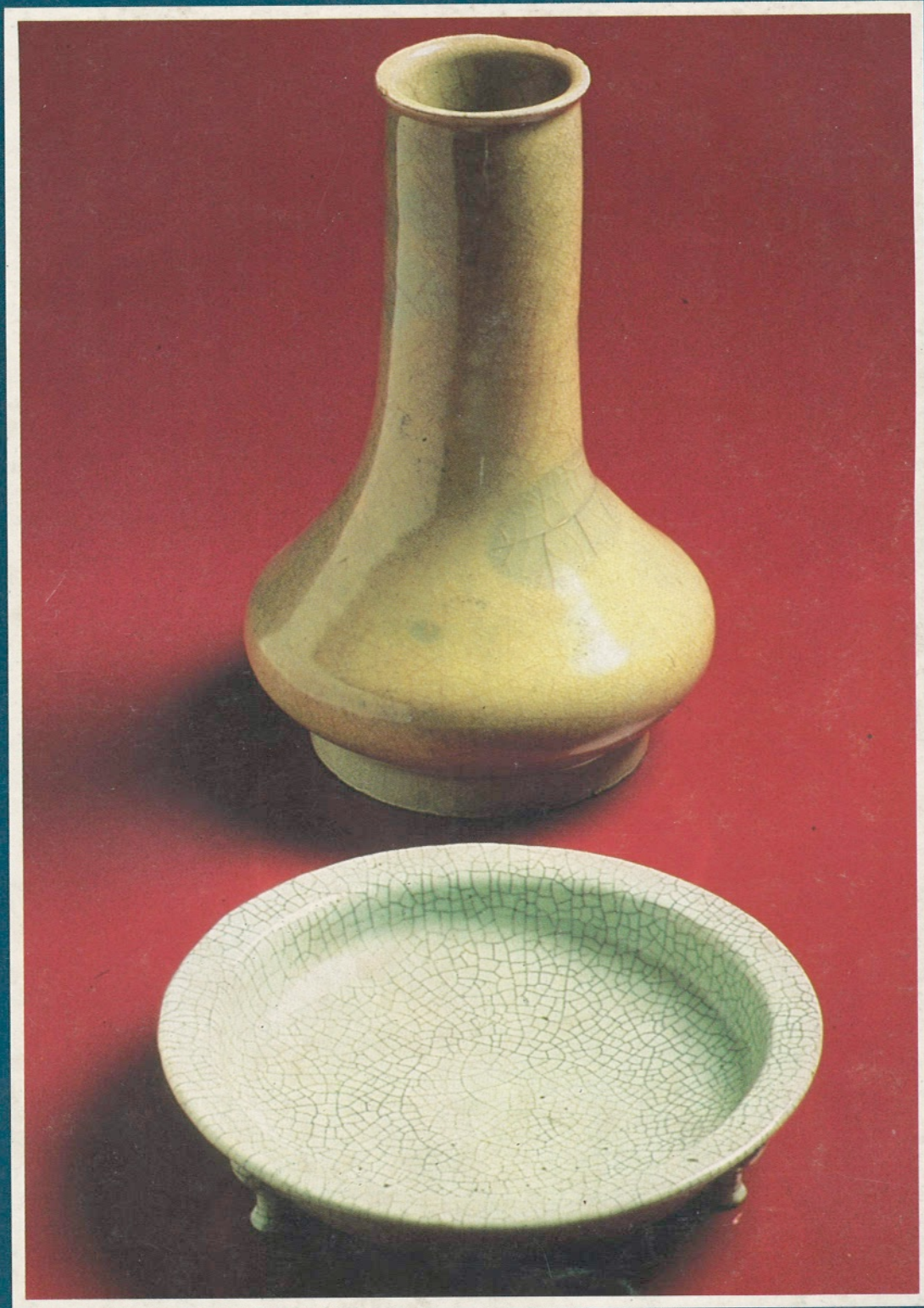


National Ceramics

Quarterly

NUMBER 4

R3,50



ESIAS BOSCH • CHINESE CERAMICS • BERESFORD & VERWEY • PRODUCTION POTTERS

Life and pottery in S.A. did not stop in 1984!

Charlotte Katzen

Johannesburg.

I regret that your correspondent misread information contained in my article. Names mentioned were specifically those of some AWARD-WINNERS — not exhibitors!

I quote the relevant passage —

"Over the years South African ceramicists have submitted work, and several have received awards INCLUDING Susan Annandale, Barry Douglas, Lesley Ann Hoets, Ann Marais, Rika Meijer, Sue Meyer, and Charmaine Peterson."

The Vallauris Ceramics Biennale goes back to 1968! A listing of all South African exhibitors and award-winners over the years would have been impractical and unnecessary in the context of my article.

Benita Munitz

Cape Town

To date, Ms Katzen, I have not received the most recent news of your work. However if you would like to update your list, you could add Sheugnet Christie, one of her accepted entries was illustrated on page 31 of the same issue. At present our Associate Editor, Rosemary Lapping, is in Europe and will be visiting Vallauris so NCQ certainly will be featuring 'the most recent news' of any award winning works although probably not of every work accepted. Ed.

"Taste" and "feeling"

As I was drinking my breakfast coffee, I flipped open the Hamada book (by Leach). By chance, page 113 appeared and what caught my eye was a wonderful dissertation on "Taste" and "feeling" by Hamada. All very relevant, even today!

And in case the modern "whiz kids" consider the Hamadas of this world as "old hat", look back to the preface by Janet Leach in which she has this to say:

'I believe that Hamada is the most completely integrated 20th century artist-potter (we have); his home, his life style, his thoughts and work flow in one harmonious stream.'

I say: In this disjointed world of today whose philosophy do you prefer to follow. (Rhetorical question!)

Hym Rabinowitz

Cape Town

"Taste" and "feeling": the former is a part, the latter is the whole.

If one is observing a pot or any good article, one must be aware that "taste" is only partial viewing, while perceiving the "feeling" of an article is seeing the whole. The person who is preoccupied with good taste will respond to the details and incidentals of the object he is viewing, but is too close to see the whole object properly. The person who is concerned with feeling stands aside and allows the work to make its natural impact on him.

The same distinction also applies to the craftsman doing his work; he can consciously create tasteful things but he cannot deliberately create things with feeling. Real feeling seems to hover impartially; it is something inherent in the nature of a work. The piece achieves its beauty irrespective of the conscious aims of the maker. Usually the craftsman sets out to produce a particular effect and is pleased or displeased with the final result, depending on how near the work comes to his original intention. In fact, the essence of the true quality of the work lies somewhere else, and his conscious efforts to achieve this quality make little difference.

Good taste is a formula, and almost anyone can develop the ability to have good taste or to create good taste. But it is not so with feeling, it cannot be purchased like a new coat. Therefore, criticism or appreciation by people who deal essentially in taste is of little real value to the craftsman, whereas any genuine criticism of a work's feeling gives the maker cause for serious thought.

The connoisseur, in selecting or judging work usually chooses the tasteful, safe, pleasing pieces, as viewed from the established standard. This approach is admirable as far as it goes, and the works concerned are no doubt relatively well-balanced, pleasing pieces. But I often wish that people would take a step further and apply non-established, non-accepted standards and select work that has true directness of feeling, even if it is lacking in the expected taste. I am sure the potter himself would learn a great deal from this. People have a tendency to dwell a great deal on shape, balance, pattern, line, and so on, but they fail to see, or they forget, the whole. The article produces its own effect regardless of these piecemeal distinctions.

A work with a plain surface is a beautiful thing, but intentional, deliberate plainness becomes a type of pattern. It lacks both the beauty and the depth of the truly unadorned. By contrast, there are many articles where pattern is used in such a way as to create an effect of no pattern. The pattern that is time-tested and matured harmonizes and does not fight with the piece it adorns. In spirit, this well-decorated piece is identical to the one with truly no pattern — this is the real meaning of plainness.

Traditional raku ware is an excellent example of conscious striving after profound, unadorned beauty. These pots are in reality no more than a lump of taste made through a compromise between the connoisseur and the potter. The result seldom goes beyond self-conscious rusticity. The person who perceives a work's good taste is often regarded as a fine arbiter. But to finally appreciate a work one must see beyond the conscious intention of the maker; one must try to see the essence of the piece itself. To do this you need to stand back, and allow the true feeling to have its say.

Hamada (from *Kogei*, Vol. 8, 1931)

Throwing with Bruce Walford

In this our second throwing lesson we will make a smallish lidded jar. The basic lessons learnt in the previous issue (No. 3) will both be used again and before starting this exercise, one should first practise throwing a few cylinders and bowls. Points to remember: Do not rest your arms on the edge of the wheel — use your thighs. Sit well up over your clay. Do not use too much water and use your fingers to carry the water to the clay dispersing it gently on the rim. Always be conscious of your next move and work steadily.



2. Push down and pull out with the thumb of the right hand and fingers of the left.



4. To pull up squeeze the clay between the thumb and fingers of the right hand, the left hand steadies the pot. Pull the pot about halfway up leaving enough clay to form the galley.



6. Note the right thumb and index knuckle forming the rim and keeping the pot on centre.



1. Centered and ready for opening (about 1 kg. of clay). Note the position of the braced hands and the small indentation made with the thumb which will give you enough water to open the clay.



3. Use the fingers of the right hand to steady the clay to the required width.



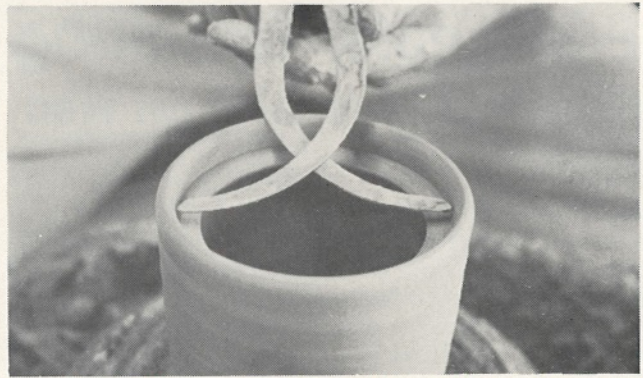
5. Press down with the index finger of the left hand using the second and third fingers to support and form the underside of the galley.



7. Now throw the pot to its full height.



8. Trim the base and if need be give it its final shape.



9. Carefully measure the width of the galley.



1. For the lid center the clay squeezing in slightly at the base. Notice the braced hands.



2. To open and throw press down with the fingers of the left hand and slightly in and up with the right hand.



3. Draw the clay directly towards you — NOT left or right.



4. Trim off excess clay with a square edged tool.



5. Carefully finish your rim as shown.



6. Measure the outer edge to fit. If necessary repeat steps 3 and 5 to adjust.

In our next issue we will cover trimming and footrings.

Personally Speaking

Rosemary Lapping on Neo Deco.

Pssst....It's Post Post Stoneware

Plodding through the pile of brown stoneware at the potters' market has become par for the course, and this April meeting seemed no exception. The air had an autumnal ring, with the aura of tenmoku heralding the impending long, wet, winter days. Thus it was with some shock that amongst the stalls, a group of bright coloured mugs was spied.

On further investigation it became evident that the work of Rabie and Louw was one answer to a cry for a more modern (and local) approach to the everyday mass-produced mug or bowl. Many of the younger generation who are starting homes today are veering from the ethnic whole earth approach, where twenty years ago Indian prints, leather sandals, incense and stoneware were the in thing. One may argue that the classical style of Leach-orientated stoneware will remain as perennial and as acceptable as Mozart, and this may be true — but if one is looking at the market of tomorrow, there is no doubt that the shift is towards more colourful surfaces, more loose, asymmetrical designs.

General domestic appliances, furniture and fabrics have moved from their rather sedate place to a fun-orientated life-style. No doubt both the pop and funk artists (and even the Bloomsbury group) contributed to inspiring the post-war designers whose job it was and is to shape telephones, kettles and cars for the highly competitive market we have come to accept. In the 1970s the Memphis Group headed by Ettore Sottsass, provided the creation of wildly controversial domestic objects whose purpose it seems, was to introduce controversial coloured and patterned objects back into the home. The concept of utility seemed to take a back seat as the objects which they provided assertively questioned the social and psychological roles which the ordinary cup, teapot or chair may play in our lives. Whilst Sottsass reintroduced the totem into daily living, it is important to acknowledge that emotional as well as physical needs demand satisfaction, and Memphis designs stated quite simply that life can be merry and colourful, of course. Reaction to Memphis was both strongly positive and negative, but no contemporary designer can deny that their panache influenced and spawned exciting offspring. A fresh dexterity has developed with colours, patterns and textures, and a new way of looking at household objects has been born. In 1985 the Watney Museum in New York staged an exhibition of 'Fifty Years of Domestic Industrial Design' and the contrast between the rather staid (for whatever reason) thirties vacuum cleaner and the "maxi-suck" of the eighties was shattering! It has all become related to the market where

trading involves a good return on capital investment, and of course this means creating a product for the present day demand (or even creating a demand for a present day product!). Thus it follows that industrial designs must be conceived to produce articles which have been dictated by the market.

Pursuing this argument further it becomes obvious that young couples who have invested in all the modern domestic appliances, with their sleek, modish lines and brightly coloured surfaces (right down to the red, yellow or blue plugs) will find it very difficult to then buy brown stoneware coffee mugs.


Whether the consumer is walking down the aisles of David Mellor, Heals or Next of London — all home-supply emporia, the Habitat in New York or Printemps in Paris, the eighties market screeches colour. Those shops sell production line ceramics and are supplying us all with everyday domesticware. The CPA shop in London which sells handthrown production line vessels, reflects a similar trend. So the point is, are we in this country a) making any effort to stay current with the modern designs for tableware and b) are we training any draughtsmen or educating any potters to design for the crockery industry of today?

I believe that we in South Africa are stealing overseas ideas and mass producing them here. This certainly happens in the clothing and shoe industry where manufacturers go abroad in the European Spring, photograph or buy their models, import or simulate the fabrics and leathers, and voila! Come our own Spring, we are afforded easy access to cheap versions of European fashion. Due to the ever-depleting rand, imported goods have become prohibitively expensive and so once a well-designed prototype has been found in Europe, Japan or America, we use local materials and labour and plagiarise to our hearts content. On certain levels of commodity, this may be the only logical way to maintain a relatively acceptable standard of aesthetics. Take a well-made, well-designed, strong plastic chair from France which sells here for close on R100, one of which was procured by a local manufacturer, and used as a mould. Within a short space of time the chairs were available for R29,95. We may have foregone a certain quality of plastic, but at least we can enjoy the pleasure of a well-designed chair. So what is happening on the ceramic front? Well, for starters, the accepted medium of fired clay for tableware has been upstaged to some extent by Corningware, glass and high quality plastic — the latter available in every colour of the rainbow, technically whimsical and visually seductive. The old, well-loved brown Arabia-ware which was imported from Finland has been replaced by sleek, white China, thin and refined. German crockery with bright flowers and fruit can be found in the upmarket shops and IGB is manufacturing some very trendy, brightly coloured earthenware in reds, pinks, blues and yellow (which I may say chips like mad).

The local ceramic factories tend to choose the middle road and still produce somewhat benign shapes and designs, predominantly in white, which is as safe as anyone can imagine. There is a certain stagnation, due no doubt to fear of failure and capital loss, or to a lack of adventure, creativity and excitement — all of which are important for generating a new market.

Most of the Technikons now offer courses in industrial design which is part of their Interior Design programs, and maybe some bright sparks will initiate a new, truly South African design which will find its way onto our tables each morning. The potters are really neither trained, nor motivated, nor inclined, it seems, to take on full production of a Neo-Deco tableware. There is a market in the country for an exciting new mass-produced table setting, which does not resemble anything like the passe brown stoneware of the sixties, NOR must it hint of any well-practised cobalt flick of the Japanese brush.

We who are making ceramics must realise that we are not simply creating objects to satisfy functional needs — designing does not only mean making an object. It is the result of a creative intelligence and an exercise in critical imagination. Hopefully we shall for a while allocate ferric-loaded glazes to the museum where we can recognise their beauty and validity. Rabie and Louw's white mugs with the blue and yellow worms were just what I needed to assemble my thoughts and deliver Spring to my teatray on a drab winter morning. Thanks.

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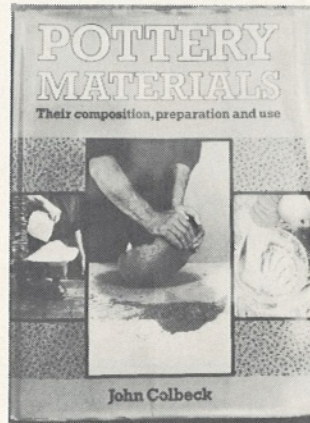
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Book review



Pottery Materials:
Their composition,
preparation
and use.
John Colbeck.
Publ. B. T. Batsford.
London 1988
£16.25.

If you are not the owner of any other books on ceramic-related raw materials and their uses, this book could be just what the potter ordered. Succinctly assembled and clearly illustrated, it reads well with a good deal of sound information. Any potters who want to know about the chemistry of their medium will find it a worthwhile volume.

For the old hands who have a sound foundation of facts and practical experience, the book may come as a disappointment. This book is recommended to potters who are in need of a volume containing sound, basic information.

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AGENTS:

TRANSVAAL: The "Clay Pot" Tel: (011) 640-7316 Johannesburg.

OFS: "Clay Cottage" Tel: (051) 47-2711 Bloemfontein.

CAPE: T. Reinders Tel: (021) 902-2977, Shaw-Tec Tel: (021) 61-8686.

NATAL: Trade enquiries welcome.

MANUFACTURED BY: Potters Pride Products (Pty) Ltd, P.O. Box 41, Tableview 7439. Tel: (021) 57-3357.

Production Potters

Janice Rabie and Watney Louw state quite simply that they are not trying to make art. They do not relate to many of the potting fraternity, whom they feel tend to rely too heavily on the vision and inspiration of the East. Instead, they learnt their trade from local china factories and plenty of research into ceramic chemistry. Having both graduated in the early eighties from Michaelis Art School with BAFA degrees, (and Watney, a teacher's diploma to boot), they have set out to become self-reliant, independent potters who produce well-designed tough, strong domestic-ware which is nothing like anything that we have yet seen.



*Above: Part of their workshop.
On the right: Some of their exciting domestic-ware.
Photographs: Rosemary Lapping.*

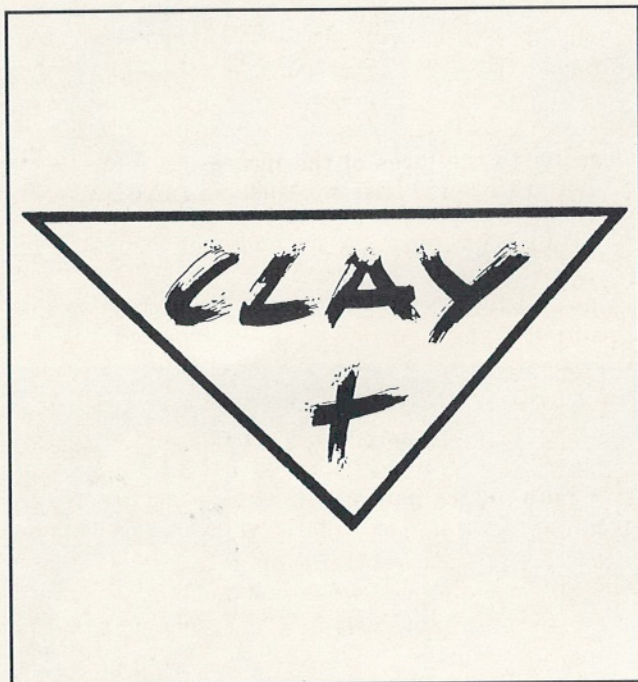
Today they yield a kiln load with less than five percent rejects and even fewer unexpected surprises. With the element of doubt shelved, they refine their shapes for moulding to their precise requirements, whilst subjecting their colours and glazes to similar stringent tests. When everything is perfect, the productin line begins. The Rabie/Louw ware is slipcast in plaster moulds whilst decoration is done by hand. They fire each piece between one and three times depending on the glaze and the final lustre, but the body does sinter at cone 7. This gives the product the added advantage of a body which will not easily chip or craze.

Their studio is equipped to make dinner services, bowls, mugs and jugs. As their prices are very competitive with the local commercial domestic-ware, there is no reason why one cannot have easy access to something different on one's dinner table. Outlets for their ceramics are essentially craft shops, small galleries and kitchenware suppliers throughout the country.

Janice Rabie and Watney Louw are two young potters who have set their goal on an alternative aesthetic. They have constructively and methodically set their target at something new, fresh and different, and how grateful we should be for that.



Ceramic exhibition at UNISA



The invitation to submit work for selection for Clay + and has met with an enthusiastic response. Practising artists and students of ceramics throughout the country submitted exciting work for selection. The aim of the exhibition was to collate innovative work made in clay that was felt to move beyond traditional expectations.

The works that will be included in the exhibition represent a wide variety of approaches to ceramic art and attest the tremendous creative potential of the medium. Many of the works reflect international contemporary trends in painting and sculpture. In contrast other works are rooted in a more local tradition or personal style. A number of the artists adopt a figurative mode that facilitates the inclusion of direct content. Some of the works reflect social issues with the inclusion of narrative elements, humour and satire.

While the Clay + exhibition is on view, other local museums will present exhibitions focusing on ceramic art in their collections. A focus on clay is being planned for Saturday 23rd July — open both to students and the general public. Visual presentations reflecting recent trends in the field of ceramics in South Africa, Europe and the USA will be offered.

The exhibition opens on the 7th JULY, at the UNISA ART GALLERY, THEO VAN WIJK Building, Preller Street, Muckleneuk, Pretoria. It will run until the 20th August.

Visiting times: Weekdays 10.00-15.30
Saturday 10.00-13.00

Further enquiries: Gerda Engelbrecht.
(012-4402212.)

Get known in Germany

Annegret Metzger, whom some of you may know from the Eastern Cape, has returned to Germany and is in contact with an established German ceramic magazine. They are looking for information on ceramicists in other countries and are offering to print information on this subject. A good opportunity for exposure of your work in Germany and possibly other parts of Europe. You never know — this could lead to full articles and perhaps individual or group exhibitions. They require the following:

Name

Address

When and how you got started

Training and academic qualifications

Where you work

What kind of work you do, functional, non-functional, etc.

What gives you your motivation and where do you get your inspiration

Where is your work exhibited

Where do you sell your work

Any further information.

This information, together with a few colour slides of yourself and your work with captions, should be sent to:

Annegret Metzger
Berliner Str. 30
6094 Bischofsheim
West Germany

Towards a Modification of the Seger Theory of Ceramic Glazes

H.J. McWhinney

Ceramic Industries Journal 95 (1986) [October]
14-15 (English)

Seeger's theory on the composition of glazes is investigated by the author. His point of departure was the fact that the Seger formula does not give a proper explanation for the correlations of the chemical elements and their most favourable proportions in a ceramic glaze. The limitation of the RO factor to 1,00 mol equivalents is considered unfavourable in the case that e.g. the RO_2 is raised. Therefore it is proposed to introduce RO and RO_2 as variable factors in the glaze formula as long as they are varied proportionally to their correlation ratio. Using the example of glazes for SK 10 it is demonstrated that ratios such as $3,00RO/0,90R_2O_3/9,00RO_2$ become possible. The new methods allow one to increase the number of elements in the glaze whilst maintaining the ratio of the elements towards each other. The author also includes oxide stains in the molecular equivalents.

Could anyone please send me a copy of the original article — Editor

Interceram . NO. 2, 1987

Encounter with the East

A brief deliberation on the early ceramics of China with especial reference to the De Pass and Davis Collections at the SACHM, Cape Town.

Most potters have paged through many books about pottery. Some have visited museums to look at historical pieces securely tucked into glass cases, but not too many have actually had access to a piece at close quarters; close enough, in fact, to run a finger over the surface. The experience is exceedingly humbling to say the least. Few porcelain bowls made today, with the very best celadon glaze, are as beautiful. We do not share the Eastern philosophy, the lifestyle, the social structure, so an attempt to emulate these pots, in my opinion, is an extraordinarily challenging one. It is the integrity of shape to the glaze surface, it is the pose of the figurine to the facial expression, it is the functional aspect of its very existence and much, much more.

Even the most sophisticated of potters today will acknowledge the involved process required to physically produce a successful piece of fired ceramic. Yet, the impressive and astonishing truth is, that before the first millenium B.C., the Chinese potter had achieved the technical skill to produce a high-fired glaze with a sintered body to match. The earliest stoneware was covered with lime glaze which was fused completely between 1200-1300 C, whilst the porcelains were vitrified and translucent from 1300 C. Control of the kiln atmosphere was such that it was possible to achieve both oxidation and reduction firings, whilst the decoration of the wares achieved a sophisticated level of professionalism — shapes and lines often influenced by their counterparts in bronze. Glazes seem to have been painted on, poured, dipped or sprayed through a bamboo tube, sometimes leaving unglazed quite a large section of the base of the pot.

Saggars were used frequently as there were often ash particles in the kilns during the firing. Sometimes vessels were fired on lumps of sandy fireclay or stands, but the saggar method was undoubtedly favoured. Although the base of each pot was sometimes turned on the wheel, the potter often did the trimming with a knife. All methods of pottery techniques and decoration as we know them today, were developed and utilised by the end of the 14th C A.D.

Burial pottery during the Han and T'ang dynastic periods can easily be distinguished from utilitarian ware because the tomb-pottery was low-fired, either covered with lead glaze or completely unglazed and cold-painted (painted after firing) or, as in many T'ang figurines, partly glazed and partly cold-painted — the painting being confined

usually to the faces of the figures. The South African Cultural History Museum (SACHM) collection contains some intriguing tomb objects (typical of the Han period) which are covered with a green lead glaze now oxidised in parts to a silvery sheen. There are also some unglazed, painted T'ang figurines taken from tombs.

Whilst, during the Han period, tomb figures were mostly green from copper in the glaze or brown from the iron, during the T'ang period many polychrome objects can be found. Iron was used for both yellow and brown, copper for green and cobalt for blue — introduced at this stage for the first time into Chinese ceramics. The cobalt came from the Middle East and after the T'ang period disappeared from Chinese wares until hundreds of years later in the Yuan period when it reappeared on the earliest blue and white porcelain.

Beside the tomb pieces, the collection is richest in Song period wares. This period was the one during which the famous Chinese forms and glazes were brought to subtle perfection. It is interesting to note that the colourant used on 99 % of Song ceramics was that of iron. It was manipulated to yield colours ranging from yellow through red, from brown and black and grey to greenish, from leaf-green to blue, the latter being described as "the sky washed by rain".

Beside iron, copper was used in small amounts to make red or purplish splashes in Jun ware fired in reduction, and green as part of the first polychrome on-glaze enamelling used on Cizhou ware. Of course these enamel colours were fired in oxidation, the others being yellow, red and black-brown from iron. Cizhou ware is particularly interesting to study, because these pots provided surfaces for the widest range of decorative techniques.

Basically Cizhou ware is a buff stoneware covered with white slip and a clear glaze. However one sometimes finds an incised design through the slip

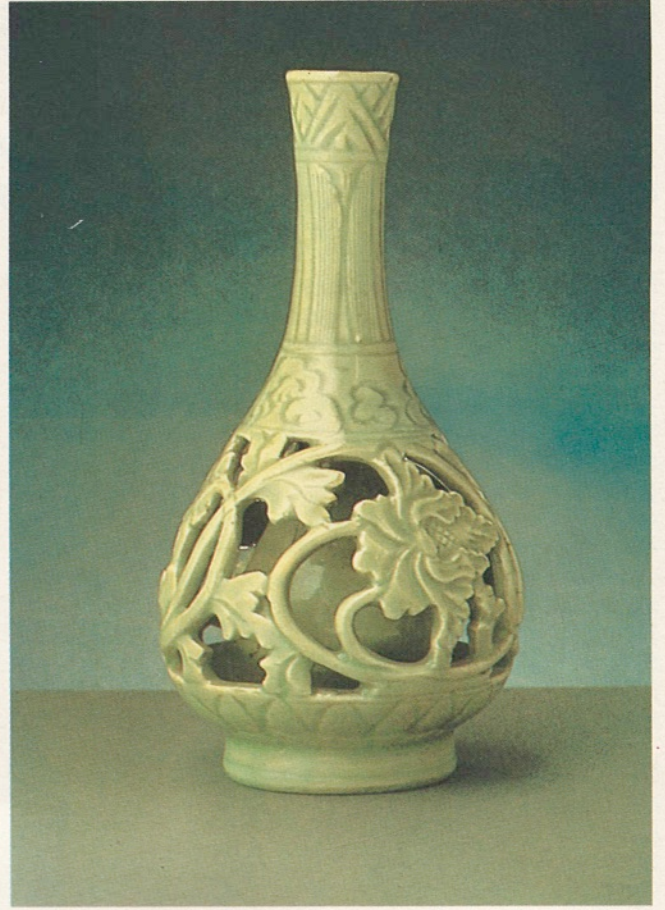
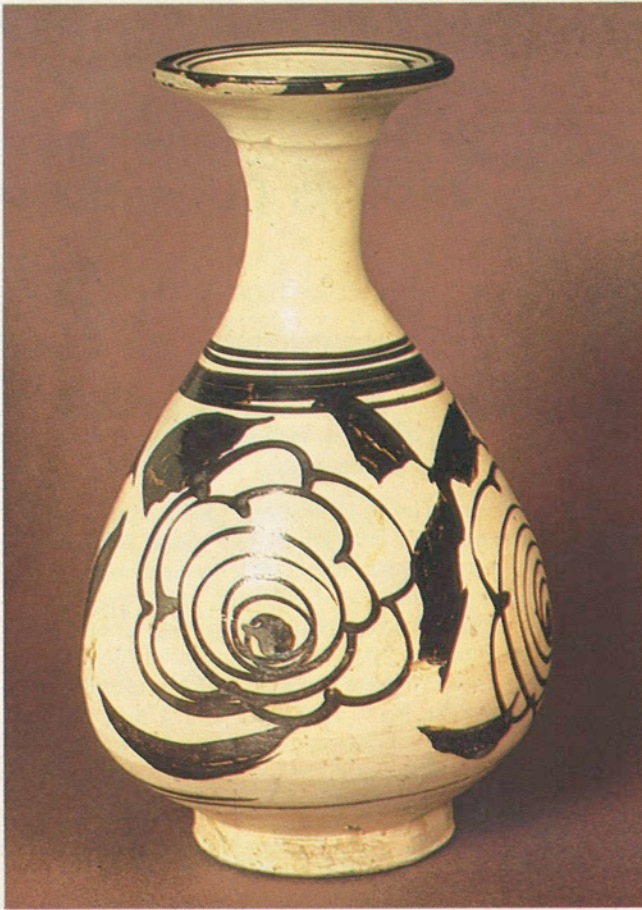
Captions to photographs on page 12. Top left: Vase or bottle. Cizhou ware. Song-Yuan dynasty. Davis collection, H = 235mm.

Top right: Vase or bottle. Celadon glaze. Early Ming dynasty (14th-15th century). Davis collection, H = 205mm.

Bottom: Bowl and ewer, Porcelain, Qingbai glaze. Song dynasty. Davis collection, H = 69mm (bowl), H = 149mm (ewer).

Facing page: Tomb figurine of a lady. She is holding a sash in her hand. The figurine dates from the T'ang dynasty. It is unglazed with traces of pigment. De Pass Collection, H = 280mm.

Photographer: Pam Warne SACHM



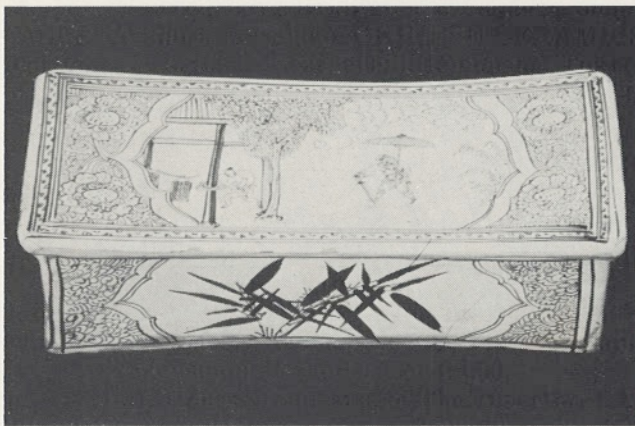


to the body, or some painting in iron pigment onto the slip, or alternatively the whole pot is sometimes glazed with a dark brown glaze and then parts of the glaze are scraped away to reveal the raw body . . . one even finds variations of all the techniques on a single pot. As mentioned above, it is also on this ware that the first Chinese on-glaze enamelling was employed.

With brief mention of the celadons, and a reference to the various black and brown wares, it may be useful to mention that the collection has a marvellous range of white wares starting from a T'ang dynasty white stoneware covered jar, moving through the Song dynasty Ding ware to the elegant Qing Bai bowl and ewer shown here. Qing Bai is a blueish-white ware that is the precursor of the base on which blue and white ware is found in the Yuan period.

Thus it is that SACHM is the proud keeper of such an exquisite group of early Chinese ceramics. The two collections, which reflect the innate Chinese culture, were entrusted to the museum by two collectors. The first being Alfred de Pass (1861-1952) who donated his ceramics between 1930-31, and the second being Judge R. P. B. Davis (1881-1948), who bequeathed his collection to the South African nation in 1948. The Davis Collection consists of items dating from the Han, T'ang, Song, Yuan and Ming dynasties*, and the de Pass pieces serve to complement and enhance the whole trove.

Not only did Alfred de Pass contribute very generously to several collections in the SACHM, donating, inter alia, Egyptian, Greek and Roman artefacts, but also six ceramic tomb figurines from the Northern Wei period and the T'ang dynasty, all being unglazed with traces of pigment still visible.



Headrest or pillow. Cizhou ware. Song-Yuan dynasty. Davis Collection, L = 400mm, H = 140mm, W = 180mm. (Used filled with hot or cold water, or scented leaves.)

In acknowledging the importance of these two collections, one is reminded of the valuable contribution such donations are to a nation. Judge Davis bequeathed all of 135 items to the South African Museum, many of which have been on

display for public viewing over the years. In 1953, 65 items were loaned to the South African National Gallery which staged a Chinese Art exhibition. In 1966 both of the above collections were transferred to the new SACHM at the top of Adderley Street in Cape Town. Today 16 examples of celadon ware are presently incorporated in the Chinese display, whilst the rest remain in storage until the new permanent ceramic room is officially opened to the public at the end of the year.

Over the years experts, enthusiasts, dealers, and students have viewed and studied this extraordinary collection of Chinese ceramics which occupy a proud place in the Museum's collection. With the completion of a permanent venue for displaying such extraordinary pieces, every ceramic lover will be able to share more fully in an appreciation of the art of the potter. In addition to the Chinese display, there will be examples of ceramics from Egypt, Greece, Rome, Persia, Turkey, Thailand, Korea, Japan and Europe. It is sincerely hoped that the public will take full advantage of this wonderful opportunity.

Dynasty Dates: Han (207 B.C.-221 A.D.), Northern Wei (386-535 A.D.), T'ang (618-906), Song (960-1279 A.D.), Yuan (1260-1368 A.D.), Ming (1368-1644 A.D.).
Medley, M.: THE CHINESE POTTER. p.10

At the outset of this assignment, the enormity and complexity of so vast a subject was realised. This article is, regrettably but a brief assemblage of facts which, it is hoped, will whet the appetite of the reader and urge further study.

Further reading:

Gompertz, G.St.G.M.: CHINESE CELADON WARE. Faber & Faber, London.

Medley, M. T'ANG POTTERY AND PORCELAIN. Faber & Faber, London.

Medley, M. YÜAN PORCELAIN AND STONEWARE. Faber & Faber, London.

Sató, Masahiko; CHINESE CERAMICS, A Short History. Weatherhill/Heibonsha. Tokyo.

Tregear, Mary. SONG CERAMICS. Thames & Hudson. London.

Addendum: Anyone interested in reading more about the Davis and De Pass collections may place an order for the forthcoming SACHM bulletin in which an article by Ms Grobbelaar will be appearing on the subject.

The bulletin is due for publication in October/November 1988 and is available from the museum at the cost of R4,50.

Address requests to: The Director, SACHM, P.O. Box 645, Cape Town 8000. Tel.: 021-468280.

National Ceramics Quarterly wishes to thank the staff of the SACHM for their co-operation in the writing of this article, and in addition would like to extend sincere appreciation to Mr Hylton Nel whose vast knowledge of Chinese ceramics was invaluable in assembling the facts to make the publication of this information possible. The sound advice was sincerely appreciated.

R. Lapping.

Esias Bosch

Esias Bosch, regarded as the doyen of creative ceramics in South Africa, celebrates his 65th birthday on July 11 this year.

To mark this occasion, a biography of the master potter will be launched on September 14, together with a retrospective exhibition of his work as well as latest work in the flat and a collection of porcelain thrown pots which he will produce especially for the event. This will take place at the Pretoria Art Museum, from September 14 through to October 9.

The art of Bosch can roughly be divided in the following periods

Earthenware period, 1952-59: During his student years in England, he worked with famous pottery pioneers. At Finch's Winchombe Pottery he learnt to make earthenware, and upon his return to SA in 1952 he proceeded to produce his own earthenware. He set up a small studio in Pretoria and made mostly domestic ware. However, he soon tired of the medium and felt the need to progress to stoneware. A visit to Michael Cardew in Nigeria in 1959 strengthened his decision and he says: "My work had become too easy, and I was restless. Stoneware was a medium in which I knew I could really indulge in the quality of impure materials, and I wanted the subtle qualities that can only be obtained by firing with wood or oil."

Stoneware period, 1960-75: Bosch and his family moved to the Eastern Transvaal Lowveld in 1960 to settle outside the small town of White River. He proceeded to build a wood fired kiln and eventually a studio and a house. After 15 years of working in stoneware, Bosch felt that he had exhausted all the challenges that this medium could offer him. He was looking for a clay which would take him back to the basics, a unity of pure form and simple decoration — this he was to find in porcelain.

Porcelain period, 1976-79: Porcelain offered the challenge that Bosch needed. He enjoyed the pure white, with its demand for religious cleanliness as well as the precision demanded when decorating. Always looking for new avenues, however, he grew restless once again and stopped throwing in 1979 to work on lustre tiles.

Lustre tiles period, 1980-1987: Large ceramic surfaces had always fascinated Bosch, and work in

Bosch at work on one of his latest laminated tiles.





a single plane offered different challenges and presented the artist with new strictures. Working with lustres entailed another set of problems altogether. Flat top-loader kilns had to be designed and built — in short, the lustre tiles, as large as 1,6 m by 1,2 m, demanded every skill the potter had. After a while he felt that gold lustre held no attraction for him any longer, and would prefer to work, still on flat surfaces, but with a freer hand than the lustre tiles allowed.

New work, 1987 — After a trip to Europe in 1987, Bosch quietly began working on a new idea. He can now produce ceramic sheets as big as the largest lustre tiles, or even bigger. It is practically possible to produce one single ceramic sheet of 2 m by 3 m or larger, which would be of almost monumental proportions. At the same time the constrictions the large tiles presented, are no longer there; the works can be fired many times over without fear of damage, glazes can be applied in a variety of layers, the oxides he uses can be overpainted much as is possible in oils, and a large and bold brush can be used, with brilliant colour.

Hym Rabinowitz writes:

On a hot summer's afternoon in my early years at Eagle's Nest — a farm on the mountain slopes of Constantia — I was completely exhausted and desperate after more than 30 hours of continuous stoking and no appreciable temperature rise in the kiln.

At that moment, as though the fates had planned it, Esias and Val Bosch appeared at my door. After more than 20 years I still remember clearly the scene that followed: Sias took in the situation at a glance, instructed me to lie down, and took over.

Relaxing, flat on my back, I watched him go about his rescue operation — the three elements, potter, kiln and fire began working in harmony. The temperature soon responded to his sure, purposeful movements, and the sluggish old wood-fired kiln was on its way to a successful firing.

This episode epitomised for me what I understood about Sias the Potter. He is not simply a superb artist; there also exists a fundamental understanding of his craft. He is a master at cutting through the 'mysteries' of kiln control, he can deal with confidence with the myriad operations — apparantly unconnected with the actual making and firing of pots — vitally necessary for a meaningful pottery operation.

In the Bosch family's lifestyle there has always been a balance and a harmony between the workplace and the home — the warm and artistic family atmosphere simply flowed into the workshop, and it was my good fortune to spend six months with him in 1961-2, to be welcomed into the community of their many interesting friends, and to share many of their daily problems.

There were also desperate times, financially, and dramatic efforts were sometimes called for, such as opening intensely hot kilns before the sensible

time, to unpack and run pots to Johannesburg for sale at the Craftsman's Market, one of the very few outlets in the 60's that handled craft pottery.

The interaction of family and workshop intrigued me; there is a picture of a five year old Anton, very professionally engaged at the wheel, while at a later stage, daughters Andree and Esra part-earned their air fares with ceramic jewellery when visiting relatives overseas.

They were, and still are, a close and mutually stimulating family group, with never any pressure on the young regarding the direction of their lives.

There is no doubt that Sias has well and truly laid the foundation of craft pottery in this country, given it its original momentum, set the stage for its coming of age, indeed, educated the public and paved the way for many of us to follow.

By the end of the 50's he had established a well-earned reputation for his Pretoria work in earthenware, and in the 60's, the experimental stage over, his stoneware went out to greet a growing demand. This I feel, was his great breakthrough.

There suddenly was an infectious enthusiasm for and awareness of good pottery, and here Sias did the craft a great service — preparing people with sensitive and receptive minds, helping them to understand and appreciate the concept of beauty combined with function, and, in the process, adding an enriching dimension to their lives.

In the early 1950's he intuitively moved away from Art School training in the United Kingdom to experience pottery making in its proper setting in the Winchcombe workshop of Raymond Finch, who was Cardew's first apprentice and who is still regarded as one of Britain's leading potters.

From here he moved on to Michael Cardew's Wenford Bridge pottery. Cardew had been the first of Leach's apprentices at St. Ives in Cornwall in the 20's and was one of the most important influences on contemporary potters, and a man whom I had also spent time with in the UK and in Africa. Sias and I had great admiration for this extraordinary man and for his outstanding and original work.

Cardew regarded spells of work, which involved repetition, as the basis for creative work. Here the basis was laid for Sias' outstanding throwing technique and knowledge of the craft.

He was gradually laying the foundation for his venture into high-fired porcelain of a quantity and quality that is still to be matched in this country. At present there is much argument as to whether porcelain should be translucent, or not, fired high, or low fired.

Be that as it may, Sias fired to 1410° C, and ware was translucent and the result was another huge leap forward even as we ordinary mortals felt him to have reached his pinnacle.

The need to paint has always been in Sias' makeup, and in the porcelain medium his mastery with the brush was even more evident in the versatility and the virtuosity of his decoration.

A very successful motif, familiar to many of us, that emerged on his ware at this time, was that of electric cables spanning that standards bringing power to Die Randjie — a case of virtue out of necessity — and it worked! In time he moved naturally into his present phase of richly decorated, very large tiles, another amazing stage of his development. Few viewers, however, are able to see behind the artistry and recognise the technical problems which have to be surmounted when producing these panels.

It has always been my opinion that the best of Bosch compares more than favourably to contemporary work elsewhere, and indeed, surpasses most of it.

In the process of comparison one cannot view more than a fraction of the world's ceramic activity 'in the flesh', but as a starting point, a good deal of information is made available in overseas ceramic publications. Apart from this there were times, one in particular in 1978, when Sias and I saw much of the work produced in the UK and on the Continent, and in 1974 during the course of a potters' tour of Japan which was led by Sias, we made contact with Japanese potters, assessed their work and also experienced a part of the extremely wide spectrum of the country's products — an important exposure incidentally, for present day hand potters, as Japan's ceramic heritage is unique.

Understandably language problems were often encountered during the tour, and Sias and Val, who are dedicated and disciplined vegetarians, experienced many lean moments while trying to make their wishes culinary, known!

'Judge the art of a country, judge the finesse of its sensibility by its pottery, it is a sure touchstone' wrote Herbert Read in the 30's. Many archeologists too believe this in their assessment of earlier cultures, and we perceive it also in illustrations relating to earlier historical periods. If, in the confusion of ideas that apply to recent decades, this dictum still applies, one may be sure that Sias, and the influence he has had on other potters, would be judged to be at a very high level of development indeed.

His restless mind has always been open to change, and, in a sense, he has been the explorer, opening many an avenue for us to follow. But never a change dictated by the latest fashion. He has found his own path, changing direction when it suited him, but always through a normal progression and inner conviction.

However, there were also times of self doubt. One such time occurred while Sias was still turning out

formal pots. There was a long period of soul searching and little work. Came the day, he walked into his workshop and destroyed all his porcelain bisque pots. Then, and only then, did he feel free to immerse himself completely in his large decorated tiles.

"This is how I found it" — Esias Bosch

Many things strike one when thinking back on forty years in ceramics. Along the way, through experience and with luck, one accumulates much knowledge and some wisdom. Knowledge which has evolved into an almost intuitive understanding of the medium. Wisdom, the little that has been gleaned, probably centres on the one fact that one has to face if one has travelled somewhat and seen something of what people are busy with across the globe, and that is that one has actually come to know very little.

Ceramics, in various applications, dates back so many years and so much has been achieved, that, if one were only to succeed in upholding the great tradition established by Japanese, Chinese, Korean, English and other master potters, one has brought about a great deal.

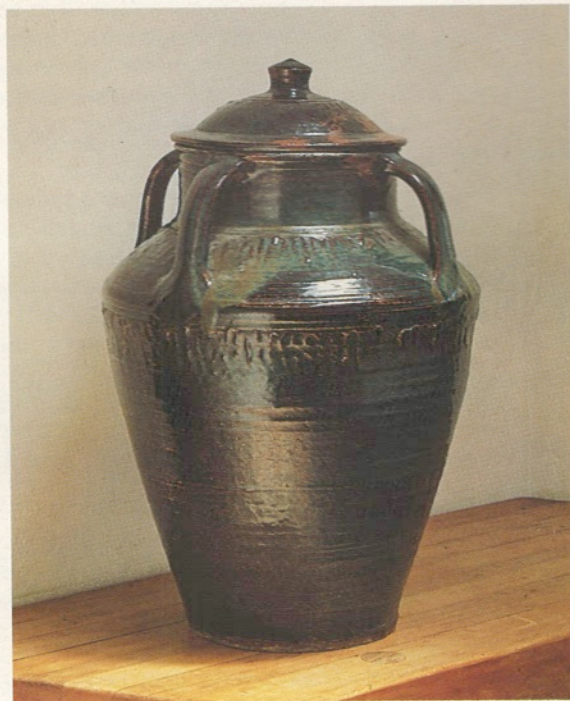
These were all people who worked with their hands, craftsmen and artists directly, literally, in touch with their materials. In an age of greatly advanced and more demanding technology, one can consider oneself extremely fortunate if one is privileged enough to be able to earn one's living with one's hands. However elementary or grand the product, the creator is a person leading, with every drawback associated with art and the crafts, a blessed existence. This is how I found it.

And I so much more fortunate because I could spend the better part of my life on this granite Lowveld rock, which has come to be much more than a home to me. It is a place of hope, and a place, if we are lucky, for the future. One day this studio might be able to accommodate a full time ceramic researcher, with artists possibly visiting or resident, exploring new fields. The momentum must be kept up, even accelerated, and we must look to the large ceramic firms for assistance. The studio potter is no threat at all to them, and there can be great reward in co-operation.

No artist, or person who works with his hands and sells what he produces, can ignore the society he or she lives in. I have been lucky, and I owe a great debt to those people who have supported me and bought my work. I hope they are satisfied with their pieces. I put as much as I could into them.

Many people have been to the studio, I have met a great many in other places. And I have been enriched with every meeting. I remember a vast number of conversations with people who took the trouble to drive up this difficult track to reach the studio, with Valerie often, if not always, in

Continued on page 22.



Top left: Stoneware plate, granite glaze, iron decoration, 25 cm wide. In the Fehr collection.

Top right: Stoneware vase, iron glaze, scratch decoration, 40 cm high. In the Fehr collection.

Left: Large lidded stoneware storage jar, blue iron glaze, impressed decoration, 60 cm high. Owner G. Fagan.

Below left: Recently vitrified earthenware dish, coloured slips, clear glaze, 84 cm long. Private collection.

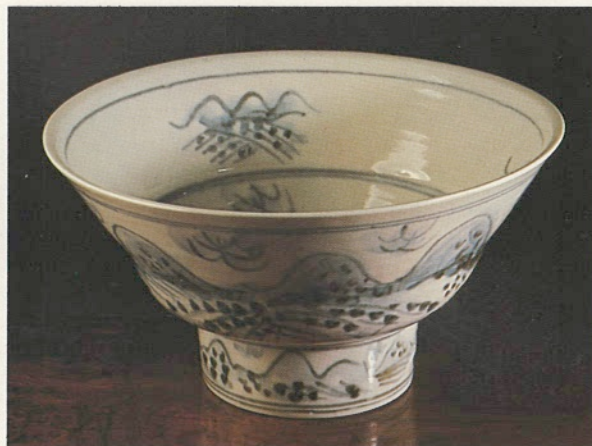
Below right: Tall lidded porcelain jar and pedestal bowl, white glaze, cobalt decoration. Jar 36 cm high, bowl 20 cm wide. Private collection.



Right: Porcelain pedestal bowl, white glaze, cobalt decoration. 31 cm wide. Owner P. Petty.

Below right: Tall lidded porcelain jar and pedestal bowl, white glaze, cobalt decoration. Jar 36 cm high, bowl 20 cm wide. Private collection.

All the photographs in this article were taken by W. van Heerden.



Esias Bosch

attendance. A graceful, creative and reliable comrade. Having her and my children close is a tremendous support.

She is also my travelling companion. We have often been away, on domestic trips or overseas, and we returned each time with sharpened senses, a new awareness of the infinite potential of ceramics, and the rather harsh realisation that one must ever and always attempt to improve one's work.

It will be a great blessing if I am able to continue working as there will always be something new and different that will evolve with time. Society, and this society is no exception, will always need artists and craftsmen, it cannot do without them. And this need will enable myself and others to continue to strive towards those high goals every artist sets himself.

In conclusion

A true evaluation of the contribution that Esias Bosch has made to South African ceramics is very difficult at this stage and an assessment will have to be left to future art historians. However, one can state with certainty that the consistently high standards of technical excellence and his feeling for aesthetic quality, has set a high norm for all ceramic art to be produced in South Africa. Anyone who in future wishes to embark on a career related to or connected to the art of the potter, will have to take cognizance of the art of Esias Bosch.

The art of Esias Bosch is original and timeless and carries the mark of his individuality. He is a potter of unusual ability and rare sensibility to form and colour. He is internationally recognized as one of the finest craftsmen this country has ever produced. In fact in 1963 the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC., awarded him a silver medal for his entry in the Ninth International Exhibition of Ceramic Art held there.

Although his art can be labelled as international, it is rooted deeply in Africa. His green glazes were once described as being reminiscent of the Knysna forests; his browns can be compared to the different hues of a newly ploughed field on the highveld. All his colours are toned to look as though they are baked in the African sun. His art has the solidity of this great continent and his rich colours reflect this ageless land.

Murray Schoonraad
Professor of History of Art,
University of Pretoria.

Potpourri

Seen any U.F.O.'s lately? (Unaccredited fired objects). We offer R10 for your photo, in black and white where possible, of any interesting ceramic related objects. Please give a short description with each item. For return of the items, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Post to the Editor, Box 481, Ramsgate, 4285.



Wendy Ross
'House of Guardians'. Mixed media — wood and acrylic painted stoneware. 2 m x 1,70 m x 1,20 m.

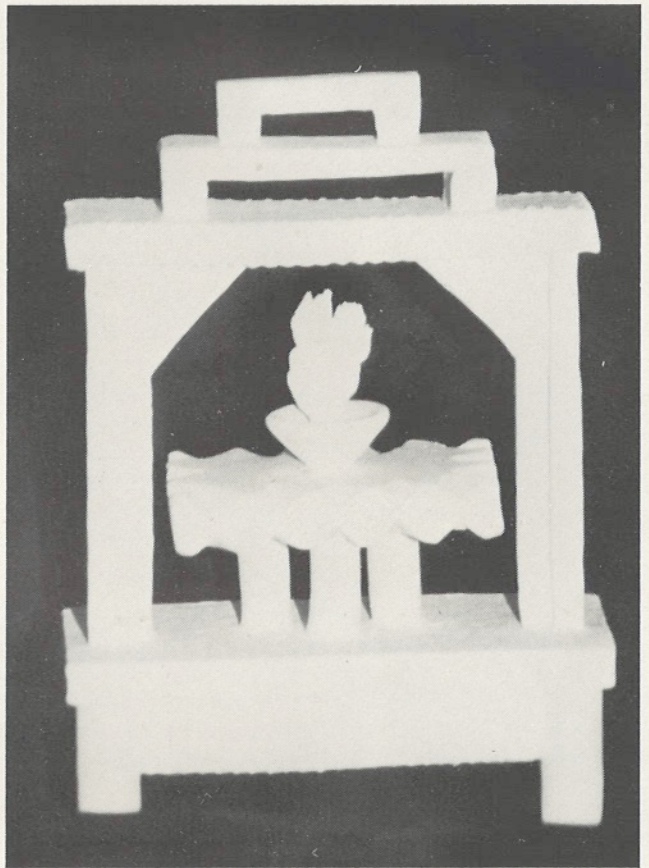


Bruce Walford
Stoneware casserole. Photograph Christine Smith.
Dorp Street Gallery.



Michael Cardew

Two views of a typical Cardew bowl. Stoneware, cream semi-mat glaze with cobalt and iron decoration. Inside of bowl a very good example of Cardew's well loved bird motive. 11 cm. high, 24 cm. across. Collection of N & M Guassardo.



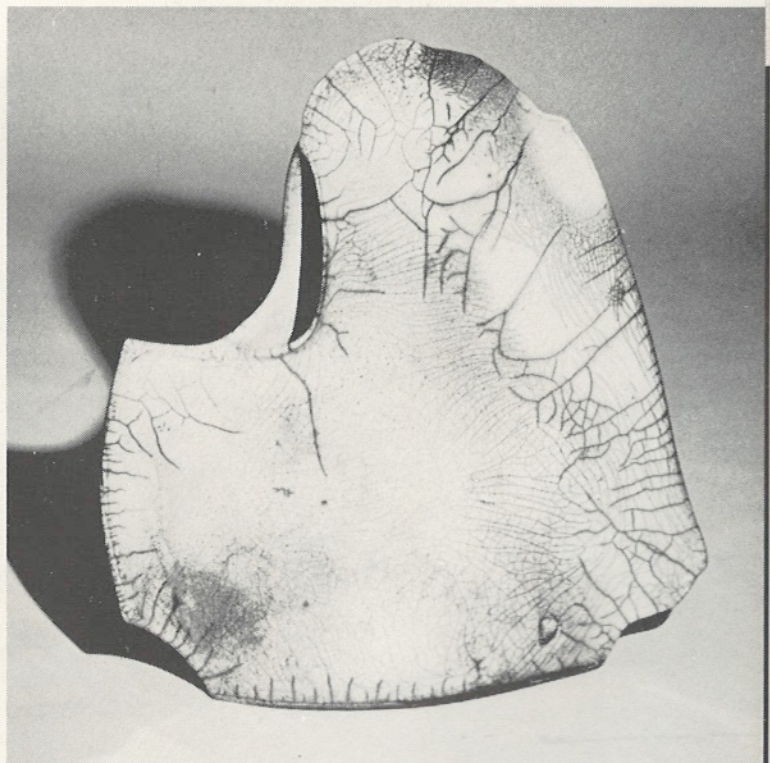
John Nowers

Porcelain altarpiece 14 cm. high. Collection of artist.



Hylton Nel

Tin glazed earthenware plate. 25 cm dia. Private collection.



David May

'Manta 'IV'. Underwater inspired raku ceramic — tin, copper, cobalt based glaze and lustre. 380 mm high x 330 mm wide x 150 mm deep. Photograph Syd Myers.



Rochelle Beresford and Daan Verwey

Creativity and simple basic energy are both essential and synonymous when it comes to the realisation of any good artwork — invariably the result of many hours of art involvement and very hard work. These have been written about the need for dedication, yet one is reminded of its intrinsic truth when analysing the progress of Rochelle and Daan. Both raku ceramists have been known to work over a twenty four hour period without flinching — making, glazing and raku firing with an enviable source of creativity and energy. Neither do they feel thrown by working every day of the week from sunrise to sunset for weeks on end in their converted barn in Tulbagh. Daan's hands may be blistered, and Rochelle's face flushed, yet they carry on — driven by an inner compulsion and passion too seldom found in artists today.

Both artists have been involved in numerous exhibitions and are represented in both public and private collections. Their commitment to understanding ceramics is commendable and their work reflects all the energy which they have invested into each working day. Their relationship is symbiotic, each individually pursuing his or her own particular drive and finding a means of expression.

Left: Large vessel by Daan Verwey.



Below: Raku figures by Rochelle Beresford.



Daan's raku objects are large self-contained vessels, anthropomorphic in structure. The energy he has used to make each one, feels trapped within each piece and fills the space as a pregnant whole. The resulting shapes appear swollen and ripe.

Rochelle's raku figures are small in comparison, scarcely 35 cm high, yet they are busy, energised and forceful. The diagonal lines dart back and forth, searching. Any suggestion of quiet has escaped acknowledgement — the pieces gyrating in a manneristic way, the raku surface complementing the mood.

They held a farewell exhibition of their work at Gallery International during April when they bade their friends goodbye en route to Europe for an extended study tour of two or more years. We look forward to watching their progress. Bon voyage, Rochelle and Daan. Ave atque Vale.



The ceramic clays from Grahamstown — Part II

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THE CLAY DEPOSITS

There are numerous occurrences of clay in the Grahamstown region, all associated with a peneplane — either the Coastal Plain or the Grahamstown Peneplain — and covering an area stretching over a distance of more than 35 km from east to west. Because most of the occurrences are of limited extent or their material is of poor quality, only a small number has been prospected in any detail or is in actual production. At present, only two of these deposits are known to be associated with the Coastal Plain, with the rest of the deposits all associated with the Grahamstown Peneplane.

The deposits occur as relict conical hills or on the edges of the peneplanes and are generally partly covered by a well developed capping of silcrete or a thick overburden of rubble. The thickness and hardness of the silcrete capping are decisive factors in the economic exploitation of the deposits. The original structural features of the parent rock, such as folds, joints and bedding planes, are clearly preserved, while vein quartz are frequently found in association with shear zones. In many deposits heavy iron oxide staining along the parting planes is observed, but the staining is not penetrative and much of the iron oxide may be removed by a process of hand cobbing.

The deposits on the Coastal Plain are:

- a) Avenue Park deposit, on Bergplaas (Aly.Q.15-25), derived from Witteberg shale. The original structural features of the parent rock, such as folds, joints and bedding planes, are clearly preserved, while vein quartz is found in association with shear zones. Heavy iron oxide staining along parting planes is observed.
- b) Melrose deposit, between the railway sidings Harper and Manly Flats, also derived from Witteberg shale. This occurrence has not yet been exploited.

There are many clay deposits located on the Grahamstown Peneplane:

- a) Strowan deposit, on Zyferfontein (Aly.F.6-51). The deposit is situated in shale of the Prince Albert Formation, Ecca Group. The quarry is one of the biggest in the area and it is worked in the form of a series of benches. The deposit is fairly evenly light coloured, but there are

some areas or pockets where iron oxide is concentrated. There is little lithological variation in the deposit and the material is relatively grit-free.

- b) Blakes Bricks and Coronation deposits, on Grahamstown Commonage West, are adjacent to the Strowan deposit, but the material at these two occurrences are more contaminated with iron oxides.

- c) Mayfield and Beaconsfield deposits, on Brakkefontein (Aly.Q.1-9). The Witteberg shale is weathered to a depth of some 3 metres and the light coloured material is covered by a very well developed silcrete capping.

- d) Webber and Wallace deposits, on Glen Graig (Aly.Q.11-22) and Collingham (Aly.Q.7-21), derived from Witteberg shale. There are three quite distinct types of weathered material in the quarries: a cream coloured, friable clay with a low grit content; a grey, grit-free and more plastic clay; and a black, very plastic clay. The dark colour is due to the presence of organic matter.

- e) Upper Gletwyn deposit, on Gletwyn (Aly.Q.6-4), situated in Witteberg shale. There is very little iron oxide apparent in the deposit and the clay has a good whiteness. In places the material is friable and micaceous and has a substantial coarse quartz content.

- f) Palmer and Elandskloof deposits, on Gletwyn (Aly.Q.6-4) and Belmont (Aly.Q.1-63), derived from Dwyka tillite. Because of the massive nature of the parent rock, there are no bedding features, but relict structures of the tillite, such as pebbles and fragments of feldspar (now completely weathered to kaolinite), are found. The depth of weathering is at least 30 metres. Parting surfaces are coated with iron oxide, but with reasonable care a material with very good whiteness, although with a high grit content, can be produced.

- g) Crous deposit, on Peynes Kraal (Gr.62/1936), situated on Witteberg shale. The deposit consists mainly of white, soft and grit-free material. It is easily mined in blocks, which affords easy hand cobbing to remove the iron staining on joint and bedding plane partings.

- h) Glenhoek deposit, also on Peynes Kraal and derived from Witteberg shale. The material from the western side of the occurrence is light in colour and similar to the Crous material, while that from the eastern side is grey to black and similar to some of the Wallace clays.

There are numerous other occurrences which are associated with the Grahamstown Peneplane. They are invariably found close to the 650 m (2100 foot) contour and just below the Grahamstown Silcrete Formation. Because the quality of the kaolin depends on the lithology of the parent rock, good quality kaolin is only found with right combination of peneplane formation and geology. The presence

of deeply weathered material below the silcrete layer, away from the present edges of the Grahamstown Peneplane, is well known, but the presence of the thick silcrete layer makes occurrences of this kind economically not attractive.

The physiographical and stratigraphical relationships of the important deposits in the Grahamstown area are summarized in Table 2.

PROPERTIES OF THE GRAHAMSTOWN CLAYS

Mineralogy

Although the mineralogy of the clay materials shows large variations, not only from deposit to deposit but also within the deposits, some very clear compositional differences are apparent between the clay materials derived from different parent rocks, as can be seen from Table 3.

These differences are of great importance to ceramists. For example, clays derived from Witteberg shales contain appreciable but varying amounts of pyrophyllite, as well as small amounts of feldspar, while clays derived from Dwyka tillite or Ecca shales are devoid of pyrophyllite and also have less micaceous minerals than the Witteberg clays. These differences in mineralogical compositions are reflected in the differences in ceramic properties.

Particle size distribution

It would appear that the type of parent rock has a distinct influence on the particle size distribution of the weathered material. For example, the clays derived from the Dwyka Formation have a narrower particle size distribution than those derived from the Bokkeveld and Witteberg shales. There is unfortunately no marked antiparallism in the particle size distributions of the individual minerals, with the result that there is a considerable amount of quartz with a grain size smaller than 20 micron in all the clays. Refining processes based on particle size differentiation would thus not be effective in producing a material consisting essentially of kaolinite.

Ceramic Properties

Comprehensive assessments of the ceramic properties of the clay materials from the Grahamstown region are reported in the CSIR Technical Notes X/BOU-KER and a summary of the more important aspects of some selected materials is given in Table 4. It must be stressed again that there is in most cases a considerable variation within the occurrences and only rather general comparisons can be made. The type of parent rock has, to some extent, an influence on the ceramic properties of the clay materials and some broad trends can be recognized.

The plasticity of the clays derived from the Dwyka tillite and shale of the Prince Albert Formation can be described as fair, while the Witteberg clays have, in general, a good plasticity.

The Pfefferkorn Plasticity Index is not sensitive in this respect, but the dry strengths of the clays derived from the Witteberg shale tend to be significantly higher than those of the Ecca and Dwyka clays.

When compared to the beneficiated kaolins of the Western Cape, the materials from Grahamstown have a moderate refractoriness. Refractoriness reflects the ease of vitrification and depends on the chemical composition and mineralogy of the material. The materials with relatively high alkali contents, ie. the Ecca and some of the Witteberg clays, have Seger pyrometric cone equivalent (PCE) between 29 and 31 (1650° and 1690°C), compared to the PCE values of 32 and 33 (1710° and 1730°C) of the Dwyka and some of the other Witteberg clays, which have relatively lower alkali contents.

The raw or unfired clays derived from the Dwyka tillite and the Ecca shale have a good white colour, with Leukometer values over 77 and sometimes as high as 82. The brightness of these materials thus compare quite favourably with that of the beneficiated kaolins from the Western Cape and they are, indeed, frequently used as fillers where a low abrasiveness is not required. The fired colour of all the Grahamstown clay materials is also very good and the materials are very acceptable in this respect as materials for the production of whitewares.

SUMMARY

The Grahamstown clay materials are, with only very few exceptions, utilized for ceramics without any real beneficiation, apart from limited selective mining, rough hand sorting and sometimes cobbing to remove excessive iron staining. In general the materials are supplied and used in the crude form and any beneficiation is really only incidental during the manufacturing process of the user, for example the screening out of coarse quartz during the wet preparation of a ceramic body.

The greatest problem faced by the clay producers in the Grahamstown region is the large variation in properties of the weathered material within and between most of the deposits. These variations are the result of the rapid short range changes in the original lithology of the parent rock, but the contorted structural nature of the parent rock frequently makes meaningful selective mining unrealistic. The solution would be to mine on a big enough scale so that the mined material could be homogenized by correct stock-piling techniques, but this is only very occasionally done because of the economic implications.

The result of all this is that the quality of the clay material supplied is generally not consistent and that some of the properties can change considerably over a short time. The consumer should thus be well aware of not only the real differences between the different Grahamstown clays, but also that material from a particular deposit could vary greatly with time.

Continued on page 29.

TABLE 2: Geological relationships of the Grahamstown clay deposits

Type	Deposit	Geological setting
Coastal Plain	Avenue Park Melrose	Witteberg Group Witteberg Group
Grahamstown Peneplane	Strowan Blakes Coronation Palmer Elandskloof Mayfield Beaconsfield Webber Wallace Upper Gletwyn Crous Glenhoek	Prince Albert Formation Prince Albert Formation Prince Albert Formation Dwyka Formation Dwyka Formation Witteberg Group Witteberg Group Witteberg Group Witteberg Group Witteberg Group Witteberg Group Witteberg Group

TABLE 3: Mineralogy of the Grahamstown clay deposits.

Minerals	Percentage in clays derived from:		
	Witteberg shale	Dwyka tillite	Ecce shale
Kaolinite	20 - 70	up to 70	20 - 35
Mica - 2M ₂	10 - 25	low	10
Quartz	30 - 60	20 - 60	55 - 70
Pyrophyllite	up to 35	0	0
Feldspar	5	0	0

TABLE 4: Ceramic properties of the Grahamstown clay materials.

Property	Clay materials derived from:		
	Witteberg shale	Dwyka tillite	Ecce shale
Plasticity	good	fair	fair
Pfefferkorn Index	26 - 29	25	28 - 30
Dry strength (MPa)	2,5 - 4,3	0,46	1,2 - 2,1
Colour	off-white/grey	white	white/grey
Leucometer Index:			
Unfired	51 - 60	82	77 - 80
1000°C	79 - 83	86	85 - 92
1200°C	77 - 81	91	88 - 92
Refractoriness:			
Seger cone	30 - 32	33	29 - 31
°C	1670 - 1710	1730	1650 - 1690

Decoration of Porcelain, Crockery and Art Ceramics

The Ceramic Colours and Special Products Division of Degussa AG, D-6000 Frankfurt, is offering a range of products for decorating porcelain, crockery and art ceramics. In the porcelain decoration sector, the high temperature, rapid firing colours in the "Impression" series have been improved further in the yellow/orange/red range. The new colours 13 1453 mandarine, 17 1453 bright red and 17 1454 coral are even more brilliant and intense.

A new glaze combination of matt and gloss red glazes, based on inclusion pigment glazes, has been developed for crockery in the firing range between 960°C and 1040°C. Unlike cadmium/selenium colours, these new glazes do not require any special bodies. They are insensitive to impurities from the bodies and unfavourable furnace conditions.

Matt and gloss red glazes, together with crystalline elimination and aventurine glazes are also the central theme of the art ceramics presentation. New developments include the special effect glazes GL 5407 aM medium red (matt) and GL 5408 aM dark red (matt) for the firing range from 1000°C to 1100°C.

Degussa AG, Postfach 11 05 33, D-6000 Frankfurt, Fed. Rep. Germany, Teletex 2627-6997 467 = DEGOEA

Regional Round up

Corobrik Northern Transvaal regional ceramic exhibition

The work of members of APSA's Northern Transvaal region could be viewed, courtesy of Corobrik, at the Beuster-Skolimowski Gallery from 22 May to 3 June 1988.

The Gallery was, as usual, a friendly venue for the potters' art and provided an unobtrusive background for the work on display. The exhibition itself was of varying quality and included both restrained, classical design utility ware as well as ceramic sculpture in which full reign was given to fantasy.

Susan du Toit produced the winning entry; she was represented by three torsos in subdued, earthy colours with wonderful textures, suggesting ancient pieces of sculpture found in archaeological digs. Various bodily parts were just indicated by incised lines on subtly swelling surfaces; the colours were earthy, smoky with a chalky overlay.

Ann Brown, the winner of the second award, presented a set of small bowls, well shaped and finished, with a seductive glaze on the interior of the vessels.

The third award went to a relative newcomer to the APSA exhibition scene, Margie Schultz. There may be some divided opinions on the aesthetic quality of the ceramic "basket" but technically this handbuilt piece was well formed and finished, especially in the case of the meticulously plaited border.

Quite a number of ceramic sculptures were on view, such as the subtly coloured heads by Len du Plooy, which harked back to art deco in the handling of the stylisation, the way the heads were poised upon neck and shoulders, colour as well as texture. Ingrid Meyer's ceramic discs, joined to form purely abstract sculpture, showed this talented ceramicist's preoccupation with the possibilities of pure form.

The work of two black potters was also shown. Ishmael Malope produced birds in browns, reminiscent of "kleiosse" both in concept and finish while Henriette Ngako displayed a large hen with chickens, richly and brightly decorated in blue and red. The work of both these artists borders on folk art but shows a grasp of sculptural qualities.

Unfortunately there were a few pieces that should not have been included in a collection like this; pieces that fell short of the increasingly high standard of the APSA exhibitions. This was a pity for it detracted from the impression of excellence which this exhibition inspired.

Katinka Kempff

"New pots for old"

The theme of a workshop Maxie Heymann is giving around the country.

Maxie is no stranger to the pottery scene and has been involved with clay for many years. She did a MAFA degree at Michaelis Art School majoring in sculpture, and her ceramic work reflects the three dimensional discipline required by the medium. She now teaches ceramics full-time in her studio at home and conducts discussions regularly for groups of students interested in the history of art and trends in the art/craft movement.

These particular workshops are aimed essentially at potters who are in search of a fresh approach to the manipulation and aesthetics of clay. Special attention is drawn to the relevance of LOOKING at the visual arts and marrying such influences. Maxie throws a number of large shapes which she then assembles as composite structures comprised of two or three pieces. She stresses the importance of preliminary sketching and planning to avoid unnecessary waste, and constructively demonstrates the many alternative ways of finally achieving the desired effect.

Once the pots have been fired, Maxie then discusses the nature of decoration whilst she introduces her audience to less conventional methods of applying glazes by way of stencilled sponges, severed brushes and expressionistic splatters. She draws attention to the fact that the vessels which the potter makes must fit into the general decor of the home, and she shows some prints to illustrate the manner in which one can blend the aesthetics of a two-dimensional painting with a three-dimensional vessel. Such concepts are food for thought, especially for young potters who are just not aware of the marrying of disciplines.

Maxie is concerned with the contemporary aesthete- be it curtaining, clothing or clay. These inspiring and thought provoking workshops should not be missed.

Maxie Heymann working on one of her composite structures.



Seven Doone Pottery's annual display

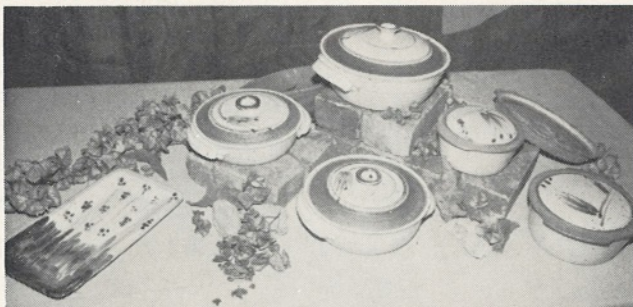
A display of their students' work was given by Suzann and Peter Passmore on Saturday 26th September. Seven Doone Pottery, formerly the outbuildings of the Chattaway farm in Pinetown, was transformed from its status as a very functional, well planned studio to an attractive gallery.

The annual exhibition resulted from the students' desire to meet and learn from each other, and to put faces to the pots they have admired throughout the year. The occasion gives them the opportunity to discuss ideas and methods and it becomes a learning experience as much as a social event. The newer, perhaps less confident participants, receive encouragement and direction, making their objectives more real, more tangible. Hessian and other textured cloths, seed pods, drift wood, grasses, and the lovely Natalia bouganvillea proved a perfect foil for the pottery. The range of work was great, from simple pinch pots through thrown forms incorporating leather and glass beads to elaborate sculptures. Porcelain, earthenware and stoneware were each represented.

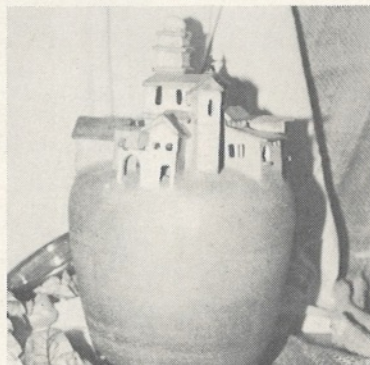
A central table was devoted to Suzann's own work, and her influence was evident in many students' ware. Other exhibits hinted of the increasingly popular ethnic-inspired trends and others yet were highly individualistic but all showed signs of Suzann's solid throwing and technique and adventurous glazing under Peter's tutelage.

Seven Doone pottery has been in operation now for 14 years and its gardens reflect the Passmore's regard for nature.

The display, open to the public, was very well attended. There was a slide show and a video on sculpture to round off the afternoon and in the evening the students were invited to join Peter and Suzann for a braai.



Suzann's own work.



Lamp by Colleen Weerheim

Good potters clay dug in East London

For the last six years Jeremy Dubber, of Dubber Potteries, 5 Nord Avenue, Abbotsford, East London 5241 (tel. 0431-52511) now a full time potter and graduate of the Natal Technikon Ceramic Department, has been using clay dug on a farm on the outskirts of East London. He has since found many clays and run hundreds of tests. The various blends of clay are processed in huge, efficient machines he built himself. These are a stainless steel blunger, vibratory sieve, quarter ton capacity filter press and large pugmill. They are capable of handling many tons of clay per month. Many East London potters now use his clays and Jeremy wouldn't mind supplying the Port Elizabeth area as well.

Studio tip

Buddy's tip for the month from the East Cape newsletter

A pipe cleaner is an excellent tool for dipping beads into glaze. When the bristle wire is removed from the bead, the hole is completely clean.

OBITUARY

Beryl Barton Hobbs

It is with regret that we learnt of the sudden death of Beryl, a long standing member of APSA. After a brief introduction to pottery in Bloemfontein she 'retired' in her mid forties to start a pottery in Natal. Here is worked for over a decade using her own clay and glazes. Her work was represented in the 1985 Nationals. She will be greatly missed by her loving pupils and partner, artist Oenone Gradwell.

ADVERTISING RATES AND DATA

Our guaranteed circulation as at our last issue was 2430 copies a steady growth which is still increasing daily.

Cover positions and rates on application.

Full colour run of magazine, full page only R500

Full page black and white R260

Half page black and white R140

Quarter page black and white R80

Smalls are charged at R7,50 per column centimeter.

Mechanical details: Printed by lithography.

Material required for colour advertisements separated positives to size. Cost of bleed on application. Black and white material either litho positives, bromides or PMT's. Additional setting and make up of advertisements can be arranged at client's expense.

Deadline for bookings, 15th of January, April, July and October 1988 and material by the 25th of the same month.