finished without fuss. Their visual and tactile elements were consistent with the enjoyment of a hot brown(ish) drink. Both entries' pedigrees and ancestry shone through clearly, but they were comfortable within their time-honoured traditions and bore enough individuality to lift them from the purely generic.

This theme show is well supported by Waitakere City with a wide range of possible prizes (eight in all) and takes place in Lopdell House, the City's lively arts centre in Titirangi each October/November.

Madeleine Child, "America's Cup"



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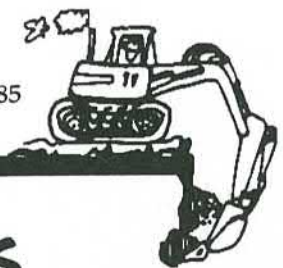
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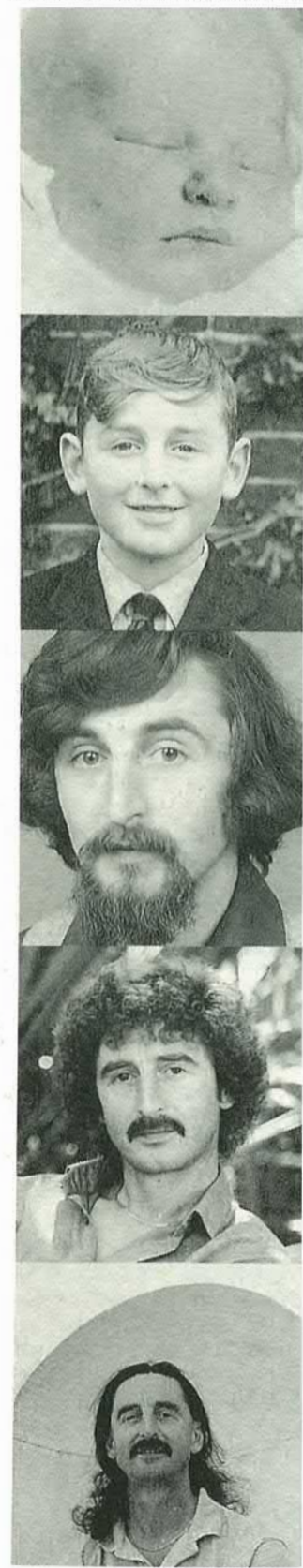


# The Ceramic Chameleon

## Rick Rudd in Review

John Parker, Auckland

Photos from 1949 to 1996



I first met **Rick** in 1977. I had just returned from completing my MA Degree at the *Royal College of Art* in London and I was Director of the *Auckland Studio Potters Centre* at Onehunga. We had advertised for an unwanted slide projector for the classes and I arrived at a flat in Sentinel Road, Herne Bay to pick up the gift. The place was dripping in Art Deco which was just beginning to be the rage. I felt as if I had found a soul mate. He didn't fit into the classic New Zealand mould of "Kiwi Potter". It was the same feeling I had had when meeting **Sally Vinson** after she arrived here in the early seventies, although then I had no OE or actual experience of London, to fully explain my feelings.

Here was someone like my friends in London who shared a studio workshop under a railway arch at Kings Cross Station. Rick also worked in a city, had a workshop in a commercial space in Summer Street, Ponsonby (when most potters had backyard workshops where they lived) and used an electric kiln in the halcyon days of diesel before even the use of gas was widespread. Like Sally, he also came from an art school background.

I have followed his career through all its ups and downs and we remain the most honest and severe critics and collectors of each other's work.

A theme which runs through Rick's life is that of *The Survivor*. His first work was entirely commercial. He was being a potter purely to earn money. He had no pretensions about having anything to say in clay. His work could have been made in papier mache or Fimo. For the craftshop/tourist market he produced vast quantities of a production line range of little stoneware kiwis, whales, sheep, mice etc, as well as a limited number of one-off pieces. Animals inevitably gave rise to the Noah's Ark series with pairs of many species crowded onto decking. The style was cartoon-like and fun and had a wide age appeal. His clay art school background really surfaced again with the larger mandrill and gorilla sculptured figures. A submarine circling a very ceramic Rangitoto for a *Peter Webb Gallery* Group Exhibition was a highlight of this period along with the beginnings of the wavy line series of pots, all made in stoneware.

However his serious work in ceramics really began with a weekend school on raku by **Mary Burr** and **Una** and **Frank Sharpley**, followed by a workshop with visiting Australian potter **Joan Campbell** who was very much part of the **Paul Soldner** school. The American Soldner was the main driving force in changing the way raku was perceived from being a period Japanese party trick into a significant means of twentieth century expression.

For Rick it was a creative watershed. The first major change. The animals and the stoneware were abandoned for a full time commitment to the process of raku. He certainly has been highly influential in popularising raku here. He has taught widely and introduced his handbuilding/forming methods of coiling, pinching and scraping, to a wider following. Handbuilding was often considered to be second rate to wheel thrown ware and the preserve of the beginner. Many reputable "How To" books feature ponderous coiling procedures of equally-sized wall-thickness coils which allow the thinking potter to go nowhere.

Rick's method of coiling, pinching and scraping is rather like throwing and turning at the same time in slow motion. He usually works on a series of pieces, which allows drying time to engender a flow of ideas to come from the work. The serial nature of his work has always been there in the most successful pieces. His interests have been form and shape and the dynamics of balance and collapse. There are obvious **Hans Coper** influences to some of the work with wineglass stems fitting into bases, but there are also highly original ideas like the *Moebius Strip* handle which continues to pervade his later work.

Most of Rick's work since abandoning the animals has been containers, except for some Deco-ish raku wall plaques of classic Hollywood icons like **Mickey Mouse** and **Marilyn Monroe** attached on circles of black glass. All the raku pieces were consciously numbered.

There was an unfortunate excursion into "Sculpture" which I never fully understood, where metal inserts were added to building block-type raku pieces. It seemed to me mock sculpture and betrayed a lack of confidence in this usually totally self-confident potter. It seemed to be that unexplained, but age-old need for a "craftsperson" to aspire to being an "artist" within the Fine Arts hierarchy, despite Rick holding an elevated kudos as an applied artist. He was already well respected and had won the *Fletcher Brownbuilt Award*.

Throughout his life he has stage-managed his career. The second major change was a conscious decision to leave raku behind. By its very spontaneous nature, raku is porous, brittle and fragile, but you could get away with murder, shape-wise. The expressive and often structurally complicated forms, successful in the relatively low firing temperature of the raku kiln would not survive the rigours of high firing where the clay was nearing vitrification point. The beauty of raku is that form-wise you get out of the kiln what you put in. The clay never approaches vitrification so no form change happens.



Raku fired box, 1981

The black of the clay achieved by smoking (entrapping carbon in the pores of the clay) gave a seductively matt black glaze-like texture while maintaining all the sharpness of the making process. Most of the raku was left largely unglazed. The purity of the forms were shown off to their best advantage. Minimal use was made of a shiny black or a classic raku white crackle glaze, usually in interiors. Of course there were excursions into the commercial primary yellow and red glazes to complement the black, but these were rare.

Rick has always been conscious of making work specifically to enter Award offering competitions. Solo exhibitions have been similarly planned according to specific rules and the work was made to fit within the initial concept, but allowing for experimental input along the way. His best work came out of this process. Absolute freedom comes from total control. The fewer the variables, the more that can be said.

Adapting to his environment, Rick moved from his Herne Bay flat, to an Epsom location working in his carport and then to buy his first property, a bach on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula. With customary zeal he rebuilt parts of the house making the place very liveable, and on-sold for the deposit on a more major home in the suburb of Birkdale. The fern garden, which has since become a Rudd Trademark, flourished, but when the mortgage became untenable *The Survivor* in him surfaced again and he decided to make the major change of moving all the way down country to the smaller city of Wanganui, where house prices and the cost of living were very much lower than in Auckland. A new fern garden was begun and slowly the old house has been modified into a working studio/home. Because of his techniques of handbuilding, Rick has always needed very little work space. He is orderly and fanatically tidy. His favourite place of work is the kitchen table with his portable television always going nearby.

His tastes changed. The passion for Art Deco was supplanted by a passion for

a box collection. Ceramic boxes have always been things for potters to collect, but Rick has made an institution of himself with his *Rick Rudd Box Collection*, complete with a catalogue and a major display of them at the *Sergeant Gallery* in Wanganui.

The box fetish was re-introduced into his own work in the form of eroded lidded container forms which were contrived manipulations of archaeological finds dug up from some fictitious culture of the past. *The Survivor* in him however still maintained a broad and butter line of smaller, more affordable wavy line raku boxes.

Until the end of raku, the manipulation



Raku fired Vessel, 1992

of form was his primary concern. Glazes were not a major feature of his work. An Arts Council Grant in 1993 to work on glazes, a change of firing temperature and a much larger kiln, altered all that. His clay now deformed under higher temperatures. There were problems with scale to surmount. Ironically the glaze area he has chosen to work in, is that of the glaze fault known as crawling. That plague of the regular potter where the glaze pulls back and leaves bare clay showing, had a vogue in Art Pottery of the fifties, usually a cracked, crawled white over a shiny black or green base. Rick's experimentation has provided him with a full palette of background and surface crawl glazes.

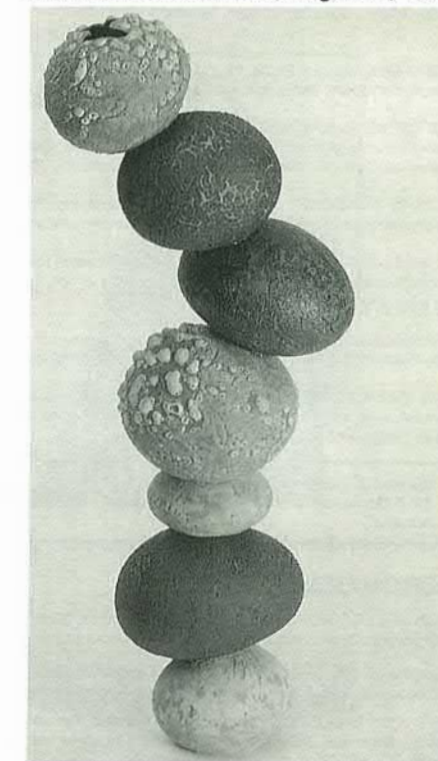
The forms have modified from the extremes of their low-fired ancestors, into the more practical shapes appropriate for the new glazes. The *Moebius Strip* handles have changed to a more simplified rounded fashion. What has altered most is the size of things, some being almost as tall and thin as the slightly-built potter himself. The logistics of glazing something that size and lifting it to the kiln are more major problems which have been resolved. Vessels and boxes on plinths and cups and saucers on Coper-esque bases brought

forward the earlier raku preoccupation with two-part work.

The newest work, the *Pacific Vessel Series*, made after a trip to Japan with **Peter Collis** and twelve other potters, and which won the 1996 *Devonport Arts Festival Award*, I have yet to come to terms with. The actual pieces of fired pumice which constitute the bases are just amazing, but it is the ikebana trough-like vessels, that the rock pile was built to support, that I find crude and out of place. They are soft, roughly put together slab dishes, with asymmetrical canoe prow-like lurches in one direction. They have the quality of the quick clay sketch, which **Bronwynne Cornish** has made her own. But for Rick's work, they seem to be unfinished, awaiting refinement, from a potter renowned for his control of the medium. For me, there is no dynamic going on between the two ideas. Both are loose, giving no contrast or tension. There is no breathtaking Rudd edge. Is this a genuine new change of direction? I will follow the body of work with interest. Is the Chameleon changing trees yet again? ■

A survey exhibition of Rick Rudd's work from 1968 to 1996 called *True To Form* is at the *Sargeant Gallery, Te Whare O Rehua, Wanganui* during June. It will then tour to other galleries. The catalogue which illustrates every piece, is available at \$10 from the gallery, or direct from Rick Rudd, 68 Lincoln Road, Wanganui.

Multi-fired Bottle with crawl glazes, 1993





# Gallery Guide

Entries for this listing cost \$15 — boxed \$20 — (incl GST) for up to 25 words. Cash with order, to NZ Potter, PO Box 881, Auckland

## NORTHLAND

BURNING ISSUES GALLERY, 8 Quayside, Town Basin, Whangarei. On site glass blowing, production pottery and sculpture studios, with viewing platform. Open 7 days 10-6pm. Phone/fax (09) 438 3108

NORTHLAND SOCIETY OF ARTS — Reyburn House Gallery, Lower Quay Street, Whangarei. Monthly Exhibitions of artists and artisans in various media. Hours: Tues - Fri 10.0am - 4pm Week-ends 1 - 4

## NORTH AUCKLAND

PALMS GALLERY, Wayby, Fine selection of New Zealand pottery and studio ceramics. Open 7 days (09) 423 7125. Turn left off S.H.1 15km north of Warkworth.

WARKWORTH CRAFT GALLERY CO-OPERATIVE, Corner Baxter and Neville St. Excellent selection of local pottery, turned wood and furniture, jewellery, silk clothing, handknits. Open 9.30 - 5pm daily. Phone (09) 425 8790.

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COMPENDIUM, 5 Lorne Street, Auckland, Ph/fax (09) 300 3212. Open Mon-Thur 9.30-6pm, Fri 9.30-7.30, Sat 10-4pm. Greatest selection of quality NZ crafts anywhere - ceramics, jewellery, clothing, glass and woodware.

EARTH AND FIRE, ground floor St Lukes Mall, Mount Albert, Auckland. Offer a wide selection of fine New Zealand crafts, pottery, woodturning, glass and wrought iron, etc. Open 7 days. Phone (09) 846 3265.

'FLYING FISH CERAMICS', (Catharine Dawson) 702 Dominion Road, Balmoral, Auckland. Thrown, handbuilt and colourfully decorated ware. Wholesale and retail welcome. Open 6 days: Mon - Thurs 10-5.30pm, Fri 10-7pm, Sat 10-4pm. Phone (09) 638 7069, Fax (09) 818 5858

LOPDELL HOUSE GALLERY, Waitakere Centre for the Arts, two galleries, two working studios, gallery shop. Open 7 days 10am-4.30pm. Phone (09) 817 8087. Fax (09) 817 3340

MASTERWORKS GALLERY, 77 Ponsonby Road. Phone (09) 378 1256, fax (09) 378 1257. Ceramics, glass, fibre, wood, jewellery. Superb selection of New Zealand's best. Open Monday-Friday 10-5pm Saturday 10-4pm, Sunday 11-3pm

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OUT OF THE BLUE WORKSHOPS. (Brendan and Kathryn Adams, Sue Newby and Bruce Haliday). Working studio gallery, 507 New North Road, Kingsland. Electric and vibrant ceramics with an off beat slant. Open Monday to Friday 10-5.30pm, Saturday 10-4pm. Phone (09) 849 6376

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## WAIKATO

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## COROMANDEL

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# Stop Press

Auckland Studio Potters have just announced that *Creative New Zealand* has approved a grant to help run an in-depth Forum, to examine contemporary studio ceramics. The participants' brief is to analyse and interpret ceramic work, its history, present position and future directions, using examples from the concurrent *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* exhibition. This will take place in Auckland as a major ancillary event to the exhibition in late July.

The Forum will be chaired by experienced moderator and ASP member, **Robert Kay**, and will comprise a panel of six expert arts writers, three from New Zealand and three from overseas. Those invited are yet to be confirmed, though it is hoped the overseas panel members will include:

**Gabi Dewald**, a writer on contemporary ceramics and fine arts, a frequent judge and critique writer of European exhibitions and currently editor of *Keramik Magazin*, Germany.

**Janet Mansfield**, professional Australian salt-glaze ceramist, exhibition curator and judge, writer on contemporary ceramics and editor of *Ceramics; Art and Perception* and *Ceramics; Technical*, Australia.

**Michael Robinson**, former keeper of decorative arts at *Ulster Museum*, known writer and critic on contemporary ceramics, and lecturer at the *Victoria and Albert Museum*, London.

These three, plus three New Zealanders, will assess and discuss international works selected from the *Fletcher Challenge* exhibition, in the public forum on Sunday 28th July from 2pm at the *Auckland College of Education*, Epsom. A modest door charge of perhaps ten dollars will include afternoon tea and a light supper.

This Forum will be an important "first" in New Zealand, an international and scholarly session vital to anyone interested in clay, and a special not-to-be-missed event to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award*.



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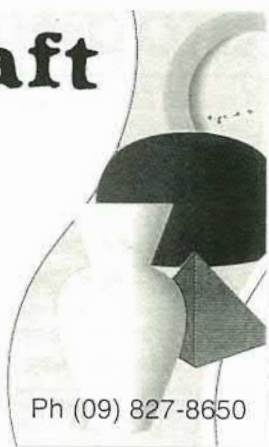
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