



NEW ZEALAND POTTER : VOLUME 35 : NUMBER 1 : 1993

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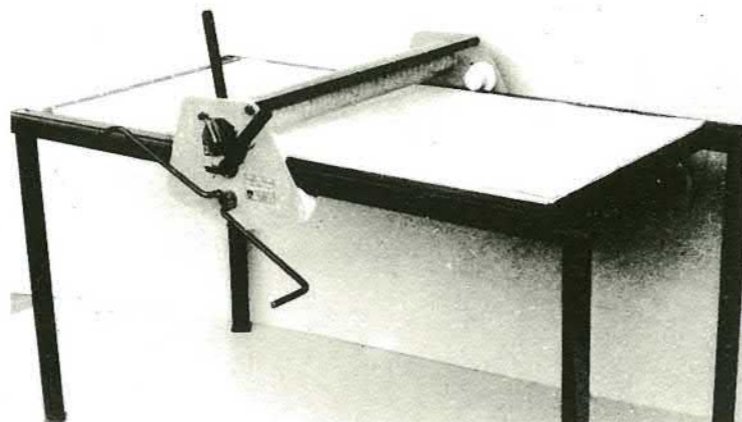
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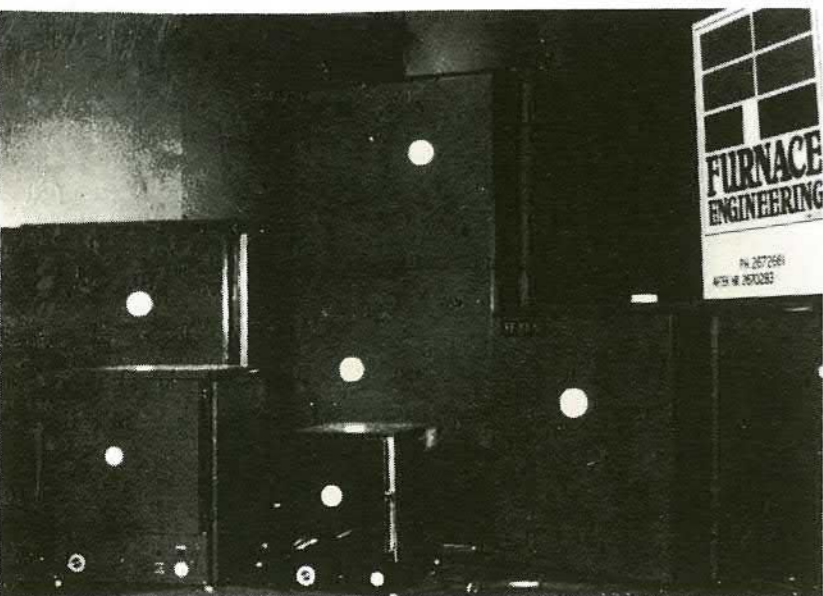
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VOLUME 35: NUMBER 1: 1993

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COVER PHOTO

Detail of flow effect of
optical blue glaze on
stoneware vase, 1280°C.

Photo by Len Castle
see article pages 18 to 21.



THROUGH THE FILTER PRESS

EDITORIAL

Howard S Williams

APOLOGIES

We still have the occasional gremlin to keep us humble. In our last issue it was a photograph of **Gordon Cooke's** porcelain landscape which looked jet black as it was printed in the negative.

The same gremlin took to the photos of **Helen Pollock's Storehouse** installation on page 36. The negative printing of these turned a terracotta vessel and a row of grinding stones into ethereal objects with white ghostly shadows.

These photos had been taken by **Haru Sameshima** who we also omitted to credit.

Our apologies to those concerned.

FIRST NZ POTS

A little-known fact has come to light — the first pots were made in this country as far back as 221 years ago! **Anne Salmond's** book *Two Worlds* describes an incident during **Marion du Fresne's** expedition to this country in 1772.

Crozet found red ochre and white potter's clay, which the master gunner used to demonstrate the potter's art to the local people; "Our master gunner, a very ingenious man, rigged up a potter's reel on which, in the presence of the savages, he made several vessels, porringers and plates, and even baked them under the very eyes of the savages. Some of his essays succeeded perfectly, and he gave the articles to the savages who had seen them turned and baked, but I doubt if they will profit from such an industry as this, which could afford them a thousand conveniences."

LEN CASTLE

See article on page 18.

Len Castle will be shortly travelling to Sweden where he has been invited to hold a solo exhibition at *Galleri Nykvarn* near Enköping. This gallery is in a 19th century water mill, converted into an exhibition gallery, craft workshop, retail centre and living quarters. Residential summer schools are held there and Len has been asked to demonstrate for up to four days during his visit. His exhibition will consist of around 80 works, many of which will relate to the influences of geothermal activity.

Other recent visiting exhibitors include **John Leach** in 1990 and **David Leach** in 1991.

CERAMIC REVIEW

The 9th edition of *POTTERS* is now available from the English *Ceramic Review*. It is the illustrated directory of the work of Fellows and Professional members of the *Craft Potters Association* of Great Britain, and includes a practical comprehensive guide to studying pottery in that country. Its 288 pages give all relevant details of over 230 potters with nearly 500 black and white photos of the potters and their work. Included are such details as address, phone number, type of work and when visits to studios are convenient.

Along with maps, this is the best possible guide to meet potters when visiting the UK. If you are not able to do this, the book is still a fascinating record of people and their work in that country. It is available for around \$27 plus postage from:
Ceramic Review Books
21 Carnaby Street
London W1V 1PH
England

CRAFT NZ YEARBOOK

Another guide, this time to craftspeople in this country has been produced by **Peter Gibbs**, editor of *Craft New Zealand*, and his small team.

From the magnificent cover showing cast glass by **Ann Robinson**, through its 100 pages of full colour, it is a page-per-person record of some of our best artisans in all the major crafts. Entries for this guide were selected by the editor (potter), **Amy Brown** (fabrics) and **Humphrey Ikin** (furniture), so the standard of work shown has been kept high.

At \$14.50 this is an excellent guide not only for our own information and archives, but also as a special present for friends overseas — or invaluable for visitors in this country wishing to find the best of our craft work.

It has some unfortunate colour lapses where a yellow case pervades, and the design style which slices off the top of many portrait heads is disturbing, otherwise it is good value for its cost.

The *First Craft New Zealand Yearbook* can be obtained from many galleries and craft shops, or direct from:

Craft New Zealand
PO Box 1110
Nelson

CLAYHANZ 93

Various spelt *Clayanz* or *Clayhanz*, this is the *New Zealand Society of Potters* conference for 1993, to be held in Dunedin 21-24 May.

The accent will be on "finished and finishing work" with expert help from Auckland ceramic artist **Brian Gartside**, **Greg Daly** from Australia, and possibly Australian glaze expert **Janet de Boos**.

The conference will include all the usual lectures, demonstrations, slide shows, side trips and social events, and of course the society's AGM. It will not however, include the annual national exhibition, which will be replaced by the *Cleveland Ceramics Award Exhibition*, this year promising to be its best yet.

Registration for *Clayhanz* is \$85 with hostel accommodation available at \$48 per day. For information contact:
Clayhanz
PO Box 122
Waitati, 9160

QE II GRANTS

Artists in Residence

Northland Craft Trust — to provide Northland's top potter with an opportunity to work in a "hassle-free" environment. \$20,000.

Waikato Polytechnic — **Steve Fullmer** for a six month period. \$12,000.

Short Term Projects

Anneke Borren — to study multiculturalism in the Pacific rim. \$10,000.

Steve Fullmer — workshop development. To purchase a 22cu ft LPG gas kiln and complete existing shed to house kiln, to enable progress in work. \$8,000.

John Lawrence — Travel; to study and photograph contemporary and historical ceramics, \$10,000.

Ann Verdcourt — Study; to gain practical knowledge of new techniques and visit artists, art schools and other exhibitions and gather information. \$10,000.

NZ Society of Potters. To provide five South Island workshops for **Merilyn Wiseman** and five North Island workshops for **John Crawford**. \$8,000.

NZ Society of Potters. To support the travel, sale and display of selected New Zealand ceramic art at San Diego in March 1993, in conjunction with NCECA Conference. \$10,000.

LOPDELL HOUSE

Sho and Chawan — Calligraphy and Ceramic Tea Bowls.



"Chawan". Japanese Tea Bowl by Ukei Kamata

Ukei Kamata teaches *Sho and Chawan* techniques at the *Aomori Prefectural Senior High School* in Japan. From 28 March to 24 April he is exhibiting his work at *Lopdell Gallery*, Titirangi.

Sho (Japanese calligraphy) which originated in China, is today not simply a means of writing characters to convey a meaning; it has become a form of artistic expression. Variations in line strength, boldness, richness and the speed at which the line is produced enable variations in texture and feeling to be injected into the work. The resulting life and power in the composition has a synergy exceeding the literal meaning of the words.

Sho are customarily hung in the alcove, traditionally the most important part of a Japanese room.

The Japanese tea ceremony has been described as "a way to appreciate and practise composite art." Tea bowls are the most important utensils in the ceremony and considerable artistic expression is shown in them.

Throughout the long history of Japanese aesthetics, beauty has been found in the imperfect (*Wabi* or *Sabi* in Japanese). Tea bowls follow this principle.

Each tea bowl, possessing both beauty in imperfection and reserved brilliance, is designed to look its best when part full of tea. The more profound qualities of the bowl can be appreciated through taking it in your hands and feeling both its pleasant weight and the warmth of the tea through the bowl.

Unlike porcelain, tea bowls are made from a slightly permeable clay. A little tea permeates through the glaze and in the course of time, the colours of the patterns change slightly. Love of this

change is expressed in the term "to breed Tea Bowls" rather than "to use Tea Bowls".

Kamata has exhibited throughout Japan both as a solo exhibitor and in group exhibitions including the prestigious *Annual Imperial Art Exhibition* and the *Yomiuri Calligraphy Exhibition*. He studied ceramics under **Kazutomo Takahashi**, a student of **Shoji Hamada**.

While this exhibition was on, a group exhibition was also showing in the large gallery. Called *Pure Form*, this exhibition recognised five New Zealand potters who have excelled in their attention to exterior form, either through sharp edges, classical shapes or rigorous control of the external wall. It celebrated superior skill in throwing and turning to create perfect form, as well as recognising the essence of a perfectly formed hand-built piece.

Each exhibitor was represented by five pieces of their work — **Peter Collis**, **Rick Rudd**, **John Parker**, **Cecilia Parkinson**, **Peter Shearer**.

Together, work from these exhibitors responded to the Japanese influences in Ukei Kamata's work, providing a point for comparison and a stage for the celebration of the development of New Zealand ceramics.

AUSTRALIA

Across the ditch, another important conference is to be held 11-17 June 1993, the *7th National Ceramics Conference*, in Adelaide, Australia.

This will recognise the major influences on Australian ceramic history since WWII and consider issues for the future of ceramics in that country. There is a long list of demonstrators and lecturers from Australia and abroad, and a wide ranging programme of activities.

Information can be obtained from:

Joanne Pettidemange
The 7th NCC
PO Box 234
Stepney
SA 5069
Australia

KILN SPACE

A very simple and effective tip comes from the *Canterbury Potters Association* newsletter: When constructing new shelves in the studio for storing greenware or bisque, make the storage space exactly the same as the stacking space in your kiln. With two or three such shelving modules, you will have alternatives for efficiently placing ware and know exactly when enough pots have been accumulated for a well-packed firing.

CREATIVE CLAY 1993

The *Humegas Award* for excellence in ceramic design will take place in the Baycourt Exhibition Hall, Tauranga from 4-13 June 1993. Entry is open to potters resident anywhere in New Zealand, and they may submit up to five pieces, one of which may be a set.

The premier award in this exhibition is \$1,000 and up to five merit awards may be given. There is an entry fee of \$10 per potter.

Last date for the work to arrive with the organisers is May 26. Entry forms are available from:

Ann Pritchard
State Highway 2
Bethlehem
Tauranga

WOMEN'S IMAGES

The NZSP in association with *Fire and Form Gallery* and *Waikato Ceramics* will be holding this theme exhibition from 5 September to 3 October.

This year, 19 September commemorates 100 years of women's suffrage in New Zealand and works presented for this exhibition should reflect or image women's lives.

Waikato Ceramics will sponsor the \$500 award for excellence, and the works will be shown at *Fire and Form's* co-operative gallery in Chartwell Square, Hamilton.

Receiving day is 16 August, 10am-4pm. The exhibition is open only to members of the NZSP and there will be an entry fee of \$5. Further information can be obtained from:

Lynda Harris
8a Wymer Terrace
Hamilton

NO MAN'S LAND

The *Dowse Art Museum*, Lower Hutt, is also celebrating the centennial of Women's Suffrage in New Zealand with an exhibition of the work of 45 contemporary women artists. For this the gallery has produced an excellent catalogue comprising photos, drawings and statements by the artists. Funding has been through the *1993 Suffrage Centennial Year Trust* and the *Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council*. The exhibition will be on all year, closing on 23 January 1994.

Women ceramic artists in this major show are **Christine Boswijk**, **Bronwynne Cornish**, **Moyra Elliott**, **Robyn Stewart**, **Julia Van Helden**, **Ann Verdcourt**, **Merilyn Wiseman**.

EXHIBITION LISTING

We intend to publish a free *Exhibition Calendar* in our future issues. All galleries, societies or co-operatives are invited to send their advance listing of ceramics exhibitions to the editor:

NZ Potter
PO Box 147
Albany

CLEVELAND CERAMIC AWARD 1993

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May 21-26 1993

AWARDS

\$3000 - Cleveland Premier Award

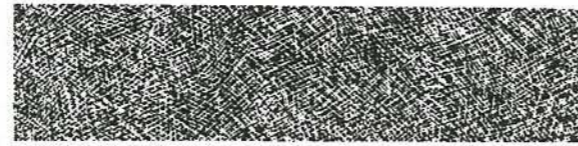
\$1000 - Scottwood Award

**Southern Clays Ltd Award
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Entry form and work to reach Dunedin
by May 6th 1993

Entry Forms available from the
Otago Peninsula Trust
P.O. Box 492 Dunedin
Telephone (03) 466-7351



The Dowse Art Museum

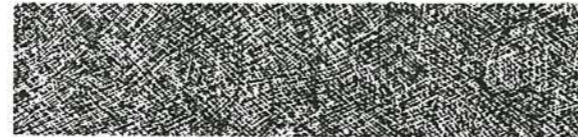
collects the fine arts in materials traditionally associated with the crafts.

Art Museum hours

Monday to Friday 10am — 4pm
Saturday, Sunday and public holidays
11am — 5pm

Lower Hutt City Centre

Dowse Museum (04) 569-5743



BEST DESIGN AWARD

Designers Institute of New Zealand

Potters — and others interested in the application of good design will be interested in the *Studio Stove*, a modern version of the old-fashioned pot-belly. It won the top award at the recent national design awards sponsored by the *Designers Institute of New Zealand*. These awards are granted annually to what are adjudicated to be the absolute best in any and every design category including studio crafts.

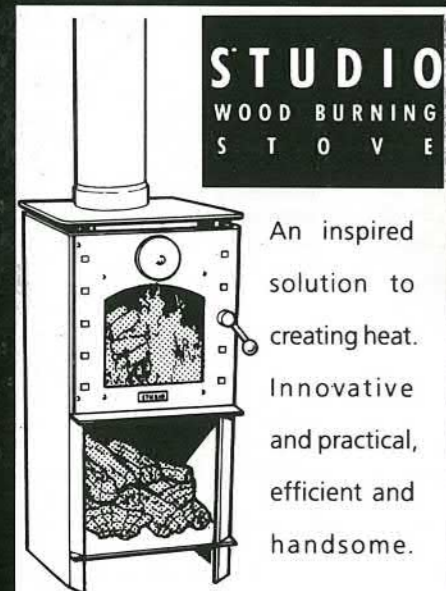
The *Studio Stove*, designed by **Peter Haythornthwaite** of Auckland was late last year judged top in the Furniture Design category. As well as showing excellent design and good engineering, it was given top marks by the panel for its additional "product personality or character".

The stove is deceptively small, but due to a very efficient combustion chamber can deliver up to 15kw of heat output. Like most wood burning stoves it has a large cooking area on top, but it

also has more modern additions such as storage and drying area for wood, under the fire-box. As a bonus it has a good safety feature in its double skin — the outer skin stays relatively cool, unlike the traditional pot-belly type of stove.

Selling for under \$1,000 puts it into the middle of the price range which the judging panel thought was a lot of design for very little money.

This award winning stove is an example of New Zealand design at its best and has become the first project of a newly formed company *Studio Pacific Ltd*. **Derek Vance**, the director of this new company said it was formed specifically to find, promote, produce and market products with a high degree of New Zealand design and production content. *Studio Pacific* is working with **Peter Haythornthwaite Design** to assemble a portfolio of products from well-known local designers and craftspeople. ■



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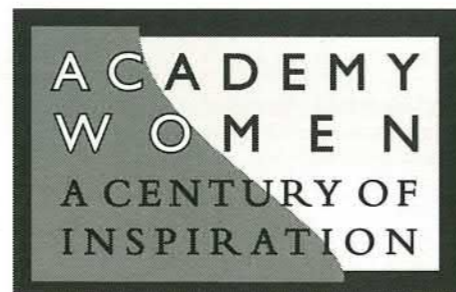


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KERIKERI

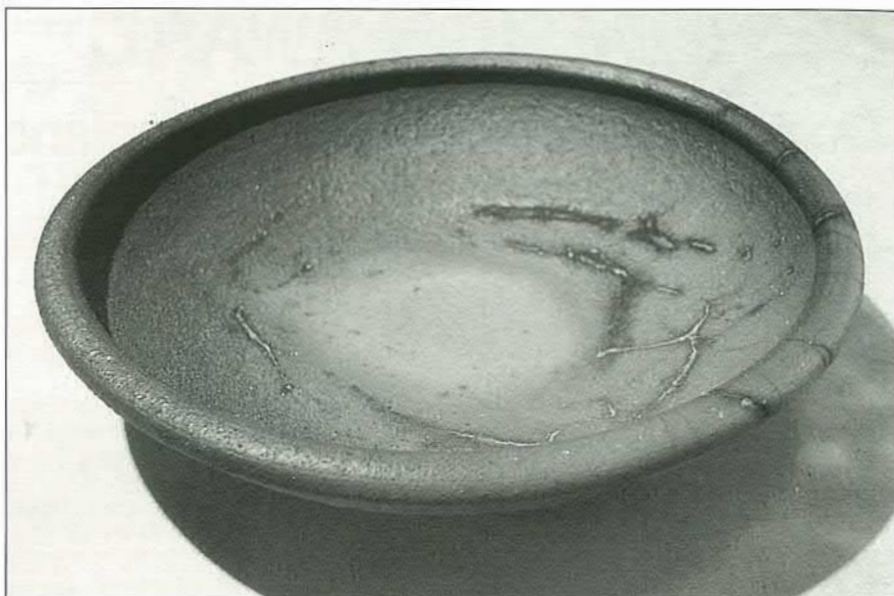
Kerikeri Artcraft Society
Exhibition, January 1993

This year's exhibition attracted entries from all over the country and saw prizes sponsored by local businesses in nine craft categories, two in photography and six in various divisions of painting. Prize monies donated totalled \$6,000.

In the past this exhibition has been mainly a Bay of Islands affair, but this year judges were brought in from further afield, in order to attract more entries from outside the district and to upgrade the general standard of the exhibition.

This policy proved effective — and will be extended in the future — as the show had a very strong cross-section of crafts and art this year.

Its dates next year may be shifted to coincide with those of the *Bay of Islands Arts Festival*, an already widely acclaimed event in the arts calendar. This would ensure better publicity and a greater attendance from the public, increasing the valuable exposure given of our arts to overseas visitors.



Toby Stafford, first prize

Photo by Howard Williams

The exhibition and attendant lectures given by visiting judges in the various disciplines are proving of great value to local artists and craftspeople.

This year the first prize in the pottery section, sponsored by *New Zealand China Clays* was won by **Toby Stafford** for a simple terracotta, woodfired bowl.

The second prize, sponsored by Kerikeri's *Homestead Hotel*, was won

by **Adriana Hendl** for her landscape-decorated raku vase. Both potters are from Northland.

Entry forms for next summer's award exhibition can be obtained from:

Kerikeri Artcraft Society
PO Box 414
Kerikeri
Northland

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CARRYING THE FLAME

Helen Mason, Coromandel

Helen Mason was the founding editor of the NEW ZEALAND POTTER, August 1958

One of the advantages of being 77 is that it gives you the perspective to appreciate the growth and development of the pottery movement in this country.

Ever since 1953 when I discovered the first pottery class in Wellington, and **Bernard Leach's A Potter's Book** in the same year, my life has been enriched.

As editor of the **NEW ZEALAND POTTER** for its first nine years, from 1958, I could see that something real was happening, but its significance was beyond my experience.

It was when the legendary figures — **Bernard Leach, Shoji Hamada, Dr Yanagi** and **Michael Cardew** started taking an interest in what was going on here, that I began to realise maybe we did have a potential for a valid form of art expression.

Then when **Harry and May Davis** arrived with their family and mountains of equipment, I knew we were on the way.

There was a lot of learning to do though. I remember pleading with Harry Davis to take 17 year old **Paul Melser** on for a few months.

"A five year apprenticeship, or nothing," was his reply.

"You'll never get any of ours to do that," I said, "they're already too

advanced to be able to knuckle down to that — all they need is a bit of technique and the chance to see a real potter in action."

Things have moved on since then, and rightly so. The **Leach/Hamada** tradition is now old hat, but it was a sound foundation and helped make us realise that, living in the Pacific we had other cultures to influence us, and new things to say.

Now, in the short space of some 35 years we have our own heroes. Recently I have had contact again with three potters who are surviving in these difficult times, each in their own territory. To me they have a stature and a quality of work equal to those of the great names we used to hold in awe.

MICHAEL O'DONNELL

Michael O'Donnell was born in Hamilton in 1952. After High School he spent three years at **Waikato University** studying Soils and Geology. Here in his own words is his story:

My first interest in potting came from visits to **Barry Brickell** with my father in the late 60s and early 70s to buy pots for retail. There I met **Mark** and **Paul Lorimer** and seeds of interest were sown as I ate out of **Adrian Cotter's** bowls.

In 1973 I left Hamilton and travelled down to the South Island where I met **Steven Schofield** working as a potter with **Christopher Vine** in the Teal Valley, Nelson.

It is Christopher I have to thank for that initial opportunity to learn and sense the way of life of a potter. I moved back north with what I felt was sufficient skill and knowledge to at least begin. They seemed very exciting years . . . I recall having a great sense of pride in being a potter . . . even in a small way.

I established **Tara Pottery** at Paeroa with my father and mother who had visited me in the South Island and were convinced this was a great way of life. My brother **Graeme** also came to learn, so three potters came into the family of O'Donnell and remain so to this day.

In 1975 I moved up to Puhoi to work with **Judy Lucas** and **Kevin McGee** and in 1976 I headed overseas through Asia and the Middle East to Europe, visiting many potters and weavers and their workshops on the way. I was most influenced by traditional workshops where the work was centred on its practicality and beauty and had not lost the rhythm and energy of the maker.

My last year overseas was working as a potter on the West Coast of Ireland, not far from where my grandfather was born. This was a very important time for me — it touched on something I had never really known consciously, but had always had a strong sense of the feeling.

I returned home to Aotearoa/New Zealand with a great stirring inside . . . new eyes, more open, and a heart with a small, but stronger understanding. Back to Paeroa, and a piece of land that has become our place to keep warm — **Tarariki** and, it seems, to defend. A place in which to raise two children — **Jacob** and **Emily**, to work as a potter, and where my wife **Julienne** runs a clinic and teaches therapeutic massage incorporating shiatsu, reflexology,



Mike O'Donnell with apprentice Eugene Anderson

accupressure . . . of great relief for the potter's back!

I have now been working as a full time potter for some 20 years. I have under me an apprentice . . . **Eugene Anderson**. Eugene is in his fifth year and has taken over much of my production work. We are both learning; as I find the courage to explore what is in me, so does he. I teach quite traditionally. Eugene is Ngati Haku of Hauraki — he is the first potter of Hauraki and it has been my privilege to pass my understanding on.

I have a gallery adjoining my workshop from which we retail our work. We also supply shops, I do commissions and am invited as guest exhibitor. National exhibitions I have occasionally entered, but am usually too late, to which some will testify! My work is more and more of me and less of those whose influence gave me direction, but I thank all of you for that. From here I hope to follow more of the confidence of what I feel and not so much of just what I see.

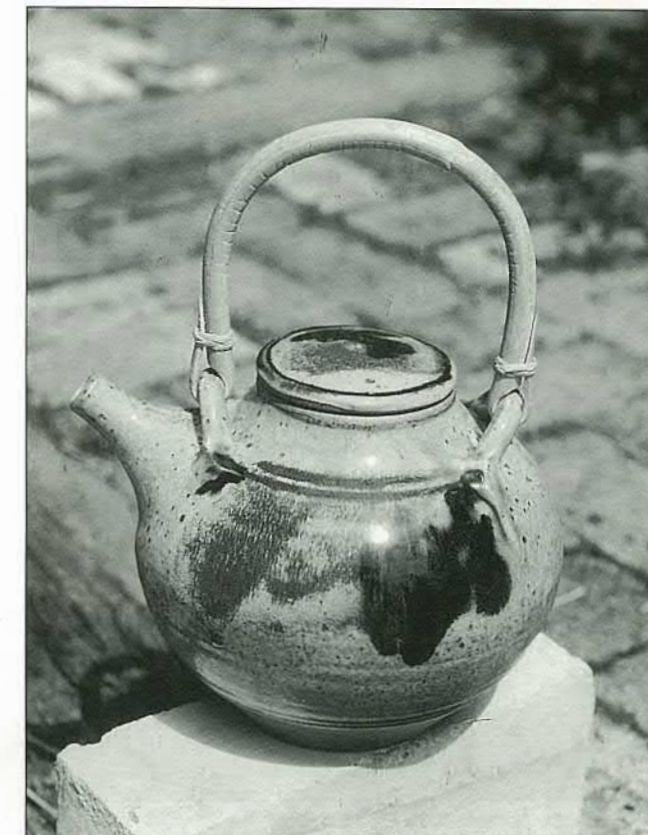
As a potter I began with much excitement and joy in something that seemed not to separate mind from body from spirit. I have worked in production to get rid of those bills, to build a house, a home, a workshop, to bring up a family, to be a father . . . to survive.

It is now time to get back to more of that initial feeling with what I have gleaned from life . . . in the reality it is slower for me than I sometimes care for . . . I just need a period to step outside of what I may take for granted in my work and reflect and feel inspired . . . just to afford that time will be good . . . I think this may happen.

I would like to encourage others to pass on their knowledge and their skills and take a young person on. It is in the relationship, the exchange of energy for knowledge, that you can help and be helped . . . that you can teach and be taught. ■



What is it all about; Tarariki Pottery, 1988



Teapot, Mike O'Donnell

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PAUL MELSER



Robert, Paul and Frances

I well remember **Paul Melser's** first exhibition in Wellington in 1964 when he was 17. His little oil-fired kiln was on top of a steep clay bank at the back of his parents' house on a cliff side at Evans Bay. The pots which survived the firing had to be manhandled down a ladder, and arrived at the exhibition still warm, but they were alive and showed much promise.

Now that Paul is 47 and well established in his pottery not far from Mt Holdsworth in the Wairarapa, the pots are still warm and vibrant, and technically very satisfying. I have made a synopsis of the information he has put into two brochures he has produced about his pottery:

Paul was born in Dunedin in 1947. He started making pots at the age of 10 at *Ardmore Teachers' College* where his father was a lecturer. He continued making pots throughout his school years.

At 19 he gave up university studies and became a professional potter in Wellington, before moving to Featherston to set up a pottery in 1967.

Paul moved to the present site in 1974 after spending some time travelling in Europe, where he met **Frances**. They have two children, **Danny**, and **Joseph**. The pottery was built in 1976, the house in 1978 and the showroom in 1985. The pots are sold only from this showroom.

The pottery is run in conjunction with a 100 acre farm which allows plenty of scope for Paul's interest in planting trees. Since 1990 **Robert Butler** has worked with him in the pottery and on the farm. He and his wife **Maree** live on a neighbouring property with their two children.

Since 1985, particular effort has been put into rationalising methods of claymaking, firing and wood processing to free up time for making pots in order to lower pot prices. This has meant a substantial investment in machinery and equipment.

All materials for the pottery are processed on site using clays and glaze materials from New Zealand and overseas. Clays from Pahiatua and Carterton are blended with other ingredients to give three distinct clays which are used for making terracotta, domestic ware and big pots. The clays

are formulated to give good performance in firing and use. The glazes are also blended on site using a maximum of local materials. Firing is with wood, some of which is grown on the farm. The finished pots are a result of processes and materials unique to the Wairarapa and so have a strong local character.

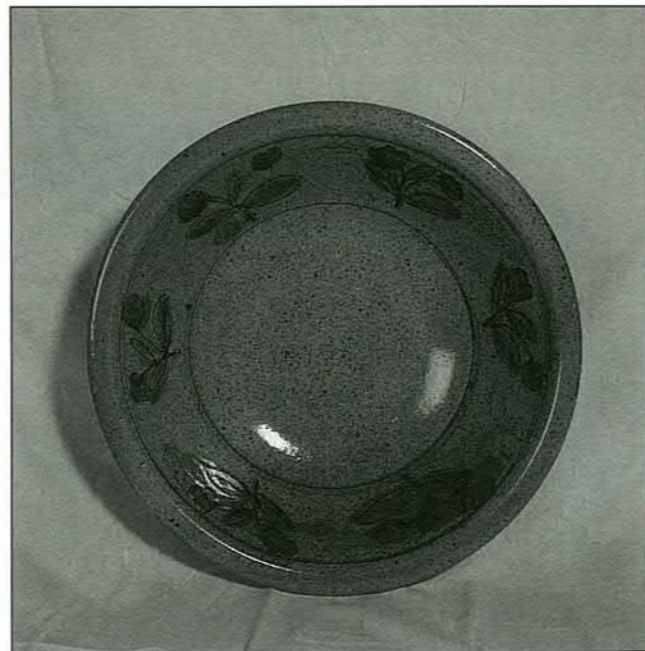
Paul intends to write an article for this magazine describing his situation and how he has extended production and marketing work. I quote, "I feel now that the production *base line* has always been far too low in New Zealand and this has resulted in inflated costs which has led to a shrinking market. I would hope that an article describing the ways I have adapted to those rising costs and falling market of ten years ago might be useful in setting standards which can give handmade domestic ware a more secure place in the market."

When visiting Paul last December I could see for myself that here was another survivor who had used his head to create for himself the kind of environment in which he flourishes best. I wrote to him afterwards with some queries, and again I quote from his reply: "In answer to the question 'Why do you make pots?' I can really only say I have always done so. Since I have been potting so long — I can only say that that is what I do . . . so I try and make it work as well as possible. Making pots is just unquestionably what I do." ■



Paul Melser at the wheel

Shino Platter



BOB HUCK



Bob Huck was born 61 years ago in England in the little village of Honicknowle in Devonshire. The village was almost totally dependent on the brickyard there where Bob's relations — uncles, aunts and cousins, all worked. He grew up in the shadow of the *Hoffman* kiln and played in the quarry where the clay was dug.

Later he worked as a glazemaker for the *Poole Pottery* in Dorset where he was fascinated by the whole works. There were seven bottle kilns for biscuit and four tunnel kilns for glost. All this time he was taking in knowledge subliminally about the pottery process, but he still hadn't got his hands in the clay.

He married, and after working at a multitude of jobs decided to emigrate, somewhat to his wife's dismay. **Bob, Enid**, and their son **Peter** arrived in Australia in 1962 and ended up in Queensland on the 16th parallel, where Bob was employed cutting sugar cane. It was here that their daughter **Catherine** was born, but after finding four snakes (three of them highly poisonous) in the house and near the baby, they decided to move on to New Zealand arriving on Christmas Day 1965.

Here Bob found work with **Hughie Fulford** in his *Te Mata Pottery* at Havelock North. Bob's job was to man the pugmill, but in the lunch hour he tried himself out on the wheel until Hughie offered to teach him to throw. The old man was a wonderful thrower. He had learnt from his father who had learnt to throw in Europe and at one time made junction pipes for the sewers of Paris.

Hughie taught Bob well, helping him develop his style and handle large amounts of clay. He also instilled in him a love of earthenware and the belief that the ordinary humble pot is a live thing that improves with age. Bob stayed there for about five years, when he felt he needed a complete break, and went off to Raoul Island for a year with the *Weather Office*.

By the time he returned he had decided to become a potter, and worked for a short time with **Mirek Smisek** in the Manawatu. In 1967 he attended a *Massey University* Summer School with tutor **Jim Greig**. This was where I first met him and was astounded at Bob's ability to throw enormous pots of impeccable form, a sight quite rare in this country at that time.

Returning to Havelock North he set up his own pottery in an old ammonia cold store. This first pottery was burnt down due to a fault in the electrical wiring, but he started again in another part of the building. I remember taking **Harry Davis** to see him and **Peter Pharazyn**, who was working there by this time. Harry too, was amazed to see work of this calibre and scale happening here (he always did think we were a bunch of amateurs!).

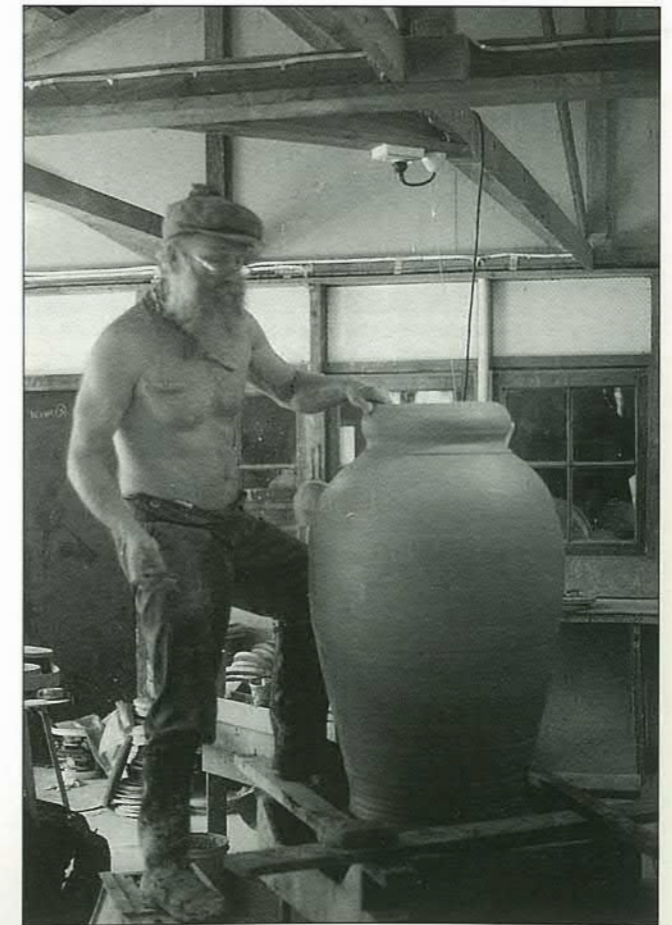
After three hot firings in a row this pottery also went up in flames, and at Peter's insistence they moved to a property at Otane already owned by Bob, and the foundation for the *Phoenix Pottery* was laid in October 1980. By June 1981 the first pots were being made, the clay coming from a pit 39km away at Amblethorn Station, and mixed with local river sand.

Many students from all round the world as well as this country have worked with Bob and benefited from his teaching. He taught them as he was taught, in a one-to-one relationship. The *Phoenix Pottery* grew strong — at its height five people were working there — and its pots can be seen in gardens all round Hawkes Bay and further afield.

Then two things happened; in 1987 the market was flooded with cheap imported garden pots from Asia, and the economy collapsed. Almost overnight sales were reduced by 80%. Fortunately, Bob had paid off the mortgage during the good times, but was still left with a large tax bill. At the same time he developed arthritis in his hands.

However, Bob is a survivor, and when I came across him again in December '92 he was working all on his own, his hands have improved, and he is still making those beautiful large earthenware pots and plates. He feels this satisfies his need to create, and as an artisan rather than an artist likes to feel close to the earth, working with the elements.

Using local clay prepared in his own workshop helps him feel his pots embody the wisdom he has learnt about life, as well as the local knowledge he has acquired. As I saw him sitting in his rather Victorian garden surrounded by his flower-filled terracotta pots I felt that here was a contented man. ■



ANAGAMA

Taking a Closer Look

Estelle and Bruce Martin, Hastings

Estelle and Bruce Martin work as a team at their *Kamaka Pottery*, though they each make their own individual pots. Bruce received two merits in the *Fletcher Brownbuilt Awards* (now *Fletcher Challenge*) in 1986 and 1987, and the principal award in the *United Group/Suter Gallery Awards* of 1990. Estelle has been awarded two merits, 1988 and 1990 in the *Norsewear Art Awards*.

Here they team up again to tell in their own words and photographs, some details of their experiences with Anagama firing.



Anagama is a Japanese word, *ana* meaning hole or cave and *gama* meaning kiln.

The original anagama were built directly into clay hillsides as an upwards sloping tunnel. First developed in Korea about the 4th century AD, they were used in Japan from about the 6th through to the 14th century.

Traditionally they were fired with pine wood for an extended time of between 8 and 16 days to produce a very high temperature. The resulting pots were marvellously coloured by the flame, ash from the wood and the smoke from this long firing. Many fine examples from the 12th to the 16th century still exist in Japanese museums and collections despite many having been through long burial in the ground — a testimony to the strength and durability of this type of firing.

After seeing the pots from a modern day Japanese kiln at **Sanyo Fujii's** pottery in 1978 we resolved to build such a kiln in New Zealand. Our attraction to anagama pots was immense — so much so, that all obstacles were overcome to build one.

The *Kamaka* anagama is approximately 500cu ft and built on four levels, each holding about 250 pots. There is one main fire-grate and three pairs of side stoking ports placed one pair at each floor-level rise.

Approximately 25 tonnes of split pine wood is used for the main fire, plus one tonne of very finely split wood for the side stoking. Over 1,000 pots of various sizes can be placed on the floor and the 130 silicon carbide shelves. Each pot is set with fire-clay pads underneath to prevent ash from sticking them down to the shelf, and to allow colour under the pot.

We usually fired with two teams of stokers working 12 hour shifts. The fire was restoked every 5 to 7 minutes on average and each time another bundle of wood was put into the kiln, it disturbed the ash which was carried through the large single chamber by the natural draught, to be deposited time after time onto the pots. In this way the pots, put into the kiln in the raw and unglazed state, developed their colour and glaze coatings.

Sometimes the team consisted of ourselves for the first five days, then we would be joined by our sons **Dean** and **Craig** for the last five. One firing each year, usually in May, was carried out, for a total of nine firings.

Following our first firing of the *Kamaka* anagama we returned to Japan in 1982. During 1983 **Sanyo Fujii**, a master Japanese potter, stayed with us for seven months and participated in the second firing. The pots made for this firing were based on traditional Japanese utensils used in the Tea Ceremony. A selection of these pieces was shown at a joint exhibition with Sanyo Fujii at the *Mitsukoshi Gallery of Fine Art* in Osaka in 1984.

From this we learned traditional methods to maximise the successful results of anagama firing, and continued to explore traditional forms and to develop our interest in Ikebana containers. We loved the natural colours which blend with, and enhance those of nature in a way that cannot be achieved with any other type of firing.

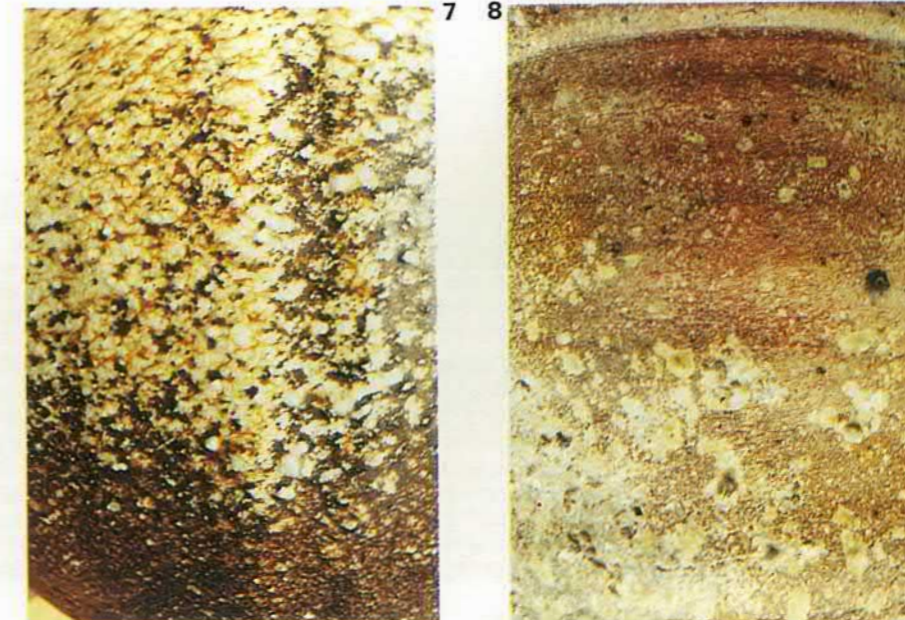
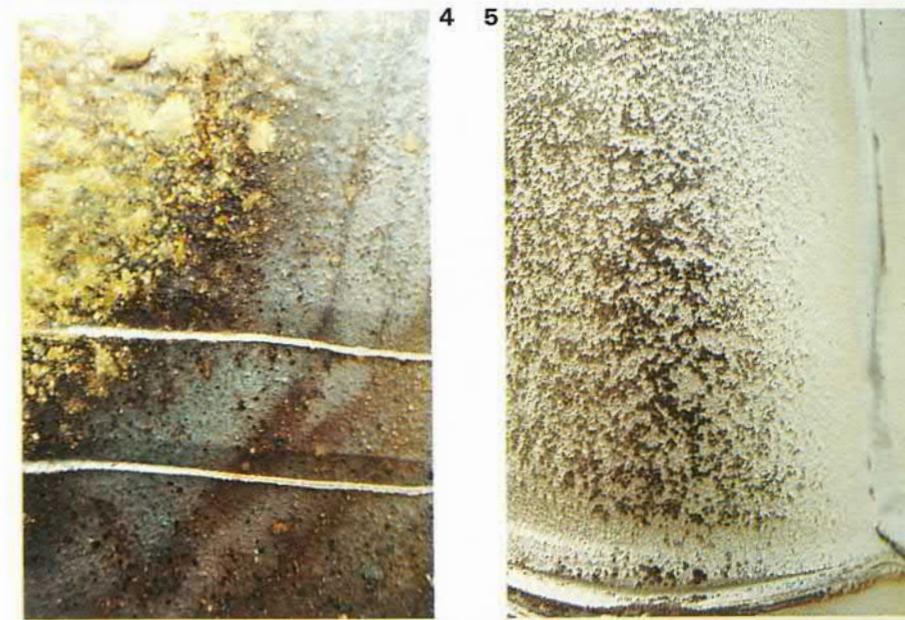
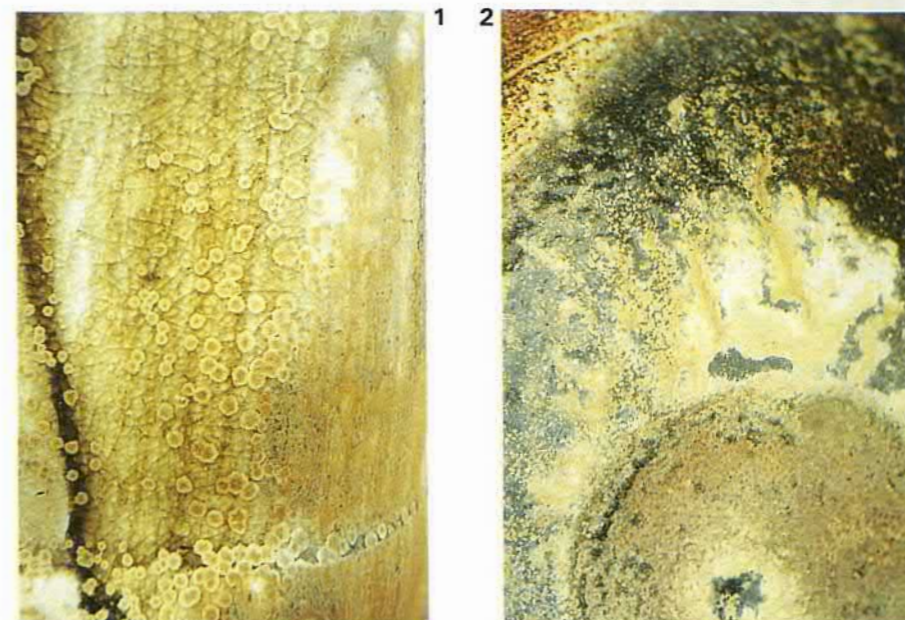
The kiln is quiet now, but the flame in our hearts is still burning for anagama. The sounds remembered — the soft clunk of wood falling onto embers on the grate — the quiet crackle of flames as they worked on the pots — are all still with us. The night sounds of animals and distant traffic. The 4am freight train — miles away, but still clearly heard on a frosty night. The bitter cold of the first two nights when the small flame pulled cold air in towards the fire-mouth. Warm, then hot, then even hotter as the days passed.

The beauty of dawn and bird calls of early morning. Watching the sky. Sheltering from wind and rain. Seeing the beauty of a rainbow through mist. All have become a part of the experience.

Shifts of 12 hours, working with this kiln amongst nature, seemed like no time at all. A routine developed itself and the ten days of firing proved no problem.

Photographs: Taking a Closer Look

- 1 With the large amount of ash produced over a ten day firing, the use of shelves was necessary. On the front stack, our aim was to get a dense white background with a green running glaze surface. A depth of glaze was achieved by the 2,000 or so showers of ash from the stoking of the kiln.
- 2 Three areas of the kiln were progressively side-stoked over the final three days of firing. Small pots were placed in this space, where wood burned directly over the pots and built up a thick layer of embers. Care was taken to stop clinker forming on the pots.
- 3 This pot has been fired in the same place as **Photo 6** and shows the area free from the ash build-up, making it more glossy in contrast to the matt surface. Anagama fired pots are full of these contrasts in texture and colour.
- 4 We found that clay with a high iron content responded well on the third level — the constant flame length burned into the clay surface and "seeds" of molten ash turned yellow over the dark clay.
- 5 A high iron clay body which we used only at the rear stack. Beautiful tones of red-purple-silver were the result of the long firing. Smoke and flame enriched the iron to a metallic finish.
- 6 From the floor area adjacent to the main fire grate. This was the result of ashes and embers building up against the pot. Twentyfive tonnes of pinewood were used for the main fire. Pots from this area are the "survivors".
- 7 The result on each pot was unique to it — difference in position on the shelves was enough to give a variation of effect by the draught carrying flame and ash. The feldspathic crystals are emphasised in this pot.
- 8 White clay responded well to side-stoking, flame and smoke coloured the clay soft subtle pinks. This clay was used throughout the kiln.



INTERNATIONAL CERAMICS STUDIO

Christine Thacker, Waiheke

My adventure into Hungary, in September 1992, to work at the *International Experimental Ceramics Studio*, began with a boat journey along the River Danube from Vienna to Budapest. If you want to experience what remains of the romance of the Austro-Hungarian empire, this manner of arriving at Budapest is the way.

From the very large Eiffel-designed Nyugati railway station, a 1½-hour train journey south brings you to Kecskemet, located on the edge of a vast expanse of fertile land known as the Puzsta, or great plain.

The studio, less than one kilometre from the city centre, comprises administration and accommodation buildings, a superbly comprehensive library, up to 10 technical and individual work studios, along with a building for student accommodation and teaching. There is a large kiln shed with wood-firing, gas and electric kilns and a glaze-technology area. In the grassed yards are two salt kilns, a small wood-firing kiln and a number of clay sculptures and assemblages.

A charismatic director and a group of able and helpful technical assistants complete the inventory of features, facilities and staff within the high-walled, white-washed compound sometimes referred to as an island. And so it is, from which ventures to the markets, numerous galleries (naive art, toy museum with a tribute to **Rubik** and the cube, ethnographic museum, etc), the town square and its environs serve to remind that this ceramics enclave is in the heart of an interesting country and culture.



Wood-fired figure by Gyorgy Fusz

The studio was planned in 1973 and operational by 1977, under the visionary guidance of Hungarian artist and studio director **Janos Probstner**, with funding from the state-initiated cultural decentralisation programme.

Probstner's idea went beyond state sponsorship to an autonomy made possible by developing a factory adjacent to the experimental studio which would create profits to fund studio activities. This entrepreneurialism was curtailed when the factory was annexed by the county administration.



Ceramic sculpture by Vaclav Serak

These days the ICS has departmental status with the *Hungarian School of Applied Art*, providing teaching programmes for post-graduate students which included at the time of my visit, masters students from Norway and Iceland. Others in residence were invited scholarship holders of international distinction: **Vaclav Serak** from the Czech Republic, and **Peteris Martinsons**, from Latvia. Both of these artists were intermittently absent from the studio as they maintained professorial commitments in their homelands.

Janos Probstner emphasises the protean nature of the studio and its objectives which are far, wide and flexible. As one who has lived through radical political changes he recognises the studio must be adaptable to prevailing economic and social conditions.

"Art and life are always changing," says Probstner, adding that he would like the studio to develop into what he calls a "free academia" where people can learn through creative association.

The first international workshop was held in 1980, membership of the *International Academy of Ceramics* began in 1983, and since that time well over 100 artists from more than 30 countries have attended, along with many Hungarian artists who have benefited from the studio's existence.

At the time of my visit the studio was undertaking its first bronze casting with a view to establishing foundry facilities. The first piece was one of Hungarian (now living in Germany) artist Sandor Kecskemeti's *Pieta* series and it is a success.

There is talk also of setting up a glass studio. In Hungary too, it seems, there is resistance to paying high prices for clay work; the diminished value of the material is seen before the artistic value of the idea.

Everyone is busy at the studio: courtyards are being cleaned, lawns mowed, kilns fired, politicians and twin-city dignitaries are being escorted and introduced, birthdays celebrated, exhibitions organised, greetings extended and farewells observed.

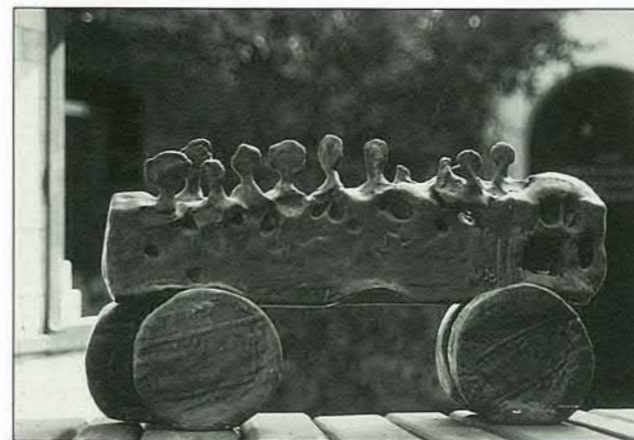
A group of third-year Icelandic arts students and their tutor, and scholarship artist, **Jona Gudvardardottir**, are firing every technique the studio offers: blue/black/green smoke, sparks, flames and eventually gems and interesting experiments emerge from the kilns.



Maria Geszler tends to a salt firing

Maria Geszler arrives from her home in western Hungary for three days of activity and excitement around the firing of the largest, three-chambered salt kiln (built in Hungary, by a Frenchman, to a Japanese design, so I'm told). She makes figurative forms of regal stance, large and small, cast and altered; some swaddled, wrapped, painted, some with applied photographic decals. After successful and successive salt firings an other-worldly, soft iridescence is achieved.

Gyorgy Fusz creates large primordial and mythical figures along with head and shoulder forms, cast from life, every feature loaded with contemporary and cultural import; dramatic and significant.



Sculptural piece by Sandor Kecskemeti

Sandor Kecskemeti arrives to work on a monumental (around two metres) 3-figure *Pieta* variation. It is built up from a large lattice frame with coarse grogged clay, then defined in a vigorous graphic manner with chisel-aided cuts, slashes and deft, knowing prods with a broken brick. Pathos, in the hands of Sandor Kecskemeti, is achieved this way.

These three, among others, are visiting teachers at the studio with its connections to the school of applied art at Budapest.

In October, 1992, the studio opened a new gallery which will feature changing exhibitions drawn, by invited curators,

from its collection of national and international works (in excess of 1500).

The studio hosts symposia and in 1991 was the venue for the well-documented East/West symposium where around 16 ceramic artists from everywhere compared ideologies and inspirations.

Above all the ICS provides a climate for creative experimentation. Every piece of work made is a test, an exercise in learning. As **Peteris Martinsons** says of a typically fine, very large, slab-rolled, porcelain, architectonic form he has just made, "it is a test, it is a big test."

This I learned. While working at the studio everything I knew was challenged by the variations in materials. My first week was spent working confidently on forms in the manner I know.

In the second week confidence wavered with unsatisfactory results from slip-painted test-fired pieces.

In the third week I experimented with a body slip which, with the help of dextrin (sugar glue) could be applied to scraped and sanded, bone-dry green ware.

In the fourth week: satisfactory results, confidence restored and knowledge extended.

I learned that the clay was different... the very air was different, but new problems produced new, surprising solutions and, along with the friendliness and generosity encountered, it all contributed to a most positive, memorable experience.



Birthday lunch at ceramics studio. Director Janos Probstner on left

Attendance at the ICS is possible by scholarship award, or invitation, by a self-maintenance and funding programme or as part of a self-funded group educational programme. Inquiries may be directed to:

The International Ceramic Studio
H-6000 Kecskemet,
Lugossy I.u.1.P Box 18
Hungary
Ph 00/36/76/20-367

I wish to acknowledge assistance from QEII Arts Council of New Zealand to travel to Hungary to work at the *International Ceramics Studio* at Kecskemet. ■

THE MUG SHOW

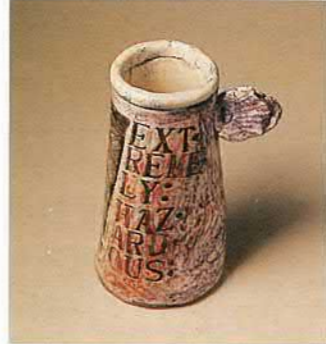
Lopdell House, Titirangi
Titirangi Community Arts Councils Project, December 1992

Judge: Jacqueline Fahey

Most Outstanding Mugs: Peter Lange
Special Choice Award: Margaret Sumich

Awards sponsored by Portage Licensing Trust

Waitakere City Artist Award: Cathy Kenkel
Merits: Ami Newby and Susan Jowsey



Hilary Kerod
"Extremely Hazardous Mug"



Wendy Lifton
"Majolica NZ Style"



Ami Newby
"Skins of a kind" Cowhide, Barramundi



Catherine Dawson
"Muggy Feet"



Peter Lange
"Slipcast Terracotta"



Phil Tchernegovski
"Waitakere Roadside Inorganic Recycled"



Hilary Kerod
"Fairly 'armless Mug'"



Margaret Sumich
"Raku Trophy 'Elevating the Mug'"



Jenny Price
"Blue Processional Mugs" Stoneware



Elizabeth Steiner
"Muehlenbeckia Mug"



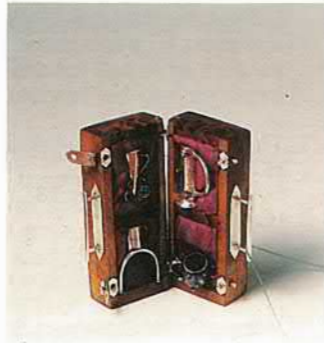
Dairne Jones
"Coffee Beans"



Susan Jowsey
"My thirst is Metaphysical" Paper, wire



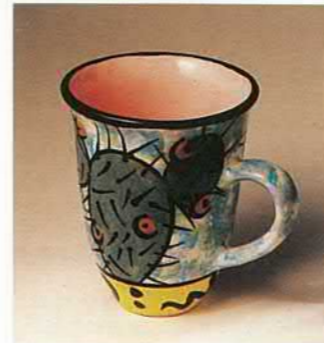
Cathy Kenkel
"Pair for Revelling" Paper Mache



Tania Patterson
"Box Set of 4 Mugs" Silver, Silk, Titanium



Brendan Adams
"Breakfast Set" Slipcast



Scott Hockenhull
"Cactus Mug" Slipcast

Photographs by Howard Williams

CRAFT POTTERS NELSON INC.

19th Annual Exhibition, August 1992

Opened by Tasman Mayor
Kerry Marshall

Guest Potters

Raewyn Atkinson, Wellington
David Walker, Akaroa

Photos by Bob Heatherbell



Alan Ballard "Fish Platter"



Raewyn Atkinson Square platter



Raewyn Atkinson "Iris Bowl"



Margaret Baxter Teapot



Ralph Hetzel "Nelson" plate



David Walker "Landscape" vase



Keith Smith Gold lustre vase



David Walker "Story of suggestion"



Bob Heatherbell "Claybirds" chun glaze



Vic Evans Raku basket



Royce McGlashen "Wild Strawberry", "Summer" jugs

THE RESTLESS EARTH TOUCHES ME

A commissioned exhibition of pottery and photography by Len Castle, relating to geothermal activity.

Len Castle, Titirangi

In my pottery, my mind has often focussed consciously or sub-consciously on natural phenomena. As a potter who works with fire as a partner and one of his tools for creation, an interest in volcanic activity was a natural development.

During the past four years I have been passionately involved in explorations of the geothermal areas of the central North Island.

In that geothermal hinterland between sky and the subterranean are marks left by the feverish exhalations of volcanic activity. Volcanoes and their associated features of lava flows, ash deposits, explosion craters and hot springs form an important and fascinating part of our landscape.

Sometimes ephemeral, but usually evolving slowly are forms, deposits of minerals as efflorescences, crystals or precipitates that create panoplies of texture, colour and pattern. This is a world largely unknown. The casual observer passes by, eyes focussed elsewhere.

It is also an art gallery filled with a variety of nature's treasures thrust to the surface from subterranean crucibles by steam, boiling water and gases. It is a gallery full of stimuli for designers and worthy of the attention of artists.

Theo Schoon the artist introduced me to this world and now I explore it alone. It is my desire to bring it to the attention of a wider audience.

I record images of this activity with my camera, often revisiting an area at different seasons because certain phenomena are in a state of flux, affected by changes in temperature and the water content of their immediate environment. Some of the images shown cover an area as small as a matchbox top. These 'close-ups' are carefully composed as abstract images. Compositional possibilities abound — for me this is a valuable learning experience.

Over the years I have noticed in my kiln, a similarity between volcanic-geothermal forces of nature and some glazes when heated to a fever pitch of molecular activity. I have used these effects as part of the statement in my work during recent years. With 'mineral separation' glazes I have to think ahead in terms of unrevealed visual metaphors. Varying thicknesses of glaze, nature of the kiln atmosphere,

type of underglaze, method of glaze application, plus the mineral character of the glaze, all play roles in producing the final effect.

One of my favourite glazes fired at 1250-1300°C depends upon copper oxide as the colorant, plus tin oxide and zinc oxide combinations to produce 'separation' effects. The boric oxide and calcium oxide contents of the mineral colemanite produce separate fluxing reactions at different temperatures. The final effect is a mottling that can be enhanced by varying the glaze thickness.

Many glaze effects produced in the kiln by eruptions, flow, cracking, crawling, blistering and separations need to be contained and restricted within bowl or dish forms, so there is a greater number of these forms in my work. Bowls are of especial significance to me. They are widely used by all cultures throughout human history and their circular outlines are symbolically suggestive. The circle is an important symbol of the psyche, it points to completeness and ultimate wholeness.

Many of my unglazed forms have pronounced textures characterised by surface cracking, a response to the seasonal drying of geothermal muds.

So visits to geothermal areas stimulate certain facets of my work and discoveries in the kiln intensify my desire to find more amongst these restless areas of our landscape.



The sequential pattern of cracking sinter, formed as the overflow from a now extinct hot spring. Waiotapu, autumn 1990



Surging water rich in silica, forms wave-like patterns on the terraces at Waiotapu, summer 1992



Fractured sinter. The result of convulsions by underlying geothermal mud. Whakarewarewa, autumn 1991

□
Rotorua Bathhouse Art and History Museum; 20 November 1992 to 7 February 1993.

□
Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North; 9 April to 23 May 1993.

□
Assistance for this exhibition from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand is gratefully acknowledged.



A gossamer-fine precipitate is suspended above black mud in the quietly rising waters of a hot spring. Whakarewarewa, autumn 1992



A concentricity of obliquely layered forms in fluid geothermal mud. Whakarewarewa, spring 1989

COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHS▶ on following pages

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7	8	9	18	19	20
10	11	21	22		

1 & 3 Siliceous sinter and orange precipitate from the overflow of a large hot spring. As silica-rich water cools, its silica is progressively deposited and coralline forms evolve. The forms that develop depend on a number of factors; temperature, mineral content and nature of the water, angle of slope and the water's flow characteristics. Champagne Pool, Waiotapu, summer 1991.

2 & 4 Hanging stoneware forms with wire-cut decoration, stimulated by ripple patterns in silica terraces at Waiotapu. Heights, 160 and 250mm.

5 Fracturing and slumping of geothermal mud with its characteristic three-way jointing. Minerals drawn to the surface by summer heat produce the pitted texture. Waiotapu, summer 1991.

6 A panoply of colour and pattern creates a beautiful abstract image, as a thin section of volcanic rock is photographed using polarised light and a geological microscope. Geology Department, Auckland University, 1990.

7 "Nature as an abstract artist". Drying geothermal mud. The concentric pattern is ephemeral and appears for one or two weeks only, during spring. Rotorua, spring 1991.

8 A flow effect down the slope of a stoneware bowl appears like a volcanic explosion within a copper colemanite glaze.

9 Sulphur compounds, alum and borates built up encrustations on sun-cracked geothermal mud. The mud is an overflow (similar to the lava flow of a shield volcano) from an active mud volcano. Whakarewarewa, early summer 1990.

10 Lipped earthenware bowl formed by beating and stretching a lump of plastic clay coated with dry powdered clay, to produce stress fractures at the surface. Black stain and cadmium-selenium glaze fired to 1060°C. Diameter 340mm.

11 Detail of chilled and cooling magma. Earthenware, black stain and cadmium-selenium glaze fired to 1060°C.

12 Detail of an eruption glaze on a stoneware plate. The underglaze is more fluid and gaseous with the result that the viscous overglaze rises to form domes with entrapped gases. The cracked graphic-like pattern was produced by pressing a section of dried, bulging overglaze with a finger. The memory of the unfired pattern has remained throughout the high temperature firing. The cracking shows again

the characteristic three-way joints of many substances as their stresses are released.

13 The aftermath of volcanic activity. Scoriaceous ash and a lava dyke line the throat of the Red Crater, Mount Tongariro. Behind, is Mount Ngauruhoe, summer 1990.

14 Stoneware bottle with a scoriaceous glaze. Height 170mm.

15 Stoneware bowls showing mineral and colour separations as well as cracking and flow effects. Diameters, 250-300mm.

16 Hanging stoneware forms. Surface texture stimulated by cracked geothermal mud. The surfaces show consciously controlled and directed stress patterns. The forms evolve from a solid sphere of plastic clay coated with dry powdered clay, as it is rolled, finger-manipulated and stretched. As the surface area increases, cracking occurs due to stresses between plastic and non-plastic clay. Variations of texture and pattern are controlled by the concentration and position of the powdered clay, its degree of compaction, its grittiness or fineness, and the introduction of potential stress lines that evolve into rents as the stretching process is continued. After biscuit firing, washes of yellow ochre or burnt umber pigments are used to enhance the textured patterns. Firing temperature 1260-1300°C.

17 Silica terrace deposits near the overflow of the Champagne Pool, Waiotapu, summer 1990.

18 Hanging stoneware form with wire-cut decoration stimulated by coralline silica deposits. Height 145mm.

19 Saffron bright precipitates settle out as thermal waters emerge after a lengthy subterranean journey. Waiotapu, summer 1993.

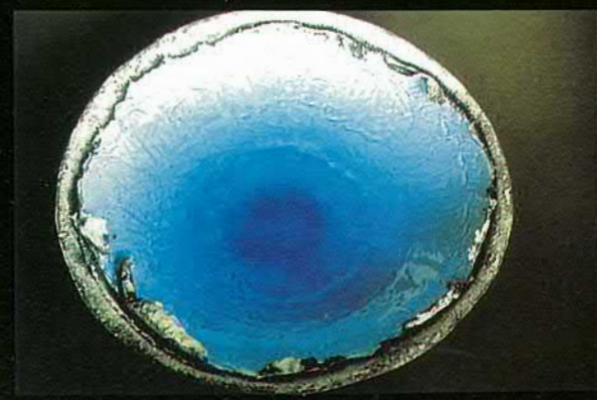
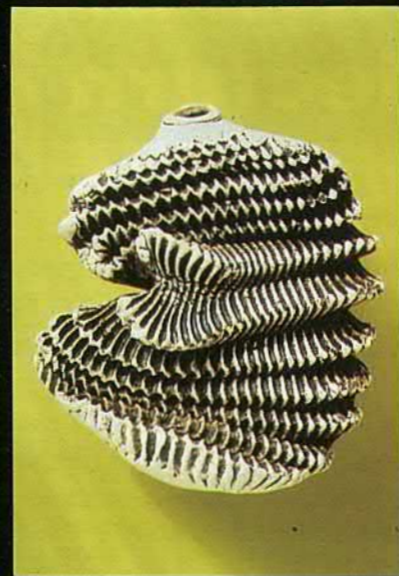
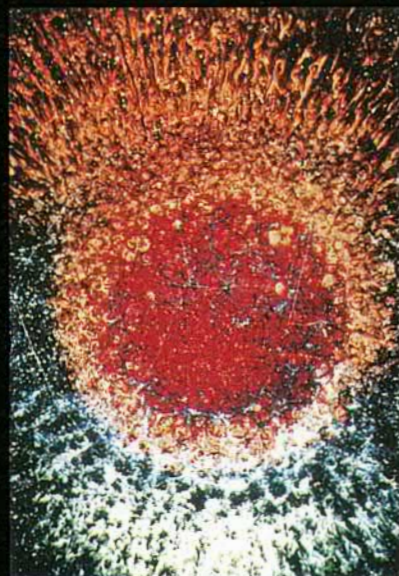
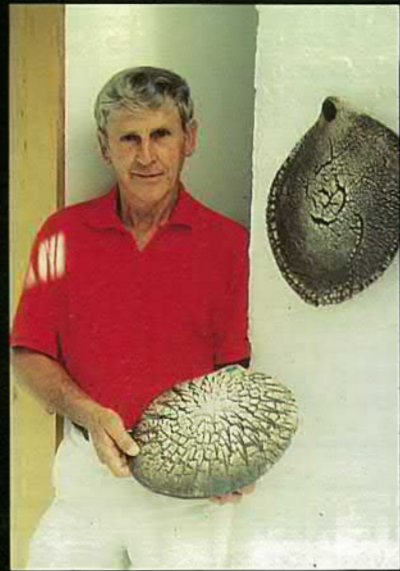
20 Stoneware vase and dish with gaseous eruption glaze. The bubbles formed have been deliberately broken post-firing. Vase height 600mm.

21 Earthenware bowl of my Alkaline Spring series. High sodium alkaline glaze with copper carbonate as the colorant. Oxidised firing to 1080°C. This bowl is a response to the beauty of the Emerald Lakelets. Diameter 480mm.

22 The Emerald Lakelets are cradled by the surrealistic landscape of andesitic lava and ash near the Red Crater, Mount Tongariro, summer 1990.

Photo of Len Castle by Berit Zetterman

All other photos and pottery by Len Castle



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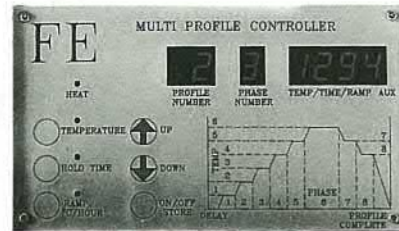
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ABEL TASMAN

Ann Verdcourt, Dannevirke

The New Zealand *Abel Tasman 1992 Commission* asked me to make a work to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the Dutch navigator's sighting of New Zealand. This work was to join the ceramic exhibition featured in *Expo '92* at Seville in the New Zealand pavilion (see all 3 issues, *NZ POTTER*, 1992) when it opened later in Amsterdam as part of the anniversary activities.

The style of the piece was already decided as it would be shown alongside my previous work about **Christopher Columbus**.

This work depicts **Tasman's** arrival at the New Zealand coast and his contact with Maori people. I based the piece on a drawing of the Dutch encounter by **Isaac Gilseman** which is part of *Tasman's Journal* and the first representation of Maori people by a European.

The Trumpeter and the Maori with the Conch Shell are not illustrated in the *Journal* and so required intensive research. The *National Museum of New Zealand* in Wellington was very helpful with canoes and in persuading a Maori model to be photographed showing the correct way of blowing a conch. The fax machine between Dannevirke and Europe was busy hunting down ships and 1642 trumpets.

After a couple of months' research I was able to start work. The pieces changed considerably during the making, the first attempt being rejected as neither John nor I could lift it to get it into the kiln!

As the dramatic encounter took place in a bay, I wanted a partly enclosed effect. I took some liberties with the landscape as *Tasman* described it as high and green. I needed to provide a placing for the figure of the Maori Conch Blower and the Dutch Trumpeter. While they did not figure in *Isaac Gilseman's* drawing they were a most important part of the story; I could not leave them out.

As the work was in a ceramic exhibition it also had to be about clay. I wanted to get that feeling of freshness like small rolled figures a child makes. The ships are an instance of

this; they are as close to the originals as I could get and still maintain the feeling of the clay. I could have joined rigging, masts and sails after firing and made more sophisticated ships, but I felt I would lose contact with the viewer's imagination, which helps keep a work alive.

I had not anticipated any trouble in filling the canoes with little men. I planned to make them over a couple of days, wrap them to keep all damp, and then fill the boats as quickly as possible to get the paddles connected up while still in the same state of clay.

I opened the wrapping to find condensation had created a pile of small slices of clay! I bought some large plastic Tupperware boxes, having kept work damp very successfully this way before and set out to make the men again, only to end up with another pile of slices — this time boxed ones!

I finally conquered the problem by putting fewer men to a box after lining the boxes with paper handy-towels.

After that experience I felt quite nervous about the Maori Conch Blower and the Dutch Trumpeter, particularly whether the conch stem and the trumpet would spring from the heads during drying or firing, but all went well.

The work is all hand built; coiled, pinched and modelled in *T material*, a specially formulated grog and clay body, coloured in the raw state with oxides and commercial stains mixed with water and a little flux in some cases. Black stain was applied after the bisque firing of 960°C. The final firing was to cone 6 in an electric kiln.

The whole work is 105cm wide, 65cm tall at the highest point. The Conchman and the Trumpeter are both 40cm tall.

There are eight parts to the whole, one being a base to boost the height of the back piece with the land and ships at anchor. Each sea piece provides a sea backdrop for killing or front canoe. I wanted to get a feeling of theatre to take away from the depressing subject matter and draw the viewer into the story.

This project started in December '91 with information gathering and colour testing, while actual clay work started at the end of February '92. Completion came at the end of August.

The work is at present on display in the *New Zealand Embassy* at the Hague.

THE HEEMSKERCK GALLEON

Barry Brickell, Coromandel

Abel Tasman's ship *Heemskerck* which in 1642 sailed the "oceans blue", was accompanied by another ship the *Zeehan*. Need it be said that *Tasman* "discovered" *Kiwiland*.

In 1992, the *Auckland Maritime Museum* at Hobson Wharf decided to celebrate the 350th anniversary of this event by commissioning a properly built scale model of the *Heemskerck*. The museum's director **Rodney Wilson** also asked me to make something in clay for the occasion.

An article in the museum's magazine *Bearings* by a **Mr Hoving**, describing ships of this tradition caught my imagination — an amazing tradition of massive wooden ship-building, the decadent end-point of which was represented by those top-heavy, impossible-looking craft reeking of mercantile ostentatiousness with their

flamboyantly decorated sterns. That they managed to sail without capsizing on their multinational escapades speaks, no doubt, for the seamanship of their crews rather more than the sobriety of their captains and company executives who enjoyed the suites upstairs with private promenade decks. No seasick pills in those days.

The *Heemskerck* was a more humble and practical version, but the impressive thing about this European galleon tradition was the exuberance and masterly craftsmanship with woodwork, arts, trades and crafts.

Viking ships and whakataua also share similar things — but I had to stop somewhere. In the spirit of it all, I enjoyed cheating with bright oil-based colours over the top of ceramic stains to make forms stand out.

To my astonishment, the restored *HMS Victory* of **Lord Nelson's** Battle of *Trafalgar* fame has a roughly similar colour scheme, but then I do seem to have occasional lapses in my perception.

As to the form of my vessel, well, it is the stern of such a ship that impresses one; after all this is the only aspect one was meant to view them from as they passed, to show their slip, so to speak.

My **St Nicholas**, patron saint of seafarers and the Dutch **Father Christmas** was transmuted from a *New Zealand Geographic* magazine and other symbolic decoramentaia were derived from a mixture of scanty sketches and the imagination. The hull design derives from my slight experience with sailing boats and the old Devonport Ferries.

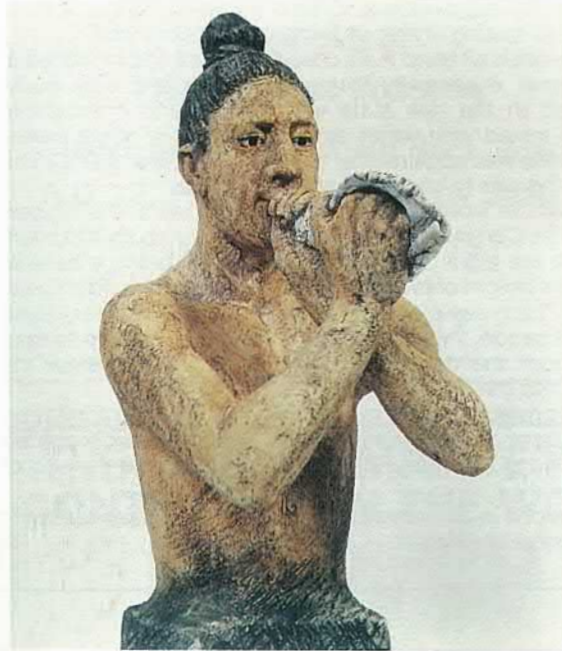


ANN VERDCOURT

Double canoe



Dutch Trumpeter



Maori Conch Blower



Abel Tasman, a small memorial

Photos by Alan Stephens



St Nicholas, stern view with Black Peters
BARRY BRICKELL



Heemskerck No.3 Terracotta, stains and oil paints



St Francis, stern view
Photos by Barry Brickell

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BOOKS

Reviewed by Howard S Williams

A POTTER'S COMPANION

Compiled and edited by Ronald Larsen

Park Street Press
One Park Street
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USA
US\$17.95

This is a beautiful book in the true sense, which makes it a shame it is not bound in a good time-and-use resistant hard cover. The laminated soft cover is one of those annoying ones that curls up, allowing pages to become dog-eared all too soon.

The *Potter's Companion* is just that — a book to be kept beside the bed, on the coffee-table, in the loo; at one's elbow where it can be dipped into at leisure, its thoughts and flavours savoured, contemplated and wondered at. Not to be read in one go.

A collection of writings of *Imagination, Originality and Craft*, it celebrates the makers, and the making of functional, handmade pottery — or any other works — by exploring the history, aesthetics and philosophies concerning potters, and other craftspeople.

Included are short stories, poems, essays, observations and quotes (called *Shards*) from a wide range of potters

famous and less known, contemporary and ancient. There are writings by Thoreau, Ruskin, John Updike and from Ecclesiasticus.

Potters include Wayne Higby, Robin Hopper, Warren MacKenzie, Byron Temple, Harry Davis and of course Cardew, Leach and Hamada. It also has a poem by our own John Green (what august company he keeps here) first published in the *NZ Potter* vol 22, no 2, 1980. Women's writing also — Marguerite Wildenhain, Jenny Lind and Barbara Skinner are included.

There is no colour other than on the cover, but there are 43 illustrations by way of photos of pots, or line drawings taken from older literature. The pots illustrated are mainly works by the contributing writers and give an elegant touch to the pages.

Some of the writing is humorous, some anecdotal; some is historical, some philosophical, but it is all fascinating. A well-selected collection of writings probing deeply into the psyche of potters to explore that drive which makes them seek beauty and express it in functional objects, made by their own hands.

A very special book which all thinking/reading potters would enjoy and treasure.

"The question is not what you look at, but what you see." *Henry David Thoreau.*

"Judge the art of a country, judge the fineness of its sensibilities, by its pottery; it is sure touchstone." *Herbert Read.*

"Art is not a matter of giving people a little pleasure in their time off. It is in the long run a matter of holding together a civilisation." *David Pye.*

PLASTER OF PARIS:

Techniques from Scratch

By Reid Harvey

Attic Press
32 Graves Ave
Northampton
MA 01060
USA

A slightly strange little book this, as it attempts to describe in simple terms, the complex procedures for making plaster of Paris moulds used in slip-casting and press-moulding. It begins by showing in diagram and text the steps from model to production, of a vase form which is cylindrical at the top, but which progressively changes to a triangular section at the base. A very complex form to confront a beginner with, and a difficult one to describe in diagrams which, though clearly drawn are not easily read so as to distinguish concave from convex surfaces. It also uses some 27 parts in its mould system, making it a real turnoff to any reader unfamiliar with the process of mould-making.

Why not start with a truly simple open, one-piece mould and then a two-piece example to lead the reader gradually into the more complex once the basics have been understood?

On page 38 out of a total of 43, we actually come to chapter *Beginning Mould Making* and even then, this deals with the complexities of making a coffee mug complete with handle. Not a beginner's exercise.

Three diagrams I would like to re-draw to give them spatial sense and all the diagrams need labelling with arrows to relevant parts in order to make them really clear.

I will forgive on page VI the typographical error which refers to a diagram as *see figure 22* when the one intended is *figure 11*, but I cannot forgive diagrams which confuse rather than clarify the text. To be ultra picky, the drawings on

pages 34 and 35 are unnecessary as they illustrate in almosts pre-schooler simplicity such everyday tools as a rubber mallet, a bow saw, a metal rib and even a small torn piece of wet-and-dry sandpaper. Strange.

Mostly, the information is good and includes tables of water-to-plaster ratios and volume calculations. It also describes a most effective system to produce an elliptical hump mould for large platters, and turning boxes for making symmetrical plaster models.

The author does miss on one technique though, where on page 38 he describes the making of a coffee-mug mould which requires drawing an exact mid-centre line vertically down the model. He says "The best way to do this is by eye. There are no real tricks for measuring the exact centre." Here I could add a page with a diagram which would give a simple and precise method of determining such a line.

The book I would recommend as a good addition to one's reference library (with the exception that materials and suppliers are all USA-relevant) though it is of more value to people already conversant with the subject than to novices. It could be a useful teaching aid for tutors able to further explain the processes illustrated.

Plaster of Paris Techniques from Scratch

By Reid Harvey

The New Zealand Potter is the sole distributor of this book. If you require a copy, please send cheque \$14.95 incl GST & Postage. Overseas NZ\$16.95 incl surface mail to PO Box 881 Auckland, New Zealand

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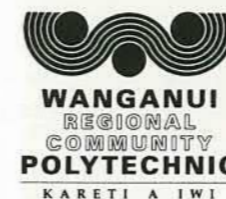


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Philip Wijohn, canoe bailer



Nicky Leef, carved bowl



Kaimana Pomare, gourd form

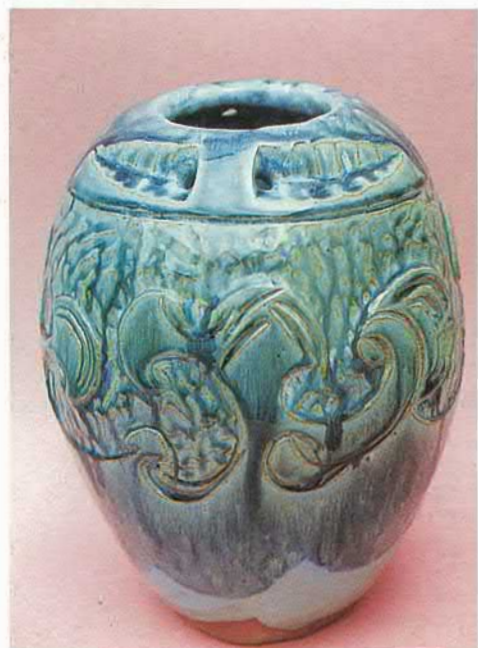


Sue Morunga

VESSLS IN CARVING STATE



Puis TeWake



Ashton Mathews, carved vessel



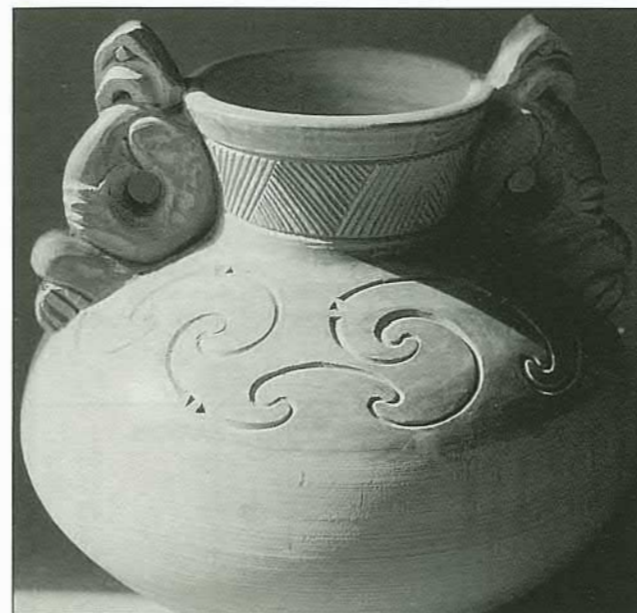
Rochelle Maxwell, carved vase



Gerald Davey

CARVED POTS OF PANGURU

Phil Bonham, art teacher, Northland



Pot by Phil Bonham, teacher, carved by Paul Marshall, carving tutor

The Inspiration

These low temperature stoneware pots were made by 14 to 16 year old students at Panguru Area School, Hokianga. As 95 per cent of our students have Maori ancestry, we spend a lot of time studying Maori artforms. Some of the magnificent examples of traditional carved vessels; *kumete* (bowls), *hue* (gourd containers and water vessels), and *tiiheru* (canoe bailers) were the starting point for these pots.

Contemporary ceramic artists who work with Maori motifs were also a source of inspiration. Images of pots by Manos Nathan, Robyn Stewart and Ann Powell, were displayed alongside the traditional vessels.

The Pots, Paddles and Drying

Panguru pupils have been coil-building for many years, but it wasn't until we wanted smooth, even pot surfaces to facilitate clay carving, that we got into paddling. Why, oh why didn't I try this sooner? It's great! Even the students who have had less experience with coil-building can achieve bump-free pots with springing curves.

For paddles we used wooden Japanese rice spoons of varying curves and dimensions, but any piece of smooth-edged lightweight wood, would do. To paddle concave surfaces you need a convex paddle. When paddling fresh clay, the paddle must also be textured in order to prevent it from sticking. We did most of our paddling when the clay was cheese to leather-hard though, to help avoid sticking problems.

With thicker-walled pots you can get by without a hand inside for support, but if you want thinner symmetrical walls, hold a round water-worn stone inside the pot, to paddle against.

In a school situation, with only a couple of short classes per week, the teacher and students have to be vigilant in monitoring the drying of the pots. With plastic bags for each pot, Gladwrap strips for the top edge of incomplete pots, a hand spray atomiser for too dry ones, and a draught-free storage room, pots can be kept in a carving condition for many weeks — even over the school holidays.

The Carving

Under a LINK scheme, we had the able help of Paul Marshall as carving tutor. Paul has carved many materials including clay, and has had lots of experience with tutoring various groups. It was great to work alongside him and share his expertise and enthusiasm for clay carving.

Clay can be a very forgiving material to carve — if you make a mistake, as Paul says "Just lick it, stick it, burnish it, and start again".

For carving, use standard wood-carving chisels rather than small lino or box cutting tools. The small tools may be useful for small pots, but they lead to tight, fussy work. Kraft knives are also useful for piercing through vessel walls.

The vessels we did were at least 250mm high or wide to give plenty of scope for in depth, clean, flowing carving. They took one or two weeks to make (2 to 4 hours) and the carving was done during a full school day (5 hours) or longer. It is best if there are some practice pots available so each pupil can get the feel of carving before they tackle their final work.

With the international style in ceramics making it virtually impossible for the average person to distinguish New Zealand pots from those of other western countries, it is refreshing to see pots that are definitely of New Zealand origin. Taonga whakairo are one source of inspiration that is particularly appropriate for schools with Maori pupils. There is a vast array of carving styles and motifs, plus other traditional Maori vessel shapes that lend themselves to reinterpretation in clay.

Thankyou to Michael Dee of Newlands College (NZ POTTER vol 34, no 1, 1992) for the encouragement to submit this article.

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COMBUSTION SERVICES

"Avoid Nickel my son" said Josiah Wedgwood

Middle fire oxidised glazes: Part 4.

John Parker, Auckland

Anyone who has played around with Nickel as a ceramic colorant will know just how prophetic these words of the great pottery patriarch can be. Nickel is expensive and wildly unpredictable if you are into consistency of product. I believe the three basic requirements for being a potter are a sense of humour, a hammer and a rubbish pile. You definitely need all three when working with Nickel. Why bother? Well, when it works it can indeed be sensational, with colour responses that almost cover the spectrum. Pinks, browns, yellowy greens, blues, mauves through to purples have all reared their seductive heads in glazes.

There are many published glaze recipes involving Nickel, particularly in the work of Emmanuel Cooper. But in order to understand what is happening, I recommend testing with the 5 significantly different base glazes we have already established.

Recommended additions 0.5-3.0% of Nickel Oxide

A. GLOSS NEUTRAL	
Potash Feldspar	43
Silica	24
Kaolin	2
Gerstley Borate	20
Whiting	2
Zinc Oxide	3
Barium Carbonate	6
	<hr/> 100

B. GLOSS OPACIFIED	
Potash Feldspar	43
Silica	24
Kaolin	2
Gerstley Borate	20
Whiting	2
Zinc Oxide	3
Barium Carbonate	6
Tin Oxide	10
	<hr/> 110

C. MATT MAGNESIA/ZINC	
Potash Feldspar	31
Whiting	20
Talc	10
Kaolin	29
Silica	10
Zinc Oxide	10
	<hr/> 110

D. MATT HIGH ALKALINE	
Barium Carbonate	27
Nepheline Syenite	58
Kaolin	6
Silica	7
Lithium Carbonate	2
Alkaline frit	10
	<hr/> 110

E. ZINC CRYSTAL	
Potash Feldspar	50
Whiting	17.5
Silica	17.5
Zinc Oxide	25
	<hr/> 110

However when considering Nickel, a Sixth significantly different glaze base becomes apparent. This plays zinc off against barium in large amounts so their combined total is always 50% of the glaze. By averaging out a number of one-off glazes from differing sources, the sixth glaze becomes,

F. MATT ZINC-BARIUM	
Barium Carbonate	35-15
Zinc Oxide	15-35
Nepheline Syenite	25
Lithium Carbonate	5
Silica	15
Kaolin	3
Bentonite	2
	<hr/> 100

Where barium predominates, the colour tends towards pink and towards blue with more zinc. The glaze tends to be deceptively fluid for a matt glaze. The dilemma is to retain some movement for colour break up and not have a lot of glaze runs onto shelves.

As we established in the first part of the series, all tests should be fired to Orton 7 at 150°C per hour. Don't soak or overfire. ■

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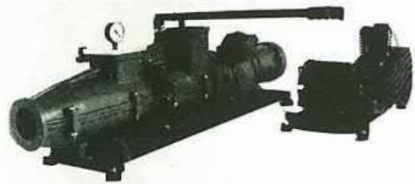
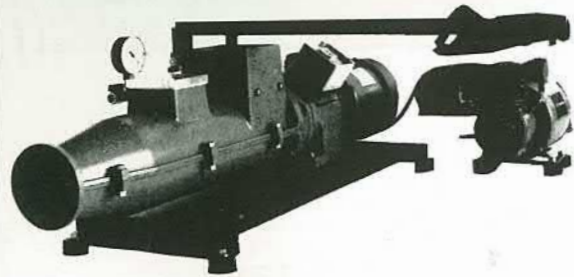


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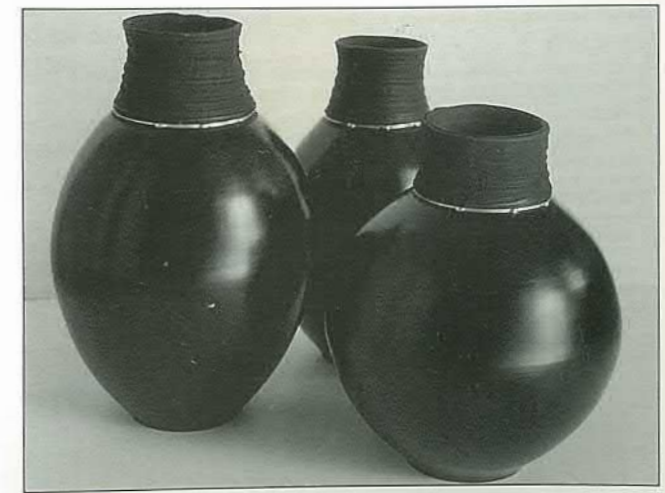
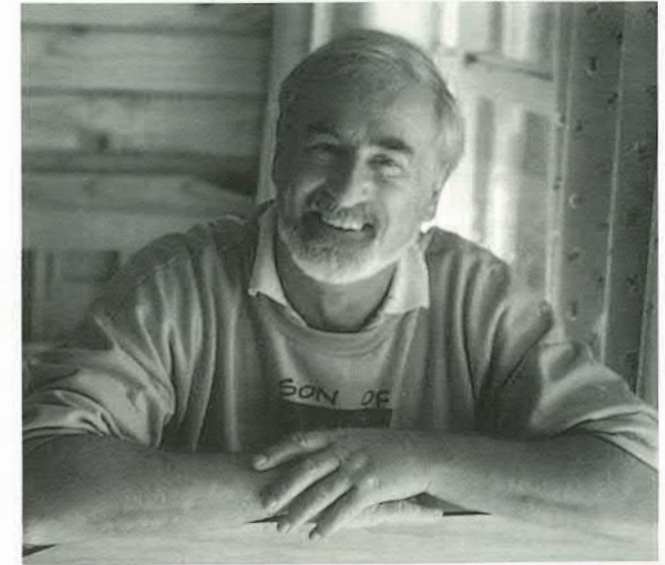
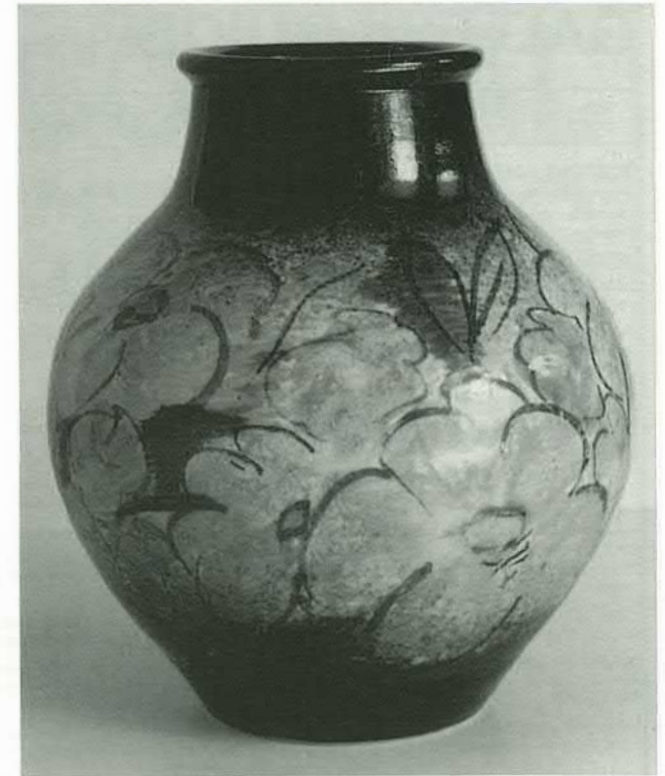
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A VILLAGE POTTERY II

Nong Khai, North East Thailand
Rosemary O'Hara, Wellington

Heartened by my experience at Barn Dtorn Chai (see NZ POTTER, vol 34, no 3, 1992) of happy potters delighted to share their work with me, I headed for Nong Khai feeling certain that I would find some potters in villages close by. Nong Khai is a large bordertown, the most northern centre, on the Mekong river across from Laos.

Sure enough, within biking distance is Barn Sa Machee, and under a house on the road to the village, where I stopped to ask directions. I found a potter rolling a large cylinder of clay with a stick protruding from both ends, on a plastic tarpaulin on the ground. Lamon had just started a batch of 8 water jars and was happy for me to stay and watch and photograph her.

Potters here made their pots by the paddle and anvil method, over the afternoon of the first day and the morning of the next. The clay was fine and sticky with 33% grog.

Lamon wedged 7 to 9kg lumps of this clay and rolled them into cylinders about 38cm long and 20cm diameter, with the ends flattened off. She pinched a hollow in each end, pushed a stick through the centre to the other end, then used it like a rolling pin to enlarge the centre hole. She stood this hollow cylinder on its end, and turned it on a wet patch of the plastic ground-cover. The sides were expanded simply by the pressure of her fist on the inside and open hand on the outside. The rim was kept thicker and smaller in diameter than the expanding sides. The base of the cylinder flared outwards while all this was happening, from the weight of clay turning in the slip. Lamon turned the cylinder upside down, trimmed the flaring soft clay off, pinched the base a little thinner and made the hole smaller.

She then quickly made herself two tools; a wooden paddle from an old seat, with her machete, and a soft former with two sheets of folded newspaper moistened with slip, and folded in several layers of plastic. This was wet and rubbed to give it flexibility.

The slightly hollowed-out pot with a hole right through its thick base, was then placed on top of a post, and thinning and shaping done with Lamon walking around backwards while she paddled. This shaping was the same as at Barn Dtorn Chai, except she had her post at a much more comfortable working height and at this stage she used only her hand as an anvil inside the pot.

Several paddles were used. One was deeply grooved in a basket weave pattern. Another was cut in a shallower zigzag pattern and there was a smooth paddle for finishing off. The most vigorous paddling, where the pot was thickest, used the heavily grooved paddle. It seemed to bite into the clay and, with pressure from the inside, thinning the walls without splits was achieved very rapidly. This paddling was followed by the lightly marked paddle that closed up the texture, but still helped the walls to stretch.

Lamon paddled from about half way up the cylinder to the top using the heavily marked paddle. She paddled vigorously only once in each spot at the middle of the pot, but as she came closer to the rim and was much more intent on thinning the walls, the strikes became much closer together or were repeated in the same spot. As well as thinning the walls, she was using a pulling-upward motion with the paddle and the heel of her inside hand, to increase the height. She paddled down on top of the rim to compact and thicken it. This process was then repeated on the top half of the pot with the more finely marked paddle, using softer and more frequent strikes.

When the rim was about double its original diameter she began shaping the top. Using her wad of wet newspaper and plastic she compressed and shaped the rim and 5cm of clay below it. Over eight walking revolutions and by varying the shape of her paper former and her hands and altering the pressure, she made a gallery, thickened the rim and flared out a shoulder below the neck. This was left to firm up, and later some more quick paddling below the neck formed a wide shoulder. At this stage the pots were covered over with the tarpaulin for working on the following day.

Next morning the base was made. The pot still had a soft thick base with a hole through the centre, though the rim and shoulder were almost leather hard. Lamon sat with the pot held by her thighs and calves with her legs crossed at the ankles. She used a fired clay mushroom with a stalk handle as an anvil and the lightly grooved paddle, both of which she frequently wet.

Photographs by Rosemary O'Hara



Paddling the middle section into line with the base

First she beat two revolutions around the edge of the hole into an increasingly smaller circle until it was closed. She then paddled firmly over the closed area with the patterned paddle followed by the smooth one, moving the anvil around inside as she did so, making the base round. All pots at this stage were stood in old tyres or in upturned necks and shoulders of broken pots.

They were then expanded in relays, working between each base and shoulder. With a pot being turned on Lamon's legs, its base was paddled and expanded wider than the shoulder or middle, and then the middle expanded out to meet it. It was then stood upright in a tyre or pot shard, and the potter walked around paddling the shoulder until it became much wider than the base. This process was repeated several times.

Gently finishing off with the flat paddle



Tears or holes were patched with a little fresh clay, or one edge of the tear deftly pushed under the other with the paddle tip, while the paddling continued with hardly a break in rhythm.

The final shaping involved the smooth paddle used gently — the shoulder first for 3 or 4 walking revolutions, then the base with the pot back on the potter's legs. She used a small wet stone to compact the surface and sharpen the shape on the inside of the neck and rim. All the pots were completed to the same stage together, and this allowed some drying time.

I travelled on to Barn Sa Machee later in the day, a large village where every household seemed to be involved in pot production in some way. Hundreds of water jars the same as Lamon's were drying in the sun and many houses had 30-40 drying underneath them.



Water jars drying beside a raised firing platform

Firing was on large platforms about four metres square with bamboo runners raised 15cm above the ground on fired clay piles every metre or so. Wood and bamboo were laid flat and quite close together on top. I didn't see a firing in progress, but I assume the pots would be arranged on this platform and covered in a clamp similar to those in other villages, using rice straw and small pieces of wood. The ceramic piles below would draw air underneath the fire for the initial part of the firing at least, allowing large numbers of pots to be fired at one time.

Here the mystery of where the grog came from was revealed. Rice husks were wedged by foot into sticky clay, in about 50/50 portions, rolled into fist-sized balls, and coated in more rice husk. These are fired in a clamp using rice husk as fuel, after which they are easily crushed. It produces coarse, uniformly sized, sharp-sided pellets. They are also porous, a factor in why the clay dries so fast.

I spent a few hours at Barn Sa Machee, but it was quickly obvious that this was a village many tourists go to. The potters there could not understand that I was very interested in the process of their work for its own sake, or why I should ask so many (mostly unintelligible!) questions without buying something. Sitting quietly watching was out of the question.

I was grateful that I had stumbled across Lamon's house and had watched her making those lovely water jars. I was struck by Lamon's relaxedness, her attention to detail, and the obvious pride she took in her work. Members of her family and community enjoyed watching her too, as much as people anywhere love to watch a skilled craftsman at work.

Watching her produced feelings for me that I experienced again last year and shared with many others, when the potters from Lombok came to the Dowse Art Museum. There was a witnessing of a quiet but very significant event; Earth is taken, and rhythmically, unselfconsciously, repetitively made into Vessels for Nourishment. Awesome.

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WAIPUKURAU — FRESNO

Howard S Williams, Auckland

The California-Central Hawkes Bay artist exchange programme is working well.

An offshoot of the *Norsewear Art Award*, this artist-in-residence scheme is unique in New Zealand. It was established as a mutually advantageous exchange of international artists, their skills and ideas, by **Robert Barret**, director of the *Fresno Art Museum*, California, and the *Hawkes Bay District Council*. Finance is sponsored by patrons and business houses in both countries and exhibitions of the work produced by the exchange artists are held in the *Fresno Art Museum* and the *Waipukurau Civic Theatre Gallery*.

The second recipients from California were Fresno artist **Suzanne Sloane Lewis** and her ceramic artist husband **James Shephard** who spent their eight-week residency last year based at Porangahau Beach.

Suzanne, a teacher of art at several institutions in Fresno, is well known for her drawings on porcelain, graphite drawings and tile painting. She held a master-class for local artists in life drawing.

James who is a *Fresno City College* ceramics tutor, held several days of raku and pit firing and conducted an open forum. He also re-visited high fired stoneware, a medium he has not used so much recently in California. Most of this work was done at the *Islington Gallery*, home and workshop for Waipukurau potter **Sandra Shand**.

The work they completed during their residency was shown in a four-day exhibition at the *Waipukurau Civic Theatre Gallery* and it included work from the 1991 resident, Fresno painter **Elaine Lynn**, and also work from this year's visitor to Fresno, Auckland painter and printmaker **Jenny Dolezel**. Jenny was resident in Fresno during February and March this year, the first New Zealander chosen for this exchange.

On his return to California James Shephard had an exhibition at *Plums Gallery*, which surprised people who know his ceramics as picturesque sculptures — chunky dioramas of Southwest American landscapes — or distinctive blue-and-white porcelain he worked on with his wife Suzanne. Instead, he showed a simple, restrained group of well-thrown and inventively glazed and decorated pottery in variations on the classical vessel and platter.

James was interviewed by arts writer **David Hale** of the *Fresno Bee*. "The people were very warm and made such an effort to make us feel welcome, and

Californian artists James Shephard (seated front) and Suzanne Sloan Lewis (seated right) with members of the *Norsewood Pottery Club*, including Sandra Shand (standing second from left). Photo courtesy *Hawke's Bay Herald-Tribune*



important. We stayed in Hawkes Bay on the east coast of the North Island. They gave us a cottage by the sea and a car. I worked in a studio making pottery. Suzanne did pen-and-ink drawings and we got taken around to visit the art centres that every community seems to have. We were amazed at the grass-roots support for the arts."

David Hale continues with a report on James' Fresno exhibition. "One prize from the New Zealand tour can be seen in the dark brown, lustrous glaze on a handful of vases and a small cube. The porcelain glaze is Tenmoku; the formula for this ancient Japanese glaze is a prize James Shephard received from the president of the arts council in Napier, for delivering a slide lecture."

For June this year the chosen exchange artist coming here is to be **Kathy Wosika** who has exhibited

widely in the states and is a well-known teacher and professional storyteller. Her skills include those of clay, fibre, handmade paper and assemblage. Her tour here will not only interest local artists, but also garden clubs and herb groups, as she uses marvellous ways of mixing floral material into handmade paper.

Sandra Shand's husband **Jim** is the *Norsewear Art Award* chairman and a Waipukurau District councillor, so he is very closely involved in the exchange artist scheme. He is thrilled with the success of the residency exchanges and looks forward to those in the future.

Artists — and of course that includes those working in craft media like clay — are invited to apply for the *Norsewear-Fresno Art Museum* residency in California next year. Information is available from **Box 127, Waipawa**.

PAPRIKA WITH EVERYTHING

Brian Gartside, Ramarama

Cars take priority on pedestrian crossings. No seat belt laws. Carved and ornamental stone walls, 24 inches thick. Buying milk in plastic bags — milk that tastes like not milk and goes off in a day. Paprika potato chips. 1960s pop music. High intake of alcohol. Donald Duck speaks in Hungarian on TV. Conversations that sound like fights, getting louder and louder. Bread with everything — without butter.

The most up-to-date phone book is four years old. No sign of real estate activity — no one moves house much. Dozens of ice-cream shops. Radishes the size of golf balls. Non-smokers in a very small minority. Power points with no earth pin.

Paprika with everything: Chicken heads and feet, goose livers, entrails, pickled cabbage, spring onions, rubbery cheese.

Tall iron or wooden gates leading to beautiful courtyards. The Tradat, two-stroke motor car polluting the air with oily fumes. Goulash is good, like a watery Lancashire hot-pot, spiced up a bit. Little fire-extinguishers on two-wheeled trollies line the airport runways. Going through Customs like going through a wooden cupboard.

A ceramic studio in a setting that provides everything an artist needs. An individual studio. Kilns of every kind. Trees and courtyards. Ceramic tiled rooves. Artists from various parts of the world. Technicians and helpers to assist in every part of your creative idea. Supplies and tools brought to your studio when you request them. Someone to sweep out and clean the floors. A choice of clays, advice and help with glazes. Kilns fired by technicians.

An extensive collection of East European ceramics in the basement. A ceramic supply shop next door. Assistance generously given. Discussions.

Notes to myself: June 1992
Nernzetkozi Keramia Studio
Lugossi Str 1
600 Kecskemet, Hungary

Convivial company searching for ways around several different languages. Making meals and buying food by sign language. A huge selection of wines and paprika with everything. Even at breakfast.

Opening the big wooden doors to the outside world — spires, domes, ornamental buildings. Yellow ochre, browns, white. Ceramic wall sculptures in bright earthenware colours. Back streets empty, some crumbling walls. Not a lot of private ownership means little maintenance.

Free from Russian presence for two years — the capitalist world moves in. *Adidas* leads the way, followed by *Mars Bars*. Little stalls and shops that look like somebody's front room. Gypsies selling their craft in city square. Town Hall bells play **Kodaly** folk tunes on the hour. No Hungarian T-shirts, only American. No-one seems to speak English in this town. German tourists everywhere.

Railway station busy, one-and-a-half hours to Budapest, the big city on the Danube where there are more signs of Western influence. *McDonalds* and *Coca Cola* rampant. Cars park on the pavement. Lots of restaurants. Tourists, tourists, tourists. Expensive hotels. Well and truly on the international tourist circuit.

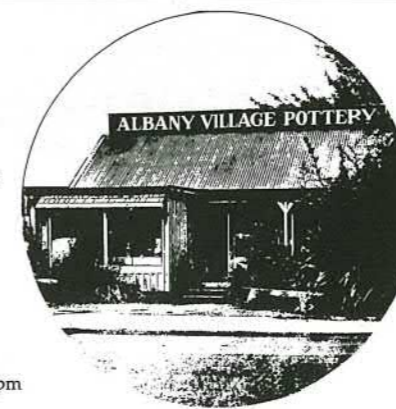
Back to the studio. Peaceful environment. Cool colours. Tiles. Trees. Absolute freedom to contemplate new ideas. This place is one of the few in the world which dedicates itself to nurturing artistic growth through gathering international artists in one place for a period of weeks. Fostering international understanding, as well as artistic sharing.

This place exists in Kecskemet, a city the size of Hamilton in the center of the great Hungarian Plain.

Hungary, an island with no coastline. An island in culture, history and language. With paprika. ■

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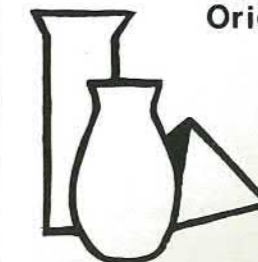
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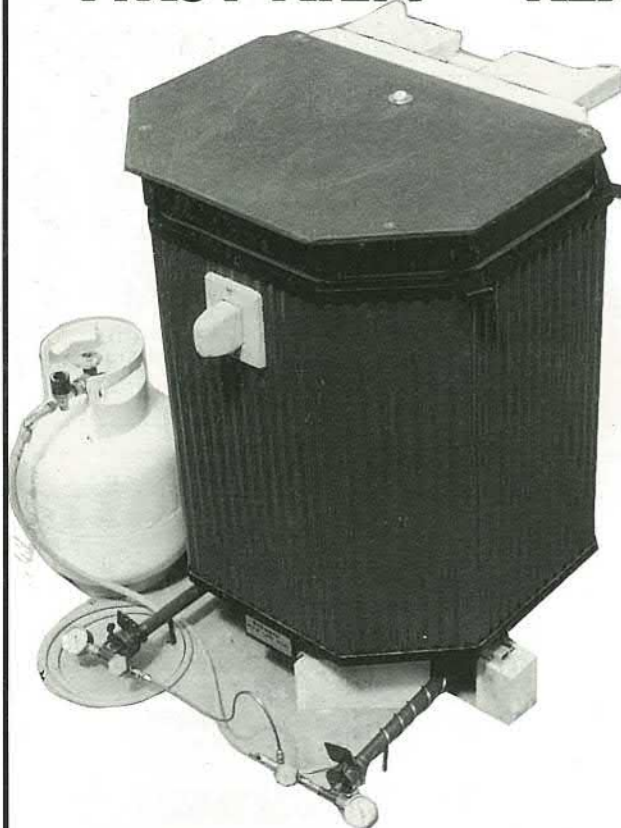
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