

New Zealand Potter

Volume 32, Number 2, 1990





NEW ZEALAND POTTER **VOLUME 32: NUMBER 2: 1990**

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Subscriptions, Publisher and Distributor: NZ Potter Publications Ltd P.O. Box 881, Auckland, N.Z. Fax (09) 393-247

Managing Director: Cecilia Parkinson Design: Cecilia Parkinson, John Parker, Howard Williams

Typeset by: Mills Typeset Ltd Tel/Fax: (09) 605-250 Auckland 3, N.Z.

Paste Up: Sheena Reeves

Printed by: World Publications Singapore

Copy Deadlines: 1st day of February, June, September Issued: April, August, December Price: \$8 per copy incl. GST Annual Subscription: \$24 incl. GST **Overseas Subscriptions sent** surface mail: \$NZ28.50

Advertising Rates: GST not inc.

Display: 4 colour: Back cover: \$1650 (Min. 3 issues) Full page: \$759. Half page: \$550

Display: Black and White Inside front/back covers: \$532 Full page: \$485. Half page: \$295 Quarter page: \$179

Potter's Market: Full page: \$418. Half page: \$253 Quarter page: \$154. Eighth page: \$93

Classified: 55c per word. Minimum 10 words. Cash with order.

Finished art work must be supplied or above rates will be added to.

> PRICE \$8 inc. GST ISSN 0113 - 583X

IN THIS ISSUE

THROUGH THE Howard S Williams, Editorial JOURNEY INTO

BIENNALE ORL The Orlandi Tile Design Conte

FLETCHER CHA Photographs from the 1990 E

A CHALLENGIN Keith Blight builds outdoor so

THROUGH THE FILTER PRESS Howard S Williams, Editorial	2
JOURNEY INTO INDIA — PART II Elizabeth Woodfield looks at Fired Houses	4
NZSP ANNUAL EXHIBITION, NELSON The pots photographed by Lynn Griffith	9
BIENNALE ORLANDI 1990 The Orlandi Tile Design Contest, Geneva, Switzerland	11
RECENTLY SEEN Our colour picture gallery	12
SOUTHLAND POTTERS ASSOCIATION Annual Exhibition Photos from Invercargill	13
VALLOURIS TODAY Jennifer and Geoffrey Maxwell visit Picasso's pottery village	14
HA, HA, HA, YOU AND ME Brian Gartside's sixth article looks at the Little Brown Jug Glaze	16
BOOKS Reviews by Leo King and Howard S. Williams	18
FLETCHER CHALLENGE CERAMICS AWARD Photographs from the 1990 Exhibition, by Haru Sameshima	20
GALLERY GUIDE A countrywide listing of pottery shops and galleries	23
IGBARA ODO Jan Kiesel writes about a pottery commune in Nigeria	25
DIESEL FIRING SYSTEM Milton Hutchinson describes a diesel kiln starter tube	28
MEDIAEVAL TILES Doris Dutch's photos of tiles in the British Museum	29
RETURN OF CLAY NZSP Nelson Convention photos by Howard S. Williams	32
SUPREMATISM AND CERAMICS Leo King examines the Suprematist Movement in Europe	33
A CHALLENGING COMMISSION Keith Blight builds outdoor sculptural lights	36
POTTERS MARKET	37

COVER PHOTO

Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award 1990. Photos by Haru Sameshima. See pages 20, 21, 22



THROUGH THE FILTER PRESS

DEADLINES

This issue is the first NZ POTTER to be sent overseas for printing, mainly for reasons of cost-cutting. We trust everthing goes to plan. One change has become necessary — our deadline dates for copy are now the 1st day of February, June and September for the three issues published April, August and December each year. This major move is to ensure that your NZ POTTER grows in stature and desirability, without increasing in price!

ACCIDENT COMPENSATION

You will recall that in our last issue we asked that letters be written to MPs and Dr Cullen, the Associate Minister of Labour, asking that studio potters be classed according to their "risk value" for the purposes of levy rates for ACC, insteady of arbitrarily being classed with workers in heavy industry. We thank those of you who did so, and on behalf of all potters, thank the executive of the NZ Society of Potters for their work on our behalf with the minister.

They were eventually successful in that their submission was seen as having merit and hand-craft potters have now been re-classed under "Other manufacturing" with a levy rate of \$1.30. Make sure your accountant knows this when doing your tax returns. Another good reason for ALL studio potters to be members of the national society which again has proven its value in lobbying power on their behalf.

DON THORNLEY

A retrospective exhibition of the work of the late Don Thornley is to be shown from August 27 to September 7, at the Emporium of the Waikato Polytechnic, Ward Street, Hamilton.

OBITUARY

Doris Holland, one of New Zealand's pioneer potters, died in Christchurch at Easter, aged 73.

Doris started potting at the King Edward Technical College in Dunedin under Robert Field in the 1930s. Her love of potting continued throughout her life.

Well-known as one of New Zealand's most significant painters, she painted under her maiden name, Doris Lusk. She was a lecturer in drawing at the University of Canterbury School of Fine

Arts from 1967 to 1981, and taught at many painting schools. She was president of the *Canterbury Society of* Arts from 1982 to 1987. The CSA Gallery hosted a 50 year retrospective exhibition of her paintings in 1986 to mark her 70th birthday. Doris was one of the first pottery

teachers in Christchurch, teaching at the Risingholme Community Centre from 1947 until 1967. She made earthenware pottery using a standard kick wheel. The brushwork, slipware and decorative glazes on her moulded dishes showed the influence of her painting.

A foundation member of the Canterbury Potters' Association in 1963, Doris served as its president in 1969 and 1970.

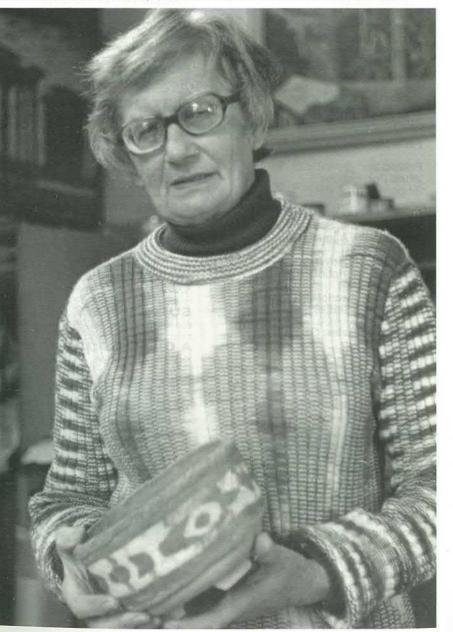
Throughout her life, she made wonderful masks using thrown, reassembled clay. An exhibition had been arranged to show a group of these at the Cave Rock Gallery in August this vear.

Doris had a wide range of interests, including language, music and theatre. For some years she wrote interesting articles about potters' activities for the Canterbury Society of Arts newsletter. An excellent teacher who encouraged young talent, she will be remembered for her lively interest and support of all the arts.

Doris will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Rosemary Perry, Christchurch

Doris Holland, 1988, photographed with one of her pots, by Gerrit van der Lingen



AIRBRUSHING

From the Wellington Potters' Association newsletter comes the following tip for those using an airbrush with glazes. "If you are having problems with glaze stain powders clogging the airbrush try using a good glaze suspension agent. Potter Ian Hutchinson's suggestion to use a car tyre inflated to 40psi worked well. The tyre has to be on a wheel and you will need a little adaptor so the airbrush can be screwed onto the tyre valve. These adaptors can be bought for \$5.40 from Art Suppliers such as Littlejohns in Wellington. It is a good idea to have a foot pump to re-inflate the tyre as you soon lower the pressure. You will stay very fit!"

Another Handy Hint comes from the Canterbury Potters newsletter and is for getting the last of a glaze through a sieve without adding more water: use a wide basin, so that the sieve can be immersed in the already sieved glaze. Water comes back through the sieve and the remnants will then go through quite easily. Do this several times if necessary.

AUSTRALIAN MAGAZINES

Big things have recently been happening in Australia to their pottery publication. Janet Mansfield, editor of Pottery in Australia for 14 years and Glenys Waller, business manager for the Potters' Society of Australia, have left their positions to start an independent magazine. The first issue of this new quarterly CERAMICS. Art and Perceptions is expected mid 1990 with the annual subscription being Aus\$40 for four issues. It will have a broad international scope and aims to become a focus of communication for clay artists throughout the world. At this stage they are requiring subscribers, advertisers, retailers and of course top quality contributors of both articles and photographs. Inquiries regarding all these can be addressed to: **Ceramics Art and Perception** 35 William Street Paddington

Sydney NSW 2021 Australia

The NZ POTTER wishes Janet and her team all the best for this new venture.

Do not forget however, that Pottery in Australia is still alive and well and continuing to be published as before. Changes are bound to be made with a new editor installed, but the Potters' Society of Australia are determined to keep their well-established magazine going as effectively as it is now, reflecting the best of what is happening to studio pottery in their country. They will continue with 4 issues per year for a post inclusive price of Aus\$40. The interim editor is the society's president Leonard M Smith and the subscription address: Pottery in Australia 2/68 Alexander Street **Crows Nest NSW 2065** Australia

7000 YEAR OLD POTTER'S PRINT

What is believed to be the oldest fingerprint in the world has been discovered by Zhao Chengwen, an associate professor of the Chinese police institute in Shenyang, while examining relics from a Neolithic site at Banpo in central China.

Police fingerprint experts say it was a left-hand thumb-print of a child aged about 13, left on the inside of a water jar while it was being made some 7000 years ago.

1991 AUSTRALIA

The 6th National Ceramics Conference; Arts Industry Interface will be held at Griffith University and hosted by the Queensland Potters' Association over the first five days of July 1991. There will be a great gathering of international speakers and workshops for potters as well as the ceramics industry. Details of this conference can be had by writing to: Mrs Dot Menzies **PO Box 231** Broadway

Queensland 4006 Australia

YOU SLEEP

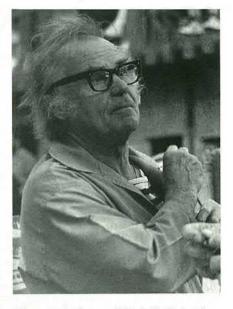
Electric Measurement & Control Ltd ing in pottery manufacture and in purpose in the design was for an instrument that would control the kiln programmed temperature/time profile.

Several years ago it was realized that there was a real need amongst the pottery community of New Zealand for an instrument which could control the firing of a Kiln while unattended and would allow firing to take place overnight while the owner was sleeping. (EMC) contacted many people specialisconjunction with them developed the type 480 Kiln Controller. The main unattended accurately to a pre-It had to be simple to use, reliable in operation, but easily disconnected in the event of servicing being required. The successfully designed EMC Controller has since proved to be very popular with potters throughout New Zealand and overseas

Although originally developed purely for the pottery industry the controllers have now been applied to precision process control roles in the pottery, textile, dairy, ceramics and glassware industries and are also serving manufacturing jewellers. The EMC 480 series of Temperature

Controllers has the unique feature, particularly for home potters, of being able to operate overnight. Another good factor is that the program is retained in the memory of the EMC 480, ready to use again.

Types 480 and 481, which have aimed at kiln temperature control, have three programmable stages. Each stage has a ramp rate, a hold temperature and a hold time, which allow control of the firing

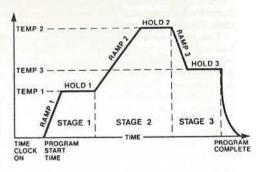


Congratulations to Mirek Smisek who was awarded an OBE for his years of service to pottery.

Photo by Lynn Griffith

A KILN CONTROLLER THAT WORKS WHILE

process including cooling. Type 481, suited to gas-fired kilns, has two additional outputs. One operates when the programme is running and the other when kiln temperature exceeds a programmed limit.



Both models may be started manually, remotely or set to start at a programmed time. They may also be configured to resume the programme manually or automatically after a power failure.

EMC programmable controllers are simple to operate by use of indicator lights, keys and clear labelling.

With all these features, the simplicity and accuracy of operation of the EMC 480 series brings the greatest benefits for users.

To obtain free illustrated leaflets see you local Pottery Supplier or contact Electric Measurement and Control Ltd, PO Box 31-145, Milford, Auckland 9. Telephone (09) 444-9229, Facsimile (09) 444-1145.

JOURNEY INTO INDIA - PART II

Elizabeth F Woodfield, Hamilton

In Pondicherry on the south ease coast of the subcontinent, in Tamil Nadu, locals are being taught to make better quality and higher fired bricks and objects of durability. **Ray Meeker** is building and firing houses as huge kilns. He hopes these will provide low cost, high quality, aesthetically pleasing housing. Ray and fellow American **Deborah Smith** have the *Golden Bridge Pottery* — Deborah runs the pottery and Ray fires houses.

Whilst at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, it became known Deborah had studied pottery at Bizen in Japan and was subsequently asked to start a pottery. In 1971 Ray had no intention of staying. "I was going to spend two or three months and build a kiln, but when my order of fire bricks could not be delivered for six months I started to feel if I stayed a year I might never leave." Five people are throwing now at Golden Bridge along with 12 others who work there.

Very few students, including **Priya Pawar** (see story, previous issue) have yet had a chance to prove if self sufficiency from studio potting is possible. Ray says there is no competition, that it is easy to sell what *Golden Bridge* makes, now that a market is established. "Establishing a market had to be done first. We just go slowly... It was inexpensive to set up and we grew slowly, learning as we went ... We didn't know about glazes either." Although Ray did a ceramics course whilst studying architecture in America he says "I really learnt everything here. We started small, just selling locally through several boutiques." Buyers coming to Pondicherry for other things (leather and cloth) would see the pots and now *Golden Bridge* pottery is in Bombay galleries. There seems to be a sort of parallel here and in New Delhi with earlier New Zealand potters. There is no national body affording cohesion and sharing of information and technology for the handful of studio potters sprinkled through India, but they maintain some contact and the first Annual All India Studio Potters Exhibition was held in 1982.

The only one-of-a-kind pots made at *Golden Bridge* are pots for exhibition, requests from students, and work resulting from the visits of overseas potters. Several examples of these pots decorate Deborah and Ray's home, but all other pots made are their standard domestic ware.

Two stoneware clays are used at the pottery from ball clay, kaolin, fireclay and local clay, blended in a "human pugmill." Most raw materials are available except nepheline syenite and gerstley borate. Quite a lot of wood ash is used in glazes on domesticware fired in a 100 cu ft triple chamber drip feed kiln, or the twin bourry box 60 cu ft trolley kiln which share a common chimney. A reverberating and various other smaller kilns are used for tests.

The large kiln is fired with kerosene through five feeders and wood. The first chamber is fired for 15 hours, starting with kerosene. Wood is added for the reduction cycle in the first chamber, but with the kero still on. Water is added to the kero during firing. The second chamber is fired for 6 hours predominantly with wood which is easier to use and get in to the Pottery.

Tamil Nadu is unique as forests are not cut down for firewood, but Australian casuarina pine is grown as a cash crop. Ray says it is an ideal fuel for his fired houses.

Domesticware is packed in baskets individually woven at the Pottery for transhipment on bicycle, rickshaw or bus. With roosters crowing, crows carking and the sound of lump clay being pounded and crushed, Ray showed us round experiments with arches and "fired houses".

He has designed extruded hollow bricks with inserts for the free standing Nubian arch where the bricks lean into one another. Nubians used to build mud catenary arches last century, from 15 x 25cm mud bricks. Mud sticks to mud so they were just put up with mud and water. When I told Ray I thought it a brilliant idea to cut the brick at an angle and poke in an insert to lock it, he laughed and said, "It is a good idea though the shape's not quite right yet. However, it's being made



Camels transporting bricks in Jaipur

with a crude clay and a simple extruder, so without having to have an expensive pugmill, mixtures and all that sort of thing, I can do it and build houses with them."

The fired house at Golden Bridge Pottery is still growing, itself being a series of experiments. Structures are treated as huge kilns and fired full of product, the proceeds from which offset firing costs. This house was fired with 12,000 bricks inside to 950°C. Some areas were underfired. The walls varied from 27 to 45cm thick where the outside brick was not fired right through, but the vault at 16cm was, in the four days of stoking. A 4cm coating of mud, dung and rice husk was plastered over it to act as insulation up until it ignited and burnt, so firing occurred on both sides. Ray is working on an idea of mixing 5% coal dust within the bricks as a combustible that uses its own oxidant to combust, so firing will be only one day and then it cooks by itself.

Asking if I'd struck it lucky to see a house firing, I was invited to see one under construction and one already being lived in. "It's a long way out to the site — you could cycle, but finding it is the problem." We opted for a taxi as my son Carrick was not long out of hospital after having typhoid fever.

not long out of hospital after having typhoid fever. Ray was given a week to design a 1,800m² cheap, different and beautiful factory for leather working. The threechambered catenary kiln being built at this leather factory site will eventually house the watchmen and their families. The bricks for this factory are product bricks fired in the watchmen's quarters kiln. The quarters are taller than the usual village house; nicer, and cooler than a low cost house and have no real maintenance. Being catenary they look similar to traditional homes of the Todas in the hill station Ootacomund, and have small end windows. Ray says the villagers prefer the security of dark boxes so he needs to make his kiln/houses more closed. This excludes the use of more open designs.

The ends of each chamber and buttresses are made of fired brick, product from another housekiln. All other bricks are made on-site including product bricks which are tablemoulded and high quality compared with ground bricks. Table-moulding is a tradition in other countries, but not in India and in the same given time, two people can make 1,000 ground bricks, but eight workers are needed to make 1,000 table bricks. This is barely viable and in addition uses four times as much fuel in the six days of firing, as the 18 hour firings of local low fired brick kilns. With increased sales it may become more viable because the end product uses less cement, less labour and no paint.

Six workers were constructing the kilnhouse, two people ground moulding structure bricks and eight working from the dig to stacking the table-moulded high quality water resistant bricks. These are used for buildings not being plastered, and can withstand the very heavy monsoon rains.

When Ray was asked by a friend to design and build a house he read up on fired houses in Iran by **Nader Khalili**, but found it of no real help, being non-technical. Ray says he developed what he knows. The owner friend of the 80m² house was willing to risk Ray's design and method. Four vaults radiate out from a central domed vault which proved to be "a not particularly efficient kiln." With no heavy presses or clay preparation equipment, approximately 52,000 bricks were made for the structure and 200 tonne of product brick plus 2,000 tiles, gargoyles and pressmoulded toilet pans. Pipes and window jalis were produced from a hand operated extruder. All these were fired in the housekiln.

The house was started in November 1987 with foundations of brick and lime a metre deep. Local masons of 20 years experience had to be taught the new technique of building Nubian arches for the four vaults, where bricks are pitched into the bottom angle of the fired-brick end catenary arches. The builders had never even built a Roman dome before and the mason of least experience worked on the central dome without having previously worked on any circular structure. A catenary arch form was used as a guide to maintain the parabolic curve of the central dome.

Some bricks were made on site, but 150 bullock cart loads of high quality unfired bricks came from the pottery at Pondicherry. At one given time 40 carts were in convoy. The cost of transportation was not insignificant, but the structure could not be fired empty as there would be no economic advantage to be gained. It took four months for the small scale industry to make product. Product tiles were later used as flooring in the house.

Stacking the structure with product took four weeks and because stacking determines the way heat will move, Ray had the unenviable task of stacking all the 60,000 bricks by himself. The chimney ran up the middle of the central vault and was the only outlet except during initial water removal. The biggest challenge was firing efficiency and a 10cm coating of dung and rice husk insulation was applied to the outside.

The house in its unfired state was vulnerable to rain, a constant worry, and 7cm fell in an unseasonal cloudburst. The damage was not serious as the structure had been well covered with malar, the top brush sections of casuarina pine.

Clay is pounded . . .



Nubian arch being made with extruded hollow bricks



Each side vault had four fireboxes and firing began in the end ones of each vault, taking 60 hours to get the draught moving, pulled by the dome vent. Exit flues were cut in the vaults during steaming to allow the 10 tonne of water to escape in the first two days, so initially it was an updraught kiln. Five thermocouples, one in each vault, were used to understand how it was moving, but on the fourth morning heat distribution was still uneven and at about 600°C. "Had to figure how to even it out." Malar gives a fast flame and 2 to 4m malar was thrown quite deeply into fireboxes. Every 10 minutes the 16 stoke holes got one bundle while raising the temperature. Two men were at each stoke hole.

The firing was in May 1988 when the weather was intensely hot. According to Ray, it was inhumane and stokers had to be hosed down. On the fourth day the kiln stuck at 700°C as the chimney could not handle it. Stoking was changed to a vault sequence rhythm of 1,2,3,4. 1,2,3,4. and so on — the four stoke holes in each vault being used in the same rythm.

In the five and a half days of firing 37 tonnes (cut wet weight) of wood and 24,000 bundles of malar were burnt. Casuarina has a high calorific value and 2 to 4m lengths of 2 to 5cm diameter were used.

The central dome reached 980°C on the sixth day and the main section 1100°C. Ray had not expected it to get so hot so soon and firing was closed down early. Cracks were tightly sealed during cooling. Firing, cooling and recovering took three weeks with another week to unload. The finishing process of building ends to the vaults, installing a skylight where the chimney had exited, plastering with red sandy clay, lime and cement took another five months. The project should have taken less time, but the locals who are not professionals did not understand how to keep the work going. Philosophically Ray adds, "that's the way it is . . It wouldn't take so long if you knew what you're doing . . . I made it up as I went along as it's not been done before."

In retrospect Ray surmises the economics of the kiln house

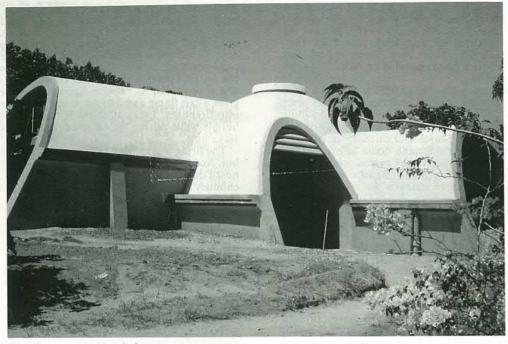
... and crushed in front of experimental fired houses



Building the three chambered kiln which will house the watchmen



New Zealand Potter No. 2, 1990 5



Fired house near Pondicherry

were inexpensive for the volume, but average for floor area. "The process of making and moving product to the site with the transportation costs, immediately make you a loser - so you have to come up with a portable production unit with extruders and pugmills and actually move them to the site. Then of course the site clay has to be suitable for making, which isn't going to happen all that often. It's a very site specific process. The reason one goes on with it, is because presumably the sites do exist and if they do, I think it will be a pretty economic technique. But the way I do it right now is a nice way of experimenting with it. A friend wanted a house. He paid for the house, I paid for the brick making, product and the firing. They built me a kiln and I fired them a house. It's a good deal and I get a very cheap experiment."

More experiments will determine how viable fired houses are and Ray will continue doing them as he still thinks it is possible

to produce low cost aesthetically pleasing housing. His experiments are already reaching into villages, competing with the "ticky tacky little boxes that all look just the same". Eventually they may be an alternative solution to the housing problem in India.

The concept of making, firing and building on-site is similar to that in Karnataka, but it is rare the bricks are used on the site, normally being carted off for use elsewhere and the cost of transporting bricks cannot be ignored. In Jaipur camels pulled carts of bricks, little donkeys struggled with sacks of them and in the Himalayas porters carried them on their back with a cloth bound from their forehead. Pots were transported similarly.

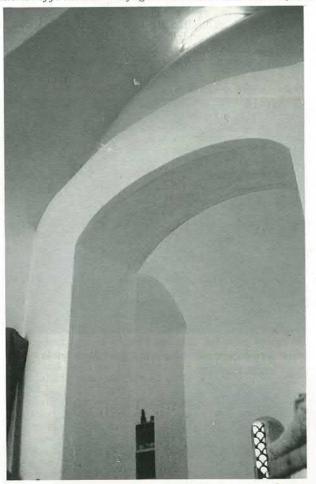
In Delhi an organisation, Development Alternatives, is experimenting with mud brick building. Their impressive headquarters, in some places two storeys, are nearing completion and incorporate corbelling, semi-circular arches, catenary vaults and Nubian arches. These are all of stabilised soil blocks while walls are compressed soil with about 10 courses of fired brick where supporting walls touch. It is interesting to note that DA's 'Balram' press can produce in eight hours 1,000 soil blocks which are sun dried and have a strength of 25kg/cm². Stabilised soil blocks with additions of 6% cement or lime can bear a load of 30-60kg/cm².

Another group, the Shelter Unit, also works on low cost building materials to create mixes of new materials and new technologies with traditional building practises to make earth construction more stable and durable.

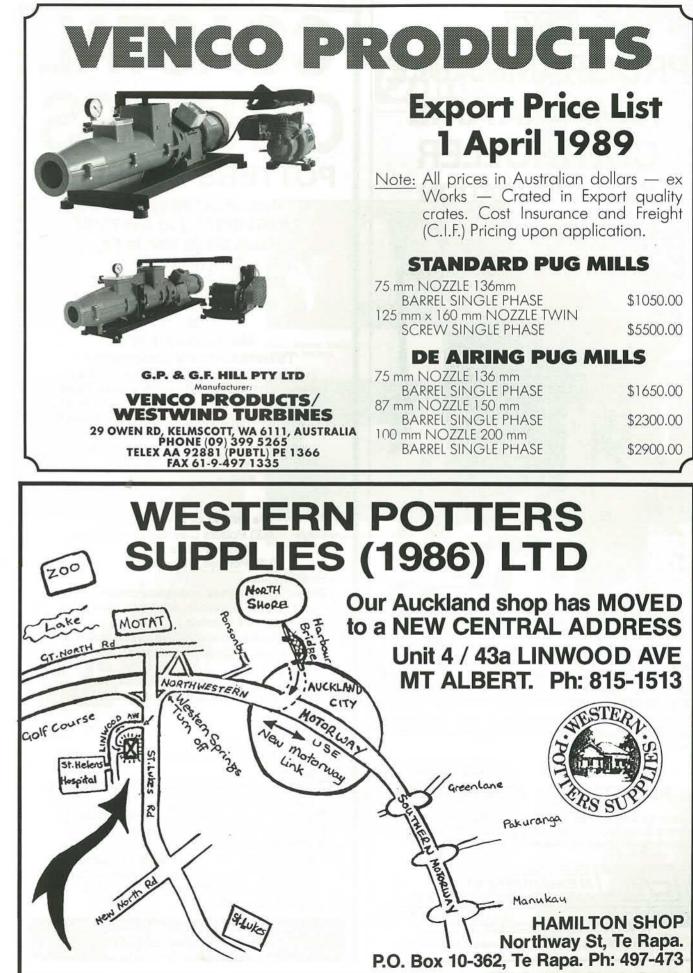
It is estimated that more than a quarter of the urban population of most large cities live in makeshift shelters or slums and in rural areas 75% of the houses are classified semi or nonpermanent construction. The housing crisis continues to

6 New Zealand Potter No. 2, 1990

Interior of fired house. Skylight is installed in kiln chimney exit



escalate, timber supplies dwindle, concrete and steel are expensive, so architects and engineers continue experiments with rammed earth, mud or fired brick in their search for viable low cost alternatives that give better quality, waterproof and anti-termite systems best suited to available resources.



See out next issue for Part Three of Journey into India

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NZSP 32nd NATIONAL EXHIBITION

Suter Art Gallery, Nelson Awards Sponsored by United Group and the Suter Art Gallery

\$5000 Award Winner: Bruce Martin, Hastings \$1000 Award Winner: Steve Fullmer, Nelson Special Commendation: Darryl Robertson, Nel \$1000 Special Award accorded by popular vote to Robyn Stewart, Auckland

Merite

Sally Connolly, Christchurch Liz Earth, Hawkes Bay Moyra Elliott, Auckland Paul Laird, Nelson Heather McLeod Dunedin Wendy Masters, Wellington Margaret Mouat, Whangare

Richard Parker, Kaeo Jenny and David Shearer, Coromandel Jenni Winters, Hamilton Merilyn Wiseman, Auckland Barry Woods, Golden Bay Diane Woods, Golden Bay

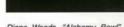


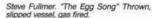


Bruce Martin, "Under the Willow' Anagama fired slab box.

Wendy Masters, "Hillside Group" Carver porcelain, gas fired.







Diane Woods. "Alchemy Bowl" Electric fired porcelain



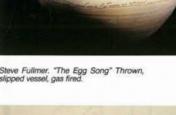
Darryl Robertson. "Storyteller, Listener



Paul Laird, "Boys at the Bar" Stoneware



Margaret Mouat. "Stormy Weather" Gas fired stoneware.









Liz Earth. "Matching Couple" Raku, commercial glaze.









Sally Connolly. Slab bottles, raku fired commercial glazes.



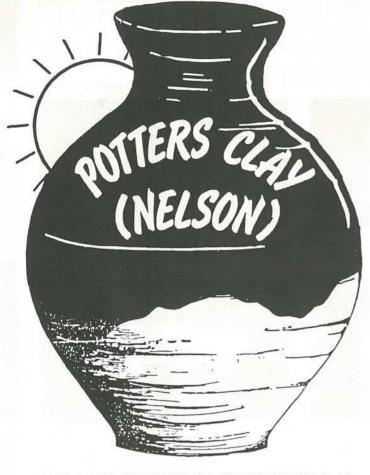


Moyra Elliott. "The Ringing" Multiple fired



Heather McLeod. "Land Form" Coiled,

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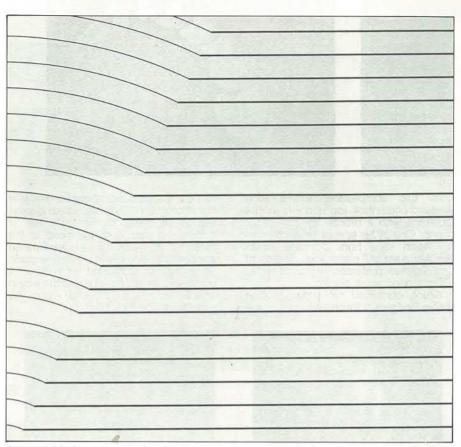
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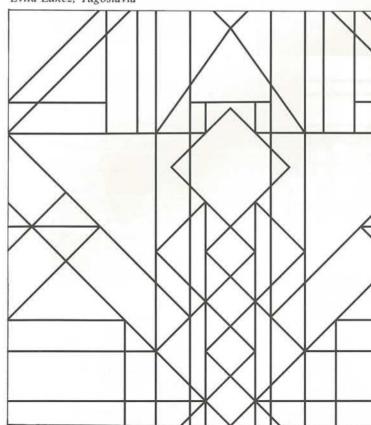
and most Placemakers branches

BIENNALE ORLANDI 1990



Susanne Weilenmann, Switzerland

Evita Lukez, Yugoslavia



A press Release from the organisers of the biennial tile design contest *Orlandi* held in Geneva, Switzerland during January 1990.

"Orlandi Contest 1990. It is indeed fortunate that architects, sculptors those concerned with forms and materials — are rediscovering ceramics. Following the long eclipse that occurred in this century, ceramic tiles were relegated to the role of a mere sanitary accessory — a functional minimalism that has weighed heavily on the aesthetics of construction.

And yet talented creators of every epoch have exploited the qualities of enamelled tiles. For some 4000 years, tiles have been used to cover floors and walls. Archaeologists discovered striking examples of the art in the palaces of Susa and Babylon, and in the first Egyptian pyramids. The Arab conquests of the 7th century brought ceramic techniques to Spain where they were perfected, reaching Italy by the end of the Middle Ages, then spreading north to Holland.

With the growing fame of the *Delft* and *Faenza* creations, all Europe was soon enamelling its buildings with blue and white, or polychrome decors. It was not until the 20th century, with the arrival of the *Bauhaus* influence, that creators tended to abandon the ornamental character of architectural ceramics.

It is to André Orlandi that we owe credit for having again conferred on the ceramic tile its true functions, both decorative and functional. For 20 years, this builder has fostered awareness and creativity. In 1988 the first Biennale to carry his name revealed the immense expectations of the architects, designers, artists and manufacturers: nearly 500 projects arrived from 21 countries.

In 1990 the new edition of what is henceforth known as the *Biennale Orlandi*, consecrates this triumph. More than 900 inscriptions from 36 countries, yielding 1298 projects, thus confirms the truly contemporary character of this ancient art.

It is to be hoped that Geneva, which possesses one of the world's most beautiful specialized museums, the *Ariana* (under repair since 1981) will become a capital of contemporary ceramic creation although it has not sought this role. The current exhibition makes it possible to situate this creation. Moreover, it confirms indisputably that the creator of an architectural ceramic, contributes to the process leading to a better quality of life."

There were nine prizes awarded in this exhibition by an international panel of 10 judges. The first three of these went respectively to, Susanne Weilenmann, Switzerland; Bruno Karl Wiese, West Germany and Evita Lukez, Yugoslavia. Many of the tile designs submitted will now be put into production by various ceramic tile manufacturers under contract with the artists.

RECENTLY SEEN



HOTELYMPIA

London, January 1990 saw the Hotelympia, British Open Cookery Championships being held by Salon Culinaire International de Londres. New Zealand chef Bruce Griffiths who is presently saucier at the Top of the Town Restaurant in Auckland's Hyatt Kingsgate Hotel, was then working in London's Chelsea Hotel. He came away from this competition, where New Zealand chefs took top honours in Hot Cookery, with 2 bronze awards and 2 merits. One of his special creations was an Asian style hors d'oeuvre which required a set of 7 plates and some small sauce dishes, preferably slightly raised to effect a good visual display.

Bruce contacted his potter mother Robin Rodgers of Invercargill who made

him the "Serpent" set of dishes shown in our photograph. They are raised on small feet to lift them off the table, are of diminishing size from the head to the partioned tail sauce dish and are finished in a beautiful jade green crystalline glaze. They can be arranged into different snake shapes, giving variety to the way in which the hors d'oeuvre can be presented.



Raku and salvaged metal vessels by Welsh potter Joanna Duncalf, at present in NZ









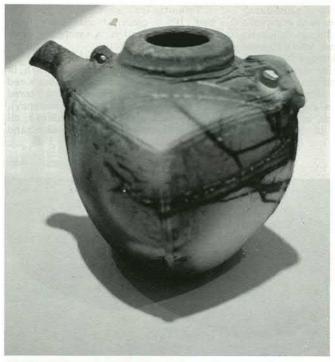


Southland Potters Association Exhibition

Southland Museum and Art Gallery, Invercargill



Rhonda Hall



Peter Johnson

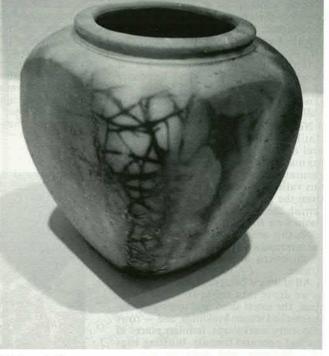
RECENTLY SEEN

Black and white photos or standard size colour prints are welcome for possible inclusion on our *Recently Seen* pages. In order to minimize printing costs the photos accepted will be used directly in

our production process, so they will not be returned. Please include all relevant data re the subject of each photo. If you have slides, please send 9 x 13cm machine prints taken from these (approx Photos by Dawn Glynn



Judith Day



Peter Johnson

\$1.20 from your local camera shop or chemist). This will protect your original slides from loss or damage and will allow us to include many more photos than we have in the past.

New Zealand Potter No. 2, 1990 13

VALLOURIS TODAY

Jennifer Maxwell, Auckland

.....



We arrived at Vallouris, as we arrived practically everywhere on our travels by accident. We had just been evicted from Nice, for the crime of impersonating two Kiwis in a campervan, without all-over suntans, or a Van Cleef and Arpels to their name. And backing into a Frenchman, while it did wonders for morale, had not advanced our cause one bit.

Undeterred by the xenophobia of these foreigners, and our own ignorance of local customs, we headed in the general direction of Provence — via Vallouris, Valley of Gold.

Nearby Nice, and Cannes and Antibes, have gold at the very heart and soul of them. But the gold of Vallouris lies underfoot, in the red clay that for two thousand years has been the wealth of this valley. Wooden galleys once set out from the nearby port of Golfe-Juan to furnish the whole of the Mediterranean Basin with cooking ware. And until the 1940s this area produced *la Culinaire* the terracotta dishes that used to go into all the ovens, and onto all the tables of France.

All of which I was supremely ignorant, as we drove into the town — a narrow road, the usual tired and unprepossessing stacked stucco buildings, and — rows of pottery workshops, familiar places of stacked pots and friendly, bursting bags of ingredients, and dusty people and broken moulds. We reined in Roy, our campervan, and wandered uninvited yet welcome, through this part of old Vallouris, where families have worked for generations — cramped and crammed workspaces, wall-to-wall ware. Simple, domestic, business-like.

If the outskirts of this town contained a little nostalgic romance for a potter far from home, the centre of town was an orgy — every shop, gallery and corner spilling over with ceramics, artisans working under eaves heaped with tiles, old stone and stucco, great pregnant planters punctuating the footpath and a challenge worthy of a dedicated

and experienced shopper such as myself. I began, as everyone does in Vallouris, at the *Madoura Boutique*, where **Picasso** once worked and exhibited. Picasso has been held responsible for many things; cubism, synthetic cubism — and Vallouris — where as with everything else he did, opinion is divided as to whether he was the best, or the worst thing that happened in the town's history. Before he arrived there in 1947, the pottery industry in Vallouris was dying. His presence revived the interest of potters and craftspeople and the town boomed. But part of that revival included the abandoning of ancient traditions, the importation of finer, white clays to replace the local earthenware, and replacement of the old wood-fired kilns, by electric. By 1960, Vallouris was being described as a citadel of bad taste.

Photos by Geoffrey Maxwell

Today, the avenues of Vallouris are a kaleidoscope of colour and shape and style, reflecting the many moods of this part of France — the sophistication and the brass of the Cote d'Azur, the soft warmth of Provence, the careless indiscrimination of the tourist trade warm earthy tones, vibrant monochromes, mosaics, awful turquoise, and pots staggering under the weight of their decals.

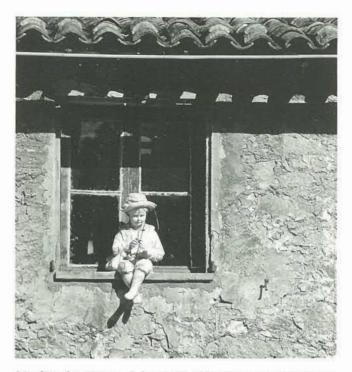
The sublime, the ridiculous, and all that lies between, cram the shops and galleries. From mugs shouting Vallouris in blinding blue, and amphorae crusted liberally with sand and shells to conceal the fact that they were born yesterday; from the painted pots of Andre Brasilier and colossal sculpted birds; to tiles and piles of tiles, and domestic ware in quantities no longer seen at home.

Vallouris isn't about taste, good or bad. It's a place of indulgence — a ceramic celebration, a symphony with kettle-drum and flute . . .

... and the lyrics are written on the land beyond Vallouris, in terracotta earth, in sculpted cliffs of ochre, in the brick-red rocks that rise from the sea like shattered city walls, and houses, fences, chimneys, scallop-tiled and terracotta stained, all created, it would seem by the same hand — all the way into Provence ...

Typical Vallouris domestic ware

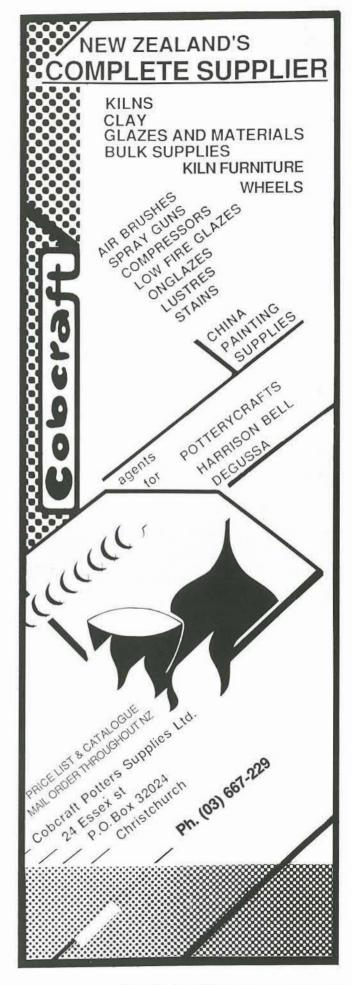




Moulins des Pugets. A beautiful old stone and tile building with lifesize figures of potters on the roof and a child on a window ledge. This pottery specialises in terracotta planters.

Modern Vallouris





New Zealand Potter No. 2, 1990 15

HA, HA, HA, YOU AND ME

Little brown jug don't I love thee?

Our 6th article by **Brian Gartside**, who really just likes taking colourful photos and then making up a story about them!

• I have been re-reading my **Daniel Rhodes**: "Where the glaze was quite fluid, the spots (of red iron) tended to run down and caused streaks of brown or bluish-black in the darker brown or black glaze. Glazes of this type are known as "hare's fur" of "Temmoku" (sic), the Japanese designation . . . characterized by streaks of brown or tan, mingled with black which runs down from the lip of the pot . . . develops best in oxidisation firing . . . to a heat sufficient to mature the glaze . . . the glaze may run very thin at the edge of the piece."

• And then browsing **Emmanuel Cooper**: "A true "Tenmoku" (sic) glaze has a light red brown rim and ridges, contrasting with a dark brown or black glaze... at its most handsome on a light coloured fairly dense body... usually needs to soak at the end of the firing... hard to distinguish between reduced or oxidised tenmokus".

• In recent times I look around craft shops and galleries and wonder where all the "home-made" glazes have gone. The clean, definite and obvious colours produced by commercial stains seem to predominate. Coloured fish, flowers and leaves abound, usually in slip covered with a commercially produced transparent glaze. Bowls, vases, plates, teapots, mugs and planters are alive and crawling with all forms of vivid marks.

• "It's what sells!" is the cry. "People these days want colour!" The swing of the pendulum is the cliché that comes to mind, and the idea is that the pendulum swings so far that it leaves behind or forgets another concept about colour.

• I'm thinking of the idea of colour which is more subtle, demands more close looking, more attention than is given by a passing glance. The colours I have in mind shift and change in light, look deep and rich. They are a mixture of several colours and the result of very exciting chemical changes during the fluid hot glass phase of the melt. These are colours which are formed by the firing and are fused into the clay — they seem to be more a part of the clay body than just painted on — seem to belong to, rather than added on. The word fundamental springs to mind.

• For 15 years I have been producing food vessels and plates with a tenmoku type glaze, with overlaid fluid glazes to create designs in oxidising firings. When I started I didn't set out to make a tenmoku glaze. My aim was to create a glaze that would melt so I could add metal oxides to it — just one glaze that would melt and be fluid at about 1250°C. I played safe and ensured an easy melt by using Borax Frit as an essential ingredient. Over the years I have fired this glaze hundreds of times and with much variation that was not always intentional — slowly, quickly; with 1, 2, 3 or 4 hour soak time; employing different thicknesses on different types of clay — clays from brown to white. But always in oxidisation.

TECHNICAL DETAILS Tenmoku type glaze, in parts	Possible Variations
4 Borax Frit	Increase 4 parts clay, up to
4 Clay	10 parts for matt glaze
2 Silica	Increase frit to 5 or 6 parts
2 Potash Feldspar	for more shiny and fluid
1 Whiting	glaze
1 Talc	Try higher temperature
1 Red Iron Oxide	and shorter soak time

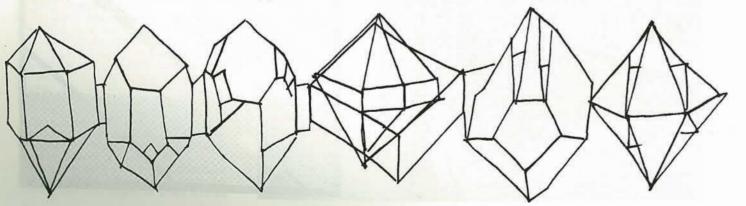
• It's been a reliable friend, dependable and popular with people who like to use hand crafted pottery, and the fact that the dark colour doesn't show craze lines is quite an advantage. It is still very popular in spite of the contemporary cliché "No one wants brown pots!"

• Have you ever noticed than when people are so sure about something and dogmatic attitudes prevail, that the opposite can often be the truth: "Brown can be beautiful and lots of people like it!"

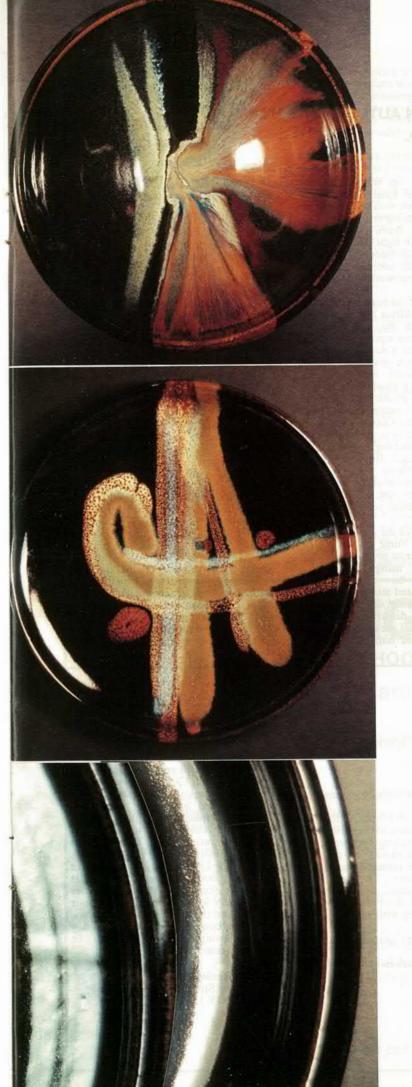
• This glaze article did not set out to deal with the virtues of "home-made" glazes, the subtleties of tenmoku, or "beautiful brown". Its purpose is to document a very interesting discovery which arose from experimenting with firing glazed pots for a third time. Some of my completed tenmoku bowls and plates are returned to the kiln and refired to earthenware temperatures, 1000 to 1060°C. This enables a few smart colourful and textural additions of various earthenware glazes which I have described in previous articles.

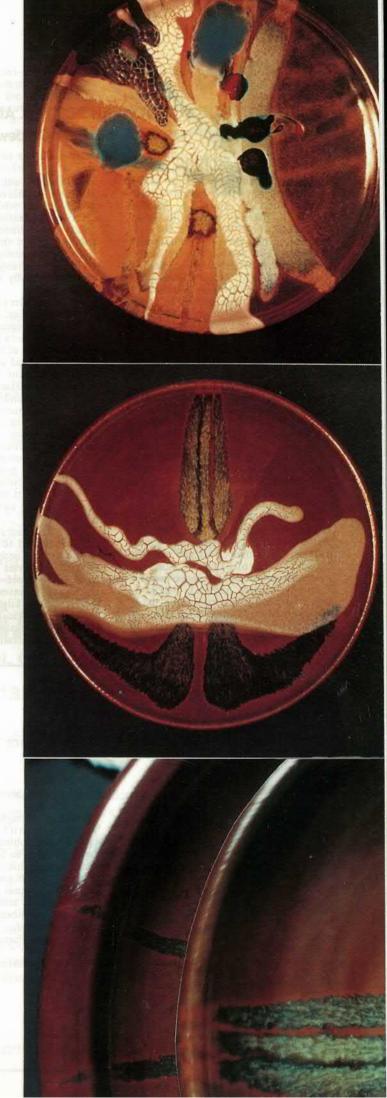
• BUT! Most striking is the change that transforms the dark black-brown surface to an orangy or Indian red colour. In conversation with scientifically inclined friends I have come to believe that the second, lower firing melts *only the surface* of the previously fired glaze, and during cooling that melted surface forms minute crystals of iron that completely change the colour.

• The colour page opposite illustrates; on the left, the original 1240 °C tenmoku type glaze, while on the right we see the change that is caused to that very same glaze by refiring to 1060 °C. ■



16 New Zealand Potter No. 2, 1990





MICHAEL CARDEW, A PIONEER POTTER, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY. Oxford University Press. 1989. Ed. Seth Cardew.

Reviewed by Leo King

There are occasionally people whose commitment to their life's activity borders upon an obsession, Michael Cardew is perhaps a case in point. Concerned with a vital need to make pots, the reestablishment of values which he perceived in work made by human hands and the need to communicate this to others, Cardew's image and his place in the world of pottery, internationally eclipsed, perhaps unjustifiably by Leach to whom he owed little, is asserted beyond doubt in this edited version of his own writings.

Subtitled A Pioneer Potter and an autobiography to boot it is not an immediately popular choice, except for those who are interested in the history of ceramics and those who have personal knowledge of his work or have had some association with him. However, upon a human level it encapsulates the intensity of his beliefs, his dynamic self drive, introspection and passion which are the elements of Cardew's personality.

The first two thirds of this small book (about two hundred pages) is concerned with Cardew's metamorphosis from reluctant intellectual at Exeter College, Oxford (the same college that William Morris attended) to master potter operating his own potteries in the English counties of Gloucestershire and Devon. It records the immense amount of energy, mostly physical, which he invested to produce a very minimal living for his wife Mariel and his three children. The energy he expended was in part, an expression of his distaste for the products of an increasingly industrialised society and his wish to make available functional handmade articles at low prices, which would signify the creative satisfaction experienced by the potter who made them. Against the background of this fight against odds which are not unique there are glimpses of his inner strength and a passion for music, especially the works of Handel and Mozart.

The remainder of the book pursues his activities in West Africa where he was initially appointed by the English Colonial Office to run a pottery at Alajo which was part of the Achimoto College. This pottery had been producing glazed ware on a pilot scale, but had been redesigned by Harry Davis to meet the increased demands of the war situation and a consequent increased output. Cardew went to the Gold Coast as a replacement for Davis, but without many of the innovative engineering skills which Davis possessed. Here as well as the technical problems Cardew had difficulties of administration some of which he admits were due to his lack of sensitivity to cultural attitudes and perceptions.

After the closure of the Alajo pottery, Cardew moved to Vumé on the Volta river where, in order to prove that small village potteries using traditional methods could be satisfactorily developed, he invested much effort into the building of kilns and development of materials. Political disturbances in the region and personal health problems eventually persuaded him to return to England.

A few philosophical comments in retrospect complete the writing of this book.

Cardew's extensive and often solitary experimentation which has born fruit in his book Pioneer Pottery is indicated by descriptive commentary of technique and process which colours and adds drama to the text. It is possible that this was some of the material which was edited from the original manuscript.

It is unfortunate that the period of Cardew's life after his return to England in 1948 is not recorded, as it encompasses until his death in 1983, the return to Africa and a greater success at Abuja (where Peter Stichbury worked with him in 1959), making pots at Wenford Bridge in Cornwall, extensive lecture tours and teaching.

This deficiency leaves a significant gap, but the writing presented to us is coherent and the content allows a focus upon Cardew's early years when his developing views and aspirations were contrary to both the industrialised society and the prevailing artistic milieu.

Included however are some tantalizing references to Mariel, his wife and the mother of his children whose intellectual capability and personal commitment were very supportive, but without, it seems, the loss of her personal integrity.

Exemplary as it is this work must be the harbinger of an account which gives a more balanced insight into Cardew's life by the inclusion of the detailed personal and familiar relationships without which no human is complete.

Reviewed by Howard S Williams

ANSWERS TO POTTERS' QUESTIONS

Ceramics Monthly. US\$4.95 Edited by Barbara Tipton

This is another excellent little book published by the American pottery magazine Ceramics Monthly to add to their growing list of handbooks for those who work with clay. Most of us will know the magazine - this book is a compilation of the Answers to Questions columns which have been appearing for over 30 years. Readers have sent in their ceramics problems which have been answered by a wide group of experts and the best and most pertinent answers to the problems published.

Now the most useful of these questions and answers have been put together in the very convenient form of a small handbook. The subject matter is wideranging having sections on clay, glazes, firing and kilns, equipment, safety in the

studio and trouble-shooting problems in all these areas.

Reading through this book, I find it fascinating even if I have not experienced a particular problem in my own work the knowledge to be gained will always be of value. This is especially true for those who teach pottery. They will find this book a great asset, as will those pottery groups and clubs who wish to build up their library with really useful reading material.

Answers to Potters' Questions can be obtained from:

Professional Publications Inc Box 12448 Columbus Ohio 43212 USA

POTTERS TIPS Ceramic Review £5.95

Another compendium taken from a pottery magazine's regular column, this time the English Ceramic Review. Their Potter Tips sent in from readers have been compiled by author and potter Robert Fournier into eight chapters, each dealing with a major topic - Clay, Glaze, Decoration, Kilns; Throwing and Turning, Finishing and Handbuilding, Tools and Equipment - the latter illustrating many ways in which potters can make their own. A final chapter deals widely with such subjects as floor cleaners and the labelling of materials.

Again a book essential to have in any pottery group's library. It can be obtained from:

Ceramic Review Books 21 Carnaby Street London W1V 1PH England

CLAY BODIES By Robert Tichane

New York Glaze Institute. US\$35. Post paid.

Over the years I have reviewed many books by Robert Tichane including those specialising in Celadon, Copper Reds and Ash Glazes, all of which are available from the same publishers who will send a free brochure on request.

This latest addition to the range, Clay Bodies continues with the quality seen in its predecessors. It is printed on special acid-free paper and cloth-bound in a hard cover for long life under studio conditions.

It is an easily read and understood text, yet is packed with excellent technical information on all aspects of clay. The 40 chapters are illustrated with clear drawings and black and white photos, and there are important additions such as a comprehensive glossary, an extensive bibliography of books dealing with clay and charts showing the chemical composition of many materials, both natural and those made up by major ceramic material suppliers. This last could be extremely useful for potters wishing to approximate materials cited in recipes given in USA publications, where the local equivalent has to be estimated in order to make up the recipe.

Though the book deals with clay in general including earthenware and raku, it is mainly concerned with high-fired ceramic bodies, and in particular is aimed at assisting artist-potters. I like part of the preface which states "With the thought of increasing the percentage of time that artists can devote to their true vocation, this book is dedicated to decreased drudgery and increased artistry.'

All ceramics libraries should include Robert Tichane's books for potters. This one on clay formulation is probably the most valuable as its information is basic to the needs of all who work with clay, whether they use manufactured bodies or wish to formulate their own. With the backing of many specialist people in this field and the New York Glaze Institute, Robert Tichane has here produced an exceptionally valuable volme, which can be obtained from:

The Book Department New York Glaze Institute 511-3 N. Hamilton Street **Painted Post** N.Y. 14870 USA

DESIGN AND APPLIED **ARTS INDEX**

Design Documentation, England

The first fully comprehensive international index to current design and design-related journals - is how this twice-yearly publication describes itself. Volume 1, Parts 1 and 2 were published in 1987, and Vol 4, part 2 is due out in October this year.

WANGANUI SUMMER SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

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John Teschendorrf Australian ceramics artist/sculptor and teacher. focuses on handbuilding and exploring ways of integrating new materials into traditional processes to give extra impact to individual work.

We also offer an exciting range of classes in other arts/crafts media.

Further information from Summer School Coordinator Wanganui Regional Community College Private Bag, Wanganui

COMMUNITY

Design and Applied Arts Index (DAAI)

is THE index for publications in all fields of design, and as such should be in all reference libraries, public libraries and reference shelves of concerns working in all design fields. To date over 200 journals are fully indexed (including NZ POTTER) covering 32 areas - pottery and ceramics, glass, jewellery, textiles, fashion, illustration, photography, packaging, theatre, books, graphics ... design education and design management

Each journal is indexed in several ways and cross-referenced, so one can look up a subject under its magazine title, its own title, the title of its author or the name of the designer or artist. Each entry is given a short abstract which describes the article published and all relevent data by which one can find the journal carrying that particular article.

Every year more journals and magazines will be added to those already being indexed and DAAI will be extended to cover books, exhibition catalogues, theses and dissertations, and film and video material. People who reguarly need the resource supplied by such a comprehensive index should subscribe to DAAI; others who would benefit occasionally should ensure that their local library subscribes. At the present time the subscription for 2 issues, airmail post paid is \$Aus295.00. Orders may be made through usual library agents or placed direct with:

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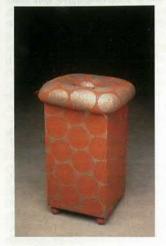


FLETCHER CHALLENGE CERAMICS AWARD 1990

Seiji Kobayashi, Japan. "Illusion from April Clouds"

In association with the Auckland Studio Potters Auckland War Memorial Museum Judge: Elizabeth Fritsch, Wales

Premier Award of \$10,000 shared by: Eiichi Kawano, Japan. "Red and Silver"



Awards of \$1,000:



Peter Beard, England



Morihiko Fukumori, Japan



Jane Hamlyn, England

James Robb, New Zealand.

The New Zealand Potter wishes to thank Fletcher Challenge Ltd for their contribution to these pages.

Photos by Haru Sameshima

Seiji Kobayashi of Japan who made *Illusion from April Clouds*, one of the joint winners of the premier award gives technical details of how it was made.

This coiled terracotta piece was figuratively based, being inspired by the bowing figure. The unique sur-face was achieved by the following:

The cloud patterning was drawn with latex and the surface gradually built up with cobalt slip and layers of latex to gain varying strengths of colour. The latex was then removed and the form left until almost dry.

Then the lines were engraved into the leatherhard clay with a tool, freehand, and porcelain inlaid, the excess being scraped away.

Moistened fine-textured gauze was wrapped around the form and porcellaneous slip applied all over. This was left until the moisture of the slip had transferred to the body, after which the cloth was removed.

After drying and a bisque fire, glaze was sprayed on, followed by the glaze firing. Finally lustre was painted on and a low temperature lustre firing done.

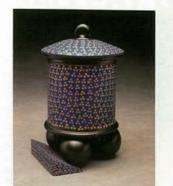




Charles Newton-Broad, New Zealand

Merit Certificates:

Gary Bish, Australia





Yoshitaka Kato, Japan



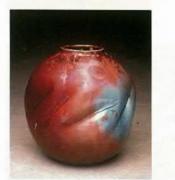
Loretta Braganza, England



Judi Brennan, New Zealand



Connie Hoedt, Australia



Julie Brooke, USA



Chloe King, New Zealand



Anna Lambert, England



Gen Onodera, Japan





Yasuhiko Ohsuga, Japan









Yasushi Mori, Japan









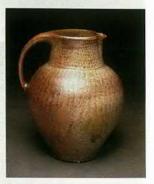
Robyn Stewart, New Zealand



Jill Symes, Australia



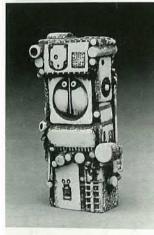
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Gloria Young, NZ



Mieke Selleslagh, Belgium



Seiji Kobayashi, Sir Ron Trotter, chairman of Fletcher Challenge Ltd and Elizabeth Fritsch - Judge

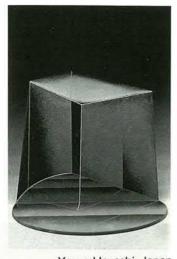


Junko Kitamura, Japan



The New Zealand Potter wishes to thank Fletcher Challenge Ltd for their contribution to these pages.

Kyoko Hori, Japan



Yasuo Hayashi, Japan



Ritva Karlsson, Sweden



Kris Sivertsen, USA



Andrea Hylands, Australia

GALLERY GUIDE

Entries for this listing cost \$15 — boxed \$20 — (incl GST) for up to 25 words. Cash with order, to NZ Potter, PO Box 881, Auckland. Next deadline, 1st September for December issue.

NORTH AUCKLAND

PALMS GALLERY, Wayby, Pottery, wood, glass. Resident potters: Barry, Barbara, Scott and Arran Hockenhull. Open 7 days (08463)7125. Turn left 500m off S.H.1 15km north of Warkworth.

WAIKATO

EXPRESSIONS - The Museum Shop, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton. The finest New Zealand pottery, glass, jewellery, silk, books, prints, cards. Phone (071) 395-100.

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THE SPIDERS WEB, St Lukes Square. Phone (09) 863-265. Open mall hours. Specialist in a wide range of domestic pottery and woodware, puzzles and games.

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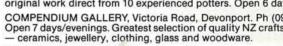
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MIREK SMISEK AND PAMELLA ANNSOUTH POTTERY, Main Highway, Te Horo. Open every day. Wide range of domestic, decorative and sculptural pieces in stoneware and saltglaze.

PAUL MELSER POTTERY. A wide range of domestic ware in six standard glazes. All pots handmade and woodfired. Norfolk Road to Mt Holdsworth, Wairarapa. Ph (059) 83-788.

REIKORANGI POTTERY and Riverside Animal Park, Noatiawa Road, Waikanae. Jan and Wilf Wright invite you to experience a country environment. Open 7 days, 9.30am-5pm. Ph (058) 35-146 (Tea Rooms).

THE POTTERS SHOP, Kirkaldie and Stains Building, Johnston Street, Wellington. Phone (04) 738-803. A co-operative potters gallery offering their pots of excellence direct to the public.

NELSON

ABIGAIL CRAFT POTTERY. Individual work, stoneware, raku, bonsai pots, garden pots. Colleen Malcolm, 38 Collingwood St, Nelson City. Phone (054) 82-031

WAIMEA POTTERY. When in Nelson visit Waimea Pottery at Craft Habitat, Richmond, to view a fine collection of lustred and domestic ware by Paul Laird.

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IGBARA ODO

POTTERY COMMUNE Jan Kiesel, Nigeria

Photos by Summi Smart-Cole

It should have been an early start. It wasn't! By 10.30 am the pale, blue-washed sky was assuring us of yet another hot, humid day. Resigning ourselves to this, we push aside cravings for iced water or chilled fruit as our vehicle trundles out of Lagos. Tropical images everywhere - spiky palms and gangling creepers, flashes of water and the sweep of a canoe. In the villages, human activity — inactivity as the day heats up. Our vehicle is neither air-conditioned nor particularly comfortable, so we are relieved to see the bush giving way to the encroaching cement block and tin pan of a town. Dusty roads packed with traffic. Ondo city and lunch — plastic tablecloths, pounded yam, tepid beer, and back on the road. This now curves, twists, takes us further inland. The palms

This now curves, twists, takes us further inland. The palms follow us but the creepers disappear. Rocky outcrops and redflowered trees scattered over an undulating countryside.

Off the tarmac we bump down a pitted track. Then, as if by chance, in a clearing by a huddle of roofs, a large group of yellow-grey cooking pots drying in the sun; their wide mouths announcing our arrival in *Igbara Odo* — pottery commune. An arc of trees provides deep spots of shade over the textured mud walls of an L-shaped building. We pass stacks of fired pots as we move inside through to the courtyard.

Shefumi prepares the clay



There, in the middle of this space, is one huge well-worn plank, heaped with clay in the process of being prepared. Preparing it is a tiny bright-eyed pixie — **Shefumi**. She pounds the clay with a pestle, presses it with her feet, sprinkles it with water and covers it with plastic sheeting to keep it moist while she tends the fires under the vats of locust bean pods.

Shefumi means "bring it for me", an apt name for a potter's apprentice. Perhaps nine or ten years old with deep luminous eyes, winsome face and a self-assurance that comes with ability, Shefumi gives you the impression that she has been waiting for you. She's been watched at work before. As she sings softly to herself, busy between clay preparation and fire place, she flashes you the odd grin if you catch her eye. How long will the clay preparation take? She shrugs her shoulders with resignation "ee go take". So she will probably work on and off all day at it, until her experience tells her it is ready.

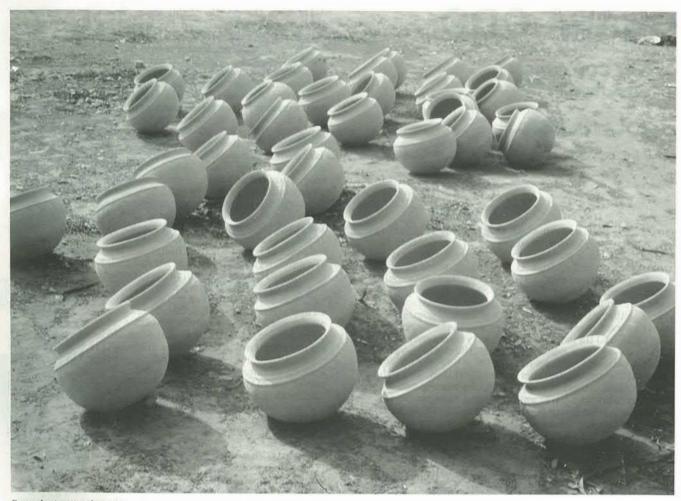
Igbara Odo commune makes large water pots, smaller cooking pots, large platters used in the process of pot making and also strange, semi-sculptural figures with relief decoration. These are the work of Felitia Anlepelu and express the influence of her woodcarver father. She started working in clay as a child, trying to copy what her father did in wood. She tells us this was 32 years ago and claims to be the first to work in clay in this area. She is a wiry woman, in a striped blouse and headtie and short working wrapper. Shefumi is her grand daughter, an apprentice to all four potters at the commune. No one lives on the premises, but they live nearby. They have labourers, other women, to help dig the clay from the nearby clay pits. In the courtyard are heaps of three different clay types which are mixed together to form the pot body. All are found within walking distance from the work place. We visit one of the pits carved out of the bush. Women are digging out the clay using ladders to get down into the huge pit. There are two basic pot-making methods in Igbara Odo. For

There are two basic pot-making methods in *Igbara Odo*. For the first Felitia takes the cylindrical base of one of her sculptures and uses it as a stand. She places an old cooking pot on top. One of her wide but shallow platters is then heavily sprinkled with wood ash and set over the cooking pot's mouth.

This is the supporting shape. Shefumi has brought a gourd of water and the enamel bowl of tools (rags, scrapers made of pod or bamboo) lies at hand. Felitia takes a large ball of clay and throws it, "thud", to the ground. With a rhythmic clockwise movement of the foot, she shapes it out into a 'pancake', half an inch thick which is lifted onto the platter. Taking up the contour of its 'support' the pot will have a gently rounded base — good for standing in the sand or propping between the upturned pot supports of a fireplace. Between her palms, Felitia rolls out a fat sausage coil of clay. She attaches it to the base by scraping and pushing on the inside against the steady outside palm. With more coils added, the pot is literally 'rolled' upwards from within. Sprinkled with water it is smoothed with deft movements of a bamboo tool. Felitia takes a rag and wipes out the inside of the pot, bellying out the shape as she does so. She pinches out a rim. Walking backwards around the pot she smooths this rim with a shiny Obibo leaf dipped in water. The pot is then left to dry to the leather-hard stage before being lifted off its support. The shaping process has taken a little under ten minutes.

At the same time a young woman is demonstrating the second pottery method — one that Shefumi too has used to produce the small pot she proudly shows us. This time the 'pancake' is beaten gently with a fired clay beater around an upturned pot sprinkled with ash. It stiffens quickly and is lifted off and placed in a deep bowl of ash in the sunlight. The rim will be added later. The potter smooths out the inside, an important strengthening process, with a curved pod. If this had been a normal potting day, she would have moved on to make a series of these delicate thin-walled shapes, adding rims by the coil method later, when the pots reached the leather-hard stage. But this was not a normal potting day.

This morning is full of bustle, ripples of subdued excitement. Shefumi has been at work early, sitting in the shade at the workshop entrance with a bowl of rich red laterite slip. She is busy wiping this slip around the rims of the cooking pots with a piece of ragged cloth. Her burnishing tool is a smooth river pebble, which she selects from a bowl full of pebbles of different sizes and shapes at her feet. This is not the highly decorative burnishing of other areas in Nigeria (eg Paiko) but



Pots drying in the sun

a functional strengthening. She has her fires simmering; the vats of soaked locust bean pod and bark are bubbling.

Now is Emilia Aleju's turn to take over today's activities. Emilia is firing her own pots but she needs the cooperation of the commune for preparation and finishing. The firing will take place directly outside the work area and close to the entrance where Shefumi's been sitting. It is a flat open space, a little stoney, fringed with broken pots — memories of many other firings. Shefumi and two others bring the wood, but it is Emilia who lays out the straight lines of narrow sticks, about 60 to 90cm long, directly on the flat ground. She too, is the one to deftly place the pots, pot mouth to pot base, in three rows, wedging them with small stones to prevent movement. It is she who will rearrange the pots if she feels it is necessary. Now her eves dart over them; she makes repairs to surface cracks from a wad of moist clay wrapped in plastic. In between the rows she stacks longer, thicker logs, adding then another three rows on top. A quick count gave us fifty-two pots. Some of the large broken pots, fired maybe years ago and now lying seemingly discarded, are stacked up at the four corners of the firing pile to steady it during the burning down of the wood. Emilia slips more wood in between the rows and lays a couple of extra pots on top of the pile. Everyone joins in to lay various logs, planks or sticks across and against the pile of pots. There does not seem to be any preference for wood type. Anything will do. Armfuls of vines and bark are tossed casually over the top; handfuls of wood chips and bark pieces are sprinkled over the mound, into any crevices.

Emilia doesn't talk much, interested only in what she is doing, she now appears satisfied with the arrangement of pots and wood. The mound has been built up quickly and smoothly — directly on the ground. No pit is deemed necessary, no protection built or laid around the pots, merely a little anchorage provided by the half dozen corner pots and a few stones. The weekly routine of firing has developed an intuitive and closely cooperative work process essential to successful production. Emilia's cooking pots will sell well at the market tomorrow; of that one is confident.

Out she now bustles with Shefumi in tow. Each holds a pot shard containing hot ash, and without ceremony, they each take a corner and work their way around the mound scattering ashes. The ash catches the dry wood. In seconds the entire pottery pyramid is engulfed in swirls of grey smoke. Flames flash and whip up into the crevices of the pyramid.

There is a stiff breeze. The flames burn high. No attempt is made to control or slow the firing down. It is almost ignored. Emilia will occasionally pick up a long palm frond stem and poke at the fire, shifting a pot slightly or pushing hot embers back into the centre. She is already preoccupied with the next process.

Firing





Pots of locust bean pods and bark - the glaze

Rusted drums are brought out from the store rooms and are set down as knee-high stands quite close to the fire. As in the pottery making, shallow curved platters, brown from locust bean juice, are placed on top. Pots of bubbling hot locust bean juice are at the ready, beside each stand, along with a stumpy brush of twigs and leaves.

The fire dies down. The pots stand, covered with grey ash on the heap of still glowing embers. One pot has shattered. Emilia takes the first pot from the fire. It is less than an hour from the time she first lit up. The long palm frond stem is worked into the mouth of the hot pot which is lifted gently out of the fire, swung around and down onto the ground. Another potter flicks it clean of ash with a cloth. The work must move quickly now. Emilia takes one pot after another from the fire, waves of heat still radiating from them. They are lifted with sticks onto the stands. Turning the pot quickly with a short stump of palm frond stem, the potters cover it with locust bean juice. The brush is dipped into the steaming pot of juice and swished over the hot pot, bubbling like treacle toffee and leaving the pot a warm, mottled, shiny brown. It is surprising that the pots will

CLAY AZ ART INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE NEW ZEALAND — JUNE 14-16, 1991

The conference, to be held in Rotorua, is sponsored by Northern Arizona University Art Gallery, in cooperation with New Zealand Potters. Invitations to attend have been extended to Americans, Asians, and Europeans as well as New Zealanders.

Ceramics demonstrators will be Don Reitz and Jim Leedy of the United States, Barry Brickell of New Zealand, and Yukio Yamamoto of Japan. Rudy Autio will conduct an informal discussion. In addition to Barry Brickell, two to three other New Zealanders will demonstrate and show slides. Additional conference events are being planned. Pre- and post-conference tours can be individually arranged.

Ceramist Barry Brickell in Coromandel has arranged a pre-conference firing of his coal-fired salt glaze kiln. The firing will occur June 9 through 12. Participation will be limited.

For additional conference information, contact:

JOEL S. EIDE, Director Northern Arizona University Art Gallery BOX 6021 Flagstaff, AZ 86011-6021 U.S.A. Tel. 602/523-3471 (Gallery) or 602/774-8328 (home)

take such treatment - hot, direct flame, a sudden temperature drop, saturation with liquid - without shattering. There is no pre-heating of the pots (except a good saturation of sunlight for a couple of hours previous to the firing which starts at 11 am). So the answer must lie mainly in the coarse clay used to make these thin-walled vessels. There are few signs of cracking or warping. Centuries of trial and error provide the knowledge needed to fire these pots to the correct temperature. The locust bean juice is *Igbara Odo's* 'glaze', helping to strengthen and make the pots less porous.

As we leave that afternoon, Emilia is still taking pots from amongst the smouldering embers. Groups of these gleaming mahogany brown cooking pots stand in the sand at the potters' feet.

The potters of *Igbara Odo* are quite ready to talk about the techniques they use and, when language fails, are prepared to demonstrate. There is no jealous guarding of secrets. People are friendly but also busy and productive. Despite competition from plastic and enamel wares, there is obviously great demand for their work. They are proud of this. The cooking pots produced here are austere, functional pots of pleasing shape. Felitia decorates her water pots with heavy relief work and is open to influences from other areas.

We are, however, not the only visitors to *Igbara Odo*. There has been a government supported policy to try to improve the 'lot' of the rural women. An enthusiastic action group has provided *Igbara Odo* commune with a new workshop - a long concrete block, tin-roofed affair, about 60m away from the old shady courtyard and L-shaped work and storage buildings. A new brick and cement 'kiln' with metal door stands like an uninvited guest 40m away from the new workshop, across an area recently cleared of all vegetation. A car park perhaps? Neither are in use as yet. Does Emilia see the new kiln as an exciting improvement on her own firing technique? She is noncommital.

We cannot imagine how Emilia will be able to swing her pots out of this kiln with quite as much aplomb as she does from her open fire. She will also find she can't fire as many pots as she used to with her own old method. She may not even be able to reach the temperature she instinctively knows is needed. The cement used in building this kiln will crack once 500°C is reached.

Perhaps she will never use the kiln. If only her benefactors had thought to plant some trees!

MARK CHADWICK New Zealand Tour Co-ordinator for CLAY AZ ART R.D. 9, Te Puke New Zealand Tel. (075) 32-102. Fax (075) 32-102

DIESEL FIRING SYSTEM

Milton Hutchinson, Whitianga

Recently I had a hand in building a small diesel fired catenary kiln at *Driving Creek* for **Helen Mason**. When it came to lighting it up with jet burners, we got the usual problem; malodorous clouds of singed diesel, the stench of which caused **Barry Brickell** to grizzle mightily.

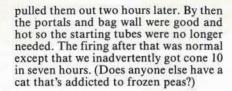
This problem doesn't worry me very much as my own kiln is out in a paddock and the smoking doesn't go on for long, but it's not acceptable when it's next to your front door. So I made some starting tubes.

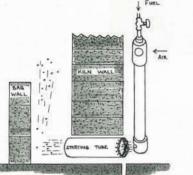


Tube Starter: 4" diam. stainless steel pipe, 10" long. Asbestos lagging laced in with light stainless steel wire.

From 4in. diameter — don't bug me about metrics — staindess steel stove pipe, I hack-sawed off two 10in. lengths, drilled a lot of 1/2 th in. holes around one end of each and stitched some old lagging asbestos around the inside with stainless steel wire, to make a lighting orifice.

The surprising thing is that they worked perfectly first time and Barry even stopped grizzling for a while. They became red hot within seconds and gave great heat without smoke or smell. We



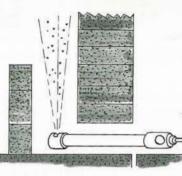


Placement of starting tube remove after about two hours.

We also got around the messy burner change-over, which can be irksome. I did this when I was potting in Perth, Western Australia some years ago, simply because I didn't have the money to make both horizontal and vertical burners. Vertical burners are a **must** for efficient firing of down-draught kilns. So I made up a pair, and to start firing and get to low bisque temperature, I hung them vertically outside the portals on bits of wire, thus making them fire horizontally.

To change over, I simply turned them off, inserted them into the portals to their normal position and turned them on again. No mess, no panic, no changing air and diesel lines, no electric or gas preheat, no pot burner starters — no worries.

It's OK to broach the cask at this stage — its just a coast from here, but remember if your kiln gets 'stuck', pull out the damper and give it heaps (of fuel).



Normal vertical position after about 800°C

The starting tube idea isn't new, most of us have played around with similar ideas and all blowtorches and butane torches use this principle — but this system works so well that I thought I'd add it to the gene pool. Everything else you want to know is in Brickell's Potter's Dictionary.

Now you can look at the pictures.

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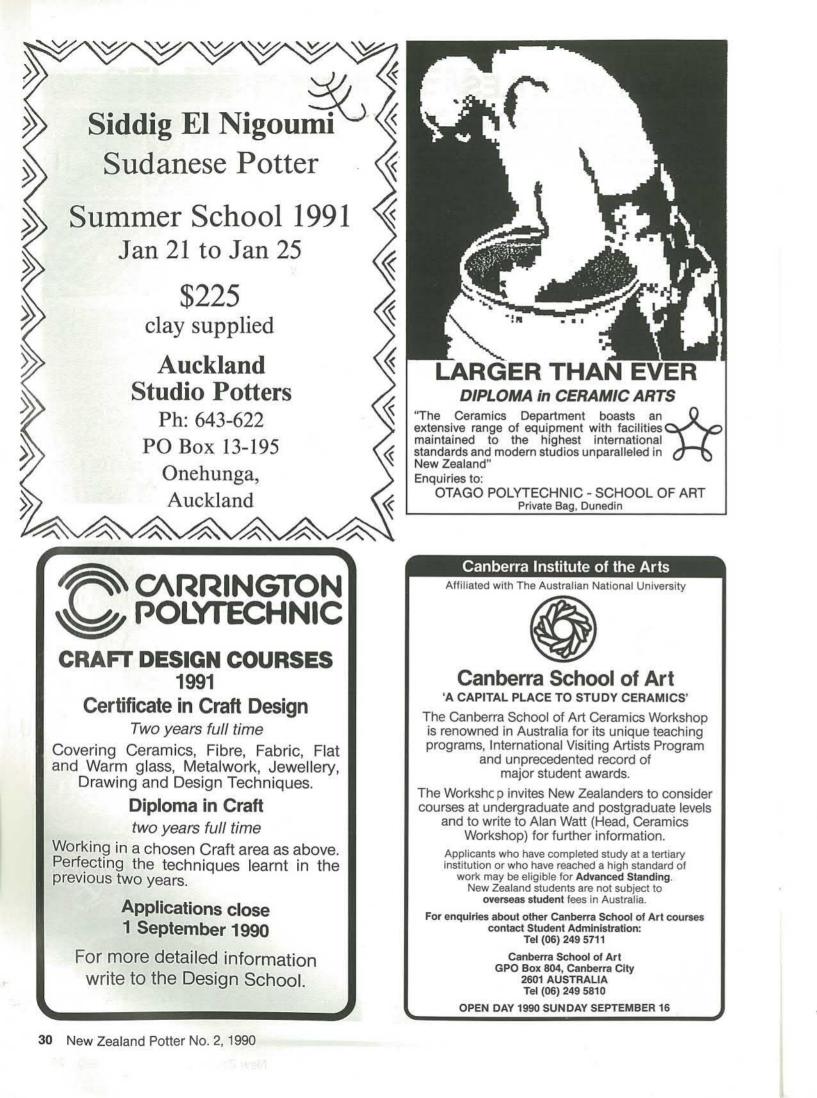
MEDIAEVAL TILES

Photographs taken by Auckland potter **Doris Dutch** in the *British Museum* of a Romana-British kiln and the museum's brilliant collection of mediaeval tiles. The decoration of these tiles was closely concerned with the art of Heraldry. Doris recommends this room to any potter visiting Britain, as well as such gems as the Sutton Hoo treasure, the Elgin Marbles and the wonderful Sumerian work.





New Zealand Potter No. 2, 1990 29





erials traditionally associated with the crafts.

Art Museum hours

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Lower Hutt City Centre







New Zealand Potter No. 2, 1990 31

'RETURN OF CLAY'

NZSP CONVENTION: NELSON



John Scott and Brian Gartside



Peter Collis



John Pollex, England



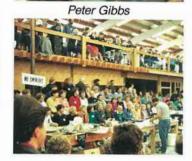
Royce McGlashen



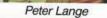
Bronwynne Cornish







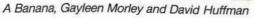






Merilyn Wiseman







Photos by Howard Williams





B. Cornish, C. Nealie and M. Wiseman





Brian Gartside



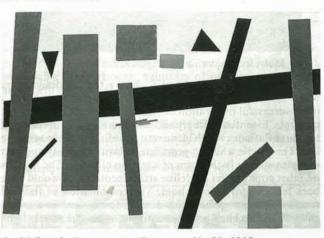
Steve Fullmer and Chester Nealie

SUPREMATISM AND CERAMICS

Leo King, Auckland

In 1915 a Russian artist **Kasimir Malevich** launched a style of painting which he perceived as a language through which art might extend man's psychic possibilities beyond the limits encompassed by earthy forms. This he called *Suprematism*.

The paintings which were abstract suceeded Malevich's own interpretation of Cubism which he called Cubo-Futurism, and used as elements of composition rectangles or beams, triangles, squares and other geometric forms arranged to appear as if suspended or moving outwards into space. Illustration 1. is an example in which the elements are coloured using black, red, purple, yellow and blue green. The exhibition at which these works were shown entitled *The Last Futurist Exhibition of Pictures 0-10* also contained a painting consisting of a black square on white which subsequently symbolised Suprematism and Malevich's art.



1. Malevich. Suprematist Paintings No 50. 1915.

Between this time and the revolution in 1917 he continued to develop the theories and art forms of Suprematism and subsequently became very active with organisations which were concerned with the development of the visual arts. He accepted a number of posts including that of teacher at the Free State workshops and in 1919 wrote a book entitled *On New Systems in Art.*

In the same year he was invited by the artist **Marc Chagall** to teach at the *Vitebsk School of Art* where he continued to gather around him a group of ardent supporters. He was a charismatic teacher and visionary who saw Suprematism to be the visual style of the Revolution and foresaw its potential for the reformation of society on a world wide basis.

Post revolutionary ideology emphasised the employment of all skills in the development of the State and artists were therefore expected to contribute, as there was little place for art as an independent activity. The opinions of the various artist movements in Russia were not unexpectedly diverse and the *Constructivists*, headed by **Vladimir Tatlin**, whose interests were orientated towards architecture and engineering, maintained that the efforts of artists should be applied uniquely to the design problems of industry. Unwilling to accept this apparent repudiation of their vocation as artists, the Suprematists proposed a compromise whereby they applied their art to the embellishment of utilitarian articles such as plates, cups, jugs and other articles in everyday use produced by the ceramic industries.

In 1922 Malevich moved with a small number of his students, to Petrograd (now Leningrad) where he joined a branch of the Institute for Artistic Culture with which is associated the Museum for Artistic Culture, the first in the world dedicated to modern art. He also began to work at the Lomonosov Porcelain Factory together with two ardent Suprematists, Nikolai Suetin and Ilya Chashnik, both of whom continued to work there, although Chashnik died a few years later in 1929.

Through their efforts Suprematism was employed in the production of ceramic articles in two ways; firstly by the application of the hard edged elements employed in the two dimensional art forms which symbolised the movement, to existing production designs; and secondly, by the remodelling of the items themselves such that they appeared expressive of Suprematist concepts. These approaches generated a fair amount of criticism from opposing factions.

The designs which were applied to the tea sets, jugs, plates and other articles, used Suprematist images and in the early days were painted on the ware by hand by the designers themselves. The geometric shapes - triangles, circles, squares and other forms were disposed over the surfaces using bright colours and appear to complement the form of the article, as the jug by Suetin demonstrates in Illustration 2. In general the colours used were red, black and white and in this case the large circle emphasises the spherical shape of the body of the jug, while the oblique elements suggest a spinning movement and a precession to other parts of the surface. The triangle complemented by the line which rises almost vertically from the circle is inclined and suggests a spiralling of the elements from the surface into space, unimpeded by the rim which has purposely been left undecorated, thereby conforming to Malevich's Suprematist perceptions. Contrarily the spout has been distinctively terminated, perhaps to differentiate its function from the other orifice and from the liquid stream which issues during the act of pouring, but essentially to unify it with the rest of the design when the form is in the position of rest.

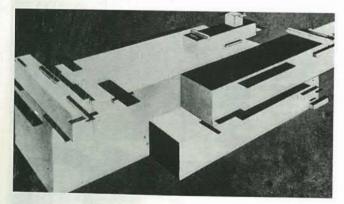


2. Suetin. Suprematist Jug made 1920-25.

While the disc was perhaps of less consequence than the square, Malevich used it, of parts of it, often in his work and Chashnik, working whith him as a designer at Lomonosov, obviously saw its formal relationship to the plate. He spent much time upon designs for it and for other circular articles such as saucers and the matching cups. Suetin also worked upon designs which could be applied to surfaces of items which were in everyday use, but also, together with Malevich and Chashnik experimented with changes in the basic forms to make them more expressive of Suprematist notions.

In the seven years prior to the exhibition of the first Suprematist paintings, Malevich's work progressed through a series of changes from simplified images of working peasants, to more abstract portraiture and works which resemble closely Cubist collage. The images of the peasant workers in the paintings of 1912 are reduced to an assemblage of cones and tubes to which the illusion of three dimensionality is imparted by Malevich's use of strong contrast achieved with a minimum of tonal gradation. With this apparent interest in sculptural modelling, in relief and in collage, excursions into the creation of three dimensional objects is not unexpected. He began to work on these in the autumn of 1919.

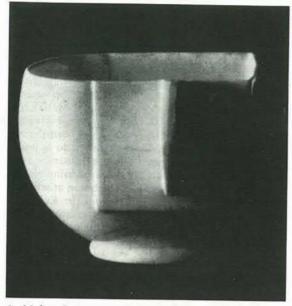
By this time in Russia, the previous acceptance in Europe of the principle of the unification of architecture, painting and sculpture, as described in the writings of Walther Gropius and other teachers of the Bauhaus was equally welcome and projects such as Tatlin's Monument to the Third International was already in evidence. The Department of Architecture at the school at Vitebsk exhibited in 1921 three dimensional architectural models of power stations and railway stations. Malevich's own work upon models of this kind, formed in plaster, began in 1922/3 and the results of this work flowed over into the ceramic designs which he undertook at the Lomonosov Porcelain Factory.



3. Malevich. Suprematist Architecton, No All.

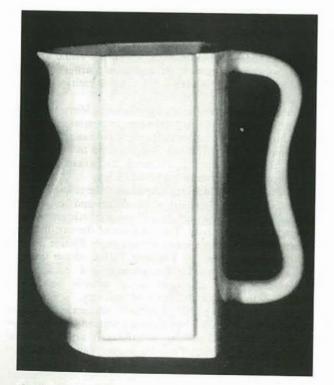
His work on the architectural models described as architectons expresses his dominant interest in geometrical form especially with the square and the beam which he used in the Suprematist paintings. The models which he constructed fall into two groups, vertical and horizontal and were composed from a small number of basic elements, the cube and the beam predominating although circular and partially circular forms were also used. The cube, however was the essential unit and was varied dynamically, retaining its square section, but extended to produce an oblong beam. This Malevich explained by his Suprematist theories as the result of its fall through space. The Illustration 3. Shows an example of a horizontal architecton which is one of the more simple constructions, but relates closely to the painting in Illustration 1. The vertical models bear a remarkable resemblance to the 'modern' boxlike structures which typify early American skyscrapers. It was not however Malevich's stated purpose to design such buildings but rather to create a conceptual basis for architects to develop.

These essays in three dimensions form the basis for the redesign of the utilitarian articles made at the Lomonosov factory.



4. Malevich. Suprematist Cup. 1923.

The Illustrations No's 4 and 5. show a tea cup designed by Malevich and a jug designed by Suetin. The cup is probably a more successful integration of functionalism and Suprematist concepts. Essentially simply and presumably white in colour, it has three flat sides which blend into a swelling curve to meet the lips. The handle which appears integral with the body and part of the casting, is in the form of a section of a disc. The handles on other cups are flat bladelike attachments which would have been less comfortable to hold. The combination of flat and round surfaces together with disclike forms used in this cup embody the architectonic elements but allow the article to be used successfully for its designed purpose. One is tempted to speculate however, upon the desirability of left as well as right handed forms.



5. Suetin. Suprematist Milk jug. 1929-31.

While there is no reason to doubt the functional performance of Suetin's jug the amalgamation is less fortunate. The obvious flattening of one side emphasises by contrast, the unexciting form of what may well have been an existing production design. It also requires the handle, which would have complemented the original swelling form, to be extended to a lower attachment point and has now been given a concavity which in no way complements its opposing contour. The parallel-sided panel which echoes the Suprematist beam creates an unacceptable discord with the convexities at the base of the jug, but probably affords a more acceptable combination by giving the illusion of a relief if the jug is viewed at ninety degrees to the plane of the illustration. This design is possibly more compatible with contemporary concepts which tended to reflect the appearance of functional industrial components apparent in Western Europe. This was the subject of much discourse by protagonists such as A H Read whose book Art and Industry was available and read in New Zealand in the

C. Douglas. Swans and Other Worlds. UMI Reserach Press.



New Zealand Potter No. 2, 1990 35

A CHALLENGING COMMISSION

Keith Blight, Auckland

I was delighted when *New Vision Ceramics* approached me with a commission for a client of theirs **Michael Ewens**, for decorative lighting in his small courtyard garden. The garden was just being formed with the first railway sleepers laid in place, so it was easy to arrange for cabling to be installed to the three lighting positions. I sketched a suggestion for the central piece, which pleased the client, who then gave me free rein to complete the sketches for the three lighting units.

Naturally the actual lamps had to be weather-proof for outdoors and Michael had a sample of the units he wanted me to use. This was produced by *Kendelier Lighting Ltd* of Mangere, Auckland and was model *BK520* from their range of *Beacon Bollards*, though we cut down the length of the metal pipe section to make the unit more compact. These *Beacon Bollards* are made in varying sizes up to 1500mm tall and are designed specifically for outdoor situations.

The central slabbed sculpture was made in two pieces which were fired upright, later being *Araldited* together base to base and placed horizontally over the lighing unit which was screwed onto the railway sleeper base. I did a lot of preliminary sketches and used a calculator to make sure the sculptures were big enough after they were fired, to house the lanterns. Also, because the base of the lantern had to penetrate the sculpture I had to be particularly careful to eliminate warping of the clay in this area. At all stages of drying, bisquing and glost firing I had rolls of clay supporting the bases to overcome any movement.

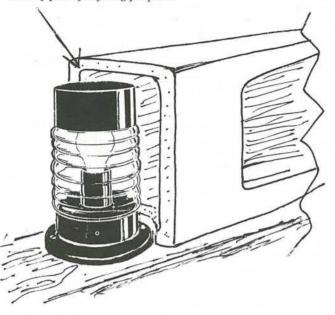
The second sculpture was influenced by the central piece. Its internal texturing was done with the end of a thick hollow "hole borer" by scraping upwards and inwards near the top. Both pieces were brushed with red iron oxide which was then sponged to take the oxide off the top of the texture. This was then sprayed with a very light film of Barium Blue glaze (any one will do), then finger rubbed to give life and a warm brown colour to the recesses of the texture. I applied 2 coatings of a good barrier cream to my fingers before doing all this and of course wore a breathing mask for every operation involving the glaze.

These two sculptures were finished by spraying the outsides, using an *Electrolux* vacuum cleaner spray gun, with three separate applications of three different barium glazes. First a fine spraying of *Barium D* which just covered and no more.

separate applications of three different barium glazes. First a fine spraying of *Barium D* which just covered and no more. Second, a fairly thick covering of *Blighty's Barium Blue*, almost but not quite to bubbling stage. By this I mean when small dry looking bubbles appear under the surface on the third, fourth or fifth pass of the spray nozzle — these need smoothing down with the fingertips. Thirdly, a two or three pass spraying of *Barium Blue* 2 — the third neas lingering in one or more procedure to cincumplicate the

Thirdly, a two or three pass spraying of *Barium Blue 2*— the third pass lingering in one or more areas to give variation to the colour. I spray two or three different glazes to stop the heavy glaze runs often associated with barium glazes, though on my second sculpture of this commission I did have an unexpectedly fortuitous run on the front.

The third piece was a difficult but delightful one to work on, as it necessitated using wetter slabs to bend the clay into shape. It was sprayed with a thick coating of *Barium D*. This is a remarkable glaze which I often refer to as *Forest Colours* glaze Base of piece for firing purposes



Sectional view of righthand wing of horizontal sculpture showing lantern screwed into position on wooden base

— where thin it is dryish browny grey; where medium thick it is grey-turquoise with a touch of mauve; where thick it can sometimes be a strong turquoise. When this glaze is let run or overglaze dribbled, it can break into almost orange. All these pieces were fired in an electric kiln to 1267°C, in a

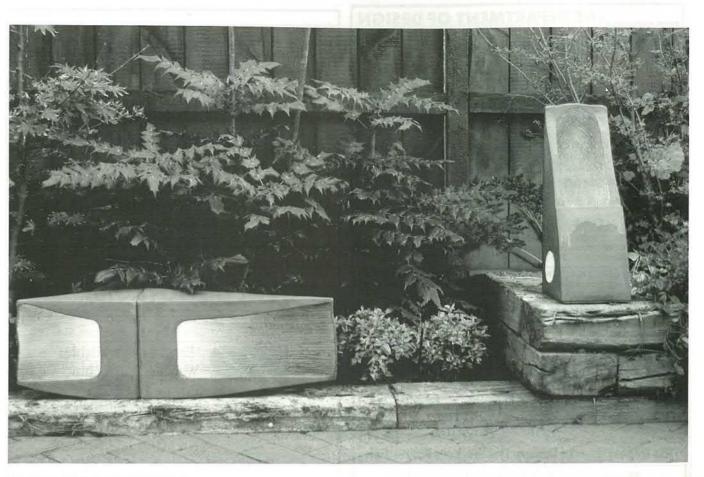
All these pieces were fired in an electric kiln to 1267°C, in a 12 hour firing with a 12 minute soak. The firing must be no less than 12 hours. The kiln shelves were liberally covered with No 12 grog to prevent warping of the pieces which were also dried in place, on the kiln shelves. The holes in the sculptures' sides were designed to allow indirect light to shine sideways and backwards into the foliage in the garden.

This successfully completed commission was very satisfying as it came during one of those "in-between" periods, when one needs the stimulation of working on something different.

GLAZE RECIPES These can be used alone or in combination as described in the article.

Blighty's Barium Blue (Blue/Green) Barium Carbonate Australian Potash Feldspar Copper Carbonate Zinc Bentonite	36 62.5 5 1.5 0.5	Barium Blue 2 (Deep blue to purple) Nepheline Syenite Barium Carbonate Flint (Silica) Ball Clay Copper Carbonate	48 37 8 7 4	Barium D (Forest Colours) Nepheline Syenite Barium Carbonate Dolomite Kaolin Flint (Silica) Copper Carbonate	70 20 5 10 10 4
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Use a good barrier cream on the hands when mixing, rubbing or spraying these glazes. An efficient face mask is essential when spraying.



Photos and drawing by Keith Blight



POTTERS MARKET

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9 bowls @ \$3.50 each, 1 big bowl, \$6, 1 bowl with a lid on, \$4, 6 small dishes @ \$3 each, 1 flat plate, \$2, 12 bowls @ \$3 each, 3 planter bowls @ \$3 each, 1 cup, \$5, 4 flat plates @ \$2 each. **Please phone Brian Martin, Nelson (054) 20-744**

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Applications are sought for the following positions at the Auckland Studio Potters Centre in Onehunga, Auckland.

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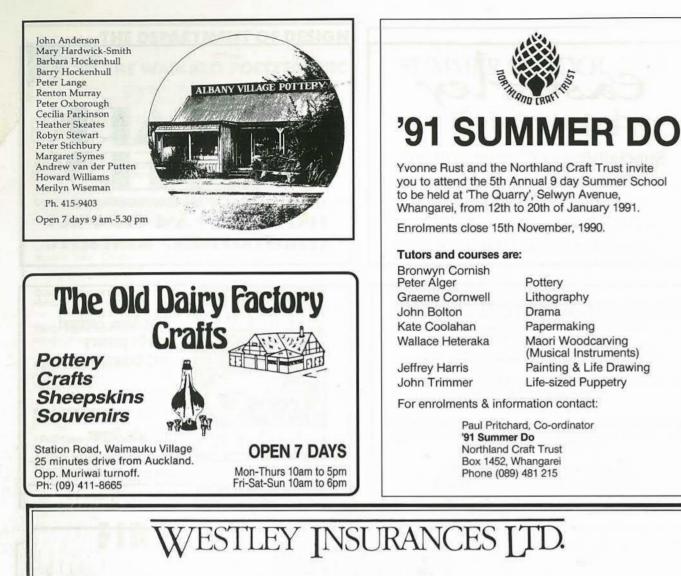
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