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**Back Cover:** clockwise from top left. Chris Patton - Teapot,  
Lindsay Scott - Lidded Jar, Sonia Gerlings - Head, Maggie Mikula - Flat vessel.  
**Front Cover:** Bukkenburg Studio.

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# CERAMICS

SOUTHERN AFRICA  
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Please note the following due dates for all articles, reviews, book reviews, advertisements as well as exposure page photographs for 2016

15 January 2016

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## FROM THE EDITOR

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### Contributions to the Ceramics Magazine

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#### Editorial requirements

This information is intended as a guide for contributors. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Articles may include profiles on ceramists (self or others), reviews of ceramic exhibitions and books, upcoming events, critical reports and commentary, research papers and technical innovations. In fact, we welcome any subject of interest to ceramists, potters and sculptors, galleries and collectors, educational institutions and their students.

The average length of articles is 500-1200 words. Longer articles are welcome, they might be broken up over two issues if space is not available, or stand over to the next issue.

Please submit by email to [ceramicssa.magazine@gmail.com](mailto:ceramicssa.magazine@gmail.com) in an attached Word document.

Your own writing style is a preference and minimal editing will take place, mostly in cases of spelling and grammar. At times, articles may be edited to meet layout requirements. When possible, the author will be contacted prior to going to print.

#### Guidelines for Images

The files must be high resolution JPG (300dpi) - approx. size 220 x 150mm.

Digital files may be sent in small batches (under 3 meg) to [ceramicssa.magazine@gmail.com](mailto:ceramicssa.magazine@gmail.com) or via [Dropbox.com](https://www.dropbox.com) or similar.

All images must be accompanied by a text document which lists the following for each image: name of the artist, title of the piece, date, materials and techniques, dimensions and the photographer's name.

*Please note:* The quality of your images is of high importance and may determine whether or not your article is published.

If possible, seek the help of a professional photographer.

#### Guidelines (if taking your own images):

A good image is in focus, with proper exposure, a full depth of field and a full range of contrast (light to dark tones). Do not set work against a busy background.

White, grey, black or earth colours make a good neutral background.

Do not use lighting which will result in hard shadows or will reflect off the vessel.

Do leave a generous space around the object if at all possible.

Tight cropping is not recommended.

Choose your images carefully. At the most ten images per article. We will ask for more if required.

Please do not send Tiff images.

If you are contributing to the CSA Exposure page, 2 images would suffice. Some of these images will be deep etched (cut out) and need to be against a contrasting background with little or no shadows. Please supply a name and a short description regarding size, new work, or where it is on display. Send your images to [ceramicssa.magazine@gmail.com](mailto:ceramicssa.magazine@gmail.com).

The editor retains the right to include or postpone the publication of any contribution.



*With many little issues and bumps in the road our first magazine was posted mid August. Thank you very much for your positive comments. However, our magazine is only as good as the contributors, namely YOU. If you have sent a contribution and it has not*

*yet seen the light of day, do not despair, it will be published in due course.*

*In these difficult times for art publications, especially one with such a small circulation number, it is necessary for everyone to contribute. Most art publications have closed their doors or gone digital. I was recently told: "you are brave to publish hard copy in this digital age". I hope we can keep this up for some time before we need to consider a digital issue only. At this stage, it might be the Post Office which will be our undoing.*

*We have some stalwarts of ceramic musings in the second issue. Hopefully you will find it an interesting mix of articles and exhibition reviews, as this was the season for exhibitions. Feast your eyes on the beautiful work on display at two of the regional exhibitions. I was privileged to be at the opening of the Gauteng Regional Exhibition and the unexpected exhibition downstairs was a pleasure for the senses. This will be featured in a future issue.*

*The Eastern Cape and Western Cape Regional Exhibitions will be reviewed in the next magazine.*

*Firstly we congratulate Felicity Potter on turning eighty, not to forget that Jerice Doeg also passed this milestone in 2015. She is still our National Chair and is not only producing beautiful work, but also assisting with editing the magazine. Working in ceramics obviously has an anti-ageing effect!*

*Enjoy reading about Kate Malone, but please do listen to the rest of the interview. Naturalscool is a wonderful website for inspiration and creativity. Kate explains her inspiration and processes in this lively interview.*

*Travel to the USA with Bob Wagener and just up the coast to Paternoster with Ann Marais. Darryl Houghton also gives us some insight into Louise Jennings' move from painting to ceramics. Enjoy these journeys!*

*This is the last issue of 2015 so may I take this opportunity to wish you all a good rest over the holiday season.*

---

Opinions expressed are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the editorial staff of Ceramics Southern Africa.

*Lydia Holmes.*





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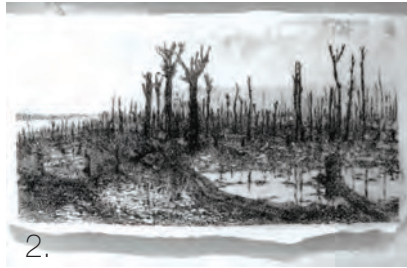


# EXPOSURE

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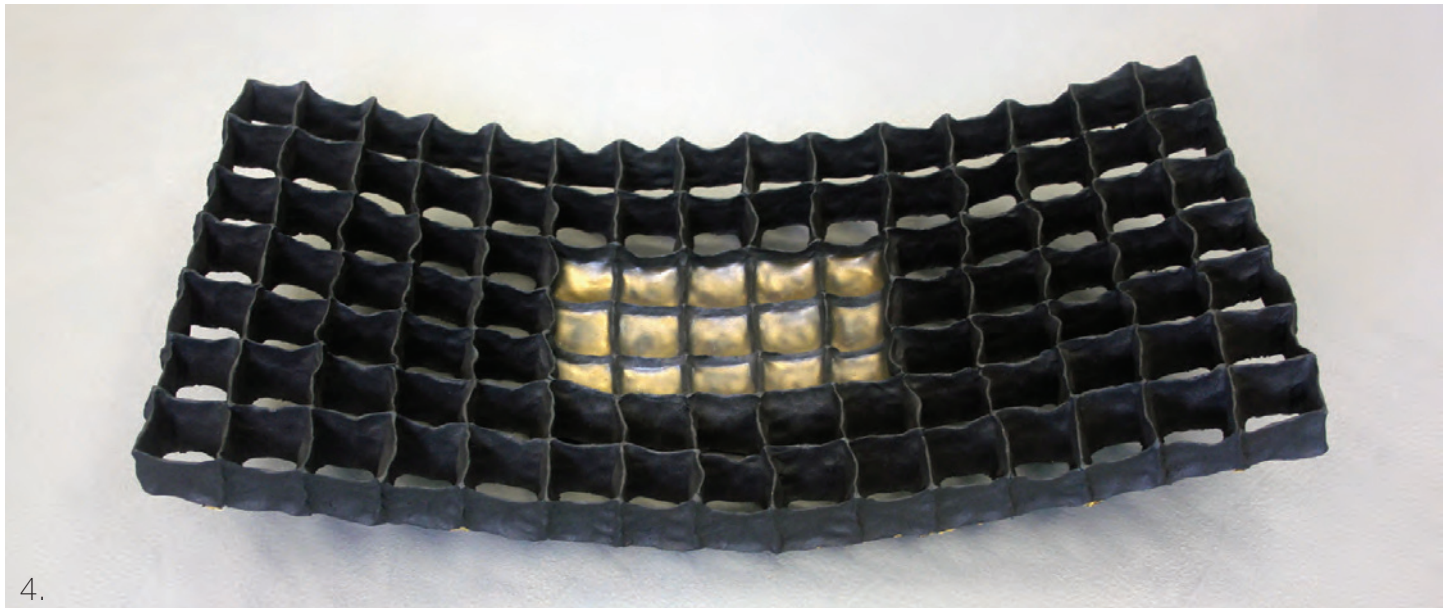
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2. Michelle Rall, KZN Gallery, Durban
3. Shirley Edwards, FADA Gallery, Johannesburg
4. Hennie Meyer, *Grid Vessel* at Ebony, Franschhoek
5. Lynnley Watson, *Bruiser Gang* at The Lutge Gallery, Cape Town
6. Nic Sithole, FADA Gallery, Johannesburg

*Opposite page:*

7. Sandra Goercke, *Small Bowls*, FADA Gallery, Johannesburg
8. Carla da Cruz, *Udder Bowl*, KZN Gallery, Durban
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13. Bentley van Wyk, *Art on Target*, Port Elizabeth
14. Nicolene Swanepoel, *All the Pretty Ponies*, IS Gallery, Franschhoek





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## Felicity POTTER at eighty



Article by Joy Savage  
Photographs by David Schlapobersky

*"When you buy from an independent artist, you are buying more than just a painting. You are buying hundreds of hours of experimentation and thousands of failures. You are buying days, weeks, months, years of frustration and moments of pure joy. You are buying nights of worry about paying the rent, having enough money to eat, having enough money to feed the children, the birds, the dog. You aren't just buying a thing, you are buying a piece of heart, part of a soul, a private moment in someone's life.*

*"Most importantly, you are buying that artist more time to do something they are truly passionate about; something that makes all the above worth the fear and the doubt; something that puts the life into the living."  
.....Rebekah Joy Platt; Artist*

I first made the acquaintance of David Schlapobersky and Felicity Potter when I attended a 'Walkabout' exhibition of their high-temperature, reduction-fired stoneware and porcelain, held at the Oude Libertas Gallery in Stellenbosch during 2014. There is much about the skills involved in ceramics that recalls cooking and as David shared his glaze recipes with his audience, I was reminded that if I am a 'Jamie Oliver' type of potter, (glugs of this and handfuls of that!)

then David is the 'Heston Blumenthal' of ceramic glazes. Constant experimentation and meticulous precision are his watchwords. David told me subsequently that only once in his life had he ever bought a commercial glaze - a transparent one. He buys the ingredients from South African suppliers and mixes all his own recipes.

Shortly afterwards I was invited by David to visit Bukkenburg Studio in the quaint, historic hamlet of Swellendam in the Western Cape. The partnership of David and Felicity recalls the connected yet unfurling rings of a Mandala. In Oriental art, particularly Tibetan, a Mandala is a schematized representation of the cosmos, characterised by a concentric configuration of geometric shapes, each of which may contain an image or representation of a deity. In Jungian psychology it is a symbol representing the effort to reunify the self. My visit gave me the opportunity to encounter that still, small centre of this Mandala - the singularity of James.

James, Felicity's son, suffered a severe accident when just a small child. In 1972, as a result of James's need for high care, Felicity, whose speciality was in the decorative arts, met David, whose interest was in the care of people with special needs. Around the singularity of James, the creative stardust of Felicity and David began to rotate, coalesce and evolve.

Felicity has always been inspired by nature. She tells of hurrying home after school when still a little girl, to water her plants. Rotating within the energetic, creative gravity of her mother, Ruth Wolff, a well-reputed designer, architect and interior decorator, Felicity graduated from the Johannesburg Technical College with qualifications in Art and Commercial Art. Like so many artists, she has been a multi-tasker, working at one stage with Ernst Ullman as a designer, commercial artist and screen printer, for Penny le Roy as a designer and textile printer and even for two years as a Judges Clerk! After James's accident, however, she worked from home. Felicity then met with David, who hailed originally from Swaziland, and had been involved, when in England, in the care of people with special needs. During 1972, whilst they were house parents at Cresset House - a school and training centre for



# Zen and Now



children in need of special care, situated in Halfway House, near Johannesburg - they were asked to begin a small pottery studio at the school.

Felicity renewed her acquaintance with the mercurial Tim Morris. He was skilled in what has become known as the Anglo-Oriental School of studio pottery, as well as being an accomplished watercolourist, and he proved to be a magnet to both her and David. They were both excited by his work and environment, and Tim, together with his wife Marlene, was keen to become involved in getting the pottery at Cresset House underway.

"If you're going to start a workshop at Cresset, you'll have to do more than rely on donor support and prepare yourselves for a long period of sustained commitment. It's an expensive business starting and running a pottery studio," advised Tim Morris when David and Felicity expressed a desire to open a pottery studio there. A special relationship developed between them, which saw the establishment of a vibrant studio at the school.

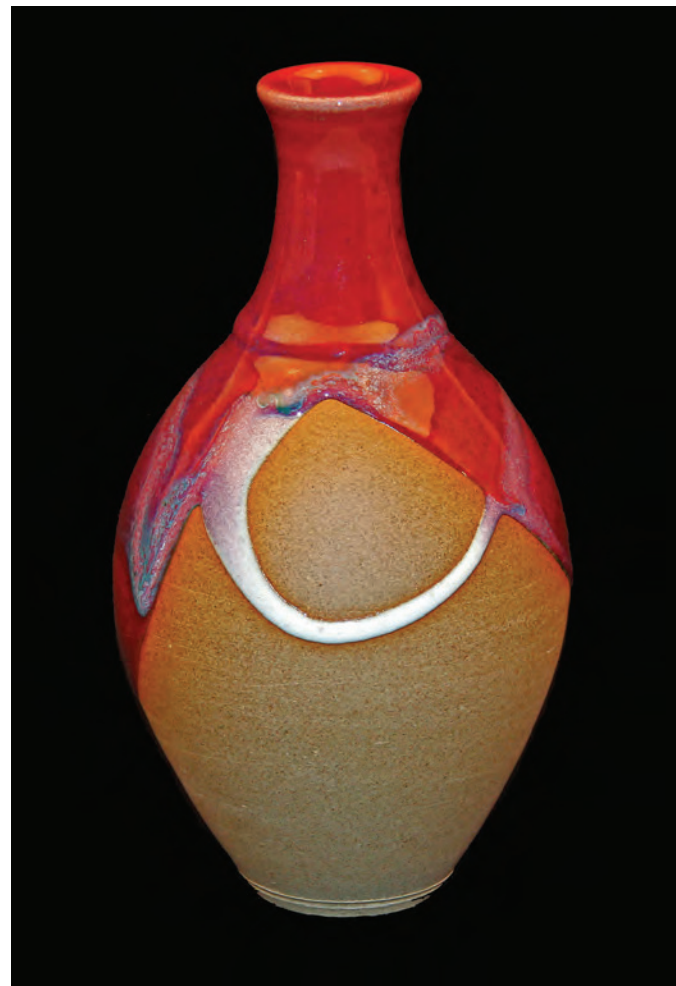
In 1973, they joined the newly formed Association of Potters Southern Africa (APSA), now Ceramics Southern Africa (CSA), and in 1975 David and Felicity exhibited work on APSA's first National Exhibition, which was held in Cape Town.

Through this growing friendship, they were introduced to the work and impulse of several pioneers of South African Studio Pottery and became acquainted with some of them. On their website [www.pottery.co.za](http://www.pottery.co.za) they pay their respects to those who inspired them at the time and continue to do so now. In addition to Tim Morris, there were potters such as Hyme Rabinowitz, Sammy Liebermann, Esias Bosch and Thelma Marcusson among others.

They have published and still maintain memorial pages on Facebook for three of the pioneers of high-temperature reduction-fired studio pottery in South Africa, namely: Tim Morris, Hyme Rabinowitz and Esias Bosch. They welcome contributions from those who have memories of these ceramicists, including pictures, stories and anecdotes.

The move away from the school and into their own home studio in Johannesburg took place in 1976, and a year later they built their first reduction kiln, a 100 cubic foot monster fed by a municipal gas main.

The following twenty years saw a period of growth and immense output with exhibitions in South Africa and abroad, corporate and private commissions and



*All the work in the accompanying images are made by David and decorated by Felicity using their own exclusive blends of clay and glazes. Reduction-fired to cone 12 ( $\pm$  1 320°C) in oil-fired (paraffin) kilns.*



pots made for special landscape projects. Articles in magazines and other publications made their names familiar both locally and overseas, and they presented numerous workshops under the auspices of APSA.

They were founding members of the Johannesburg Studio Route, where studios in various disciplines, in and around the suburbs of Johannesburg were open to the public on the last Sunday of every month.

Then, as now, David's technical throwing skills and Felicity's decorative ability proved to be a successful symbiosis. As much love and care is bestowed upon a commissioned metre-high wine jar or jardinière, fountain or washbasin, as upon a casserole, platter or lowly coffee mug. Arguably one of the most ancient of the arts, pottery is both functional and symbolic. Pots are everyday companions in our domestic life, take part in our sacred rituals and also appeal to our higher aesthetic senses.

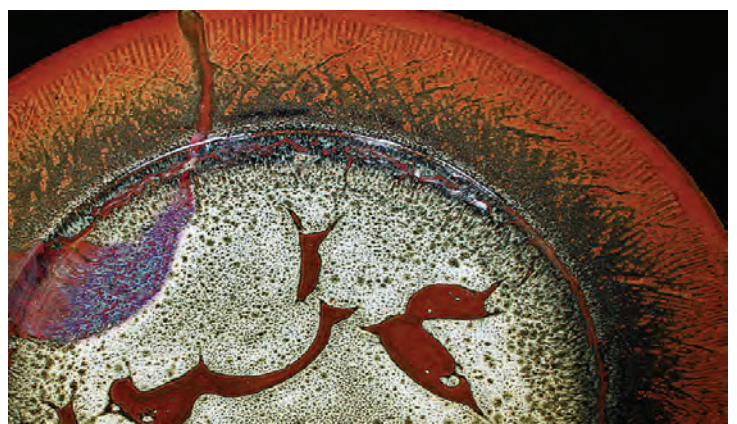
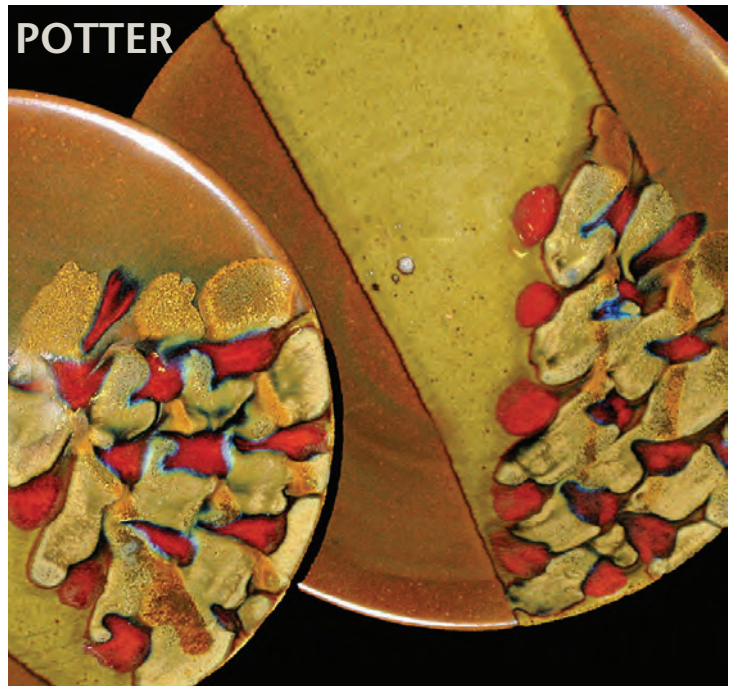
David recounted an amusing anecdote - in 1993, as a trip to the UK was being planned, a suggestion was made to bring and submit for auction at Bonham's in London: ".....your best big pot". Upon viewing the piece, the ceramics specialist at Bonham's, Cyril Frankel, would not accept that it had been made by David and Felicity in Johannesburg, insisting that it must have been made somewhere in the Far East - his experience and expertise informing him that it was of Eastern origin. Needless to say, the pot was not put up for auction!

They moved to Swellendam on the 1st October, 1996, having bought the house two years earlier. They had been dreaming for many years of moving their studio to the country and as David succinctly put it to me during our interview: "We stopped for a meal and petrol on our way from Cape Town to the Garden Route and almost immediately decided that this could be the place". They fell in love with the Victorian Heritage House, Bukkenburg on a large piece of ground in the historic heart of Swellendam. The house which had been owned by a local farming family for generations, gave its name to the pottery studio, gallery and guest cottage. In the inimitable manner of civic bodies the local municipality turned the electricity and water supply off on the day they arrived at their new abode, with the disclaimer: "Pay up and we'll switch back on"!

Coming as they did from socially and politically active families, David and Felicity have been very active in the communities around them, in Alexandra Township when they were in Johannesburg, and then in Swellendam after their relocation.

Although David admits to becoming somewhat more reflective recently, they remain inspired and productive, ever mindful of what they have in being able to work from home, take care of James and create beautiful ceramics which connect them to an ancient timeless tradition, as well as the wider world. However, they still exhibit their work away from the Swellendam studio and undertake a variety of commissions. They run workshops, including children's sessions and will structure them for people of all abilities. The Bukkenburg studio and gallery are open most days and visitors are welcome to drop in, browse and view the work in progress.

During the year they host at least three 'Open Studio Weekends' at Bukkenburg, including the now well-known and supported "Potters' Lunch". They are held to coincide with public holiday long weekends centred on Freedom Day in April, Heritage Day in



September, and the Day of Reconciliation in December. These open studio weekends cultivate an awareness of their work and nurture an audience. Felicity's catering has built up a reputation over the years and they now have people travelling from afar to enjoy a lunch on the veranda at Bukkenburg.

Late morning on the day I arrived was a momentous occasion. One of the two large paraffin kilns had just cooled enough to be opened and as all potters will appreciate, it was like attending a birth. Each new 'baby' was carefully lifted out and placed gently on the bench. Exclamations of joy and relief accompanied the tiny, high-pitched pings of carefully placed pieces. I know of no potter who can become blasé towards this emotional moment! The happy culmination of months of hopeful, ceramic gestation - David's Attic forms with Felicity's lively decorations had produced another wonderful batch of newborns. Deep iron glazes, copper reds and turquoises, cobalt blues, celadons, gentle rutilles and the soft, ashy mattes of high-fired porcelain and stoneware filled our gaze. These combinations of colours and effects are not usually encountered in reduction-fired studio ceramics.

"Right," said Felicity, entering with an earthy announcement: "It's time for lunch."

Swellendam is surrounded by large farms with quietly grazing sheep, sweeping stretches of wheat and chartreuse yellow canola fields. Ash from these, as well as that from wattle, give subtlety to the soft matte glazes to be found on the shoulders of urns or within the concave sweeps of platters. Behind the Bukkenburg studio the Langeberg Mountains soar. The conservative, traditionally Afrikaans community



is benevolently invaded in the summer season by English, Dutch and German holidaymakers, affectionately referred to as 'swallows'! They visit and revisit the studio.

In the spirit of the Arts and Crafts Movement of the early Twentieth Century, David and Felicity are lifestyle potters. They work, live and make relationships within the orbit of their home. Whilst I was browsing in the studio, reading the pithy quotes and quips on the walls and absorbing the symmetry of the displayed ceramic forms and the subtle gleam of the glazes, an English family entered, bent upon the same purpose. With the jovial conviviality of like-minded strangers, we spontaneously embarked upon conversation. They had visited Bukkenburg before and yes... they bought more pots. It is via these rotating satellites of repeat business and word-of-

mouth contacts, that Bukkenburg Studio exerts its ever-widening gravitational pull.

My two days' stay enabled me to steep myself in the peace and benevolence that characterise this scenic spot. At one point, whilst in conversation with David near the entrance to the studio, James stretched out his hand and touched my sleeve, laughing merrily. "He likes you," David told me. Like small children and animals, James is very sensitive to the emotional radiance of those around him. Generally, as adults, we are very verbal beings and occasionally we need to be reminded of quieter, less-obvious forms of communication. I felt warmed and touched by James's acceptance of me. I had come into his orbit; the still, small centre of this Swellendam solar system.



*Joy Savage is a ceramic artist who has lived for most of her life in Central and Southern Africa. She has a B.A. Degree (majoring in English and History of Art) from UNISA. While residing in the Durban area she was involved in teaching ceramics for many years and had articles regarding her award winning work appear in many local publications. Since moving to Stellenbosch early in 2007, she joined CSA Western Cape and has written several reviews for the Newsletter of the Region and for National Ceramics Quarterly Magazine.*

Later that day, driving back to Stellenbosch through the swelling hills of the South Western Cape, flanked on the right by the purple peaks of the Riviersonderend Mountains, I thought contentedly of the two bubble-wrapped platters securely ensconced on the back seat of my car. Would they be used? Yes. Would they be objects of quiet joy and contemplation when not being used? Absolutely.

It is only fitting that a quote from David and Felicity's collection should be the string with which I draw this article to a close:

"Pottery is at once the simplest and most difficult of arts. It is the simplest because it is the most elemental; it is the most difficult because it is the most abstract. Historically it is among the first of the arts.

*...Art is an escape from chaos...it is the indetermination of matter seeking the rhythm of life."* *The Meaning of Art: Herbert Read c.1931*

Felicity and David may be contacted through their website [www.pottery.co.za](http://www.pottery.co.za)



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# A Painterly Sensibility: the ceramics of Louise Jennings



Article by Daryl Houghton  
Photographs by Louise Jennings and Daryl Houghton

At a recent art exhibition the name of Louise Jennings came up in the conversation with regard to her connection with the world of ceramics. One of the people in the group responded with, "Oh, but isn't she a painter?" In fact she is a painter, but also a ceramicist who is steadily making a name for herself. In 2014 alone, Jennings had a show of her latest ceramics at artSPACE Durban, as well as having a large installation piece selected for the National Ceramics Exhibition and a smaller piece selected for the KwaZulu-Natal Regional Ceramics exhibition.

She has come to ceramics via painting and these two areas of artistic endeavour remain an interconnected part of her oeuvre, although it would seem that ceramics now tend to dominate her production. Jennings began to paint full time in 1998 and held her first solo exhibition of paintings in Durban in 2011. Her move into the realm of ceramics happened in 2009 when she began her studies in the ceramic department at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg. These studies were undertaken specifically with the intention of furthering her knowledge of porcelain and glaze technology, areas which had increasingly come to interest her. In 2014 she was awarded an Honours Degree Cum Laude in Ceramics from UKZN.

### **Inspiration from nature**

Jennings works from a studio at her home which is set in the leafy suburb of Cowies Hill which lies a few kilometres outside Durban. The quiet orderliness of this home is clearly reflected in her work and it is obvious that she also finds inspiration in the beautiful indigenous garden that surrounds the house.

Her extensive knowledge of glaze technology allows her to mix all her own glazes. An impressive array of test pieces is arranged on a set of

shelves in her studio allowing for easy reference and attests to her skill in this direction. Jennings works largely in porcelain and she is currently experimenting with mixing her own porcelain clay. All her porcelain pieces are fired in an electric kiln at a temperature of 1230 °C. When she occasionally does work in stoneware these pieces would be fired at 1180 °C, which, according to the artist, is '... high for black but gives it a cast iron appearance'.

Fundamental to Jennings' art is her love of nature and plants and it is not surprising to learn, that before her move into the world of art, she studied horticulture for a year in 1989. However art won out and in 1993 she completed a three year Fine Arts diploma at Technikon Natal majoring in Painting. Since 2005 Jennings has exhibited her paintings regularly in both solo and group shows. The subject matter of her paintings has largely centred around still life, with her most typical works focusing on the portrayal of a single piece of china ware, a bowl or a teacup for example, placed centrally and, often, standing on a crisp, white linen cloth. The ceramics she chooses to depict are familiar ones that she had known in her years of growing up, they are ones she uses in her own home. As the artist herself puts it, these objects are from '... collections of things that I have a history with and provide a comfortable link to people and places of my past'.

### From painting to ceramics

When Jennings made the move from painting, to making ceramics, she did not make any attempt to reproduce the kind of vintage ceramics that appeared in her paintings. Instead she found her own direction and her ceramics clearly reflect a contemporary idiom. The artist has written of this shift in her means of expression as follows, 'My ceramics are about a new history. They are still about collections and things . . . and although new, they hold a link to the past through the memory that serves to inspire them'.

Jennings works in porcelain and her first pieces were simple, hand thrown cylindrical forms that showed an affinity with one of her acknowledged influences, namely the British ceramicist and writer, Edmund de Waal. Working with these austere forms allowed Jennings room to explore a range of subtle glazes that were never allowed to dominate the piece, but rather enhanced the form in a quiet, understated way. These vessels were usually shown in groups and placed on shelves. In fact by placing them on shelves the works, although not strictly functional, were given a link to the domestic context that is so important to her in terms of the memories that inspire her work.

### Exploring surface decoration

By 2012 Jennings had moved away somewhat from these primary, unadorned forms to explore a wider range of shapes and to experiment with surface decoration. Although continuing to produce unadorned vessels, an interest in Japanese and Nordic ceramics inspired a range of spherical vessels and bowls decorated in cobalt blue underglaze with designs of swirling water and fish. In these, as in all her decorated works, Jennings demonstrates a deep understanding of the need for the decoration to relate to the specific form. Her ever present interest in the world of plants was evidenced in works produced in 2013 when, continuing to restrict herself to cobalt blue underglaze, she decorated a series of bowls and plates with carefully observed plant forms.



Left to right.

Opposite page:

1. 'Breath 2', 2014. Porcelain with wooden shelf, 196 x 37 cms.
2. Louise Jennings
3. Plate with Forget-me-nots, 2013. Porcelain with cobalt decoration.

Above

1. 'Still Life with Teacups', 2012. Oil on canvas.
2. 'Arrangement in Dark Grey', 2014. Black stoneware and porcelain with wooden shelf.
3. A group of Botanical Studies mounted in wooden boxes, 2014. Porcelain-paper clay.





'Exhale', 2014. Porcelain vessels with wooden shelf.

Jennings' large and ambitious work shown on the 2014 National Ceramics Exhibition in Cape Town was a wall piece entitled *Breath 2*. It consists of ten white, wooden shelves placed one above the other with each shelf holding three mug-like vessels. Some, but not all of the vessels have handles placed low down on the cylinder and this seems to deny their functionality as drinking vessels. Thus the work is best read as an installation and can be looked at almost as if it were a painting. As with most of Jennings work it invites lengthy, quiet contemplation. The artist's particular strength lies in her knowledge of glazes, and in this case each vessel has been glazed separately in a range of soft greys, greens and browns. The tonality of the glazes gains in strength towards the middle of the work where a range of darker earth colours becomes apparent. The inspiration for this work lies in a poem by the Sufi mystic, Jalaladdin Rumi, an esoteric piece of writing that speaks of the universality of breath. The layering of the vessels on the shelves and the slow colour changes in the glazes set up a quiet rhythm that is akin to the unconscious act of breathing.

#### A very still life

In her exhibition at artSPACE Durban held in September 2014 and entitled *A very still life*, Jennings chose to move in a new direction, but without making a sudden break with her past work. On show were a number of shelf pieces as well as some delicately modelled plant forms mounted on wood panels. Left unglazed the plant forms in the latter works are placed against a dark background so as to create a contrast. The shelf pieces are each made up of a group of bottles, bowls and cylindrical vessels of differing heights and arranged into satisfying compositions on a shelf. These shelves are always handcrafted by the artist herself and are painted either dark grey or white. The bottles in these groups are a new departure for the artist in terms of form, as many of them are pentagonal having five sharply faceted sides made from slabs and topped with a wheel thrown neck.

For Jennings, these shelf pieces are like '... a three dimensional still life with a painterly presence of calm, serenity and the same stillness as the memories embedded in my mind'. At first glance these groups recall the work of the Italian painter, Giorgio Morandi (1890-1964), who spent virtually his whole career painting a series of austere still lifes made up of vases, jugs, bottles

and bowls arranged in tight groups. Jennings herself acknowledges this influence and, like Morandi, she restricts her range of colours to the neutral tones of the natural world. Thus, for example, a shelf group might comprise of two charcoal bottles, a light grey bottle, a beige cylinder and a dark grey bowl. The artist also varies the textures of her glazes with some vessels having a gloss surface, while others are dry glazed to give a matte effect. The interest for the viewer with regard to these works lies in the inter-relationship of the various forms and the compositions that exude an air of quiet and almost Zen-like stillness. They are simply very beautiful to look at.

Although Jennings does produce functional ware such as mugs, jugs and bowls, her originality as an artist lies in her varied groups of vessels that she arranges on shelves. In her artist's statement for her most recent exhibition at artSPACE Durban she wrote as follows regarding these particular works: "These are installations, drawings in space or paintings if you prefer. They happen as a collective thought and are carefully planned to work together". Thus she manages to transfer her painterly sensibility into the realm of ceramics and through her sensitive arrangement of simple forms and subtle use of colour she moves her ceramics forward into a new dimension. Although she never denies the fact that she is working with archetypal vessels she does provide the viewer with an aesthetic experience that comes close to that when one contemplates a painting and this is what makes her work so interesting. Jennings continues to both paint and make ceramics with each discipline enriching and informing the other and she strives constantly to find a balance between the two.

*All quotations in the above article are taken from the artist's website and from her Artist's Statement of 2014.*

*For further information and images of Louise Jennings' work visit her website at [www.louisejennings.co.za](http://www.louisejennings.co.za)*

**Daryl Houghton** has retired from a long career in art education with the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department as teacher, lecturer and subject adviser. He now has time for his own creative endeavours. He has always had a great interest in ceramics and in his initial training at the Pretoria Art School, studied Pottery under Minette Zaيمان. As lecturer at Edgewood College of Education he was instrumental in reviving the Ceramics Studio which had fallen into disuse.

*Left: A Dark Grey Line', 2014.*

*Black stoneware and porcelain with wooden shelf.*





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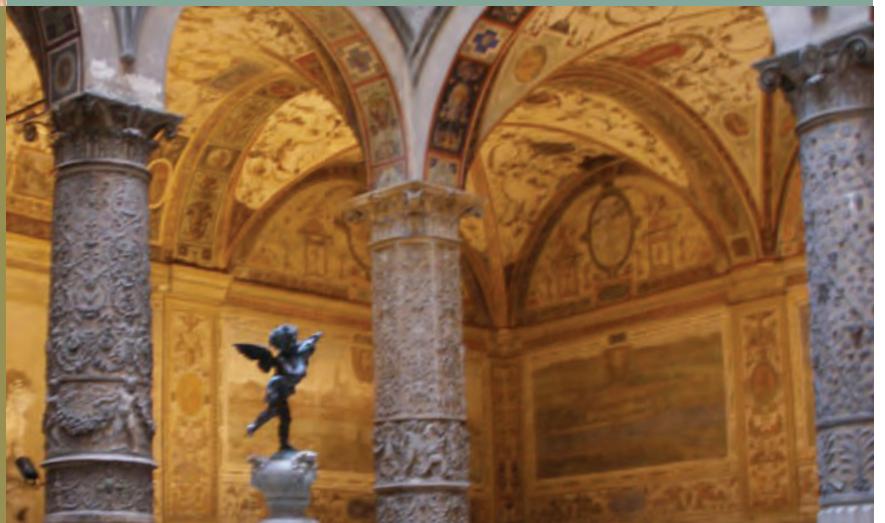
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# Red Queen to Play - Another Chapter in the Alice Sequences

Article by Wilma Cruise  
Photographs by Niel Visser

In 2014 I was invited by Ann Marais to exhibit at the Clay Museum - part of the historic Rust-en-Vrede Gallery in Durbanville, Cape Town. My exhibition was to coincide with the 2015 Sanlam National Portrait Awards - a prestigious affair that, in the two years of its existence, has garnered a large following. Naturally I jumped at the chance!

I entitled my exhibition Red Queen to Play. It was the sixth exhibition in The Alice Sequence and coincided with the fifth, Advice From a Caterpillar, which was showing concurrently at the David Krut Project Space at the AVA Gallery in downtown Cape Town.

The central theme of the "Alice Project" evolved from an anxious awareness of environmental melt down. In the project I focus on the other-than-human animal. I am particularly interested in the interface between humans and animals. This boundary between human and other sentient beings is what I call "the in-between space". This is a place where being human ceases to be primary, where language functions with no certainty, and thought fails to provide a safety net of reason. Yet it is a place fraught with significance. Deleuze and Guattari go as far as to suggest it is the place where a new state of being develops in the way of 'becoming animal'.

That I chose Lewis Carroll's two texts, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Alice Through the Looking Glass, as a conduit for my research needs some explanation. "Alice in Wonderland" was the first book I read, or could remember reading. Thus it has been a part of me since the inception of my conscious self. However the chief reason for using it as a "meta-metaphor" for my visual research is that the animals in "Alice" have the knowledge, the language and the (albeit upside down) reason, as to how Wonderland works. The White Rabbit, much like a modern corporate executive, is forever rushing off somewhere lamenting his lateness. "Oh my paws and whiskers", he





# Rust-en-Vrede Gallery, Durbanville September - October 2015

cries as he rushes past the bewildered Alice. His task is urgent, but it is never made clear to Alice or to us, her sympathetic co-journeyers, what this urgent business is. Likewise, the Cheshire cat appears and disappears, sometimes leaving only his enigmatic smile behind. He knows, but just what he knows remains unclear. Like Derrida's cat, before whom [sic] the philosopher stood naked and ashamed, the Cheshire cat has the power to unsettle certainty. His god-like presence and his ironic smile confuse more than they elucidate. In the upside down, rabbit-hole world, all sense of who Alice is falls away. She is not even sure of her size. "Who are you?" asks the haughty

*Opposite page:*

*The Borogoves 2015 - Ceramic*

*Size: various 100 to 170 mm*

*Chess pieces 2015 - Ceramic*

*Size: various approx 150 - 350 mm*

*Below*

*Cradle II 2014*

*Ceramic forms in Perspex boxes with stands*

*A 600 x 600 x 600mm*

*Stand: 600 x 600 x 1200mm*

*B 1100 x 550 x 350mm*

*Stand: 1100 x 550 x 100mm*

caterpillar and a little later, the pigeon, who thinks she just might be a serpent, asks, "What are you?" Alice does not have the answer to either question. The caterpillar's question is significant. Who is Alice and, by extrapolation, who are we? Are we right to presume our position of superiority in relation to the animals? Do we really deserve our place on top of the Cartesian pile? Carroll's creatures pose these questions and others of an ontological and logical nature.

That Lewis Carroll's writings provide such a fecund metaphor for a discussion on the question of the animal is echoed by Derrida, who said about his seminal seminar on the animal, which was later formalised into the text *The Animal Therefore I am (Following)*, "Although I don't have the time to do so, I would have liked to inscribe my whole talk within a reading of Lewis Carroll. In fact you can't be certain that I am not doing that..." (Derrida 2008: 7). Referring to the hedgehogs in "The Queen's Croquet Ground" he said,

Alice wanted to give the hedgehog a blow with the head of the flamingo she held under her arm, and it would "twist itself round and look up in her face" until she burst out laughing" (2008: 7)

Derrida goes on to ask: "How can an animal look you in the face?" (2008: 7)

This is not only the core of Derrida's question on the animal but also embodies the central tenet of my research: What happens in the "space between" the animal's gaze and one's perception of it. What knowledge is conveyed at that

moment when the animal looks back at its observer? Is it aware of its interlocutor as ashamed and naked as Derrida was, or clothed and curious as this researcher is?

At the Clay Museum I installed *Cradle II* (2014 - 2015), an installation of hundreds of armless doll-like babies packed one on top of the other in two transparent boxes. Each doll is particularised by the placement of head and legs. The heads are tilted at different angles. The legs, which are freely modelled, take on attitudes of repose or activity. The surfaces of the babies are variously treated with non-fired coloured oxides, sand, paint, sealant or cementitious materials. The babies share a common origin but, much like in real life, each is individualised. Nevertheless all the babies are armless, signifying a universal helplessness. Does this say something about population explosion? Perhaps.

Taking the opportunity to utilise the two built-in cabinets that line the walls of the museum and which normally display small, functional ceramics I made a series of small works. In one cabinet consisting of ninety individual spaces, I placed freely modeled heads of baboons, birds, cats, rats, pigs and even humans. These stare out at the piles of babies. I entitled this piece *The Borogoves*, a word derived from Carroll's nonsense poem, *The Jabberwocky*:

Tw'as brillig, and the slithy toves  
did gyre and gimble in the wabe:  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
and the mome raths outgrabe" etc.  
(Carroll 1983: 134).

As Humpty Dumpty later explains to Alice in *Through the Looking Glass*: "Borogoves





## EXHIBITION

are thin shabby looking birds with feathers sticking out all round". "Slithy toves", on the other hand, are slimy, lithe creatures "like badgers or corkscrews", words that better describe my clay heads. But since "silthy" did not have the right ring to it, I took artistic license and stuck with "Borogoves" (Carroll 1983: 185).

In the other cabinets I placed twenty-four figures informed by the shape of chess pieces. Again these one-off creatures are not anthropomorphised animals but a mixture of animal and human. The chess figures allude to the fact that, while on the other side of the looking glass, Alice was a pawn in a giant chess game, the purpose of which was to reach the other side of the board - the eighth square. On her journey through the chequered landscape she encounters animated chess pieces including the Red and White Queens. The Red Queen is a recurring figure on Alice's journey. In her Queen of Hearts guise in Wonderland she is prone to shout, "Off with his/her/its head!" at the slightest provocation. As the Red Queen in Through the Looking Glass she is equally as haughty and imperious.

Curiously, the exhibition, Red Queen to Play, has less to do with the animal and more to do with the human side of the equation. Unlike the other exhibitions in the series, the animal-other has been displaced to the margins, while the human is placed at the centre of the catastrophe. Just whom the Red Queen

symbolises in the drama of the exhibition is not clear. Might she represent humankind in general or the artist in particular? Either way she is the one who controls the moves. As in chess, humankind is moving inexorably towards the end game.

Yet, in spite of the apocalyptic scenario evoked by the notion of the end game, the Alice Sequence is not intended as a homily. Nor is it intended as an illustration of Carroll's tales. Rather it is a way of making sense of an increasingly confusing and dangerous world. Life can be a dream or a nightmare. Our task is to try to make sense of our place in it as we tumble through time, together with our co-travellers, the animals whose planet we share.

*Wilma Cruise is a South African sculptor and visual artist. Working mainly with fired clay on a life size scale she has had over twenty solo exhibitions, curated others and completed a number of public works including the national monument to the women of South Africa at the Union Buildings, Pretoria and The Memorial to the Slaves in Cape Town. A number of her ceramic sculptures have been translated successfully into bronze editions. In addition to three-dimensional works Cruise has made a number of print editions and large format drawings. She is pursuing her doctoral studies at Stellenbosch University in the field of art and animal ethics. She has participated in the Havana Biennale, the Florence Biennale and the 7th Gyeonggi International Ceramic Biennale in Seoul, Korea. Cruise is a Fellow of Ceramics South Africa.*

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Article by John Shirley

Photographs by Eugene Hön, FADA Gallery.

The Exhibition was held this year at the FADA Gallery at the University of Johannesburg. The gallery was the perfect space to showcase the work and there were many excellent pieces to see. Beautifully mounted by Eugene Hön and a team of assistants, with careful attention given to the placing of the pieces to ensure that each one is shown to its best advantage, the result was a truly exciting view of all that is good about our local ceramic output.

Before entering the exhibition we were greeted by a pair of Digby Hoets' monumental pots, beautiful forms glazed with ash glazes. Hoets is a Fellow of Ceramics Southern Africa, and his work is an impressive introduction to the exhibition.

On entering the gallery the focal point of the exhibition had to be the premier award winning work by Madoda Fani. His meticulous surface carving on excellent form was simply superb and could hold its own on any international exhibition. Surrounding Fani's work is an array of monochromatic work, black and white and smoke fired. What shone for me in this section of work was Sandy Godwin's lace decorated work which is both delicate and strong. Each year the work develops in subtle ways showing exceptional skill. Godwin's work was Highly Commended. Pamela Schroeder's porcelain work with metal additions made a striking impression. Her contemporary interpretation of traditional form received the Belmont award. It was wonderful to see Elsbeth Burkhalter's work again on one of our exhibitions. One of the Fellows of the association, her boat form treated with a dark verdigris surface has a powerful presence. Eunice Botes received the Glazecor award for her intricately decorated work depicting narratives of local nature. Her finely carved and stained surfaces are executed with incredible precision.

Simon Masilo could be considered one of our national treasures, and his strong burnished forms added austerity to the exhibition. Fran Lessing's boldly decorated pieces were Highly Commended and show excellent integration of form and surface. Gaby Snyman's work demonstrated how delicately porcelain can be worked. Her gossamer fine, light as air pieces received the Melanie Robinson award for excellence in porcelain. Lelage Hunter's work received the Ultra Furn award. Her pieces are thrown in terracotta clay and carved and altered. Glazed inside only in a matt cream glaze her work has a strong presence.

We then move on to the blue area of the exhibition and taking centre stage here are Dale Lambert's beautifully thrown pieces. Her excellent forms are treated with shades of blue in ombré style giving the work a luminous quality. Lambert received the Potters Supplies and Mail Order award for this work. Karen van der Riet's



# Gauteng Regional Exhibition 2015 - at the FADA Gallery



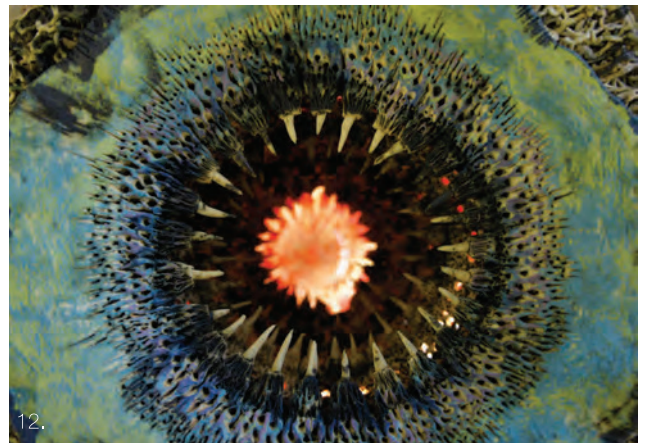
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*Opposit page:*

1. Gauteng Regional Exhibition - FADA Gallery
2. Eunice Botes - Glazecor Award
3. Dale Lambert - Potters Supplies & Mail Order Award
4. Lalage Hunter - Ultrafurn Award
5. Michelle Legg
6. Jean Grobler - van Tuyl New signature Award

*This page:*

7. Madoda Fani - G & W Minerals Premier Award
8. Fran Lessing - Highly Commended
9. Henriette Ngako - Tim Morris Bursary Award
10. Pamela Schroeder - Belmont Award
11. Gaby Snyman - Melanie Robinson Award
12. Helena de Waal - Highly Commended
- 13/14. Lindy van Hasselt - Lionheart Chemical Award



# EXHIBITION

## Gauteng Regional Exhibition 2015 at the FADA Gallery

Highly Commended porcelain vessels, showed a surface of varying shades of turquoise and blues with narrow openings and unusual lids. Finally in the first part of the show is the work of Michelle Legg, another Fellow of the association. For me her potent work conjures up impressions of ritual and the use of gold on her work enhances this.

Moving to the rest of the exhibition one cannot miss the strong coiled work of Colleen Lemkuhl. Her large vessel coiled in dark clay and banded with pastel colours was a beautifully resolved piece. This work was acquired for the Corobrik collection.

The work of Margot Rudolph made quite an impression. Bold sculptural vessels decorated with strong colour making powerful statements.

Another fellow, Querardien van Vliet, showed modernist sculptures which mark an interesting new direction in her work.

Monica van den Berg's heads employ bright colour to give an added dimension to her ceramic sculptures.

Christine Williams' work which was acquired for the Corobrik collection was a pair of hand built porcelain vessels decorated with strong floral patterning.

There is very little conceptual work on the exhibition, so it was wonderful to have the van Tuyl New Signature Award given to Jean Grobler for his piece, Urban Fabric. The work was beautifully executed with detailed hand painted decoration.

Helena de Waal's work was Highly Commended. She showed two conceptual works, one an urn form covered with delicate flowers which were separate from the form and could be removed from the piece to reveal hand written messages. Her other work was set into a plinth and appeared to be a low vessel placed on the surface of the plinth until one looked down into it and the incredibly created interior was revealed.

Recipient of the Tim Morris Bursary Award, Henriette Ngako has a distinctive personal style, and her pieces on this show are excellent examples of this, a naïve quality created by experienced hands.

I cannot leave the show without mentioning the magnificently carved netsuke by Lindy van Hasselt, the recipient of the Lionheart Chemical award, the only word that comes to mind in describing this work is breath-taking.

In the lower level of the gallery was a second exhibition, Ceramics by Design. This was curated by Eugene Hôn. The show, mounted on deep sea green plinths and dramatically lit, focussed on design and showed work produced by Industrial Design Students at the University of Johannesburg over the past few years as well as work which was produced in the Ceramic Design department up until 2010.

Judging by what there was to see on these exhibitions, ceramics is alive and thriving in Gauteng, and there is much to be excited about.

*John Shirley is a ceramic maker and educator. He has lectured at The University of Johannesburg since 2000 and also teaches in the informal sector. He works in porcelain and bone - china and has exhibited extensively both locally and internationally. He is a founder member and Fellow of Ceramics Southern Africa and was accepted as a member of The International Academy of Ceramics in 2009.*



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1. Sandy Godwin - Highly Commended
2. Karen van der Riet - Highly Commended
3. Colleen Lemkuhl - purchased for the Corobrik Collection
4. Simon Masilo
5. Christine Williams - purchased for the Corobrik Collection





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# Meeting Clay - Kwa-Zulu Natal Regional Exhibition 2015 At the KZN Society of Arts Gallery, Bulwer Road, Durban

Ceramics Southern Africa encourages, inspires and develops members. As artists, we measure ourselves, our creativity, against what else is on show... and move on.

This year we had 43 members (out of a membership of 65) exhibiting and a total of 138 works on display.

The exhibition was impressive and the work overall was fresh, engaging and well-made. The sales were down from last year and numerous factors can be called into consideration here, but the one I can mention, is lack of functional ware (compared to last year). It suggests that the buying public still want utilitarian objects as well as purely decorative and sculptural pieces

Elizabeth Balcomb, Fahmeeda Omar and Michelle Rall were our Invited Guest Artists. The inclusion of work by these artists assisted in creating an interesting and successful exhibition, coupled with the professional layout done by Francois Cheney and Louise Jennings.

Our selectors were Mary Slack, Frank Nthunya and Fahmeeda Omar.

Frank Nthunya, as a selector, was ineligible for an award, but was given recognition by the National Council as they purchased one of his pieces for the Corobrik Collection. The chosen piece is a vessel of quiet contemplation with its small base and sweeping curved form. Frank's unorthodox approach to the traditional vessel can be seen in his use of green slip, delicate patterning and the fact that he chose not to smoke fire it.

Jo-Anne Kuter won the Maggie Mikula Premier Award. An award given by Maggie's family in memory of this well-known Durban ceramic artist who broke boundaries in clay in the 1970's by incorporating other material into her work. Jo-Anne's installation of fourteen porcelain perfume bottles is a contemporary take on the traditional blue and white Delftware and Chinese Willow pattern ware. She deliberately creates crawling of the cobalt blues so that there is a play between abstracted soft decorative marks on linear forms.

Trayci Tompkins, owner of Zulu Lulu gallery in the Midlands, won the Bartel Trust Award (2nd Place) for a work called Sophie gets a lay in. Trayci's acute powers of observation and skilled handling of clay resulted in a dog, lying in comfortable abandonment on a sofa, complete with wet nose and one eye peering out to see if she is being observed. The highly decorated sofa in rich red shows off the soft sagging skin of the dog and the ornate Renaissance-styled legs of the couch add the finishing touches to an amusing piece.

Any artist who creates a sculptural piece can choose her base and this is what 3rd Prize winner Lois Strong has done. She has used a chunk of found concrete as a base for her ceramic flowers. This piece, called Wild Flowers, brings so many thoughts to mind - one thinks of the power-play between man and nature, the willful destruction of our environment and how nature always prevails in the end. It is a piece which speaks volumes, not only visually... The lack of colour allows one to focus on the conceptual, which evokes forgotten memories of places and perhaps, people.

Karuni Naidoo, this year's winner of the Cape Potters Supply Decoration Award, has made structured architectural forms with interesting variations of geometric and organic shapes built up in layers. Her marrying of glaze, under glaze and oxides achieve a fresh interesting surface.

Michelle Rall created a series of printed images on torn porcelain paper clay set behind glass, which further emphasizes the preciousness and fragile quality of the work. She has been inspired by early (18th

Article by Lynette Morris-Hale  
Photographs by Lynette Morris-Hale,  
Anthea Martin and Carol Hayward-Fell







- Opposite: 1. Tracy Thompkins - Second Place  
 2. Lois Strong - Third Place  
 3. Jacky Maclennan - Highly Commended  
 4. Elizabeth Balcomb - Invited Artist
- Above: 5. Frank Nthunya's green vessel with a view over the gallery  
 6/7. Jo-Anne Kuter - Premier Award  
 8. Elize Buchler - Highly Commended  
 9. Carol Hayward-Fell - Highly Commended  
 10. Kyle Pierpoint - Highly Commended

century) explorer drawings of South African wildlife and landscapes. The torn edges of the white porcelain emulate old drawings on parchment paper.

Fahmeeda Omar submitted miniature vessels averaging 15cm in height. These delicate, tiny, hand-coiled vessels have a power that beguiles one's sense of the small. The coloured clay coils, further enhance the contemporary interpretation.

The expressive distortion of the human figure, won Elize Buchler a Highly Commended Award. The large, overlapping feet and tiny head engage the viewer as does the sweeping movement of the drapery and hair. It works successfully as a monochromatic piece.

A newcomer to the ceramic scene is Kyle Pierpoint, who won the Student Award a few years previously and a Highly Commended Award last year. He has won another Highly Commended award this year for his colourful, adventurous play of layers of slip and glazes on hand made plates.

Carol Hayward Fell won a Highly Commended Award for her pair of interacting horses.

Garth Hoets, a Fellow of Ceramics SA, continues to make strong forms in a masculine, traditional way. His platters, large vessels and jugs are functional but also decorative.

While Hermine Coleman won the Student Award for her porcelain bowl, coiled to set up a pleasing rhythm with the agate technique used within the interior of the bowl, Tami King won a Highly Commended in this section.

Quirky little teapots and jugs by Carol Tullidge with impressed designs give the surface of her work interesting details. Her mixture of glazes, under glazes and smoke firing pleases with these timeless forms. It is juxtaposed with Maryna Wagenaar's work, Depleted, which is a technical achievement in Raku Firing.

Lynette Morris-Hale's bubblegum series of vessels was inspired by some South African taxi drivers who show disrespect for the rules of the road. Lynette has treated the clay with the same recklessness (compiling the vessel in under an hour!) Using paper clay, she has constructed the vessels in a seemingly haphazard way and also applied colour with no regard for the traditional formulas of colour harmony. The titles themselves are audacious and add to the enjoyment of the work.

Noreen Hepker's work is a comment on daily domestic life in South Africa. Her white clay figures enable one to focus on the competent and informative modeling.

Jackie Maclennan has won a Highly Commended Award two years in a row. This year her vessel forms are given meaning by smoke firing and the piercing of the clay which evokes memories of braziers.





1.

Carla Da Cruz is an established ceramic artist. She has created a series of vessels where one is encouraged to look deep within the bellies of the pots. The rhythmic banded decoration inside is competent and engaging, so is the shape of her two vessels which are reminiscent of the form of a cow's udder. These are burnished to a smooth finish to create powerful work.

Congratulations are due to all the KwaZulu-Natal members who participated and supported this wonderful exhibition.

*Lynette Morris-Hale* has been involved with ceramics since 1995, as an art educator introducing ceramics at High school level and now currently running her own teaching studio in Durban. She has won awards at Regional and National level and has work in private and public collections in South Africa. She is currently the Chairperson of KZN Ceramics Southern Africa.



2.

1. Carol Tullige 2. Jane Jarvis



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Early in 2013, Iziko Museums of South Africa was approached by the SA Post Office's philatelic services division regarding a new commemorative stamp series featuring South African ceramic vessels. We worked closely with graphic designer Rachel-Mari Ackermann of Philatelic Services to select vessels from the Iziko collection which could work in the small format of a postage stamp. We are indebted to Rachel-Mari and her colleagues at the SA Post Office for the hard work that has gone into realising the series, and especially to the members of the Stamp Advisory Committee who in the first place promoted the idea of featuring ceramics on stamps, and for their final selection of vessels which were to feature.

The new stamps were launched on 13 November 2014 when Iziko opened the 'From African Earth' exhibition, in partnership with Ceramics Southern Africa, at the Slave Lodge in Cape Town. The series comprises a booklet with ten stamps, and two commemorative envelopes, illustrated with photographs by Sascha Lipka. Some of the oldest indigenous pottery made in South Africa, together with contemporary works, feature in the series. The vessels selected are from the Social History and Art Collections of Iziko Museums of South Africa. These vessels are currently on display in the ongoing 'From African Earth' exhibition at the Slave Lodge.

The following ceramic vessels appear on the stamps:

1. Vessel dating from the pre-colonial period, and created by a Khoekhoe woman for domestic use. It has perforated lugs on the shoulder through which handles could be attached for carrying. The vessel was found in the Mossel Bay area and is similar to the type of indigenous pottery that was still being made in the south-western Cape when the Dutch colonists arrived during the mid-17th century.

2. The ukhamba is a traditional beer drinking vessel from the KwaZulu-Natal area. This one dates back to 1965, made by an unnamed artist in the Melmoth area. The outer surface of the vessel was burnished and decorated with applied raised designs or amasumpa, giving vessels such as these a distinctive appearance and alluding to a style of body patterning.

3. A serving vessel for beer made by an unnamed artist in the Mashishing (Lydenburg) area of Mpumalanga. The vessel dates back to 1946 and has a burnished ochre outer surface decorated with arrows and zigzag motifs in graphite.

4. A stoneware vessel created in about 1972 by Ephraim Ziqubu (1948-) at the ELC Art and Craft Centre at Rorke's Drift in KwaZulu-Natal. It was slip-painted and decorated with carved figurative motifs. Rorke's Drift ceramics were not only influenced by indigenous Zulu and Sotho traditions but also by 20th century modernist Scandinavian graphic design through various teachers associated with the Centre.

5. An earthenware vessel created in 1996 by Rebecca Matibe (1936-) from Mufulwe in Limpopo. The burnished outer surface was covered in ochre and decorated with bold geometrical designs in graphite.

6. An earthenware vessel created in 2008 by Clive Sithole (1971-). Sithole's work is influenced by traditional Zulu pottery forms, yet it also references international ceramic traditions. He often uses cattle as a theme, as is evident here in the form of sculpted applied decorations.

7. An earthenware vessel titled Urn for Colonial Ashes, created in 1991 by Clementina van der Walt (1952-). The vessel subtly references social and political conflict in South Africa by way of a collage of applied images, juxtaposed with bright on-glaze painted African designs. The angular shape of the vessel conveys a sense of disjuncture, loss and threat.

8. A stoneware vessel titled Views from the Studio, created in 2011 by Andile Dyalwane (1978-). It features incised and vividly coloured imagery of social and cultural life through motifs of cattle and music making, in combination with modern views of urban Cape Town. The incised clay surface resembles body scarification.

9. A stoneware ceramic vessel made by Hyme Rabinowitz (1920-2009) in 1987 in Cape Town. Recognised as one of South Africa's master potters, Rabinowitz was one of the first in the country to work in the Anglo-Oriental

Article by Esther Esmiol  
Photographs by Sascha Lipka



ceramic tradition, a tradition marked by the use of dark or neutral glazes with subtle decoration.

10. A decorative earthenware vessel sculpted in 2005 by Mondli Obed Mthandeni Mkhize (1981-) and painted by Matrinah Ntombenhle Xaba (1970-) at the Ardmore Ceramic Art studio in KwaZulu-Natal. Ardmore's unique forms are intricately decorated featuring brightly coloured flora and animal motifs. Ardmore is the largest pottery studio in South Africa, producing work which combines European and African ceramic traditions.

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Esther Esmiol is the curator of the Social History Collections at the Iziko Museum of South Africa, Cape Town.



# Small is Beautiful - An Exhibition of Quietude by Jerice Doeg Association of Arts, Pretoria

Review by John Shirley



An exhibition of ceramics is something I relish, particularly if the artist is one of our most well known and respected ceramists. It is always a pleasure to savour the work of someone who really understands their material. This is surely the case with Jerice Doeg, whose exhibition 'Small is Beautiful' showcased at the Black Box at the Association of Arts in Pretoria.

Jerice was introduced to clay when her children went to school. With time on her hands she enrolled at what was then the Port Elizabeth Technical College for a short "hobby pottery" course. It was about twenty years ago that she bought her first bag of porcelain, a material that Jerice went on to work with almost exclusively. Of this she says: 'I love the smooth feel on the wheel, the whiteness and brightness when it is fired and the translucent qualities which give a subtle texture. I like the way dark glazes have an extra shine on a porcelain body and contrast with unglazed surfaces.'

This was not a show of swagger or bravado but rather a show of extreme quietness and introspection. The delicacy of the work was breath-taking, especially in the bowls decorated using the water etching technique. The restraint used in the resist brushwork added to the exquisiteness of these finished pieces. Some of them were decorated on the bowl itself and other pieces only on the rim. I have always found the translucency of porcelain quite magical and these bowls were beautifully lit, making them even more so.

In complete opposition to these translucent works were vessels glazed in an opaque, dark blue glaze of amazing depth. This is quite a risk to take when using porcelain, to completely hide the translucency with an opaque glaze, but the risk paid off. The striking use of lustre on the glaze, again used with restraint, was very effective.

Set between these two extremes were numerous other pieces, delicately thrown agate ware in soft blues and white. These pieces showed the assured hand of the maker guiding her material to a perfect conclusion. As well as the more traditional agate ware there was experimental work with the coloured porcelain used in a bolder method, perhaps not as delicate but equally successful. The elegant perfume bottles, narrow vessels thrown with even narrower necks with gently pinched lids, make the works reminiscent of flowers.

I must mention the work which to me was the most interesting on the exhibition. These were wallhung masks, or to be correct partial masks, (never completely obscuring what is behind). I found these decorative pieces extremely successful and also quite a departure from what I know of Jerice's work, beautifully executed

in porcelain, highly glazed and painted with subtle colour and lustre. All in all this was an exquisite exhibition, quietly celebrating a wonderful life of a maker. Her love for her material of choice resonates throughout the exhibition, a show of quiet pleasures.

*John Shirley is a ceramic maker and educator. He has lectured at The University of Johannesburg since 2000 and also teaches in the informal sector. He works in porcelain and bone-china and has exhibited extensively both locally and internationally. He is a founder member and Fellow of Ceramics Southern Africa and was accepted as a member of The International Academy of Ceramics in 2009.*



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# CLAY AS CANVAS

## Charmaine Haines Expresses her painterly side at Kim Sacks Gallery

EXHIBITION

Article by Wendy Goldblatt



The first thing that strikes one on entering the gallery is the colour and impact of the work on show.

There are tall vases, square vases, large bowls, tiles, square boxes, sculptures, all decorated in Charmaine's inimitable figurative style. Charmaine uses single faces, composite faces and other forms all with strong drawing lines and exciting colour especially red, turquoise and golden brown. Surfaces and backgrounds are also boldly treated, often carved into and darkened with oxides, others washed over the often embellished and textured surfaces.

In some of the pieces, the background is left white and smooth, adding a very dramatic effect to the colour and design of the work.

Charmaine explores the human form through her vessels and also incorporates abstract and stylised symbols, particularly birds, fish and cactus plants. Living in the Karoo with its harsh climate has obviously had a great influence on her new work.

Her large open bowls are unglazed, as is most of her work, but she uses some transparent brush-on glaze to emphasise certain aspects of the design and drawing. This is most successful in these large bowls adding an extra dimension.

Many of the vases stand on a small platform raised on feet, others on an oval base, resulting in a commanding presence.

I found this exhibition a very satisfying and exciting one. You can go to Charmaine's website to view some of her work.

[www.charmainehaines.co.za](http://www.charmainehaines.co.za)

*Wendy Goldblatt has been creating in ceramics for over 40 years. She has exhibited on both National and Regional exhibitions throughout the country and has work in many private collections both in South Africa and overseas.*

*One of the founding members of Ceramics SA (the Association of Potters as it was then called) she has served as both committee member and Chairperson in that organisation. She has also acted as judge for several ceramic exhibitions and is a Fellow of Ceramics Southern Africa.*



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**500 Prints on Clay:**  
An Inspiring Collection of Image Transfer Work  
Juried by Paul Andrew Wandless  
Publisher - Lark Crafts 2013  
ISBN 9781454703310  
*Review by Janice Mendelowitz*

*Janice Mendelowitz holds an Honours degree in Fine Arts from WITS. She uses traditional printmaking techniques such as monotype, relief, collagraph, and intaglio, sometimes individually, or in combination as a hybrid print. She prints by hand or on an etching press. She often prints onto paper clay to achieve an interesting alternative surface and an added visual dimension.*

*Aspects of female fragmentation and growth - rituals, death and rebirth, liminal and transient states interest her and informs her art making process. waterleaf818@gmail.com*

It is the nature of the artist to explore new ways of interpreting their medium. An exploration begun in the last twenty to thirty years has seen printmakers investigating other materials rather than ink on paper and ceramists looking at alternative means of surface decoration. Print and clay have come together to form something of a union, creating an entirely new medium, a hybrid practise which is in a category of its own.

500 Prints on Clay is a showcase of contemporary works which blend tradition and innovation. According to the juror, Paul Andrew Wandless, the pieces you see here constitute a separate genre, one that isn't specifically about clay or printmaking but about something in between. Wandless is a teacher and expert practitioner of this technique and has selected the works from thousands of submissions from around the world.

In this publication, there are examples of works of polymer clay, earthenware, stoneware, porcelain and commercially manufactured china. Pieces have been thrown, cast or hand built into utilitarian objects, sculpture or installations. Some artists have used commercially manufactured porcelain and even found objects.

Print methods range from transfer of screen printed images using newspaper, tissue paper or digital ink, direct stencilling and stamping. Other traditional methods such as intaglio, mono print and lithography can be seen, as well as photopolymer relief, digital decal or laser cut stencils, all quite recently developed processes, adding to the exciting options available. Every artist uses their unique combination of print and clay, so that no two works have the same result. Visually it is like being in a candy store, with hundreds of options to whet one's appetite.

Some of the methods may seem very technical to a ceramist not having previously used printmaking. For a printmaker looking to experiment with clay, the complexity of ceramic technology may seem like a daunting prospect. Although there is no information on how to put these ideas into practice, the book does offer exciting ideas to inspire one to research further.

Every page has clear, high resolution photographs of the works with artist, title, techniques and size. A valuable reference for a ceramist or a printmaker's library as there is something intriguing to be seen at each turn.

Whether employing printmaking to enhance surface design, or clay as an alternative surface to paper, the possibilities in this book are endless and if put into practice, will take your work to another level.



**Troubleshooting for Potters**  
By Jacqui Atkin  
Publisher - Apple Press  
ISBN 9781438004099  
*Review by John Shirley*

*How can I prevent my glazes from pin holing?*

*What can I do to reduce warping when firing porcelain?*

*What makes a handle crack and fall off?*

*How do I avoid a teapot spout twisting in the firing?*

These and many other questions are dealt with in this new publication which deals with just about any problem you could think of related to clay, glaze, decorating and firing.

Divided into five sections, namely, *What's the problem? Clays, Forming and biscuit ware, Surface decoration and Firing*, this volume sets out to address all the problems you may have, why they happen and how to remedy them.

The first section looks at specific problems in chart form and all this information is then expanded upon in the further sections.

It is really wonderful to have all this information in one book. Well laid out and with excellent explanations and solutions. This book should be welcomed by all working with clay be they seasoned professionals or beginners.

Jacqui Atkin is a studio ceramist who has taught pottery in colleges and occupational therapy for several years. She is the author of 250 Tips, Techniques & Trade Secrets for Potters.

*John Shirley is a ceramic maker and educator. He has lectured at The University of Johannesburg since 2000 and also teaches in the informal sector. He works in porcelain and bone-china and has exhibited extensively both locally and internationally. He is a founder member and Fellow of Ceramics Southern Africa and was accepted as a member of The International Academy of Ceramics in 2009.*





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An exciting array of Southern African potters and ceramic artists, both rural and urban, including Lisa Liebermann, are showcased at Liebermann Gallery. The Gallery is located in the historic Gas Works, close to the trendy Melville shopping area.

Liebermann Pottery in Johannesburg has an extensive range of traditional handmade cottage tableware, dinnerware and ceramic picture tiles, brilliantly-coloured contemporary garden planters and vases, with their distinctive Liebermann ambience. For the Bonsai enthusiast, the Liebermann Gallery has the largest selection of planters on the continent.

**Our Cape Town gallery is situated on an old Cape farm, on Kommetjie Main Road, near Kommetjie on the Cape Peninsula.**





# Competing in Zanesville, USA: The Zanesville Prize for Contemporary Ceramics

Article by Robert Wagener

Photographs by Robert Wagener and various artists



*Left to right: Paul Donnelly, Tray, 2015*

*John Utgaard, Reaction, 2014*

*Robert Wagener, Dark Star, 2015*

*Opposite page: Jessica Putnam-Phillips, Ashes of Rose, Urn Pair, 2015*

At the beginning of August I received the good news that I had been selected as one of 58 finalists for the 2015 Zanesville Prize for Contemporary Ceramics, purported to have the largest prize money in the western hemisphere. In celebration I decided to attend the opening of the exhibition, which was held on the 25th of September 2015 in Zanesville.

Zanesville is situated roughly in the center of Ohio, about 200 kilometers south of Lake Erie in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. It is a small town, (approximately 25 000 inhabitants) with a rich history and was once the capital of Ohio. It lies at the confluence of two rivers, where the plentiful clay deposits in the area led to the establishment of a major pottery industry. The Weller Pottery which opened in 1910 manufactured 'art' pottery and tableware and was the largest of its kind in the world at that time. Sadly, most of these factories closed down soon after the Second World War as a result of economic recession and cheaper imported goods.

Today the town is something of an artists' colony and is home to several smaller potteries and many studio potters as well as sculptors and painters.

The Ohio State University has a branch in Zanesville and it has the fourth best-ranked fine art school for ceramics in the United States. There are also numerous ceramics classes and workshops on offer for adults and children.

This is only the second awarding of the prize - \$20 000 for the overall winner and \$10 000 shared between the first, second and third placed winner. Each participant could enter three works for an entry fee of \$40. Sixty-three works were chosen from the over nine hundred entries received. The first selection was made from submitted images.

The 2015 Exhibition is staged in the Zanesville Museum of Art, which also houses a permanent collection of ceramics dating back to the turn of the nineteenth century - mainly from the potteries in and around Zanesville, some of whom employed well-known potters from Europe and Asia. The current exhibition will run through to January 2016.

I arrived in Zanesville on the day of the opening, exhilarated from my train journey on the Amtrak from New York through the Appalachians and the beautiful state of Pennsylvania; to a very warm welcome from the organizers, particularly Susan Gottlieb the director. I was introduced to the jurors and to several of the local benefactors who contribute to the prize and are passionate about keeping Ohio and Zanesville the important center for ceramics that it is.

This year the jurors were Garth Johnson, Curator of Ceramics at the Arizona State University (ASU) Art museum; Doug Jeck, Associate Professor and the chair of Ceramic Art at the University of Washington Seattle and Julia Galloway, Professor and Director of the School of Art at the University of Montana.

The exhibition is perfectly staged with a vast spectrum of genres from simple 'traditional' wood fired ceramics through to complex avant-garde sculptures and installations. What is most striking is the attention to detail and the meticulous execution of the work.

The 'Best in Show' award went to Colby Parsons from Denton, Texas, with an abstract piece called Peak No 1: a pyramid form with an undulating surface. A strobe light projected onto it from the ceiling above created the impression of water running down the surface, described by one of the jurors as a wonderful 'liquid' glaze. First placed was Paul Donnelly from Kansas City, Missouri with Tray: an exquisite porcelain vessel with a translucent pale





blue/green celadon glaze. Second Placed was 'Bloom' by Amanda Salov from Corvallis, Oregon - a delicate circle of flower sculptures on a base raised on steel tacks creating a shadow line and giving a floating aspect to the whole. Third Placed was 'Selling Copy' by Chris Dufala from Missoula, Montana, a meticulously made antique type writer in a black gun metal glaze, that looks so real you could type a letter on it! To see all the finalists go to finalists go to [www.zanesvilleprize.org](http://www.zanesvilleprize.org).

Personally, it was an unforgettable experience and a great privilege to be present at this occasion and I had the added pleasure of selling my work on the opening night!

*Robert Wagener, who lives in Johannesburg, left a career in construction some five years ago to become a full time ceramist. He is represented in The Corobrik Collection and in private collections and galleries both locally and abroad.*

The complete list of awards:

Best in Show: Colby Parsons Peak #1, 2014 (video) [www.colbyparsonsalt.com](http://www.colbyparsonsalt.com)

1st Place: Paul Donnelly, Tray, 2015

2nd Place: Amanda Salov, Bloom, 2013

3rd Place: Chris Dufala, Selling Copy, 2015

Honorable Mention: John Utgaard, Reaction, 2014

Honorable Mention: Jessica Putnam-Phillips, Ashes of Rose, Urn Pair, 2015

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# A Trip up the Coast to Sculpt in Paternoster at Dianne Heesom-Green's Stone Fish Gallery

Article by Ann Marais.

Photographs by Dianne Heesom-Green and Santie de Bruyn

So there we were - five creatives in the iconic West Coast fishing village of Paternoster ready to embark on a 4-day sculpture course, equipped with open minds, lots of enthusiastic energy and an eagerness to absorb the knowledge and expertise afforded us by sculptor/teacher, Dianne Heesom-Green.

We were an interesting mix: multi-media artist and life-adventurer, Theo Kleynhans; academic anatomist and grand-père extraordinaire, Roelof Roussouw; "Solid Gold Eveready" TV and film set builder and Mr. Fix-it Build-it of virtually anything, Patrick Mulder; freelance TV production manager, Santie de Bruyn, and myself, ceramic artist and sculptor and insatiably curious about everything in life.

Our venue was Stonefish Gallery - the colourful, vibrant, multi-creative hub of Paternoster run and owned by Dianne Heesom-Green - and a must-visit venue for anyone interested in the creative arts and the lowdown on life in this unique village. (Charlie Chaplin once owned the stretch of land that stretches out onto a promontory at the end of the long beach).

Dianne's oeuvre is impressive. She is an award-winning sculptor who generously shares her knowledge and expertise through ceramic and painting courses, pottery classes, community projects, art exhibitions as well as showcasing in her gallery the works of artists in many different media. The gallery space is a cornucopia of creativity - ceramic sculpture, paintings, graphics, and pottery, both functional and conceptual - all unique, hand-crafted works of great variety and interest. She also provides accommodation for workshop participants - Watershed House that accommodated us all on a modestly-priced, self-catering basis.

Day One started with a formal lecture and demonstrations on the anatomy of the human figure. Heesom-Green states that for a figure to ring true, the underlying structure (the skeleton) must be anatomically correct, no matter how far from reality the figure is interpreted later. She is very formal and correct in emphasising the importance and necessity of studying the proportions and structure of the human figure. She demonstrated the conventions pertaining to the human figure in that the head fits eight times (she attests it is seven and a half) into the figure and she pointed out the pivotal

points: taking the head measurement, one moves to under the armpits, to the waist, to the pubis, half way down the thigh, to the calf, then to the ground.

She gave the conventional measurement of the head as one third and the shoulders two thirds: the diameter of the hand bunched into a fist is the size of one's foot. In addition, the length of one's arm from wrist to elbow is the length of one's foot and the length of one's nose is 2/3rds the length of one's middle finger.

Armed with these interesting anatomical facts, she set us on our way with a limbering-up exercise. Each of us was given a ball of clay and instructed to take any pose of a figure and interpret this in clay. It was a quick, 5 minute exercise. However, soon all this anatomical seriousness called for a caffeine boost! Next it was time to tackle another figure pose of a more substantial nature. These would be worked upon later after the initial preparatory pushing and pulling of the clay into some sorts of recognisable figures.

Lunch followed soon after with a splendid homemade quiche and apple crumble made by local gourmet cook, Gaby Dunn. This delightful repast was taken beside the Queen Anne wood-fired stove that warms the studio/gallery. Dianne's canine companions shared this warm space on the couch next to the stove.

Our instruction into the formal conventions of the human figure continued in the afternoon with those troublesome appendages - namely hands and feet. Feet are all triangles as expertly demonstrated by Dianne. She reminded us that the thumb begins at the wrist! She expertly cut and fashioned all five digits into fingers with knuckles, flesh and cushioned pads at the finger tips... very sensual sensors she insisted. (Think of the feel of silk as it slides past your finger tips or as your fingers trace a line down your lover's back!)

4pm on Day one and it was time to CHILL: enough physical activity for the fingers: time to give space to the muses. Heesom-Green and Paternoster are well-suited - gentle, chilled and tuned to the sensitivities of creative souls. Time to 'be'... to drift in the gentleness of down-time.

Later, it was time for supper at the one and only Paternoster Hotel. This unique watering-hole, with its vast collection of flotsam and

*Below Left to right: Theo Kleynhans (unfired), Patrick Mulder (unfired), Santie de Bruyn (unfired), Roelof Rossouw (unfired)*







Above: Ann Marais (unfired)

jetsam of human endeavour - photographs, fishing gear, bar paraphernalia, eccentric bric-a-brac and all manner of kitsch draws in the temporary visitor as a vast legion of passing souls leaves their marks. There are scrawled signatures on the walls and one senses vestiges of mega, marathon parties stretching far into the night.

Day Two and we tackled the construction of bigger figures created by a building technique that is unique to Dianne. A hollow structure was built up quickly with torn strips of clay, all because we were using paper clay. With the inherent strength embedded by the paper in the clay we were able to keep the structures strong as they were built up vertically. The morning's work ethic was intense, broken only by caffeine breaks taken on the veranda outside the studio in the warm winter sunshine. Verbal exchanges were gentle, reflective, easy and paced-down, matching the gentle ebb and flow of the grey sea swells lapping at the beach glimpsed in the distance. All quotidian stress was far away and forgotten.

Day three began with high expectations of a breakfast out of the ordinary. This was to be at Kobus Van der Merwe's unique (and a must-do on the Paternoster trail) restaurant, 'Oep ve Koep' where the cuisine is based on foraging for local ingredients on the seashore, in the sea and on the land of the West Coast. Starters were moer koffie and wild sage tea together with heerenbone, masala, sagte eier and sout slaai. Next came homemade bread, farm butter, appelkoos konfyt and sweet milk cheese. Lastly, we were treated to Strandveld heuning, seasonal fruit and yoghurt. Borage blossoms were used to decorate the plates. Each table was decorated with Euphorbia succulents in glass vases. All the elements were grown, made or foraged in the area. Resting around the dining area are pensioned-off fishing boats that now serve as container gardens for herbs, flowers and seasonal vegetables. The restaurant entrance is an Aladdin's cave of local produce, arts, crafts and kitchen equipment. Do not miss out on this culinary adventure if you are in Paternoster but be sure to book a table well in advance.

So then it was time to start the day's work. Our abstract forms were transformed into human mode with additions of faces, feet and arms protruding out of the strips of clay which formed part of the previous day's abstract sculpture. This now became the human form. It is always a source of wonder how workshop participants are given the same basic brief and yet out of this common starting point emerge unique creative expressions of the

human form. Theo Kleynhans' robust work spoke of controlled inner emotions jutting out of form and face. Santie de Bruyn's figure was an unconsciously accurate expression of her gentle nature. "Solid Gold" Patrick's figure was a wild, multi-exploratory expression of a creative soul searching to make sense of, and experiment upon, the three days of new, aesthetic frontiers he had traversed. Anatomist and grand-père Roelof's figure was a poignant and tender exposition of mother and her child engulfed in swaddling blanket on her back. My figure was a strange, androgynous figure peering out, like a startled doe, at an increasingly bewildering world. These five, unique works were a tribute to the skilful tuition and guidance of our seasoned tutor over the short period of three days. She covered a huge amount in easily absorbed steps with clear explanations and insightful guidance to the point whereby complete beginners, as some were, were able to create a credible sculpture from start to finish in three days.

The finale to this excellent course and creative journey was a highlight in itself - sundowners on the rocks. It was the picture-perfect Hollywood ending: the gentle, warm, sun-bathed sea, sky and land in soft glowing golden light. The Atlantic rollers, remnants of a storm at sea, were now quietened down to huge, heaving swells that crashed against the giant boulders lining the shore, with white sprays of water shooting up and spewing over the grey granite. Our eyes inevitably followed the never-ending fascination we have with moving water, which was coloured gunmetal grey by the gentle light of the winter sky. All around we drank in with our eyes, the organic colourings of yellows, grey, grey-blue, greyish-white and soft greens of the landscape that is the calm quiet of the winter season. We laughed, we chatted, we marvelled at the scene before us, we drank, ate and took selfies as we revelled in this extraordinary beauty. Santie and Patrick jumped for joy against the setting sun - a pure burst of energy that captured the spirit of this magical time together.

*Ann Marais has been a full time ceramist, sculptor and artist since 1977. She has exhibited with much success, both locally and abroad. She is highly respected for her writings in local as well as overseas publications. Her work is held in collections all over the world. She is a Fellow of Ceramics Southern Africa.*



# Vital Forms in Ceramics: An Interview with Kate Malone

Interviewed by architect Keith Struthers from *NaturalsCool*

Photographs by courtesy of Adrian Sassoon, London



In this excerpt of a thirty-minute podcast interview, you'll hear two like-minded individuals. A ceramist and an organic architect find common sculptural ground on the essence of their creative practice. The most interesting part of the interview is available on [www.naturalscool.com](http://www.naturalscool.com). Be inspired by Kate's creative processes

In the Eighties she was absorbed by the nature of the sea, in the Nineties by the nature of the land and most recently out of the earth's crust with magma and crystal formations.

Kate Malone is an internationally acclaimed ceramist from London whose work has been exhibited in over one hundred solo and group exhibitions, from London to Miami and New York to Japan. She creates one off-studio pieces as well as collaborations with architects, designers and public art agencies. Her intention is to convey a sense of pleasure with her art and also to express the life force she sees and experiences in nature. She is also fascinated by alchemy in the outcome of ceramic glaze technology.

'Kate doesn't just potter around, she's enormously competent and capable as a craftsperson, she says what she thinks straight up, is very approachable and has a warm heart and soul'

**Keith Struthers:** Welcome Kate, thank you for joining us, I'd like to start with your childhood. Did you grow up in a creative environment?

**Kate Malone:** My dad is a sports journalist and he really has had no art input at all in his life, he is very at home, he is not really aware of anything on the walls or what he wears, so my father wasn't an influence. My mum didn't really use her talents, well she did as she was a mother, but she didn't express herself. Although in later life when she did have a go at ceramics you could see that she was clearly very good. When we were small she made our dresses and she made the curtains in the house, so there was a degree of creativity. I was the one who was fanatically doing odd things. I was always in the corner doing sort of colour by numbers or embroidering little pictures on bits of cloth. My brothers were both sports addicts and worked as sports journalists later in life. My father and my brothers shared this triangle of loving sport.

**KS:** So how did you get into ceramics then?

**KM:** Well ceramics - that was really luck. The big, rather rough but rather modern state school I attended had a ceramics department under the stairs and it was a very mystifying and bohemian atmosphere. Very different to the rest of the school. I was drawn to it at about age twelve from the moment I looked through the window that was slightly smeared with clay. Mostly what got me were the jars on the shelf. I remember it

to this day. You know this sort of moment. What's that box with all those wires in? I learnt it was a kiln and the potter's wheel and the jars of glazes... It was an immediate draw. I do remember as a much, much younger child at primary school making something out of some kind of flour paste and making a cake, a pretend cake, and I remember that the malleability of that struck me to the extent that I have that memory.

**KS:** That's remarkable. And the first time you walked into that under the stairs studio, how was that for you?

**KM:** Our pottery teacher was rather dusty and bohemian looking, not like the other teachers. He was very handsome; there was something mystifying about him. He was a painter out of school, so he was really the different one in the

atmosphere. But essentially it was the clay and it was the wonder of the scientific changes. The clay was soft and it became hard and that made me feel clever although it wasn't me - it was the elements doing the changes in the clay. Then it was the glaze which was matt and dusty and then it was shiny and again it made me feel like I had achieved something. I think for children- and I feel very strongly about it - children having the opportunity to witness the magic of science and physics. You witness the possibility of making something very soft which becomes hard so it's a magical material.

**KS:** It's interesting the first thing you mentioned was the plasticity and the tactile quality of the clay and then the colour and those are the two elements that you have been really occupied with for all these years.

**KM:** Yes, those jars on the shelves, that was then, now I enjoy the much prettier jars and making it all that much prettier in a scientific working environment.

**KS:** So you really tried to marry a kind of a scientific approach with the free artistic expressive approach.

**KM:** Yes absolutely, I had physics, chemistry and biology at school but I wasn't a high IQ child. I did love those subjects, never really truly understanding. That big chart with the iron and gold, all those symbols, I love symbols actually, I hadn't thought of that at the time. Even then the biology drawings and cross sections of flowers, you know things like that in biology, it all adds up now. In fact my father says that when I was really very small, before walking possibly, I'd sit in the garden and sort of look, pick a flower, a daisy or something and really look at it and he'd see me just looking at it!

**KS:** remarkable!

**KM:** In fact the things I made then - and I have some of those things that I gave to my grandma back in my house since she died. I made a hedgehog with twiddled bits that I moved in my fingers and rolled into little teardrop shapes. I stuck them all over this hedgehog. So that is exactly what I do now.

**KS:** Which is a lot of what you do with your large pots now?

**KM:** Yes. I make a core and then I add bits to it.

**KS:** What I'd like you to do, is briefly describe your process, but from a very particular point of view. What's happening inside you while you are going through that process? For example, the different videos that you produced for the New York exhibition in 2010. You initially





had sketches, but in particular, what was going on inside your mind at the time.

**KM:** Yes, I think everybody's mind is like a melting pot, isn't it. I might visit a museum or do a bit of travelling or pick up the piece of celery at the market. I do this celery pot, it looks like a fennel pot but it is a cross between a fennel and celery. I have been working on Saville Row and I love the way you see a man in a pinstriped suit and the way the stripes relate to the body. I have also been looking at ploughed fields in David Hockney's meadow paintings and in real life. So the Saville Row stripes, the celery and the David Hockney fields all come together

Listen to the rest of the *interview* at <http://www.naturalscool.com>

**Kate Malone** will be one of the judges in the upcoming The Great Pottery Throw Down which should be aired on DSTV in South Africa in 2016.



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image: Ann Marais, WS1 s/w casting slip



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dale lambert  
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For more information contact

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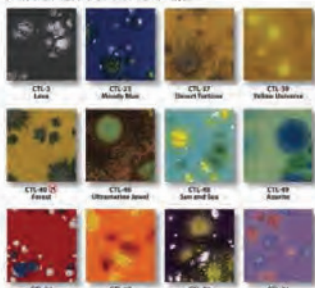
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