

New Zealand Potter

Volume 40

Number 1

1998



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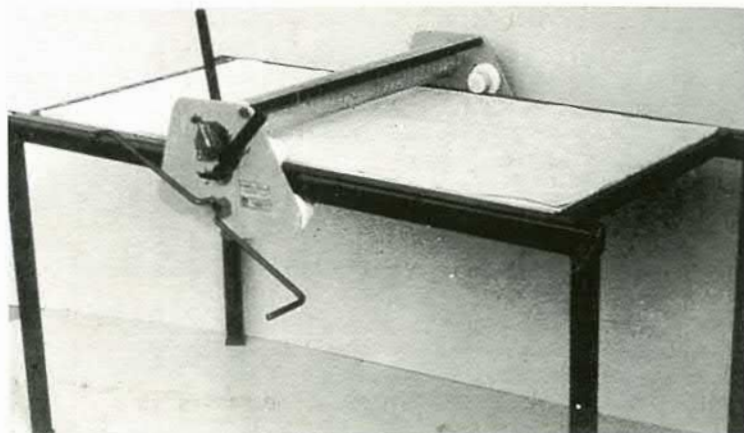
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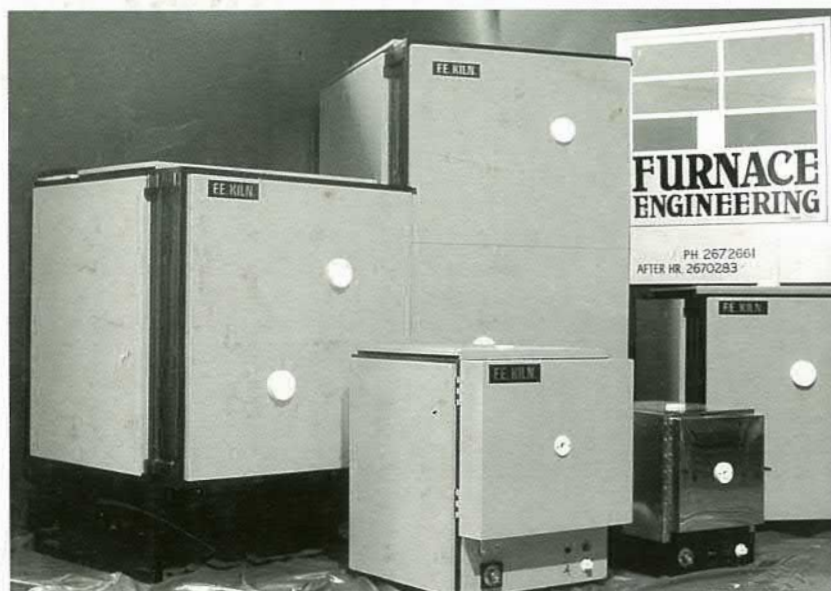
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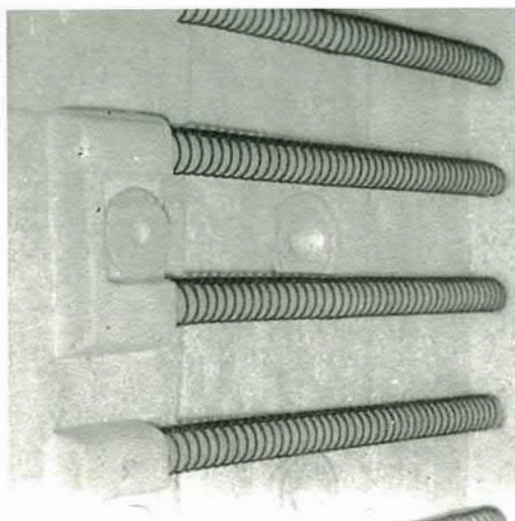
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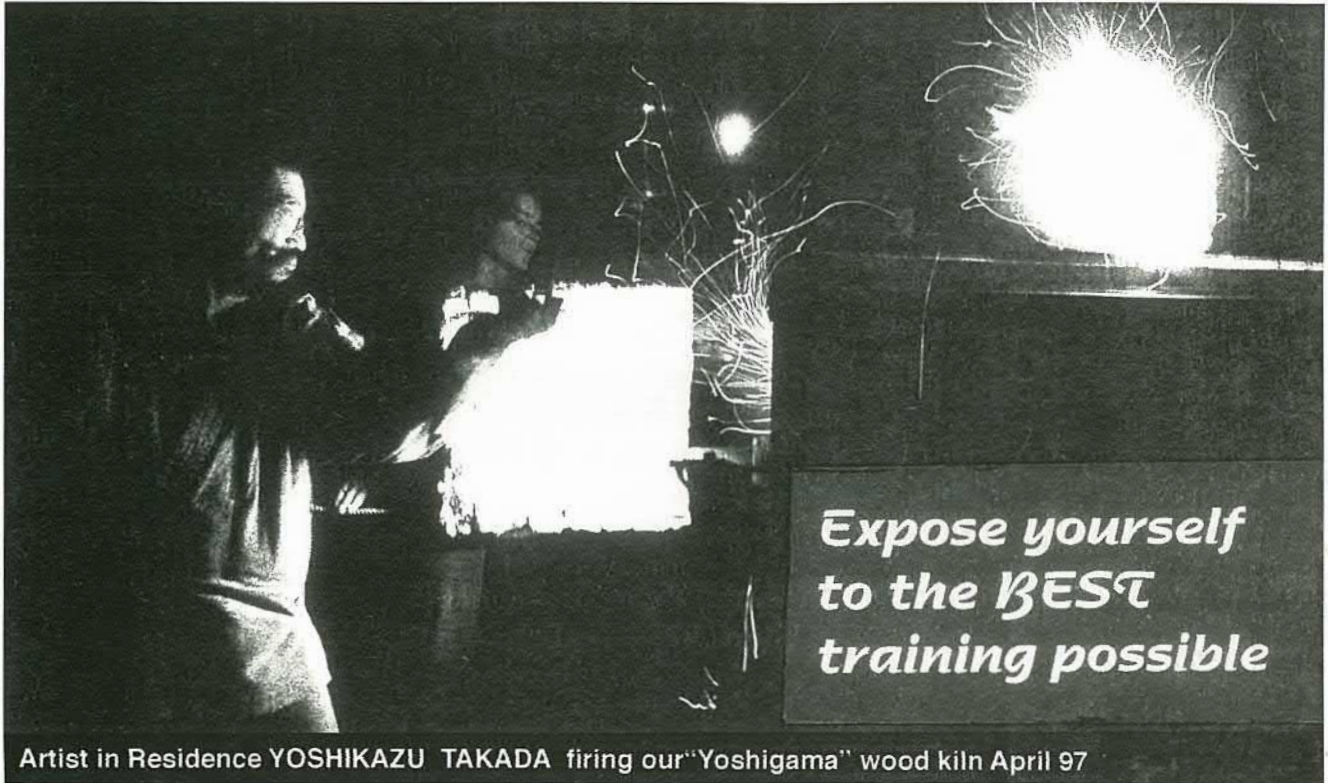
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COVER PHOTO : *Photo by Howard Williams
Royal Easter Show Winner
Chris Weaver, "Teapots"*

BACK COVER : *Photos by Julia Brooke-White
From the Craft Resources Trust Cyber Auction to be held 28 July
Jim Cooper, (top left) "Have you washed in the Blood of the Lamb?"
Raewyn Atkinson, (bottom) "Black and White Bowl"
Bronwynne Cornish, (top right) "Duality"*



Craft Resource Centre

Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt

Most craftspeople will be aware of the recently formed Trust Board which took responsibility for the archives of the late *Crafts Council of New Zealand*. Its mandate was to continue the basic work of the defunct council and update the archives on an ongoing basis to create a permanent *Contemporary Craft Resource Centre*. This was to be in new purpose-built premises attached to the *Dowse Art Museum* in Lower Hutt, Wellington, although it would operate as an entity separate from the museum.

The Trust Board undertook a feasibility study of the project and published full plans as to what was proposed. To seed the project the board called for donations of \$5.00 from each craftsperson in the country, a call which elicited a gratifying response through early 1997.

For working funding a major auction of craft works was undertaken at the *Dowse*, an Art Union took place and a Cyber Auction planned in the *Beehive* - the parliamentary building. The project also went world-wide on the Internet.

The project coordinator, **Edith Ryan** has given us the following progress report on this important venture.

Nga Toanga a Hine-te-iwa-iwa: A Treasury of New Zealand Craft

It is encouraging to those working to establish the *Craft Resource Centre* that potters from all over New Zealand have made contributions to the cause. To the 116 *New Zealand Society of Potters (NZSP)* members, whose donations have resulted in \$2,916.10, our warm thanks. We might also add that this amount includes a single donation of \$1,000.00 - evidence indeed of much-appreciated support.

We have maintained careful records of donations. For instance, 116 of the 450 members of *NZSP* have contributed (and, by the way, we would be delighted to see that figure continue to creep upwards). And, to date, *Nga Toanga a Hine-te-iwa-iwa* has received donations from well-wishers and all craft sectors totalling \$14,466.00.

Added to the donations were the two fund raising events held late last year: the auction at the *Dowse Art Museum* and the Art Union. Both events proved to be most successful. Many people throughout New Zealand assisted in the sale of Art Union tickets and although we didn't manage a complete sell-out, we did take \$44,660.00. No mean effort! And the icing on the cake was that the fifty prizes drawn proved to be well distributed around the country.

The Auction at the *Dowse* had multiple benefits. True, we took \$49,330.00, which was exciting, but some would say that its real success was the enjoyment and positive response of the participants. The atmosphere was one of keen interest and often rivalry and fun. Craft was seen in a valued light, respected and prized. It was an evening that continues to bring positive comment.

Already a hundred artists have received payment for their works and many of the dollars raised have been put to good use. Some of the money has been spent to set up the resource centre; equipment and supplies have been purchased. And **Jess Dawson**, previously employed by the *Dowse*, who set up the website (assisted

by our generous sponsors *Telecom Xtra* and *Glazier Systems*) will be paid through the Trust to continue in her role as Project Coordinator.

Our focus is now turning to the cyber auction. You will know that the one to be held last December was postponed. The project team has developed the concept of the cyber auction further. We are going to hold the event over a lengthier period of time, with the bidding system on the website open to all across the month of June, 1998. "Occasions", possibly hosted by polytechnics, will be held in sequence around the country. Maybe this will engender some playful, regional rivalry? Whatever, after being passed from centre to centre, this "rolling" cyber auction will end up at the *Beehive*.

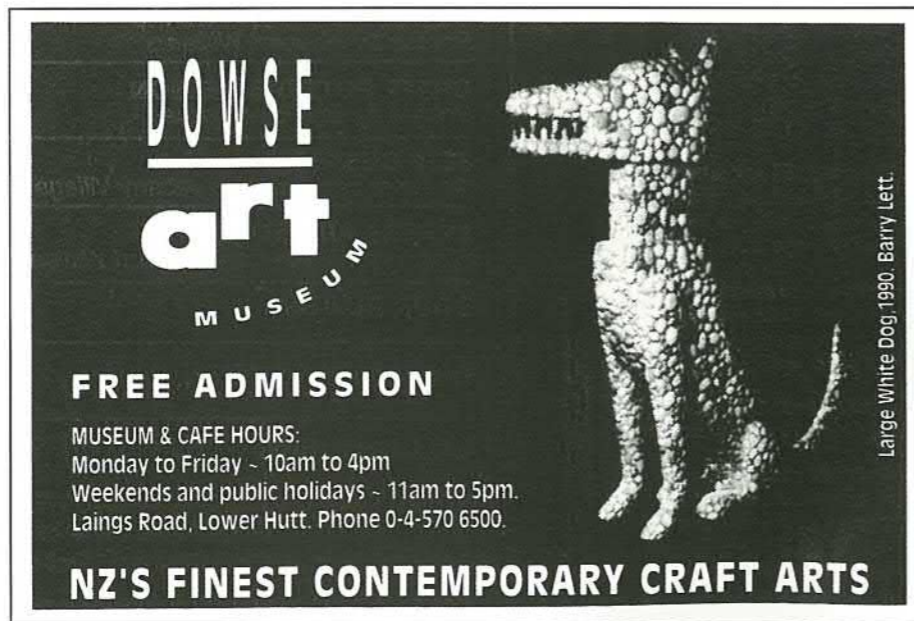
We will have close to seventy-five works to auction - those originally intended for the cyber auction and those that did not reach their reserve at the *Dowse* auction. These art works are stored at the *Dowse*, in their care. All our sponsors; *Telecom Xtra*, *Glazier Systems*, *Charta Packaging*, and the Speaker of the House are waiting for the word to re-engage their support. And **James Mack** is in the wings, waiting.

Our website is www.craftinfo.org.nz There you will find artists' information. And we are presently negotiating with *Telecom Xtra* for extensions and upgrades to the site. We are requesting extended capabilities including events calendars, newsletters, chat pages, updated details and further images, pages for craft organisation newsletters, craft education, as well as extra links to other craft sites.

Our current emphasis and energies are going into the development of the website with these capabilities, rather than the building to house and run it. After the cyber auction we will need to seek sponsorship to build the *Resource Centre*. We have several opportunities waiting, but that is another story for a later date.

We appreciate your support and hope you have had the opportunity to delve into your website. We look forward to your involvement in the cyber auction and, if you haven't already contributed your \$5.00 donation, you may like to send it to:

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NZ'S FINEST CONTEMPORARY CRAFT ARTS

Large White Dog, 1990, Barry Lett.

State of The Arts New Zealand

From the first issue of *State of the Arts New Zealand*, a new supplement to the Australian national arts magazine, *State of the Arts*.

Sponsors, take a bow

One of the encouraging developments within the arts over the past several years is an increasing awareness by arts companies that sponsors deserve recognition and a fruitful partnership which will provide a return on their investment.

The mainstream media do not help arts organisations in this regard so it is not surprising that corporate sponsors like *Telstra* are seeking to integrate their names into events such as the *Telstra Adelaide Festival* so that the media cannot overlook their involvement.

Fortunately, as a privately owned publication with sponsors of its own, *State of the Arts* magazine has no such prejudices and is always on the lookout for an opportunity to promote corporate arts sponsors... after all, the more sponsors are acknowledged, the more their industry peers will take notice and hopefully follow their lead. Launching a new publication in New Zealand has been a very reaffirming experience. Filling a need engenders enthusiasm and co-operation and it has been extremely encouraging that we have attracted a group of four committed sponsors to assist us in developing an arts publication for the New Zealand market, while promoting New Zealand arts to an international audience, particularly Australia. Specifically, *State of the Arts* and its offshoot, *State of the Arts New Zealand*, both provide a customised promotional service for each of their sponsors.

Creative New Zealand is currently committed to the international promotion of New Zealand arts and artists so a publication such as *State of the Arts* is a ready made vehicle to facilitate this.

Montana Wines has strategically aligned itself with virtually all the major arts events in New Zealand and it may be that this strategy will cross the Tasman given the success of the home grown philosophy.

Air New Zealand now owns 50% of *Ansett Australia* and is seeking to strengthen its market share within the Australian market. The airline already sponsors the major arts organisations in New Zealand - promoting that association more forcefully is the next logical step. *State of the Arts'* fourth sponsor *Tower*, needs no introduction to Australian arts audiences, given its long standing support of opera in Australia and now its major support, through its subsidiary company *Austrust*, for the *Telstra Adelaide Festival*. Group Managing Director, Mr **James Boonzaier** is personally interested in the arts and this clearly encourages a positive approach by the company, but judging from its annual report, *Tower* has a committed and forward thinking approach to sponsorship in not only the arts, but sport and community welfare. Two key sponsorships in New Zealand for *Tower* are the *New Zealand International Festival of the Arts and Opera New Zealand*, and *State of the Arts New Zealand* becomes another.

What is strikingly different about corporate sponsorship in New Zealand compared to Australia is the collaborative approach that a number of the arts sponsors have taken to gain added value from their sponsorships through their cultural partners.

This collaboration will be further strengthened no doubt, following the visit to New Zealand in February 1998 by **Camilla Boodle**, a consultant to *ABSA (Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts)*. Now in its 21st year, *ABSA* is a British organisation and the world's foremost agency designed to

promote and encourage partnerships between the private sector and the arts.

Camilla Boodle has had significant experience as a fund raiser, including setting up the highly successful development office for the *Fitzwilliam Museum* in Cambridge. Camilla gave workshops for arts organisations under the banner "Beyond tickets and logos..." She was also the guest speaker at a series of corporate breakfasts, addressing the theme "Creative Cultural Partnerships".

Driven by *Montana Wines*, with support from *Creative New Zealand*, the *British Council* and *Air New Zealand*, Camilla's program through February and March included a corporate presentation and arts workshop at the *Sheraton Auckland*, a corporate presentation and an arts workshop at the *George Hotel* in Christchurch, and a corporate presentation and an arts workshop at the *Plaza International* in Wellington.

Camilla then went to Sydney and worked with *State of the Arts* magazine to present an arts workshop and a corporate presentation later in March.

In Australia, there are a number of organisations which have sponsorship and philanthropy on their agenda, coupled with the idea of developing an Australian model of *ABSA* - but it will not work effectively until those organisations begin to think collaboratively rather than competitively, as is the case in New Zealand, where I believe the conditions are conducive to create an effective "business for the arts association".

Margret Meagher, Editor, State of the Arts New Zealand.

Good News from New York

To anyone involved in fund raising for the arts, *Finding Government Profit in Aid to the Arts* may sound more like music than a headline from the business section of *The New York Times*.

Rick Lyman, correspondent of New York's most respected daily newspaper, recently outlined the results of a study conducted by *McKinsey and Co* which concludes that "government support for the arts in New York State is a low risk, high yield investment that in taxes recovers several times its cost and generates billions of dollars in related economic benefits".

While this study (commissioned by *New York State Council on the Arts* and the *City of New York's Department of Cultural Affairs*) is a clear attempt to make a case for giving the arts financial help and to counter arguments that such help is elitist and a drain on public funds, the evidence that the financial return on investments in the arts is "an economic engine for the State" is hard to discount. Written from the perspective of a business person, the report - titled *You Gotta Have Art* - focuses specifically on the dollars and cents of the issue, rather than emphasising the socio-economic impact of contributions to (and from) the arts.

Perhaps the most compelling statistic Lyman relates is that in 1995, when Federal, State, County and City agencies in New York spent \$US197 million on the arts, the arts in turn generated \$761 million in Federal, State and City taxes.

The report itself includes even more dramatic figures: "In 1995 New York State collected \$480 million in taxes as the arts-generated \$13.4 billion was earned and spent - a return on investment of over 700 per cent."

In stating this I am afraid Lyman revealed that he had delved

no deeper than the first page of the executive summary, for if he had read further into the report - subtitled *Profile of a Great Investment for New York State* - he would have discovered: "The one catch to all of this is that if public funding ceases or declines below a threshold level, large parts of the industry will grind to a halt, the health of what is left will be seriously compromised and the investment opportunity will evaporate... Public dollars are essential for important areas that typically fail to attract private philanthropy or have limited commercial potential... Public funding also is a primary means of conferring artistic legitimacy, thereby enhancing an arts organisation's ability to raise private funds to succeed both artistically and commercially.

This paragraph alone is of great relevance to anyone in Australia (and in New Zealand - Ed) who is involved in policy-making for the arts. From a purely financial perspective, here (as in America) the ripple effect of every dollar spent by the government on the arts is vast... and the potential for increasing tangible benefits, including tax revenues, cultural tourism, employment and interdependent industry is yet untapped. *McKinsey and Co* - which should be credited for undertaking this study without charge to the *New York State Council on the Arts* or to the *City of New York's Department of Cultural Affairs* expects that as the arts supply grows, so will the public's appetite for the arts. Besides attracting audiences from abroad, opportunities exist for arts organisations to broaden their audience by reaching out to younger, less urban and more culturally diverse audiences. For example, *You Gotta Have Art* reports that *The Brooklyn Museum* enjoyed "skyrocketing attendance" with new exhibits targeted at Hispanic and African-American audiences. Somewhat closer to home, I know that last year in New Zealand the *Sarjeant Gallery, Te Whare O Rehua Whanganui* in Wanganui drew a greater number of people from a far broader cross-section of the community than ever before, when three Tibetan monks were invited to create the first Sand Mandala in the country.

And, as the authors of this report would be the first to point out, when you have more people attending cultural activities you increase the volume of traffic, not only through the venue itself, but also in local parking lots, restaurants and hotels, stimulating employment, business opportunities and real estate values.

Finally, the study states that "Frequently, public spending on the arts is viewed as 'support' or 'charity' for some vague benefits related to the cultural importance of the arts..." It would seem with sound reason these accountants add: "We disagree with this narrow point of view."

This report adds fuel to every arts administrator's argument that more money should be spent by the government on the arts... Not just because it is a shrewd investment in itself, but because these commitments are often matched with other private

contributions - the kind of add-on effect that has positive implications for government and society alike.

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Obituary

Beatrice Wood

Bonnie MacNeill, OVN staff reporter

World renowned ceramist, patron of the arts and teacher, **Beatrice Wood**, died on Thursday 12 March 1998, a week after her 105th birthday. She died peacefully at her Upper Ojai, USA, home and studio, surrounded by friends, said **Nancy Martinez**, spokesperson.

Active to the end, on March 3, Beatrice Wood made an appearance before more than 200 people who turned out for her 105th birthday party. On March 6 she gave her fifth annual *Beatrice Wood Film Award* to director **James Cameron** for his blockbuster *Titanic*. Cameron and **Gloria Stewart** who played "Rose", a centenarian reflecting on the tragedy, had lunch with Ms Wood that day. Though frail, she dined with them and enjoyed conversation before retiring to her room for a nap.

The award was given to "courageous filmmakers who tackle unusual subjects with artistic courage," said Martinez. At the informal luncheon, Ms Wood presented the award and also gave Cameron a sculpture she had made years before - of a ship that had broken.

In classic Beatrice Wood humour, the broken ceramic was given new life with a lustre glaze and mounted on a crystalline rock resembling an iceberg, to commemorate Cameron's multi-million dollar success story.

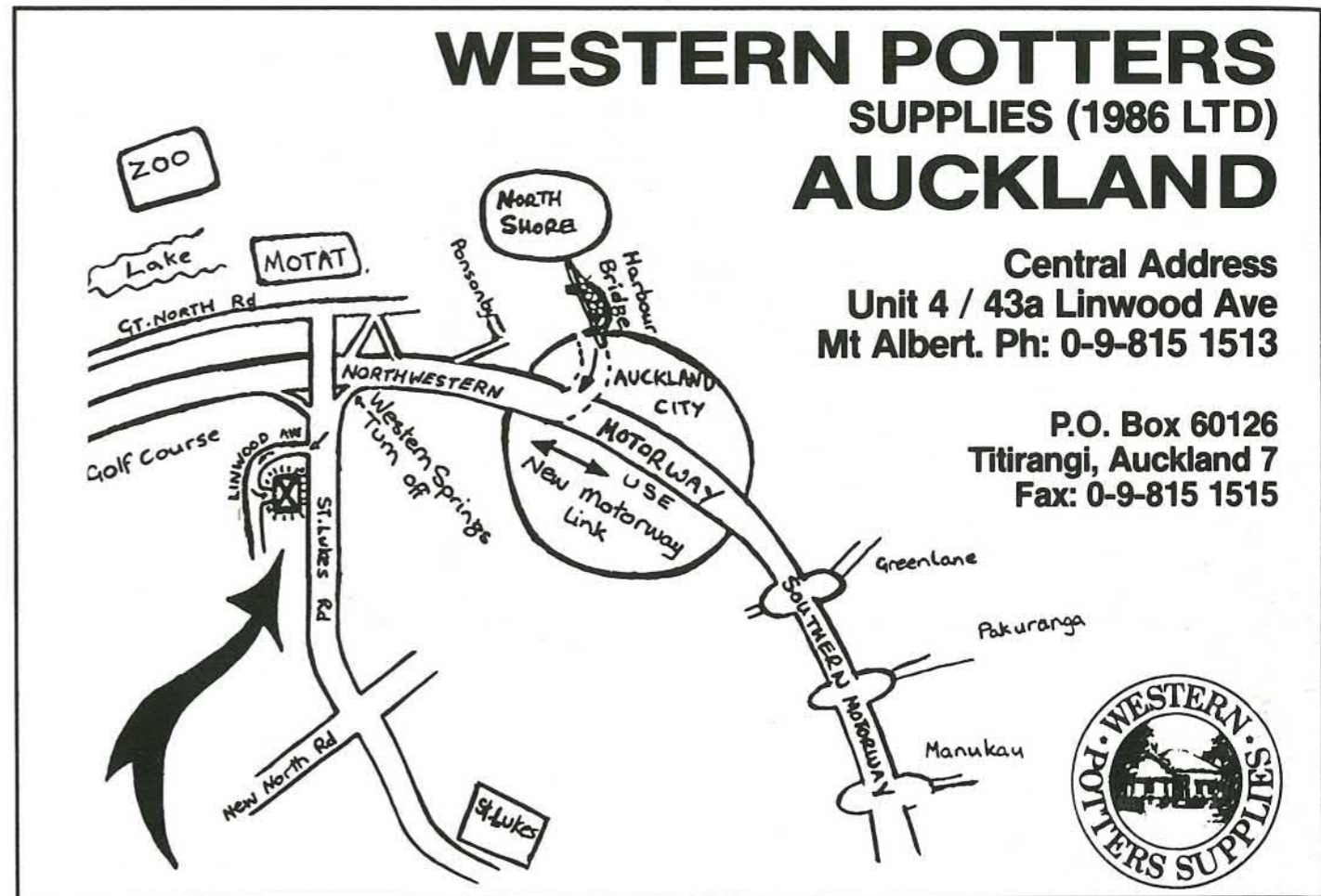
For *Titanic*, Cameron fashioned his character of "Rose" as an old woman after Ojai's famous ceramist.

Ms Wood's work is currently touring the country with the *American Craft Museum Retrospective*.

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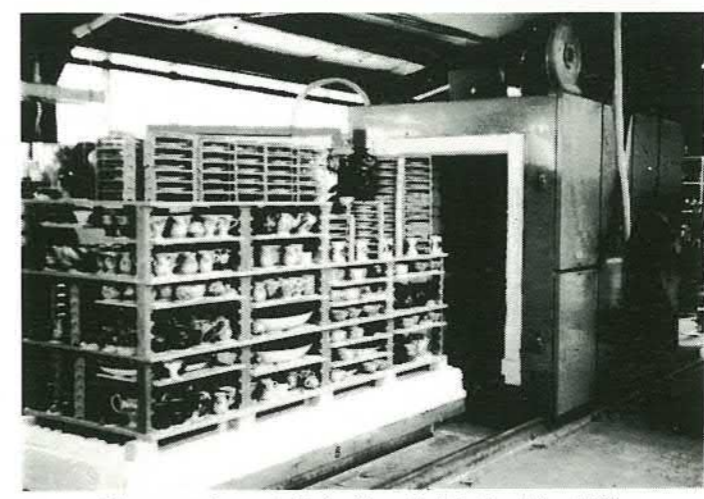
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Raewyn Atkinson

An outsider's perspective

Hilary Pedersen, Waipukurau

It is not for the layman to attempt a critical evaluation of arguably, one of New Zealand's leading identities in the field of ceramics. Nor to indulge in the intellectual debate surrounding the comparative merits of ceramic sculpture versus usable objects.

Rather, it is an attempt to draw links with the person and aspects of her work, based on impressions gained from a relatively brief lunchtime meeting and some post-interview reading.

It is tempting to draw an analogy with the sea - of a person who ebbs and flows, delivering, then drawing back, leaving the impression that more is to come - but only when she is ready to reveal it; deep, uncharted waters lying beneath the surface.

I had not met Raewyn Atkinson until our pre-arranged assignation in Martinborough one February Saturday. As publicity officer for the *Norsewear Art Award*, it seemed logical to interview last year's winner of the ceramic and glass section. But I wondered if she would stand out in a crowded cafe. Would I know her when I saw her?

In the event, the cafe wasn't crowded, but when Atkinson entered, I greeted her with certainty. Tall and lithe, she moved freely, was quietly confident, and friendly. But there was something extra and it wasn't just the hint of reserve. It was a sense of *mystery* that captured me - and that was a word that cropped up at intervals during the interview.

As our conversation progressed and I added "strength" to my otherwise unspoken list of impressions, she seemed surprised. This was a lady one could easily imagine combining solo motherhood with building her own wood-fired kiln "in the suburbs, brick by brick".

The "suburbs" was Marewa, in home-town Napier. Atkinson returned to Hawke's Bay after graduating from *Palmerston North Teachers' College* with a diploma in Early Childhood Education and a "passion for ceramics". She joined the *Hawke's Bay Society of Potters*; Ingeborg and Finn Jennssen were family friends and early supporters at the time.

Those were the days of combining "kids and pots". Days when her attitude to potting was "full-on".

"I just used to get in and throw."

While those early years were characterised by workshops, summer schools and some acceptances - *Fletcher Brownbult*, *BNZ Awards* and the *New Zealand Society of Potters* exhibitions - 1988 marked the start of working full-time in clay.

Looking at her CV, the last ten years would suggest an explosion of activity. But explosive is not a word that applies to Atkinson. The days of "getting in and throwing" are long gone. Now, all her work is handbuilt.

"The material is important; that the qualities of clay are expressed." She finds the possibilities for this "huge".

Attending *Robin Hopper's* glaze school in Victoria, Canada, opened her eyes to "the limitless number of glazes".

Perhaps that awareness is enough, because she is now simplifying her techniques and materials and "becoming quite basic". She uses one or two essential tools - including a banding wheel - and one or two glazes.

Her deeply thoughtful and evocative work (my words, not hers) is evolving, she says, with maturity and a sense of direction.

"It's a process of getting to know yourself; of developing more confidence; of having faith in an idea and that it will work."

She explains that inspiration comes from her environment and

is often concerned with universal themes: life and death; growth and decay.

"It is inspired by the pantheistic views expressed in the poetry of *Dylan Thomas*. This is also like the Japanese philosophy; that nature is identical to the universe, "permeating everything, everyone, and life itself" - a quote from *Teresa Bruthansova's In Search of the Unseen*.

Atkinson illustrates her own philosophy with reference to her *Norsewear* award winning piece, the stunning *White Rocks: And Death Shall Have No Dominion* (*NZ Potter*, vol 39, no 1, 1997). Developed from work for an exhibition theme called *Aesthetic Departures*, it combines the theme of death and the concept of a Dylan Thomas poem, with the rugged eroded shapes of the Wairarapa coastline at White Rock beach.

"These fused with ideas I had previously explored about death, as reflected in the effect of time on nature."

Coming to terms with death has also been a personal concern for Atkinson with the loss of her father, a Napier fisherman. As a fisherman's daughter, spending time on the inner harbour wharf was an integral part of her childhood, creating an early and lasting fascination with "the mystery of the sea".

She recalls lying face down on the wharf "peering through the holes in an effort to see the sea. The "mystery of the sea" is also apparent in Atkinson's much acclaimed *Whale Pots*.

She explains....

"....There are oblique historical references, such as Mycenaean pottery as well as our early history of whaling which brought contact and intermarriage between European and Maori cultures."

But while she believes that whales symbolise different things to different people, to her "they represent the unconscious....the mysterious."

"When I started making the *Whale Pots*, I was thinking about ambivalence and how reality and truth are not fixed; how this changes with time..."

White Rocks again - that the concept worked and the combination of universal theme with local images was understood by *Norsewear* visiting selector, Director of Museum Studies at *Fisher Gallery, University of Southern California, Dr Selma Holo*, was a "huge buzz".

The ability to successfully communicate a concept to someone else - particularly a visiting selector with no local knowledge and political axe to grind - was a validation.

"It encouraged me to keep working."

Given Atkinson's successes in the last 12 months, the need for encouragement might seem surprising. The *Norsewear* win, a merit award in the *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* (*NZ Potter*, vol 39, no 1, 1997) and an exhibition at *Avid* in Wellington, have been followed by selection for this year's *Fletcher Challenge* (one of eight New Zealanders, see page 13) and - hot off the press as of writing - a three month artist in residency at the *Shigaraki Institute of Ceramic Studies* in Japan. She leaves in June, the first New Zealand ceramic artist to be accepted for the six year old position.

So, as the interview draws to a close, a layman's question....Has she peaked yet?

"No", she hopes not. It's a process of evolving; of not drying up, but pausing occasionally to take time out; to reflect.

Atkinson drops hints of things to come - of being drawn to narrative: of a liking for themes: of an affinity for landforms: of social comment: of ambiguity. She has already explained that much of her work is a response to "something I feel beyond words, in the realm of the non-verbal".

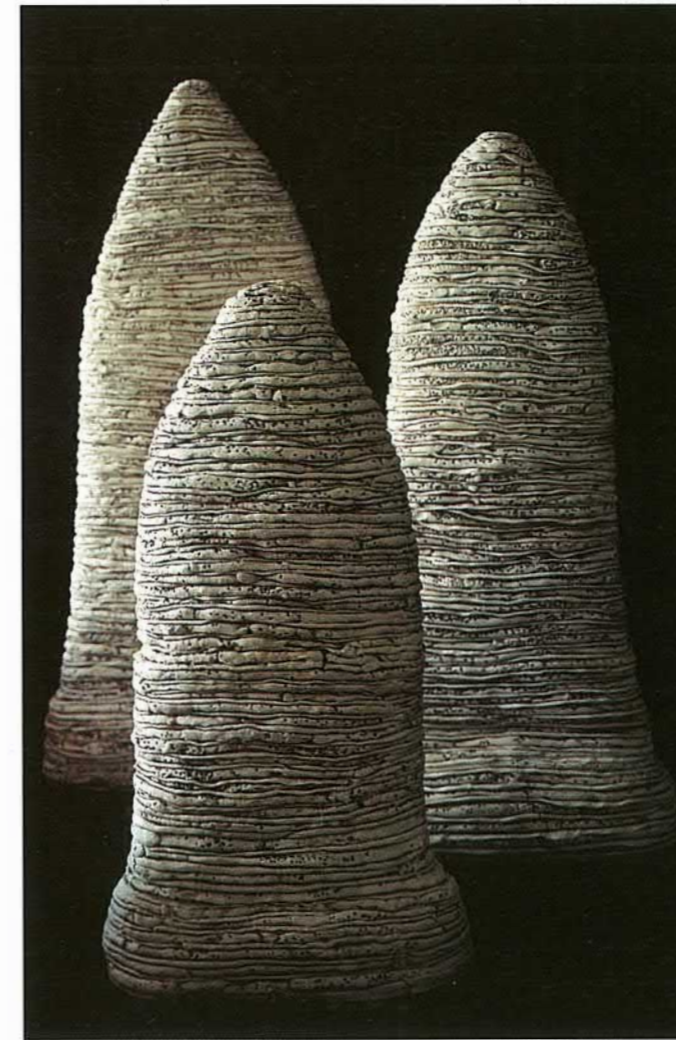
Mysterious?

Yes, I think so.



Winner, 1997 Norsewear Award

"White Rock" (And Death shall have no Dominion) 1997 74x43cm



"Land under a Cloud". 1997. 50x48cm

Photos by Raewyn Atkinson



"Catch". 1997 22x40x30cm



"A Change of Heart". 1996 22x44x36cm

"No Longer Black and White". 1997. 22x45x37cm



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The Royal Easter Show

Howard Williams, Auckland

This year's *Royal Easter Show* was better than ever. For the arts and crafts this annual exhibition in the Art Hall is one of the most important forums for introducing work from the country's best practitioners to the general public, who may not normally visit exhibitions in galleries.

There are always sections for painting, foot and mouth artists and the very best of children's art, photography, ceramics, pottery, glass and fibre. These are run as competitions with nationally prestigious judges selecting what will be on show and awarding prizes and merit certificates in each section.

In the three fine craft categories, work comes from members of national incorporated societies; pottery from the *New Zealand Society of Potters*, glass from the national *Society of Artists in Glass*, and fibre from the *Combined Textile Guilds of New Zealand*. The exhibition is a major annual event in the calendars of these national bodies, so the standard of work on display is of the highest currently being made across the country.

Handmade studio glass using all techniques has fast become a sophisticated art form around the world, and our artists are up there with the best internationally. Here in the *Glass Section*, the first prize was awarded to **Nicole Lucas** (Auckland) for her *Hearts and Crosses*, a group of female torsos cast from the ubiquitous Barbie doll. Each was solid cast from a different glass, from water-clear to waxy red, with fine individual detailing. The group was a mature development of Lucas' sculptural series in this genre.

The judges, glass artists **Elizabeth McClure** and **Gary Nash** gave five merit awards. **Stephen Bradbourne** (Auckland) showed two murrine vases and a bowl, all excellent examples of free hot glass blowing which he has developed in a commendably personal style. Stephen started out as a pottery student and has gained recognition in national exhibitions for his clay work,

but has recently become one of the leading young glass blowers after intensive apprenticeship with Gary Nash at the *Sunbeam Glass Studios* in Ponsonby.

Other merits were for two black and white paper weights entitled *Brothers*, by **Greg Smith** (West Coast) a clever and humorous touch, and a beautiful pair of necklaces in size-graded flameworked beads by **Lisa West** (Dunedin). **Jo Auld** (Auckland) fused red and white glass layers together for her oval *Leaf Plate*, and **Layla Walter** (Auckland) cast an oval dish with a woven-flax texture built into the sides.

In the *Pottery Section*, the tableware pottery first prize was won by **Chris Weaver** (Hokitika) for a teapot and coffee pot in matt ivory white. Weaver's superb thrown and altered pottery is well known, winning him major awards in the recent past, but these prize pieces were completely new in design concept.

Steve Fullmer (Nelson) won first pottery prize in sculpture for his idiosyncratic pair of *Bandits*, and first prize for production design went to **Charlie Seakins** (Auckland) for immaculately painted fish on matching plates and platter.

The judge, director of Pakuranga's *Fisher Gallery*, **Tim Renner**, gave six merit awards: **Toby Stafford** (Northland) for a salt-glazed vessel with luscious runs of glassy green glaze; a traditional firing and glaze style on a new form. **David Milne** (Dunedin) for a straight-sided oval vessel earthily textured and coloured by fire, a total contrast to **John Parker's** (Auckland) three ring-stepped bowls in kitchen-clean white like the old *Crown Lynn* mixing bowls. **Andrew van der Putten** (Auckland) for two terracotta bowls glazed liquid green with yellow and cobalt blue running down from sea-shells sprigged on. **Lynda Harris** (Hamilton) for two tall vases with complex graphic decoration and **Ann Verdcourt** (Dannevirke) for her black and white sculpture, "*Ceremonial Knee*".

In the fibre section the first prize was awarded to *Cocoons*, by **Jenny Bain** (Dunedin) for her free-hanging group of open-weave pod forms, a very similar group to that which also gained her first prize in the national *Norsewear Art Awards* just a week before.

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Royal Easter Show

Judges: Pottery : Tim Renner
Glass : Elizabeth McClure and Gary Nash



Pottery Sculpture First Prize
Steve Fullmer, "Bandits"



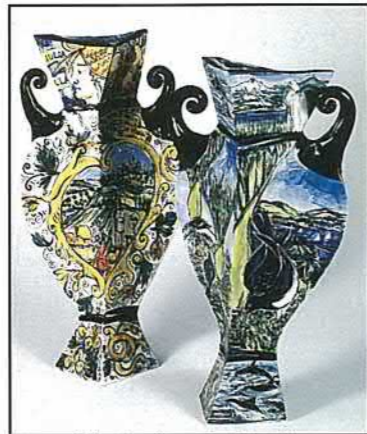
Pottery Tableware First Prize:
Chris Weaver, Teapot and Coffeepot



Pottery Production Design First Prize
Charlie Seakins, "Painted Pacific"
Merit : John Parker, "Ridged Forms"



Merit: Andrew van der Putten. "Pair of Bowls"
Photos by Howard Williams



Merit : Lynda Harris
"Tutto Bello in Italia" (left) and
"Clean and Green"



Merit : Ann Verdcourt
"Ceremonial Knee"



Merit : Toby Stafford
"Flattened Salt Glazed Bottle"
Glass First Prize : Nicole Lucas
"Hearts and Crosses"

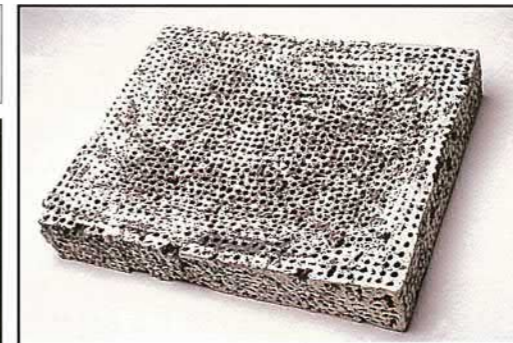


Merit : David Milne
"Touch, Dave and Molly"
Glass Merit : Stephen Bradbourne
"Murrine Cylinder"



Torbjorn Kvasbo at work

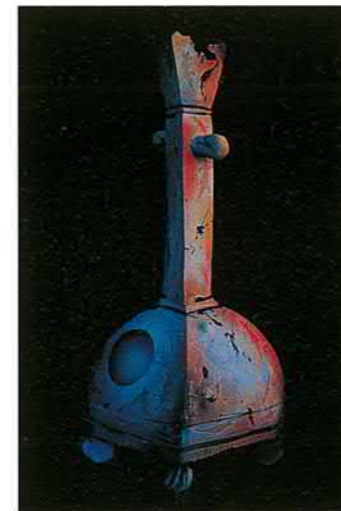
Fletcher Challenge
Ceramics Award
1998 New Zealand Finalists



Christine Thacker, Waiheke Island



John Lawrence, Dannevirke



Darryl Robertson, Nelson
Margaret Edwards
New Plymouth



Greg Barron, Whangarei



Chris Weaver, Hokitika



Raewyn Atkinson, Wellington



David Milne, Dunedin

Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award

1998 New Zealand Finalists

The judge for the 1998 *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Awards* is **Torbjorn Kvasbo** from Norway. His own work has been in the exhibition over four different years, gaining him a Judge's Commendation for *Chest - Houseform* in 1993 and an Award of Merit for *Trough* in 1997, a work which he described as "between thought and clay".

Born in Norway in 1953, Kvasbo is a member of the *International Academy of Ceramics* and a professor at the *University of Gothenburg*, Sweden. His CV is extensive with exhibitions, lectures, workshops and related professional activities listed around the world. He has been profiled in three major ceramics magazines and his work is held in private and public collections, including the *Auckland Museum*.

Kvasbo's work was described as "Between Nature and Civilisation" by **Gunnar Danbolt** in *Ceramics: Art and Perception* (No 13, 1993). Though the work is purely sculptural, Kvasbo "is not a sculptor who happens to use clay, but a ceramist who contemplates the useful object which he feels no longer obliged to make."

Kvasbo throws platters and then stretches and pierces them or embeds silica stones, with melting and fusing at high temperatures to bring out the clay's colours. He gives surfaces to ordinary objects making them appear as if created by some ancient catastrophic event, followed by centuries of burial, with the earth from which they were formed gradually reclaiming them.

They are elemental, raw, undecorated bones of objects, full of energy and movement recording their forming and firing. If they were archaeological artefacts, they would not only record their own history, but would allude to the history of the earth itself and to our culture. His blocked forms of *House* and *Chest* and the open *Trough* traditional in Norway for kneading dough, are dynamic vessels expressive of containment both of the clay and fire they are made from and of the culture we create by making and using such containers.

His use of clay focuses on the material's own ceramic qualities with no attempt to disguise or beautify through decoration or glaze coverings. In a post-modernist way he transforms nature into culture in such a way that the implied degeneration back to nature by its elemental forces, leaves them as relics of nature's ultimate triumph over civilisation.

Kvasbo trained as a traditional utilitarian potter in Norway, but was involved in the change in outlook during the 1970s when craftspeople reacted against society's accepted definition of them and took up a political stance to set their work apart from other sectors such as handicrafts or industrial design. This was similar to the change in New Zealand in 1979 when government applied the sales tax to what was seen as a taxable "industrial" sector. Craftspeople united against being defined as solely producers of practical objects and talked about a fine art form; self-expression, culture, education. From this developed the practice of ceramics as an artistic expression combining elements of fine art, pottery craft and sculpture, the meld that is seen as an art form in its own right at the *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* exhibitions.

Working through this evolution, Kvasbo left behind the salt-glaze kilns he had trained on in Bergen and then built and worked with in his home village of Venabygd. In 1984 he travelled in Japan as a handyman learning to fire with wood in anagama kilns, where natural effects were obtained through extended firing. In his portfolio (*Ceramics Monthly*, April 1992) he explains, "This taught me a lot about large, wood-fired kilns - how to build and

fire them....especially from firing **Gary Moler's** anagama in Shigaraki. On returning to Norway, I built my own large wood burning kiln, and now the firing process lasts three to five days.

"I have deliberately created a way of working where each separate component is equally important to the result, due to a continual striving with as few means as possible. The conjoining of technique, materials and style, has led to a natural completeness. All the forces work towards the same goal. And I am still enthusiastic".

From Venabygd, Norway, Torbjorn Kvasbo wrote a small introduction to himself as a person as apart from his clay persona....

"I'm married (to the same woman for 20 years, not very typical in our business: people don't divorce in our village: they don't move either). We have three kids: 8, 10 and 18 years old. The village is beautiful to grow up in, until you get 10 years old: then things have a tendency to repeat themselves and get too limited, unless you are an artist and make your own limits. No hobbies of course, but I do collect older leather jackets, which probably has something to do with pottytraining.

"Nevertheless: the family don't want to move to more central districts. I commute, and sleep in other beds 250 nights every year. The only way this is an uncentral place, by the way, is that the trains keep stop stopping: I spend the same time from Oslo to my village as from New York to Oslo. My wife, when being asked about how such a life is, she says I'm at home for a couple of weeks at a time, and these weeks pass fast. No problem." ■



FLETCHER CHALLENGE CERAMICS AWARD

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Call for Entries 1999

The closing date for entry to the Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award 1999 has yet to be finalised. However, ceramists are reminded that entry is by slide submission and that the closing date is likely to be early December 1998. Work selected by the sole international judge is likely to be required by late March 1999.

For further information contact:

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Extension: International Exhibiting Ceramists

Pots of Ponsonby May, 1998

The *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* exhibition provides the viewer with many individual and distinct pieces. *Extension* allows some of these pieces to be considered against a body of the works of the respective potters.

Ten overseas potters with acceptances in this year's *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* exhibition have been invited to show a body of their work in an exhibition called *Extension* at *Pots of Ponsonby Co-operative* during the early part of the *Fletcher Challenge* show this year. Those who accepted are:

John Dawson, UK. John is also a professional musician and has developed a strong relationship between his potting and his music.

André Hess, UK. He produces shapes which at first seem simple, but later reveal complexity.

Anita McIntyre, Australia. Anita extracts the essence of the Australian landscape for her imagery.

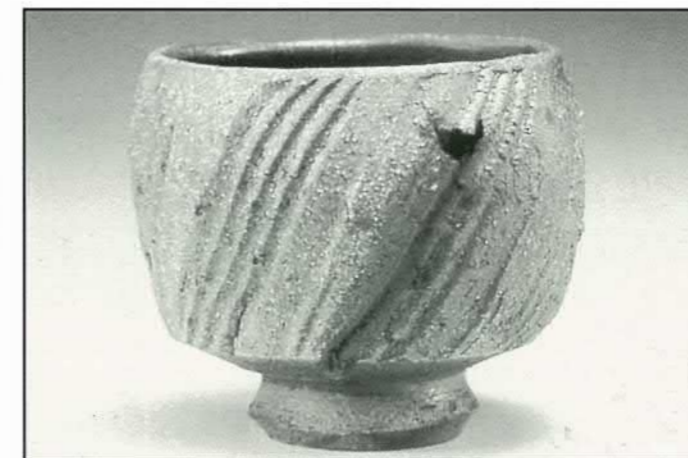
Jeff Mincham, Australia. Jeff is both a past winner and a past judge of the *Fletcher Challenge*.

Carol Bradley, Canada. The natural world of shells and lichen strongly influence her hand-built earthenware forms.

Nancy Barber, USA.

Rand Heazlitt, USA. A salt/woodfirer of domestic ware, he exhibited successfully at *Pots of Ponsonby* in 1996, while a piece of his work was showing at the *Fletcher Challenge*. His work has been widely exhibited in the USA.

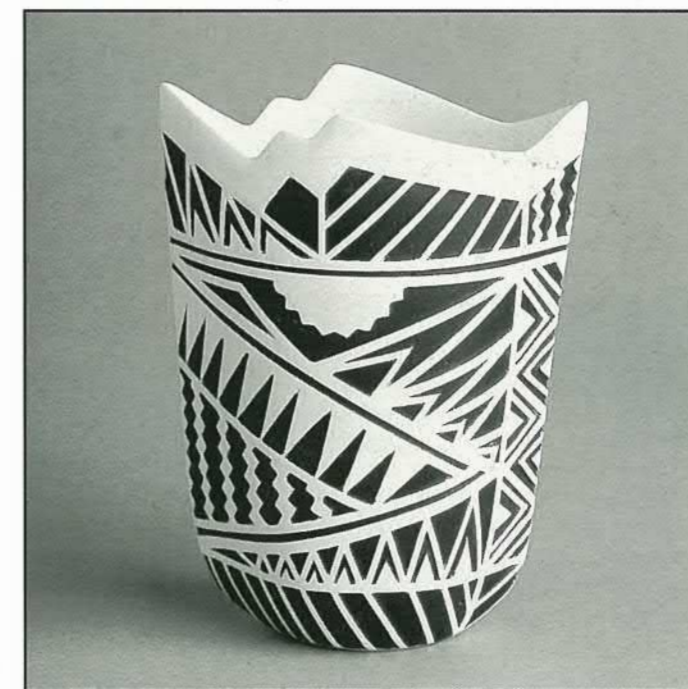
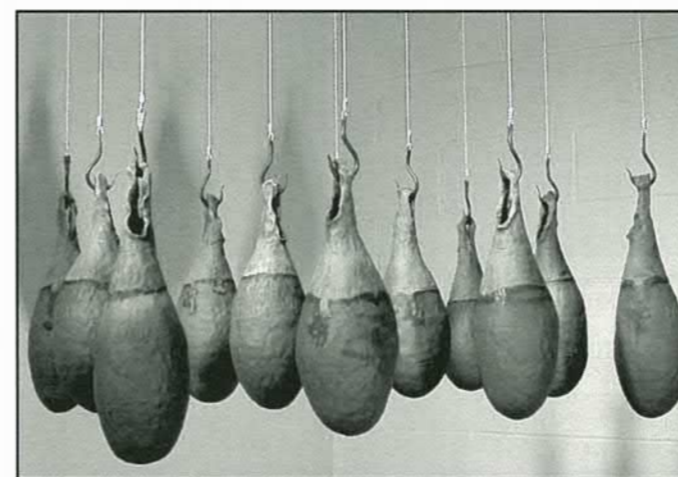
Martha Zettler, South Africa. She casts bone china vessels which she blasts with small glass beads. Has exhibited at the *Ceramic Triennale*, Switzerland, 1997, and the *World Triennale of Small Ceramics*, Croatia, 1997. ■



Above: Rand Heazlet, Salted, Wood-fired Teabowl

Below: Martha Zettler, Bone China Vessel

Below left: Carol Bradley, "Vesicles", Earthenware and Steel



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Madeleine Child

Photos by Madeleine Child and Philip Jarvis



"Beaker Folk"



"Runcible Spoon"



"Doggerel"

"About-face Plates"

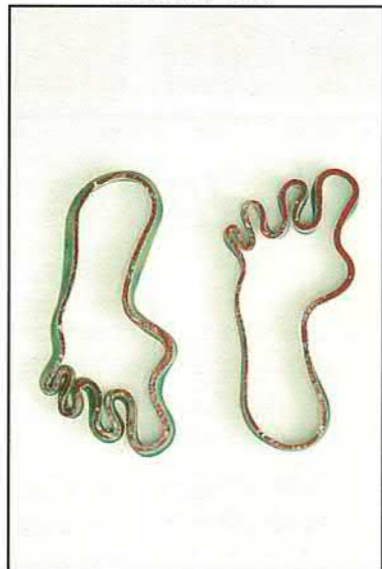


"99 Cups"



"Jug"

"Foot-hold". Shepparton Awards Australia, 1998



Pot illustrated on poster advertising "Top Marks" exhibition



"Swooning Pot", exhibited in "Ceramic Contemporaries" exhibition

"Pair of Trunks", Photo by Ian Leeden



Madeleine Child

Moira White, Dunedin
Curator, Humanities, Otago Museum



Madeleine Child with Philip Jarvis at the Millay Colony for the Arts, New York State, October 1997

Madeleine Child moved back to Dunedin from London in late 1994. Born in Sydney, she had moved to Dunedin with her family when she was nine. In 1978 she completed the Otago Polytechnic School of Art's Ceramics Certificate and for the next three years shared a workshop in Moray Place in the city with fellow certificate graduates Philippa Coleman and Rachel Cameron.

The British Crafts Council touring exhibition *Image and Idea*, (on display at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery in 1981) introduced her, she not-very-seriously says, to the idea that ceramics could be fun. Individual potters whose work she particularly remembers include Jillian Crowley (exciting her because her cats "were a way of using raku that was not tea bowls") and three Royal College of Art graduates, Jacqui Poncelet - "a weird, patterned textile-y look", Elizabeth Fritsch - "almost like optical illusions" and Alison Britton, whose asymmetric slab-built jugs, "playing with lips and handles" and linking of form and decoration, made a huge impact.

She summarises her memory of this exhibition as a novel sense of people working in earthenware and, even more, their use of surface decoration. There were two main factors bearing on the latter: the idea of people working in styles without reference to the Japanese influenced brushwork designs then seen so extensively in New Zealand ceramics, and the unfamiliar colour range of stains used by these artists.

Moving to London, she took evening classes at Morley College tutored by Jill Crowley and Angus Suttie, and then enrolled at the Camberwell School of Art and Craft, graduating with a BA (Hons) in 1990. Series of work she started at this time included the *Pot-bellied Pots*, *Spoons*, *Cups* and large urn-like vessels.

In 1992 she completed an MA in Ceramics and Glass at the Royal College of Art, in the midst of which she spent a summer residency at the Lisbon Studio, Centro de Arte Comunicacao Visual in Portugal and was awarded the Tricia Guild Travel Scholarship to go to New York.

The Royal College, where she produced *Plates*, *Doggerels*, *Beaker Folk*, and more *Vases* was followed by a year at the Central

St Martin's College of Art, gaining teaching experience and then more tutoring at the Camberwell College of Art.

Madeleine's work was exhibited in some prestigious venues during this time: *Top Marks*, at the London Institute Gallery in 1992 was an exhibition of work from London area graduates who had gained Firsts: *Ceramic Contemporaries* at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1993 was a look at recent British ceramics selected from the work of graduates of the previous six years; and *Towards the Future* at the Marianne Heller Gallery in Heidelberg in 1993 was an exhibition of British and German ceramics. The British component of this toured to Belgium as *Ceramics from Great Britain* at Galerij Desko in Kortemark.

Since returning to New Zealand she has had a solo show, *Versatile(s)*, at the Dowse Art Museum in 1995 (*NZ Potter*, vol 37, no 3, 1995); her entry in the *Lopdell House Mug Show* in Titirangi in the same year was the Judge's Choice (*NZ Potter*, vol 38, no 1, 1996) and, since 1997, she has taught full-time at the Ceramics Department of the Otago Polytechnic School of Art.

In 1996 she took up a three month residency at the European Ceramics Workshop (EKWC) in s'Hertogenbosch (*NZ Potter*, vol 39, no 1, 1997) developing the "large wiggles and rings" she had started working with at St Martins in 1993. The Centre purchased two of the pieces she made there, one of which is currently on display in Coruna, Spain. Other work from this time formed the basis of three exhibitions in New Zealand with Philip Jarvis: *House Jewellery* at Fluxus in Dunedin and *Masterworks* in Auckland, and *Sculpture for the Home* at the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch.

In general, she says, "Most of my references are to other pots". While her frequent use of a turquoise glaze, the occasional combination of turquoise and black, and her work with tiles made me think of Islamic ceramics, Madeleine says the precision intrinsic to the huge scale of the tile work decorating their mosques and other public buildings is not something to which she feels drawn. If the sense of a particular ceramic tradition informs her work more than any other, it is that of Spain and Portugal - the looseness of the shapes; the thick drips that come from firing vessels upside down and the slightly haphazard element that adds to the final product.

At the moment Madeleine works mainly in earthenware or low-fired stoneware, using the clay body for colour in combination with glazes. She describes the glazes she uses as very old and simple, but the end product seems far from that. Juxtaposing incompatible glaze types offers an extra "shadow" to pattern elements. In part, she says, the effect of her glazing is about the way it is made, and that has its roots in fabric decoration. She feels it is probably related more to two-dimensional art techniques than ceramic history.

Although the *Pot-bellied Pots* are the closest thing to figurative work she has produced, bits-of-body struck me as a recurring theme. Apart from the *Bellies* there have been *Lips* and *Feet* and *Hearts* and....other bits. When I asked her for comment she said that, well, yes it was there, but there was not a lot more to say other than that it existed. And fair enough.

Titles for individual pieces and series of work often involve word play. As well, words or script-looking patterns have formed part of her repertoire of surface decoration for some years. The *Spoons* inspired by Welsh Loving Spoons had Spoonerisms written on them; the *Pot-bellied Pots* referenced both terms to describe pot parts and the anthropomorphic pot belly; the *Doggerels* played with the form of dog bowls and the idea of doggerel verse...

As well as all this, Madeleine periodically works on co-operative projects with Philip Jarvis, the latest of which is the captivating *Pair of Trunks*. Together, Madeleine and Philip also constitute *Madpanic*, which produces a separate body of work. ■

Lesbos

A Sentimental Journey

Vic Evans, Nelson



Vic and Mersyna Evans in Akrasi, Lesbos

Lesbos is the third largest island in Greece. Tucked tidily away into the coastline of Asia Minor in the northern part of the Aegean, it is almost surrounded on three sides by Turkey. Lesbos is the island's name, but in Greece it is equally well known by the name of its capital city, Mytilini, a city comparable in size to Nelson. The island is approximately 1630 sq km in area, measuring 70 by 45 km.

In September 1997, my wife **Mersyna** made a pilgrimage there, to her parents' homeland. Because I speak almost no Greek, I was able to stand aside and observe the interaction that took place during this sentimental journey. I was also permitted, through Greek-speaking friends and relatives, to find out how some of the potters in Lesbos make their living and to a lesser extent the impact four thousand years of ceramic tradition has had on potters there today.

Two flights land at Mytilini every day. Ours landed in the afternoon on a clear, breezy mid-autumn day. Mersyna's cousin, **Stephan Nicko Aligiani** (pronounced Stefan) had arranged to meet us and said we would recognise him because he would be wearing a hat. Fortunately, the airport is quite small and only a small number of people were wearing hats. Along with Stephan was another cousin, also called Stephan, **Stephan Peter Caldis** and a brother-in-law, **Adoni**.

The Greek system of naming means that within a family the same names appear repeatedly. The system serves to identify a person's relationship through their paternal bloodline and allows anyone to be identified as a son or daughter by their middle name, and the eldest male to be identified back to his grandfather. (In our first example, we know that Stephan is the son of Nicko and grandson of Stephan - who is also Mersyna's grandfather.) We were also told that to call out Mersyna's name at the airport could elicit a chorus from the many women on the island who have the same name.

At first I thought that in such a patriarchal society it must be the duty of the men to meet, and check out, new arrivals. Time and experience would show however, that this perception was inaccurate and the idea that men run Greek society is very misleading indeed. In fact, **Kiki**, Mersyna's goddaughter and cousin from her mother's family was waiting excitedly in the background. This young teacher and mother would clearly demonstrate how the women of Greece quietly control their families.

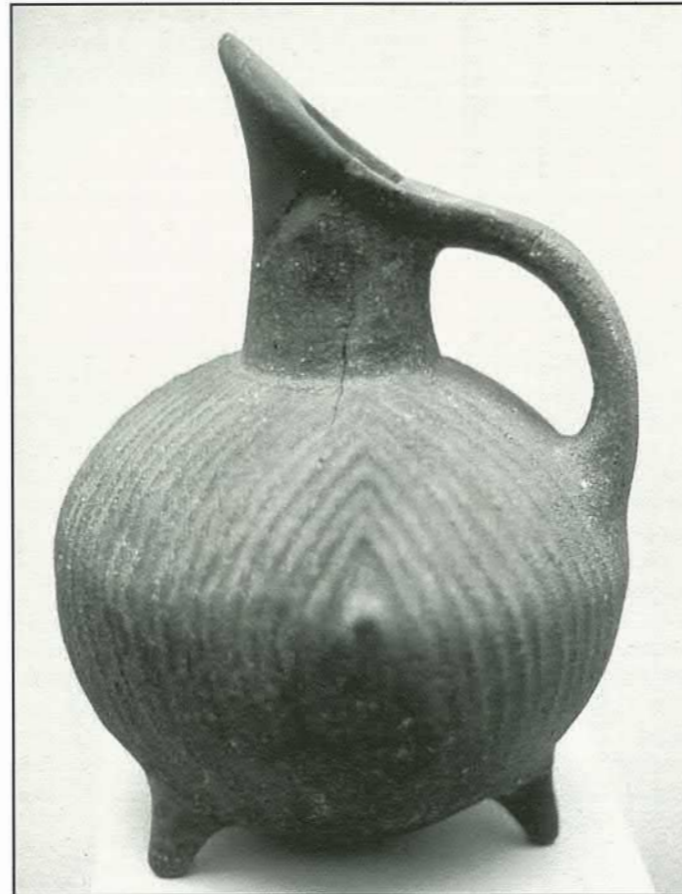
How does one greet people who have orally been there, as part of you, all your life? It seemed Mersyna had always been a part of their lives even though she had never been to Greece and her parents had left many years ago. A lively conversation broke out with bursts of Greek interspersed with English and much repetition of words and phrases.

The word *Turkeal* accompanied by waving arms arose above the general hubbub again and again. It soon became clear that the presence of Greece's huge neighbour dominated the psyche of the people of Lesbos.

Tired after travelling for over 30 hours we were grateful our hosts knew that sleep was what was needed most urgently.

The "reunion" I had witnessed had its beginnings seventy years earlier. Mersyna's father was born in a small village called Akrasi,

Early Greek pot at the Archaeological Museum, Mytilini



Mersyna in the Archaeological Museum, Mytilini

set high in the mountains when Lesbos was under Turkish rule. He cannot remember the exact date of his birth, but does remember the flashes in the sky in the northern horizon when he was about six years old. We know that date as 25 April, 1915 and the place, Gallipoli.

The acrimony towards the Turks is deep and long lasting. Much later when I talked about the Ataturk movement in Wellington, the concept of honouring such a hated enemy was greeted with wide-eyed disbelief. Nevertheless, the interaction between the two peoples has at times been mutually beneficial. Greeks would boast of their ancestors swimming to Turkey to trade. I was told that Mersyna's name, *Caldis*, originated from the lantern that was waved on the shoreline when her great grandfather returned from a trading trip to Turkey.

That Mersyna's father was not sure of his actual birth date is not unusual - Greeks place less importance on birthdays than they do on "names" days. Most dates on the calendar are associated with a Christian saint and individuals celebrate their names day on the day their first name comes up on the saint's calendar, ie, the names day for Emmanuel is 25 December.

Greece in the 1920s was a poor country, and because of the War of Independence and the resulting influx of one million Greeks from Asia Minor, it was a very over-crowded country. As the oldest son, Mersyna's father, **Emmanuel Stephan Caldis**, was sent away to find a country where he and his brothers could establish a new life.

To leave the land of your birth is a hard experience made even more difficult by the barriers of language and ignorance. Though well educated, while in New Zealand he was never able to work at an occupation that tested his intellectual capacity. His youngest brother who remained in Greece became the Director of Education for the Northern Aegean.

In Greece it was, and to a lesser extent still is, traditional to arrange marriages. Immediately after the Second World War young women from Greece were sent out to Australia and New Zealand on the understanding that if a marriage that had been arranged halfway round the world did not take place within three months, then the woman concerned would return to Greece. And so Emmanuel Stephan Caldis of Akrasi, Lesbos, and **Katerina George Moraitis** of Mytilini, Lesbos, married in New Zealand.

Our "reunion" in Lesbos brought together the two families who were determined to make sure that this couple, who came from the other side of the world, not only enjoyed Greek hospitality, but became immersed in the culture and history of Lesbos. It was evident to them that one of us spoke appalling Greek and the other spoke no Greek at all, and we must therefore be treated with tolerance and patience.



Vic Evans trying out the side wheel at Emilos' studio

Over the next ten days I discovered that the traits and characteristics that made Mersyna the person she is, were clearly evident in this society. Life was for living, and with gusto. Meals became occasions as we sat in cafes by the sea, in village squares, on the side of the road or in family gardens. Food was analysed and compared. Conversations were accompanied by wild gestures of hand-waving and dramatic facial expressions. Catching up on over 40 years was indeed an exhausting, but exhilarating experience.

And so, after a period of settling in, I was able to look to see how the pottery business in Lesbos was organised and where its roots lay.

First; what status did potters hold in this society? In part to establish my own credentials and not to embarrass Mersyna, I attempted to emphasise the artistic role of the potter in New Zealand, the enthusiasm for "do-it-yourself" and the freedom of working for oneself. When that did not seem to be working, I fell back on my history degree and my short teaching experience to establish some respectability. This could well have been as mistake as I am sure they were still shaking their heads when we left. Why would anyone give up a profession for the insecure life of a craftsman?

Greeks today, like their overseas cousins, value education with a passion. Pottery is still regarded by all except the most modern of young Greeks as a trade. Nevertheless we, by chance, briefly made contact with a woman who was determined to make pottery her career.

Maro Kritikou was in the process of moving to a new studio down the narrow street from where she worked in cramped conditions with another woman potter, **Georgia Zahariathou**. Mersyna and I made initial contact by exchanging cards and

Large olive pots found in the fields throughout Lesbos





Maro Kritikou in her studio

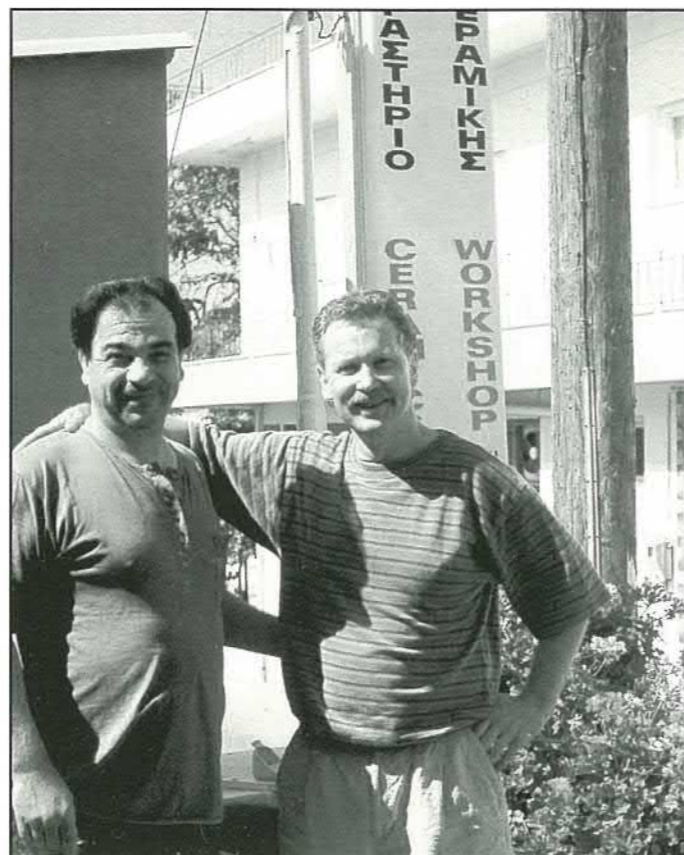
viewing photos - I have always found that photos of your home, your family and your workplace will open doors where the barrier of language can create misunderstandings.

Maro explained that she had only been potting for five years and had not developed the skills necessary to make big pots. When asked why she was making pottery her reply was simple - "Because I want to". I was unable to discover how she, at the age of 35 began her interest in pottery. She was at the time working on a commission to design and make plates for a local politician to use as presentation gifts. The theme of these plates was the olive tree which seemed appropriate as Lesbos has over 11 million growing on the eastern side of the island.

Days after meeting Maro I discussed her studio shift with **Raphael Moraitis**, a young architect cousin of Mersyna's. He expressed his consternation at having to decide which of the women he would be buying his pottery from, as they they had decided to set up separate studios. Along with his wife, **Katerina Dimitrou**, a Paris trained painter and art teacher, Raphael represents changing attitudes to all art forms amongst the young professionals in Lesbos.

Next we travelled to Plomari, a beautiful town on the south coast. In many ways the potter we met there, **Emilios Kountouris**, represented the other end of hand-crafted pottery in Lesbos. His studio was large and geared up for the mass tourist market. I was to see his pots in almost every town on the island, usually advertised as made in the town itself. At first suspicious that I was trying to steal ideas, he soon relaxed when it became clear I came from a long way away and my ignorance of the Greek language demonstrated my naivety. I was invited to make a pot on his wheel, which in traditional style operated to the left of the thrower.

After establishing my credentials we managed to get down to serious discussion on the three *Ems* that dominate the lives of



Emilios Kountouris and Vic Evans

pottery: Materials, Markets and Motivation. He explained it had been a lackluster summer and the rent on his workshop was very expensive. I commiserated with him as potters do. Nevertheless he was enthusiastic about the prospect of a ram press being introduced to the studio, so he clearly felt that next year would be better.

To see if the work being made by hand in Lesbos today had any foundation in the past, I went to the *Archaeological Museum*, set in shady grounds on the outskirts of Mytilini. Pottery from four thousand years ago, up until Roman times is beautifully displayed and clearly explained in Greek and English. The standard of display shows a love of the past and the place pottery has played in keeping that past alive. Yet despite the availability of these fine examples, as well as the pots of huge proportion and fine design that can be found scattered around the countryside, the potters of Lesbos do not seem keen to incorporate their past in the work they produce today.

Language limitations prevented me from really coming to understand the motivation that drove the two potters I met, but I was impressed by the dedication Maro showed. She worked in cramped conditions for long hours and I had the feeling I was seeing someone who loved their work.

Soon; too soon, it was time to leave an island and culture I was beginning to come to terms with, and people who showed enormous affection for their long-lost relative and her slightly unusual husband. As we flew away from Lesbos towards Athens, two Turkish jet fighters streaked across the sky below us. It made me of course grateful we came from a country where we suffer few threats to our safety. Perhaps because life on this island is not as secure as we are accustomed to, emotions are expressed more openly. For Mersyna the experience was unique. For the first time in her life she met many people who felt like her and expressed themselves in the same way. ■

Morgan Pottery

Jersey Isle, UK



Kim Morgan graduated from the ceramics course at the *Otago Polytechnic* in Dunedin in the late 1970s. After working some time as a production thrower in Australia, he established his own one-man pottery workshop and gallery at *Portelet*, in the English Channel Isle of Jersey. This was in 1993, since when his pottery has become part of the local culture, his wide range of decorative domesticware and one-off individual pieces selling from his showroom, mainly to tourists.

Kim was back in New Zealand on holiday this January to visit family and see what was happening in his home pottery scene. He wishes to apologise to his pottery tutor from Otago, **Neil Grant** (who got him throwing in the first place) and other friends from that time, that he has not kept in touch over the ensuing twenty years. To balance this omission, Kim gives an open invitation for any New Zealand potters who may be travelling to UK, to call in to his studio and gallery in Jersey.

He left the *New Zealand Potter* with this story and photographs.

Perched high above the *Ouaisne* headland in Jersey, just before the road to *Portelet Common* becomes a pot-holed track, lies *Kim Morgan's Pottery*. **Tiki**, the red setter, is the first to signal a guest's arrival, followed by the man himself, who emerges from the garage workshop to greet anybody who makes it this far.

"People often say it has taken them three attempts to find me," admits Kim with a laugh, "but I love it out here. I reckon it's about as close to the bush as you can get, in Jersey."

No prizes for guessing, that Kim is of antipodean origin. Born and raised in New Zealand, he worked in Australia for eight years before an "early mid-life crisis" trip around the world found him in Greece with a young Jersey girl, **Debbie**.

A weekend trip to visit her at her home simply stretched and the couple ended up marrying and happily settling in the Island.

Kim's love affair with pottery however, goes back even further, to the age of ten when a school trip gave him his first taste of working with clay.

"I just loved the smell and everything about it. I guess I also liked the fact you could make something that could actually be used."

Not that his first attempts were entirely successful.

"The first thing I ever made was an ashtray," laughs Kim, "It was meant to be a vase, but it went wrong. My Mum still has it."

A diploma from Otago and a stint spent in an Australian factory

as a production-line thrower certainly helped Kim to hone his skills, but he is the first to admit the learning process never ceases.

There is an ancient proverb which says a skillful potter takes 20 years to learn and 20 years to forget. Kim feels he is only just beginning the second half of the journey.

"The idea is that once you have mastered the techniques and processes, you want to reach the stage where you can forget everything you know, and let the work simply flow out of you.

"The best pieces are those which you just don't think about, they just happen naturally. I suppose there is a bit of a spiritual side to it, it's a bit Zen."

Such philosophising comes as a slight surprise from such a cheerfully "non-arty" artist. This is a man, after all, who prizes function at least as highly as beauty in his work and who insists the pot is more important than the potter.

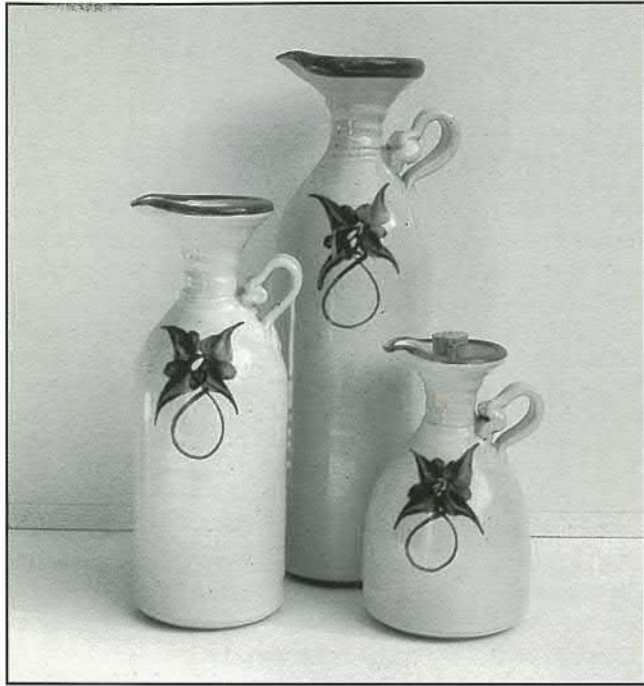
"I love the idea of the *Unknown Potter*. The idea that the object can last long after the artist and that each piece has a sort of spirit of its own."



Certainly, the rhythmic shapes, restrained patterns and soothing glazes point to Kim's pure approach to his work, and there is an element of Japanese pottery with its fluid simplicity, in his vases and plates.

But inspiration, Kim says, comes less from particular sources than from experience. Each piece leads naturally to another, with mistakes being learned from, and successful elements being developed and used again.

"There is always more to learn and I am constantly going off at a tangent. The work I am doing with dribble glaze, for example, came about as a result of experiments I was doing with glaze. The really big pots are never going to be suitable for a tourist to take back on a plane, but I had to explore the idea."



Such a fascination for one's work could easily become an obsession, but Kim tries not to get too carried away and keeps regular hours so other commitments are not neglected. He also accepts he has to tread a fine line between doing exactly as he chooses, and making commercially successful work, but for the most part the balance seems to come pretty naturally.

"I am very lucky," Kim admits. "I always wanted to be a potter, and I am, and when I was looking for a workshop this place just came up. It was absolutely perfect.

"Sometimes, in the middle of winter, when it is really cold, I do have my moments of doubt, but basically I am incredibly happy. "It really is not work at all. I play, and I love it."



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Brushes

Kay Alliband, Sydney, Australia

Kay Alliband, potter and writer, recently resigned as editor of the very informative newsletter of the *Ceramic Study Group Inc* of Sydney, NSW. With permission we reprint her latest article on brushes and how to care for them.

We expect a lot from the brushes we use and often when unsatisfied with what we have done, blame the brush.

On many occasions we have not chosen a brush best suited to the task, or have misused it or not looked after it so that it has "lost" its wonderful qualities - or maybe we just need more practice getting to know just what that implement will do.

Like with many things, with brushes we have a large variety to choose from and all cannot be covered in this article. The basic types used in ceramics are hair, synthetic and bristle brushes.

1. Hair brushes fall into a few categories with various brushes being made out of different hair, eg; sable, camel, ox, goat, squirrel, pony, wolf, etc. The most expensive of these would be sable with the Kolinsky Sable the most expensive of all. Those made from the ear of the animal are more expensive than those made from the belly.

2. Synthetic brushes are from man-made fibre with golden sable (nylon) and white taklon being the main two. They tend not to last as long as the hair brushes, but they are much cheaper.

3. Bristle brushes are usually hog's hair and are stiff and quite cheap.

Hair and **synthetic** brushes are usually used for the same things, such as applying glazes and underglazes and doing brush design.

Bristle brushes are used for applying opaque stains, dry brushing and some specialised glazes. They are good on rough textured pots.

The variety of brush forms is endless, but the most commonly used in ceramics would be:

A. Square flat. Hair or synthetic or bristle. For applying glaze, underglaze or stain.

B. Glaze Mop. Soft camel hair or mixed hair. Holds large amounts of colour and great for applying brush-on glazes.

C. Liner. Hair or synthetic. Long and pointed. Used for brushstroke marks or very fine banding.

D. Shader. Synthetic. Flat chisel end. Used for shading and brush work.

E. Square Shader. Synthetic. Used for shading. Holds a sharp chisel-like edge. Great for painting checks and "calligraphic" narrow to wide strokes.

F. Round. Hair or synthetic. Short and fat. Used for blocking in colour, brushwork and banding.

G. Detail. Hair or synthetic. For fine detail work.

H. Hake. Japanese soft goat hair brush. Suitable for wash work, glazing and slip work were a medium has to be "flowed" onto a surface.

I. Fan. Bristle. Used for glazing and special effect decorating.

J. Chinese and Japanese Calligraphy. Various types of hair. Generally has a core of stiff hair surrounded by a softer, more pliant hair. Brushes of different hair composition are used for different calligraphic styles. Hair commonly used includes deer, rabbit, tanuku (type of racoon) squirrel, sheep, badger, wolf, weasel, cat, dog and pony. Handles are usually bamboo, but wood and other materials may be used. Wonderful for lively brush work.

K. Dagger. Hair or synthetic. A lining brush, but excellent for brush stroke decoration, especially the long daggers, traditionally used by signwriters.

All brushes are made up of four parts:

1. Tip (or chisel if it is a squared brush). The very end of the hair or bristle of the brush.

2. Reservoir. The part of the brush which lies directly above the tip or chisel. Holds colour until it is needed by the tip.

3. Ferrule. The metal or plastic or "bound" part that holds the hair in place.

4. Handle. Usually made of wood, bamboo or plastic.

Do:

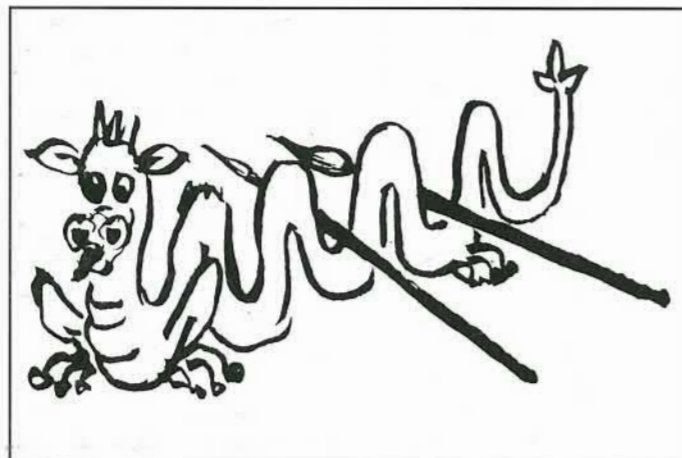
1. Use brush only for intended purpose.
2. Keep brush in a suitable container; a flat box, bamboo tube or cloth wrap is good. Or hang upside down.
3. Keep brushes very clean.
4. Pull into shape after washing.
5. Condition your brushes by saturating the hairs in detergent and wiping off excess before using special products such as latex or wax.
6. When using metallics or lustres, use essence to clean brushes.
7. If using an oil-based medium, clean brush in a solvent such as mineral turps, before washing in warm, soapy water.

Don't:

1. Use your brushes to mix colour.
2. "Beat eggs" - ie; hit bottom of container when washing brushes, as this damages the tip.
3. Leave standing in water as this destroys the glue holding wooden handle in ferrule and, with Chinese or Japanese brushes, causes bamboo to split and the hair to fall out.
4. Let colour harden in brushes as you may never get it out if it is a stain.
5. Leave wax or latex on a brush.

6. Dry your brushes upright as colour and water will run down into the ferrule causing hairs to break down.
7. Wash in hot water as this destroys the spring in the hair.
8. Put plastic tip-protectors back on Chinese or Japanese brushes once they have been used as you will damage the hair and it won't be able to dry properly.

When buying brushes, some shops will allow you to try them out with water. This gives you an idea of the spring and colour-holding capacity. The spring is important in a brush used for decorative brush work - you don't want it turning into a "dead fish" when wet; it should bounce back to its form and point after pressure is released.



Make yourself a "brush dragon" onto which you can lay your brushes between strokes. A dragon keeps your work area clean and organised and prevents brushes from rolling off the table.

Remember, with care brushes will last for many, many years, but with mistreatment they will have a very short lifespan.

When a brush is correctly used it becomes one with the hand of the artist and ceases to be just an object. It becomes a favourite friend - and a great loss when eventually it "dies".

In Japan, the reverence for the life and soul of a brush is exemplified in the *fude-zuka* custom in which a brush, worn past any possibility of use is not just discarded, but interred with ceremony in a "brush grave".

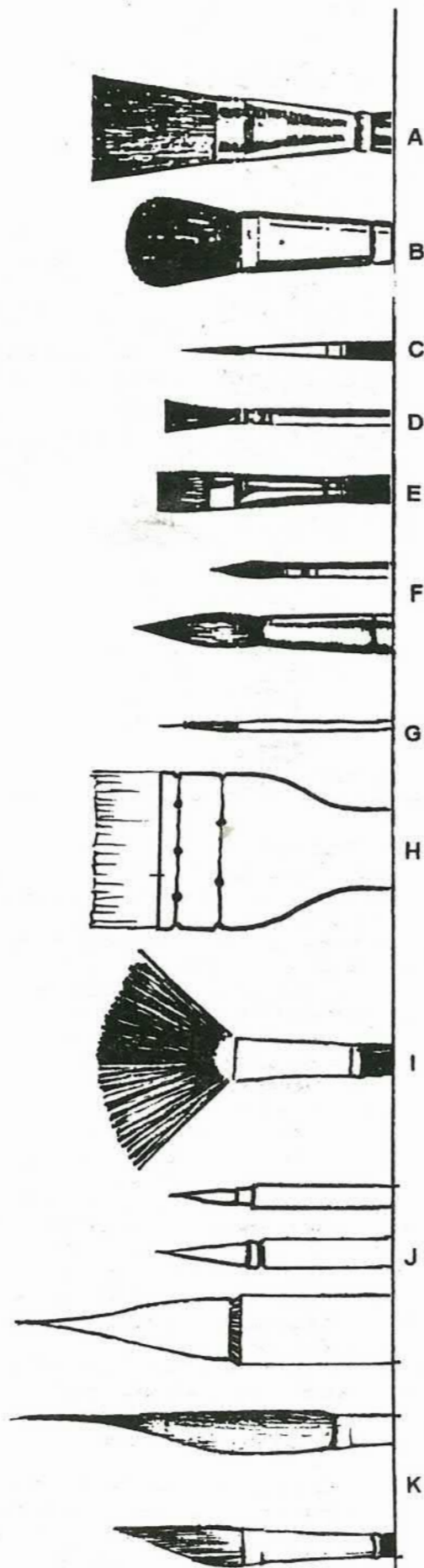
References:

- Art Scene*, catalogue, 916 Victoria Road, West Ryde, NSW.
- Japanese Brushes. Form and Function Series.
- Use and Care of Brushes*. Tasmanian Potters Society, NW branch newsletter

Cleveland Art Awards 1998

Information on this prestigious Exhibition which is held in Dunedin will be in the next issue of the New Zealand Potter

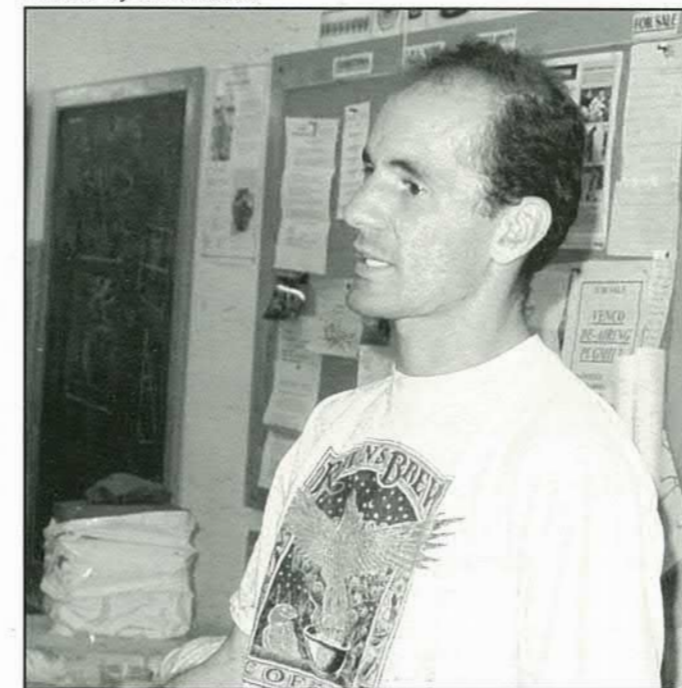
Be sure to purchase your copy early



Thomas Barter at Canterbury Potters

Jim Pollard, Christchurch

Photos by Jim Pollard



Thomas Barter's November School contained lots of lessons for those willing to learn. Not just how to make clay tiles, but how to make a career of making tiles (or anything else) from clay.

Another of these new-fangled American potters who received his training in an art school and so hardly deserves to be called a potter at all, Tom can actually thumb his nose confidently at the Luddites. After completing a degree with a ceramics major at *Humboldt State University*, Tom was apprenticed for two years in the *Moravian Pottery and Tileworks* in Doyelston, Pennsylvania.

This working museum was established in 1898 by American blue blood **Henry Mercer**. Mercer turned from law and archaeology to establish not a tile factory, but artisans' studios in which tiles were hand-made from plaster moulds, which in turn were made from individually hand-modelled tiles. This particular American reversion to a pre-industrial arts and crafts tradition thus predates the *mingei* revival in Japan which brought **Shoji Hamada** into prominence. The *Moravian Tile* factory still operates in this manner, using much of the original equipment. You can't get much more *mingei* than that.

There's an unexpected parallel with recently declared Living National Treasure and Important Tangible Cultural Property, **Tatzuso Shimaoka**, *deshi* to Hamada. When post-war US stockings raised the silk price so high the family rope factory folded, leaving no business to follow his father into, Shimaoka took a degree in ceramics from *Tokyo University* and went to Mashiko to become a *mingei* potter. Shimaoka makes more money, though.

Thomas Barter continues to work in the artisan tradition, retaining personal control of the entire process from raw clay to fastened tile. His art school training brings disciplined creativity to the design while the apprenticeship ensures a practical product that fulfils its function. It is interesting to contrast Tom with **Bob Shay** who toured New Zealand in 1986 (*NZ Potter*, Vol 28, No 1, 1986) and comes from a pure art school tradition.

Head of Ceramics at America's largest University, *Ohio State University*, Bob Shay is a maker of wonderful and exciting works which push technology and one's purse to their limits. But as an artist, he takes no responsibility for the work once it is complete. "I'm not concerned with what happens to my work, hanging one of my pieces is the gallery's problem."

Tom though, keeping one eye on posterity (in the knowledge that his work may be around for hundreds of years) and the other on his public liability insurance premium, makes work which will survive forever in its intended location and will not break up through continued exposure to the weather cycle. Tom does not intend to go broke because one of his tiles fell off a skyscraper onto a litigious citizen.

Artisan though he is, Tom can work on a huge scale and some of his commissions involve many thousands of tiles. All hand-made, but hand-made fast. Great care is taken to preserve master moulds for repeat and future use and much of Tom's workshop at Canterbury dealt with these processes. The illustrations show mass production of plaster moulds from clay originals. Artist and artisan rather than manufacturer, he nevertheless has a practical eye on time-saving techniques; time is just as valuable a resource as clay and must equally be conserved. Tom is a thoroughly modern potter.



Some tips from the Canterbury Workshop

Use clays with a large particle size for making tiles - eg. *Potters' Clay Tile Body*, *HGB*, *Abbot's Brick Red*. While *Slab* clay has large particles, those in between are too small for a good tile clay. To seal the plaster mould use soft soap, shampoo, detergent or mould soap in a mix with 50% water.

Apply it liberally, sponge it off with clean water, and apply it again. Repeat this a couple of times. Re-soap each time you take an impression.

To get a clay impression (the tile) out of its plaster mould, don't dig at it with needles and knives, press a lump of the same clay onto the back of the impression and lift. Repeat. When you have a plaster impression that began with found objects, especially those from nature, there will be little re-entrants regions - undercuts - that grab clay and tear it from the tile when this is removed. Note where these little pockets of clay have remained and pick away at the plaster with a needle to prevent clay being trapped there again. Now use this modified mould to create your master. Don't rely on your fingers to press clay into a mould, use a tile press - you can convert an old drill stand.

To make grout use 50% washed sand and 50% Portland cement. ■

Above all buy the "Barter Bible", **Frank Giorgini's Handmade Tiles**, published by *Lark Books*, 1994. ISBN 0-937274-76-3. US\$24.95. If you are net-wired get it cheaper from <amazon.com> US\$23.42 including postage - that's about NZ\$40. (See our review of this book in *NZ Potter*, Vol 37, No 2, 1995

Stephen O'Leary's Cone 10 Glazes

Stephen O'Leary, a potter from Camperdown, Western Victoria, Australia, is also a lecturer at the *TAFE* and *University of Ballarat*. He throws high quality production ware glazed with rich copper reds and celadons, which sell at the "higher market level". He uses his clay (*Clayworks TKM*) in quite a stiff state as he likes the work to be thin, so suiting his fine throwing and the quality of his glazes.

For the New South Wales *Ceramic Study Group's* newsletter he offered these glaze recipes with the advice, "have at least one glaze test in every firing, even if you are only slightly changing the recipe; it adds to the enjoyment of opening the firing". With permission from Stephen O'Leary and the *CSG*, we print the recipes here.

White Gloss

Cone 10, oxidation or reduction

Potash Feldspar	34.68
Whiting	13.71

Kaolin	9.68
Silica	6.13
Zinc (dense)	1.61
Zircon Flour	24.19
Tin	3.00

The tin is an optional addition for reduction atmospheres. Decoration can be used on top of the glaze.

Celadon

Cone 10, reduction

Potash Feldspar	50
Silica	6
Whiting	14
Kaolin	14
Ball Clay	6
Zinc Oxide	8
Red Iron	0.5

Requires a thick application

Matt Black

Cone 10, oxidation or reduction

Dolomite	15.90
Potash Feldspar	48.24
Kaolin	22.21
Whiting	4.55
Black Stain	9.10

Requires only a thin application

Copper Red

Cone 10, reduction

Nepheline Syenite	42.4
Potash Feldspar	9.1
Kaolin	2.0
Silica	22.7
Gerstley Borate	13.2
Whiting	10.6
Copper Carbonate	0.3
Tin Oxide	1.0

Recommended reduction at 980°C (medium red) but this will differ with individual kilns. As this recipe contains no barium it is entirely food safe and can be used in a dishwasher. ■

'CAPITOL CLAY'

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Harbourside Art Trail

Howard Williams, Auckland



Jeanette and Peter Shearer at the Art Trail's first open day, admire the newly-printed brochure

Many guides to assist people wishing to find craftspeople and their work have been produced, one of the best in the past being the independent *Craft Hunter's Guide*, compiled in the early 1980s through three editions by **Fiona Thompson** and published in association with the *Department of Tourism and Publicity* and the *NZ Tourist Industry Federation Inc.*

Other agencies have set up information bases and directories, including the now defunct *Crafts Council of New Zealand* and its offshoot, *AMBA (Arts Marketing Board of Aotearoa)* which expensively blossomed and died having published the *Icons* booklet. As a swan song for the *Craft Council's* magazine *Craft New Zealand*, its editors **Peter Gibbs** and **Julie Warren** continued and with *QE II Arts Council* assistance, published *The First Craft New Zealand Yearbook* in 1992 and *Craft Galleries of New Zealand* the following year.

It is hoped that the archives of the late *Craft Council* now held at the *Dowse Art Museum* will be re-activated and constantly upgraded in the future by the *Craft Resources Centre* at present being re-organised to supply this important data base information on a national scale.

In 1997 the first edition of *NZ Art 'n' Craft*, a directory of "who's who in art and craft" was published by a division of *Target Marketing Ltd* in Taupo, this, a commercial venture to publish a comprehensive countryside listing.

National and local societies representing various craft disciplines have all at times published local lists of craftspeople, as have many local bodies' *Community Arts Councils*.

Another promotional idea has long been practised, that of individual craftspeople banding together to produce a brochure or location map facilitating public visits to their various studios. It is one of those exercises which craftspeople, known generically as not being very street-wise about advertising, marketing or self-promotion, have recognised as an effective way of putting themselves - so to speak - on the map.

It is less physically and financially involving than the commitment needed to form a "co-operative", but the principle is similar. The promotion of disparate individuals is enhanced by corporate effort, where expenditure to reach a larger market audience is spread across a group. It is also of mutual benefit to utilise singular expertise of members within the group.

There are different ways such a map or brochure can be organised. An obvious one is an already established group or club drawing up a directory of members having studios with on-

site sale facilities which can be visited at certain times. The *Tourist Guide to Nelson Potters*, produced by the *Nelson Potters Association*, has perennially been one of the most successful of these. An extensive map of the area locates over 40 potters and some associated retail outlets, with a brief description of the pottery made at each and available times for visiting. This is far more of an informative brochure than just a listing.

Others groups not based on a society or club have done similar guides, based on a smaller geographical area and including different types of operation. For instance, in the far north a *Craft Trail* brochure maps a 50 kilometre circuit drive off the main highway to visit the workshops of a painter and writer, a toy maker, three potters and a co-operative including wood turner, shoe maker, wool-fleece rug maker, silk dyer and stained glass artist.

The latest, and a most sophisticated type of this brochure, the *Harbourside Art Trail*, was launched this past summer by a group on Auckland's North Shore who took advantage also of tourist amenities in their area like beaches, local council parks and reserves and bush walks. What they proposed took the imagination of local body officials who saw it as good tourist promotion for the area and the brochure finished up by being heavily sponsored - and distributed - by the *Birkenhead and Northcote Community Board*, the *Birkenhead and Northcote Community Facilities Trust* and the *North Shore City Council*. It is in support of North Shore craftspeople, artists and Park Volunteer Management Committees.

Auckland Studio Potters' president, **Peter Shearer** is one of those profiled and his wife **Jeanette** became the organiser of the project spending many hours coordinating local bodies, the artists and craftspeople, photographers, layout designers and printers. A six-fold full colour brochure is the result with photos of studios and work as well as of bush walks and local historic buildings, these photos being set around a clearly annotated map of the area.

Peter's wide range of pottery includes terracotta foccacia bread baking dishes which Jeanette uses in public demonstrations of her culinary art, where she sells the idea, the recipes, the bread and the baking dishes!

Another of the group's organisers is wood turner **Ian Fish**, who turns superb tableware and gallery pieces from native timbers. At *Glass Creations* **Darryl Fagence** kiln-moulds "warm" glass into platters, bowls and contemporary lighting fixtures. The studios of well-known potters **Ian Firth** and **Peter Collis** are profiled as well as the *Painted Pacific Pottery* of **Charlie** and **Chrissie Seakins**.

On the fine art side is the *Old Butcher's Shop* studio/gallery of water colour and acrylic artist **Patricia Turney** and the studio of artist, printmaker and interior designer, **Karel Burrows**. The *Gatehouse Gallery* houses works by **Peter Featherstone**, including exhibitions of painted furniture and associated collectables.

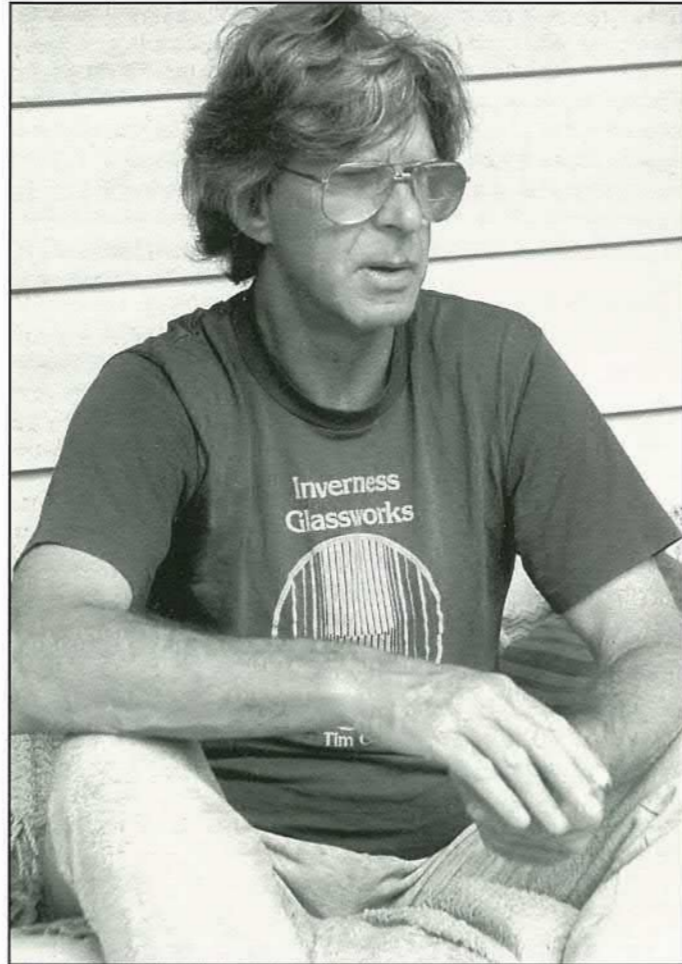
The *Harbourside Art Trail* brochure is available at information bureaux, libraries, local body offices and local motels - anywhere tourists might look for such information. Studios can be visited at times designated or by appointment. As well, when the likes of community arts festivals or garden tours are being held, the group combines for open days, advertised so the public can "do" the full trail. This usually includes the foccacia bread making as well as workshop demonstrations and live music at some of the venues.

The venture looks like being a great success with North Shore residents and visitors, not only because of the high standard of the artists and craftspeople involved, but also because of the professional design and production of the brochure and the enlightened support of the local body councils. ■

The Art Farm Summer School, Orua Bay

Howard Williams, Auckland

Photos by Howard Williams



At the beginning of January, I took a "working" holiday at *The Art Farm* - swimming, sunbathing, drinking too much wine and feasting on fish caught and smoked each day - reluctantly taking notes and photographs to justify the "working" part.

The west edge of the Manukau Harbour is formed by Awhitu Peninsula tapering up to Manukau Heads with Whatipu opposite, across the harbour entrance. A little east along the harbour's southern shore is the beautiful bay of Orua; a few houses, a camping ground and *The Art Farm* right on the beach; a 60 acre dream rapidly becoming real for painter, potter and musician, **James Robb**.

Robb has always been an entrepreneur. For a year, 1967-8, he was a DJ on the pirate radio ship *Radio Caroline* off the Essex coast, then became a DJ in a German night-club and later for several stations in the USA. In England in 1971, he co-organised the first *Glastonbury Fair Music Festival*, the largest rock festival in Europe. Robb has also been a professional ski instructor at Courchevel, France and at Squaw Valley, California.

Returning to New Zealand in 1974, he discovered his other artistic talents and, self-taught, became a landscape painter and potter, often creatively adapting his own invented techniques between the two disciplines. (*NZ Potter*, Vol 38, No 3, 1996).

Now he combines his art and music with teaching others, setting up *The Art Farm Trust* and calling in other professionals, to develop an art centre catering for ceramics, painting, sculpture, photography, creative writing and music, with bush and beach walks, sailing, fishing and swimming thrown in.

The Art Farm project has support for its courses from the community arts sector of the local council and also from groups like COGS and CEGS, the *Unitec Mentor Programme* and *Shoreline Kids* - groups providing education opportunities and outdoor experience programmes for disadvantaged children and the unemployed. School camp activities focusing on outdoor pursuits or any of the arts and crafts can be arranged, as well as live-in workshops for adults.

Already, classes from *Hillary College*, *Pukekohe High School* and the *Titirangi Steiner School* have had camp-in workshops in various forms of pottery and landscape photography, and a programme for 1998 is rapidly filling.

The 1998 Summer School for raku and pit firing is recorded here by tutor **Bryce Stevens** and students, **Lia Tuerlings** and **Lynley Atchinson**.

Bryce Stevens, Hamilton

I shared the tutoring of the inaugural summer school with James Robb. What a blast! **Loved** it! Beach front site, purpose built facility, catamaran, clearing the net, fresh smoked fish, best atmosphere, lotsa pots, raku firings, pit firing, dancing, eating, laughing. Without exception, students and tutors alike considered this a pivotal life event. A cracking of the shell of the creative egg. We who participated are family now.



Bryce Stevens teaching Lia Tuerlings

Lia Tuerlings, Auckland

The *Auckland Studio Potter's* newsletter was where I first saw *Raku by the Sea* advertised. A whole week at the beach, spending my time simply potting and swimming, it sounded wonderful!

A beginner and doing pottery for only about 30 weeks now, there was a stage last year when I felt I just had to set back in touch with the creative side of myself. I enrolled in a 10 week beginner/combined course at *Auckland Studio Potters* - the beginning of what has become somewhat of an addiction, so much so that I couldn't resist continuing doing another term. From day one I have received nothing but excellent guidance, positive encouragement and support from everyone there. *Raku by the Sea* seemed like the perfect opportunity to continue my new found passion over the holiday period.

Driving up the Awhitu Peninsula, a lovely region only 1.5 hours out of Auckland, gives a feeling of really getting away from it all. Following the signs to the Manukau Heads, brings you to Orua Bay and *The Art Farm*, where a warm welcome awaits.

A really magical place, *The Art Farm* is a dream now coming true for potter, artist and musician, **James Robb**.

Raku by the Sea at *The Art Farm* was just absolutely wonderful! "Positive energy, calm, beauty, inspiration, adaptability, confidence, wisdom, great people and lots of fun and laughs" - all these describe my experience there.

Every morning, for me, began with a stroll across the paddock to the beach for a swim, a walk to take in the beauty of the sights and smells all around, and a bit of meditation. Then after a relaxing breakfast at my own pace, the day was spent potting. Using the inspiration that nature had kindly gifted, together with the guidance of absolutely expert and very encouraging teachers, I thoroughly enjoyed and got so much out of every minute of every day.

About late afternoon I'd go down to the beach for another dip and return afresh to finish off any bits and pieces I was working on, have a chat and a cuppa. About 8pm I went down to the water for my last swim - it was glorious! So peaceful and calm at that time of night, no-one else around, just the stillness of the evening, the softness of the water and gorgeous sunsets. After a lovely shower, the perfect days were rounded off with a *yummeee* meal. We all enjoyed pitching in to do the cooking, fresh fish smoked, barbecued or simply pan fried, scrumptious salads, a glass of wine and great company. We never ate till after 10pm, we were all just having such a great time, it flew by.

James gave us all a wonderful introductory talk about the course on the first night, focusing on one's personal inspiration from within. Something which seemed so easy for some, yet which I personally had been having trouble with. I wanted so much to make things that came from me, and often wondered if I ever would be able to. Little did I know, the process had begun.

A meditation and walk on the beach the next morning to my pleasant surprise gave me the inspiration I had been waiting for. Later that morning we spent some time trying to depict our ideas onto paper, a step which I found challenging, but nevertheless all part of my development.



Glazing pots

We then all went into the workshop and took a ball of clay each, closed our eyes and created something - anything - for 5-10 minutes. It was an amazing, fun experience. Really good stuff came out of it. The rest of that day and the next few days were spent doing our own thing. Free to ask questions or for advice whenever we felt the need. I am lucky to have learnt so much from such great teachers.

As that first day went by I saw more and more clearly how my idea was developing and it's still something I enjoy working on. One of the most important things my experience at *The Art Farm* gave me was the insight I received on that first day. A seedling of inspiration was growing; it was so exciting to see I could make things that came from within.

As the days continued I had a few hiccups with my work which



Setting pots into sawdust, in the pit kiln



James lighting the kiln

were sometimes very upsetting. You know, like after working hours on something, then it cracks or the shapes go all wrong. In the end though, with the guidance and encouragement of those around me, everything turned into something great. Some, totally different from the original idea, but this reminded me of the next most important thing I learned. Often a mistake or a mishap can be made into a feature or can be changed; it can become something else; sometimes, something even better.

After making an array of pottery masterpieces, we all thought about which things would go into the pit firing and which into the raku. Another total learning experience in itself. We all pitched in to prepare and stack the pit and mix the glazes for the raku. It was fun. Then we had to go through the suspense of waiting to see the result. Never fear, we took our mind off it having a great meal.

The next clay we glazed and fired our raku stuff. The lawn was full of finished pit fired work, finished raku fired work, old buckets upside down covering smoking sawdust and precious jewels (the raku in the process of becoming) a firing hot raku kiln, a table of glazes with all of us glazing or covering or uncovering our treasures. It was great fun, busy, intriguing and full on. I think we ate around 11pm that night. But, what an end to a great week. Thanks everyone for your such special company.

Thanks Howard Williams for the great pictures and the knowledge you shared with us. Thank you so much, James Robb and Bryce Stevens for your wisdom, guidance, and the work and energy you put in to make this week so special for us all.

Something we see, or think of, something beautiful in nature or anywhere, doesn't necessarily have to be reproduced. It can serve as an inspiration, a beginning, a seed to wonderful future



Christina Barnes-Graham empties embers from her fired pot



Tutors and students relaxing together

developments, maybe continually changing, sometimes unplanned, Isn't it exciting? This is what I was lucky enough to be reminded of, and take away from my experience at the Art Farm.

Lynley Atchinson, Waiuku

The people and the setting could not help but be inspiring and encourage you to grow in knowledge and abilities. An awesome week, the essence of which is summed up here, in a Maori quotation.

*Ma tau rourou
Ma taku rourou
Ka ora te iwi*

*With your basket (of knowledge)
And my basket
There will be enrichment for all*

Visual arts paint grim picture of finances

A new study on visual artists shows them disillusioned with the declining support from *Creative New Zealand*

Underfunding has left artists fragmented, dispirited and leaderless, says a new report.

The report, commissioned by *Creative New Zealand* and a Hamilton arts trust and released on April 29, identifies serious problems with funding, advocacy and co-ordination of the visual arts.

"A picture emerges of the visual arts as a fragmented, dispirited and leaderless profession," say the report's authors, Wellington consultants, *McDermott Miller*.

Creative New Zealand receives \$4.4 million a year in grants from the Government and the rest of its income from the *Lottery Grants Board*.

Last year this was \$20.2 million.

The visual arts share of this has fallen from \$2.77 million in 1990 to \$1.72 million in 1996.

The agency cannot offer artists more support because of a lack of money, the report says.

Research showed that *Creative New Zealand's* share of annual spending on the visual arts was less than 2 percent.

The report recommends that the agency increase its funding of the visual arts and give priority to study travel, grants for individuals, capital and equipment grants, workshops, residencies, publications, public exhibitions, marketing initiatives and community projects.

It also says *Creative New Zealand* needs to do more to promote local art and artists, and suggests that it form partnerships with

the public and private sectors.

It also recommends the formation of a national organisation to develop programmes and initiatives on behalf of *Creative New Zealand*.

Artists spoken to by the report's authors had a bleak view of *Creative New Zealand*. They saw the organisation moving away from continued consultation with the visual arts sector, peer assessment and the support and initiation of one-off projects.

Several categories of artist interviewed, including those in mid-career, craftspeople, contemporary Pacific Island artists and Maori, said they felt alienated by *Creative New Zealand*.

Artists also strongly criticised *Te Papa*.

"With the exception of those directly involved in its planning and management, *Te Papa's* absorption of the *National Art Gallery* was widely perceived as a retrograde step for the visual arts," the report says.

Artists saw a deliberate move away from the museum's traditional role of collecting and promoting New Zealand visual art, a cut in the finance available for the buying of contemporary artists and the loss of a venue dedicated to visual arts.

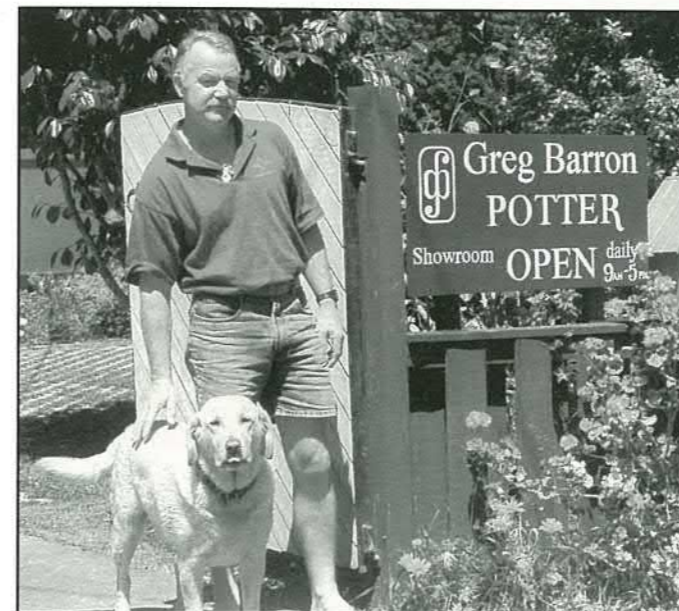
In the 1991 census, 1788 people called themselves artists - a 51 percent drop from 1986. But they have few opportunities to exhibit, the report says.

Of the more than 600 galleries and museums in New Zealand, only 33 larger ones appeared to have an interest in New Zealand contemporary art, and only seven of those were dedicated to acquiring and showing it.

- NZPA

Greg Barron

Barry Rosenburg, Ohope



The possible scenarios for **Greg Barron's** life were marked out fairly early:

Option 1: Take over the family's dairy farm operation in Matamata.

Option 2: Make top grade domestic ware pottery, thus earning a living for his own family of five, limiting his most creative perceptions to the reservoir of unrealised imagining.

Option 3: Break out, take risks, and convert the images and ideas in his mind to form and shape and substance.

As a young man, against parental wishes, Greg went for Option 2. Oh, he did try number one. Gave it a decent shot, but it was never a viable option. And for a quarter century, neither was No 3.

"For years, first in Golden Bay, at the northern tip of the South Island, then in Kaeo, Northland, I turned out domestic ware that was good, that put food on my own table," Greg says. "And for all those years I'd be sitting there at the wheel, up to my armpits in clay, seeing these wonderful pictures of pots in my head. But also in my head were these voices, authority figures I guess you could call them, who would tell me to stick with what I knew, the conventional work, and keep the dollars coming in."

Greg's first encounter with the craft came at *Matamata College*. Upon graduation - "a real hick of a kid" - he got on a train to Wellington, where he spent two years at the *Polytechnic School of Design*.

Not yet 20, there were still those options to sort out. In the end, familial obligation won out. For a time.

So over the next five years Greg was a dairy farmer, but not a day went by he didn't question what he was doing. Then came a crunch.

"It was somewhere between a spiritual experience and a breakdown," he recalls. I knew then there was no way I could be a farmer the rest of my life."

He was introduced to Mirek Smisek and went to Te Horo, ostensibly to spend a week with the noted potter.

"I suppose, because I was good at things like mowing lawns, he let me hang around for four months."

The association with Smisek transformed, Greg.

"It wasn't so much conscious teaching on his part, as what I

picked up being around him. Here was a man who had rubbed shoulders with **Leach** and **Hamada** - the top masters. Being there, I couldn't help gravitating to the core of what was happening in the modern pottery movement.

A second mentor was **Yvonne Rust**, with whom he worked for six weeks at her Parua Bay studio, out towards the Whangarei Heads. It was shortly after, in 1973, that Greg married and moved to Golden Bay.

"I was making a living selling pots right from the beginning," he says.

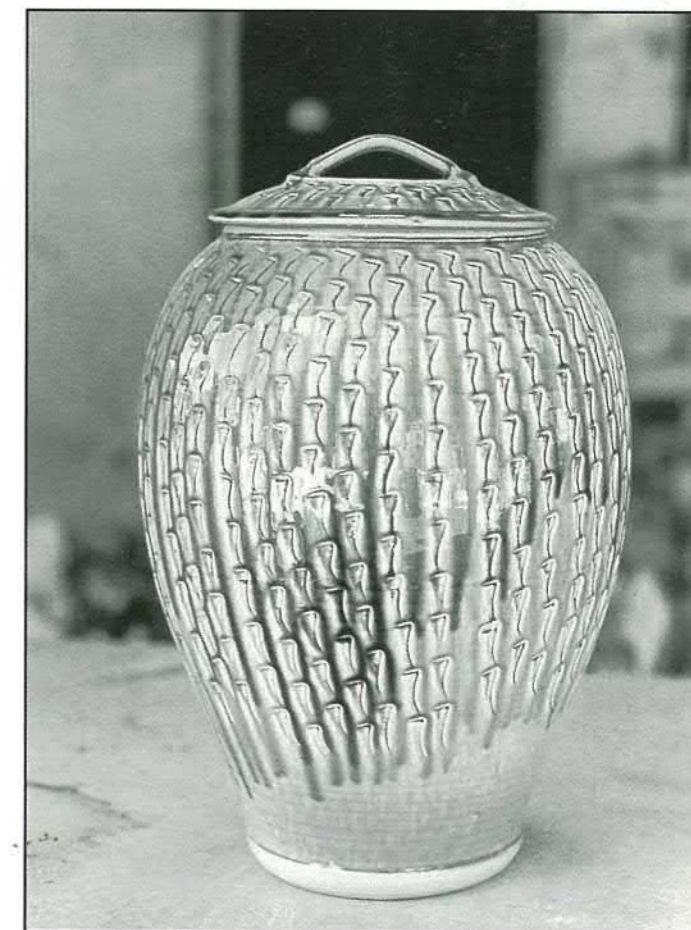
Three sons came along in rapid succession, and in 1978 the Barrons shifted to Kaeo, where Greg continued to turn out domestic ware that was of the quality to earn an award of merit from the *New Zealand Society of Potters*, and the bills were being paid. But he could not help noting that other potters were experimenting with new concepts, radical ideas, while his own remained locked in his head.

Even after a divorce that left Greg solo, free, and unencumbered by the need to provide support for others, the cork still was snugly in.

He was an entrant in the *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* in 1991, received an award of merit at the *New Zealand Society of Potters XPO* in 1993, and last year was one of 29 selected potters in competition for the *Norsewear Award*.

In 1994 Greg was appointed director of the *Northland Craft Trust*, and the following year was one of three of the *Trust's* potters invited to China as past of a cultural exchange. (*NZ Potter*, Vol 38, No 1, 1996).

All feathers in the cap, but it wasn't until meeting **Zhang Jin Ling**, a sculptor from Suzhou, China, last year, that Greg moved to bust out of the creative closet he had long locked himself into.





"Jin Ling's life in China has been anything but easy," he says. "There's been repression beyond anything we in New Zealand can imagine. But she has a strong cultural tradition she respects enough to bring through into her work, in a way I'd never been taught to do. I saw right off she had an artistic honesty, an integrity, that I lacked. She sees something she feels she'd be happy with, and goes straight to it without even considering the restrictions of convention."

Working alongside Jin Ling in Whangarei, Greg in the past year has yanked out the cork, the resultant spillage of ideas into forms and colours having earned him selection as one of only eight New Zealand exhibitors - out of 94 worldwide, culled from 790 entrants - for this year's prestigious *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award*. (See page 13)

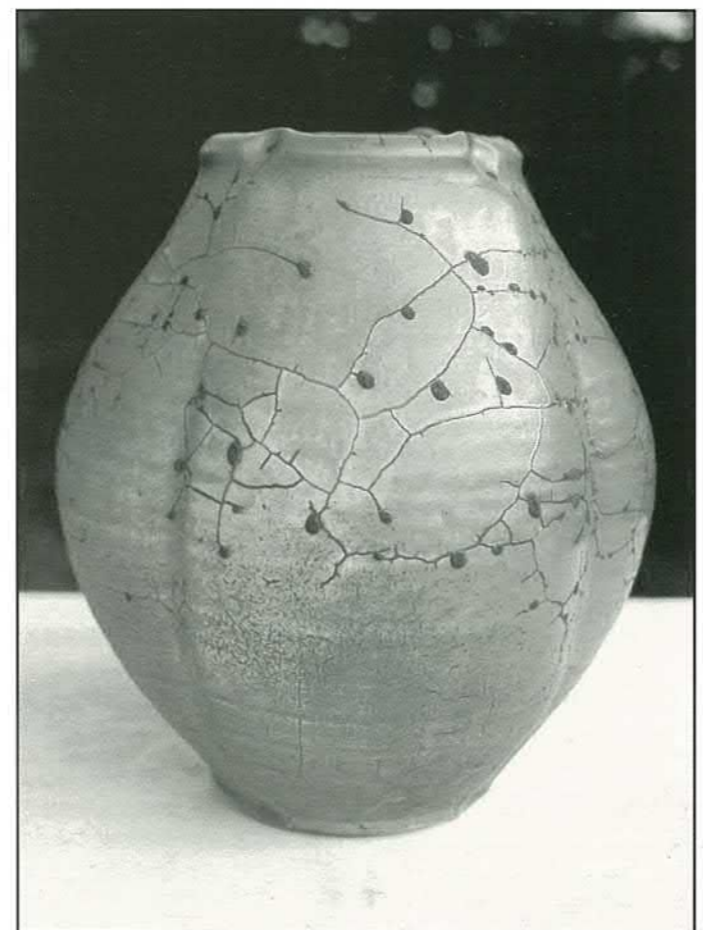
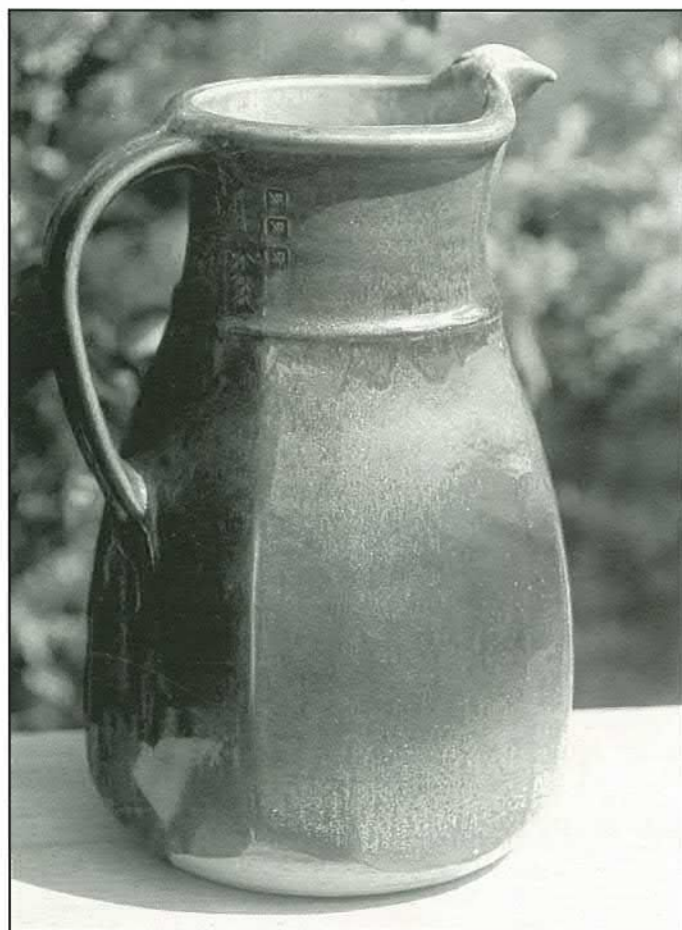
"I certainly don't regret all those years potting domestic ware," says Greg, now 50. "For sure I was perfecting my craft so that today I can produce what I envisage to an exactitude I might not have in the past. Yet I know that my failure to take risks, to follow my true intuition, was not so much situational as a fear of making "mistakes", of losing face.

"Just look at today's market," he adds. "Since the industry was deregulated, so many good potters have left the wheel, and with ample reason. You can buy cheap imported dinner sets for \$20. I wouldn't make a set of dinner ware for less than \$400!

"At the same time, this has served as an impetus for New Zealand potters to look more squarely at new ideas, at what it means to be a potter."

For Greg Barron, what it means is to explore the images that arise in his mind instead of sticking to the safe and secure. ■

Above left: Greg explains his home-built filter press



Norsewear Art Award, 1998

Selector : JoAnne Northrup
Curator : de Saisset Museum
Santa Clara, California

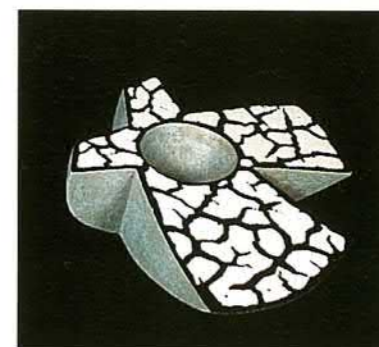


Winner Ceramics and Glass
Tessa McSherry, Waipukurau
"Fur Slipper", slipcast ceramic

Photos Howard Williams



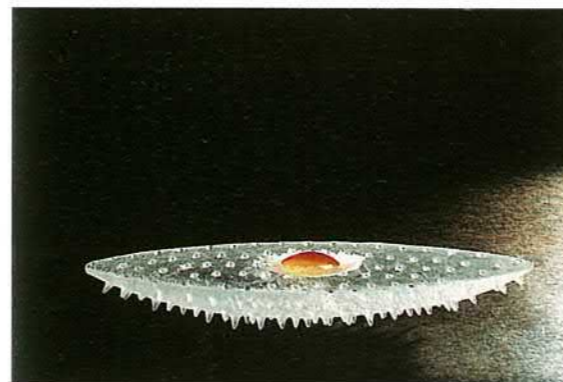
Merit : Toby Stafford, Kaitiaki.
"Salted Manganese Box", Ceramic



Rick Rudd, Wanganui.
"Multi-fired Bowl", Ceramic



Winner : Jenny Bain, Dunedin.
"Cocoons", knotless netting. Fibre

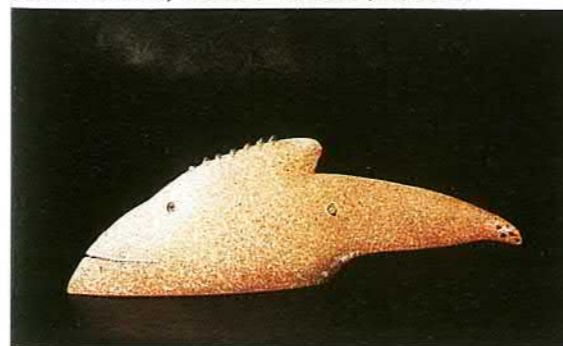


Merit : Liz Sharek, Auckland. "Nut", Glass



Peter Shearer, Auckland
"Voices from the Past", Ceramic

Steve Fullmer, Nelson. "Li Bido", Ceramic



Helen Keen, Dunedin. "Espresso Landscape for Two", Ceramic



Merit : Layla Walter, Auckland.
"Patterned Kete", Glass



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WHITESTONWARE Very plastic dense whitestoneware, good for throwing. Works well in gas, wood and oil fired kilns. Shrinkage 12-13%. Cone 10-11. Off white (R)/white (OX)

WHITESTONE Very plastic dense whitestoneware, good for oxidized firings. Shrinkage 6% to dry— 12-13% fired. Cone 9-10.

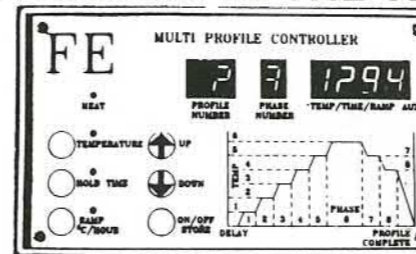
WHITE SLABWARE Coarse whitestoneware, good for slab work and handbuilding. Shrinkage 12-13%. Cone 9-11.

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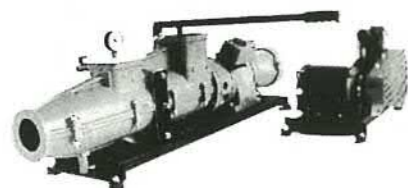
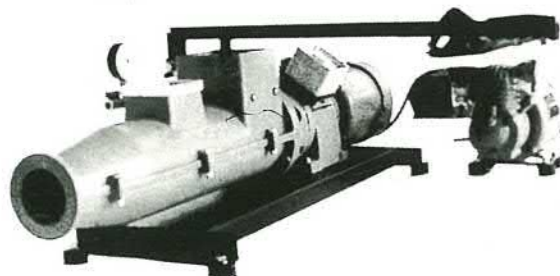
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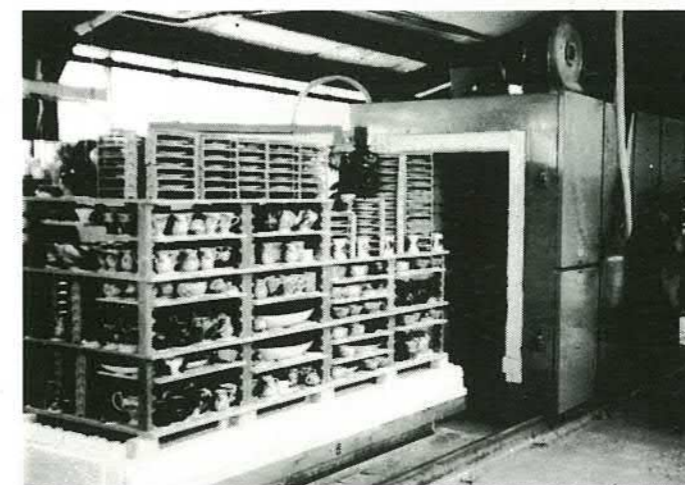
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Craft Potters Nelson

Annual Spring Exhibition
September 1997

Photos by Bob Heatherbell



Guest Potter **Peter Shearer**, Auckland
Green Vases



Guest Potter **Jenny Turnbull**, Cromwell
Otago Summer Wine Plate



Paul Laird, Bird on a Mountain Top



Peter Shearer, Auckland. Plate



Allan Ballard. Brown Trout



Royce McGlashen. Serving Dish



Jenny Turnbull, Cromwell
Otago Summer Fruit Vase
Diana MacMillen. Herb Tea



Katie Gold. Orange Top Shell Pot



Michael Perry. Cups



Bob Heatherbell. Terra Sigillata



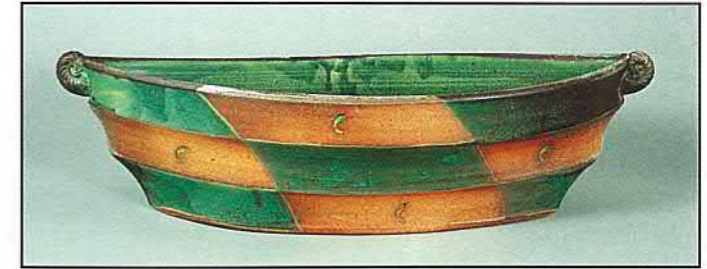
Steve Fullmer. Reef Heads

Jeff Oestreich

Albany Village Pottery



Jeff Oestreich (right) with Renton Murray *ex-alfred*



Fish Dish, 500mmH

Photos by Howard Williams



Three Creamers, 130mmH



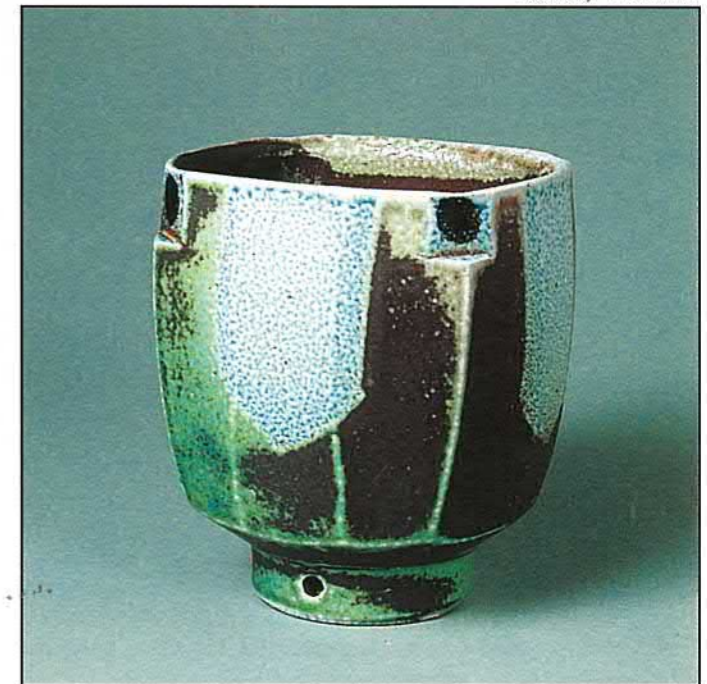
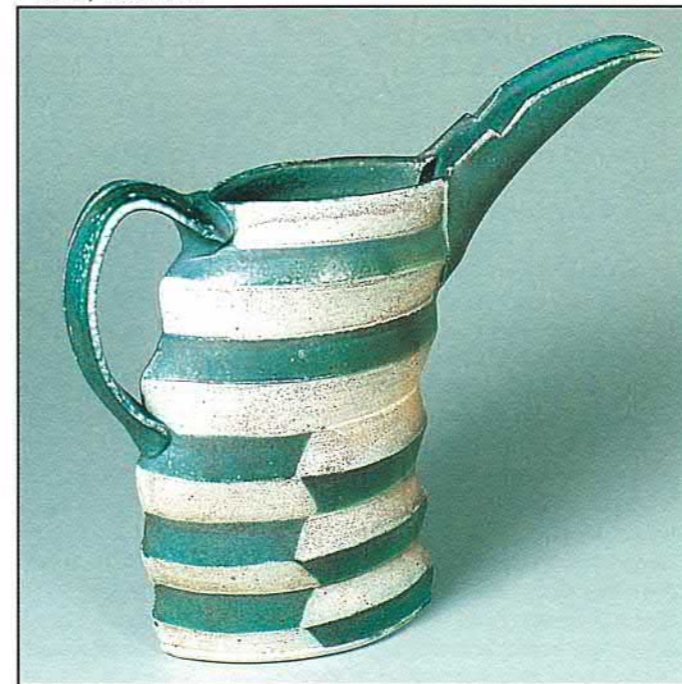
Creamers, largest 110mmH

Pitcher, 255mmH



Teapot, 135mmH

Beaker, 110mmH



Jeffrey Oestreich

Albany Village Gallery, January 1998

Howard Williams, Auckland

American potter **Jeffrey Oestreich** studied at the *University of Minnesota* and the *Bemidji* school of the *University of Northern Minnesota*. His involvement with, and then dedication to pottery led him to work as an apprentice from 1969 - 71 at the famous *Leach* pottery in St Ives, England, where the ethos of the post-war revival of craft pottery was generated. As well as gaining craft skills Jeff soaked up the philosophy which informed this world-wide pottery movement, returning to his home studio in Taylors Falls, Minnesota, to become a full-time potter and teacher.

Now he is internationally known, especially since his unique winning of a double merit in the 1991 *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* for a thrown and altered stoneware teapot glazed in the glossy black of tenmoku. Every year since, he has had an entry of either a teapot or beaked pitcher accepted for this prestigious exhibition.

On his first visit to New Zealand, to collect his award in 1991, he fell in love with the country and made so many friends amongst local potters that he has returned several times; in 1992 as a travelling tutor for the *New Zealand Society of Potters*, taking schools in both North and South Islands for pottery groups; in 1995 as artist in residence for three months at *Unitec* and then early in 1997. His work has been exhibited at *Pots of Ponsonby* and the *Albany Village Pottery Gallery* as well as those examples he took with him on tour. He now teaches and exhibits internationally and has had his work profiled in several ceramics magazines, including the *New Zealand Potter Vol 33, No 2, 1991: Vol 37, No 3, 1995: Vol 39, No 1, 1998*.

At the end of 1997, after working in Australia, Oestreich took the opportunity to again visit Auckland to help build a new kiln for salt-glaze potters **Rosie** and **Renton Murray** at their *Hillside Pottery* in Oratia, West Auckland. For this visit he also brought 51 pieces of his latest pottery made in the States, for a solo exhibition at Albany.

Oestreich specialises in salt glazing, but uses sodium carbonate (common washing soda) instead of straight salt (sodium chloride) which produces more pollution during firing. The pots may be decorated with glazes, stains and slips for colour, but the overall body is vapour-glazed during firing. His propane-fired kiln has some 20 holes through which the sodium carbonate can be introduced to the ware in varying amounts at different places and at specific times or temperatures, the material being volatilised by the flame and carried throughout the kiln chamber.

Wherever this vapour contacts the silica in clay it combines with it to produce a glaze, including on kiln walls and shelves holding the pots. It can also produce the "orange-peel" texture typical of salt glazing, though the effects are usually more subtle than those of the chloride. The finish can be dry, though still talc-smooth to the touch, or it can gleam like pearl-shell.

As in a standard salt firing, pots must be separated from the shelves so they don't become permanently glaze-cemented to them, by being placed on small pats - flattened balls of special clay - which are later broken off, leaving tell-tale wounds which are finally sanded smooth to show as faded circles. These can also be seen in rim galleries and correspondingly underneath lids where lid and pot have been kept safely separate, though as close together as possible to ensure a good fit after firing, through similar shrinkage. These signature marks provide an "information detail" about how the pots were fired. ■

Oestreich is fascinated by such information detail. Everything is thrown, including his square, multi-faceted and even sharp-ended oval forms which are cut, gusseted, rejoined and otherwise manipulated after being thrown, to produce non-round pots which still carry all the information describing their hand-thrown beginnings.

His *Fish Dishes*, designed to cook a whole fish, are good examples of this, the round pot being cut into sections, parts of which are rejoined on a slab-rolled base to form an elongated boat-shape; radically altered, but still showing all the information marks of being thrown in the round.

Altering pots in this manner gives Oestreich spatial problems he finds satisfying to resolve, particularly the conjunction of double-curved form and angle which can change the apparent perspective when seen from different viewpoints. To make the shape work he must carefully design the meeting-lines of planes, the physical effect of which he then accents visually with geometric positive-negative patterns, using colour offset against the natural clay.

Sometimes this patterning visually distorts the three-dimensions; corrugations appear to lift bodily out of a gently curved surface, or separate forms seem to stand close together when they are in reality cunningly drawn on a single plane. Exploiting these visual conundrums without spoiling the overall aesthetic of the form is part of Oestreich's magic.

Against the iron-rich, warmly toasted clay, glaze is mostly matt greens and blacks with grey-blue and lichen-like patches of sooty black. Salting adds subtle colour bleeds especially where it breaks over the soft corners of cut facets, or draws a fine orange-peel texture imparting a silvery glister to some areas.

Most vessels have a "warm" and a "cold" side - an information detail showing how they were placed in the kiln in relation to the firing flow. Occasionally the copper from a glaze reduces to give blushes of plummy red. Some colours applied by stencil-like blocking develop haloes around their edges.

Against the dominant forest of green and black, one group of vases and pourers is mustard-warm in yellows and ochres with accents of black.

The working form is important. Handles fit for use, look a little "quick" in the top curve, but this proves comfortable and prevents the hand from slipping. Spouts on jugs and teapots are elegantly elongated like toucan beaks, almost overstated, but always complimentary to the pot's lines and in balance with the handles - and they pour beautifully. Other "information details" animate the spouts where small triangular "nicks" are taken out of spout edges, or triangles added on.

Where a tea bowl has four feet, these are not added; a deep foot-ring is turned and then cut away in arcs leaving segments as feet which still describe the full circle of their origin. Sometimes this cutting is minimal; perhaps just tiny triangles removed, a mere suggestion of lifting the pot onto feet instead of its standing solid on a ring - and these removed triangles may be added back as decoration; as positive echoes of the negative spaces left by their removal.

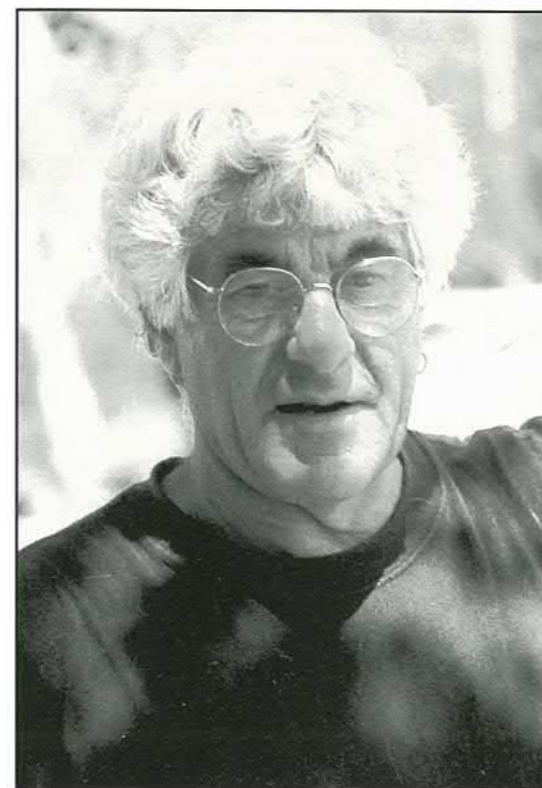
The creamers or oil-pourers have evolved from the explored process of throwing, cutting and joining. Small ellipses in plan, sharp in bow and stern, they fit the hand perfectly for delicate pouring, a half-round cover directing fluid into a tube spout. A coiled minimal "handle" may echo tiny coiled feet; decoration again in geometric patterns following the form and maybe delightfully fooling the eye.

These pots are masterful; working sculptures carrying a signature specific to the potter's personal aesthetic. They have a timeless quality about them, a son-of-Leach genetic inheritance, yet they are very modern and unmistakably Oestreich. ■

Morris & James

Howard Williams, Auckland

Photos by Howard Williams



Anthony Morris

A widely travelled and energetic entrepreneur, **Anthony (Ant) Morris** began his adult career as a shepherd. During this farming beginning, his work ethic was set in place for life when he met the record-breaking sheep-shearer, **Godfrey Bowen**. From him Ant learned that success in any "craft" based on physical skills comes through analysing every movement to gain the ultimate in ergonomic efficiency, then to fine-tune each until they flow into the rhythm of the whole, creating a choreographed "dance" which, with dedicated practice becomes the best, the fastest, the most efficient - and the most satisfying.

This pertains to all repetitive work of an individual using tools or machinery, but even more so where a team must work together - just watch how a sheep-shearing gang works, or a pit-stop crew in a Grand Prix.

In his sheep-shearing, Bowen analysed what the task needed and then designed the sequence of every hand-hold and foot movement; every stroke of his handpiece had to be economic of time and energy, and to finish millimetres and milliseconds away from the following stroke. Savings between each stroke were as important to the winning formula as the strokes themselves. The rhythm enabled fluency which meant speed, with accuracy. Impeccable maintenance of tools and intimate knowledge of materials were also important and the whole had to be approached with a passion to be the best.

In the art world, this is epitomised by a glass-blowing team. The dance, when correctly choreographed is astounding; any break in the rhythm can be disastrous. The creative idea and the initial design are important, but these cannot be brought to fruition without the artisans' skill, the conductor and the choreographed dance.



Throughout his career Ant has remembered this lesson and applies it to everything he undertakes; personally in his work on the wheel, or with his decorating brushes and especially when he designs processes or bench lay-outs to keep his workshop teams efficient.

In the early 1960s Ant travelled to Europe picking up work of any kind as well as becoming a builder and studying anthropology in South Africa. Then in England his work-dance was found again when he saw potter **Robin Welch** making precise chess pieces and throwing stoneware jars for salt-glazing. He was intrigued by the precision and economy of movement, by the rhythm of throwing and turning. He was also excited by the aesthetics of the pots. He had to have a go - and was hooked!

Soon Ant had set up his own pottery workshop in Suffolk and within 3 months was earning his living making ashtrays - self-taught on a *Bolton* wheel with double-cone drive (one steel cone and one of stacked leather discs). Learning the skills was choreographing and practising the dance.

The other learning was about aesthetics which hadn't featured much in sheep-shearing or building work, but as Ant now quotes, "Art creeps up behind you", and within 18 months he submitted pots to, and was accepted as a full professional member of the *Craftsmen Potters Association of Great Britain*. No mean feat!

Anthony returned to his native New Zealand in 1977, a fully dedicated potter. Wanting a change from stoneware, he looked for a source of iron-rich terracotta clay, which he found in the beautiful Matakana valley, out towards the coast from Warkworth. Here on the banks of the river was a clay pit which had been worked a hundred years before by pioneer brickmakers. Again he was hooked - he bought the property.

Over 20 million years before, during the Miocene period, the area was covered by a shallow sea. A chain of volcanoes off the west coast showered ash which sank to the bottom and eventually consolidated to form sandstone. Tectonic plate movements gradually pushed this upwards until it became dry land and subsequent weathering transformed some of the minerals into clay. The river carried this clay out from the parent rock, forming rich deposits along its banks.

Now exposed in high terraces, this clay is mined from the bank tops by backhoe and processed in *Morris & James'* purpose-designed and built plant, which uses some 240 cubic metres of terracotta each year (about 300 tonnes). The only clay bought in is some *Southern Clays' Abbots Red*, which is mixed into their body for kitchen and cooking ware.

Ant started here making garden pots, planters, tiles, and other terracotta architectural items - his wife and business partner then, was the architect **Sue James** - and quickly becoming successful employed another person at the end of the first year. After four years, the staff numbered six.



Morris & James front entrance



Unglazed planters



Kiln IV in its "tin shed". Ant Morris with visiting Japanese potter, Haruko Harada



The greenware drying room



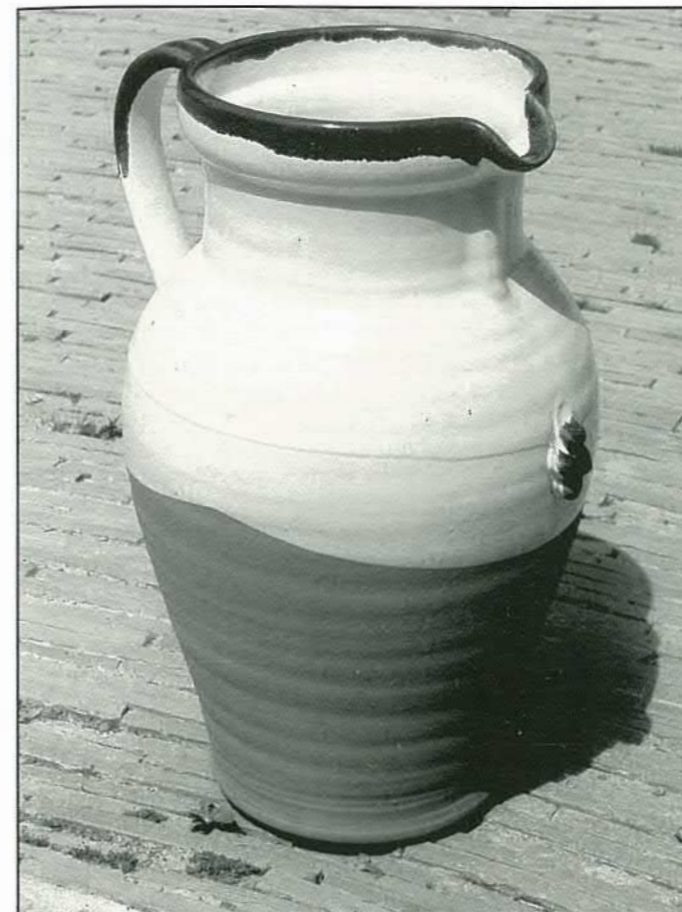
Terracotta pitchers

Decorating department



Glazed planters

The tile showroom



Large terracotta pitcher

Mike Rose joined him early on, a government *Department of Science and Industrial Research (DSIR)* industrial chemist who after 11 years is still with him testing and adjusting the clay bodies as they are dug and mixed, formulating and testing the glazes and doing the all-important costings. There are now 30 people working at *Morris and James*, including a full-time engineer who oversees building and maintaining the equipment, including clay crusher, double-shaft mixer, pug-mill, de-airing extruder and the gas kilns.

Ant has a daughter, **Roz** who often works in the showroom in her holidays, and two sons, **Patrick**, a student of Classics at *Otago University* and who also helps in his holidays and **Jake**, who works in the wet clay area.

The team even built the vast workshops, offices and showrooms, and restaurant as well as Ant's own house and the magnificent new swimming pool, which of course has a specially designed tile mural floor. Square-section pipes of extruded terracotta make great pillars to support the portico roof of this latter-day Roman bath-house complex, and the surrounding gardens are complete with tiled fountains and Ant's own sculpture in terracotta, carved stone or cast glass and bronze.

Three people, including Ant, actually design the ware and its decoration, though every new idea has to be passed by him before it goes into production. Ant says, pragmatically, that he doesn't necessarily have to *like* every design - if their market research tells him it will sell, then they make it. I guess marketing manager **Trish Allen** has a hand in this aspect as well.

In the mid 1980s the range of terracotta ware was extended to include brightly coloured glazes, not only on pots, but also on wall tiles, hand-decorated platters and later, stencil-cut or moulded wall decorations. The latest additions are large patio

planters with bas-relief moulded fish slip-luted on and glazed in high colour.

After being thrown or extruded and manipulated, green pots are lined up in a vast climate-controlled room for perfect, even drying. The pots are then loaded onto a kiln trolley which when full will measure 10ft x 4ft x 6ft high - roughly 3 x 1.2 x 1.8 metres. This goes into a pre-heating kiln which stays at a constant 100°C, totally drying the ware. When the trolley is withdrawn it is wheeled straight into one of the four gas kilns, the previous fired load having been removed when the temperature came down to 100°C. The new firing starts then, going up to 1020°C for terracotta and 1080°C for a glaze firing.

A surprising amount of time, fuel and breakages are saved by this turn-around system of never allowing a kiln to go totally cold, and it extends the life of kiln and furniture - part of the efficiency of the choreographed dance.

The four kilns, all designed and built on site, are each around 500cu ft, fibre-lined, with one being fired by aspirated burners using gas brought in by road-tanker. The other three, also gas fired, have computer controlled excess-air burner systems, including one just built (at a cost of around \$80,000) which looks like a painted iron garden shed complete with pitched roof. This is another innovation - outside the actual kiln, is the "shed", with the air gap between acting as a most efficient insulator, the heat off the kiln naturally going up into the "attic" and then being ducted away. This excess heat is not recycled for use, as extensive trials have proved the economies of collecting and using it are not viable.

Other waste materials are recycled however. Spray glazing is done in two "space-pod" booths moulded in fibreglass, with extractor fans collecting overspray of either glaze or engobes into a special settling tank. Every two years or so this material is removed, mixed with clay and made into blocks, which are fired and then ground up to make the pottery's own grog. Any other unusable chemicals are rendered inert by being fired into clay blocks which can safely be buried in a waste pit.

Decorating is done in a room open to the showroom so visitors can watch the process while choosing their purchases from display stands.

In the mid 1980s *Morris & James* had their own retail outlets in Auckland's Parnell, in Wellington and Christchurch, but they have found it better to supply other outlets and now their work can be found in some 30 places around the country. Tiles used to be about 60% of their sales until the government's policy of opening up imports made it difficult to remain competitive in this field, which now comprises only around 3% of their turnover. Their main sales however, come from the visiting public and this is where their growth strategy is now aimed.

Because of an active campaign to bring people to the works, it has become a fascinating place for tourists. A cafe/bar/restaurant was added in 1994, set around a (surprise!) fully-tiled courtyard with garden pots full of flowers amongst the umbrellaed tables and a central ceramic fountain. The showroom is large and fully stocked in the style of a factory/warehouse. Plans are at present being drawn up to build a unique overhead walkway incorporating hanging gardens and eventually a full complex of conference centre and entertainment facilities.

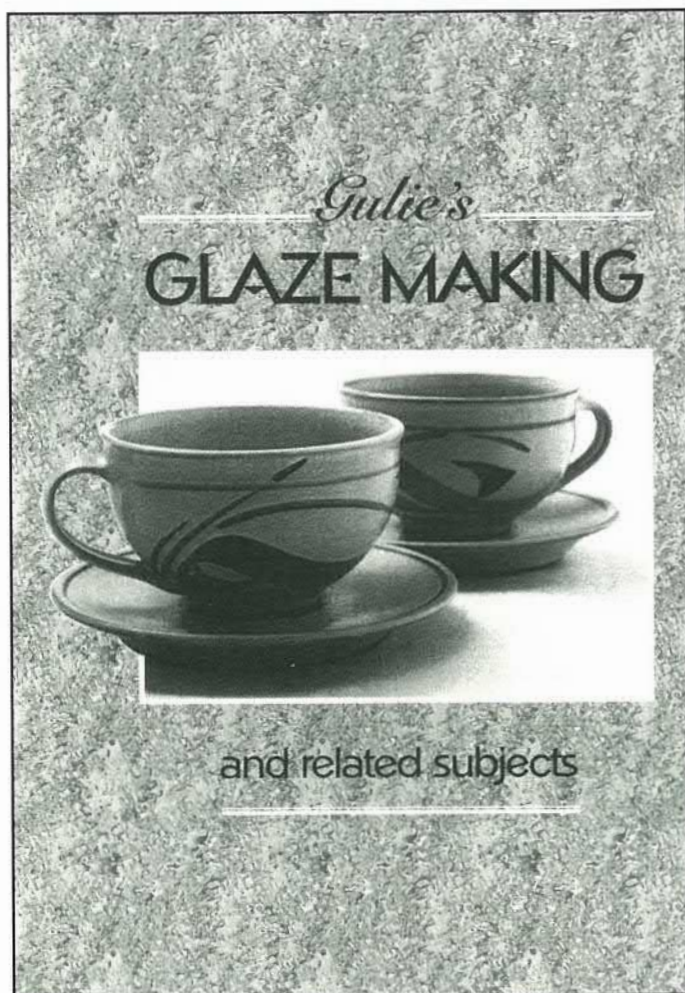
As an excursion into this aspect, *Rotary*, from its club in Orewa organised a major Artists and Artisans Expo at *Morris & James* for the weekend, 18 - 19 April. This exhibited for sale, high quality fine art, ceramics, textiles, glass art, tiffany work, hand-crafted furniture and innovative craft artistry, invited from artists and craftspeople from a large area. It is hoped this successful event will become an annual art and craft festival on a grand scale.

The choreographed dance continues. ■

Book Reviews

Gulie's Glaze Making and related subjects

Gulielma Dowrick, Wellington



This handbook has been published on behalf of the *New Zealand Society of Potters* as part of its fund-raising projects. It has been supported by *Creative New Zealand*. The book is available within New Zealand at \$18 (includes P&P). Overseas rates by application. Discount of 20% on orders of 10 or more. Write (and make cheques payable to):

New Zealand Society of Potters
PO Box 54 015
Mana
Wellington 6230

If you are serious about learning to develop your own glazes, and not just by the experimental, suck-it-and-see methods, this book is a must.

Wellington potter **Gulielma Dowrick** has put her extensive knowledge and teaching experience into an excellent book giving an understanding of basic glaze technology. It takes the reader through simple-to-understand steps, so glazes can be formulated through a knowledge of the basic chemical happenings and how to control them. A plus is, it deals with local materials and suppliers.

What - what a glaze is and what it should do.

Why - why certain materials are necessary, and in what amounts, in the make-up of glazes so they work.

How - how to formulate a basic glaze from these materials and then how to test it for your own clay and kiln conditions. Also how to adjust it, knowing what you are doing, to get the results you want.

Then -- how to use the tested results to build your own successful repertoire of colours and textures.

The book deals with stoneware glazes, but the system is basically the same for any temperature range. The writing and illustrations are clear and easily followed, yet are scientific in their approach. A foretaste of the author's ability to pass on her studied knowledge of the subject was given in our last issue (*Vol 39, No 3, 1997*), where she showed how 21 glazes could be developed from a base of three.

Being very practical, the book starts with a reference to *Health*, and recommends that everyone starts by reading **Rosemary Perry's** *Potters Beware* to make the following exercises safer for those taking part. (Reviewed *NZ Potter*, *Vol 36, No 1, 1996* and also available from the *NZ Society of Potters*).

Section 1 describes how to make test tiles for the glaze-making exercises, how to accurately use scales to weigh your ingredients, how to sieve them (and even how to cheaply make a sieve) and how to make a hydrometer so the correct amount of water can be added. It also describes how to use pyrometric cones. All this is written in clear language for the "beginner", but don't be fooled, the information is worth being read by even the most experienced potter. It explains some things that many might take for granted without really understanding the *why*.

The importance of keeping records is underscored. After a firing, if you don't know exactly what you did, you can't easily repeat the good results, or avoid the bad.

Section 2 explains the three major *Components* of glaze and what they do and *Section 3* lists *Raw Materials* and how they fit into those three categories. *Section 4* talks about *Surface* and *Colour* and then gives a comprehensive list of 21 recipes which seem not nearly so daunting, having just read the previous explanations.

Section 5 gives methods of adding one or more of the materials to a given recipe and how to knowledgeably test and adjust the results. Here we go into *Line Blends*, *Triaxial Blends* and even *Quadaxial Blends*, but the writing and clear diagrams make these easy to understand - if the processes are physically followed through in the studio, in the steps as explained in this book, lots of potters' anxieties over technical complexities would be removed.

Section 6 deals with *Faults* and how to overcome them and *Section 7* gives recipes for decoration under and on your successful new glazes. *Section 8* gives *Other Odd Notes* and *Section 9* has excellent hints on how to use LPG and gas kilns. This, written by registered craftsman gas fitter **Alan Hunter**, is an article previously printed in *Claynews*.

Section 10 describes, again with clear illustrations, how to repair fibre blanket in kilns. The book closes with an appendix listing properties of oxide components and a small *Book List* of other good books on the subject of glazes.

Gulie's Glaze Making is commendably scholarly in its research and is put together in a professional manner with good layout and editing. At its price it should be in every potter's workshop, comprehensively read and used in practice by both professional and less experienced potters.

It is interesting to put it beside **Kindra Douglas'** booklet reviewed below, which, covering similar ground though from a different approach, also has good material, but an unfortunate lack of proof-reading and editing. ■

Exploring the Potential of Found Materials

Kindra Douglas

White Feather Publications, Dunedin

Reviewed by Howard Williams

\$15 from Kindra Douglas
c/o Postal Delivery Centre
Karitane
Dunedin

EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF FOUND MATERIALS:

CLAY BODY, SLIP & GLAZE



KINDRA DOUGLAS

1996

A very compact little book, A5 size with 44 pages, a sort of self-published exercise. It is of photocopy printing standard with not very high quality black and white photographs and heaps of typing errors - but don't let this fool you. It is a little gem.

I find it heartwarming to hear people are still coming through the current ceramic education system excited about what clay is and finding out what it can do. Too many are just buying ready-made materials with which to express their "arty" ideas, without any understanding of the character of clay; its natural behaviours and idiosyncrasies - its *spirit*.

Kindra Douglas is one of those lucky people (some might say 'seriously misguided eccentrics') who have been "hooked" by clay. Much of the credit for this must go to the staff of the Ceramics Department of the *Otago Polytechnic's Art School*, particularly her lecturer **Lawrence Ewing** who, for her third year of a BFA, set her on the path to compiling this book. He is well-known for his work on computer design and production work for triaxial blends - for glaze technology in general. Some of his

material has been utilised in this writing, for which the author gives him credit.

Ewing set his pupil a research assignment, challenging her to explore this area of ceramics to greater depth and she, becoming increasingly fascinated with the potential her research revealed, decided to share her excitement and knowledge with others, particularly students, but also with anyone working/playing with clay.

So we have this informal, at times chatty, manual which nevertheless clearly and simply, sets out scientific methods for testing found raw materials. Its purpose is "to provide a series of simple tests to **discover** the potential of this material, and then to make it **usable** for your creative work".

The manual is divided into logical chapters, each of which has a section titled, *Action*, which explains what to physically do with the information gained from that chapter's tests.

Found Materials are explained as "anything you see while out adventuring" which you feel has a firing potential, as a *clay body ingredient*, a *slip*, or a *glaze*. This might be clay, silt, easily crushable rock and sand - and we are given the advice to "**Always** carry a note-pad, a few plastic bags and a hand trowel in your car. **Always** make a note of where each sample came from, and put it **in** the bag with the sample."

A map of the author's own local district is included showing where various of her materials have been found, though strangely the list of *identity codes and locations of found materials* has little meaning when read with the *Location Map* on the adjacent page to which it presumably refers.

The materials are found in road cuttings, on riverbanks, in ponds, quarries and on the coast. It reminded me of the early 1970s when every serious potter I knew collected a bagful of certain clays on certain bends of particular roads whenever they travelled them, sharing the treasure with fellow potters at both ends of their journey. Many North Island potters probably still have unlabelled bags of Mt Messenger papa or West Coast iron-sand somewhere in the studio!

Simple tests are then described on how to fire the material to assess its potential, and how to record and interpret these tests. They can be divided into the *clay*, *slip*, *glaze* categories and then samples made up to do line blends or triaxial tests. Do not be turned off by the perceived complexity of doing these tests; this book shows how, with a logical and simple one-step-at-a-time progression, and meticulous recording, these tests can be easily done. Once you get the hang of it, they become ever more fascinating and will add to your personal clay/glaze repertoire, as well as increase your knowledge and understanding of the whole ceramic process.

The triaxial blends are explained with diagrams and recipes which will give you a wide range of subtle colour or texture changes which you cannot get direct from bought packets - effects no other potter can reproduce unless you share the results of your tests.

This book will be a good addition to any potter's reading list and especially to teachers and club groups. Students should not only read it; they should use it as a manual and seriously work from it.

As an editor (and I make the odd mistake too!) I just wish the text had been given to a professional proof-reader before it was published; it deserves better presentation. References to page 30, should be page 29; there are far too many typing mistakes - several words have different spellings even on the same page; some words are obviously missing and there are extra ones which need to be removed.

All this does not really hinder the purpose of the book, but with so much effort and enthusiasm put into it, it only needed an extra hour of care to make it right. ■

Notices

Ceramics Monthly

International Competition is open to utilitarian and sculptural ceramics. To be held at *Columbus Convention Centre* in conjunction with the *National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA)* conference, March 15-21, 1999. No entry fee. Juried from slides. Cash awards, colour catalogue. Deadline date for entries by slide is 30 September 1998. For further information and entry forms contact:

Ceramics Monthly
International Competition
PO Box 6102
Westerville
Ohio 43086-6102
USA
Ph: 001 614 523 1660
Fax: 001 614 891 8960
E-mail: editorial@ceramicsmonthly.org

Ceramic Millennium

July 13-17, 1999

Ceramic Millennium, the Eighth International Ceramics Symposium of the *Ceramics Arts Foundation*, will comprise five major components: a four-day symposium featuring educators, artists, critics, writers and historians; a film festival; a resources fair of materials, services and equipment; a festival of events and exhibitions celebrating the avant garde in ceramic art; and a series of thematic guided tours through Europe. For further information contact:

Ceramics Arts Foundation
24 West 57 Street #305
New York
NY 10019
USA
Ph: 001 212 246 2205
Fax: 001 212 489 5168
E-mail: ceramics@mail.idt.net

Ceramics Symposium

Bechyne, Czechoslovakia

The *International Foundation for the Symposium of Ceramics, Bechyne*. For information contact:

Dr Jana Horneková
UP Museum
17 Listopadu
Praha 1
Czechoslovakia

Sydney Mayer Fund

International Ceramics Award

An international exhibition and competition. The 1998 jurors are **Bern Emmerichs** and the director of the *Shepparton Art Gallery*. Premier award of Aus \$15,000. The deadline is 1 August 1998. Information and entry forms from:

The Director
Shepparton Art Gallery
Locked Bag 1000
Shepparton 3632
Australia
Ph/Fax: 0061 3 5821 6352
Web: www.vicnet.net.au/~sheppag

17th International Gold Coast Ceramic Art Award

Entry to the 1998 *Gold Coast Ceramic Art Award* is by 3 slides or 3 photographs which, with entry forms and fees (A\$20 total for 1 or 2 entries) must be with the organisers by July 1. Notification of successful acceptance will be by July 31. Selected entries must then arrive by post or freight by September 25, or be hand delivered by September 28.

The judging, this year by Australian ceramist **Jeff Mincham**, will take place on September 30 and the exhibition will run from October 3 to 30.

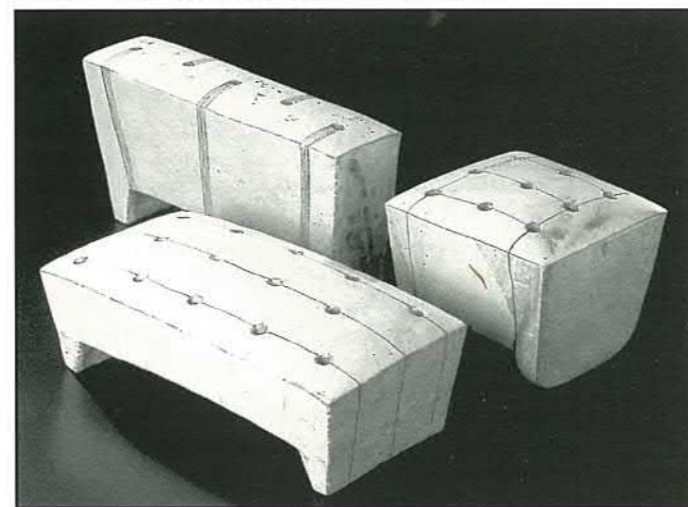
The main Award is A\$5,000 - this is an acquisition award - with additional purchases for the *Gold Coast City Art Gallery* collection of up to A\$3,000. All work must be for sale and a commission of 33% will be deducted from sales for exhibition expenses.

Entry forms can be obtained from:
Gold Coast Ceramic Art Award
PO Box 6615
Gold Coast Mail Centre
Australia 9726
Ph: 0061 7 5581 6154
Fax: 0061 7 5581 6594

Faenza

The 51st International Competition for Contemporary Ceramic Art

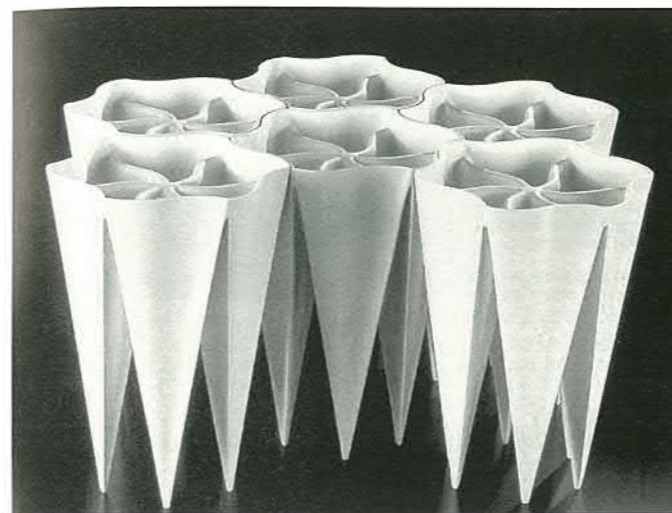
This will be held in Faenza, Italy from May to October, 1999. The aim is to stimulate research and the renewal of techniques, materials and expressive forms and methods.



Michael Cleff's "Vases," to approximately 43 cm in length, "Premio Faenza" winner at the "International Competition of Contemporary Ceramics" at the International Museum of Ceramics, Faenza, Italy

The competition is promoted by *Faenza City Council's International Museum of Ceramics*, and is open to individual and associated artists. Group participation may be organised with the supervision of government ministries, cultural bodies, recognised associations or similar organisations. Each competitor may submit a maximum of three works which may be created using any ceramics technique.

Applications on the official entry form must be received by the organisers by **1 August 1998**, accompanied by the artist's CV, official certification of age, critical dossiers and three 35mm slides of each of the works being submitted.



Sasja Scherjon's "Crown," approximately 30cm in height, medal winner

Artists will be notified of admission by return of post and selected works must be received in Faenza by **19 December 1998**.

Prizes awarded by an international panel of judges include the *Premio Faenza* of 20 million lira, with the winning work being acquired for the collections of the *Faenza International Museum of Ceramics*. A further study grant of 5 million lira involves a two month stay in Faenza with an exhibition of works in the museum at the end of the period.

For entry forms (printed in Italian and English) and further information contact:

The Secretary
Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche
Via Campidori 2
Faenza
Italy
Ph/Fax: 0039 546 20125

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Association of Potters of Southern Africa

1998 National Ceramics Biennale

Sponsored by **ALTECH (Allied Technologies Limited)**

The 1998 *National Ceramics Biennale* will be held at the *Sandton Civic Gallery*, Municipal Buildings, corner West and Rivonia Roads, Sandton, Gauteng, South Africa from 18 September to 10 October 1998.

The Biennale is the most prestigious ceramic event in South Africa. Pieces on exhibition will be chosen by three Selection Judges from three colour slides of each piece. The closing date for slides will be 25 July 1998. Ceramists throughout the country and from bordering States are invited to participate and, for the first time international ceramists are being invited to participate.

The following awards totalling K20,000, sponsored by *Altech (Allied Technologies Limited)* will be awarded by the Award Judge **Lucia Burger**, well-known art educator and critic.

1st Prize - **Altech Premier Award** (excluding sculpture): R10,000
Altech Sculpture Award: R5,000
Five **Altech Merit Awards** of R1,000 each

There are also the following additional awards:

APSA Award for best New Signature: R1,000
Mollie Fisch Prize for best Handwork: R500
National Ceramics/Norma Guassardo Award for the best thrown piece: R500

Enquiries concerning participation in the exhibition can be made to:

Cynthia McAlpine
Association of Potters of Southern Africa
P O Box 184
Florida Hills 1716
Gauteng
Republic of South Africa
Ph: 0027 11 768 5341
Fax: 0027 11 768 5342

Hoffman Kiln

Kiln Protected

Palmerston North has protected a well-preserved *Hoffman* brick kiln.

It has recently been reported that the remains of a *Hoffman* brick kiln unearthed in Avondale are to be demolished to make way for a subdivision.

The Avondale kiln, thought to have been built in the 1860s, was excavated after the *Auckland Regional Council* and the *Historic Places Trust* asked for an archaeological assessment of the area.

The Palmerston North kiln was built in 1918 and was last used in 1959. In 1983 it was given a B classification by the trust. Two years later a protection order was issued.

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.am - 4pm Weekends 1 - 4

NORTH AUCKLAND

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.

AUCKLAND

ALBANY VILLAGE POTTERY, Main Road, Albany. 15 professional potters exhibit and sell their work at New Zealand's oldest established co-operative gallery. Open every day. Ph (09) 415 9403

ART BY THE SEA, Featuring New Zealand's best in ceramics, jewellery, sculpture, painting, hand blown glass, etc. cnr King Edward Parade and Church Street, Devonport. Phone (09) 445 6665

COMPENDIUM, 5 Lorne Street, Auckland, Ph/fax (09) 300 3212 and 14 Woodward Street, Wellington. Ph/fax (04) 499 9299. Open 6 days. Greatest selection of original NZ craft - glass, ceramics, jewellery, wood, clothing

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) 68 Routley Drive, Glen Eden, Auckland. Thrown, handbuilt and colourfully decorated ware. Wholesale and retail welcome. Open hours by appointment. Phone (09) 818 5858 Fax (09) 813 2436

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, jewellery and other media. Superb selection of New Zealand's best. Open Monday-Friday 10-5pm, Saturday 10-4pm, Sunday 11-3pm

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

POTS OF PONSONBY, 298 Ponsonby Road, Auckland. Ph (09) 376 0145. Craft co-operative gallery offering a wide range of quality handmade domestic and decorative pottery and other crafts.

WAIKATO

EXPRESSIONS - The Museum Shop, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton. The finest New Zealand pottery, glass, jewellery, silk, books, prints, cards. Phone (07) 839 5100.

QUATTRO GALLERY, 513 Victoria Street, Hamilton. Phone (07) 839 4535. Contemporary New Zealand ceramics, wood, jewellery, glass, prints and paintings. Monthly exhibitions by NZ Craftspeople in various media. Closed Sundays

COROMANDEL

ALAN RHODES POTTERY, Situated at Whenuakite, 23km south of Whitianga. Stoneware and pit fired pots. Studio attached to the gallery, visitors always welcome.

PENINSULA GALLERY, Showcasing the Peninsula's finest arts and crafts. Pottery, flowers and carved kauri. Open 7 days, 9am-5pm. Albert Street, Whitianga. Phone (07) 866 5224.

RIVERSIDE GALLERY, Settlement Road, Pauanui. The peninsula's best selection of paintings, pottery, woodware and other crafts, beside a peaceful waterlily pond and garden. Open daily. Phone (07) 864 7834

WETA design store, Kapanga Road, Coromandel Town. Work by New Zealand's finest artists. Purchases for overseas mail are tax free. Open daily 10 - 5pm. Phone 07 866 8823

TAURANGA

PYROMANIA, THE ART CENTRE, 24 Wharf Street, Tauranga. Ph (07) 578 5028. Co-operative gallery. Specialising in pottery, paintings, jewellery, silk scarves, hand blown glass, weaving and other crafts. Open Mon - Thurs 9 - 5, Fri 9 - 6, Sat 9 - 4.

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AVID Dealers in Applied Arts, 48 Victoria Street, Wellington. Handmade works for sale by Contemporary New Zealand designers. Open 6 days Monday to Saturday from 10 - . Phone (04) 472 7703

Bakehouse Gallery, Swan Lane (off Cuba Street) Wellington. Phone 382 8331. Pots, handbound books, glass, flax, jewellery and other out of the ordinary crafts

CHEZ-MOI POTTERY, 12 Kiriwai Road, Paremata, Wellington. Work by Anneke Borren. Domestic, sculptural, hand brushed decorated stoneware and earthenware. Ring first. Phone (04) 233 9668.

MALCOLM WARR STUDIO GALLERY, 26 Parata Street, Waikanae. Ceramic Sculpture by Maree Lawrence and original prints by Malcolm Warr. Hours by appointment. Telephone (04) 293 5060.

MIREK SMISEK AND PAMELA ANNSOUTH POTTERY, 170 Weggery Drive West, Waikanae Beach. Open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, or by arrangement. Phone 04 293 5429. Wide range of functional, decorative and sculptural pieces in stoneware, porcelain and saltglaze.

REIKORANGI POTTERY and Riverside Animal Park, Ngatiawa Road, Waikanae. Jan and Will Wright invite you to experience a country environment. Open 7 days 9.30am-5pm. Phone (04) 293 5146 (Tea Rooms).

THE POTTERS SHOP AND GALLERY, 14 Woodward Street, Wellington. Phone (04) 473 8803. A co-operative potters gallery offering their pots of excellence to the public.

NELSON

WAIMEA POTTERY. When in Nelson visit Waimea Pottery at Craft Habitat, Richmond, to view a fine collection of lusted and domestic ware by Paul Laird. Phone/fax (03) 544 7481

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HOKITIKA CRAFT GALLERY CO-OPERATIVE, 25 Tancred Street, Hokitika. Multi-media gallery of top quality creations by internationally recognised West Coast Artisans, New Zealand's best. Open 7 days. Phone (03) 755 8802

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CAVE ROCK GALLERY, The Arts Centre, Christchurch. For fine New Zealand crafts, ceramic, wood, jade, glass, silk and wool. Open 7 days. Phone (03) 365 1634

COURTYARD POTTERY, 75 Rutland St, Christchurch. Ph (03) 355 5933. Specialising in quality pottery, glass and silks by New Zealand craftspeople. Open Mon-Thurs 9.30-5.30pm. Friday 9.30-8pm, Saturday 11-2pm.

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Contact Paul Winspear, PO Box 6144, Te Aro, Wellington, Ph: 04 382 8331



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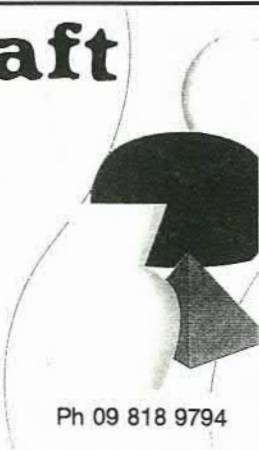
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