



NEW ZEALAND  
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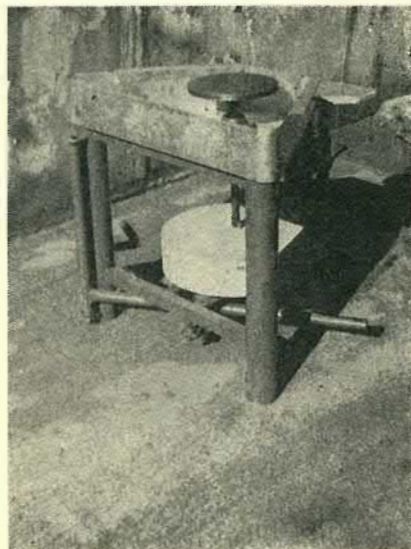
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## contents

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Editorial	2
The Fourteenth	3
A power wheel	10
Oriental pottery	12
Another man's poison	18
International success	22
China cabinet ceramics	24
Not just another sale of work	27
Yvonne Rust and colleagues	30
Cowan exhibition	34
Potters materials dissected and examined	37
Teapots galore!	42
What they are doing to our greenstone	47
Unspoilt Bali	49
News of people, pots and events	53

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# editorial

The National Exhibition of the New Zealand Society of Potters has been regarded as a showing of the best work produced each year and a goal for new potters to aim at.

The Fourteenth has now been held. After selection, 167 entries were put on display in Christchurch's C.S.A. Gallery, out of which the first 22 catalogue entries were those of guest exhibitors. Thus the actual membership of the Society of Potters supplied an exhibition of 145 items (or sets).

Such a heavy selection should have ensured an exhibition of high quality. So why did it look somewhat thin and disappointing? Certainly the work on view had its share of nice pieces. But not enough to make a memorable display in a large gallery. A long standing problem of jury selection, especially one which relies upon a voting or point tallying system, is the tendency to eliminate the controversial or divergent work along with the less competent. It is the view of some, that the fourteenth exhibition could have been more exciting if the selectors had been prepared to allow in pots that they may not have cared for personally, but which were different, even if technically not so well made. Having said this, which is a bit condemning of the selectors who said that they were given only a mediocre offering anyway, if we cast our memories back to the Twelfth and Thirteenth, we recall that the after-exhibition-cry was that the selectors were not setting a high enough standard, particularly in basic aspects of design such as craftsmanship and function. This year's selectors pre-

sumably were chosen to do just this. It would seem then that the Society gets the kind of exhibition that it asks for.

Two things were plainly apparent. One—that the exhibition can no longer call itself "National" in the sense that it represents New Zealand potters as a whole. Nor does it show a representative cross section of work produced in a current year (for better or worse!) So one must ask the question—does it serve a purpose any longer?

Fifteen years ago when the National Exhibition series began, the situation was very different. Potters were few, and exhibition opportunities even fewer. The National exhibition brought potters and public together in an appraisal of what had been achieved in the course of the year. Today, potters have a wide choice of possibilities in the display and marketing of their wares, without feeling a need to compete for very limited space at large-group-organised exhibitions.

The Society of Potters should be alert to these changed circumstances. It is already committed to holding a 15th "National" exhibition (in Wellington in 1972). There is a strong case for making this the last of its kind — a Grand Finale done in style to finish an honourable movement on a high note. Few art movements last longer than a decade, so the National exhibition in its original form has done well to survive so long.

For the future the Society could consider what are the present needs of potters. Perhaps the promotion of regional exhibitions? Overseas exhibitors? Or what?

# The Fourteenth

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL TRUMIC

When the editor of New Zealand Potter, wrote asking me if I would write an objective criticism of the 14th Exhibition of the N.Z. Society of Potters, my answer should have been 'how' instead of 'Yes'. How indeed.

Objectivity in any art form is elusive, but its elusiveness does not mean its non-existence. Wouldn't it be nice if indeed it didn't exist. What a free game ART would be.

Craftsmanship is part of any art form and it is often referred to as the technical aspect or the rational part of it.

The critical eye can quite easily be objective in this area and I will try to look at this exhibition mainly from this angle. I am fully aware of the fact that in this way I will not be able to encompass the 'whole pot'.

Under craftsmanship I understand technical execution of pots, their form and design. The craftsmanship in pottery is easiest to compare with craftsmanship in music—IT CANNOT BE BY-PASSED AND IT IS NOT INSTANT.

In this exhibition I had the unusually good chance to handle and touch every pot several times as I set up the display. Even before I had gone halfway through, it became obvious to me that there was an overwhelming absence of skill. The almost total absence of complex pottery forms proves this observation. There was only one coffee pot, three teapots, very few handled pots, hardly any jugs, but plenty of ashtrays, plates, platters and

bowls. Plates and bowls are particularly suitable to carry enormously thick layers of beautiful glazes or elaborate decorations, screaming for attention and getting it, but on the unseen parts of these there was no skill or attention. We all know how many mistakes a good glaze or elaborate decoration can hide and how powerful is the glaze appeal to the public eye, but by doing this one can go only so far, so often, and no more. This way one's skill must come to a full stop and never develop any further. One must acknowledge this confrontation with one's own skill.

Beside the actual absence of skill, this exhibition revealed to me an alarming insensitivity to the three dimensional form. We potters begin with a form—form is the essence of our work—form IS a pot; and before we even consider glazing any pot we must make sure that the form is good, so good that it does not need any beautifying processes applied to it.

It is no good to hope that the glaze will improve it. Glazes and decorations can and should only confirm already existing form—that way makes it perhaps more 'visible' or stronger. To blend a glaze and a form successfully is a sensitive and complex problem and it should not be treated lightly. The natural feeling for good form is in every one of us but at the present age more often or not this feeling has to be rediscovered, re-stimulated and 'relearned'.

A potter is a sculptor in the first place and if he is not that way inclined, he



should take up brush and canvas and try again.

To sum it up, the skill and form are the two main weaknesses of this exhibition as a whole. Its strongest points are the quality and variation of glazes and the fact that so many potters are working, trying and exhibiting. There is a definite feeling of enthusiasm and hope throughout all pots despite the weaknesses I mentioned earlier. This is a lot of capital for the future.

On the individual level there are highlights and lows, but I can mention only a few. Due to the system of selection, some potters finished with only one pot in the exhibition — hardly enough to assess.

*Oil bottles, Gail Carlson.*



**Gail Carlson — Auckland** had a lovely and lively group of five small pots (mainly oil bottles) sensitive in form, with good glazes and textures. Those had their own inner dynamics despite their size and attention had been given to every detail.

**Mirek Smisek — Te Horo** His best I thought, were six fluted porcelain goblets (141 Cat. No.) and his 'worst' perhaps six bowls (138) which were that bit 'top heavy'.

The continuity of good craftsmanship which is not easy to maintain is a thing one must admire in Mirek's work. These pieces are no exception.

**Jane Smisek — Te Horo** exhibited five pieces, all flat, square dishes of various *Jug, Margaret Higgs.*

Photo: G. Christian

sizes, well decorated and only one small mistake in one of them where the decoration ran away from the flat area of the dish on to the upright side.

One wishes to see some 'standing up' pots from this potter.

**Juliet Peter — Wellington** had three exhibits, two slab pots and a large fruit bowl. These were not sensational in any sense but the care and attention were obvious to any sensitive onlooker. I would like to suggest that this care (not fussiness) is the surest way to put oneself into one's work. The big fruit bowl, while basically correct in form, was cut too abruptly and left without any type of lip, giving us a feeling that we were looking at a half of a giant bowl.

**Hazel McCaughern — Christchurch** had six exhibits and one bowl was purchased by the Canterbury Museum. Again there was nothing sensational in her pots but one handled them with care and respect because that is what had gone into them.

**Peter Stichbury — Auckland.** His coffee set, particularly his coffee pot, was extremely well designed and executed. Every part of it was in balance with the whole. But his wine bottle had a very 'unfortunate' handle attached to it. Neither in shape nor in mass was it belonging to that particular pot. The platter, while beautifully glazed was 'solid' clay, totally formless and only the rim was thinned out.

**Denys Hadfield — Amberley** had very elaborate decorations more suitable for the flat areas than to the rounded and curved areas of the pots. His 'porcelain' plate was one of the heaviest plates in the exhibition and the foot was big enough and strong enough to support a thirty-inch tall pot.

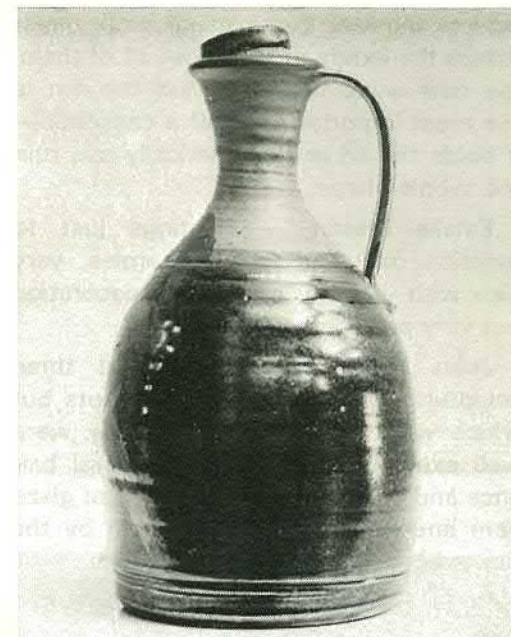


Photo: G. Christian

*Wine bottle, Peter Stichbury.*

**Guy Mountain** — presents us with a large bowl and a beautiful thick glaze but almost footless—there was a mini one only. The foot on a bowl is as important as the bowl itself. Its size and shape is dictated by the size and the line of the bowl's shape otherwise these two do not fit each other. He is not the only one making this and similar mistakes in bowls, particularly large ones, but space limits me from mentioning each one.

Casseroles are an item for which I would feel guilty if I didn't say something about, but there were too many to mention individually. The basic trouble spots were handles—which were either too big aesthetically or too small functionally. There is a point where these two aspects meet and the potter's job is to find it. The lids were shaped nicely outside but inside most of them little attention had been



paid to the fact that internal shape must match the external. In almost all of them, the rims were very bad, yet the rim is the most important part of a casserole—it holds the lid and aesthetically can ruin the whole shape.

**Estelle Martin — Hastings** just to mention one, had two casseroles, very nice with in form, reasonable decoration but very poor rims.

**John Fuller — Feilding** had three sculptural forms which he calls pots but which were less. Technically they were well executed with good sculptural balance and a bit unnecessary touch of glaze here and there. One was bought by the Canterbury Museum.

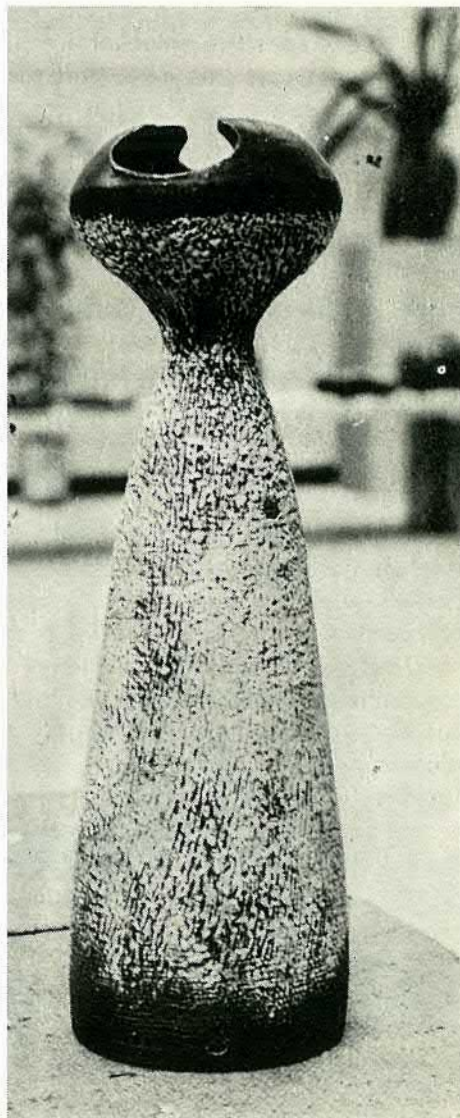
**Brian Gartside — Auckland** exhibited two stoneware vessels with strong sculptural accent. Those were again technically well executed, robust and warm in form but the glaze which he applied ran in trickles and patches down the pots, completely ignoring and contradicting the form. Sculptural pots demand more uniform glazes so that nothing distracts us from the form itself.

**David Brokenshire — Christchurch** had two exhibits—Anchor Stone and Chasm. In fact, two sculptural forms executed in clay by coiling. They did radiate inner movements and joy of working in clay without over-indulging in it, well glazed, with matt iron slip so that the form was easily seen.

**Nola Barron — Christchurch** exhibited two plates and two ceramic forms. Both ceramic forms were purely sculptural in concept and every plane and line was worked on. One unglazed, the other glazed with a simple matt glaze so that there was no glaze obstruction to the form.

Nola did not attempt to rely on glaze appeal or clay appeal, the trap into which many ceramic sculptors often fall. These two forms could be an object lesson to the intending ceramic sculptor.

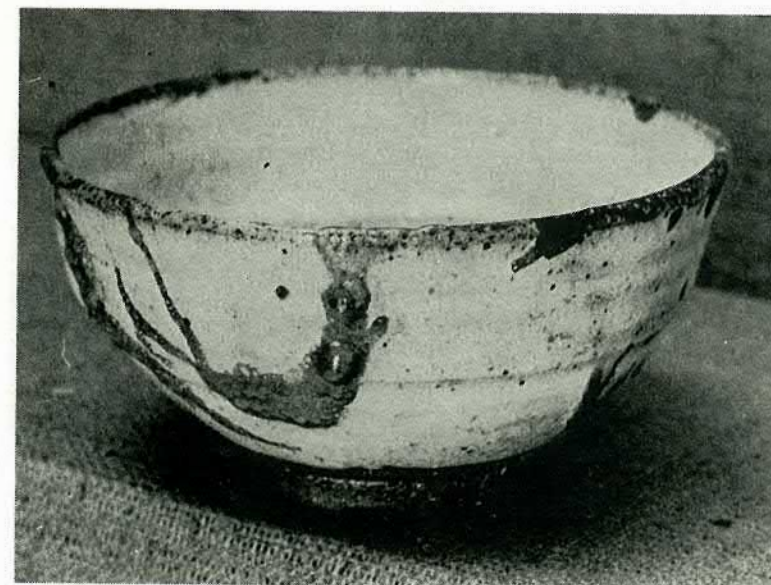
*John Fuller*



*Bowl,  
Len Castle*

**Len Castle — Auckland** had six pots, all good ones, but I did not feel them all to be recent ones. No that that matters much, but if the white bowl (1) is a recent one and if that is the newest direction in which Len Castle intends to go, then in the future we are going to see many more beautiful pots to come, un-

**Crewenna — Nelson** with eight pots, had their usual good level of craftsmanship with two exceptionally good pots. One was a small bowl (9) excellent in form and even better in decoration and a dish (11) with incised delicate decoration. The bread crock was less appealing in form, somehow cumbersome, but what really surprised was the wax-resist decoration over the finger marks. The fingermarks, particularly the heavy ones do create a decoration on their own and if we apply another decoration on top of them we finish with two decorations fighting each other and negating each other.



Photos: G. Christian

matched by anything in the past. I will not analyse this bowl as I feel it is fully integrated in all its aspects.

**Warren Tippet — Coromandel** had eight exhibits, one being a twenty-piece lunch set. There is no question of Warren's skill, he excels in it, but a form of eclecticism is obvious in his work—the forms

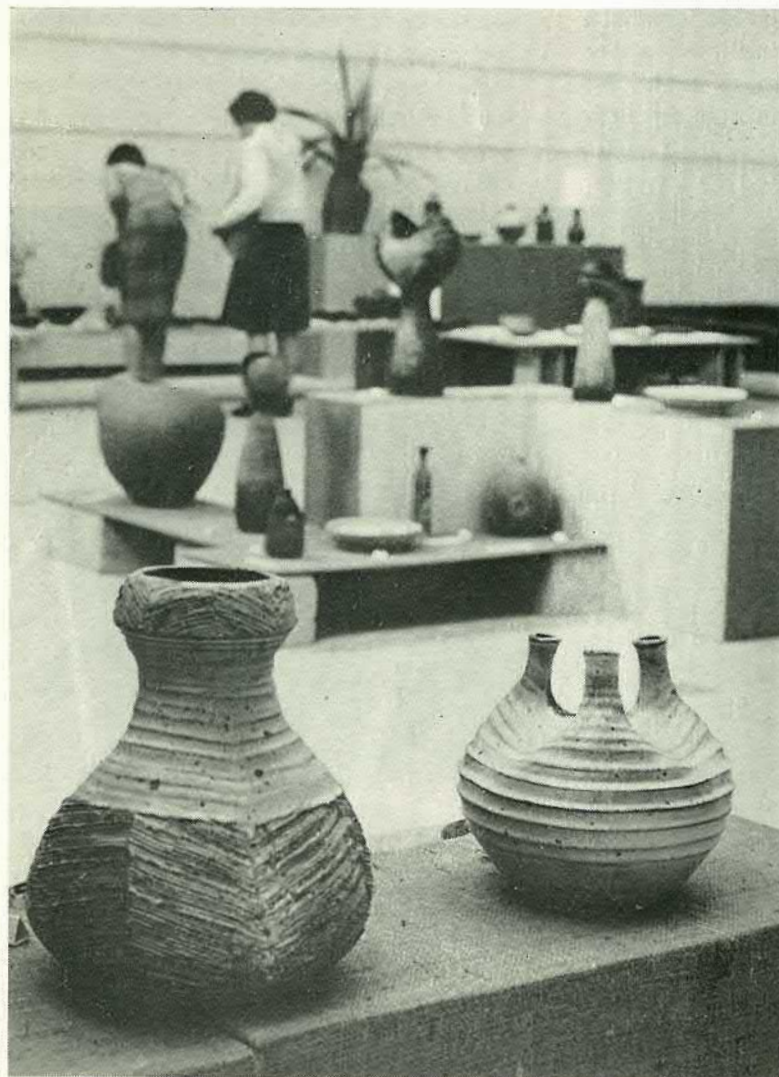


and surfaces embodying values upheld by others. Where does that lead? It is not for me to judge.

A large blossom jar was bought by the McDougall Art Gallery.

Considering the time and space I had, I think I did my best. I have missed

many potters who should rightfully be mentioned, but I had to select those whose work offered me the best chance to say something by either their good or weak points. I have tried to stay on the objective line of good and bad and not to wander into the subjective; I like or I dislike.



*General view of exhibition, with pots by Warren Tippett in foreground.*

Photo: G. Christian



The magnitude of the problem, as selectors see it. The photo above shows the 13th Exhibition (at Auckland in 1969) before selection.

Below. Selectors, 1971, at Christchurch. Warren Tippett, Len Castle, and Harry Davis.

Photo:  
Nola Barron





# A POWER WHEEL

By Roy Cowan

Most electric wheels built for studio potters are made to duplicate the infinitely variable speed characteristic of the treadle wheel. In my experience the availability of three or four set speeds permits the making of all classes of ware from small items formed at high speed to terrace jars coiled and thrown at traditional slow wheel speed, without inconvenience. The drawing sets out those parts of the construction peculiar to the method of driving the wheel, in a form suited to construction with home workshop tools.

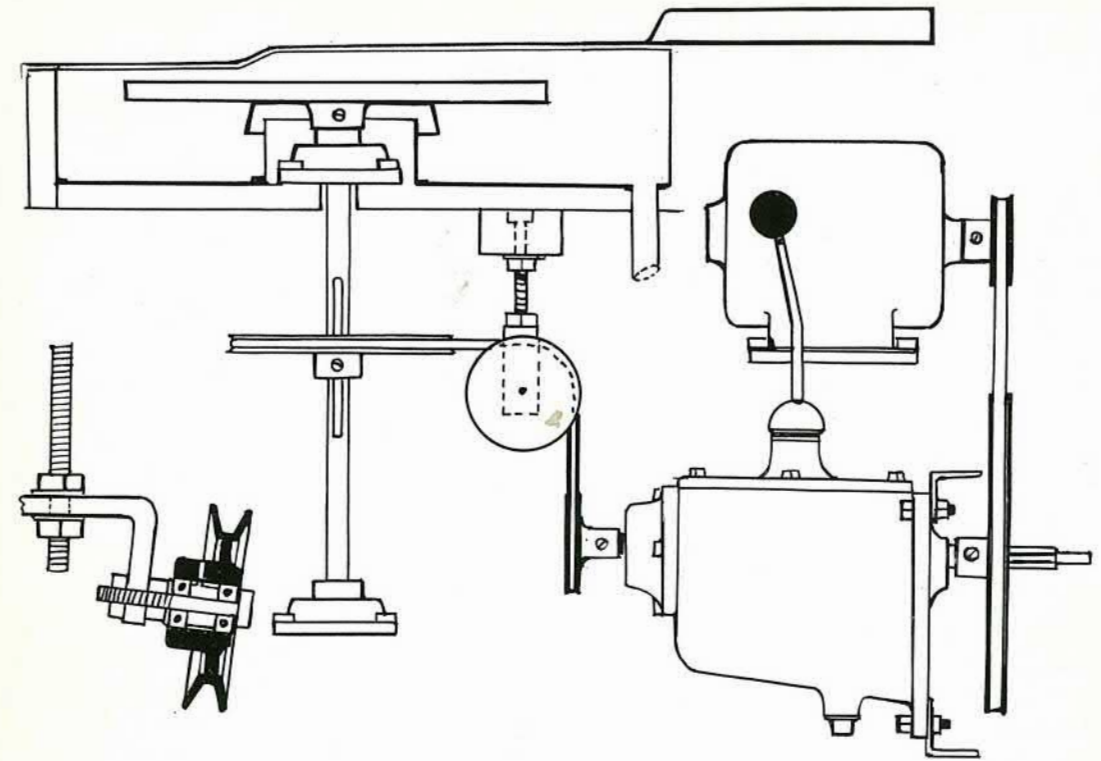
The 'furniture' part of the wheel may be made in steel or more probably wood, in a low format or to bench height, a minimum height for the 'engine room' being sixteen inches or so. The space around the wheel head should be sufficient to pass the closed fist without jamming between the wheel head and the body of the wheel. The sides of the sump should rise just far enough above the wheel head to intercept liquid thrown off at speed, about one and a half inches, curved down to three quarters of an inch on the angles marked by the forearms when centring. The sump is lined with 24 gauge brass sheet. The parts are cut and tacked with brass or copper brads, then the seams are soldered. A rounded aluminium moulding is fixed to the rim with countersunk screws. The lining should include an upstand around the top wheel bearing and on the under side of the wheel head an overlapping splash guard which can be made from a spun aluminium bowl. A

one inch copper or brass drain pipe may be soldered in place to take off excess slip to a bucket.

The wheel shaft is of three quarter inch shafting with a flat filed at the level engaged by the set screw of the pulley. The top and bottom bearings shown are Unit Flanged Housings, SKF type FYC 012

A  $\frac{1}{4}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  H.P. motor, 1440 r.p.m., is required, and a gearbox. Any light car box, three or four speed, of the type which bolts to the flywheel housing, may be used, provided the shafts are of one inch or lesser diameter. The example has conventional floor change, but some column change types which have a single lever are adaptable. The unit should be drained and cleaned, and be refilled with a much lighter grade of oil when installed. A ten-inch pulley is fitted on the input side, and a three inch on the other, sleeves being used if necessary to obtain a firm fit on the shaft. Framing, possibly of two inch by 3/16 inch angle steel as suggested in the drawing will be required to bolt the gear box in place. The gear box need not be on the centre line but it must be aligned on the wheel shaft.

To transfer the belt drive through 90° from gearbox to wheel shaft an adjustable yoke carrying two idler pulleys, which must lie at an angle to secure a fair run for the belt, is fitted. The yoke shown is made from one inch by  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch steel. The pulleys, which must run freely, may come from a boating supplier, or 2½ inch pulleys may be used. The enlarged



detail suggests a way of running these on small ball bearings such as Ransome & Marles type KLNJ  $\frac{1}{4}$  which fit into a  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch bore.

The motor is fitted to permit adjustment for correct belt tension the drawing is schematic and the motor may be alongside the gearbox. The final drive belt is of  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch round hide, obtainable from belting suppliers. It is cut to length and joined with a special clip or by threading with linen. Tension is adjusted by moving the yoke up, adjusting the pulley on the wheel shaft to correspond. Neither belt need be tight. Provided that one may centre a large block of clay without slipping, tension should be such that the wheel can be stopped when firmly grasped, without

stalling the motor.

If the motor pulley is of 2 inch, the gearbox first of 10 inch, and second, 3 inch, and the shaft pulley, 6 inch, the overall ratio will be 10 to 1, about 140 r.p.m., with a low speed of about 30-40 r.p.m. These are comfortable speeds for making small to medium sized wares, but for large diameter coiled objects lower ratios may be arranged by changing a pulley. Reverse has its uses, should twist appear in a large pot.

The gear shift lever should be reworked to bring it out of the side, or alternatively it can be brought through the top behind the sump in which case a gaiter to prevent splashes draining downwards should be fitted.



# Oriental pottery

## in private collections

By Doreen Blumhardt

Collectors of art objects around the world, are a special kind of human being, often they are philanthropists who have done a great service to mankind in many ways, but a disservice in other respects. By this I mean that many fine artifacts have been saved from destruction, because someone liked them and recognised their worth, the pleasure they could give to countless people and their importance in preserving the heritage of the country of origin. Many museum collections have been started by bequests from private collectors.

But at the same time, collectors have deprived countries of their own treasures. In some ways it is of course a pity that many countries have not valued and kept the best of their own art, but have allowed it to be thieved or sold to collectors or museums in other countries.

Collectors in foreign countries have been prepared to pay very high prices for a Budha head, a Chinese Sung vase or a Japanese screen which has encouraged the poor or unscrupulous to cut the head off a stone image in a temple, or rob a tomb of its ceramic treasure.

In times of war there is often a flow of artifacts out of a country, which turn up in dealers shops in many parts of the world. Cambodia is a country from which much looting of treasure is going on now.

In Bangkok I was able to buy from a dealer, some magnificent specimens of

14th Century khmer pottery, each equal or better to anything of its kind I have seen in museums in and out of Cambodia. This particular dealer had a considerable stock of such pots, which I understand have very recently found their way across the border.

Collecting oriental art has become an obsession with some, who do it only because it is a fashion, and who have little love for or understanding of the things they collect. However, on my recent travels around the world, I had the priceless opportunity of visiting some outstanding private collections whose owners have great knowledge and a sincere love of the oriental artifacts they have collected. One of these is **Paul Bernat** in Brooklyn, Mass. who is only incidentally, a patron in the traditional sense, he is far more likely to collect works of art for his own enjoyment, so that his collection reflects as much of himself as it does of the time and place in which he lives.

One can only say that his collection has a luxurious fineness. It is not a large collection but each piece in it is of rare quality. Paul Bernat himself is a warm friendly person, who loves nothing more than to show his collection and talk about it to anyone showing a genuine interest. As he talked with me telling about each piece, it was quite obvious that he loved these treasures as friends, and this is



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FROM THE COLLECTION OF DOREEN BLUMHARDT

### 1. SUEKI PILGRIM BOTTLE

*Natural ash glaze. 28 cms. Japan approx. 4th Century A.D.*

### 2. SILLA POTTERY, KAYA AREA.

*Unglazed. 50 cms. Korea. 6th Century A.D.*

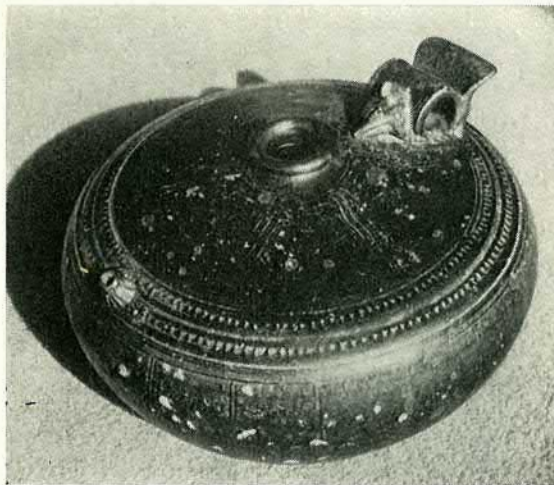
### 3. SILLA POTTERY, KYONGJU.

*Unglazed. 20 cms. Korea 6th Century A.D.*

the way the collection was built up. He buys an object because he likes it, and does not acquire it simply because it is rare. In his Brookline home set in several acres of land and surrounded by trees is one of the finest collections of 18th Century Chinese porcelain in the world.

Being closely associated with the Boston Museum of Fine Arts he says he learned much from it, and his wife is today a trustee. Mr. Bernat has been generous with his treasures and has donated some





4. KHMER POTTERY.

Dark brown glaze. 24 cms. Cambodia. 14th Century



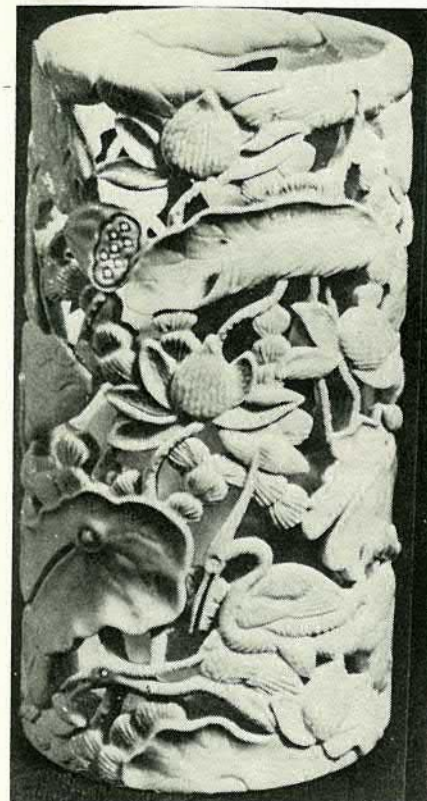
5. KHMER POTTERY.

Dark brown glaze. 23 cms. Cambodia. 14th Century.

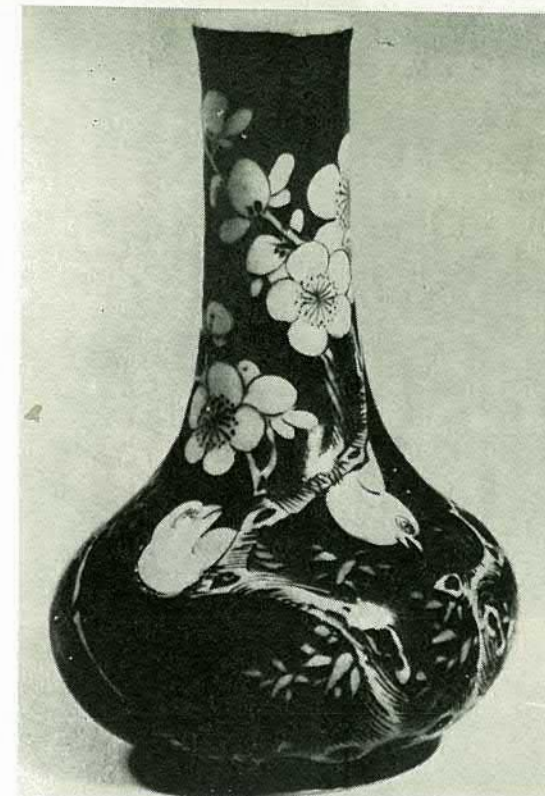
to the Boston Museum, in particular a set of rare sepia pieces of which only one example now remains in his own collection. He has chosen limits for himself and does not buy anything earlier than 1700 or so, consequently he is most discriminating and does not seek large objects. His shelves are filled with small and exquisite pieces of Ching Dynasty porcelains, a century in which Chinese civilisation strengthened its ties with Europe after the fall of the Ming Dynasty. The finest Ching porcelains came from the Imperial Porcelain Factory at Ching-Te-Chen in the province of Kiangsi on the trade route from Nanking to Canton, and many examples of high quality may also be found in the **Museum in Taiwan** which houses the collection from Imperial kilns taken there when Chang Kai Shek fled the mainland.

The porcelains in the Bernat collection and in the Taiwan Museum and in the **Sir Percival David collection at the London University** (I believe the finest collections of this kind of pottery) are quite different in quality, design and glazing from those made especially for export, and which have been found in graves and tombs in many countries.

One important collection of Chinese export ware I visited in Manila, is that of **Leandro and Cecilia Locsin**. He is a very busy and well-known architect and she is an archaeologist. In the basement of their magnificent modern home in Forbes Park, are several thousand pieces of the finest of Chinese export ware of the Pre-Spanish period in the Phillipines. This basement consists of room after room, all airconditioned, whose walls are lined with glass fronted cases, filled with pottery



6



8

FROM THE COLLECTION OF PAUL BERNAT

6. **PIERCED BRUSH HOLDER**  
Chinese. 18th Century Ching Dynasty.

7. **WHITE PORCELAIN VASE**  
Chinese. 18th Century Ching Dynasty.

8. **PORCELAIN VASE**  
Chinese. 18th Century Ching Dynasty.



7





9. PORCELAIN BOWL  
*Chinese. 18th Century Ching Dynasty.*

FROM THE COLLECTION OF  
LEANDRO AND CECILIA LOCSIN

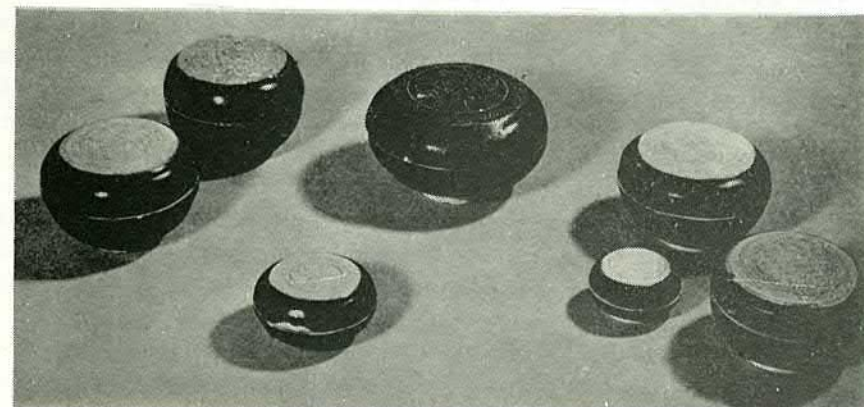
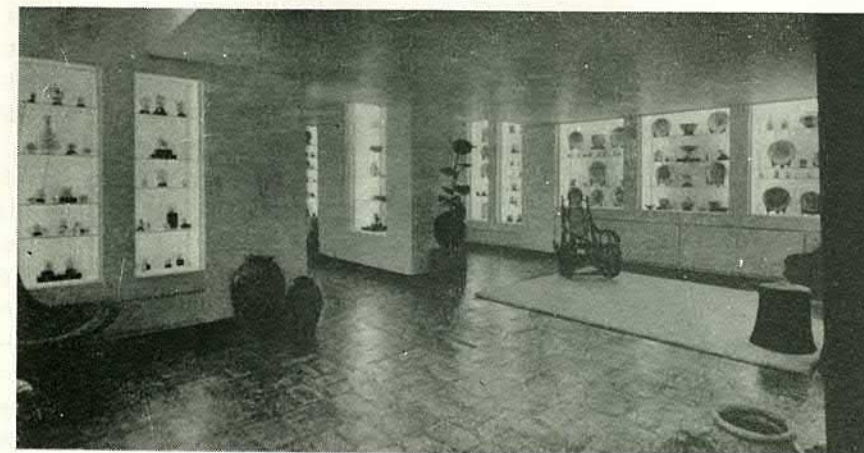
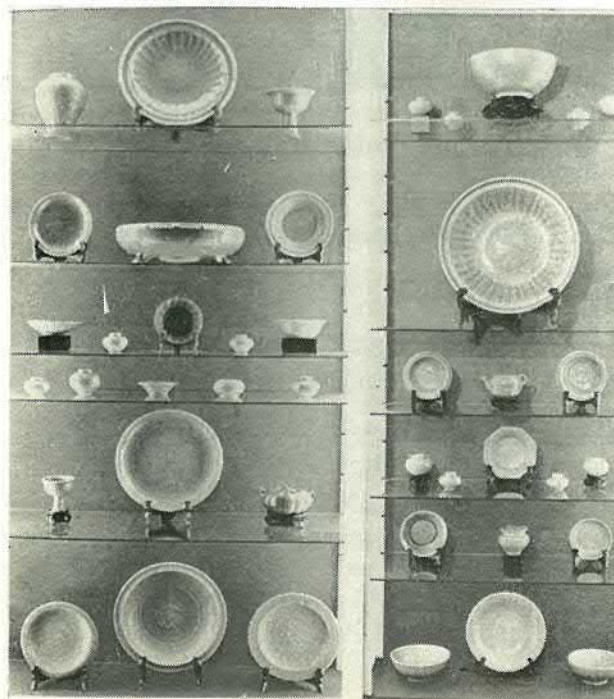
10. LOCSIN BASEMENT  
*Examples of Chinese celadons found in the Philippines.*

11. LOCSIN BASEMENT  
*Five cases at far right contain Siamese ceramics. At extreme left early Chinese blue and white, and spotted white wares.*

12. LOCSIN COLLECTION  
*Covered boxes. Siamese 14th. to 15th Century.*

13. LOCSIN COLLECTION  
*Attributed to Chinese 10th to 13th Tang type glazes still made during Sung dynasty.*

14. LOCSIN COLLECTION  
*Globular vessel with wide mouth 18 cms. high. 14th to 15th Century. Black-brown glaze. Body is coarse grey stoneware which fires a dark violet red where exposed.*



Photos from:  
ORIENTAL CERAMICS  
DISCOVERED IN THE  
PHILIPPINES  
By Special Permission





all carefully labelled and excellently lit. The pottery is not only Chinese, but some cases contained Annamese and Swankholok pieces of rare quality, and excellent preservation. As well, they have some fine large funerary urns, and other small and large unglazed pots made in earlier times in the Phillipines.

To form their collection they did not wait to buy on the market, or through dealers, but they have dug much of it themselves in different parts of the Philippine Islands. The first recorded excavations of a burial site was in the Santa Ana district of Manila, initiated by the Locsins in 1961. This site at the back of the church of Santa Ana, has been roofed over and kept as a museum with the skeletons and some of the pottery left where they were found. In this one area alone over 200 graves were excavated, and approximately 1500 pieces of Chinese Sung Dynasty pottery was discovered. From the discoveries it has been found that Chinese trade pottery reached the islands in great numbers for a period of approximately 1,000 years.

The Locsin collection contains pouring vessels, jars and jarlets (squat, eared and lobed) kendis, covered jars, large and

small plates, everted and inverted bowls, vessels in the form of birds and animals, stemmed cups, miniature bottles, figurines, gourd shaped vessels, and a host of others.

My love for things oriental has developed much more deeply during my recent trip around the world. There is no doubt that oriental ceramics have a quality and charm, a subtle sensitivity of form unsurpassed by anything in Europe. It is significant that Chinese porcelains for hundreds of years have influenced Europe most especially during the 17th and 18th centuries when the fashion for Chinoiserie hit that part of the world.

I too have not been able to resist the temptation to collect, and am pleased to have had the opportunity of bringing back to New Zealand Swankhalok, Annamese, Chinese Sung and Yuan, several 14th Century Khmer pieces, a magnificent Silla dynasty Korean pot on a tall stand, a Silla roof tile end, and most treasured of all a Japanese pilgrim bottle of the Sueki period. These pieces were acquired in in Bangkok, Manila, Korea, Hong Kong and Japan, where, although they are no longer cheap, they are still be found at reasonable enough prices.

## Another mans poison

### RISKS FROM LEAD GLAZES

By Nigel Harris

Wilf Wright, Secretary of the New Zealand Potters' Guild, sent the following letter to the Dominion, published July 6th 1971.

Sir,

The superintendent of food standards in the public health division of the Health Depart-

ment, Mr. H. W. Carter, warned the public in an article in the Dominion about the dangers of using pottery for domestic use which has been glazed with low solubility lead glazes.

While the N.Z. Potters' Guild agrees that the public should be warned of the dangers of raw lead glazes we feel the public should be made equally aware of the fact that most

professional potters in this country use the high firing technique of stoneware and fire these clays at temperatures ranging from 1250-1350 deg. C. No lead of any kind or material of any type, that would have a toxic effect is used in these glazes.

The guild is especially concerned therefore with Mr. Carter's statement that "cottage industry potters use it (lead) but high firing temperatures were always used in factories". The guild consists of professional potters who mainly work as individual "artist craftsman potters" and do not operate factories, yet they are firing at temperatures generally far in excess of that used by industry.

The main concern in this country would be with the work of inexperienced amateurs and with some low fired imported pottery that has been on the market in this country for some time. The guild was concerned with this problem of low-fired lead glazed pottery from overseas and endeavoured to bring it to the notice of the Health Department in a letter sent to the Medical Officer of Health for Wellington in March of this year.

While it is conceivable that some inexperienced amateurs might use low fired low solubility lead glazes on domestic ware, no professional and certainly no members of the N.Z. Potters' Guild would do so.

WILF WRIGHT,  
Secretary,  
N.Z. Potters' Guild.

The Health Department told the Potter that in view of recent alarm about lead poisoning from the use of handmade pottery containers, it was their duty to warn the public of the risks. It was, however, not pursuing an eradication campaign since it believed that the answer to the problem lay with the potters themselves.

While we agree with the statements in Wilf Wright's letter, just what comfort is this to even a discriminating buyer of pottery? With the professional potters being unable to fully supply a sellers market for handmade pottery in New Zealand,

a proportion of the ware sold in craft shops originates from low firing electric kilns operated by enthusiastic amateurs. Most of these potters obtain their earthenware glazes by mail order from the catalogues offered by firms who sell ceramic glazes. Inquiries made by the Potter of a leading merchant reveal:

- nearly all glazes sold are to handcraft potters
- most of the glazes are known to contain lead
- other glazes are imported from manufacturers who are not prepared to divulge the secrets of their glaze recipes. Many of these probably contain lead
- when glazes known to contain lead are sold, no danger warnings are given.

The obvious conclusion to be drawn from the comments above, is that some of the pottery sold in shops is potentially hazardous to the health of the consumer. It is from the hobbyist potters of limited experience, that most of the potentially hazardous, and furthermore often aesthetically sub-standard pots are produced. Those who have encouraged the enthusiasts to get involved with clay, have helped create a consumer demand, at this stage still largely indiscriminating, for handmade pots. Because a glaze contains lead does not necessarily mean it is dangerous. If the total glaze recipe has been devised to reduce the solubility of the lead in the glaze to the safe levels recommended by various health authorities the pot can be used for any domestic purpose.

What is to be done about the health risk? A first reaction is to ban lead glazes, but the use of lead in low temperature glazes is as old as pot making itself and its continued use in spite of known health hazards speaks for the special visual and accommodating technical properties of this most traditional fluxing agent. To ban its use because of cases of



abuse would be to deny all potters of its virtues. The risks attached to the use of lead glazes should be fully explained in every consignment of such glazes sold by suppliers. This makes it essential that suppliers know the chemical composition of every glaze they sell—local or imported.

Another way of control, is by education, and it is up to instructors to be informed and pass on this information to their pupils. Mr. Barrett of the Department of Education, assures us that all supervisors going into art rooms at intermediate and secondary schools point out the hazards of using lead. We are not convinced that all instructors know enough.

Probably the narrowest point across the river which flows from potter to consumer is the point of entry into the shop. Craft shops have a responsibility to completely satisfy themselves that the pots they are offering for sale as food containers are entirely safe. To expect the consumer to judge the safety of a glaze before buying would be unrealistic. To place such reliance on the consumer could result in refusal to buy any earthenware at all.

Some craft shops are displaying a notice saying that none of their ware is glazed with lead. Their action in doing this can be commended in that it shows they have recognised that some responsibility lies with them. However if this type of action were to become general among craft shops, it would be effectively placing a ban on the use of lead in glazes under all circumstances; an action which the Potter believes to be too sweeping.

At this stage it is apparent that the Health Department and other government agencies concerned with pottery have adopted a fairly permissive attitude, in that there are no restrictions placed on the availability of lead glazes from glaze merchants. If a death occurred, as a result of the freedom from controls presently being enjoyed, the pendulum could easily swing towards more harshly restrictive control or a complete ban.

If a joint committee representing say potters, glaze merchants, craft shops and the Departments of Health and Education were formed, it would seem a relatively easy task for it to devise simple controls to take the hazards out of the current situation. This would then mean that the Health Department would not need to make public statements periodically on the risks inherent in lead glazed earthenware in order to feel that the Department is doing something about it. That these statements are ultimately harmful to the livelihood of all potters, whether they use lead glazes or not, is evidenced by Wilf Wright's justifiable action in writing to the Dominion.

Test for lead solubility

Accurate quantitative tests for lead solubility are complicated and expensive, but the following test, published in 'Pottery in Australia', will serve as a guide.

Materials:

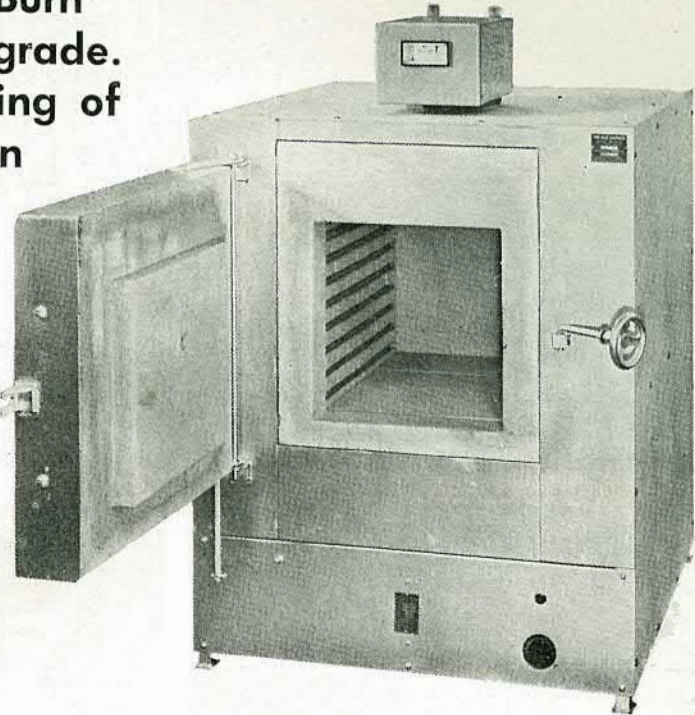
- 4 ozs white vinegar.
- 1/8 teaspoon liver of sulphur (from local chemist)
- 2 clear glasses, same shape and size.

Procedure:

1. Put 2 ozs. of vinegar in the test pot and soak at room temperature for 12 hours.
2. Dissolve the liver of sulphur in 2 ozs. hot water.
3. Place the test vinegar in one glass and equal amount of fresh vinegar in the other.
4. Put 2 teaspoons of the sulphur solution in each glass.
5. A white cloudy precipitate will form in the fresh vinegar.
6. If the test vinegar precipitate is tinged tan or brown, there are heavy metals present, and the glazes deserve more accurate analysis before using on the inside of any container.

It goes without saying that raw lead in the studio should be labelled as such, marked poison, and locked away. During use the area should be well ventialed and hands should be washed carefully before eating or even smoking.

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SPECIFICATION	MODEL K2	MODEL K3	MODEL K4
Dimensions Internal	15" w. x 15" h. x 18" deep	15" w. x 15" h. x 24" deep	15" w. x 24" h. x 20" deep
Dimensions External	34" w. x 42" h. x 31" deep	34" w. x 42" h. x 37" deep	34" w. x 50" h. x 33" deep
Capacity	2 cubic ft.	3 cubic ft.	4 cubic ft.
Max. Operating Temp.	1300 Centigrade	1300 Centigrade	1300 Centigrade
Electrical Rating*	230V. single or 3-phase 12 KW. (See Local Power Authority).	230 Volt single or 3-phase 12 KW.	230 Volt 3-phase 14 KW.
Temperature Control	Sunvic E.R.H. with Pyrometer or automatic.	Sunvic E.R.H. with Pyrometer or automatic.	Sunvic E.R.H. with Pyrometer or automatic.
Time to reach max. Temp. (Empty)	4 hours	4 1/2 hours	5 hours
Thermo/couple. Elements	Platinum Plat-Rhodium Kanthal A1 grade	Platinum Plat-Rhodium Kanthal A1 grade	Plat. Plat-Rhodium Kanthal A1 grade
Element support tiles	High grade refractory	High grade refractory	High grade refractory

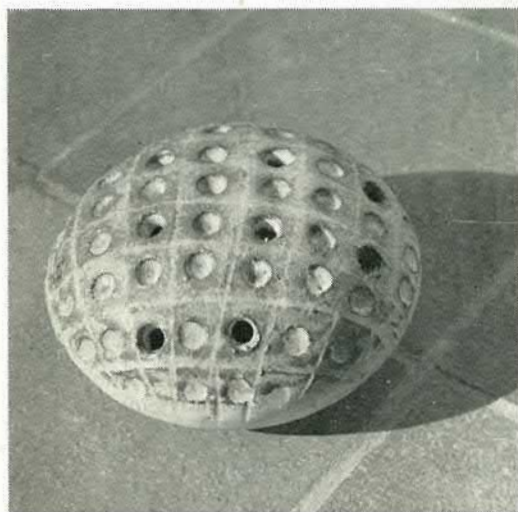
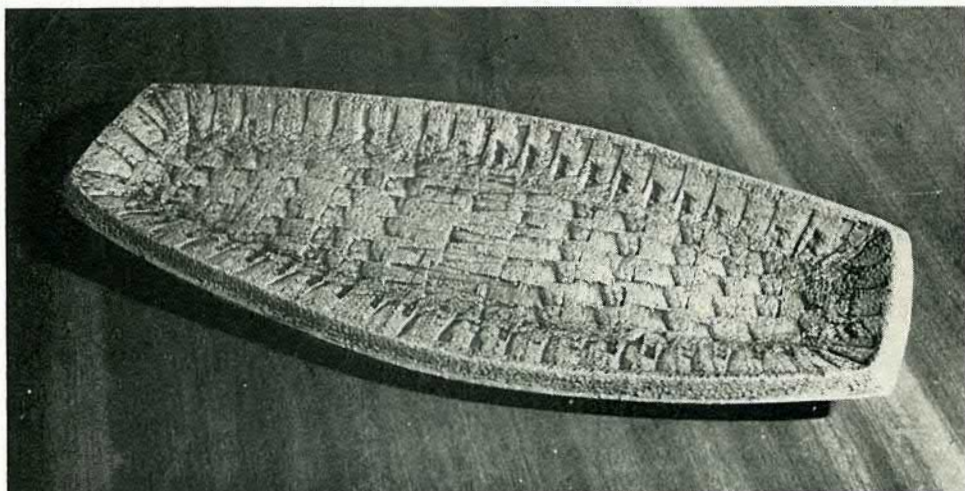
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## International success for Doris Dutch

A big entry of high quality works provided scope for strict selection, and those who had pots chosen for exhibition could regard it as a distinction, according to the international jury of judges for the 1970 International Concourse of Ceramic Art in Faenza, Italy. Doris Dutch had her pots accepted for this exhibition. She also had photos of them included in the catalogue.

Doris Dutch is essentially a New Zealand potter although her introduction to the craft was in Britain in the forties.

'I had been at Art School in England for several years before the pottery department opened nearly at the end of my training. I was enraptured by the sense of creativity when you put a shapeless lump of clay on the wheel and suddenly you have a pot?

I vowed I would come back to it, but did not get the opportunity until 1962 in New Zealand when I started going to evening classes. Almost immediately pottery became the most important interest in my life. After two years of evening class and two summer schools I was lucky to get into Len Castle's evening class. Len gave so much that I feel that I owe any success I have had, to him. He gave not only technical information, but a new way of seeing things. This does not mean that I ever consciously copied his work, though the techniques that he taught are bound to cause a superficial similarity. I believe that when a potter has mastered techniques, the work he does is a direct expression of his own personality. I hope this is true of my work.

My aim is only to make better pots. To have time and space to develop the ideas that come to me, and to perfect my craftsmanship, because there is always a better pot in my mind than the one that comes out of the kiln. Life is a constant and often frustrating climb towards that goal.

I have built two kilns, one from Roy Cowan's plan, at the school, (Rutherford High), and an adaptation of myself at home. Until then I managed with a small electric kiln and infrequent firings in the school kiln. My husband helps with the firings, and being an artist is an excellent and stringent critic.'

'Other potters may like to submit work for this exhibition held annually in Florence. There are certain hazards in sending work from as far away as New Zealand, mainly in determining how soon in advance to send by sea to be sure of getting there in time. (Months). Makers of small objects, would be able to use airfreight and minimise this difficulty. Editor.'

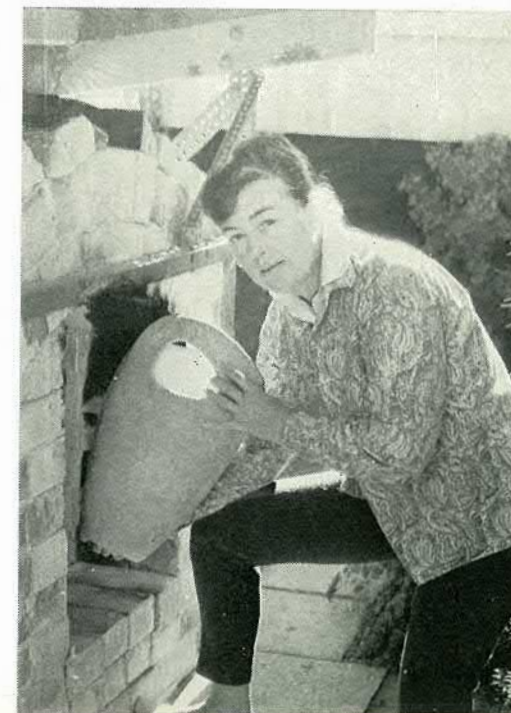
### Doris Dutch

Born London. Studied art at S.W. Essex Technical College School of Art. Commercial artist and teacher of art and craft at evening class. Came to New Zealand 1951. Started potting 1962 and 1964 onwards gave evening classes first in weaving, then in pottery.

Exhibited with N.Z. Society of Potters, in two-man shows with artist husband Ted Dutch, in World Craft Council Asian exhibition 1970 and International Concourse of Ceramic Art, Faenza, Italy, 1970. She has this to say of her work.

'Although it was the wheel that first attracted me to pottery, now my most satisfying form of expression is hand-made work. Sources of inspiration are varied—from prehistoric pottery and clay tablets, medieval costume, computer patterns, cell structures, rock forms, details of plant forms and seed pods, in fact every facet of life, but not consciously copied. Often I make the object and then later recognise its derivation.

Being short sighted I'm more interested in small things observed closely, than in large scale projects.'





bronwynne cornish  
and her

'china  
cabinet  
ceramics' —

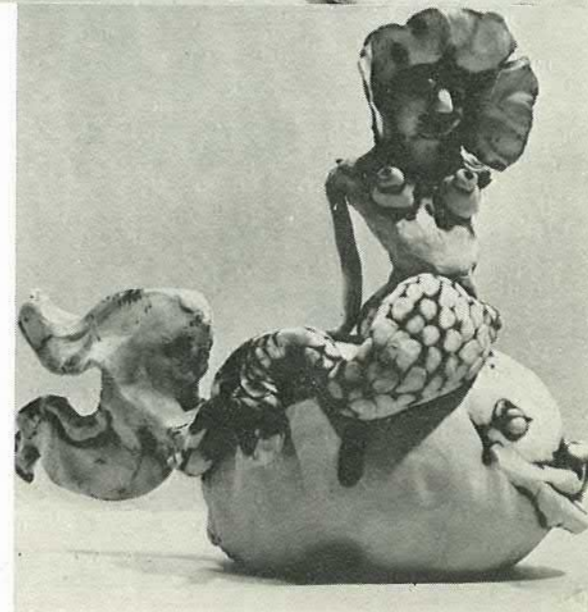


So Bronwynne Cornish described her collection of witty ceramic creatures. To be enjoyed by those with a sense of fun — and possibly detested by people who like their pottery to come straight.



Photos Leon Hamlet

— at  
new vision gallery  
auckland, july 1971





## In Wellington: exhibitions

### DENYS HADFIELD AT ROTHMANS IN JUNE

"I am always serious about anything I do," said Denys Hadfield, and the determination that made him a prominent jockey has now made him a potter.

Denys first became interested in art through John Coley a Christchurch artist, and attended his classes for two years. He realised that it would be difficult to become a recognised artist without starting from the bottom and having the necessary training.

"I became interested in pottery as a medium to express art with," said Denys. "I joined Marion Mauger, and then went to Yvonne Rust. It was a very creative environment. I was still riding at that time,

but I realised I was going to have to make a change."

Miss Rust moved to the West Coast, so I set up my own pottery and kiln.

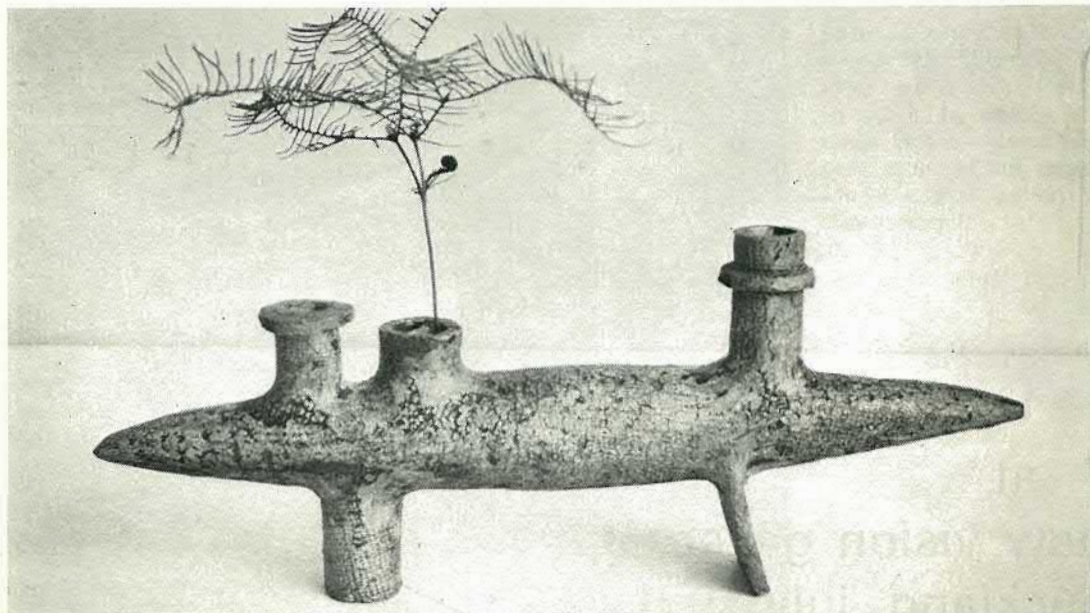
Then in 1968 I finally left racing and bought an old property in Amberly. My wife and I renovated the old house and we do all our work there now." His wife, Gillian, helps in mixing glazes and with experimental work.

Next year they are hoping to go to Indonesia, where Denys has a brother who is a missionary. "We hope to learn a little about Asian culture," he said, "and about the work their artists are doing now."

From Evening Post review, June, 1971.

*Ikebana pot—Denys Hadfield.*

Photo: Ans Westra



## Not just another sale of work

**Yvonne Rust and West Coasters  
exhibition at Rothmans Gallery,  
Wellington, May, 1971.**

By Doreen Blumhardt

Photos Don Montgomery



'I am not a sophisticated person, so my pots cannot be sophisticated', is a statement Yvonne Rust made to me over lunch when she was in Wellington during her recent exhibition. On reflection I realised how absolutely true this is about Yvonne and her pottery. Like herself the pots are genuine, without gimmickry, and have this quality of springing from the earth with some of the soil and rocks still clinging to them. There is an almost childlike simplicity in the forms, and yet

the ruggedness of experience, for Yvonne is rich with creative ideas, which manifest themselves directly in what she makes. What struck me immediately as I viewed the exhibition, was the great variety of work, such as long stemmed wine cups, plates, large lampbases with impressed patterns, in fact small and large pots of many kinds, and her 'spice trees'—a number of corked spice containers all clinging together like cones on a pine tree. Other multiples were her planters which



A "spice tree"  
by Yvonne Rust



consisted of a number of small plant pots attached to a central core at various angles and when imaginatively planted, no doubt would look 'mighty' or 'smashing' or what ever the in-word is. Her fountains too were multiple and most original in concept showing clearly her love of water, which she says she enjoys so much, whether it is sea, or river, or



lake, or just a little stream in the garden.

I think my greatest pleasure of all was that here was a real exhibition not just another sale of work. She demonstrated this by gathering from the West Coast mosses and plants and many hundreds of small stones, and using them on a black background to set off the very carefully arranged pots. She had the vision and took the trouble to make the whole thing a design in itself.

Yvonne is an educator, and her generous, easy but strong character has had a lasting influence on many of her school pupils, on potters, and on other people with whom she comes in contact on the West Coast and elsewhere.

We could do with more Yvonne Rusts, dedicated as she is to helping others to find themselves, and to bringing creative activity into their lives.





# Yvonne Rust and colleagues

By Jeremy Commons

Photos: Don Montgomery



I do not remember when I have seen a more striking exhibition than this. From the moment one stepped into Rothmans' Gallery, one was aware of the visual excitement of a forest of pots rising out of an expanse of white pebbles, these pebbles themselves thrown into high relief by a background foil of black plastic. And from this immense central two-level table, the same visual excitement continued through a bold series of paintings in dark greens, browns and whites, through two live fountains, to all the side-tables, all linked into a heirarchical unity by the continued motif-like use of white quartz pebbles.

The longer one looked, the more one realised that this visual impact was nothing fortuitous or superficial but the carefully planned result of a consistent use of West Coast materials, textures and colours. Take Annette Kerr's paintings, still a little tentative in technique, they nevertheless caught and conveyed the sombre bush-colourings, grey-white glacial ice and clear white light of the West Coast, its land-patterns and the rapid movement of its rivers. On their own they might not have attracted great attention, but like so much in this exhibition they blended into a total impression—blended with the deep greens and browns of the grass-trees with which Yvonne crowned the pyramid of her central table—blended with the sombre but rich salt-glazes of so much of the pottery.

One of Yvonne's objectives in going to the West Coast was to find 'clays,



*Wine pots, by Hardy Browning*

grogs and glazes which, occurring naturally together, naturally run together'. This exhibition shows the result; strong work, bold in form, rough and rich in texture. A friend described it to me—vividly and without any thought of being derogatory—as 'peasant pottery'; and the design of many of the goblets and candelabra struck me as distinctly gothic, apt tableware for lusty mediaeval revels. Yvonne herself believes that when she leaves the West Coast at the end of this year her whole style of pottery will change, finding new forms and textures in a new environment..

Be this as it may, she leaves behind her a school of pottery which is unmistakably West Coast, as rugged as the landscape from which it springs.

Of her colleagues and pupils, those who to my mind stood out were Hardy Browning and Roger Ewer. The former, recognisably her pupil, nevertheless achieved

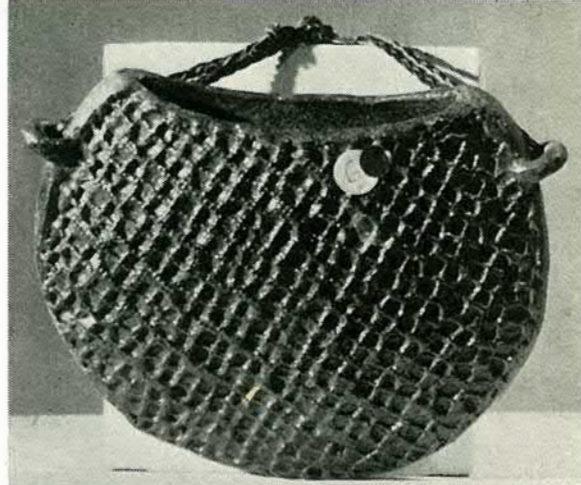
an individuality of his own, particularly in his wine-jars with their unusual hieroglyphic-like markings. Roger Ewer, with his lighter-coloured glazes and variety of deliberately cavalier forms, was independent of all influence but still recognisably a Coaster in his use of rough surface-textures.

Rugged workmanship in the pottery; delicate workmanship in the nephrite jade-carving of Bill Matheson and the bone-jewellery of Bill Hammond. The contrast from one art to the other was complete. It would require a review in itself to do justice to this carving; suffice it to say that in precision of workmanship, grace of design, and tastefulness of mounting (the nephrite on hand-plaited flax cords, the bone jewellery on slender chamois leather thongs) it achieved a standard which one can only wish were more widely emulated by the producers of mass





*Wine bottle, John Crawford.*



*Hanging vase, Nan Bunt.*

commercial jewellery.

My final word is one of reservation. I noticed that one of the most spectacular of Yvonne's items, a 'Satanic candlestick', did not sell. This was hardly surprising since it made no provision for catching the wax which would have dripped from every one of its myriad candles. The sockets on many of the other candelabra

were manifestly too shallow; and a friend informs me that she dare not pour her teapot anywhere but over the kitchen sink. This carelessness regarding function is, I am sure, part and parcel of Yvonne's happy-go-lucky joyousness of disposition—lovable in the person, but irritating in what was, after all, an exhibition of primarily domestic pottery.

## This is New Zealand

Those who saw the Expo '70 film, *This is New Zealand*, surely must have come away feeling uplifted. It put me in a happy frame of mind for the rest of the day and the images remained vivid for hours afterwards.

No nation with the ingredients of a strikingly beautiful clear-aired country, a young and healthy population, and above all with the talent to produce such a work of art as this film, need play second

fiddle to any European country. It should be compulsory viewing for all New Zealanders. A hundred and thirty thousand viewers in Wellington alone suggests that it almost was.

Maybe film making is one of the things we can do well. Its comparatively easy to make a low budget film in black and white on a limited subject and call it art. But to do it in colour with appeal to everyone is art indeed.

M. M. H.

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18 Maitre Street,  
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## SUBSCRIBERS

In this issue of *Potter* we have inserted the usual subscription renewal slip for your early attention. May we say 'thank you', too, for the quick response we had from readers in 1970/71.

This was a tremendous help to us and for those of you who might feel concern at the time lapse before receiving your first copy, please be re-assured—*Potter* will arrive (unless it is for reasons quite beyond our control).

A small number of copies are available of the following back issues.

Vol. 7 No. 1.

Vol. 9 No. 2.

Vol. 11 No. 1

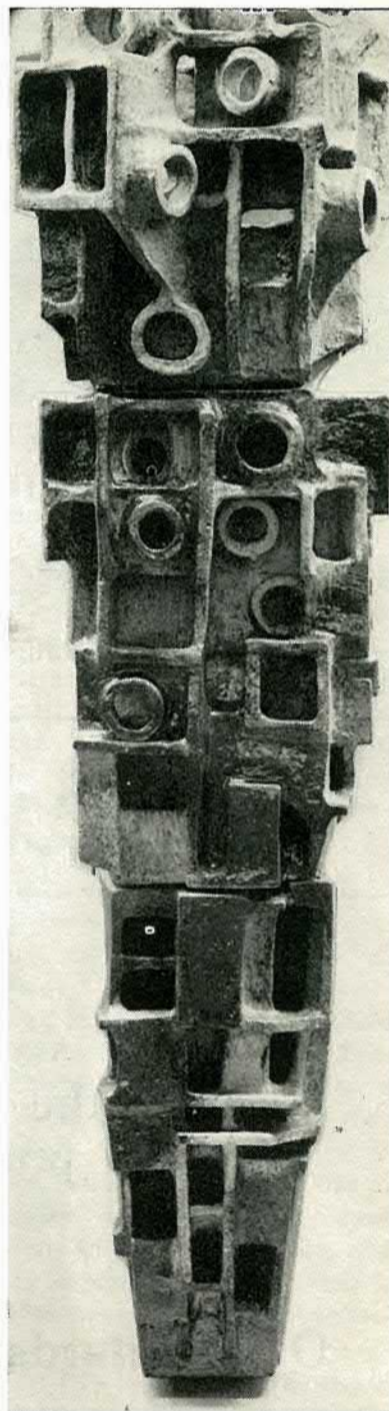
Vol. 12 Nos. 1 and 2.

Vol. 13 No. 1.

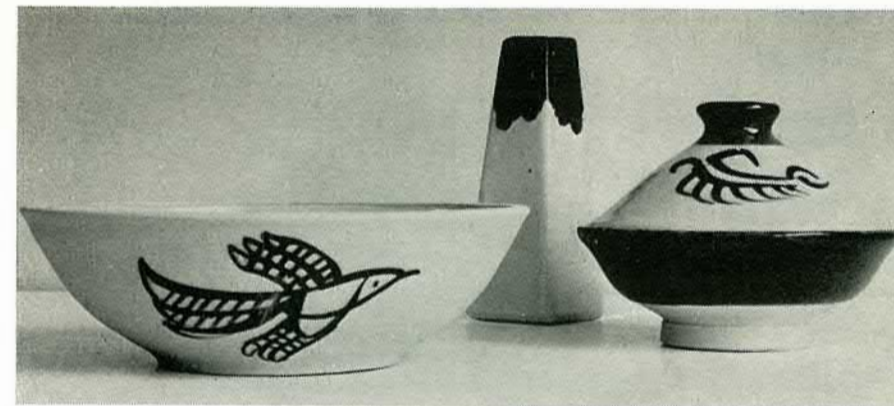
## Yet another exhibition —

Two *POTTER* work-horses, Roy and Juliet Cowan, held a joint exhibition in Rothmans Display Centre Gallery, Wellington, in September. This, and the following two pages illustrate current work.

*Lantern, 8 feet high, Roy Cowan.*



Photos:  
Ans  
Westra

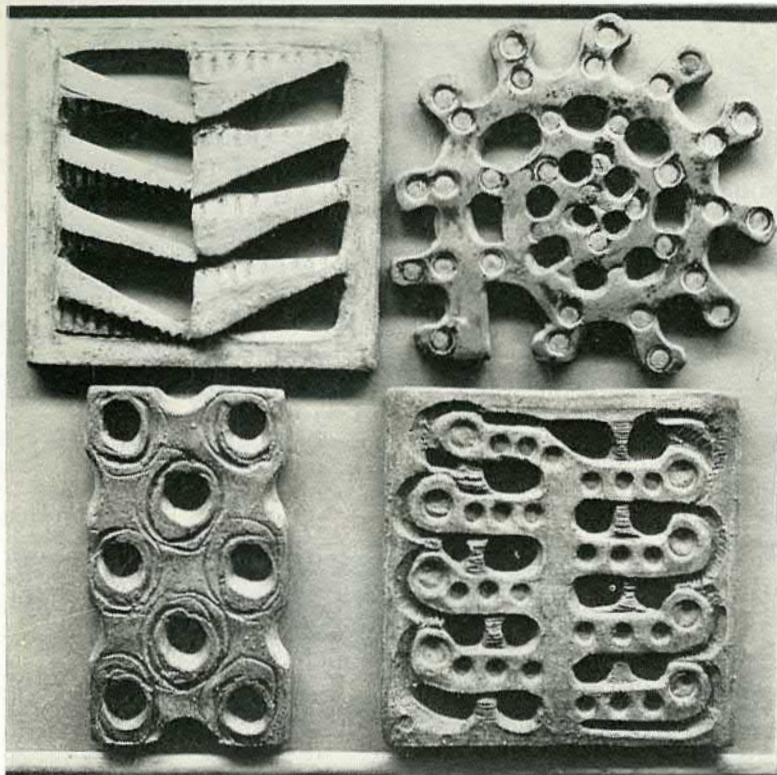


*Porcelain group, and white stoneware bowl, 20 inches in diameter, by Roy Cowan.*



*On the cover:  
'Ionic pot,'  
36 inches  
high.*





*From joint exhibition,  
Rothmans Gallery.  
Tile wall panel, 2 x 2  
feet square.  
Juliet Peter.*

*Fruit bowl, 17 inches in  
diameter.  
Juliet Peter.*



**Photos  
Ans Westra**



*Round branch pot,  
18 inches high.  
Juliet Peter.*

## Potters materials dissected and examined

The second article on the subject  
by J. R. Rooney.

The name is a corruption of the Chinese 'Kao-liang' meaning high ridge, a local designation for the area where the white china clay was found. The kaolins or china clays—the latter name often being reserved for the Cornish product, are white burning clays, generally of low plasticity and high refractoriness (cone 34 to 35) 1750-1770° C.). When mined they are rather siliceous e.g. of the Cornish clay rock only about 13 percent is extracted as china

clay, but after washing the chemical composition of the clay approximates to that of kaolinite; this mineral does in fact predominate in kaolins but others are present.

Many theories have been advanced about the conversion of feldspar to Kaolin. According to one theory igneous gases originating in the centre of the earth and containing superheated steam, boron and fluorine compounds, carbon dioxide etc., are the active agents.



This theory accounts for the deep deposits like the world famous ones in Cornwall and West Devon, the depth of which is not known. The most famous European deposits are the Cornish ones, followed by those at Zettlitz, Kemmlitz, Bortewitz and Amberg. In the United States the main deposits lie in a band from Vermont to Georgia and up the Mississippi Valley, with a few scattered deposits in the west. Sedimentary deposits occur in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

China clay is usually used in glazes especially where a clear glaze is desired. In glazes containing a great deal of clay a proportion of calcined china clay may be added. This prevents excessive shrinkage which might otherwise result from a high percentage of raw clay. Because of its poor plasticity and high refractoriness it is difficult to shape into objects, therefore it is seldom used by itself. It is usual to add other materials to increase workability and lower fusion temperature. Some of the primary kaolins are much more plastic than others but tend to be darker burning. The English china clay is of unusual purity and is used where extreme whiteness is desired in the finished ware.

#### CORNISH STONE, CORNWALL STONE, CHINA STONE

A partly kaolinised potash and soda feldspatic rock containing feldspar, kaolin, mica, quartz and a small amount of fluorspar.

The main varieties being:

1. **Hard Purple.**

The most valuable with a high felspar content. The purple colour is due to fluorspar.

2. **Mild Purple.**

3. **Dry White,** with very low fluorspar content.

#### 4. Buff, contaminated with iron.

A typical analysis:

	%
SiO <sub>2</sub>	71.10
Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	16.82
Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	0.16
CaO	1.60
MgO	0.05
K <sub>2</sub> O	6.57
Na <sub>2</sub> O	2.29
CaF <sub>2</sub>	0.05
Ignition Loss	1.25

In Great Britain Cornish stone is commonly used where feldspar is used in other countries. Carolina stone marketed in America is of similar composition.

#### Cobalt Compounds

Cobalt compounds have been used since the early ages, being introduced to Chinese ceramics in the T'ang Dynasty, A.D. 618-906. The greatest development occurred during the Ming Dynasty A.D. 1368-1644.

Cobalt is still the principal blue colourant and though today's modern industrial techniques have produced zircon-vanadium blue which is even more stable at higher temperatures though not so intense, it is probable that cobalt will remain the main metal for producing blue ceramic stains.

The name cobalt is reported by Beckmann in the "History of Inventions" to have been derived from the experiences of miners in Saxony and Bohemia, who jestingly christened the then unwanted mineral with the name of the ghost Cobalus, the spirit who haunted the mines and frustrated the labours of the miners. Later the priests prayed in the churches for the protection of miners from spirits and kobalts.

	Formula	M.W.*	S.G.	M.P., °C.	Oxides Entering Fusion	M.W.	Conversion Factor
Cobalt Oxide (Black)	Co <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> .CoO	240.82	6	d.900	CoO	75	0.934
Cobalt Oxide (Grey)	CoO	75			CoO	75	1
Cobalt Carbonate	CoCO <sub>3</sub>	118.95	4		CoO	75	0.630

All three give blues in bodies, underglaze and coloured glazes. Very little is required (up to 1 percent) and the colour remains unchanged over a variety of firing temperatures and conditions so long as the atmosphere is oxidising.

Slightly yellow bodies may be made to appear white by adding about 0.01 percent cobalt in the form of its carbonate. Speckling easily occurs and the raw material should first be ground at 10-20 percent strength with clay and silica, brought to a fixed specific gravity and then added to the body in the blunger or ball mill.

#### Copper Compounds

##### COPPER CARBONATE CuCO<sub>3</sub>. Cu(OH)<sub>2</sub>

A poisonous green powder derived from by the ignition of copper carbonate or copper sulphate.

Molecular weight 221.17. Specific Gravity 4.

Decomposes at 200°C. Insoluble in water, decomposes in hot water and is soluble in ammonium hydroxide and most acids.

##### COPPER OXIDE (Cupric) CuO.

Molecular weight 79.57. Specific gravity 6.4, decomposes at 1026°C. Insoluble in water and soluble in acids and ammonium chloride. Derived by the ignition of copper carbonate or copper nitrate, or oxidation of lower oxides.

##### CUPROUS OXIDE (Red Copper Oxide) Cu<sub>2</sub>O.

Molecular weight 143, Specific Gravity 5, melts at 1235°C. Insoluble in water, soluble in acids and alkalis. Prepared by the oxidation of copper, by the addition of bases to cuprous chloride, or by the action of glucose on cupric hydroxide or upon copper scale.

Copper Oxide

Copper Carbonate

Oxidising conditions. Turquoise to green. Susceptible to quantity and nature of alkali and alkaline earth components and aluminium and boron content.

Reducing conditions reds and purples.

\* Molecular Weight. S.G., Specific Gravity.

Copper Oxide is rarely used as a body stain as it is easily leached out by the glaze.

Chinese red, sang de beouf, rouge flambee are produced in glazes maturing below cone 8 by the addition of 0.1 to 0.5 percent CuO in the presence of iron and/or tin oxides, the later must not exceed 1 percent and the kiln atmosphere must be reducing during the period after all the deposited carbon has burnt out until the glaze is sealed.

#### CRYOLITE, Sodium Aluminium Fluoride 3Na<sub>3</sub>

AlF<sub>6</sub> Composition, Na, 32.8 percent, Al, 12.9 percent, F, 54.3 percent. Molecular weight, 209.96, Specific Gravity 2.9, M.P. 1000°C. Hardness 2.5 Solubility in water at 25°C, 0.04g/100ml. Action of heat, transition from monoclinic to isometric or possibly cubic, 565°C. Melting point 1020°C.

Cryolite occurs primarily in Greenland and also Colorado and the Urals. Three grades of natural cryolite are marketed, the finest containing a minimum of 98 percent sodium aluminium fluoride with a maximum of 1.5 percent silica, 0.25 percent iron oxide, 1 percent lime. The two other grades have 93 to 94 percent cryolite and the iron oxide content not exceeding 0.75 percent.

Artificial cryolite is made in several European countries.

Used as a flux in lead and boron free glazes, in special glazes for crucibles, and as an auxiliary flux in certain pottery bodies, producing the characteristic alkaline colours. It should be fritted to avoid excessive blistering owing to the volatile fluorides produced in the reactions.

#### DOLOMITE, Calcium Magnesium Carbonate,

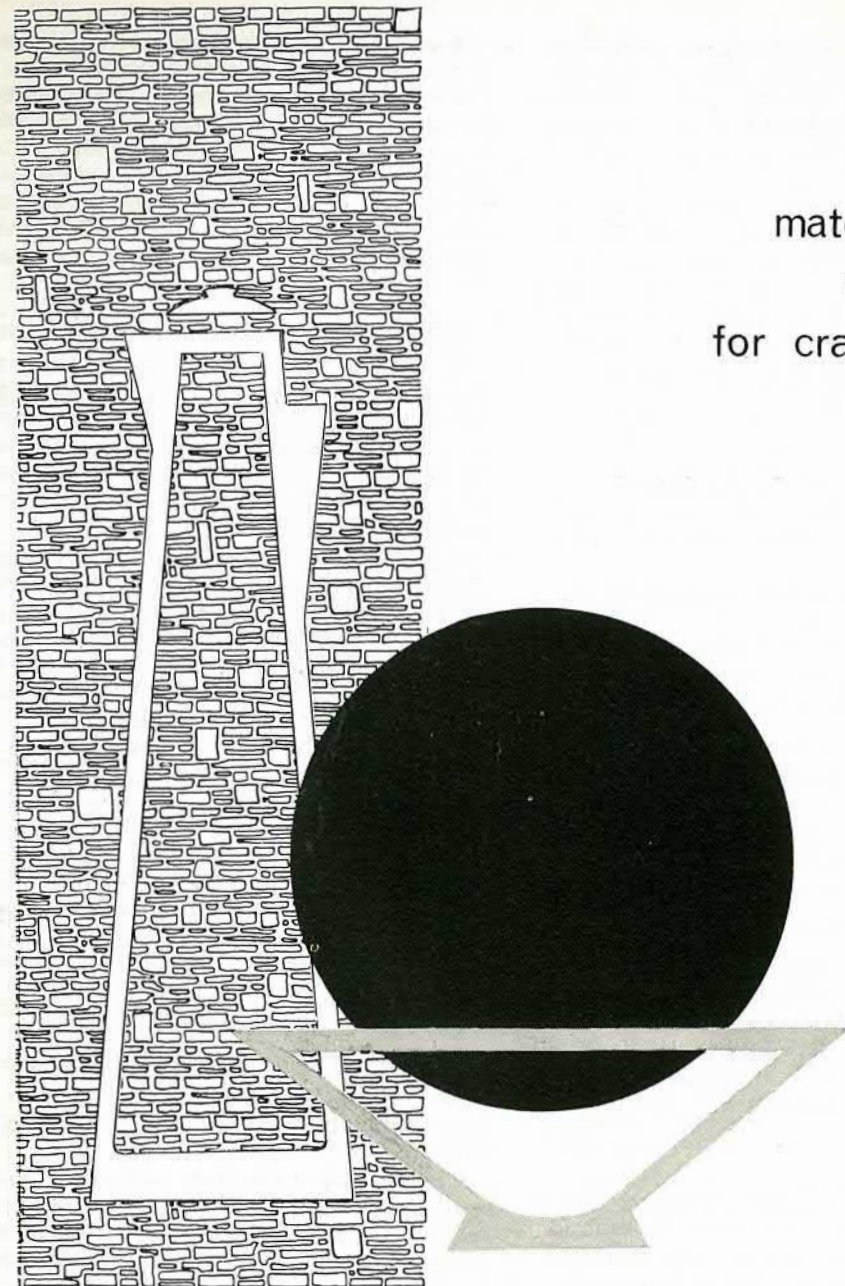
CaCO<sub>3</sub>, MgCO<sub>3</sub>. Specific Gravity 2.8-2.9 Hardness 2.5-4 Decomposes 500-700 and 800-1000°C.

Calcium and magnesium carbonates occur together in dolomite, in almost equal molecular quantities, CaCO<sub>3</sub>.MgCO<sub>3</sub> (56 percent CaCO<sub>3</sub> and 44 percent MgCO<sub>3</sub>) and also in dolomitic limestones which have 25 to 44 percent MgCO<sub>3</sub> and magnesium limestones with from 5 to 25 percent MgCO<sub>3</sub>.

Dolomite is found in primary deposits, having been formed in solution, and also in secondary rocks formed by alteration of limestones.



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### NEW MANAGEMENT

The Potter is delighted to announce the appointment of a new advertising manager. Yvonne Rust is to join the Editorial

Committee in this capacity. This will permit expansion, and an all-round dose of ginger.

### ANYBODY WANT A POTTER ?

To The Editor,  
New Zealand Potter.  
Dear Madam,

I am a potter, 25 years of age, currently living in California, and planning to emigrate to New Zealand.

I was wondering if you might know of any potters who would care to share their studio, or take on an experienced apprentice?

I have been making a living at my work for 2

years. Have studied at the University of California, and also while in the Peace Corps in Guatemala. And in various workshops. I have built 5 kilns by myself, and with other potters. My experience is primarily in cone 10-11 reduction.

I am hoping to have my papers accepted by December, and would be ready to come, hopefully, by the New Year.

Sincerely

LOUIS BOCK

12435 Alba Road,  
Ben Lomond,  
California, 95005, U.S.A.



# Teapots galore!

1. Len Castle, guest exhibitor.  
2. Jack Laird

3. Frederika Ernsen  
4. Jim Grieg



*an exhibition  
of Tea Pots*

*by*

*N.Z. Potters Guild*

*members*

*in the New Vision Galleries,*

*Auckland*

*June, 1971*



## A TEAPOT IS A TEAPOT

Some views. First for 'The Potter' by Trevor Bayliss, Curator of applied arts, Auckland Museum.

The New Zealand Potters Guild held its first exhibition recently at the New Vision Gallery.

In this exhibition they have used a theme, Teapots. This is no doubt to get away from the 'annual show of work' aspect of provincial and national exhibitions.

I suppose it is necessary to hold these group exhibitions and they do serve various purposes, but I do not feel that this exhibition has conferred any particular benefits on either the individual or the group.

Let me say at once that I don't consider a teapot one of the great aesthetic objects of the ages. I place it in the same bracket as ash trays, toilet bowls and salt shakers; so that perhaps I'm at a disadvantage in commenting on this exhibition.

I have no place on my shelves for a 'teapot that is not a teapot is not a teapot.' Tea is delicate liquid and so I expect its container to be either elegant like a Lucie Rie or cosily appealing like an Onda Valley pot; the spout should look as though designed to issue forth clear, amber, liquid, not soup. Functionally, of course the lid should not fall off at too slight an angle from the horizontal and it should not be an exercise in manual dexterity to take off the lid and fill the pot, as it is with Warren Tippet's very beautiful Tenmoku pot. I would welcome this pot in the Museum collection for its fluting, construction and

## The guild's first exhibition

glaze, but not as a teapot. His two other teapots were fine pots.

However, be that as it may, the only teapots in the exhibition that I had a yen to possess were those little 'Darlik' creatures of Helen Mason's—very vital little beasts beautifully glazed. They may, as one eminent critic said, 'spurt cascades into the saucer,' but I liked them.

Many of the teapots demonstrated all the faults I would expect in my own and similar work, but which I do not think should be seen in that of professional potters; clumsy heavy throwing, drooping wearied spouts, lids that don't fit, dreary glazes, and cane handles and fastenings more suitable for garden tools.

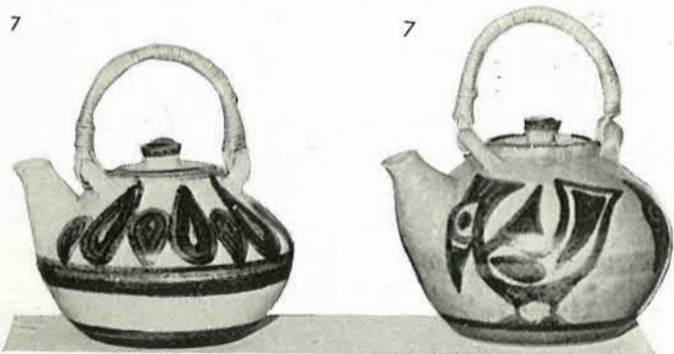
Mirek Smisek shows a group of craftsmanlike pots. He makes no mistakes and delivers a good teapot although for my liking, too heavy in the walls.

There are appealing elements of Gerald Greenwood's teapots but the work was fairly immature and too closely derivative. It is better to pass over in silence Brickell's pots. He gives the impression of a 'punch drunk' potter going through the motions. Barry can be a very good potter by any standards and often is.

The guest exhibitor Len Castle knows how to make a teapot but he was not served well by what looked like a hurried rat round of his past work.

All in all it was not a howling success as an exhibition, and it was a relief to see those handsome, splendidly thrown pots of Jack Laird's. Those were teapots.





5. Helen Mason  
6. Warren Tippet

7. Anneke Borren  
8. Michael Trumic

9. Carl Vendelbosch  
10. Adrian Cotter



11. Janet Wright  
12. Wilf Wright

13. Barry Brickell  
14. Mirek Smisek

15. Gerald Greenwood



For better or worse the Teapot Exhibition certainly attracted attention. Here are further comments.

T. J. McNamara in New Zealand Herald

There is infinite variety in the human face, though the Deity has only a few elements to manipulate—ears, eyes, nose and mouth. A potter who, like a minor god, takes common clay and makes a vessel from it faces the same sort of limitations when he makes a teapot.

The teapot is considered a test of the potter's art because it should be severely practical, must look beautiful, and there are few parts on which to ring the changes.

It is because of these strict disciplines that the first exhibition of the New Zealand Potters' Guild which consists entirely of teapots is of particular interest. The Guild is made up of full-time potters and the exhibition opened yesterday in the New Vision Gallery. It runs the gamut from extremely unconventional, to the tidiest of round fat pots. The smallest piece is a little green fuss-pot by Anneke Borren. Barry Brickell has three brawny pots with heavy handles and thick glaze, lumpish in contrast to the grace of the ware by Adrian Cotter or Jack Laird.

The most extreme pots are by Helen Mason where every spout and handle pokes out like a blast from a bull's horn. Wilf Wright's pots squat firmly on the table and the clay is heavily marked and scored. Warren Tippet's handles have more spring in their line than most.

Handles are all grippable, lids stay on, as one would expect. Only one potter, Carl Vendelbosch has considered his work pure ornament since one of his lids is without a handle (by design, not accident). In the welter of pottery being made now, this is a display to set standards by.

---

'No handcraft can with our art compare,  
For pots are made of what we potters  
are.'

unknown Persian poet

From Auckland Star 19 June 1971

The New Vision Gallery's exhibition of teapots by the New Zealand Potters' Guild is a witty and enjoyable show, provided not too much attention is paid to the possible efficiency of each object as a teapot.

As a collection of attitudes it is rewarding. The expressions on the faces of the objects exhibited, range from hilarious to sternly institutional.

Helen Mason's three teapots, for instance, would hoot with delight as they gushed their contents in a neat ring around the cup they were aimed at. They might even, just for the sake of appearances and for self-protection—like a child's smile at the moment when it senses it has stretched patience a bit too far—put a little tea into the cup as well.

Both Michael Trumic and Warren Tippet offer pots which surely had their parentage in the white institutional enamel, wielded by a stern tea lady who would never give you a second biscuit or enough sugar.

Barry Brickell's three machines are obviously unhappy to pour tea, they would prefer, perhaps, to gush steam as part of some engine, but in the meantime they will take tea—railway tea.

So much for the fun that can be extracted from a show of teapots. On a more objective view, the exhibition does not rate highly.

One pot sings out with a gentle honesty its fellows do not seem to have. Len Castle's small, brown glazed teapot is unassuming, quiet and dedicated to making tea. It might seem a country cousin, but it offers no doubt about its abilities and because of that has a beauty related to its function, not opposed to it. Castle's second pot has none of these qualities. Its pushed-in face may be whimsical and quaint and its eggy grey glaze is certainly beautiful, but like most of the teapots around it, is, in terms of design, a bit of a snob.

Carving by Bill Matheson,  
which was one of a number  
on display as part of Yvonne  
Rust's West Coast exhibition  
in Wellington.



Photo: D. Montgomery

## What are they doing to our Greenstone?

By Yvonne Rust

Greenstone; Jade; they are the same thing. The scientific name is nephrite. The oriental calls it Jade. The Maori calls it greenstone. Each piece is individual and must be treated so. Man has prized and even worshipped this stone since ancient times, and in fact greenstone brought the Maoris to New Zealand from Hawaiki, five hundred years ago.

What does the human Kiwi do with this magnificent stone? In his ignorance he has ignored or misused it by cutting it up into one inch squares or into bookends and selling it to tourists. Other such ill conceived objects are gilt bows, with greenstone attached or driftwood with a piece of greenstone glued on. In other words we are using valuable material unsympathetically to make absolute junk. The discerning tourist won't buy this rubbish anyway.

### Exploitation

How the European has been able to take

up claims on this stone of so much value to the Maori could be interesting history. The Maori was after all given sole rights to farm the rock oysters and mutton birds. Somewhere the European has taken over—and the skulduggery that goes on over greenstone claims and dealings is amazing.

In all my search for clay I have never found a piece of greenstone. It takes an experienced eye to recognise it since the talc skin that covers the stone can be any off-white colour or even dark brown. Experience teaches the prospector to see the qualities of greenstone through the skin that covers it. 'Coasters' are quite good at finding it along the beaches and river-beds.

The water-worn pebbles were most prized by the Maoris as they had a beautiful shape and polish through the action of nature's tumbler over many years.



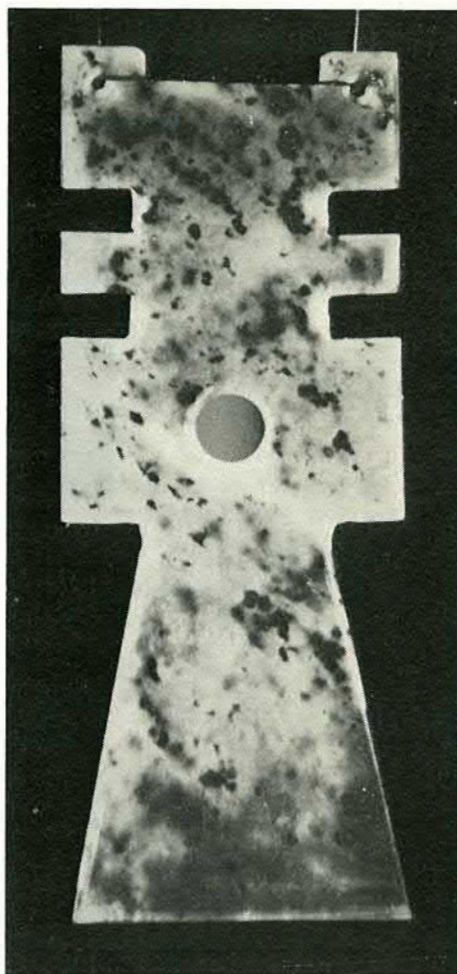
These days greenstone is mined in a number of ways. Up in the Arahura Valley prospectors collect loose stones from the riverbeds or carve selected stones in the valley by a diamond chain-saw. This is flown out by 'Copter'. In some cases miners walk as much as sixteen miles through some of the country's most rugged country with a 150 lb. slab on their backs. Sometimes they discover their prized load is useless. Greenstone does not reveal its carving qualities until it is cut.

#### Proper use

At long last there are four men who are working greenstone as it should be worked. With love, care and reverence. Peter Hughson and Theo Schoon have worked on projects together before, and quite independently they have both come to work with greenstone at the same time. Peter carves very little, but his best work can be seen in the Canterbury Museum—a fitting place for such works of art. He has taught Cliff Dalziel and Bill Matheson how to cut the greenstone from Cliff's claim and these men make their own refined carved jewellery that hangs from a delicate fibre chain.

Theo on the other hand with his background of Japanese and Maori Culture approaches greenstone with a boldness that suits the material. Maoris today give their orders to Theo because they respect his love of greenstone. He has been given a grant by the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council so that he can go to Hong Kong to study advanced techniques used in the cutting of jade.

It is marvellous that at long last the greenstone is being used as it should be. What of the future? There are unworked claims and I believe that a good claim should be set aside, so that artists in the future can quite independently work in this media. There should also be provided a workshop and a Museum in Hokitika for showing all the facets of working with greenstone. The custodian should be able to handle the machinery. Then nephrite lovers the world over could pay homage to greenstone in its rightful environment Hokitika, West Coast.



Carved greenstone by Theo Schoon

In a letter from Hokitika, Theo writes:

*"Working greenstone I had to lay the first foundations for an approach which would be fertile, valid and artistically to my own standards, being very conscious of the fact that my choice and approach will have to stand the judgement of time."*

# Unspoilt Bali

By Theo Schoon

I have come back from my journey to Bali and Hong Kong, in a state of emotional and mental turmoil. It is not merely catching up on art in Bali and Hong Kong, both places which are going through severe economic and political upheavals, but it also offers a view of New Zealand art from another perspective.

I found this land Bali particularly disturbing because even at this time in its history it remains a place which reminds any Western artist of the price he had to pay for this thing called 'progress'. I was at first astonished to find Bali full of Hippies, but after a closer look, it is really not so very strange.

Balinese life is a psychedelic dream, anyway, and the Hippies call them 'the most turned on people in the world.' I have little doubt that the message, which failed to come through in my generation, will come through loud and clear for this one. Since this is the first invasion of the young, the impressions of Bali have plenty of time to simmer in as yet receptive minds, and minds which already question Western values anyway.

The domestic pottery of Bali is still in a healthy state because in Balinese cooking and ceremony, as well as Temple decoration, pottery and ceramics still play a vital part. Virtually all of it is earthenware. There is no wheel: pots are made by coiling on a disk of wood which is slowly turned by hand. The final shaping of the pot is done by slapping it with a paddle on the outside and a stone held in the left hand supports it on the inside.

The shaping of pots to their final shape looks pretty rough and they seem, at the near final stages, close to falling apart.

Like the skill of a good thrower, this technique is wonderful and fascinating to watch. Although the Balinese have been familiar with Chinese pottery for more than five centuries, its presence and use as ornaments cemented into temple walls has had no effect on the local pottery tradition.

An accumulation of five centuries of Chinese pottery makes the island Bali the richest source of antique Chinese pottery in the world. Fine Chinese stoneware and porcelain can be purchased at ridiculous prices in many small villages all over Bali. I have seen such pottery more than thirty years ago when the collecting of Chinese pottery was still the specialty of a few antique dealers in Europe, but today collectors from anywhere in the world come to buy whatever they can. Since no pottery of this kind is made in Indonesia, there is as yet no such things as a market for fakes. It is however likely that when Bali becomes famous as a source of antique Chinese pottery, Hong Kong will step in to provide its own antique shops, stocked with fakes. I saw such fakes being examined by experts at the Museum in Hong Kong. These wonderful specimens would certainly have fooled me.

The Balinese have produced, and still do, a wide range of interesting decorative ware which is mainly of a religious nature. Decorative roof tiles and ceremonial ves-



sels such as chalises, incense burners and bowls. These are embellished with coiled decorations of a very attractive quality reminiscent of ancient Peruvian and Mexican pottery.

Bali has an embarrassing richness of art because everybody is an artist of some kind. The main value of Bali's existence is, as a living proof, that everybody is an artist. It is a powerful indictment of our own civilisation which manages to snuff out or pervert the aesthetic faculties of millions.

The culture of Bali puts the lie to so many of our lies and excuses, perpetrated in the academic world, which basically accepts a disease as a fact of life. Bali is an extremely interesting island which was 'discovered' by the Western world in comparatively recent times—about fifty years ago.

Its doom as an island paradise has been predicted as early as forty years ago. It was said already at that time that tourism would destroy this culture in a very short time.

The wonder of it is that it has so far survived these dark predictions so well. Instead of being destroyed, Bali shows promising signs of adapting itself gracefully to a changing world. Its art has changed considerably in the last thirty years, from a purely religious art, into art for art's sake. Being essentially of a decorative nature, it has become infused with a new realism which is basically a celebration and affirmation of life. Not too difficult, in an environment as yet beautiful as a stage set fit for Gods to live in, and still free from the blight of ugliness and unmasked evil, as one industrial world dares to inflict on man.

Bali can portray itself as it is and give

us Easterners a feeling that we are looking at a fabrication, an idyllic dream, rather than a reality.

One of the major diseases of our world is already in operation, and that is the mass production of bad souvenir art. Its appalling prevalence by the millions in Bali, and exported by the shipload to any port in the far East, may easily lead to the opinion that Balinese art is dead. But Bali has a large number of artists of calibre and integrity who create work of a very high standard. It is unfortunate that they are not protected from the ravages of crass commercialism, plagiarism, and vile exploitation by a host of parasites.

Where the new generation of Indonesia complains about corruption in high places, there is no hope of the Government of Indonesia protecting one of their major cultural assets. It means that the art of Bali will see the emergence of artists who will be concerned with the legacy of their heritage and its transition in a new and different world. It is a sad and ominous fact that the best of Bali's present day art goes abroad.

The two small museums Bali has, do not serve the purpose they were intended to serve, as the depositories of a nation's excellence and heritage.

Firstly, there is not the money available to purchase outstanding works of art since they fetch a higher price on the market than the museums can offer.

But it is also a sad fact that the caretakers of these collections sell the treasures in their care, or they just 'disappear'.

The fame of some Balinese artists has given some reputations abroad, which makes them able to command prices as high as \$1000 (U.S.) for a painting or

a sculpture. The days when fine paintings could be purchased for \$20 are gone.

If the situation there defies analysis it is because of the pragmatic approach to art of the Balinese.

There is, for instance, no accounting for European taste. The phenomena of a new kind of tourist; the International Hippies.

It does surprise Balinese artists who have progressed from a purely formal religious art toward European concepts of illustrative and narrative art—that the Hippies buy almost exclusively the work of the older and conservative artists, because it illustrates the stories from the Ramayana and has that psychedelic look.

The art of Bali provides plenty of paraphernalia suitable to serve as the paraphernalia of Hippie culture. Pot is cheap, of high quality and readily available; but the Balinese decline to try it or use it. Everyday life is so richly endowed with beauty, mystery, and a sense of belonging that pot could not serve any useful service in their lives. They don't have to get away from anything.

It is obvious that Bali has a great impact on these Hippies. Being the product of an extremely puritanical culture, they take their enunciation of the values of their society as an act of defiance, rebellion,

and iconoclasm. To see Balinese live without inhibitions, guilt or conflicts, and yet with a strong ethical code, is rather disconcerting to people whose freedom expresses itself in obscenity, for its lack of aesthetic form. The Balinese are sexually frank and even bawdy, but it is done with the matter of fact grace, which never flaunts itself. It is the fate of the liberated Puritan to be grotesque, obscene, and painful to watch.

The liaison between Balinese and the Hippies is however a very good one. The macabre appearance of many of them does not disturb the Balinese at all. They love anything odd, strange or grotesque, and their great sense of courtesy commands that they should not stare. The Hippie is a better mixer than his elders, safely protected and isolated in their luxurious hotels and who see Bali only from their rented cars.

I believe that the influence of Balinese art and culture would be infinitely greater if they could remove the language barrier. The culture of India is more accessible to them because many Indians speak English.

It is a pity that the language barrier makes these young people revert to their own society and their own cults on an island so full of beauty and interest.

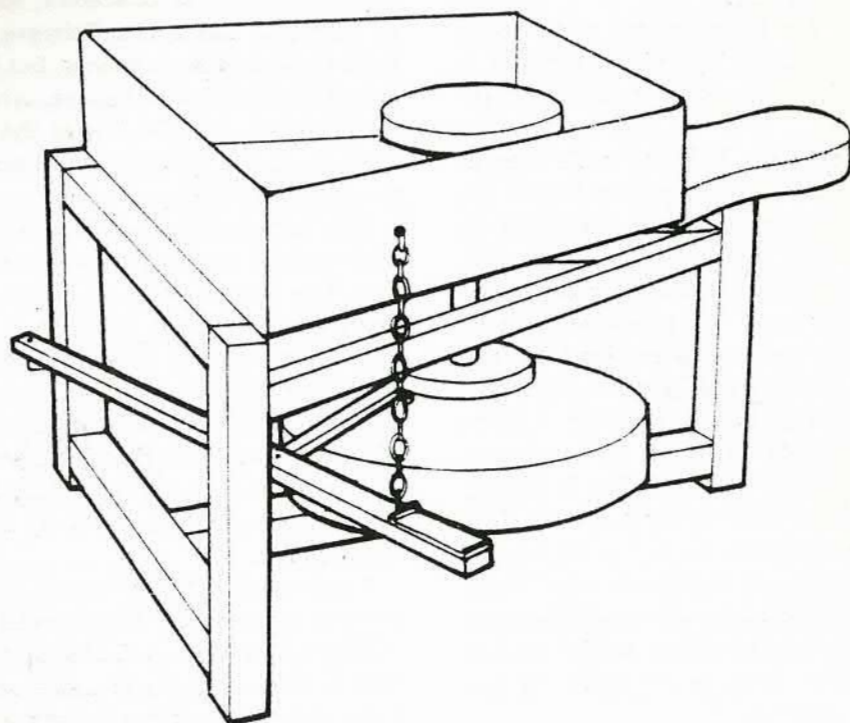
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## Pottery in Australia

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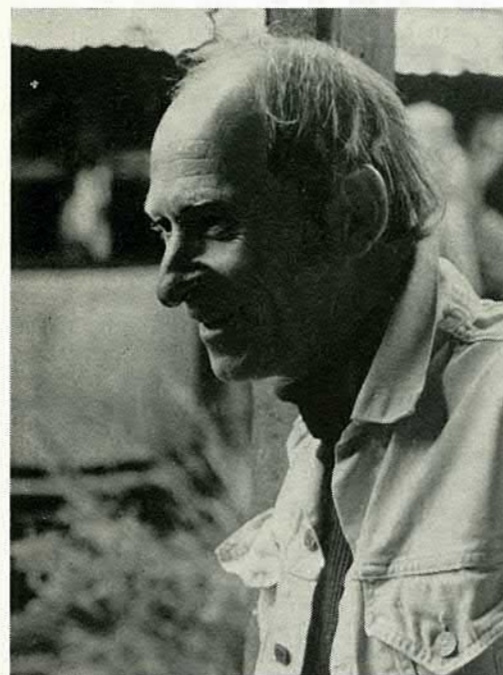
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## NEWS OF PEOPLE, POTS & EVENTS



Photos: Neil Grant

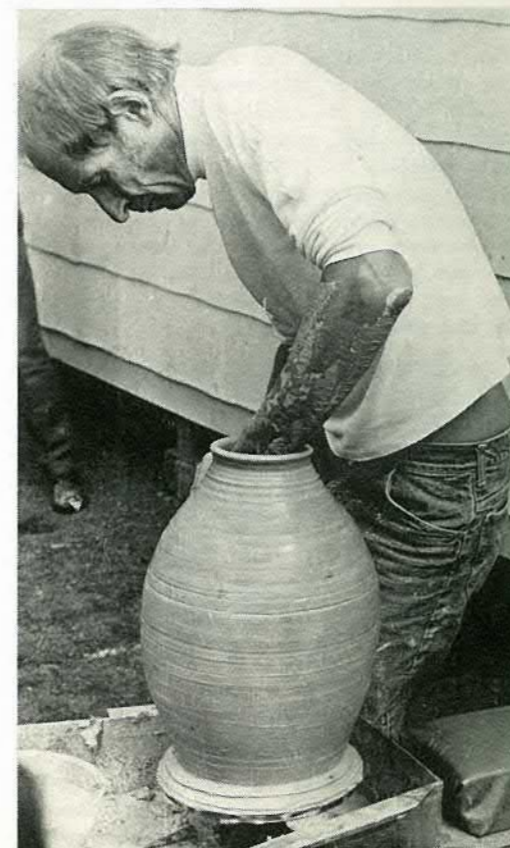
### Reflections on Paul Soldner's Visit

Paul and Virginia Soldner walked from the doorway at Auckland's International Airport on 25th August 1971, to captivate, in moments, those who met them. Thereafter potters from near and far were electrified, entranced, shocked or bewildered, each according to his view, by the artistry, ability, calm philosophy and provocative originality of one who has for many years been a forceful teacher and craftsman in the United States.

There was something for everyone, delivered always with winning charm and wit and in a friendly and unhurried manner to potters in Auckland, at Coromandel, guests at reception or students in school. It was certainly an experience. His exhibition pots, platters and dishes showed the wide range of his technical

skills, and these, though no doubt irksome to the conservative, were satisfying and stimulating to the many who seek new trends and experiences, manners of expression and encouragement in the ceramic arts.

Paul Soldner liked to prepare and talk as he went, branching off as the spirit or a question moved him. Nothing was regarded as wasted. Rather disaster or unexpected effect was cherished for its worth, or developed to provide fresh detail or interest to those listening. To the question 'Did you set out to make that shape?' came the answer. 'No. It developed that way.' This was pure joy to the beginner.





Incised design, applied paper 'cutouts' with overpainted engobe or glaze, impressed patterned platters, an almost instant kiln, its firing, and raku method are some of the memories on the surface at this time. The shattering sound and the eerie fascination of his film and slide showings shook us to the very marrow.

It is difficult with words to describe Paul Soldner's visit but there are photographs in plenty and copies of his stoneware and raku formulae available for distribution and record. Fortunately Auckland Studio Potters have been able to buy one of the fine exhibition pots.

It is with real regret that we saw the Soldners on their way.

Dr. W. B. Lusk

#### Auckland Potters News

Auckland Studio Potters started the year with a kiln building and firing session at Carrick Oliver's farm at Drury. A primitive beehive kiln based on a Daniel Rhodes design was successfully built and wood-fired to temperatures reaching 900-1000°. To open and inspect the results meant demolishing the kiln down to waist height! As might be expected, the results were unpredictable and varying in quality, but as with all fun things of this type, the joy was in the experience gained and in the pleasure of doing it.

Carrick Oliver has generously offered the use of an area of his farm suitable for kiln building and firing. A stockpile of materials is building up for exploratory kiln-building techniques and firings. Practical activities such as these are very popular with members wishing to further their experience. Another kiln build is planned for later this year to help members overcome problems with their first kiln building efforts.

A weekend school was held in July for non-members and senior day and evening class students at Glenfield College. Neil Grant demonstrated wheel-thrown techniques.

At a film evening Dr. Denis Hanna gave a talk on his recent visit to South America with the emphasis on Peru. On another evening

Mr. Guthrie of Crown Lynn Potteries held a discussion on gas kilns and then there were films of Micheal Casson and Japanese pottery.

The highlight of the year was of course the visit by Paul Soldner and his wife, about which there is more later.

Over 200 pots from members were contributed for the stall that the Society ran in the Creative Arts Festival in aid of the Food Bank of New Zealand.

#### Christchurch Potters Notes—

Our A.G.M. was held on May 5th just prior to the commencement of the Warren Tippet ten day school at Risingholme, which was one of the best schools we have ever had, and incidentally, the longest. It was a pleasure to have Warren with us again, and several older potters attended the school not only to take a refresher course, but also to meet again this now well known and professional potter.

While Warren was in town, the occasion was used to organise a National Executive Meeting here, over the first weekend of the school, and this was a timely opportunity to discuss problems of the 14th National Exhibition, as well as domestic affairs of the Society. Excellent hospitality for our visitors was offered by Mrs. Wyn Reed (who housed Warren), Mrs. Nola Barron (who housed the meeting and subsequent party) and Mrs. Rosemary Perry, who put on a super dinner party after the Saturday afternoon meeting.

Since then, we have all been geared towards the preparations for the National Exhibition.

Doris Holland

#### From Manawatu

The Manawatu Pottery Society is enjoying a busy year. It recently affiliated with the National Society. Most members are aiming to exhibit at their 6th Annual Exhibition in the Manawatu Art Gallery October 3 - 22nd. Estelle Martin, of Havelock North is to be guest selector, and guest exhibitor with her

husband Bruce. Their Annual Exhibition held last year drew favourable comment from the guest selector, Doreen Blumhardt, especially as far as the work of John Fuller and the layout and design as effected by Laurie Lord, were concerned.

Schools have been held for potters, at all levels Peter Wilde has tutored at three beginners' classes. Under the auspices of the Massey University Extension Department Stan Jenkins has conducted a series of the classes for intermediate potters, and Royce McGlasshen of Nelson held a weekend school for advanced potters. All schools were decidedly beneficial, and taken in conjunction with the night classes conducted in Palmerston North and Feilding, potters of the area are well catered for. Instruction is also available for students at the Teachers College, Palmerston North.

Doreen Blumhardt again visited us this year and spoke and showed slides taken on her recent tour.

Zoe Bendall

#### News from Wellington

The Wellington potters and the Wellington and Hutt weavers held their annual exhibition at Rothman's gallery. Patricia Perrin guest exhibitor showed wine jars onion pots and sculptured vases. Although this was not the most spectacular of exhibitions, it nevertheless gave a deep feeling of satisfaction. The pots glowed with a warm friendliness and the gallery was bustling with people. Judging from the red spots that soon appeared on the pots people had difficulty in selecting favourites to buy. It was also encouraging to see so much promise among the younger generation of potters. Patti Meads teaset in particular had a high degree of sensitivity in form and colour combined with technical efficiency.

Our congratulations to Rona Morton who made the grade for membership of the New Zealand Society of Potters.

Mavis Jack (Mrs. Erridge), is off to Taupo to live where she hopes to set up her pottery again. Anneke Borren now Mrs. Owen Mapp is still working in Paraparaumu.

Doreen Blumhardt has very generously given several very interesting showings from slides taken during her recent travels.

The Wellington potters went on a most successful Kiln Krawl to Hawkes Bay, visiting all the potters in their studios. This event was warmly appreciated by the potters who went, and it could become a worthwhile annual event. A weekend school conducted by Harry Davis will wind up the year.

Muriel Moody



#### New Lease of Life for Alexandra Pottery Group

In May this year misfortune struck the Alexandra Pottery Group. Their kiln collapsed and at the same time they were forced to vacate the shed which had been their work-



shop for five years. There were fourteen women in this group and their assets were a wheel and all the paraphernalia that goes with making and applying glazes, and a bit of cash.

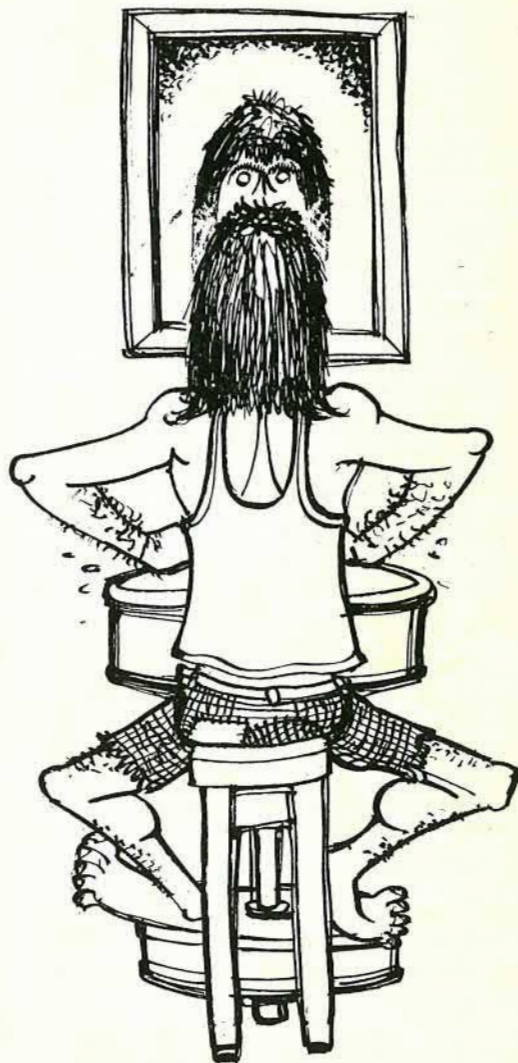
In early June the group were told of a hay loft over old stables. It turned out to be full of possibilities and most centrally situated. The most recent tenants had been hens, which was very obvious, and although there was no door and a huge hole in one wall the floor was sound as were the remaining walls which were about eighteen inches thick and made of local rock and mud. The owner was sufficiently startled to say that the group could have the loft rent free. Two months later, after a lot of work the building was transformed. So much for a home but a kiln was still essential. The members of the group decided they were better able to raise money than lay bricks and so a local bricklayer was engaged to build the kiln to their chosen plan. So with the winter over and the pottery season on its way again this small group has a charming home, over one hundred years old and a beautiful two chamber oil burning kiln and are once more turning out stoneware pottery.

(The Secretary of the group, Mrs. Marjorie Campbell, 61 Ventry Street, supplied this news item, with the object of making the group known to potters. She says that they feel rather isolated in that part of the country and any contacts with visiting potters would be warmly appreciated.

Editor)

#### Australian Potters coming

Two weeks spent visiting potteries in New Zealand is planned for April next year by some Sydney based Australians belonging to Ceramic Study Group (Box 5239 Sydney 2001.) There should be opportunities for dialogue and exchange of views between the visitors and our own potters at gatherings throughout the country at dates approximately between 4-20th April.



*"Mirror, Mirror on the wall, who is the leadingest potter of us all?"*



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