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HENRY PIM • R15 000 IN PRIZES • HELEN DE LEEUW • PLASTICITY

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COVER: Henry Pim's beautiful vessel 21 cm in height, more on page 12.



ABOVE: Throwing big plates in our popular series 'Throwing with Bruce Walford', page 28.

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Comment

First of all a very big

CONGRATULATIONS!

to our Associate Editor Rosemary Lapping. Rosemary was married to Sean Sellars on Saturday the 8th of July. We all 'Personally Speaking' wish them health and happiness for the future. Rosemary has obviously been very busy and, at the time of writing this column, is on honeymoon. However her regular article and contributions will be back to normal in our next issue. Mrs Sellars enjoy your well earned rest. 'Ceramically Speaking' I understand Barbara Jackson gave the couple a 'ceramic' wedding cake. Perhaps we could have a picture of it for our magazine.

I have had some very thought provoking correspondence from APSA's Chairman, Mrs Elza Sullivan. The first point raised is the critical state of our teaching studios and the need to do something urgently to improve them. The majority of people are introduced to pottery via their local 'pottery teacher' and it is right here at this grassroot level that the student's concepts and attitudes are formed. In many cases where the teacher and studio are of a professional standard, the quality of student and work eventually coming out is of a high standard. Many of these students then go on to start their own studios and eventually to establish themselves as recognised ceramists within the arena. Most times this a very difficult project financially which can be greatly alleviated by taking in students and supplementing their income. So far so good. However these 'professional' studios are few and far between. The vast majority have sprung up from mediocre, if not downright poor, 'teaching studios'. In many cases the 'teachers' have little or no knowledge about materials and by this I mean fundamentals such as clays; earthenware, stoneware and porcelain. As far as general knowledge of glaze materials is concerned, it is non-existent! I won't even get involved with firing techniques. Perhaps the greatest sin of all is the very limited skills these 'teachers' have when it comes to the basics of actually making objects out of clay. These 'studios' are usually also ill equipped and cramped. Ironically it is from sources like these that more and more 'teaching studios' are born. There should be a law against putting up a sign in your local supermarket saying "Pottery lessons - phone" unless some sort of guarantee can be given to provide at least a fair deal for one's money. Minette Schuiling of Pretoria has put forward a few ideas on this

subject. Briefly the broad outline would be to establish a norm for 'teachers' and 'studios' alike, under the auspices of APSA. Regional APSA Teaching Seminars could be held to establish a criteria and curriculum for teaching. At the same time basics could be formulated as to studio size and equipment available for students; adequate wheels, tables, light, kilns, etc. These standards being met, an APSA seal of approval could be issued to help the 'teaching studios' recruit students. I understand that this idea has been circulated to all Regional APSA Chairmen for their consideration and I sincerely hope that something will come of it.

I would further suggest that this magazine could publish, on a permanent basis, a national directory of the approved 'teaching studios', perhaps on the basis of a guide, e.g. wheelwork, sculpture, glaze technology, firing techniques, resident courses, etc. with address details. Your comments and thoughts are invited.

Secondly here is an extract from a letter to all Regional APSA Chairmen from Elza Sullivan: "Insake werk van ander bevolkingsgroepe is dit my persoonlike mening dat dit vir keramiek in ons land baie goed sal wees as ons so veel as moontlik werk kan vertoon van ander bevolkings — en stamgroepe. Al is hierdie pottebakkers nie lede van APSA nie, voel ek dit is ons plig en verantwoordelikheid om dit ons ten doel te stel om soveel keramiek as moontlik te versamel (en te vertoon). Dit is 'n belangrike deel van ons land se algemene kulturele geskiedenis en tradisies en ons kan help om dit te bewaar.

Graag sou ek hierdie saak ook een van ons Nasionale komitee se hoof doelwitte wil maak en sou graag wou sien dat elke streek 'n sub-komitee of komiteelid wou aanwys om na dié soort werk in sy eie streek te kyk. Werke kan aangekoop word — en in 'n mooi versameling bymekaar gehou word. Sodoende sal die tradisionele pottebakker ook aangemoedig word om aan te hou werk en die kuns aan hul kinders oor te dra."

I would appeal to all readers — should you know of any local African potters in your area or perhaps come across some on your travels, please try to get some information as to their methods of work, history and an example or two. Record what you can with photographs as well as notes. NCQ would be very interested in publishing this kind of information. If possible contact your local APSA chairman or a committee member; in most cases finance for the purchases can be arranged. It would be wonderful if the host region for each Corobrik National was able to put up a comprehensive display of this nature.

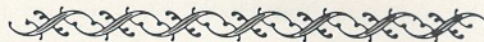
In this issue we have the first part of Professor Heckroodt's article on Plasticity, page 22, details of South Africa's richest ceramic competition, page 8 and some exciting examples of Henry Pim's

work, page 12. From time to time readers have asked my wife and I if we are also potters and what kind of pots we make. So for them, as well as our friends who have not seen our work these past two years, there is an article on page 15.

Enjoy your reading and good luck for the coming Corobrik National in September.

Michael Grossardo.

EDITOR



OBITUARY

It was with sorrow that we learned of the untimely death of John Edwards.

John will be mourned and remembered by many pupils, past and present, as an unsurpassed pottery teacher and an unrivalled expert on all aspects of the craft.

A fifth generation potter from Stoke on Trent, England, John died suddenly from a heart attack, at Hillcrest, Natal, on July 8th at the age of 59.

In a future issue we will be publishing a tribute to John and invite his friends and past pupils to please contribute to this article with anecdotes and photographs. All material will be returned.

Letters

Help needed in Mauritius

Dear Sir,
Having a pottery in Mauritius, where my wife, Pat, is the creative artist who keeps it alive, we regularly receive your magazine "National Ceramics Quarterly", to which we obviously do subscribe. Both of us find your magazine very inspiring. Having myself lived in South Africa for 21 years, while my wife is actually a South African, your magazine provides us with immense pleasure, as we follow the works of such people as Hymie Robinowitz, Stanley Cohen etc, all friends whom we personally know.

Our pottery is doing extremely well, and Harpurs from Retreat in Cape Town do provide us with an excellent service. We are, however, facing some very tricky problems, and that is why I am taking the liberty of asking you for your assistance. The tourist industry in Mauritius is booming and we have had calls from many hotels to supply them with plates, saucers, tea cups etc with their own logo printed on these objects. It is a market that we would love to serve as the number of hotels in

Letters continued

Mauritius will rise to approximately 200 by the year 1992. We are thus creating two divisions in our pottery: (a) Craft (b) Commercial.

I have tried to contact "Safto" and the various Chambers of Commerce in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, in order to obtain the name, address and telex number of various potteries making 'Production Pottery', as opposed to 'Craft Pottery'. All to no avail! We are in the market for earthenware, stoneware and porcelain, tea, dinner, coffee, lunch etc. services on which we shall glaze the necessary hotel logos and transfers. We are planning to import approximately two to three containers during the first year and I am confident of doubling this turnover during the second year. We obviously, need to start with a few plain white or off-white sample plates which we shall test in our kiln. I know of the following companies:

- (a) Continental China in Cape Town.
- (b) Grays Ceramic somewhere in Transvaal.
- (c) Drostdy Stoneware, again somewhere in the Transvaal.

Would you be kind enough to give us the address, phone number and telex number of the various above-mentioned companies and possibly the name of the person to contact. Should you know of any other supplier of table services in earthenware, stoneware and porcelain, would you kindly give us their names and address or ask them to contact me at the above-mentioned address.

This is an excellent opportunity for somebody in South Africa to make sound pennies and for potters between South Africa and Mauritius to get to know and assist each other.

In the June 1988 (No. 4) copy of your magazine, you write on page 9 a very interesting article on Janice Rabie and Watney Louw. These people could possibly help us. Would you kindly give me their address, and ask them to write to me.

Thanking you in anticipation for your assistance, please receive our best regards.

MR LEON DE MARASSE ENOUF
J. E. M. CERAMICS
7B Ave. Dr. G. Léclézio,
Quatre Bornes
MAURITIUS
INDIAN OCEAN
TELEX: 5313
TEL.: 54-9663

Should anybody be able to help either with details or directly, please get in touch with Leon at the above address as soon as possible. Ed.

Believe it — or not

I have a little story which I think is amazing enough to qualify for the Guinness Book of Records. I have heard of large kilns being fired for several days on end, but has anyone heard of a 5 cubic foot electric kiln being fired non-stop for four months and still being in working order? Believe it or not, but this happens to be true!

Here is the story: An old student of mine who is a member of APSA but who shall be nameless, was in the throes of moving house when she decided to fill and fire her kiln before doing so. The kiln was in an outside store-room, where she intended to leave it until everything was in order in her new home some 15 kilometres away. After switching on, she found that for some reason or another it was not working, so decided to leave everything until she got settled — forgetting she had set the kiln on 'soak' and not switched off.

Her old house was subsequently let, and after complaints about the electricity in the house being faulty, she got the electricians in to rectify it. Unbeknown to her of course, the kiln then started firing! Four months later she needed something from the store-room and when her husband went to get it, he heard the ominous 'klonk klonk' of the kiln on 'soak'. Panic stations, as you can guess! Having to wait until the kiln cooled down sufficiently enough to open the door was the longest day of her life. I guess I would have needed several tranquilizers before doing so. However, everything was fine except that a couple of bricks had fallen from the arch. Fortunately it was only a bisque kiln and so, although the pots had shrunk a little more than usual, the shelves and supports were undamaged.

I think this is a wonderful advertisement for Hans Werner from whom she purchased the kiln many years ago. I'd really like to know if anyone can beat this record.

Joan Winn —
Vaal Triangle

WHERE TO JOIN APSA

E. CAPE — APSA P.O. Box 12329, Port Elizabeth 6006
W. CAPE — APSA P.O. Box 6009, Parow East 7501
N. TRANSVAAL — P.O. Box 36411, Menlo Park Pretoria 0102
S. TRANSVAAL — APSA c/o P.O. Box 47182 Parkland 2121
VAAL TRIANGLE — APSA P.O. Box 53 Henley on Klip 1962
NATAL — APSA P.O. Box 1353, Durban 4000
O.F.S. — APSA P.O. Box 3958, Bloemfontein 9300



Pottery in the Benedictine mould

The Prinknash pottery is in the grounds of Prinknash Abbey which was designed and built for a Benedictine Monastic Community. The first pieces of Prinknash pottery were hand-thrown by the Benedictine monks using clay excavated from the site on which the present abbey is built. Some of the first designs of vases and tankards are still in production, notably the Portway Jug.

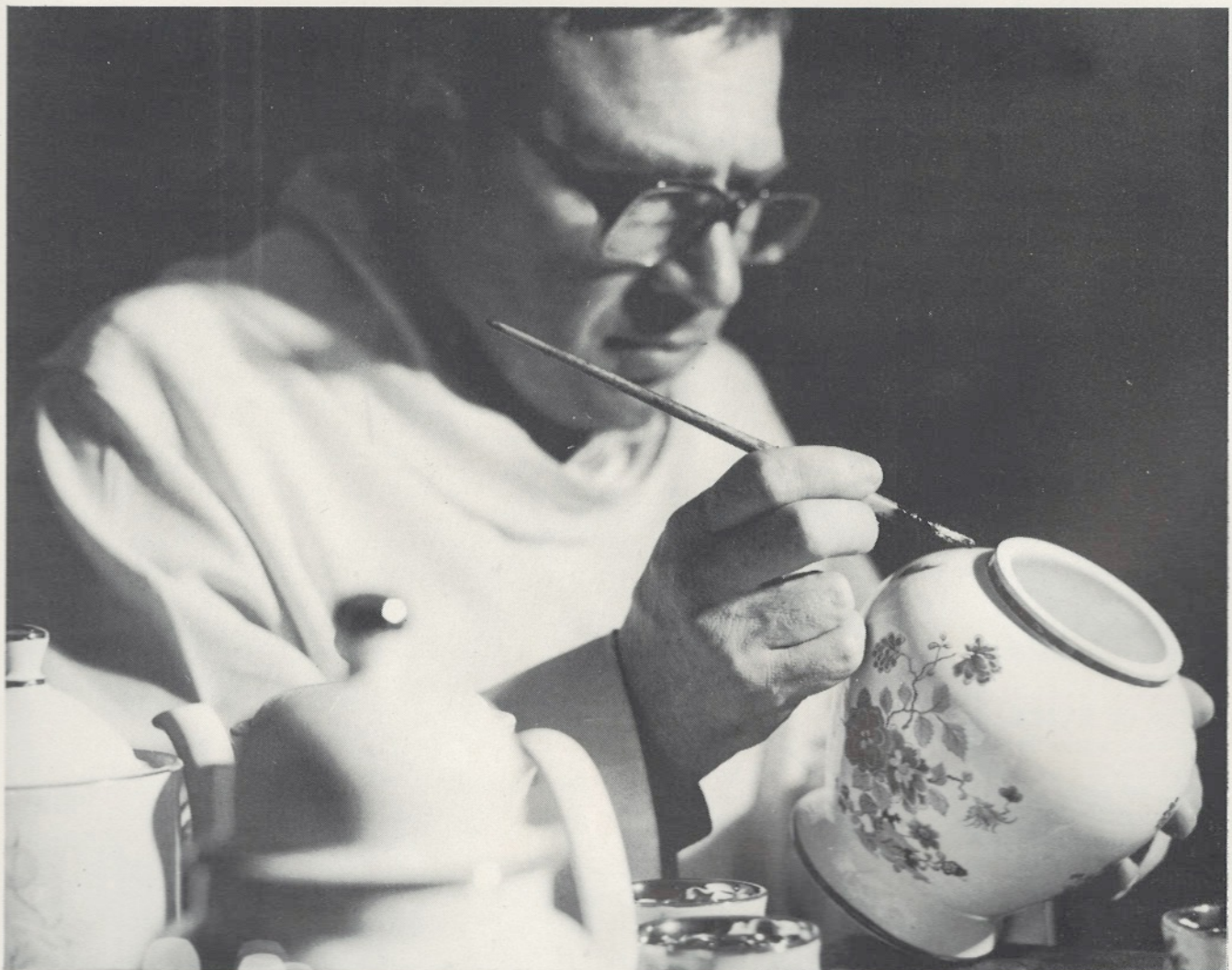
The virtual trade mark of the company is the metallic pewter finish glaze specially formulated over a period of time, but other lines now help to make up the range of shapes, glazes and decorations. In addition to the Arlington series with rich Burgundy glaze, there is a bronze crackle glaze series handcrafted in fine earthenware, fired, hand dipped in high quality glazes and fired for the second time, and with an antique finish.

Another line is table and giftware designed for a lasting and pleasing effect in fine earthenware,

hand dipped in a natural strawcoloured stoneware glaze, with light brown edging to each piece. There are ceramics with an oriental garden decoration, the Painswick boxes decorated with delicate pastel coloured motifs, both on ivory white finish with hand gilded 24 carat gold bands. Candleholders come in many shapes and sizes, decorations and colours, with candles, some perfumed, also in different shapes and sizes.

The pottery also produces special commissions, and commemorative ware in a special black and gold finish. Of necessity, the majority of the pottery has to be produced by mould and machinery these days, to keep up with demand, but a high element of hand work is still retained.

Below: A monk puts the finishing touches to the gold decoration on a vase, an item in the Oriental Garden series of pottery in fine earthenware and with an ivory glaze finish. It is decorated with an orange and crimson floral motif and with hand gilded 24 carat gold bands.



SA Ceramic Awards

R15 000 in prizes

CATEGORIES:
1 THROWN WARE
2 HANDBUILT WARE
3 INDUSTRIAL WARE

The purpose of these awards is to give potters and ceramic artists an opportunity to compete and exhibit their work, at national level, and to give recognition and reward for standards of excellence.

The competition is open to *all* ceramists, and it is earnestly hoped it will attract not only our established potters, but encourage new names, of aspiring and inspired free spirits who work with clay.

The judges accept that there will be entries which could qualify for both Categories 1 and 2. If this is the case, state both next to Category on your entry form.

A category for Industrial Ware has been included to meet the real need in South Africa for innovative design in this field, and crockery in particular. If we look at decorations, where do we see any reference in designs to our wealth of ethnic motifs or indigenous flora? Here is a wonderful opportunity for inventive minds — those who have the skills to present ideas as realities.

Whatever your chosen form of expression in clay, this competition is open to you.

The exhibition, to be held at the Durbanville Clay Museum, will be run in conjunction with the Durbanville Clay Festival on an annual basis. Works for exhibition will be selected by a panel of five judges.

RULES OF ENTRY

- Works entered must not have been exhibited or entered for any other competition, and must be originals.
- A maximum of three works may be entered. Entries for INDUSTRIAL WARE must include moulds.
- Submit the enclosed Entry Form with up to three slides of each work, 24 mm x 36 mm, in plastic sleeves. Mark entry number at top right-

Three winners will each receive an equal share of R10 000 prize monies donated by Plascon and R5 000 prize monies donated by the Rupert Foundation

hand corner of each slide (see Form).*

- Do not send original works until invited to do so.
- Slides of work not accepted for exhibition will be returned only if accompanied by an SAE.
- The closing date for slides and entry forms is November 15, 1989.
- From the slides received, the panel of judges will make a preliminary selection of works for the competition.
- Successful entrants will be advised in writing immediately after the preliminary selection. Final selection of prize winners will be made after viewing the actual works.
- The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- Works selected for exhibition must be received by the Durbanville Clay Museum, Wellington Road, Durbanville, between February 19 and 24, 1990. Personal delivery between office hours only: 9 am to 12 noon and 2 pm to 4 pm.
- Entrants will be responsible for railage or cartage costs, and insurance for works in transit.
- All works selected must be for sale, and when submitted should be marked clearly with the entrant's name and selling price.
- Commission of 30 percent will be deducted from the selling price to defray costs.
- The organisers accept no liability for loss or damage to works submitted for this competition.

ENTRY FEE

A non-refundable fee of R10 will be charged with each entry of up to three works. Your postal order or crossed cheque should be made out to SA Ceramic Awards, and sent together with your Entry Form and slides.

Address your entries to: SA Ceramic Awards, Box 1150, Durbanville, 7550.

The organisers undertake to arrange for the return of unsold works exhibited; but please note that costs will be for the exhibitor's account.

*Entry form on page 32

Northern Transvaal Regional Exhibition held at the Beuster-Skolomowski gallery, Pretoria



The Corobrik prize was awarded to Barbara von dem Bussche for her putty coloured, stoneware bowl glazed only on the inside and decorated on one side of the outer surface with small flying birds.

The Ovland prize was awarded to Inga Chinnery for her bowl made in the form of a bird with outstretched wings. It is a joyous piece in beautiful shades of blue and turquoise body stains. One is left with the feeling that this bowl could actually rise up and fly away.

Several people received highly commended awards. They are Charlotte Bloemhoff, Minette Schuiling, Ingrid Meijer, Elza Sullivan and Dalena Siglee who received two highly commended awards.

The Pretoria Art Museum has purchased two pieces from this exhibition, one made by Henriette Ngako and the other by Ingrid Meijer.

Henriette Ngako's witty, decorative bird pieces have a fresh, lively quality and are painted in glorious colours. One is left in no doubt that Henriette is making what is most familiar to her. If only more ceramists would present the same honesty and sincerity in their work as she does!

Loose, but controlled, simple slab pieces, all of

them colourfully decorated and Raku fired were made by Ingrid Meijer. Stunning work!

Jerice Doeg's feather-light, beautifully made lidded porcelain bowls are exquisite and jewel like. They are richly decorated in glowing enamels and lustres.

Elza Sullivan's work, as always, is superbly made, well glazed, robust functional ware — ware that invites one to cook in it. On this exhibition her oval casserole dish, with handles one can grasp, is decorated with one enormous, free sweeping brush stroke of body stain.

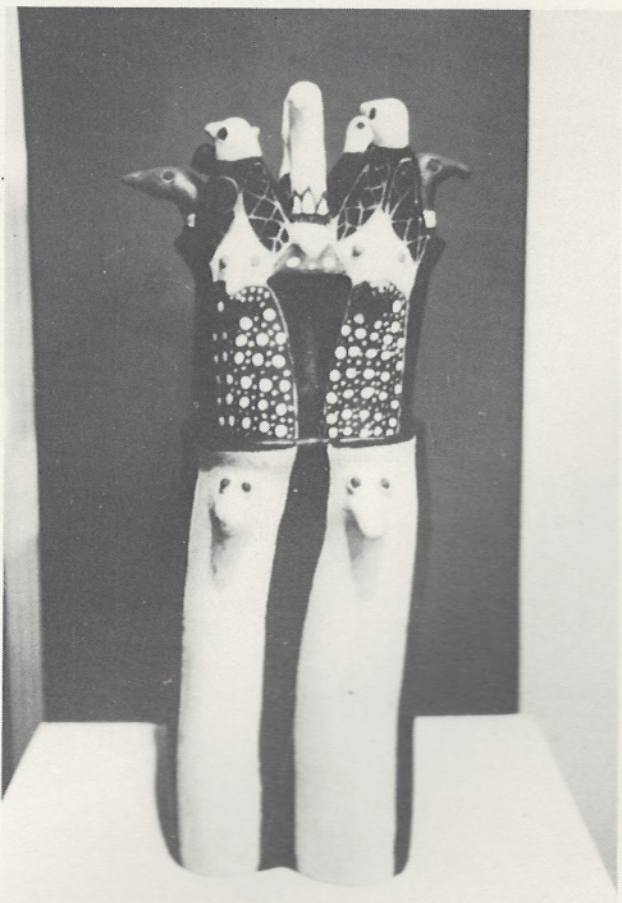
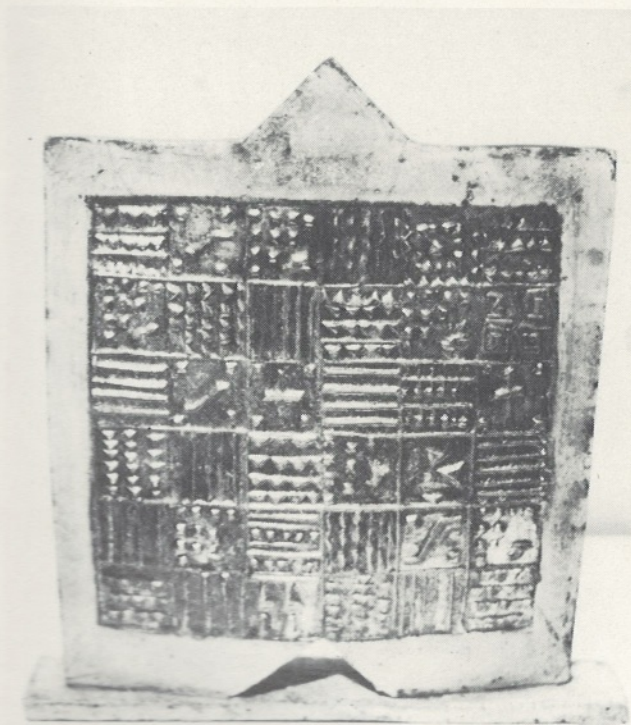
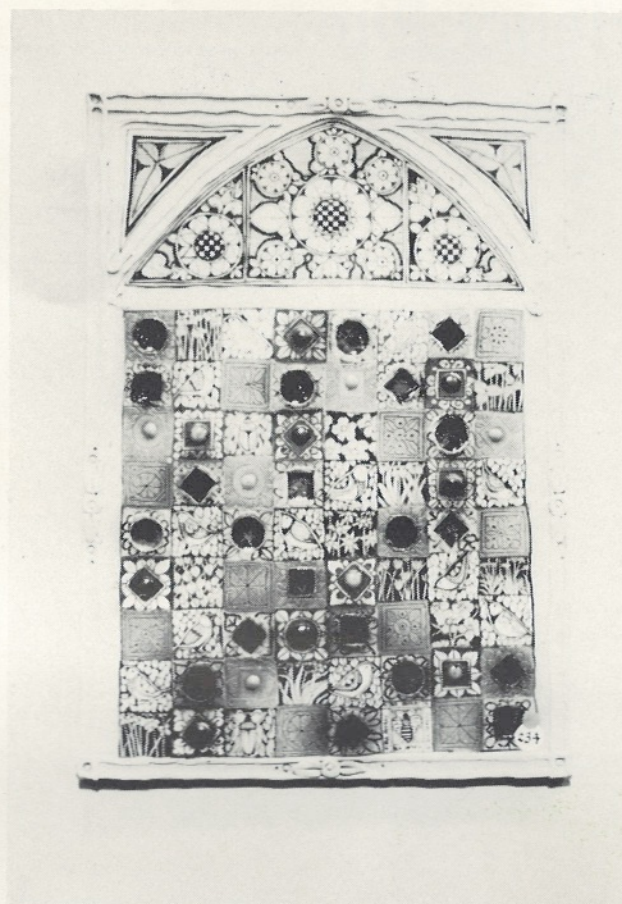
Birds are in evidence on this exhibition. Does the present plague of clay guinea fowl in South Africa owe its existence to the successful formula of some past creator of the birds? Present and future makers of clay guinea fowl would benefit if they would have a fresh look at the real, live birds.

If a pot is enhanced by the colour of the unglazed clay, then perhaps it is acceptable to leave it unglazed. But more often than not, with a few exceptions, a functional piece needs to be glazed. The message one receives when one looks at an unglazed pot which would be improved if it was glazed, is that the potter is unsure in the use of glazes and is taking the easy way out.

There is a constant call for something new and a move towards 'Art' in the ceramic field. This is confusing to many. Craft has become a dirty word, but I must urge those who make craft not to feel discouraged. Just as there is a place in this world for art, so there is a place in this world for good craft.

Bea Jaffray

Main picture opposite; Barbara von dem Bussche's prize winning pieces. On this page, top right, Bea Jaffray; top left, Minette Zaaiman's highly commended pot; bottom left, Ingrid Meijer's slab piece bought by the Art Museum; and bottom right, a Henriette Ngako sculpture. Photographs by Tineke Meijer.



Henry Pim

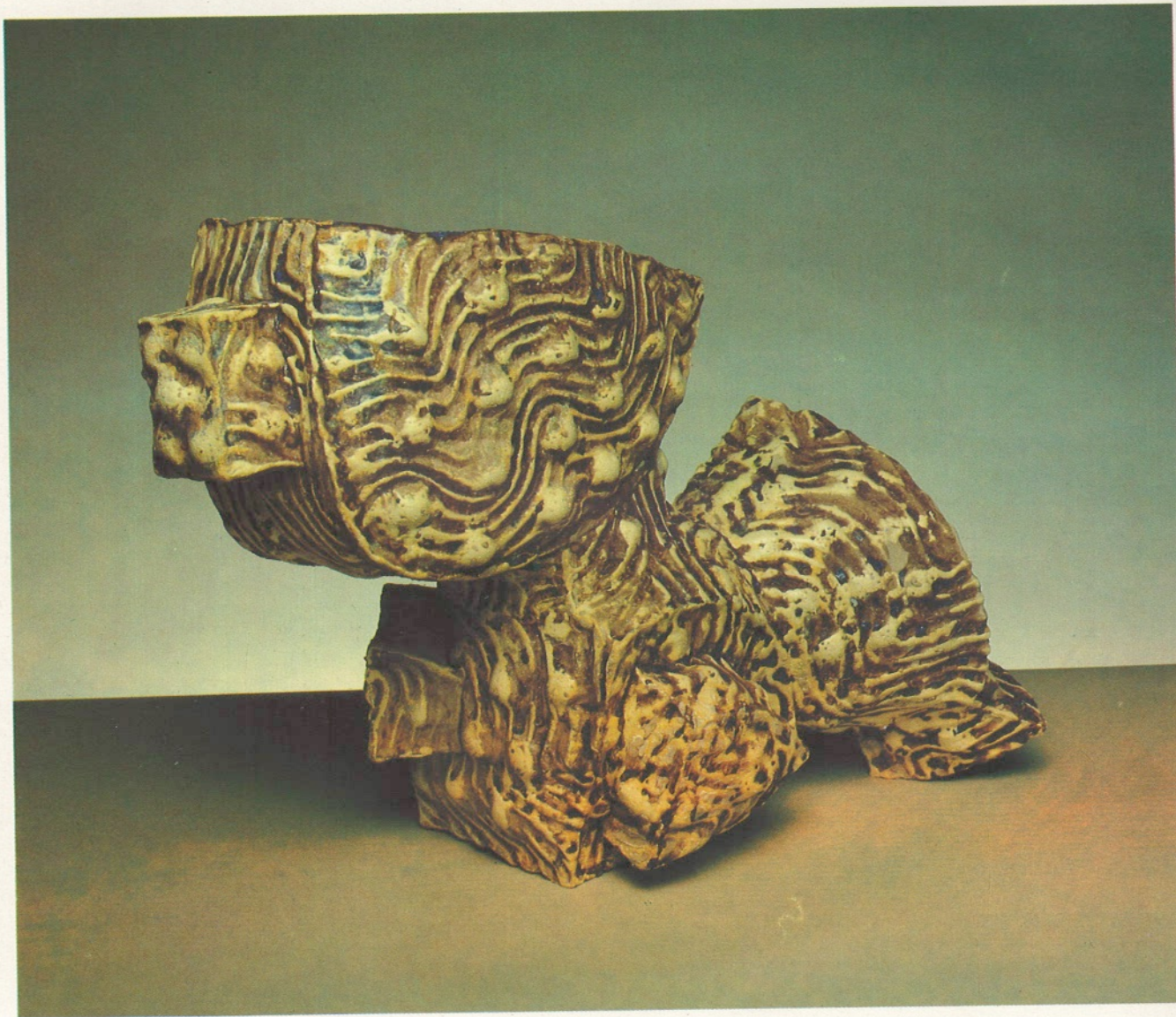
Teacher, art critic and ceramist.

In only ten short years, Henry Pim has become one of the most popular and collectable ceramists working in England today. After completing a teaching course at Brighton College of Education in 1969, he entered the Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts in London and graduated with a BA in ceramics in 1979. His work has been exhibited widely in America, Europe and England and is represented in many notable collections.

Henry starts to make his pot or bowl forms by producing paper templates or maquettes which are then dismantled and used like a dressmaker's pattern to cut out the textured slabs of clay from which the pieces are built. The pieces are then surfaced with multiple layers of slip, engobe and glaze and fired in oxidation.

The pieces shown here are fairly large; the one opposite is 40 cm in height and the piece below 37 cm high. These photographs, as well as the cover picture, were taken by Paul Derrick at the Anatol Orient Gallery in London, who are representatives of Pim's work.

A free Craft Map is available from the Crafts Council, 12 Waterloo Place, London SW1 (930-4811). The map shows shops and galleries selling contemporary crafts selected by the Crafts Council for their quality.





Guassardo Pottery

About seven years ago we were introduced to the magic world of clay. Within six weeks we had plans at Kimberley Engineering Works for the building of our first wheel and a couple of months later our kiln was firing. I am afraid it was a matter of "fools rush in" and very quickly we had a range of 'doorstops' of which we were very proud. However, after joining APSA and attending a number of workshops, we set about teaching ourselves the fundamentals of our craft. Fortunately books were relatively cheap and we soon built up a comprehensive library.

While both of us enjoy working on the wheel, our interests are divided on other aspects. Norma is involved in glaze chemistry and I, in firing techniques. This has helped our growth immensely, leaving each partner free to pursue their own speciality, yet contributing to the whole.

We have always made all our glazes and started off by using formulas published in overseas books and magazines. We soon realised that without a knowledge of glaze technology and analyses of locally available materials, it was very much a hit or miss affair — mostly miss! Norma then proceeded to read everything available on glaze chemistry.

When we changed to reduction firing about five years ago, our interest was mainly in the classic Chinese and Japanese glazes. After much testing and experimentation we achieved good celadon, kaki and temmoku glazes. However the highly

prized blue celadon was more elusive and while in England, Norma purchased a titanium free English kaolin which we hoped would put the blue celadon within our reach. This almost led to her arrest at Heathrow Airport. Being a well seasoned traveller, I had taken my trolley through customs ahead of Norma and was able to have a comfortable grandstand seat to watch the ensuing saga.

The Xray machine came to an abrupt halt and within seconds officials were surrounding Norma and her 'package'. First it was thought to be plastic explosive; then sniffer dogs arrived to ensure the 'white power' was not heroin. Eventually a very upset Norma, with clay in hand, was through customs and desparately in need of a double brandy!

Recently we decided to try and produce brightly decorated pots fired in reduction and although this would have been easier to achieve at earthenware temperatures, we both love the life and look of integration of clay and glaze that high fired reduction ware gives. This led to a tremendous amount of research and experimentation but we have been rewarded with an unbelievable palette of colours including reds and pinks from copper as well as copper blues and greens all coming out of the same firing. We have even managed to produce a yellow. The base glazes over which the

The trolley loaded for a firing in our gas kiln.



Guassardo Pottery

other coloured glazes are applied are very important to the development of colour. For instance the strongest and most vivid red is achieved over a chun type base whereas over a base containing magnesium, this same copper red is a dusty pink. We have also found that the inclusion of a small amount of zinc, about 3%, in the overglazes promotes the development of blues and greens from copper although according to most authorities, including Hamer, zinc oxide fired in reduction volatilises from the glaze at temperatures over 950°C.

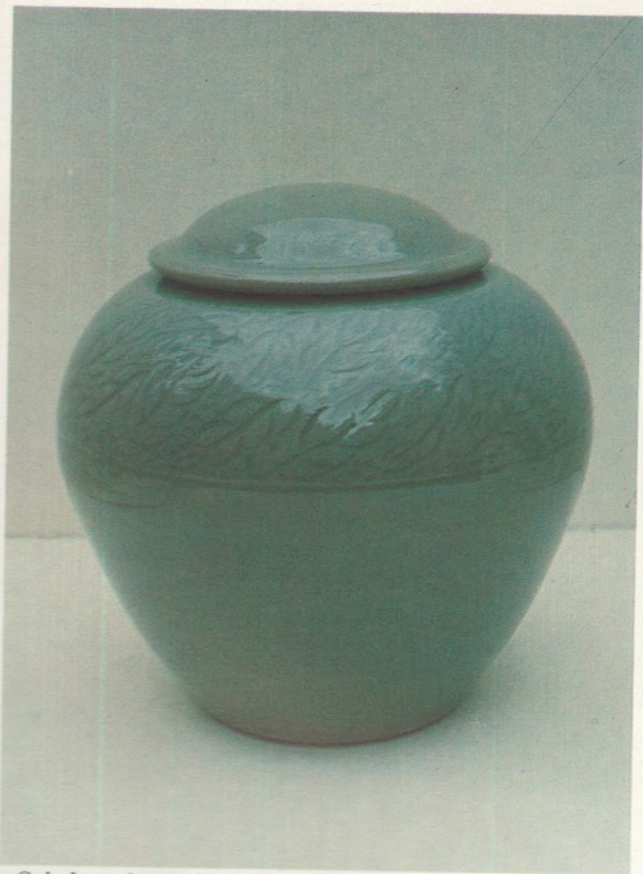
We fire in a 40 cu ft gas kiln to between Orton cones 11 and 12. We have exhibited in APSA regional and national exhibitions and our work is in some of Natal's leading galleries.

Below a sample of our glaze trials. The three top right hand tiles show single glaze tests done in oxidation; the left hand three show reduction tests, with up to about 10 tests per tile. We must have produced well over 2 000 tests in this manner. More recently we are doing multiple cross matched tests up to 144 per tile (size 30 x 30 cm) showing three layers of glaze fired to about 1320°C in reduction.



Serving dish and bowl, kaki over celadon.

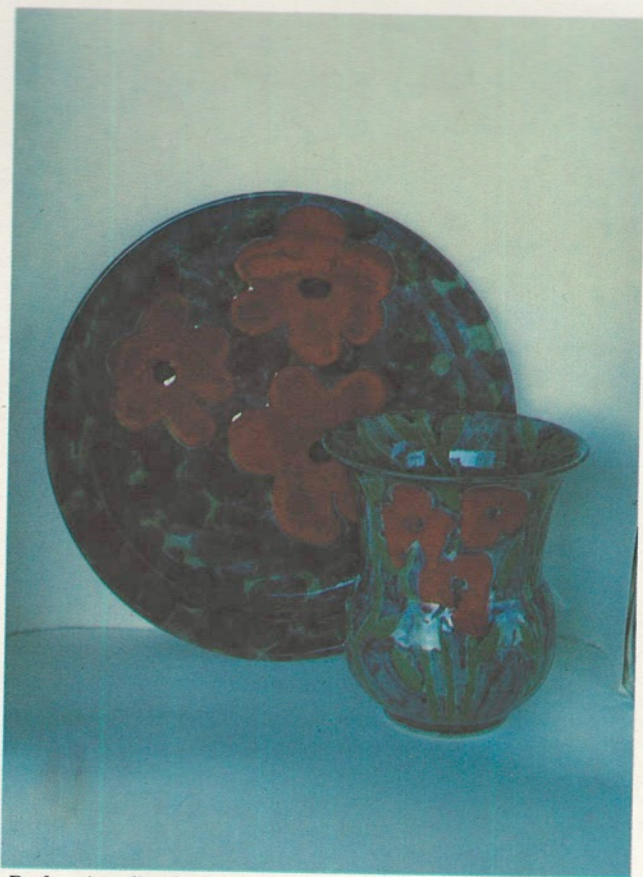




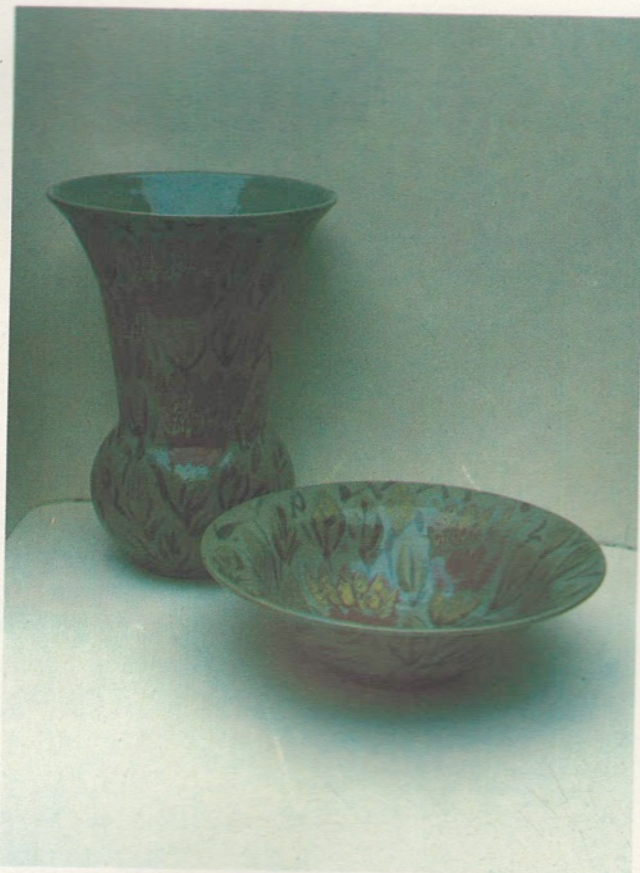
Celadon ginger jar.



Reduction fired jars with blue celadon base and decorated with overglazes giving copper greens, blues and cobalt blues.



Reduction fired plate and vase with blue celadon base overglazed with copper reds, cobalt blues and chrome greens.



Reduction fired vase and bowl with magnesium base glaze decorated with copper pinks, chrome greens and iron yellows.

Helen de Leeuw

When some 35 years ago, I started the Craftsman's Market in an unlikely department store in the centre of Johannesburg, I had to scratch around for craft. I wrote to various mission stations, I got graphic work and hand painted fabric from the Bantu Men's Social Centre in Eloff Street, paintings, sculpture and linocuts from the Polly Street Art Centre (under the direction of Cecil Skotnes), jewellery and wrought iron from that towering master craftsman, Kurt Jobst and wonderful weaving from Carol Stephens who on her remote olympus was producing curtain raiment for the gods. That, together with my own humble pots, was about it. And yet when The Craftsman's Market opened with its first exhibition 'Design for Living', it made an immediate impact and notched up a mark in history.

It was a heartening sign. My landlord, had said to me: "If you think you are going to make a living by selling good things, forget it. The public only wants rubbish". On the contrary, the public responded with such warmth and enthusiasm that the place soon became a buzzing meeting place and has remained so ever since. (The Craftsman's Market has long been incorporated into the Helen de Leeuw Gallery at Hyde Park Corner.)

Not only did The Craftsman's Market attract the buying and the browsing public, it also acted as some sort of magnet to the handful of craftsmen and women in the country who found it a sympathetic and appreciative outlet.

In those far off days came Sias Bosch, young Andrew Walford, Tim Morris, candle maker Klaus Wassenthal, iron worker Hans Bruggen and youthful Arthur Goldreich with his avant garde furniture designs and spirited ideas.

And I, of course, ranged out to find indigenous craft. Hitherto, as far as I know, only Dr Maria Stein-Lessing had found the traditional African

pots worthy of collecting. I count my forays into African villages throughout the country, where I sought out a dying breed of old woman potters, amongst my most memorable experiences. Deep in the bundu of Swaziland I encountered an African Picasso lady. With today's mania for categorising, no doubt her work would be labelled 'transitional'.

And, indeed, there has been an overall transition, even a revolution, in craft of recent years. Those early potters remain the South African classics and they retain their stature and their validity. But a rough wind is blowing, socially, politically, economically and therefore also culturally. It has stirred movement and change and new energy and a whole new growth is taking place. All over the country there are countless craftspeople, either in groups or as individuals, producing the most amazing work.

On a recent visit to Cape Town, I encountered several such people working in a diversity of media. We called them together in Barbara Jackson's studio overlooking the rocks and wreck at Sandy Bay. Little wonder that in such a setting and with such an exuberance of multi-faceted talent, ideas sparked and the nucleus of an exhibition formed. Encapsulating the mood, we titled the exhibition 'The Rites of Spring - a burst of New Energy from the Cape'. Its diversity, humour, underlying seriousness and high level of craftsmanship will give a very fair indication of the strong currents flowing throughout the country.

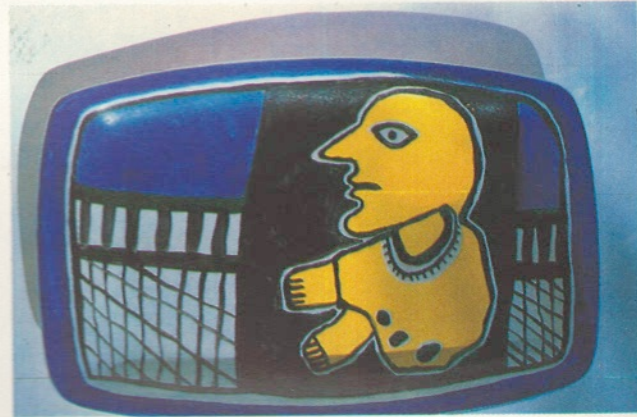
'The Rites of Spring' an exhibition of superior crafts in metal, wood, clay and pulp will be held at Helen de Leeuw, Hyde Park, Johannesburg. The exhibition, sponsored by Bellingham Wines, will be opened by Jane Raphaely at 6 pm on the 25th of September 1989, and will run for three weeks.

Preview overleaf, pages 20 and 21.



Helmut de Heeruw

Some of the artists taking part in 'The Rites of Spring' exhibition. Left, Tanya Babb's earthenware candlesticks. Below, an earthenware plate by Julia Swanepoel.



BELLINGHAM

THE MUSTY AROMA OF RICH, FERTILE EARTH; THE DEEP, BURGUNDY HUE OF A DRAMATIC SUNSET... PEOPLE TEND TO LINGER LONGER OVER A BOTTLE OF BELLINGHAM SHIRAZ. THEY SIP IT LANGUIDLY, SAVOURING THE VELVETY TEXTURE, THE LUXURIOUS FULLNESS AND ROBUST EARTHINESS. SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST SHIRAZ. REMARKABLE IN MANY WAYS.

BELLINGHAM SHIRAZ - A VELVETY SMOOTH, WELL-ROUNDED DRY RED WITH A LINGERING AFTERTASTE AND A TYPICAL SMOKEY BOUQUET.

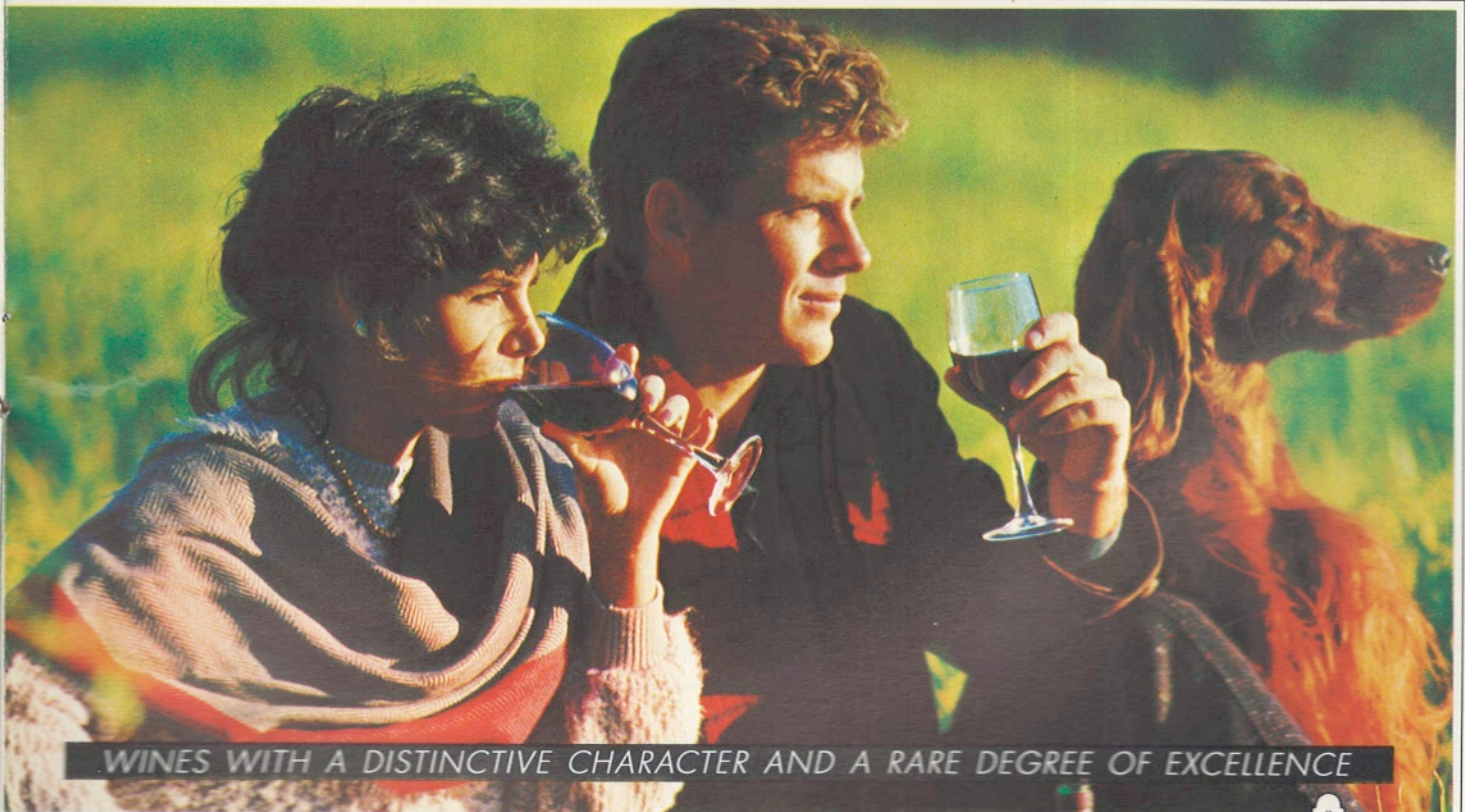
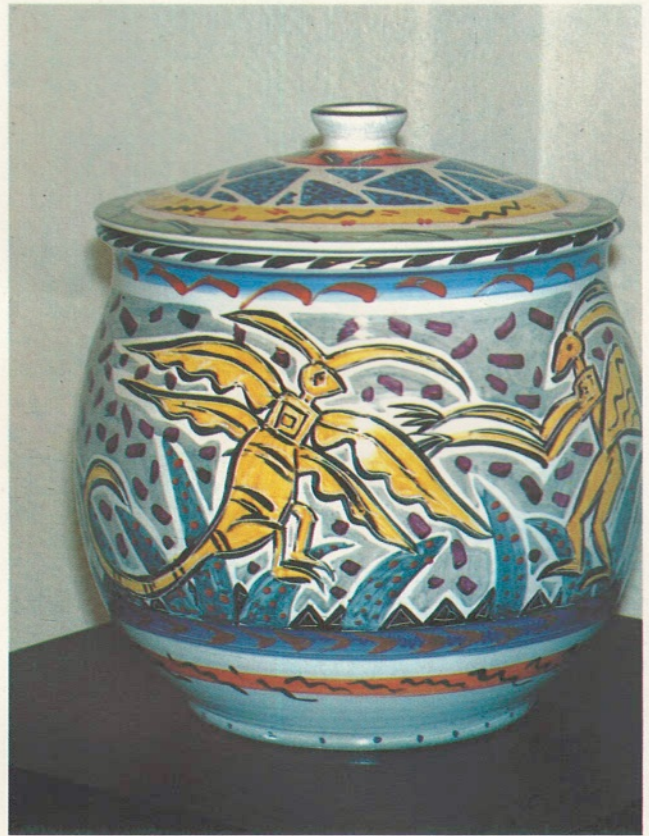


SHIRAZ SUPERIOR

VELVETY, ROUND, ELEGANT



Below, a box by Nicholas Cummings made of wood and metal. On the right Clementina van der Walt's lidded jar made in earthenware. The exhibition opens on 26th of September, 1989.



WINES WITH A DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER AND A RARE DEGREE OF EXCELLENCE

Bellingham
MEMBER OF THE VIGNERONS DE FRANSCHOEK



Plasticity

by R. O. Heckroodt
F.I. Ceram, FSAIMM

All potters are fully aware of the changes that a powder of dry clay undergoes when water is added to it. To start with, a crumbly mixture is formed which progressively attains cohesion, changing into a mouldable or *plastic* mass — at first hard and stiff, but becoming more and more soft as water is added, until it reaches a point where it will deform under its own weight. Adding more water turns the mixture into a sticky mass and finally into a runny slip.

Plasticity is an important attribute of many materials, not only of moist clay. Many metals are plastic, some even showing extreme or super-plasticity, while polymers are very aptly nicknamed "plastics". Although the plastic behaviour of materials has occupied the minds of many scientists, it is still not completely understood. Plasticity may be defined rather formally as that property which allows a material to be deformed continuously and without rupture under an applied force which exceeds a certain minimum or yield value and to retain the new shape when the applied force is removed. The definition is purely qualitative and descriptive, with no units of plasticity defined. It describes the relationship between the applied stress and the resultant strain, with stress the force per unit

area and strain the deformation per unit dimension. Stress may be applied to a body as a tensile, compressive or shear force.

Ideal elastic or Hookian behaviour is where the stress is proportional to the strain, i.e. the ratio of stress to strain is constant. The bigger the stress (up to a certain limit), the larger the deformation or strain, but the body will return instantaneously and exactly to its original size and shape when the deforming force is removed. The constant ratio is known as the Modulus of Elasticity and in the particular case where the stress is applied in pure tension or compression, it is called the Young's Modulus. An elastic material with a high Modulus of Elasticity is thus stiff and will resist being deformed. The unit of the Modulus is force per unit area or Pascal (Pa). It must be noted that the term "elastic" is not concerned with rubber — such polymers are correctly termed "elastomers" and not "elastics".

The viscosity of a liquid is an indication of its resistance to flow under the influence of pressure. In the case of the ideal or Newtonian fluid it is defined as the ratio between the shear stress and the resulting rate of shear, i.e. the ratio of the pressure applied to the liquid and the speed at which it will deform. A fluid with a high viscosity has a large ratio of shear stress to strain rate, i.e. its fluidity is low. The unit of viscosity is the Poise.

The ideal plastic or Bingham material behaves as an elastic or Hookian solid below a well defined yield stress and as a viscous or Newtonian fluid above the yield stress. The behaviour of such an ideal plastic material can be described by the change in the rate of deformation or strain rate with increasing stress, as shown in Figure 1.

Rate of Strain

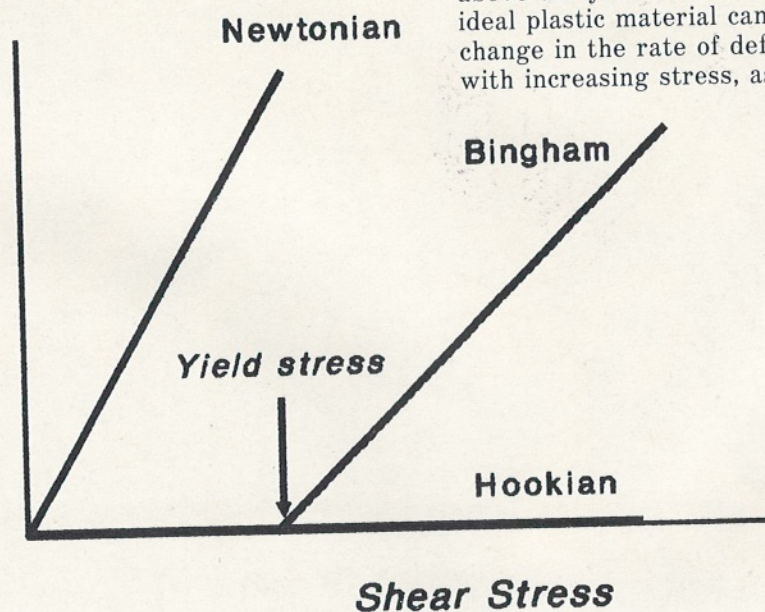


FIGURE 1: Elastic, plastic and viscous behaviour

The Plasticity of Clay Bodies

An ideal elastic material deforms instantaneously when a stress is applied, but then no further deformation takes place while the stress is kept constant. This pure elastic behaviour is clearly shown by the reaction of a coiled spring — it stretches the instant a mass is hung on it and then remains extended to a constant length; this is the principle of the spring scale. Because the rate of deformation of an elastic solid after the initial instantaneous strain is zero at all stress levels, its strain rate — stress curve lies on the stress axis of the diagram.

An ideal viscous material, on the other hand, will start to deform under the smallest of stresses and continue to deform all the while the stress is applied. The larger the stress, the faster the deformation, i.e. the higher the rate of deformation. This behaviour can be seen when stirring a pot of honey: to stir it rapidly, i.e. to change its shape fast (large rate of deformation), needs more force (higher stress).

The ideal plastic material combines these two behaviours. At stress levels below the yield value of a Bingham material, the rate of change in dimensions (the strain rate) is zero. When the applied stress exceeds the yield value, the material deforms in a viscous manner.

The underlying problem when considering plasticity of clay bodies is that this attribute is a composite and not a fundamental property of such materials. Because potters are much concerned with the shaping of a clay-water mass, using different methods and materials, different aspects of this behaviour becomes important in each different case. The plasticity of a clay is thus frequently referred to in a general way as "workability", while specific aspects are described by such imprecise terms as "short" or "fat", depending on the feel of the material, or "strong" and "lean" if the moulding behaviour is considered.

The complex nature of plasticity is illustrated by noting how it is affected by factors such as:

- Water content
- Character of the particles — size, size distribution, shape and composition
- Electrolyte content
- Previous history of the clay

WATER CONTENT

Plasticity is exhibited by clay materials within a comparatively narrow range of water additions. If not enough water is present, the mass cannot be moulded without rupture, while if too much water has been added, the mass becomes a pourable slip. The range between these two extremes is sometimes termed the workability range. It varies with different clays and some materials will show a wide range, others a short range.

Within the workability range, the water content of a particular body determines both its yield value and the extent of its workability range, as shown by Figure 2. The higher the water content, the

Shear Stress

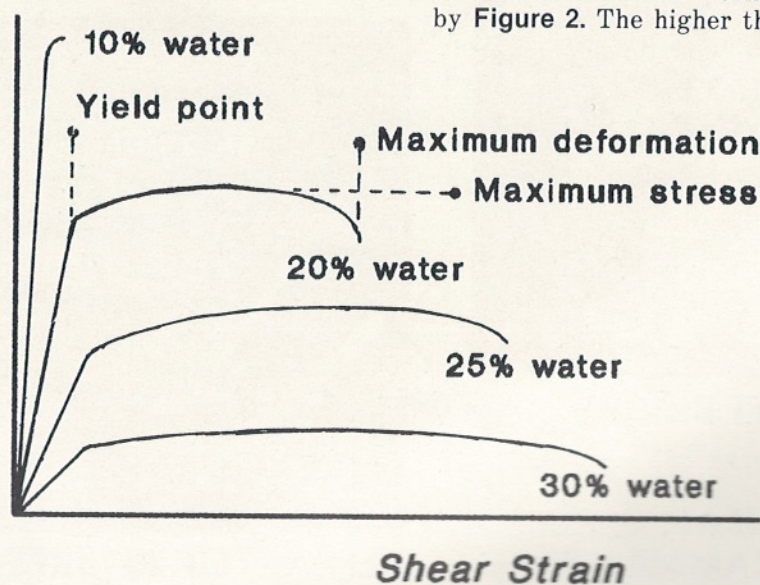


FIGURE 2: Stress-strain relationship for a plastic clay

Plasticity

lower the yield value, i.e. the softer the mass, and the longer the workability range. The maximum deformation that the clay can undergo before it ruptures is considered by some researchers to be the correct index of plasticity.

Thus, the lower the water content, the taller the shape that can be formed before the foot of the shape will yield under the influence of gravity, although the clay will be harder to work with and will need more force to shape it. Furthermore, the body can only be shaped to a limited extent before it will rupture. When tall vessels are to be thrown, the potter must either use a stiff body and work slowly, or work in stages, allowing the bottom parts to dry out and to become more stiff before work progresses.

CHARACTER OF THE PARTICLES

It is generally accepted that plasticity is associated with particles of colloidal size, i.e. particles that are so small that their behaviour is dominated by their surface character and not by their bulk properties. Colloidal particles are so small (below 0,2 microns or 0,0002 mm) that when in suspension they will not settle out, yet they cannot be regarded as being in solution.

Clays are characterised by their fineness and most clay materials have a large proportion of particles of colloidal size. The larger the proportion of fine particles, the more plastic the material will be and the longer the workability range, but at the same time the amount of water needed to develop optimum plasticity is greater. However, although size of the particles is very important for plasticity, it is only one of the particle parameters involved. Removing all the very fine particles from a clay material will destroy its plasticity, but calcining a clay at about 600°C (which does not affect the size of the fine particles to any extent) will have the same effect, because the surface characteristics of the fine particles have been changed.

The size distribution of the particles also has an influence on plasticity. A material consisting only of fine particles is less plastic than a material composed of a range of particle sizes, because of the better packing density. The influence of particle size distribution on plasticity of brickmaking clays was investigated by Winkler and his results are summarized in **Figure 3**. Thin-walled hollow ware requires clays with good plasticity, while solid bricks can be made from clays with poorer plasticity. It should be noted that the classification is one-sided, in that clays falling within Field A of the Winkler diagram will be suitable for all building ceramics, but clays falling within Field D are really only suitable for making solid bricks. The Winkler relationship can be expected also to hold for other clay bodies.

A: Thin walled hollow ware

B: Roofing tiles < 2 micron

C: Perforated bricks

D: Solid bricks

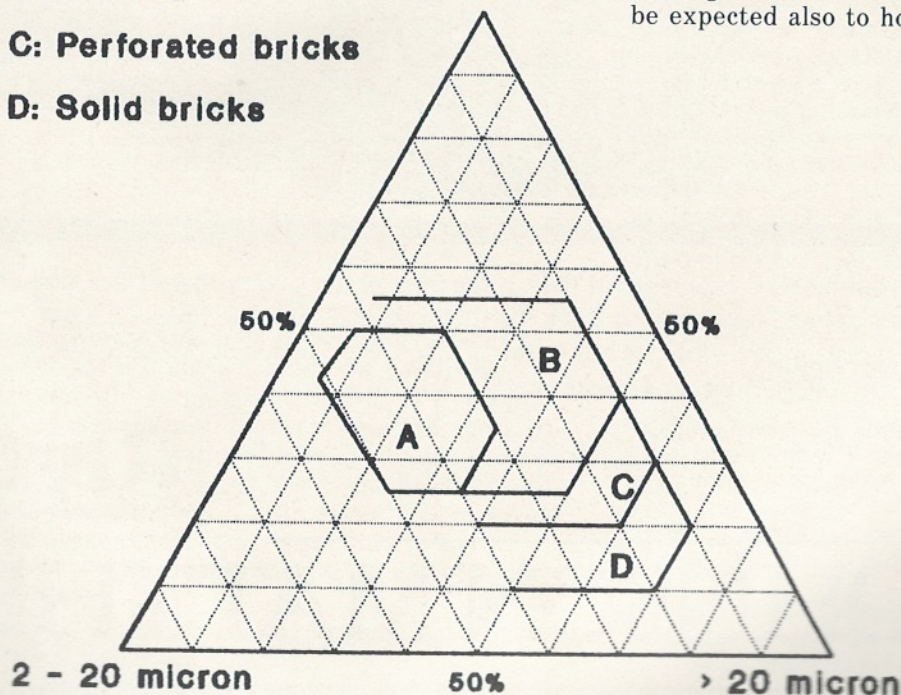


FIGURE 3: Winkler diagram for brickclays

Plasticity

Plasticity is associated with high specific surface area and the plasticity of clay materials is frequently attributed to their platy nature.

However, plasticity is not associated exclusively with platy or lamellar particles, because fibrous minerals, such as attapulgite and halloysite, also have large specific areas and can produce very plastic bodies. Spherical particles, on the other hand, have a relatively small specific surface and will not impart plasticity to a body, even if they are very small.

The orientation of the particles is also of importance. When a clay is stressed, the platy particles tend to orientate themselves parallel to the direction of maximum strain. The clay body thus becomes anisotropic as far as the stress-strain relationship is concerned and the yield value is higher in the direction of orientation of the platy particles. This behaviour is often called "shear hardening".

EFFECT OF ELECTROLYTES

The type and amount of electrolyte (certain kinds of soluble salts and acids) present in the water may influence the plastic behaviour of the clay considerably, because the balance between the attractive and repulsive forces between the particles are dependent on the type of exchangeable cations and anions absorbed on the surface of the clay particles. In natural clays the calcium cation tends to predominate, while humic acids (from decaying organic matter) provide hydrogen ions. The presence of these cations cause flocculation or coagulation of the clay-water system, which result in an open structure where the particles are packed in a random manner. Sodium carbonate (soda-ash) and sodium silicate (water glass) are sources of sodium ions. The alkali cations cause deflocculation or dispersion in the clay-water system and the particles tend to orientate themselves, resulting in a denser structure.

In practical terms this means that more water is required to form a plastic mass of a particular strength or yield value when calcium or hydrogen is the exchangeable cation, than when an excess of sodium ions are present. The hydrogen or calcium clays require greater moulding pressures, but will retain their shape better, than do sodium clays. On the other hand, sodium clays have longer workability ranges than hydrogen or calcium clays.

PREVIOUS HISTORY OF THE CLAY

The characteristics of a clay are determined by its previous geological history — the type of parent rock, contamination with other materials, conditions of formation and deposition, subsequent

geological actions, exposure to different electrolytes, etc.

On a shorter time scale, the plasticity of a clay material may in some cases be influenced by the process of ageing or souring. The clay is stored in a wet condition, allowing time for water to penetrate into hard aggregates, increasing the effective surface area of the clay. Any organic matter present is decomposed by bacterial action, forming dilute humic acids, which also helps to increase the workability of the material.

In summary, it is clear that plasticity is a recognizable attribute of many materials, but that it is difficult to define it scientifically. The precise measurement of plasticity is an even more difficult problem and a consideration of this aspect will follow.

CONTRIBUTORS

We pay a minimum of R25,00 per page, for example 1 000 words or, say 500 words and two pictures would roughly approximate a page of printed matter. For longer articles we pay a minimum of R50,00 and for short items such as studio tips or a photograph and caption a minimum of R10,00 each.

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Throwing with Bruce Walford

Throwing a large open platter.

Centre 6 to 7 kgs of medium to soft clay and spread out the clay into a flat cone shape and start the centre indentation by gently pressing in your thumbs, fig. 1. With the right palm now push down and outwards; note the left hand is interlocked with the right and is keeping the outer edge firm and on centre, figs. 2 and 3. To flatten and firm the bottom of the platter,

pressure is applied with the lower edge of your extended right hand. Note the right hand is steadied on the left hand which is at the same time forming the rim, figs. 4 and 5. The wall of the rim is now formed by squeezing and slightly pulling up the clay with the left hand, the thumb being on the outside. The right hand is steadying the left hand while keeping the rim firm, fig. 6.



1



2



3



4



5



6

The shape of the rim is now formed with the thumb of the right hand, with the fingers supporting the clay on the outside, fig. 7. Final shaping of the side and rim is done with the fingers of the left hand pushing gently outward while being supported with the right hand, fig. 8. To add some detail to the rim, push down with the index finger of the right hand, steadying the rim and supporting it from underneath with the left hand, fig. 9. Now using the right hand to

support the outside of the wall and rim, use the 'clawed' fingers of the left hand to push in and slightly up, fig. 10. Note the thumb of the left hand is keeping the outer rim firm and the thumb of the right hand is steadying the left hand. Trim off excess clay to form a clean base for cutting off, fig. 11. Allow the rim to firm, a little before cutting off however cut through the clay while it is still fairly wet. Fig. 12 the finished platter.



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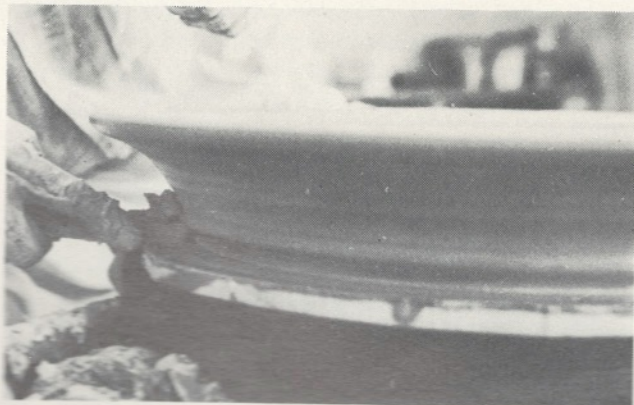
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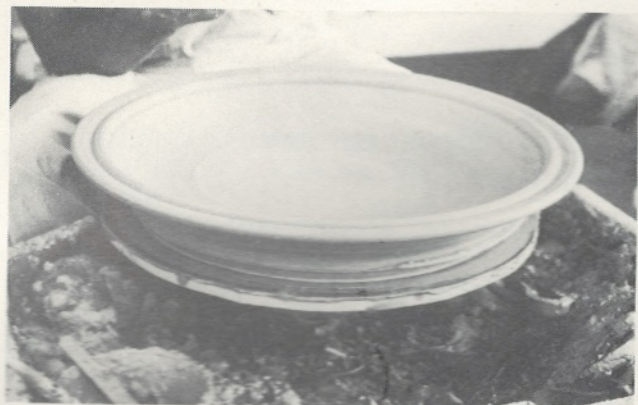
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Pots and superpots

What is the status of the crafts now? A recent one-day conference at the ICA, noting that "some of the most interesting and exciting art produced today is by practioners who work within the traditional field of the applied arts", got itself into a considerable twist about that question.

Many craftspeople have an uneasy relationship with their patrons. Though it is of the essence that applied arts should be privately owned, incorporated into homelife, become a "commodity". Some craftspeople seemed perturbed by their buyers' habit of making distinctions of merit. There were complaints about the "superstar" system, whereby some makers are invidiously sought out more than others.

More telling than all the talk was the fact that the discussion day was held in association with Christie's, as a preliminary to their sale of modern British Decorative Arts last week. At this sale a fine vase by Elizabeth Fritsch, who had moaned about the crafts being bedevilled with commodity status, was sold for a record £10 000 (plus commission).

Dan Klein, the director of the Decorative Arts department at Christie's, prefers not to take work direct from the makers, believing that auction rooms should sell things that are, as it were, extinct and second-hand, by however short a period. But other auction houses are now moving into the areas formerly occupied by shops and galleries. Phillips are inviting entries from craftspeople for an auction in Oxford in May. Last year Bonhams began holding contemporary ceramics sales.

The first, last November, held for the convenience of the private buyer in the evening, rather than during the dealer-friendly working day, was a spectacular success: in a packed room, a record £13 500 (£14 850 with commission) was paid for a wonderful vase by Lucie Rie. Partly because of growing awareness that the best studio ceramics are the equal of any contemporary British art, and partly perhaps because of the deaths of so many major makers — Leach, Cardew, Coper, Hamada — in the past 10 or so years, prices have rocketed.

Cyril Frankel, the Bonhams departmental head, is concerned to spread this success to younger working potters, pointing out that an auction room's commission compares favourably with a dealer's margin. He has successfully introduced previous unknowns, such as Abdo Nagi, who makes colourful Rie-esque bowls, and Christine Jones, who makes elegant, plain earthenware bowls, both selling at affordable prices.

Given the unsatisfactory showcasing at the V & A, auction views are one of the best places simply to see contemporary ceramics. Bonhams' second sale, tomorrow, is the biggest ever, with fine pots by all the major makers, Hans Coper, Lucie Rie, Bernard Leach, Shoji Hamada, Michael Cardew,

and a particularly good representation of one of the most sought after current potters, John Ward. All importantly in a salesroom, as not in a museum, the pots can be handled.

Reprinted from The Times

Brush decoration

Anna Botha reports on Chris Patton's workshop

According to Chris Patton it is essential and important for every potter to develop his/her own style or 'vocabulary'. Decoration is like handwriting. People will get to know the certain style in which it is applied without searching for the potter's signature.

Most important (and exciting) are the tools one uses to decorate with, for example brushes, wood and metal tools, and of course glazes, wax, etc.

a. Brushes

According to Chris only 3 brushes are necessary:

1. A **caligraphy brush**. This is a rather big brush with lots of hair to hold a maximum amount of liquid. It is tapered to a very sharp and definite point to finish off the broad thick stroke to a hair thin line. An oriental make is recommended and the biggest of the range is best.
2. A **signwriter's brush** — a broad flat brush with an even length of hair. Natural fibre is more flexible than synthetic fibre. The latter on the other hand is more durable.
3. A **liner** — a brush consisting of only a few but extra long fibres. This enables one to band a pot or plate with a thin line and the extra length of the fibre makes it possible to hold enough liquid to supply the whole length of the band and still leave a thin, even impression.

b. Banding wheel for decorating

- Make sure the article to be decorated is centred correctly from the very start.
- The faster the speed of the wheel, the better.
- Thin pigment for banding works better.
- Make sure the brush contains enough glaze or pigment to finish band completely with one movement.
- To ensure an even decoration, dampen your bisqued article.

c. Hand decorating with brushes

- Always work on a horizontal surface and

always hold your brush in a vertical position.

- Plant motifs are very successful and popular.
 - Use a caligraphy brush for leaves by starting from thin to thick. Lift the brush to end with a thin fine line. Use a 'one stroke' movement and work away from your body.
 - If you group the leaves, work in uneven numbers. Three looks better than two and five or three better than four, etc.
 - Use your arm and wrist for movement and let the brush do the work for you.
 - Combine your 3 brushes for various effects. For example after applying the leaf motifs, a liner brush can be used to emphasize or outline the leaves.
Paint the stems with the liner and stick to the true growing lines as it appears in nature. Link the motifs but leave some open spaces.
 - Use the flat brush for border patterns and binding. Practice other effects with this brush.
 - Work with speed and confidence with free movements and avoid an excessive amount of dots and splodges.
 - Avoid decorating the centre of your pot or plate.
 - If a 'put down' is wrong, leave it! A wrong stroke done with confidence is better than a correct stroke done slowly and without confidence.
 - You must know when to stop by practicing a lot.
 - Try not to turn your brush while working. You get better results when it is kept in one position.
 - Contrasts of line, shapes and colours are interesting and important.
- #### d. Decorating with wax
- Apply wax with a sponge as not to use your brushes.
 - Parafin wax diluted with a 1/4 parafin oil works best.
 - Add a coloured wax crayon when decorating with wax as a guide.
 - Don't overheat wax. A wax warmer consisting of a tin container mounted over an electric bulb (with electric wire and plug) works well.
 - Don't dip wet or damp brushes into hot wax.

Chinese Ceramics

In NCQ number 4 we had an article on Chinese ceramics. An indepth article 'The Davis Collection of Chinese ceramics in the South African Cultural History Museum' by Esther Grobbelaar is published in the 'Bulletin of the South African Cultural History Museum' number 9, 1988. The Bulletin is available at R4,50 (no GST payable) from The Director, S.A. Cultural History Museum, P.O. Box 645, Cape Town, 8000. Tel. (021) 461-8280.

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Joan Jackson
Earthenware vase with underglaze colours. 17 cm. High. Potters' Shop, Kalk Bay.



Joan Jackson
Earthenware plate, 22 cm. dia. Potters' Shop, Kalk Bay.