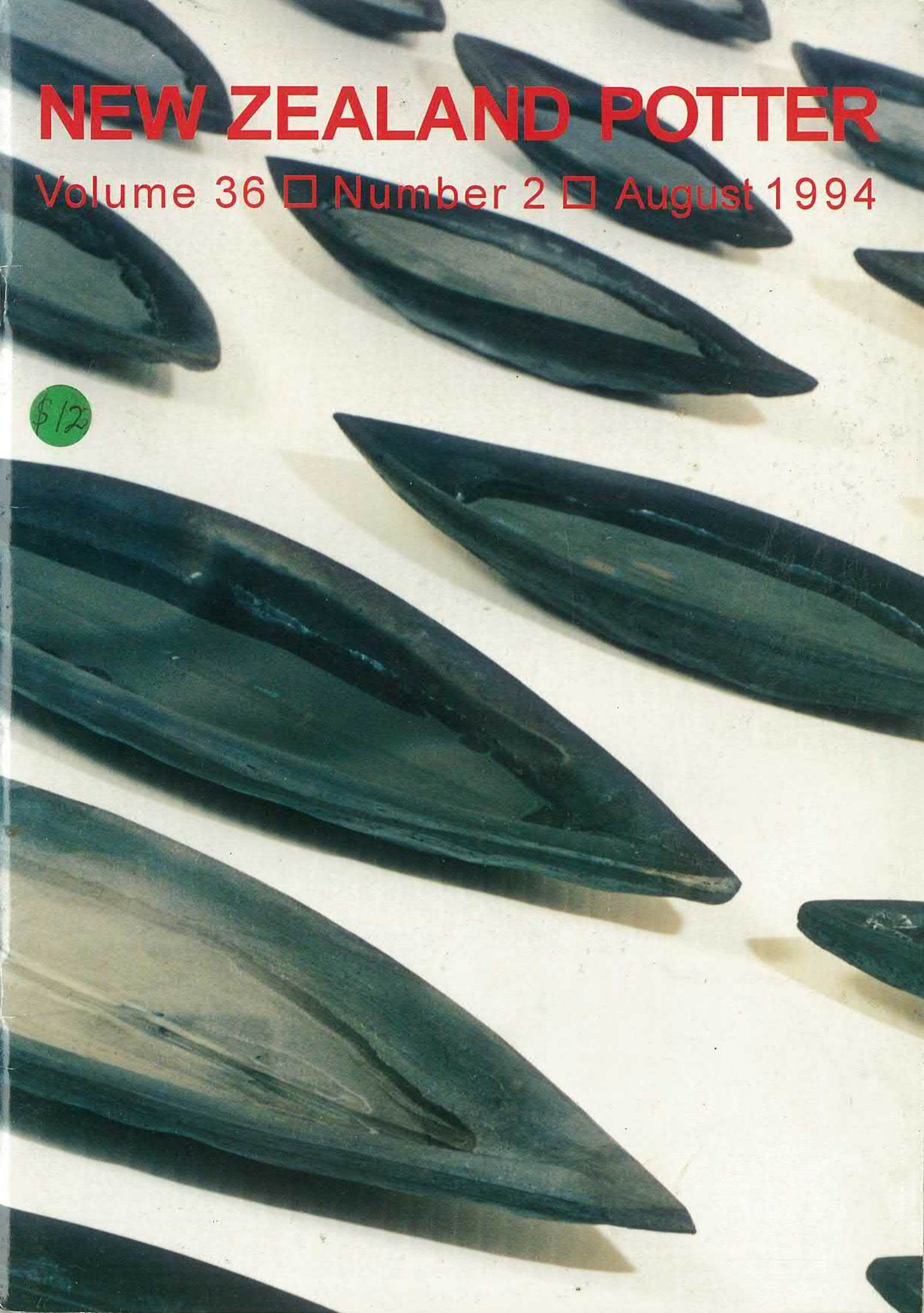


NEW ZEALAND POTTER

Volume 36 □ Number 2 □ August 1994

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NEW ZEALAND POTTER
VOLUME 36: NUMBER 2:1994

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IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|--|-----------|
| THROUGH THE FILTER PRESS <i>Howard S Williams Editorial</i> | 2 |
| A POTTER IN BALI <i>Vic Evans writes about an Indonesian pottery</i> | 6 |
| FIRING IN SEASHELLS <i>Experiments in surfaces by Kelvin Bradford</i> | 8 |
| FLETCHER CHALLENGE 1994 <i>Peter Gibbs assesses this year's show</i> | 10 |
| FLETCHER CHALLENGE CERAMIC AWARD EXHIBITION <i>Photos by Haru Sameshima</i> | 12 |
| KODAK <i>The Student Photography Award</i> | 14 |
| MAID (AND MAN) IN TAIWAN <i>Graeme Storm describes his visit to Taiwan</i> | 16 |
| WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MURAL <i>Cathy Kenkel writes the story of this Auckland tile installation</i> | 19 |
| KATHARINE WEST <i>An installation in Dunedin described by Linda Tyler</i> | 22 |
| MJCAX '94 <i>Steve Martin visits Malaysia on an Artist Exchange Scheme</i> | 25 |
| AMSTERDAM <i>Ann Verdcourt meets potters in Holland</i> | 26 |
| YVONNE RUST <i>A profile of this pioneer potter, by Theresa Sjoquist</i> | 28 |
| RECENTLY SEEN <i>Photos from exhibitions, by Howard Williams</i> | 32 |
| NZSP EXHIBITION, TAURANGA <i>Howard Williams, photos from Baycourt</i> | 36 |
| NORSEWEAR AWARD <i>The Waipukurau Exhibition photos, by Sandra Shand</i> | 37 |
| NIC HOLLAND <i>A profile of this potter by Adam James</i> | 40 |
| HANS MEEUWSEN <i>Howard Williams interviews this visiting Dutch potter</i> | 43 |
| GALLERY GUIDE <i>Galleries, shops and potters' showrooms</i> | 46 |
| POTTERS MARKET | 47 |



COVER PHOTO

Detail of *Many Wishes*, installation
by **Mitsui Shoji**, Australia.
Winner of *Fletcher Challenge*
Ceramic Award 1994.
Photo by Howard Williams
See page 10

The Publishers acknowledge the support of the
Arts Council of New Zealand, *Toi Aotearoa*

THROUGH THE FILTER PRESS

Howard S Williams



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POTTERS' MARKS

In 1976, A H & A W Reed published *New Zealand Potters: their work and words*. Collated and edited by **Doreen Blumhardt** with photography by **Brian Brake**, this now historically important book profiled the work of twelve of our best-known potters.

An interesting section was included reproducing 195 marks used by potters at that time to sign or stamp their pots.

As far as we can ascertain, this is the only time such a register has been published. Such historical documentation is extremely important and of course will be increasingly so in future.

Pots made by people who have ceased working for a variety of reasons, are potential collectors' items. In order to give accurate provenance to pieces made in the past it will be essential to have reference to an authenticated register of potters' marks.

The *New Zealand Potter* intends to collate such a register which will be published at a future date, and periodically revised.

In order to do this exercise, we will need the cooperation of as many potters as possible.

PLEASE ...

We make a request therefore, for every potter to send us a reproduction of the graphic symbol they use to identify their work, be it a stamp, impression, sgraffito, brushed signature or device. This reproduction should be in the form of a clear black and white drawing or photograph. If your mark has been changed at any time please give all examples with dates as to the years each were in use. An approximate size in mm as the device appears on a pot should be given and an indication of its position, ie: stamped under handle; on foot ring; brushed on base; etc.

This register will be of utmost value in the future to historians, collectors, antique dealers and other potters.

We ask that all potters give this request serious consideration and send in their examples. Each potter missing from such a register detracts from the completeness of such an important record of the country's ceramic heritage.

BOOK REVIEW

On page 6 of the *New Zealand Potter*, vol 35, no 3, 1993 we printed a review of the excellent book *Tin-glazed Earthenware*, by **Daphne Carnegie**, published by A & C Black of London.

We gave an approximate New Zealand price of \$59 for this book. Information from **John Spence-Ord** of the *Gallery Bookshop*, Oamaru, who has had reader requests for the book, indicates that the actual retail price here is \$99.95.

It is still an excellent publication at this price, but we apologise for not giving a closer estimate.

ARTS COUNCIL

QEII Arts Council is no more.

The new arts body is the *Arts Council of New Zealand, Te Aotearoa*. An Auckland businessman **Brian Stevenson** has been appointed as its chairman by the Minister of Cultural Affairs, **Douglas Graham**.

Under the council are two arts boards. These each comprise seven members, three of whom from each board sit on the seven-member council.

Dr Claudia Scott, a professor of public policy at *Victoria University*, will chair the arts board with members: **Richard Cathie** (Wellington); **Professor Albert Wendt**, **Sandi Morrison** and **Dian Ross** (Auckland); **Ray Sleeman** (Christchurch) and **Judy Bellingham** (Dunedin).

Ngapo Wehi of Auckland will chair the second board *Te Waka Toi*, which will be responsible for funding the promotion and preservation of Maori culture. The other members of *Te Waka Toi* are: **Lewis Moeau**, **Jennifer Morel**, **Cliff Whiting** (Wellington); **Sandi Morrison**, **Mahe Tupouniua** (Auckland); and **Rangimarie Parata** (Christchurch).

The *New Zealand Potter* thanks Wellington jewellery-maker **Jenny Patrick**, for the contribution she made to our arts and crafts during her time in the chair of *QEII Arts Council* and we wish her well in the future.

AUSTRALIA

The *Pioneer Potters Inc* of Mackay, Queensland are holding their pottery competition from 2 to 10 September. This carries four Awards, two of A\$1,500, one of A\$500 and one of A\$100. The judge is **David Stuchbury**, potter and senior lecturer at *La Trobe University*.

There is an entry fee of A\$10 for each pot of group of pots. This fee and the entry form has to be with the organisers by August 19. The pots themselves must be received by August 26.

Entry forms and further information can be obtained from:

Competition Committee
Pioneer Potters
PO Box 873
Mackay
Queensland 4740
Australia
Ph: (079) 551024

FAENZA

The 49th *International Ceramic Competition* will be held in *Faenza*, Italy in September and October 1995.

The competition application form must be received by the organisers by **26 November 1994**. It must be accompanied by an artist's CV, critical dossiers and three 35mm slides of each of the works the artist intends to submit.

An international panel of judges will make their selection from these slides. Actual works admitted to the exhibition must arrive in *Faenza* by **29 April 1995**.

This competition carries a premier purchase-prize of Lire 25,000,000. There are further purchase-prizes of Lire 6,000,000, and a special-purchase prize of Lire 2,500,000, exclusively for young artists who are under 35 on **31 December 1994**.

Ask for the English Language version of the entry form and conditions from:

Faenza Ceramic Art Competition
Via Risorgimento, 3
48018 Faenza (Ra)
Italy
Ph: 0546/621111
Fax: 0546/621554

THAMES SOCIETY OF ARTS

The *Thames Society of Arts* is gearing up towards their summer exhibition due in January 1995. The exhibition will be held in the Old North School Gallery, just north of Thames on the road to Coromandel.

The aim of these exhibitions is to gather works of merit from the length and breadth of New Zealand, while individual potters get good sales and exposure during the fortnight showing. The exhibition venue is ideally placed to attract the many tourists visiting the area at this time of the year.

There are three main prizes for paintings and pottery, totalling \$2,500, donated by local business houses.

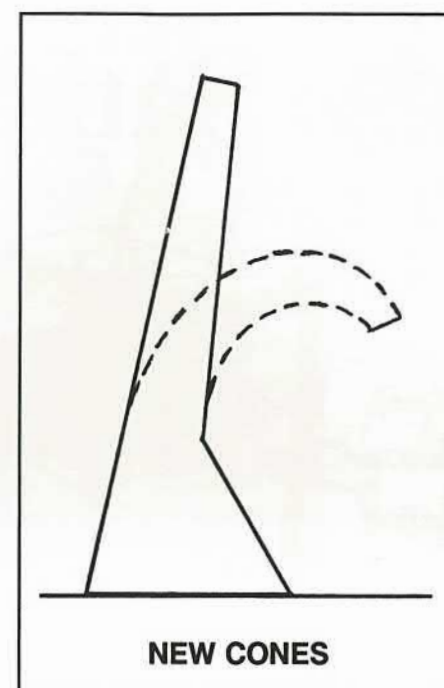
Potter **Michael O'Donnell** was judge last January, when the winning piece was a sculptural nude torso by **Rod Davies** of Kaitia.

Other prizes were won by **Betina Paton** of Auckland and **Olivia Macassey** of Whitianga. (See advert page 48)

NEW!!!

At last potters don't have to make pads to sit pyrometric cones up where they can be seen through a spyhole. The task of making blobs of clay to hold a cone, or a set of three, at the correct angle of fall, will soon be a thing of the past.

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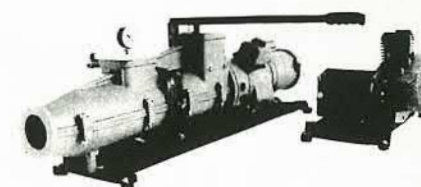
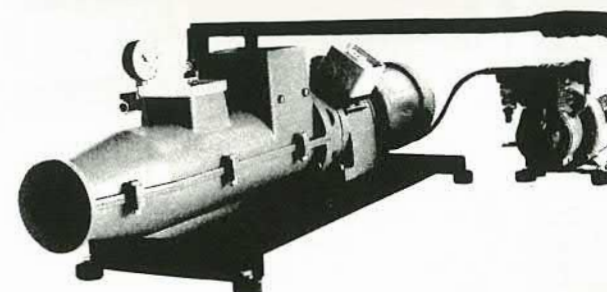
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a kiln shelf. Three cones can be placed on a diagonal line slightly behind each other so all can be seen through a small spyhole, yet each squat without affecting its neighbour. Why weren't they thought of years ago?

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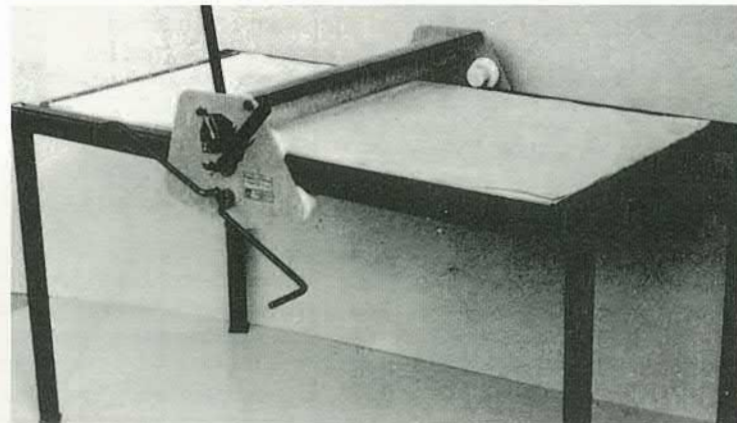
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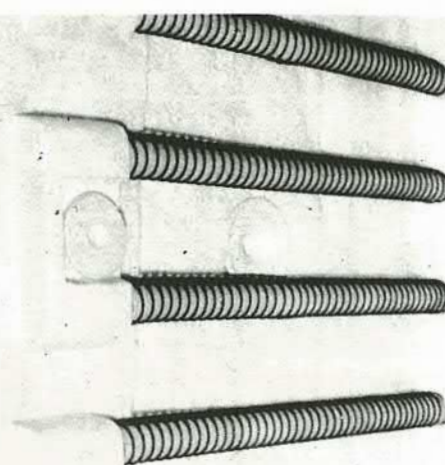


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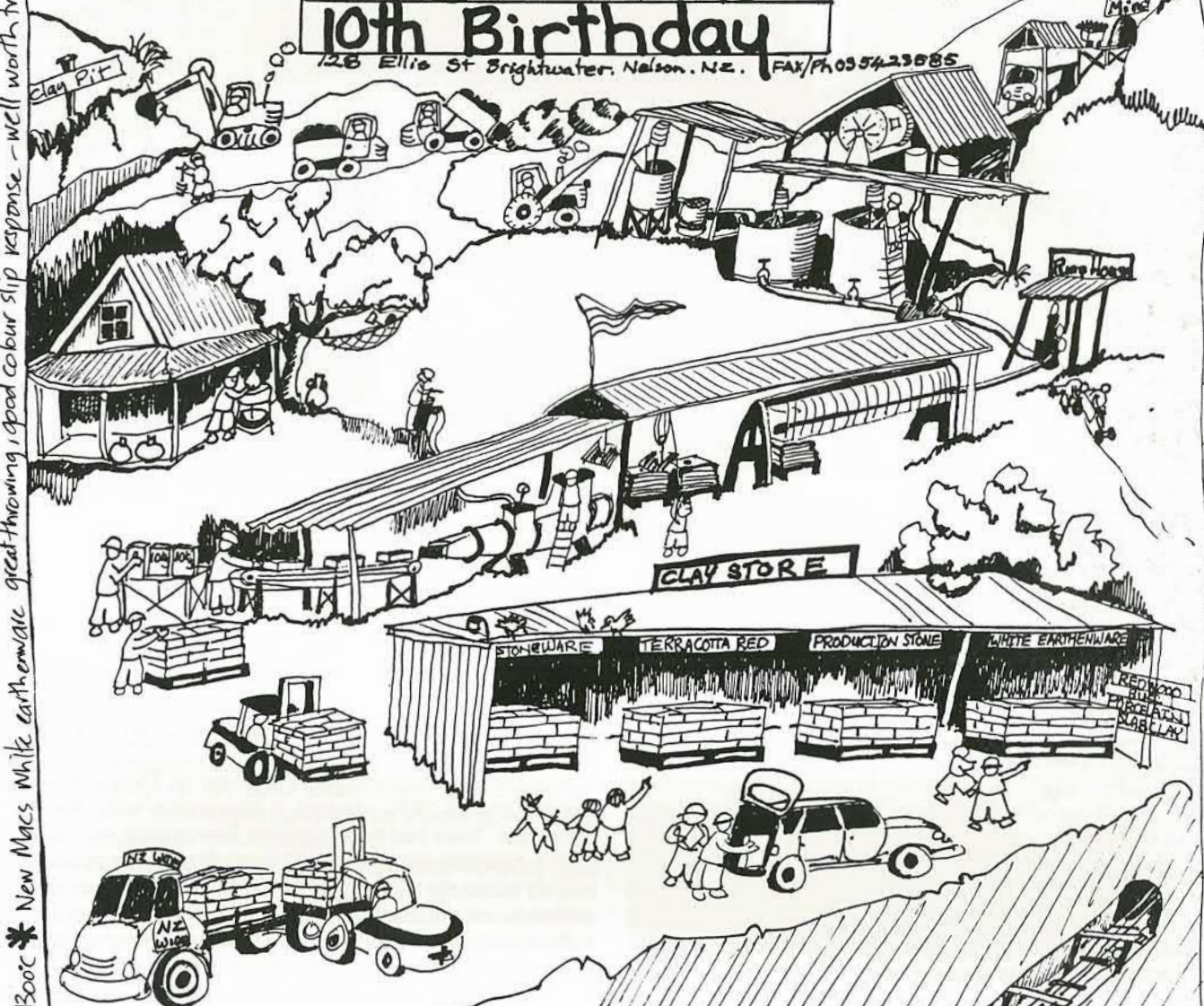
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A POTTER IN BALI

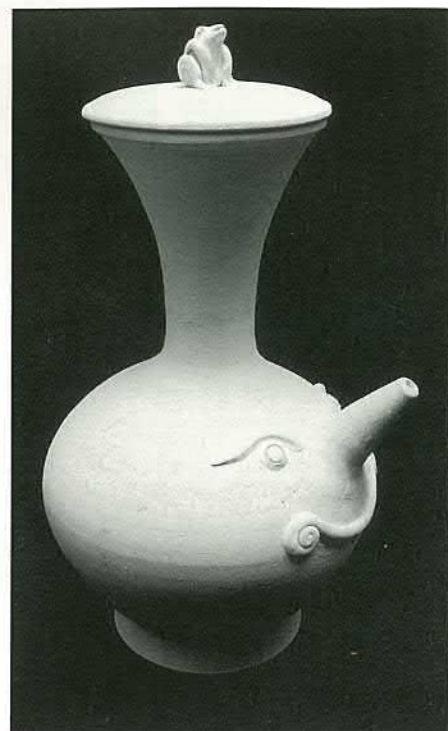
Vic Evans, Nelson



Brent Hesselyn, left, and Wal Tyrie



Adding to slip-cast pots



Pourer with frog on lid and face

The early 1970s in New Zealand was a period of experiment and discovery for those interested in pottery. Many became totally absorbed in the materials, techniques and ideas that clay challenged them to explore as they devoted themselves to the demanding learning curve.

Some younger enthusiasts were able to indulge the youthful New Zealand passion for the "Great Overseas Experience" and continue to pursue their love of clay. **Brent Hesselyn**, a potter living and working on the Indonesian island of Bali for the last twenty years, was able to combine the two and continues to do so today.

Brent was a student at *Greymouth High School* on the South Island's West Coast in the late 1960s when **Yvonne Rust** arrived to become the new art teacher. Yvonne's enthusiasm for clay was infectious as well as practical. With assistance from **Barry**

Brickell, she established a workshop in an old brewery near Greymouth. Here, Brent and a small group of West Coasters built a coal-fired salt kiln and became enthusiastic potters.

When Brent was accepted into *Ilam Fine Arts School* at *Canterbury University* in 1969, he found his involvement in Yvonne's project made it difficult to settle into the more academic and esoteric world of the fine arts.

A chance meeting with **Theo Schoon** on Theo's return from Hong Kong in 1970 sparked a fascination with the arts of Indonesia. Theo had been studying jade carving in Hong Kong with the assistance of an *Arts Council Grant* and stopped in Bali on his return to New Zealand. Theo's collection of Balinese paintings, masks, carvings and photographs of dances and local culture made a vivid impression on an art student whose teachers had made no mention of these ancient art forms.

By 1973 Brent had left *Ilam* and was on his way to Sydney. The journey would eventually lead to Darwin, Timor and Bali - and a return to clay.

At first Brent pursued another major interest; photography. Bali, since the early 1930s had gained a reputation not only for the quality of its art work, but also as a place where artists from many nations were inspired and made welcome. While photographing the art and artists of Bali, Brent met **Kay It**, a Balinese painter of Chinese extraction. Kay was interested in making fanciful creations in terracotta.

Kay It was working with potters from the villages of Pejaten and Kapal, traditional centres of the terracotta ceramic cottage industry in Bali. He had been commissioned by several hotels to create walls of decorative terracotta tiles and clay figures for garden lamps and water spouts. Kay was interested in introducing colour and glazes, but Bali had no tradition of glazed ceramics. Brent also sensed the potential for glazed pottery and with his background in high-fired stoneware set about solving the problems an absence of tradition presented.

Initially he worked in Tabanan with frequent visits to Java to source materials and equipment. However, the obstacles pre-



Adding to thrown pots

sented by low level technology and high level bureaucracy almost brought the experiment to a halt.

The first task was to find raw materials. Brent travelled through Java locating firebricks, refractory cements and burners to construct an oil-fired down-draft kiln in Kay It's back yard.

The first attempt to import equipment and material from Australia resulted in the entire consignment being returned because of the high level of tariffs imposed on imports into Indonesia at the time. So began a twenty year journey to develop a high-fired ceramic industry in Bali.

In 1975 Brent assisted **Anak Agung Nagurah Oka** to establish the *Jati Agung Pottery* in Kapal. A drip-feed diesel kiln similar to the colonial Dutch designed kilns used in East Java was constructed. This kiln was built entirely of firebricks as village custom permitted red bricks to be used only in the main village temple.

Along with *Leach* type wheels, other wheels used were of traditional Indonesian design relying on a rope and bamboo kick action. The design is still used today. Using glazes from an insulator factory, Brent began accepting commissions, one of the first being ashtrays for the *Citi Bank*.

In 1976 **Wija Wawo Runtu**, the owner of *Hotel Tandjung Sari*, was sufficiently impressed by the work being produced to offer Brent a plot of land in the *Batu Jimbar Estates* at the coastal resort of Sanur, to re-establish his workshop. Brent spent his first night at the new location sleeping on a table.

In 1977 Theo Schoon returned to Bali to recreate and document the best of the traditional dance costumes of the island. The renewed association with Theo encouraged Brent's interest in traditional Balinese design.

The problems encountered earlier with materials and equipment were gradually overcome. Kaolinite from Lombok and Ball Clay from East Java were blended with local terracotta clays to produce a suitable high-firing body. Blungers and pugmills were made in a local engineering workshop and kilns were constructed for both stoneware and salt glaze firings.

Two sisters from Kapal, experienced throwers on traditional wheels, were employed to meet the growing demand. Commissions from hotels and restaurants increased as it was realised locally high-fired tableware was available. Replacements could be supplied readily and the product was not subject to high import tariffs. However, the project was not without difficulties, particularly in the wet season when drying of clay presented a major problem.

By the mid 1980s the pottery was employing 10-15 people and continuing to grow. A meeting with **John Fawcett**, head of the ceramics department at the *Perth School of Technology* resulted in the purchase of a second-hand filter press, at last enabling the

pottery to make clay without the worry of seasonal weather variations.

The 1980s was also a period of new activity for ceramic crafts on Lombok. In 1983 the *Small Industries Department of Bappeda* (Lombok Island's local governing office) approached Brent to survey Lombok's village terracotta production and to advise on how it could be improved. As a result new designs were commissioned from the principal ceramic production villages in the districts of Banyuwulek, Penujak and Masbajik. At Penujak kilns were constructed for glaze, salt glaze and pit firing. Unfortunately local bureaucratic difficulties overwhelmed the project.

In 1985 on a visit to the *New Zealand Embassy* in Jakarta, Brent raised the issue and with assistance from the Embassy Councillor **Rene Wilson**, a feasibility report was compiled. A further study was undertaken by **Giallian Dias**, a sociologist, **Robyn Stewart**, a potter from New Zealand and Brent. The *Indonesian - New Zealand Crafts Project* is still operational today and a number of New Zealand potters have had a close association with it.

Meanwhile at *Keramik Jenggala* the momentum of technological improvement and innovation continues in the 1990s. The pottery now employs a staff of 100 people. In 1993 two large top-hat gas kilns were installed making use of the abundant supply of Indonesian liquid petroleum gas. A ram press has recently been put into operation for the production of flatware and textured tiles.



Trimming and finishing area

Wal Tyrie, a ceramic chemist from Perth with extensive experience at *Wedgwood* and *H & R Johnson*, has been associated with *Jenggala* for the past four years and has had a dramatic impact on the pottery both in the way work is produced and the resulting increase in quality standards. He has applied his expertise to improving the clays, establishing higher quality controls, developing new glazes and setting up the slip-casting production.

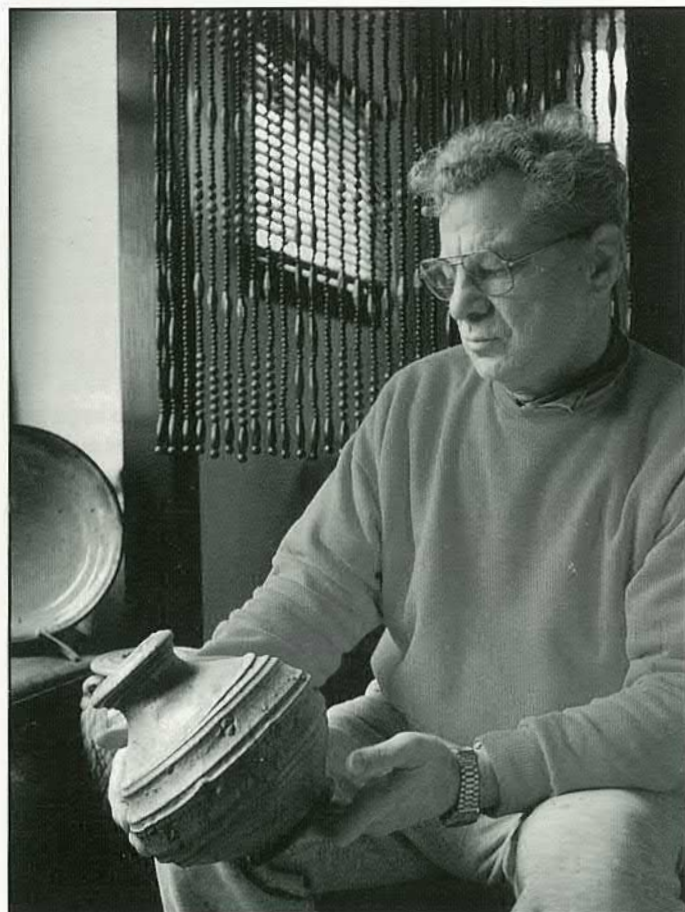
The future of *Jenggala* calls for a change of location to cope with increased production. Brent continues to design and market the work of the pottery, often using the fax to communicate with the niche markets he has established in Indonesia and abroad. He is developing designs that suggest Bali and Indonesia and is now branching into ventures that will involve decorative tiles, architectural panels and glass.

Any conflict of interest that may have arisen when Brent Hesselyn had to decide whether to devote time to clay or travel has been completely resolved. Today Brent is able to travel extensively and yet continue to explore the boundaries of the clay medium.



FIRING IN SEASHELLS

Kelvin Bradford, Auckland



Kelvin Bradford examines a vase of rare quality. The latest addition to his collection, this woodfired vase by Peter Alger was a merit winner at the Royal Easter Show

As a collector for over 22 years with a particular interest in traditional work and woodfired effects, I have followed with interest the changes in New Zealand pottery. During this period change has often come from some new overseas techniques or from market forces - sometimes to the detriment of form and traditional values. The transition from collector, to collector and part-time potter made me look and think of pieces from a different perspective.

My own pottery development and philosophy is attributed to two of New Zealand's foremost potters, **Len Castle** and **Chester Nealie**.

I first met Len Castle in 1955 as a student at *Mt Albert Grammar* prior to his departure to the United Kingdom. I have been fortunate in having a long association with him particularly since I began collecting in 1972. I have never ceased to be amazed by his dedication to the craft and constant production of works of the highest quality. I have also observed the methodical way in which he is constantly experimenting and extending the range of his work. This has provided me with the necessary stimulus to develop the medium in which I am experimenting to its present stage.

The selection of photographs represents a range of effects achieved after almost two years of experimentation in a 15 cubic foot gas kiln by well known Auckland collector and part-time potter **Kelvin Bradford**. Photos by Howard Williams

It took me four years to appreciate the unique skills of Chester Nealie. I have had the opportunity to spend many hours discussing form and particular pots with Chester and my ideas relating to the theory of form have come from these discussions - also I adopted the "throw and coil" technique used by Chester.

The principle of the medium or technique with which I am currently experimenting, was explained to me by **Peter Alger**, a potter of exceptional skills and in my opinion, unequalled innovation.

The origin of the technique is in Japan and the effects are achieved by firing the pots in shells. A slip is used and there are many variables in the firing technique. The pieces are fired to stoneware temperature. The results I have achieved have far exceeded my original expectations.

Chester Nealie visited New Zealand recently and I discussed the pots with him. He was particularly intrigued with the orange flashes I had achieved, and indicated he had not seen comparable flashes since 1976 when he was in Kyoto.

The effects are similar to some woodfired effects. The colours are warm and while they do not have the subtlety of exquisite woodfired pieces, the shells produce their own unique natural quality.

As in woodfiring where different woods produce different effects, so in these firings different shells also produce different effects.

I have always considered that particularly in vases, natural effects produce results of unequalled beauty. My experience with the development of this technique confirms my convictions.

The initial major development was made by instinct and different patterns began to emerge. I then decided to extend the range of effects and see what limitations existed. In adopting this procedure I discarded other options which were available. In the future I will continue to extend the range of effects and obtain more subtlety with colour tonings as this is achievable.

For anyone wishing to experiment there are many directions in which one can proceed.

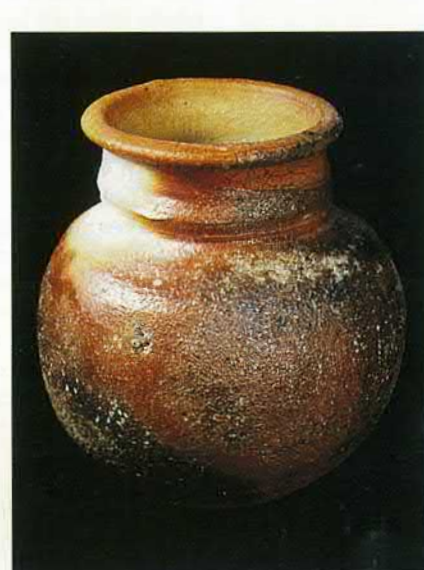
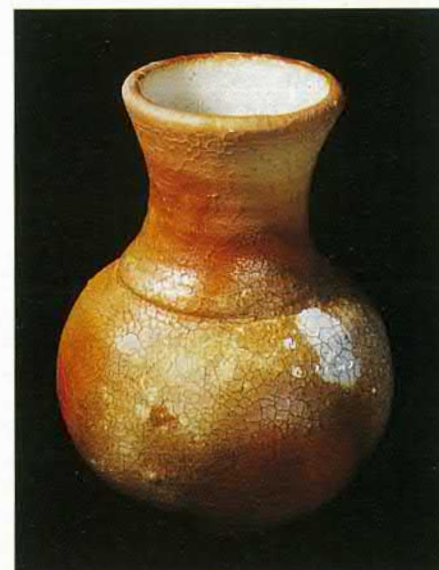
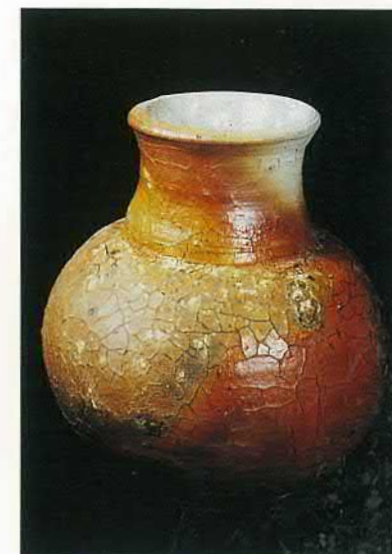
I have kept in close contact with both Len Castle and Peter Alger and discussed results and problems that have arisen during this development. I also revised my thoughts on the type of form best suited for this particular type of work.

I am grateful to Peter Alger for introducing the principle of this technique to me and for his assistance with problems and advice. Also to Len Castle for his constant support and particular comments relating to form and suggestions as to how I may further extend the variety of effects in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the large number of Auckland potters too numerous to name who have given me advice and assistance in various ways over the years. For a part-time potter this type of assistance is invaluable.

A public exhibition of Kelvin Bradford's shell-fired pots will be held in the near future.

KELVIN BRADFORD



FLETCHER CHALLENGE CERAMICS AWARD 1994

Peter Gibbs, Nelson



Moyra Elliott, left, with judge Jindra Vikova. Behind is "Open House" by Henry Pim, Eire. Photo by Howard Williams

Mitsuo Shoji was the big winner at the 1994 Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award. The senior lecturer at Sydney College of the Arts won the \$10,000 premier award for his installation *Many Wishes*.

Hot on his heels was Aucklander Matt McLean. Judge Jindra Vikova from the Czech Republic was so impressed with McLean's *Dancing Wall* that she combined two merit awards to give a \$4,000 prize.

McLean wasn't the only New Zealander to get the nod from the judge. In pride of place at either side of the entrance to the exhibition were the commendation winning works by Raewyn Atkinson and Bruce Dehnert.

Atkinson's *Green Totems* were an extension of the nikau forms she's been working on in recent years, the group of five pieces soaring to a height of 1.75m.

Dehnert, an American who first visited New Zealand several years ago to work with his old mate Steve Fullmer in Nelson, became a tutor at Otago Polytechnic in 1993. This year he joined Fullmer in the Fletcher Challenge hall of fame with his sculptural form incorporating two torsos emerging from a box-like structure.

Under the leadership of Moyra Elliott, the exhibition has continued to go from strength to strength, each year seemingly exceeding the previous one as new benchmarks are continually established. On the increase this year - as every year - are the number of entries (869) the number of countries represented (27, although work came from 45) the number of internationally famous entrants, the number of international magazines carrying

Fletcher Challenge stories. In the inexorable avalanche of superlative achievements, two questions should be asked.

Is the prestige of the exhibition itself more important than the individual works, and is the subjective judgement of one person, the judge, leading us in the best direction for the future development of clay art in New Zealand?

Probably the answer to the first question is yes. It's almost irrelevant who wins, although it probably helps the international mana and exposure for the show if a well-known personality takes the major award. It has to be that way. Without the momentum of good media exposure worldwide and a high number of entries from a wide range of countries, the show would never attract the support of the ceramics community, then it wouldn't attract the media coverage which stimulates the following year's entries. It's an endless cycle, but one which Moyra Elliott has tuned to perfection.

But what's the effect of that growing international professionalism on us here in New Zealand? Is the professional machinery taking away our feeling of pride in the show as it becomes more and more remote from the aspirations of your common kiwi potter? Just as with modern sport, we need heroes to look up to, to identify with, to give us a pride in our achievements and the motivation to try and to succeed. Once we had those local heroes. Marilyn Wiseman, Chester Neale, Rick Rudd, Steve Fullmer - they belonged to us and we were proud of them.

The heroes are still there. Marilyn features constantly, year after year. The will of the crowd on opening night that she should win an award was almost tangible. Rick was in the show as well. Those two and many other New Zealand potters are achieving recognition in a far more rarefied atmosphere than in days of old.

So why is it that I admire the show more than ever before, but can't feel that old closeness to it? Is it because the spectacle of New Zealanders receiving the awards is becoming more rare, or is the exhibition becoming less viewer-friendly?

It's always been the case that an international judge should bring their own subjective viewpoint to the exhibition. It's a good concept. Yet it has the potential to steer the show in particular directions depending on how that judge is chosen. For several years now, we've had judges who reflected an international, sculptural knowledge of clay art. As a result, we've got a show which has increasingly become sculptural and abstract.

We've always had judges like this, but they've been interspersed with the likes of Don Reitz, Gwyn Hanssen Pigott, Peter Lane and John Maltby - potters whose concerns were with the feel of the clay, the effect of the firing, the beauty of the form - concerns which seem to have been sidelined by judges of recent years.

Yet these concerns have formed the focus for the work of at least two generations of New Zealand potters. It's true that there's a new breed of clay artists arising whose preoccupation is with concept rather than technique, result rather than process. But because their concerns are more recent, that doesn't invalidate what went before. There are always reactionary mutterings in magazines all over the world against new directions, but reminiscences about old values are generally poo-pooed by the new wave. That doesn't change the validity of the viewpoint, and maybe the Fletcher Challenge team occasionally needs to come up with a short list of judges who may be able to take some cognisance of the values of the past.

There may be other options. A prominent Auckland potter whose work also featured in this year's show voiced the opinion

to me that the Fletcher Challenge had become just another international show, and that if that's the case, we could follow the lead of other such shows and award prizes in categories. In that way we could recognise ceramics as industrial design, ceramics as tableware, ceramics as sculpture, or any other facet of the ceramics worlds which seemed important. Of course that would become messy as categories overlapped - there's an attraction in the show's current simplicity. However, it seems that it's time for some lateral thinking. The exhibition has reached race speed in an international environment. It's now competing with the likes of Mino and Faenza, but what about a unique stamp that brands it as being New Zealand?

In spite of the fact that the pots I know and love weren't in evidence, the 1994 Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award was still a fantastic exhibition. Jindra Vikova was a sensitive judge who was seeking for the message - the mystery in the work. Accordingly, her choices of award winners were quite logical. Shoji's winning piece had a basic simplicity. The simple motif of boat form/containers repeated and repeated built up a spiralling pattern which could have suggested all manner of escape metaphors - in this case, the *Many Wishes* of the title being carried out into the universe.

Matt McLean's *Dancing Wall* was less sombre than his work of recent years. Despite its massive bulk it had a feeling of lightness and freshness and I liked the way the clay was allowed to speak of its own quality of plasticity and to carry the marks of the firing. The glazed strips framed and emphasised the larger unglazed sections. As the Fletcher Challenge organisation buy the winning piece, I couldn't help but think how much easier and more appropriate it would have been for them if the judge had chosen this piece for the major prize.

Either of the two New Zealand commendations would equally well have filled a space in the Fletcher Challenge building.

Catrin Howell's merit award winning stack of dogs, *Brechfa Beast and Two Dogs* was reminiscent of last year's winner. Vikova was very sensitive about this fact. "I found it a very very fresh piece, and then realised that she's very young, only 24. I knew that a dog won last year, but didn't want to be driven by that". Driven in which way I wondered, but in the pre-presentation press interviews, questions which may even obliquely seem to be hinting at possible prize winners were best left alone.

I picked up some vibrations in talking about the work of Marilyn Wiseman and Christine Boswijk. It was obvious Vikova liked both works very much, but as she had met both women was anxious to reassure me that this would have no bearing on any decision. But did it? Neither were mentioned in the awards list - could Vikova have been over-scrupulous?

The judge was absolutely enthralled with Canadian Steve Heinemann's gold coloured discoid form and gave it one of only three merit awards. I couldn't get so enthusiastic. Impressive, but fairly pedestrian.

Which was not an adjective I would apply to the third merit award. Hui-Yin Shih's *In Times Past*, was an almost grossly large cup on a tripod with a fungal handle returning to scratch itself under its own armpit. Evocative and amusing, but not pleasant or appealing.

One of my favourites was the commendation winning *Historic Relic*, by Mei-Hua Chen. Like a gigantic old mousetrap, Chen's work evoked tension, dignity and simplicity, and had enough clay-like markings to make me feel a sympathy with it as well as an admiration for its sculptural qualities. Chen, along with Shih is from Taiwan, a country Vikova picks as an emerging world force in ceramic art.

All in all, the eight hours I spent wandering around the exhibition weren't enough. There was too much to take in, too much to understand. It continued to encourage the extension of superlative language. This was the best yet - we expect them all to be, but I'd like to see the show move away from "the best of sculptural works in clay" to being the best pottery exhibition in the world. ■



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1995

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THE FLETCHER CHALLENGE CERAMICS AWARD 1994



Auckland, New Zealand

Judge : Jindra Vikova, Czech Republic



Premiere Award \$NZ10,000
Mitsuo Shoji, Australia
Many Wishes 150x4000x4000mm



Double Merit Award \$NZ 4,000
Matt McLean, Auckland
Dancing Wall 1450x2000x800mm
12 New Zealand Potter No 2 1994



Merit Award \$NZ 2,000
Steve Heinemann, Canada
Untitled
530x180x525mm



Merit Award \$NZ 2,000
Catrin Howell, Wales
Brechfa Beast and Two Dogs
500x250x120mm



Merit Award \$NZ 2,000
Hui-Yin Shih, Taiwan
In Times Past
410x420x500mm

Photos by Haru Sameshima

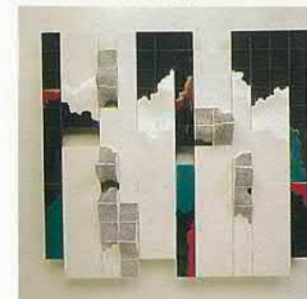
JUDGE'S COMMENDATIONS



Boris Dehnert, NZ
1100x700mm



Ross Hilgers, USA
Squared Arch Study
350x375x375mm



Milan Kout, Czech Republic
The Pellucid Landscape
700x650x100mm



Zanne Nelson, USA
Self, Contained
360x760x760mm



Grete Wexels Riser, Norway
Reflections
320x290x200mm



Boris Rubenstein, Israel
Man
450x330x210mm



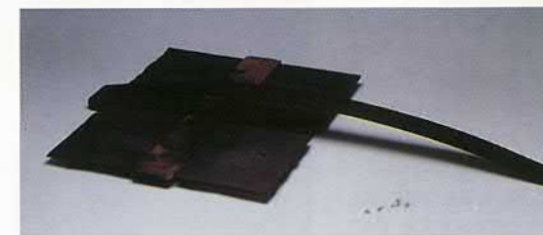
Sachiko Fujino, Japan
Phases
620x700x200mm



Anne-Beth Borselius, Sweden
Vessel with Bird
190x510x185mm



Lana Wilson, USA
90's Artifact Teapot
200x125x375mm



Mei-Hua Chen, Taiwan
Historic Relic
920x1700x160mm



Roderick Bamford, Australia
Rehabilitation and Retribution
310x180x120mm



Raewyn Atkinson, NZ
Green Totems
1750x190x190mm



Marisa Polin, Netherlands
Obelisk
580x290x300mm
New Zealand Potter No 2 1994 13

KODAK

Student Photography Award



Winner Katrina de Graaff with her ceramic camera trophy made by Peter Lange. Photo by Peter Molloy

Pictures at right are from of Katrina's photo essay on ceramist Pauline Tuau

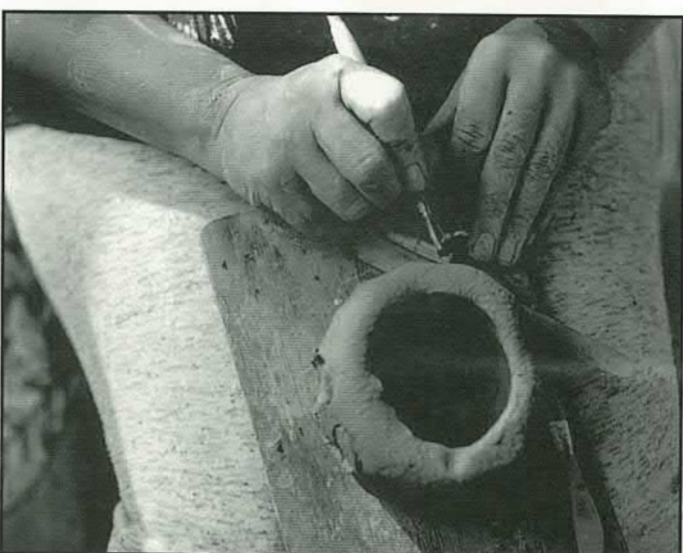
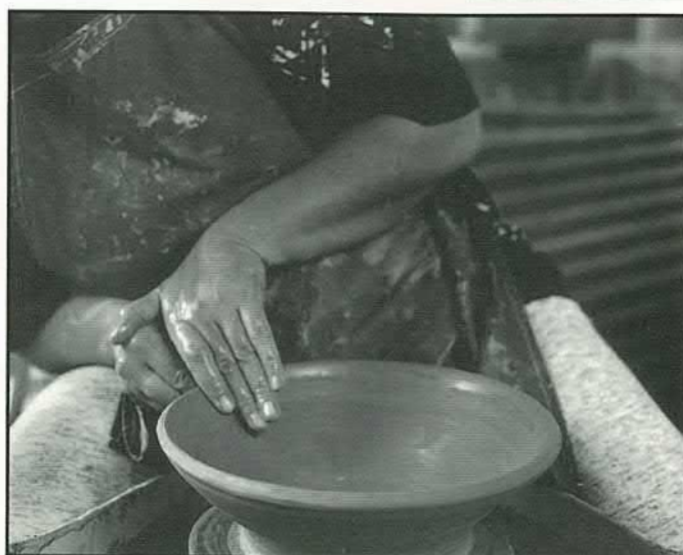
Photo essays on seven ceramic artists exhibiting in this year's *Fletcher Challenge Ceramic Award* continued the success of this recently established *Kodak Student Photography Award*.

The winner this year was **Katrina de Graaff**, a student of *Elam School of Art*, whose photo essay featured ceramist **Pauline Tuau**. Katrina's prize of \$500 worth of *Kodak Professional* products was complemented by a new *Kodak Trophy*, a camera crafted in clay by well-known ceramist **Peter Lange**. Peter was the subject ceramist for last year's winning *Photography Award* entry.

The *Award* has been set up to provide encouragement and practical experience for tertiary photography students. Each year *Kodak* invites tertiary institutes to select one photography student to complete a photographic essay on one of that year's exhibiting artists in the *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award*. The chosen students are provided with *Kodak* photographic material for their essay.

This year entries were received from *Auckland Institute of Technology*, *Unitec*, *ASA School of Art*, *Whitecliffe College of Art*, *Waikato Polytechnic* and *Wellington Polytechnic*. Next year *Kodak* also intend inviting participants from South Island teaching institutions, based on the high level of interest this new *Award* is enjoying.

The standard of entries in this year's *Award* were so high the judges, **Stephen Roke** and **Harvey Benge** in conference with *Kodak*, awarded all entrants merit prizes consisting of the recently published book *The Story of Kodak*.



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Ya-Mei Pang, Taiwan
Ht 60 cm



Detail



Chung Tching Chung, Taiwan
Ht 70 cm



Tseng Ming-Nan
Ht 48 cm



Tseng Ming-Nan, Taiwan



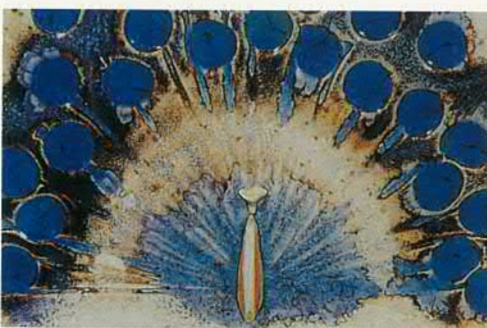
Mao C Lee, Taiwan
Ht 51 cm



Tseng Ming-Nan
Ht 55 cm



Su Shyh-Shion, Taiwan
Ht 24 cm



Tseng Ming-Nan, Taiwan
Title 50cm sq



Deng Huifen, Taiwan



Jeong Jae-Jin, Korea
Ht 46 cm



Chin Mei-Yin, Taiwan Ht 49 x 50 x 30 cm



Ya-Mei Pang, Taiwan

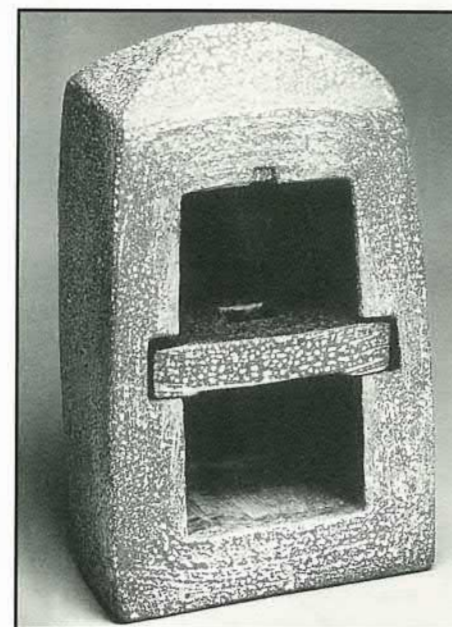


Chou Kun-Pei, Taiwan
Ht 40 cm

Photos by Graeme Storm

MAID (AND MAN) IN TAIWAN

Graeme Storm, Auckland



Jeong Jae-Jin.
Ht 48cm

Surrounded by water. That is how the Taiwanese see us, and how the small group of ceramic pieces from New Zealand were displayed at the *Taipei International Exhibition of Ceramics 1994*. Each entry stood on a white disc just above water level - lit from both above and below the water.

The entire exhibition was enormous. It filled a number of rooms and by my estimate there would have been over 1,000 works on display. Curiously, a catalogue will only be produced later. Perhaps the feat of getting such a large show up and running was daunting enough without considering a catalogue to coincide with the opening.

The exhibition consisted not only of pots, but a whole history of ceramics and pottery processes - both commercial and artistic, historical and contemporary. There was a full sized mock-up of a tunnel kiln (complete with brick exterior and welded steel strapping) through which visitors walked on the way to exhibition areas. The interior of this kiln simulated flames with a lining of large, loosely hung sheets which were rippled and undulated by concealed blowers - themselves emitting a convincing roar. Red and yellow lights, back-projected on to the sheets, completed the fiery illusion.

Emerging from this "kiln" we were confronted by the quiet simplicity of some of 20 or so people - men and women - practising the *Tea Ceremony*. Next to this was a Chinese orchestra whose timpani section consisted of tuned ceramic rings and rows of porcelain bowls, producing a very pleasant sound.

Surrounding displays accompanied by videos, were of primitive potters in various parts of China and S E Asia, demonstrating the techniques of making and firing their wares. There were also actual examples of their work on display.

As it was *VIP day* (everyone from the President of Taiwan down) and we were being escorted by a Taipei potter anxious to introduce us to many people, we were rushed through the commercial area and on to the artistic. Some examples in the former actually looked worth spending time with. Those of you who saw the Taiwan display as the featured country at last year's *Royal Easter Show*, may remember the high standard of the *Palace Museum* reproductions.

The Taiwan section of the contemporary works was divided into two. First came pieces by older respected artists, who worked mainly, though not exclusively, in traditional forms and decorations. Then there were the avant gardes for whom anything was grist for the mill. From tiny porcelain egg cups through installations on the floor or walls, to a large three metre ceramic table made of cast rustic "timbers". Unfortunately, photographing was not permitted either at this exhibition or any of the museums we visited. This Taiwanese section of the display alone held some 250 works.

From there we progressed to an Asian room (predominately Japanese) African and S American areas and large N American and European rooms, with Oceania as I mentioned at the start, also including Australian works. There was also a separate Mainland China exhibition hall.

It would have taken many more hours and several visits to cover the whole exhibition adequately and the fact that most of the identification labels of both country and potter were cunningly concealed in Mandarin, didn't help an ignorant Western viewer.

I could not help making a comparison with the *Fletcher Challenge Exhibition*. Here the culling from some 800 down to about 160 pieces, makes for a show which is not so physically and mentally daunting for the viewer. Vast quantities of ceramics may make for spectacle, but there is little else in their favour.

Also, judging by committee, which I believe was the method used in Taiwan, admits many compromises. I felt this vast showing could have done with much stricter selection. When you accept that the *Fletcher Challenge* concept of a single judge will of necessity be subjective and the numbers restricted due both to space and inclination - then it becomes a fascinating experience to look at a show put together by someone who may have an entirely different viewpoint from your own.

The *Taipei International Exhibition of Ceramics* runs for only two weeks of the year. So where else can the visitor look for pottery in that city? One venue - and much to be commended I thought - is bang in the middle of the busy *Central Railway Station*. Here is a special *Culture Gallery* with entrances/exits on three sides so people can move through it on their way to another part of the station. It is equipped with about 20 glass cases on plinths in which were displayed ceramic works by *Tseng Ming-nan*, a potter from Taichung in the S Western part of Taiwan. A handsome folding colour brochure provided those interested with photographs of work on show, together with a profile of the potter in both Chinese and English. Mr Tseng incidentally had work in this year's *Fletcher Challenge* and together with a group of Taiwanese potters, visited New Zealand during the exhibition time.

We were also taken to see three well set up private dealer galleries in the city, specializing in ceramics and I am sure there are more.

The *Taipei Fine Arts Museum* - a very modern building - also shows ceramics. How about that! In fact they are one of the major sponsors of the *International Ceramics Exhibition*.

Then of course there are the historical Chinese ceramics of the *National Palace Museum* - the main reason many people with a love of Chinese pottery visit Taipei. Here is housed the superb collections gathered during Imperial Dynasties in Mainland China. Preserved or stolen - it all depends on your historical point of view.

In fact it has a history of its own. For 14 years this vast collection was chased around China in trains, first to escape Japanese bombing in W W II, then later the Communist forces. It was hidden in caves and monasteries and finally shipped, clandestinely, to Taiwan, by *Chaing Ki-shek's* Nationalists.

The collection is vast (700,000 pieces which take 10 years to rotate) and is of superb quality. Apart from ceramics it covers bronze, ivory, cloisonne, lacquer, painting, jade, embroidery, calligraphy and carving.

An interesting feature of the *Palace Museum* is in one of the ground floor galleries. Here they have placed objects from the collection in their chronological order and together with them - by artifact, painting or photograph - show what was going on culturally in other parts of the world at the same period.

Probably the only quibble I have with the museum itself, is that they keep the air conditioning so fiercely cold, you are eventually driven out with teeth chattering. We went twice and it became an endurance test on each occasion, in spite of being 35° C outside.

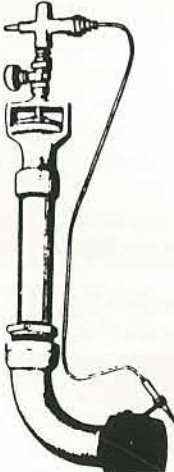
Another excellent museum (smaller and warmer!) is the *National Museum of History*. Here the collection of ancient ceramics - including wonderful tomb figures of both animals and people - are every bit as good if not so extensive, as those of the *Palace Museum*.

The collection also covers bronzes (ancient and modern) jades, pottery/porcelain, calligraphy, folk art, coinage and various crafts. But the real surprise was the room devoted to contemporary ceramic work gathered from around the world. Award winning pieces and purchases from previous *International Ceramics Exhibitions*. It is a really stunning show. Again something we went to look at twice.

If all this gives the impression that Taipei is a wonderful tourist destination, I must sadly hasten to add that it isn't. It is an ugly, sprawling industrial city, clogged with traffic and air pollution. Taiwan *does* have some beautiful areas, but you have to travel south to find them. English is not widely spoken and once out of Taipei, becomes minimal.

But as usual, once you fall in with potters you are amongst warm and lovable friends, who speak a common language - no matter the dialect.

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WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL MURAL

Cathy Kenkel, Auckland



The complete mural, Khartoum Place, Auckland
Photo by Gill Hanley

Nestled into one of Auckland's small back streets, with cobbles, tall trees and a lot of birds, is a small square known as Khartoum Place. At the back, leading to the *Auckland City Art Gallery*, the *University*, *Fingers Jewellery Gallery* and other illustrious places, is a flight of steps with waterfalls, bright red railings and a mural with over 2,000 ceramic tiles.

This piece of public art is the result of months of work by **Jan Morrison** and **Dianne Scott** (together, a company called *Tile Art*) who worked with **Claudia Pond Eyley** on this project. Claudia is a well-known artist and printmaker whose work includes several large murals, her last major work being 18 huge panels installed in the *Auckland High Court*.

Jan and Dianne as a team, have worked on outdoor murals in Auckland, Muriwai and Dunedin, using glazed tiles as the medium. Jan, who has a *Diploma of Fine Arts*, has travelled extensively in Central America, working on drawings for a British archeologist. Exposure to the Mexican use of tiles has left her enthused about the potential of tiling, both in homes and outdoors in the New Zealand setting.

In the year of the centennial celebration of New Zealand women winning the right to vote (remember Suffrage Year?) the *Women's Suffrage Committee* approved this major project supplying half the funding, the other half coming from the *Auckland City Council*. The theme was to celebrate the gaining of suffrage, with an emphasis on the work of Auckland and Northland suffragists. Khartoum Place was accepted as a site, despite the difficulties of broken wall spaces and different viewing angles. Jan and Claudia designed and glazed the tiles, while Dianne coordinated the many different tasks inherent in such a project.

People and place were acknowledged by the inclusion of kete designs, the fern and the koru representing growth and transformation. **Georgina Kirby**, an ex-president of the *Maori Women's Welfare League*, provided guidance for the use of imagery appropriate to the local tangata whenua, including the weaving details on the kete motif.

From the *Women's Christian Temperance Union* came the white ribbon, while searches in the *Auckland Museum Library* found the image of the camellia, important because one of these was presented to each Member of Parliament who had signed the Suffrage Bill. The scroll itself is too fragile to unroll completely, but with *National Archive* permission, the first page of signatures is reproduced, as is the prayer which initiates the petition.

The pohutukawa presents the Northern element and Rangitoto provides a regional focus, while other motifs include the huia, a bird of significance to the Maori and important to Jan personally. The huia was still around in 1893, though it is now extinct.

An original image of a New Zealand contingent of women standing under a banner in England was rejected by the *Suffrage Committee*, and was replaced with a cut-and-paste selection of images of standing women taken from files of the time.

Photos of women were sourced from the *Auckland Public Library* whose staff conducted extensive research into the local history of this period. The white ribbon was combined with a floral garland illustration, and placed over the standing women as a roll of honour. After much sifting of names, a careful selection of regional suffragists was made, though by no means intended to be a complete record.

Working photos by Claudia Pond Eyley



Claudia slip-trailing. Photo by Jan Morrison

Jan with the bicycle women photos





Jan airbrushing camellias



From left; Dianne Scott, Jan Morrison, Claudia Pond Eyley and others at the mural opening



Jan with stencils

The roll recognises such women as **Amey Daldy**, one of the *Women's Franchise League* who among her other activities, initiated the *Myers Park Kindergarten* for the children of working mothers. **Elizabeth Yates** was the first woman in the British Empire to be elected to public office, as the Mayor of Orehunga. A missionary, **Annie Jane Schackenberg** is there, as is **Elizabeth Rattray**, a journalist. **Meri Te Tai Maungawhai** is on the roll, acknowledged for her work in leading a delegation from the Coromandel to Parliament to procure the vote for Maori women.

These initial designs were presented to the *Auckland City Council* which approved and granted extra funding, so the mural could be expanded to incorporate another image. This extra segment showing four women with bicycles is not part of the front-facing facade, but is seen when walking down the steps through the different pond levels.

Preparation now concentrated on sourcing a tile base suitable for the task, and months of colour and tile testings. Over the years, Jan has tested Malaysian, Mexican, Indonesian, Argentinian, Italian and yes, New Zealand tiles. Finally a high-bisque terracotta floor tile from Italy was chosen for its stability in the firing process. German and English ceramic stains and glazes were used, matching their colours to those in the watercolour roughs. They were applied with testing for absorption rates and colour intensity levels which differ according to application. Design work continued with cutting and pasting.

The initial work of making a scale model of the site was extensively used in this part of the design process, aided by constant reference to photographs. After final careful placement of the chosen motifs in sympathy with all the elements of the space, including the waterfalls, it was time to begin work 'proper'.

After initial working tiles were fired, it was decided to use a variety of techniques to apply the glazes. Photographic stencils were used for the words of the original petition and the women's faces, while airbrushing through lace and other objects achieved the right 'period' look for dresses and hats. The hats worn at the time tended to be a delightful froth of feathers and bits and pieces, posing a problem to reproduce. *Mylar* stencils were used in airbrushed areas, all designs were gridded and some hand-drawn. Slip-trailing and silkscreening processes were used. Decals were used for the acknowledgement of sponsors and support.

The predominant colours were chosen for their relevance as well as for visual satisfaction. A wonderful marigold ochre was chosen for earth associations and in the flax weaving motif. Purple was used for the petition itself; purple, green and cream being the 1890 Suffrage colours. Red was used for accents and the pohutukawa blossom, while the terracotta of the tile itself became part of the design element.

The 200 x 200mm tiles were glazed on the floor of a tin shed in Swanson. This four-car garage was found close to Jan's existing studio and was cleaned out and established as a work space. In back-breaking sequence the tiles were laid out, the designs transferred, glazed by various methods, cleaned individually, loaded into a car boot and driven very, very slowly across a main road into the studio carport and unloaded into two electric kilns.

Some of the tiles went through the process twice, and over the months of work, only seven were broken.

The tiles were fired to 1050° C, lower than the original firing of 1200°C. The problems associated with maintaining the vibrancy of the oranges and reds were solved by firing tiles with those colours, a few at a time, high up in the kiln.

Any large scale project requires skills beyond the merely technical, and a collaborative project requires the use of even

Jan, Claudia and Dame Catherine by the lower pool



more skills, some of the most important being inter-personal. Learning, and sharing of information and technique is part of the process and both Jan and Claudia express a great deal of respect for the skills each brought to the project.

Claudia has memories of 'hell-hot' days on her hands and knees, gloved and hatted in a vain attempt to keep the irritating dust away from her skin and hair.

Jan has memories of hours spent spraying, cleaning and slip-trailing.

The video records dust, a noisy compressor, presentation preparation, hours of design work and discussion, detailing of glaze mixes, fine tuning of processes and much laughter as this team comes to grips with the physical and mental nature of this kind of work.

By August 1993 work was well on the way to completing the facade. Claudia records in the working diary, "This means making stencils for the airbrushing of the wording *Women Achieve the Vote 1893* - over the previously airbrushed background, the purple of the petition itself. Once fired, a real jigsaw puzzle in batches of tiles transported to my home in Mt Eden over the weekend to silkscreen the names of the signatures in a repeated motif."

The tiles filled Claudia's hallway end to end. She records that "my stepmother Ann...helped to lay out the multitude of tiles in the correct sequence and the right way up! I was most grateful. My family is very tolerant - not all husbands would be happy to have their partners silkscreening gooey glazes up and down their hallway!"

Around the same time, Jan records, "It seems I've hardly raised my head from a chaos of glazed and unglazed tiles to get to record our progress and...can hardly believe we are on the 'home stretch', but we are...It has been interesting how much easier all round it has been to airbrush glazes rather than slip-drip them. Quicker too."

Installation in time for the official opening on September 19 was the next hurdle. Each tile was numbered on the front face with felt-tip pen and then cemented to the wall.

The opening was delayed some crucial hours by heavy rain, with everybody concerned including the subcontractor still cleaning and polishing tiles up to the last minute. For the opening, the Air Force hung a huge cargo parachute from side to side of Khartoum Place, rigged to drop at the pulling of a knot at the right dramatic moment. Felt-tip pen was still being rubbed off tiles behind this screen as the dignitaries arrived.

Despite the rainy day, a Navy band led over 300 women and guests down Queen Street, including some descendants found from the roll of honour. The gathering included a large contingent from the Coromandel.

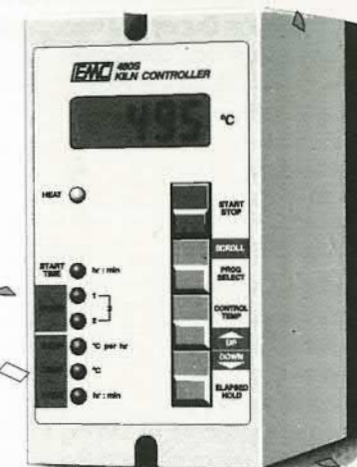
The *Auckland City Council* set the waterfalls going, speeches were made and women gathered in period dress. *Elam* students crowded on the fire escapes and balconies adjacent, cameras from TV and the press clicked and whirled. The Governor General **Dame Catherine Tizard** officially opened the mural, the crowd cheered and the parachute dropped. Claudia, Jan and Dianne saw their creation together as a whole for the first time.

They both record in the work diary that "considerable celebration" continued for some time, ie; all afternoon and well into the night.

Although every effort was made to have the 'bicycle women' segment up for the opening, budget and time constraints prevented this from happening. The mural was totally completed three months later with the installation of these four women standing by their bikes.

There were one or two small extra tasks. One (only one!) tile was upside-down; completion of the video and book; final plaque installation - and all, finally, was done.

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KATHARINE WEST

Linda Tyler, Dunedin

Photos by Brendan Lee

This year at the *Otago Polytechnic School of Art* there have been two Irish Artists-in-Residence, stone sculptor **Marian O'Donnell** and ceramic sculptor **Katharine West**. Both have been given the opportunity to exhibit at the *Dunedin Public Art Gallery* as part of the partnership between it, the *Hocken Library* and the *Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council* which all contribute to the support of the International Artist-in-Residence scheme.

Katharine West's installation, *Catena* was displayed at the Gallery from 10 June to 10 July. The works evolved during her residency in response to the landscape of the South Island, where Katharine has been particularly impressed by the contrast between thunderous curtain waterfalls and quieter passages of water around Milford Sound.

Although born in Edinburgh in 1964, Katharine grew up eight miles from Dublin in a medieval port set in a rocky landscape of granite. Attending Art School in Dublin in 1982, she studied for a Diploma in Craft Design and then went to work in Strasbourg in France. There she became interested in the expressive use of the body through theatre and mime. These two touchstones, landscape and the body, have remained as constants in her work to date.

From working in a ceramic tradition which placed emphasis on vessel making, Katharine became more interested in surfaces than volumes. She produced freestanding coil pieces which set up an ambiguous interior/exterior relationship offering both as textured environments for the hand to explore. Endeavouring to make her forms fluid, Katharine became involved in working intuitively, stretching clay to discover its limits.

Her explorations led her to Italy to work with a potter there, and then to complete a Master of Fine Art at *New York College of Ceramics* where she found a freedom from tradition and encouragement to work spontaneously. This was followed by a year as Artist-in-Residence at the *Oregon School of Arts and Crafts* in Portland, Oregon. There she developed her work further, contrasting hard edges with soft, and keeping surfaces unglazed to explore the natural colour and porosity of fired material. Significantly, she worked toward creating installations rather than individual pieces.

This is the background to her New Zealand work, *Catena*, which has come at the end of three months residence in Dunedin. The



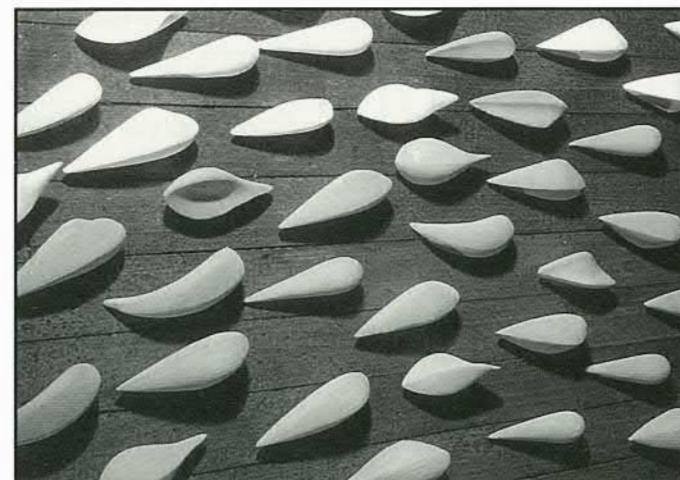
Katharine West

word "catena" means series, and there are several interrelated groups of work involved. The *Small Implement Series* combines hundreds of small sharp forms as two waves of colour, red and white, shaped into a large unfurling spiral or koru. A group of four larger forms are lined up along one wall appearing as abstracted containers. Here the initial concept was to explore the watery path of a tributary to a river.

This series of ceramic sculptures reads as three small forms, followed by a large one, conveying the notion of passage. Such a progression is suggested by the sequential layout of the internal spaces in the *Public Art Gallery* in Dunedin. These pieces appear as broken fragments which are not connected physically, but which alternate between emphasising the fragility of clay and the solidity of form, contrasting notions of temporality and constancy. When viewed as a series, tension builds to create a flow of energy like a side stream as it empties into a river or lake.

The larger pieces are grouped as a trio within the large koru/spiral series, with only one form placed beyond its confines. These biomorphic shapes are derived from a work Katharine created for the 1994 *Fletcher Challenge Award*, and each has been developed as a hybrid according to structures that can be built on (and supported by) an originating form. It is possible to glimpse figurative references here - the curve of an abdomen or slope of thigh. These develop formal echoes within the group, but each individual sculpture is an embodiment of feeling that communicates to the viewer through the realm of emotional response. The shapes deployed are sensuous and subtle, speaking to memory through the visual and tactile senses rather than relying on explicit description for an association to be made.

Similarly, the *Small Implement Series* of moulded palm-sized fired clay pieces had its beginnings in archetypal shapes - not just the spiral, but ancient constructions as well. Katharine's way of working uses clay as a sculptural medium for its range of expressive possibilities. Particularly important is the way visual



Catena, detail

impressions are relayed to invite the physical sensations of touch. Her observation of natural phenomena like the eroded surfaces of ventifacts is wedded to knowledge of cultural history. In Ireland, vestiges of the past such as neolithic passage-graves, dolmens and menhirs create shapes in the landscape which inevitably surface in Katharine's work. While coiling her larger ceramic sculptures, Katharine is effectively letting the shapes emerge from her subconscious. Celtic motifs originating in the archetypal circle or spiral are not consciously applied but can occasionally be recognised in her forms.

In the installation *Catena*, the small "implements" at first appear identical. But their very familiarity as objects for human use distinguishes them as reminiscent of separate artefacts - the bevelled shape of a paddle here, or the sharp edge of a knife blade

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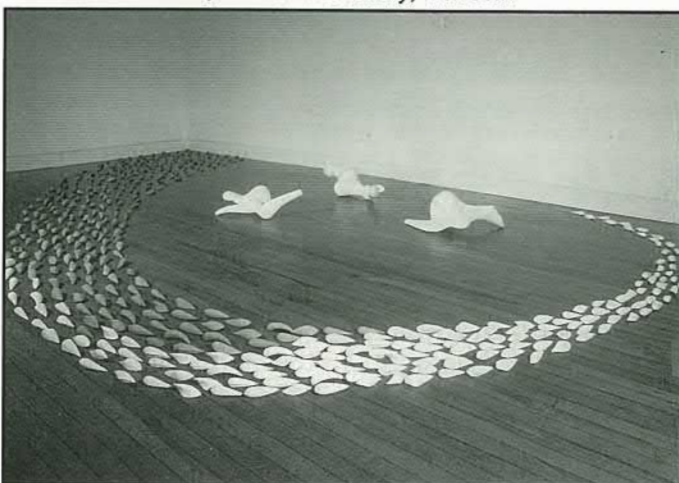
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elsewhere. The two colours meet in a curved line like the yin and yang of an oriental balance of oppositions, but the red-coloured clay pieces themselves also have multiple variations because of the wide range of different firings used to produce them. They are arranged to pull the viewer through the installation as they curl with a wave-like surge of colour and energy. At the point where the curvature becomes most intense or concentrated, the colour of the "implements" shifts from red to white before narrowing to a point. Here the idea of passage is at its most explicit, casting us back to review the larger individual pieces, and consider their hollow and ambiguous nature. Shifts of energy are experienced from interior to exterior, abetted by the unglazed porous surfaces. Katharine West's forms seem to breathe with new life and old mysteries, their expressive potential continuously communicated through the warm, raw material of clay.

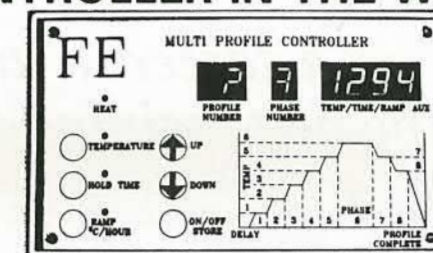
Catena, detail



Catena Installation, Public Art Gallery, Dunedin



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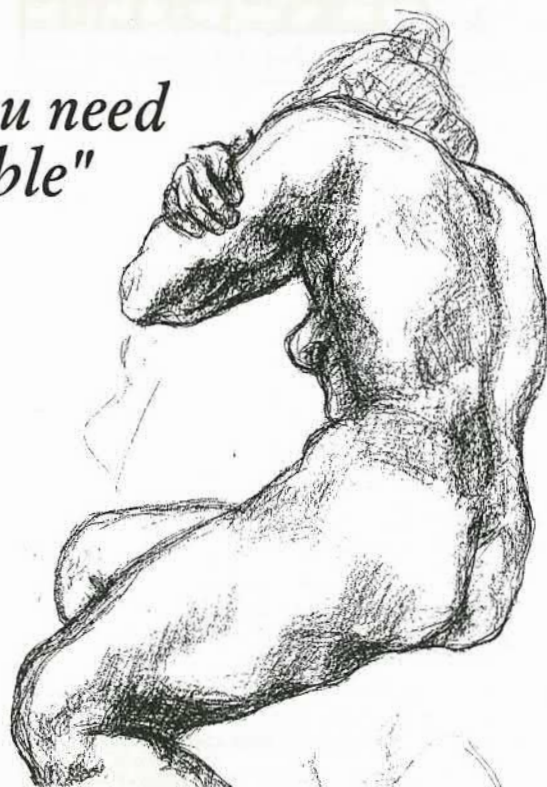


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MJCAX '94

Steve Martin, Wanganui



Ritual Vessel by Steve Martin, Diploma of Fine Arts Student at Wanganui Regional Community Polytechnic

Recently I was invited to attend the third MJCAX (Malay/Japan Ceramic Artist Exchange) at the Mara Institute of Technology, Shah Alam, Malaysia. This was to be the first time ceramic artists had been invited from other countries, and despite the short notice (my invitation for the March - April exchange arrived in December) a diverse range of artists participated.

Those attending: Bruce Anderson from Australia with his secrets of cement fondue; David Jones from England, last year's winner of the JNAX prize with his No 1 haircut and raku ravings; Soile Paasonen, Finland, pinch pots and katakana; and five Japanese guests led by Senko Yamamoto a "master of the power and energy that exists in clay."

Working alongside the foreigners were three students from ITM and a variety of Malaysian potters.

The workshop took place within the ceramic department and as the Institute was in full swing, we had the help and cooperation of the ceramic students and tutors. ITM has around 30,000 students spread throughout the country with 80 full-time ceramic students working towards a degree in industrial or sculptural ceramics. The Arts Department encompasses a wide range of disciplines such as batik, printmaking, textile and industrial design, painting and traditional copper ware.

The Institute provided accommodation and transport, so the only costs incurred during the five weeks by the participants were food and entertainment. Five New Zealand dollars went a very long way (dinner at a nice restaurant cost NZ\$5-10). Five New Zealand dollars, however, didn't go too far if visiting the local Jazz bars which became a sobering experience when the price of beer (NZ\$7 per glass) is discovered so it's tea or coffee for the rest of the night.

Included within the five weeks was participation in the first International Ceramic Exhibition to be held at the National Gallery as well as a trip to Pehantian Island in the South China Sea. The build-up to the exhibition was punctuated with flying visits to local potters, galleries and places of interest.

In between the sight seeing and cheap dinners, we worked. With 33 degrees and 85 per cent humidity outside under the marquee, we sang, sweated and exchanged ideas, thoughts and methods. Being a student of George Kojis, it's difficult not to go anywhere without making terra sigillata from local clays and these turned out

great. We had the use of a number of electric kilns, a gas kiln and Bourry box style wood kiln.

We also experimented with a paper kiln, sawdust and fast/fire salt in a makeshift brick construction.

The lowtech kilns and sigillata proved to be of great interest to the students who had only read of such things so we had good feelings about giving something back to them.

The timing of the firings had to be judged fairly well as most days, usually at about the same time 4-5pm, we had the equivalent of New Zealand annual rainfall for three decades in half an hour. It became a pleasure getting wet during this break from the blazing sun.

Week four and the exhibition became a reality, held in conjunction with an International Sculptural Symposium. The space was excellent and the opening night was a great success, with guests ranging from the Minister for Arts to dealers from Singapore.

The day after the opening it was on to the bus and off to Pehantian Island for three days of R and R. The ride across the peninsula was a roller coaster adventure through palm oil plantations, jungle kampongs (villages) of various sizes. After a two hour boat trip into the South China Sea we struck paradise - palm trees, coral beaches, jungle, the works. Population, about 50.

As you can imagine after three days and nights of swimming, fishing, diving and just lying around it was hard to leave, but it was back to Shah Alam for the closing ceremony.

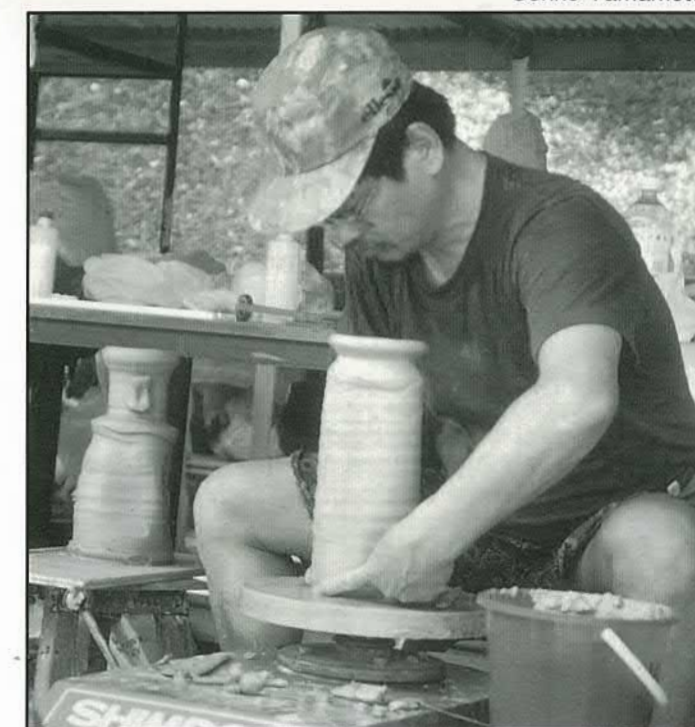
The opportunity to see old friends from Japan and meet new ones from Malaysia was fantastic. I can only add that if you have the opportunity to attend this workshop in the future you will receive the same kindness and generosity that was given to us.

Don't forget your swimming gear and of course umbrella unless you don't mind getting wet.

I take this opportunity to thank fellow students and staff of the Arts Department and also the Akoranga Trust. Without their encouragement and support this experience would not have been possible.

As an opportunity to participate in the culture and education system in another country I would recommend any student of ceramics - old or new - to give it a go. You won't be disappointed, just sunburnt.

Senko Yamamoto



AMSTERDAM

Ann Verdcourt, Dannevirke



Lies Van Vlijmen in her Amsterdam studio

We first met **Lies Van Vlijmen** at the Forest of Dean College during the Salt and Soda weekend, where we looked at each other's photographs of ceramic work and swapped addresses. I was attracted to her ceramic figures which are quite unlike anything I've seen in New Zealand.

Lies' husband, **Cor Van Vlijmen**, makes salt-glazed domestic ware in lovely colours. He has a salt kiln in the country away from the home and studio in Amsterdam, where it is impossible to have salt firings.

On the trip to Amsterdam, we had planned to visit certain collections in the good museums. We had seen wonderful Dutch ceramics in books, but finding them in actuality proved difficult. At the time there were very few contemporary ceramics on display and no advice available to the public on how, or where to find any. There is no potters' society and we never did find a ceramics magazine, though there was plenty of advertising at the tourist bureau geared to factory visits of the ever popular blue and white Delft ware.

I asked if potters work in secret and got the answer, "No, but they are not all commercial". It made me realise how well organised the English craft scene is and how good the representation is for potters in New Zealand.

If it hadn't been for Cor Van Vlijmen we would have found it very difficult to see any contemporary ceramic work in the short time available to us. As soon as we contacted Cor, he left his pots to go hard, collected us from our hotel and took us home to lunch. We saw his collection of pots and some fine *Ex Libris* book plates which he collects.

That afternoon he drove us 100km to the famous *Keramisch Werk Centrum* at 's-Hertogenbosch, a truly magnificent place. (See article by Rita Zwitser-Bavre, *NZ Potter*, vol 34, no 1, 1992) We were shown all the equipment and saw some work being packed into kilns, but the artists' studios were not open to visitors so work will not be interrupted.

I did manage to peep at a large wall piece **Betty Woodman** was making, and saw an interesting project with tiny terracotta bricks. Slide selections for next work periods were being made in the director's office. It was tantalising to get glimpses through windows as we passed by. It would be a very lucky person who gains entrance to work space here.

Ann Verdcourt and her husband John Lawrence, with the assistance of a QE II Arts Council travel grant, visited **Lies** and **Cor Van Vlijmen** in Amsterdam in 1993.

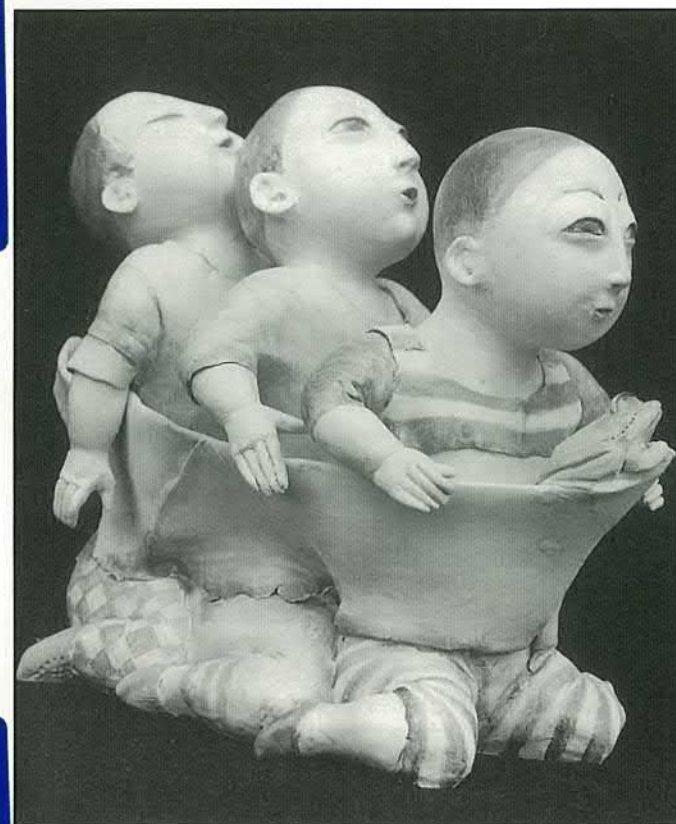
The following day Cor took us to visit some dealer galleries that show ceramics, including the *Gallerie Petit* where Lies shows her ceramic figures. She was having an exhibition there in October 1993. We also visited **Jeroen Bechtold's** gallery which has his studio and kilns behind. There was an article about his work in *Ceramics, Art and Perception* (No 8, 1992) but the photographs we had seen didn't convey the beauty of his translucent egg-shell porcelain vases we were able to handle and enjoy. They are fabulous.

Cor arranged a visit to the ceramics department of the *Rietveld Academy*, a very large art school. This excellent department is run by **Babs Haenen** who has exhibited, with three other ceramics teachers, in the *Garth Clark Gallery*, New York. We saw interesting work, all very individual. Some of the students were outstanding - they had decided in 1993 that they didn't want a set syllabus, so ceramic skills were taught as individual need arose. We were able to talk to students who were hard at work for their Degree Show. Cor has since sent us photos from this show.

New Zealand was known here through the *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* and the *Treasures of the Underworld* from Expo in Spain, which had been showing in the *Nieuwe Kerk*.

Lies and Cor share a studio away from their home in a quiet street beside a canal. We spent a very happy time watching Lies work - and exploring their cupboards. A hasty glance at her work might suggest her interest was in dolls. Not the ceramic slip-cast kind that imitate those of the Victorian era, but the altogether more exciting products of AD 750 made by Mexican Indians of Veracruz.

Follow my Leader, 35 x 45cm



Paper Boat Shipwreck, 35 x 35cm

Other works that came to mind are the rounded forms of the baby-faced Olmec Pueblo Indian figurines and the ingeniously composed Japanese Netsuke. There is also the memory of the head of a wooden Dutch doll I had as a child, which had belonged to my grandfather. Its head and body had been carved in one piece.

To say Lies' figure groups are lighthearted fun pieces or just ornamental 'toys', would be giving a wrong impression. They are certainly enjoyable, decorative pieces to ornament the house, works that give much pleasure, but for those who examine them further, they have their serious side. Most of those I saw were about relationships between mother and children, and children's games, some works having as many as four figures, the problem of joining the figures together beautifully solved.

A group of three children shipwrecked in a paper boat tells of setting out on a venture unprepared. Four figures are walking one behind the other as in "Follow my Leader". The leader has closed eyes and all the figures have the same pose - in this, Lies was thinking how many people do things without thinking for themselves, they just copy someone else.

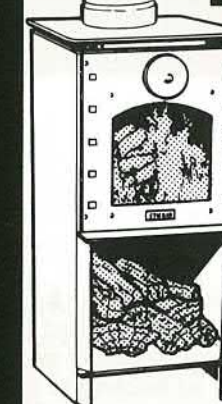
Most of Lies' figures are grouped and joined to produce a compact single object, but she has also made a lively figure on a bicycle, though this single is sometimes combined with other figures. Swimming figures are also featured in different ways.

The pieces are coiled and soft slab built from earthenware, fired to 1080° C in an electric kiln. No glaze is used, colour comes from commercial underglaze stains and oxides. Lies has made some salt-glazed pieces and experimented with other media. The earthenware groups are her predominant works with the average height being 35cm, though some are larger.

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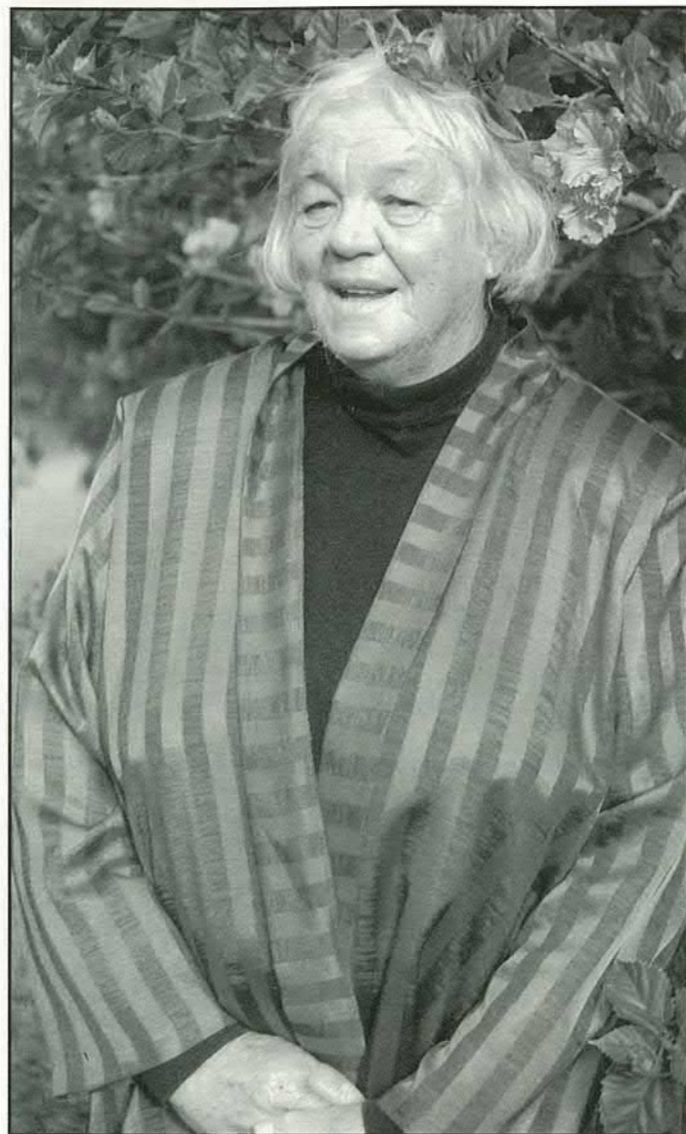
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YVONNE RUST

Theresa Sjoquist, Whangarei



Yvonne Rust QSM, is a strong-natured and compassionate woman who has had a powerful effect on many lives. She is known as an art teacher, a pioneer potter and an accomplished painter.

This year Yvonne took up an offer to use the *Rita Angus Cottage* in Wellington until June, to finish off a series of paintings started in the capital in 1993.

Yvonne learned to paint in 1942 at *Ilam* when artistic New Zealand was just finding itself. When she left art school with a *Diploma of Fine Arts* in 1946, education people were just beginning to think it worthwhile to have art teachers in high schools.

After forty years of teaching art, and wanting to paint seriously herself, Yvonne was surprised she had to start at the bottom. Being an art teacher had only meant having some technical knowledge and the capacity to inspire.

"I had to sit down and go carefully through all the material I had taught. I am still learning, since you have to build on your knowledge. Art is about having some talent, a lot of desire and discipline, and then plain old practise. Painting is learning the techniques required and then relaxing and allowing it to pour through your fingers and out of the brush."

Yvonne tutored a Life Drawing workshop at the 1994 Summer Do at *The Quarry* in Whangarei, where she enthralled her students by teaching her speciality of creating paints from clay.

She has always run Summer Schools wherever in the country she happens to have been. The first was a pottery school in Christchurch in 1956.

"I didn't know a thing about pottery, but wanted to learn, so I invited anyone who knew anything about the subject to join us and then co-ordinated a massive school with tutors **Mirek Smisek, Patricia Perrin, Carl Vendelbosch, Marion Major** and **Jim Nelson**. It was Jim Nelson who taught me how to pot.

"We scraped up pottery wheels from wherever we could find them. The railway station never forgot me for it, when fifty wheels converged on the platform and all had to be moved.

"No-one had big kilns in those days, except for one at the Art School, so we had to run all over Christchurch and spread the work of eighty students around lots of tiny electric kilns."

Yvonne's innovative ideas on the use of natural resources have inspired most facets of her professional life. Her efforts towards closer community have been remarkable and perhaps nowhere more evident than in the concrete form of the *Quarry Arts Centre* which she initiated in Whangarei fourteen years ago.

"*The Quarry* wasn't something I had a vision for," says Yvonne, "I'd started two similar centres in the past, in Christchurch and Greymouth, both of which had petered out. You need the support of local craftspeople to make it really work. I didn't get it."



At *The Quarry*

Yvonne believes *The Quarry* came about through fate's dealing with her. She'll always remember the immaculate **Mr Cook** who, dressed in a light blue suit, visited her pottery studio in Parua Bay. She had to put plastic down so he could sit without getting dirty. Cook was a local entrepreneur involved with a lot of real estate projects.

He asked Yvonne to start a craft centre in the middle of apple and pear orchards on the southern outskirts of Whangarei. Disillusioned with craftspeople as she was, Yvonne queried whether he knew what he was asking of her.

"I knew what was really involved and that he couldn't possibly have any idea of the magnitude of such a task. Despite my emphatic "no", he left that day saying, "You will".

By chance a letter arrived the next day from the *Internal Affairs Department* inviting Yvonne to attend a conference in Hastings on raw materials in New Zealand. Raw materials had been a hobby-horse of hers for twenty-five years and she'd made plenty of noise about it, so it was no surprise to be invited.

At the conference the discussion spun away from raw materials, but Yvonne managed to get her message across. She outlined the

fastPOST

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At *Rita Angus House, Wellington*

concept of a craft centre based on a nest of cottage industries using natural resources, and how it would benefit the wider community.

Still with no reply from *Internal Affairs*, Yvonne then went to Wellington to talk with them about her ideas. She found she had to set up a trust before any money could be steered her way.

"So I left my potting for almost three years and travelled around Northland soliciting interest and support for an Arts Centre in Whangarei. The government was interested because of the employment that could eventuate.

"Craftspeople accepted the proposal as a centre for helping the artisans of Northland. Clay production, training facilities and a retail outlet for crafts were part of the plan. Eventually, after spending \$5,300 of my own money, which was never reimbursed, I had the names of more than four hundred Northland artists and craftspeople. Forty percent support was all I needed to qualify for funding from *Trade and Industry* and I had much more than that."

At the time, rather than investing in private enterprise, the government effected control through state-run institutions. The *Northland Craft Trust* was given to the *Community College (Northland Polytechnic)* to set up on the apple and pear orchard site. Mr Cook was no longer involved.

Yvonne negotiated a gift of bricks from a recently demolished glassworks on condition that the site for their delivery was closer than the dump to where they would otherwise be consigned. When the *Community College* discovered she proposed to erect Trust buildings with them, they decided they didn't want to know. They also decided they didn't want anything to do with the newly formed *Northland Craft Trust*.

Dejected, Yvonne looked around for another site. One hot day she was directed to a disused quarry.

Yvonne working on her *Wellington Series* at *Rita Angus House*



"I found a Taranaki gate barring the entrance and a scruffy road which ran through a swampy area. I walked around knee-high in mud through toitoi, bulrushes, gorse and blackberry. The whole lot was against a backdrop of native bush and only minutes from the centre of town. I loved it.

"Next door to the quarry was a little park which I walked around, discovering a gravestone at one end. I was shocked to find my great-grandfather's name on the plaque; the place was part of my life. I made up my mind, no matter what, this time I would make an arts centre work."

Initially, until she could prove the *Northland Craft Trust* would be financially viable, *The Quarry* was rented from the *Whangarei District Council*. The glassworks dropped a mountain of bricks at the site and the massive task began.

When she applied to *Internal Affairs* for the \$1,000, 000 quoted to build the *Raw Materials Centre* with skilled labour, Yvonne was



Stripping Flax

given instead twenty-five workers on *PEP* and other schemes. That decision cost not one, but two million dollars.

"I sat down a few years later and added up the real cost of the *PEP* wages and included the cost of misused materials lost through unskilled labour. Labour who for the most part were not interested in working.

Part of that labour included students, one of whom she asked to collate names, addresses and telephone numbers of the four hundred artists. She was obliged to show him, as he was very nearly illiterate, how to file. After he left, she discovered that, apparently intentionally, he had recorded each telephone number with one incorrect digit.

"The *PEP* workers weren't interested in what we were doing and resented authority. The losses they caused in time and materials were phenomenal."

The six-month work schemes presented further problems, and really didn't work either.

The allocation to run the project was \$100 per week to supply twenty-five workers with tools and materials. It meant most of the

time Yvonne was off the premises garnering building materials and workshop supplies.

"Most of our materials came from the rubbish dump and 'Steptoe & Sons'. I got windows from the old BNZ as it was pulled down, and discovered the local meatworks were dumping sheepskins at the tip. We collected these and began experimenting with tanning. Eventually the skins were collected directly from the meatworks."

Wherever a concrete pad left by the original quarry operations was uncovered it was used as a base for a building, all of which are still in use. They are tucked quietly into Whangarei's bush-clad Western Hills. A waterfall splashes down from native bush inhabited by at least twentythree varieties of birds, and a track leads to an old pa site.

The Northland Craft Trust rents fourteen studios out to craftspeople from various disciplines. Currently these are mostly potters, but there is a stained-glass worker, a clay maker, a clay sculptor, a bone carver, a weaver, a painter, a landscape artist, a writer and a neon-tube bender.

The Northland Craft Co-op runs a retail outlet at The Quarry which is a popular source for local gift-shoppers. At the far end of the property, Te Kowhai Print Trust operates a public studio for lithography and paper arts and acts as a resource centre for graphic arts.

The Quarry is also home to EBANZ, the Earth Building Association of New Zealand. Many of the studios are built from either rammed earth or adobe bricks, including a two-storey, artisans' accommodation building, currently under construction.

The original arts centre idea was for a nest of cottage industries using raw materials available in the local area. Cottage industry can best be illustrated by an example such as the hand-knitting industry where a garment design is produced by a master craftsman, someone with marketing skills establishes sales,

and someone else manages quality control. The actual knitting is farmed out to private homes.

"This employs women at home with children who can't take up full-time work because of their domestic responsibilities," says Yvonne. "It uses a New Zealand produced commodity and adds value. People are already employed bringing the wool to a standard which is exportable - the knitting employs yet more people, bring the product to a finished stage."

"A companion cottage industry would be a packaging plant working for the entire nest of industries and providing overall quality control."

However, Yvonne is disappointed that the cottage industry aspect of the Northland Craft Trust has not yet come into being.

"We have leading craftspeople there now, but they prefer to make one-off things more than work with people as cottage industry demands. Generally artists and craftspeople don't think at a national level, but as individuals. This undermines any potential for community involvement."

She believes New Zealanders must develop the community mode of thinking if we are to progress; cottage industry is a direct route to this. It employs many people and can make use of natural resources.

"Northland has so many resources lying around waiting to be used," says Yvonne, "but no-one seems to have recognised the potential value in exploiting them."

The glassworks in Whangarei were pulled down because cheaper glass is produced elsewhere. There is no longer any need for the white sands of Northland, reputedly most pure in the world. The money-making potential for that sand, the amount of which is phenomenal, includes the making of crystals, of Tuff glass and of diamond sandpaper.

"An economy based on three million people should be focussed on marketing to the wealthy of the world. We simply can't compete with Korea, Taiwan and China, so why do we try? We import cotton in order to produce shirts...why?"

"New Zealand as a nation cannot command respect from overseas if it insists on imitating others rather than developing its own style and character."

"At the moment I'm working on laquered paper-mache furniture made from our natural resources. This is a New Zealand style of laquer, not the black Chinese style. Flax and dead, stress the word dead, cabbage trees, can be rendered down to a paper-mache which is then poured into sand moulds made rigid with plaster. The cabbage tree fibres act as a reinforcing agent and the end product is a half-inch thick, very strong, light furniture which can be easily exported and is much more glamorous than plastic."

"There are other natural resources in abundance in Northland. Matauri Bay yields the finest kaolin in the world and we export it all over the globe, but no-one in New Zealand has yet produced a porcelain or white china clay body. Our potters import their white clays. It infuriates me."

Yvonne believes the polytechs attempt to ape universities. She suggests that in this case they should take up a true trade university position and experiment with local resources. Universities often have research departments devoted to the development of new products from local material. Once the product is earning money in the community or on world markets, the universities divest themselves of the interest and place it in the local community for development as a business. This is the ideal to which Yvonne believes our polytechs should aspire, in particular with regard to New Zealand's natural resources.

"Individuals have picked up and run with the ideas I have offered," she says, "but I have failed to interest the nation in any of them."

At 72, Yvonne Rust still has powerful drive and tremendous energy, but now it's directed differently. She says, "Someone else can take up the fight! I'm going to paint."

One of the Wellington Series by Yvonne Rust



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RECENTLY SEEN

COLLECTABLES

An exhibition with a different slant was undertaken in June by the *Albany Village Pottery Gallery*.

It was collated from 20 individual collections, the owners of which wished to cull selected items for various reasons.

Some pieces came from deceased estates, some from people who were just wishing to quit pots they had no house space for. Some were carefully chosen to 'edit' a specific collection.

There were historically important overseas pieces by such notable potters as **Michael Cardew**, **Ladi Kwalli**, **Shoji Hamada**, **Lucie Rie**, **Kenneth Clark**, **Ian Godfrey**, **Bernard and David Leach**. Some of these were originally acquired overseas, others were brought here by their makers or even made here during a visit to this country.

Pots from many of New Zealand's foremost potters were there, some made over 30 years ago, others more recently. Ceramic artists no longer with us were represented - **James Greig**, **Don Thornley** - as were some who now work in other countries - **Warren Tippet**, **Ray Rogers**, **Chester Neale**.

HELEN MASON

Helen writes, "In 1965 I had an exhibition at *New Vision Gallery* in Auckland which I called *Fired Clay*."

On the way from Wellington with my pots I stopped off at Mt Messenger in Taranaki and filled the remaining space in the car with leaves and branches from the rich bush there. My eyes had been opened by **Barry Brickell** to the splendour of our native flora and I wanted to express something of my feelings about our country in my exhibition, so I filled the pots with this greenery.

CECILIA PARKINSON

Cecilia Parkinson uses **David Leach** porcelain with no hint of translucency in her Deco-inspired bowls, bottles and cone vases.

She throws and then turns forms concerned with accurate curves embellished by multiple steppings.

Describing the containment of volume is not as important in these pots as the exterior profile, its precise proportions of curve and reverse curve, its mathematically accurate machinings and the play of light down the steps these create.

Some of the shapes are stepped in flat square-edged rings cut into the profile at regular intervals. Others are angle step-cut like weatherboards. A third group is more softly ribbed with multiple

JOHN PARKER

John Parker, potter and stage set designer, always displays his thrown ceramic vessels with theatrical flare.

In this exhibition his pots were ranked according to their series titles and sub-grouped by colour. They were mainly high-gloss black glaze, but were accented by single pots of pure silver or copper, these being an innovation as the unglazed, bisque pots were electroplated with actual silver or copper metal.

Looking more as if spun from these metals rather than thrown in clay, these pots may well go against the sensibilities of "real clay" potters, but they are an exciting extension of the artist's controlled pushing of the boundaries of clay form, surface quality and colour.

The thrown forms were typical Parker; precise in design concept and execution, faultless in proportion, scale and curve, and

A few of the artists have stopped potting - **Beverley Luxton** and **Dianne White** - others still working were represented by pieces belonging to a different genre from that they now work in. These included early pots by **Len Castle**, **Andrew van der Putten**, **Graeme Storm**, **Rick Rudd**, **John Parker** and **Jean Hasted**.

There were also clay works by sculptor **Denis O'Connor**. Prices reached were often far higher than the pieces would have originally fetched, showing the growing appreciation of our ceramic history, the pots and the people. Good pottery buying - selective collecting - can be an investment as it is in fine art.

This was the second annual exhibition of collectable pottery held by *Albany Village Pottery*. The third will be held in June 1995. If you have a special 'Collectable' piece you wish to submit, or require further information, contact:

Howard Williams
PO Box 147
Albany
Phone 09 415 9817

Now that I have been living at that very creative place, *Driving Creek* with its pottery and railway in the Coromandel, for nearly seven years, this urge to express my feelings with clay and fire seems to have renewed itself with the added element of water.

I find at this stage of life (Helen was born in Darfield in 1915) I have a reservoir of shapes observed over the years, which come welling up while I am working.

These fountains embody as far as I have gone, but I feel I am only just beginning".

parallel lines - all cuts hold to the pure curve of the body line.

The bottles are more full-bodied than the slender cones, while the bowls are flared versions. All contain the same curve parameters, stepped cuttings and simple colourings.

Three colour-ways run through each of the three forms. A deep green to turquoise breaks into a mottled black texture, powder pink spray-fades to a powdery grey and a most unusual dry salmon-pink is produced by glaze stains in a matt barium glaze.

Cool, restrained and cerebral, the tallest of these pieces is only 15cm, yet in their multiples they make a powerful visual impact like a forest of Art Deco temples seen from the air.

undecorated. Each piece was perfectly glazed - or electroplated - in a single solid colour.

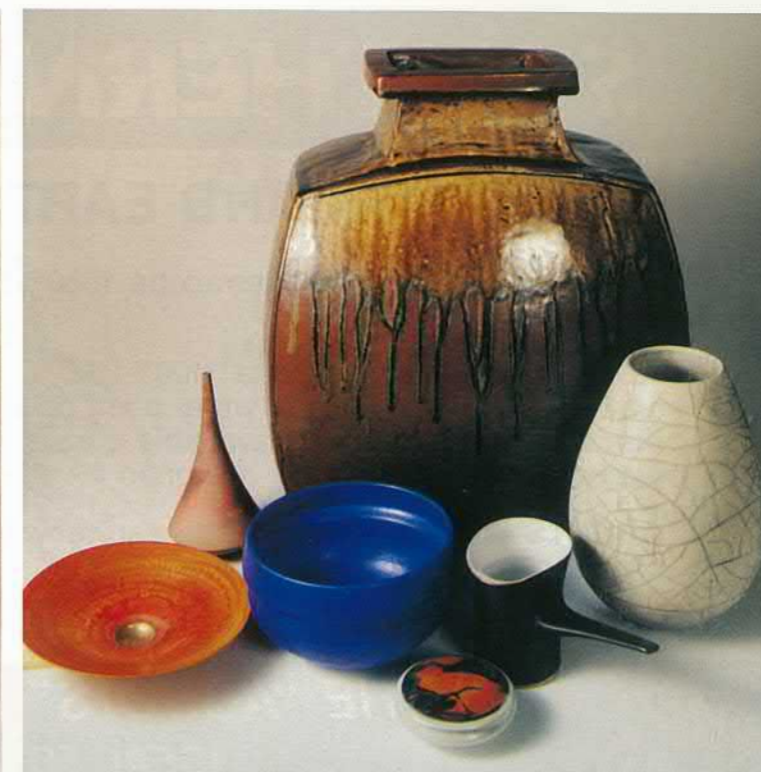
Rows of these pots were silhouetted against the gallery's white walls at chest height so their outline shapes were accentuated, the spaces between becoming as important a part of the rhythm and balance of each rank as the pots themselves.

The containment of volume was physically destroyed in many of the pots where they were penetrated by large holes, but these allowed a visual exploration of their interior volume - a viewer could see into and through the pot.

Further penetration was made where cone-shaped pots became open ended cones, themselves penetrated by solid cones rising from within. Purely sculptural forms, all based on wheel-thrown pottery, with each individual being a component part of the exhibition as a whole.



Helen Mason, Coromandel, fountain "For the Birds"



A few pieces from the 200 in the Collectables Exhibition. Pots from left, Beverley Luxton, Cecilia Parkinson, John Parker, Beverley Luxton, Lucy Rie and Catherine Anselmi. Behind is a blossom jar by Len Castle



"Deco Ceramics" Cecilia Parkinson at Lopdell House



"Points and Penetrations" John Parker at Masterworks



Photos by Howard Williams

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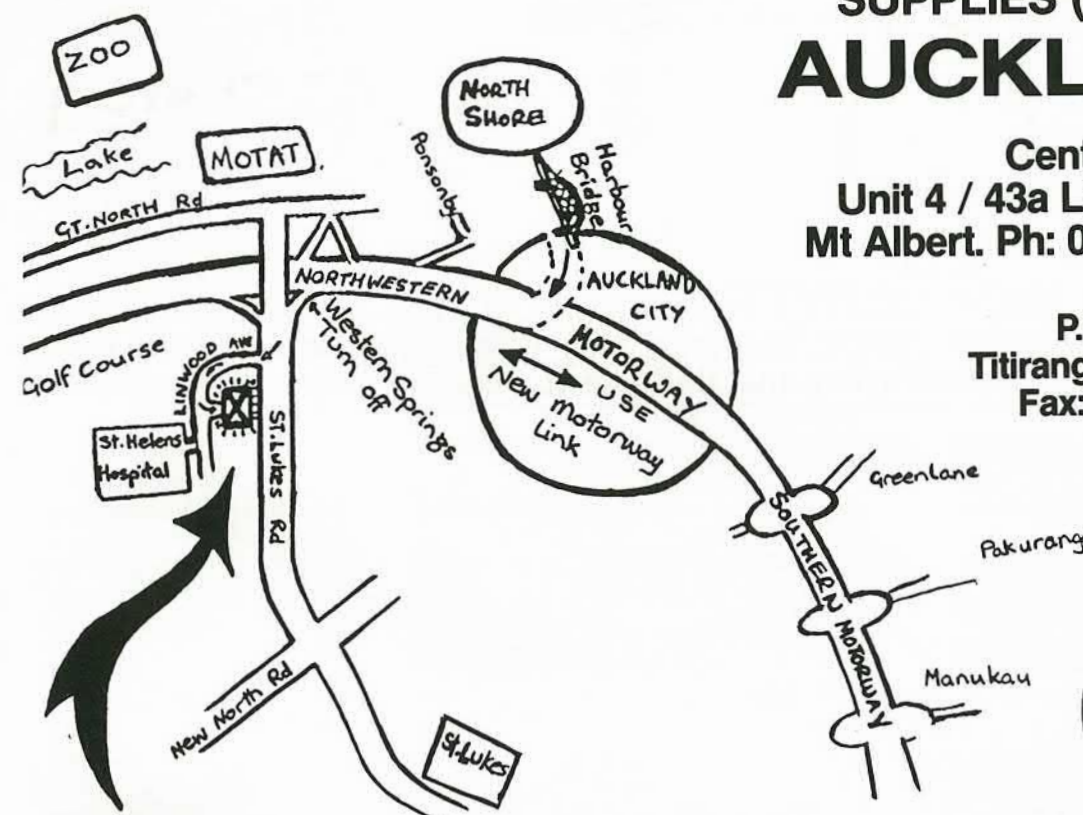
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The 36th National NZSP Exhibition
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Old Dog Waddle Bow



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Novae



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Chris Weaver, Hokitika
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 36 New Zealand Potter No 2 1994



Lesley Le Grove, Stratford
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Penny Ericson, Waiheke Island
Stoney Batter Tunnels and Trig

Photos : Howard Williams



Winner of Hulmegas Award :
Tony Bond, Christchurch
Dream Keeper VIII



ART AWARD

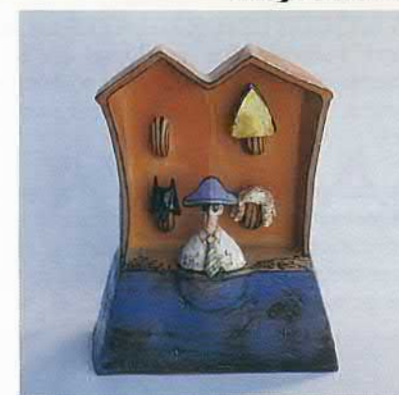
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Judge
Jean Hastedt

Photos by Sandra Shand



Liz Earth, Waimarama
Moonlight Candelabrum



Merit: **Brendan Adams**, Auckland
Middle-aged Male Domestic Daydream



Merit: **Margaret Sumich**, Auckland
Winged Vessel Raku



Paul Laird, Richmond
Fish Plate



Gaeleen Morley, Taradale
Witches' Bowl



Patrick Crabb, California, USA
Shard Cylinder
 Raku electric fired and epoxy



Raewyn Atkinson, Wellington
Vessel for the Return Journey



Barbara Hockenhull, Wellsford
Indigo Dish
 Porcelain and platinum

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NIC HOLLAND

Adam James, Wellington

Photos by Potti

Wicked little grins caught in a sea of gold. Elegant spouts piercing through a thorny body of blue.

Inspired by facets ranging from the fantasy of medieval banquets and jesters, through to the simple desire to make his work fun and accessible, Wellington potter **Nic Holland** is beginning to conjure up fresh horizons in the local art scene.

Reacting against the uniformity of factory produced ceramics, Nic uses a mixture of the outrageous and unexpected to instil life into his work. The reinterpretation of often mundane household items - teapots, bowls, candleholders - helps the artist draw attention to the form of each piece and thus encourages the user to take time out and celebrate daily rituals.

This strong sense of occasion is reflected by the flamboyance Nic pours into his work. Bold implementation of thorny spikes, penetrating eyes and obnoxious, jeering faces immediately grab the senses. Equally, technical features such as the use of shiny, rich lustres of gold, blue and green contrasted against a dry rough, matt finish help to create a feeling of conflict and uncertainty in the mind of the spectator - a fact that Nic feels is an important feature of his work.

"I want each piece to have a life of its own - to add some challenge and hopefully provoke some emotional reaction. Using features such as the spikes help create an air of caution, awareness and ideally, respect. I believe the contradictory features of appeal and repulsion can thus complement each other, ultimately serving to enhance my work."

Nic's approach to his pottery has been aided by a long association with figures in the local art community. His initial introduction to the potential of clay was provided by the Hastings couple **Bill** and **Sybill Hague**, followed by four years of not altogether inspiring times spent in sculpture and painting at *Ilam Art School*.

In 1990, use of the *Floyd's Community Workshop* in Christchurch - with the humble aim of making some bowls for winter soup - fired Nic's interest in transforming functional objects into one-off art pieces. Initially using an electric kiln and working with stoneware and commercially made stains, Nic began working part-time, selling through the *Mermaid Shop* in Christchurch.

After moving to Waiheke Island in 1992 he began working with **Valeska Champion** who introduced him to earthenware and lustres.

Finally Nic moved to a studio in Wellington where he began a full-time commitment to his art. The purchase of his first kiln, 20cu ft LPG, has aided this commitment and, coupled with the change to earthenware, enabled him to gain some rewarding results towards the end of last year.

The cumulation of Nic's efforts thus far were highlighted by the staging of his first solo show *The Feast*, a one-night extravaganza held at the *Vault* during December. Featuring almost 100 pieces, candlelight and red roses were utilised to contrast the predominant blue and green glazes. The format helped create a unique blend of mysticism and fun, enhancing the themes weaving through Nic's work.

It is through such endeavours, added to the continued support of Wellington galleries such as *Avid* and *Maiden Voyage* and the *Vault*, and *Form* in Christchurch, that Nic has managed to raise the profile of his work, creating a vibrant new perspective for the public and potters alike.

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Russell Topliss of RM/PKF with part of the company's collection

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POTTERS CLAYS - SPECIFICATION* & SUGGESTED USES

LOW-FIRE RANGE

NELSON RED (New addition to Catalogue)

A rich red coloured terracotta body with exceptionally low shrinkage and optimal workability for all applications. Fire between Cones 03-3, depending on desired colour. Maximum particle size - 50 mesh (0.3mm). Drying shrinkage 5-7%, total when fired about 13%

LFR (Low Fire Red) A deep red coloured terracotta body best fired between Cone 04-1. It is exceptionally plastic and workable with a 50 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 8-10%, total when fired 15-17%.

PCR A medium red terracotta clay suitable for throwing and handbuilding. It has a 50 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 7-9%, total when fired about 15%. Recommended firing range Cone 1-3.

E2 A fine-grained medium red terracotta clay with a dense silky texture. It has a 80 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 7-9%, total when fired about 15%. Recommended firing range Cone 1-3.

RFK A pale buff-pink earthenware clay suitable for throwing and handbuilding. It has a 50 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 6-9%, total when fired about 15%. Recommended firing range Cone 1-4.

1100 RED A higher firing rich red coloured terracotta clay suitable for throwing and handbuilding. It has a 50 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 5-8%, total when fired about 14%. Recommended firing range Cone 1-5.

MEDIUM FIRE RANGE

LF 18 A cream to pale-gray coloured (darker grey in reduction) stoneware best fired between Cones 7-9. An excellent throwing clay. It has a 50 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 5-8%, total when fired about 15%.

No. 21 An attractive iron-rich stoneware rich red to brown colour (darker in reduction). Recommended firing range Cone 7-9. Good plasticity and workability. It has a 50 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 6-9%, total when fired about 15%.

GEF Virtually a lower firing GB2 with similar overall characteristics. It fires a buff colour in oxidation dark grey in reduction. Firing range Cone 7-8. It has a 50 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 6-7%, total when fired about 15%.

WIDE-FIRING RANGE CLAYS

NELSON WHITE A pure white earthenware to porcellanous stoneware body. Significantly more plastic than porcelain but suitable for small to large thrown pieces. Recommended firing range Cone 1-10. It has a 200mesh nominal maximum particle size so is very fine and smooth. Drying shrinkage 5-6%, total when fired about 12% (Cone 3) and 15% (Cone 10).

HIGH FIRING STONEWARES

PCW A versatile, white-firing (grey in reduction) stoneware body with excellent throwing characteristics suitable for all applications (including Raku firings because of high thermal shock resistance). Fires to Cone 9-10. It has an 80 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 5-8%, total when fired about 15%.

SC80 Very similar in most respects to PCW but slightly smoother in texture. Very plastic and superbly suited to all domestic stoneware applications. Fires to Cone 9-10. It has a 80 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 5-8%, total when fired about 15%.

SC50 Identical in virtually all respects to SC80, but is screened to 50 mesh. It therefore has all the same virtues but is good for larger pieces. Fired to Cone 9-10. Drying shrinkage 5-7%, total when fired about 14%.

RMK3 A fine-textured, strong throwing clay, highly plastic and cream to fawn colour. Suitable for all domestic ware and raku. Fire to Cone 10. Nominal maximum particle size is 80 mesh. Drying shrinkage 7-9%, total when fired about 15%.

GB2 A popular easy-throwing, versatile stoneware clay. Fires buff coloured in oxidation, dark grey in reduction. Useful for all domesticware, handbuilding and well suited to salt glazing. Best fired to Cone 10. It has a 50 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 5-7%, total when fired about 14%.

Otago Poly A blend of GB2 and RMK3 exhibiting characteristics of both clays, eg; smoother than GB2, darker in colour than RMK3. Fires to Cone 10. It has 50 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 5-8%, total when fired about 15%.

HGB A version of GB2 with 10% Huntly grog (10 mesh) added to assist handbuilding. The clay is grey to light brown in colour. Particularly useful for sculptural work and general handbuilding. Fire to Cone 10. Drying shrinkage 5-8%, total when fired about 15%.

SLAB A naturally grogged, white to grey firing stoneware with excellent green strength and low shrinkage. The natural coarse sand fraction contains feldspar crystals which when fired project above the ceramic surface, giving the piece a remarkable texture. Fire to Cone 10. It has an 8 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage 5-8%, total when fired about 14%.

SLAB 30 A 30 mesh version of slab with even further enhanced strength and low shrinkage characteristics. Fire to Cone 10. It has a 30 mesh nominal maximum particle size. Drying shrinkage about 5%, total when fired 12-14%.

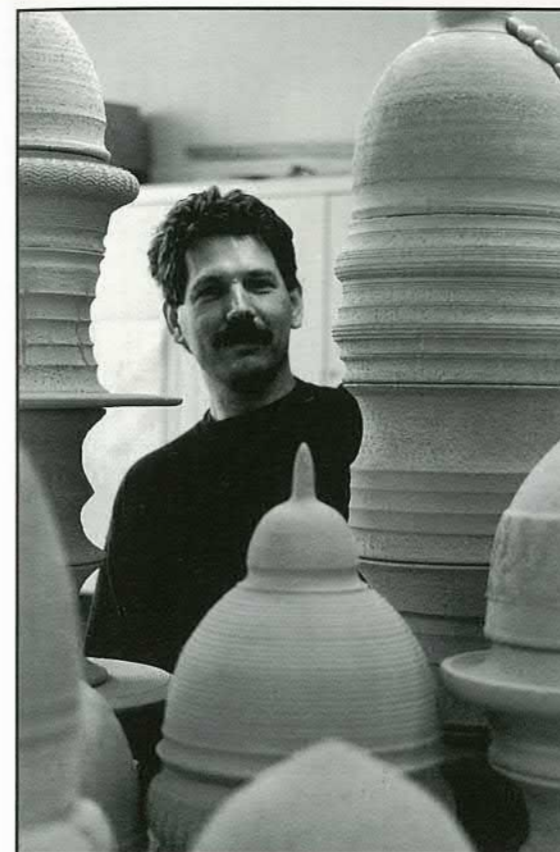
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* All firing specifications are given relative to Orton Standard Pyrometric Cones @ 150°/hour.

HANS MEEUWSEN

Howard S Williams, Auckland



Dutch potter **Hans Meeuwsen** won a merit at the 1992 *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award*.

He has been determined ever since to have work accepted again, but really wanted to show what he was capable of in terms of scale; his over two metre tall architectural groups in terracotta.

These he had developed during a January to March 1993 work period at the internationally renowned *Keramisch Werkcentrum* in the town of 's-Hertogenbosch, about 100km from Amsterdam.

Hans was sure his slides of these massive columns would gain him entry to the exhibition - the problem was, how could he afford the packing, insurance and freight charges to get them half-way around the world to Auckland?

Give the guy a problem - he is resolved to find an answer, and he did with this one. Don't send the work to New Zealand, go and make it there!

His submitted slides were accepted by the judge **Jindra Vikova**, so his next move was to make all the arrangements, not only for his travel, but also for accommodation, studio space, supply of clay and access to kilns for firing.

The initial contact was made through the exhibition administrator **Moyra Elliott**, who passed him on to **Lex Dawson** at the ceramics department of the *Design School of Unitec*. It was decided that, given the right time-frame, there was no reason why Hans could not create his pieces here and deliver them to the *Auckland Museum* on the acceptance day as if he were a local potter.

The *Unitec* workshop was ideal. Hans was working in the southern Netherlands city of Breda, part-time teaching community pottery classes for adult students. For 10 years he had been a graphics teacher, so he was used to the institutional set-up. His

own clay-work is mostly throwing of domestic ware, plus sculptures made with a mixture of throwing and slabwork.

Hans was not able to acquire a travel grant in the time available so he paid his own airfare, but was generously hosted and transported in Auckland by **Robin** and **Roger Paul**. Through them he met many other local potters.

About three weeks were available; not much time for experimenting with new materials or getting to grips with different wheels and kilns. Hans would have liked to mix his clays to obtain exactly what he needed, but he had to concentrate straight into throwing to be sure of finishing the project in time.

Abbotts Red clay was the nearest to his requirements and he quickly went through 800 kilos of this, strengthened with 250 kilos of a 50/50 mix of rough and fine grog. Over a tonne altogether.

The clay was kindly supplied by **Bruce Cunningham, CCG Ltd** of Newmarket at a special discount price - though a shocked Hans explained this was still double the price of a similar body in Holland! The *Unitec* pottery students were also a bit shocked - it was apparent they had never before seen so much clay thrown so expertly in so little time.

Unitec, through the good offices of Moyra and Lex, supplied the workspace and firing costs of the kilns for free.

The clay/grog mix was prepared in a special blunger loaned by local potter and clay-sculptor **Philip Luxton**. Hans usually mixes nylon fibres into the clay for this type of work, but he just couldn't get it to go right here. With some kiwi ingenuity Philip helped formulate the right mix without nylon fibres, and then astounded Hans by batching it in his blunger made from an industrial dough-mixer, ex-bakery, driven by a cunning coupling to his car engine.

"Roll the car on its side, you could throw your pots on a rear wheel", someone suggested.

So the forest of columns gradual grew. Cylinders were thrown with flanges at the top like casserole galleries, each cylinder locating precisely into the previous one, as long as throwing diameters, drying and firing shrinkage and roundness remained constant. Using these modular elements meant columns could be built to differing heights, their tops capped off with domes reminiscent of the onion domes of the *Kremlin*. Occasional 'frisbee' discs broke the vertical lines.

Rings were cut in some during throwing, patterns combed on, or finger-pressed into the clay and textures produced by dry-scraping the surface to expose the grog. Firing continued intermittently between the making and the assembling. Columns could be easily adjusted to get a balance of heights within the group and of course transport was relatively simple as all cylinders could be disassembled.

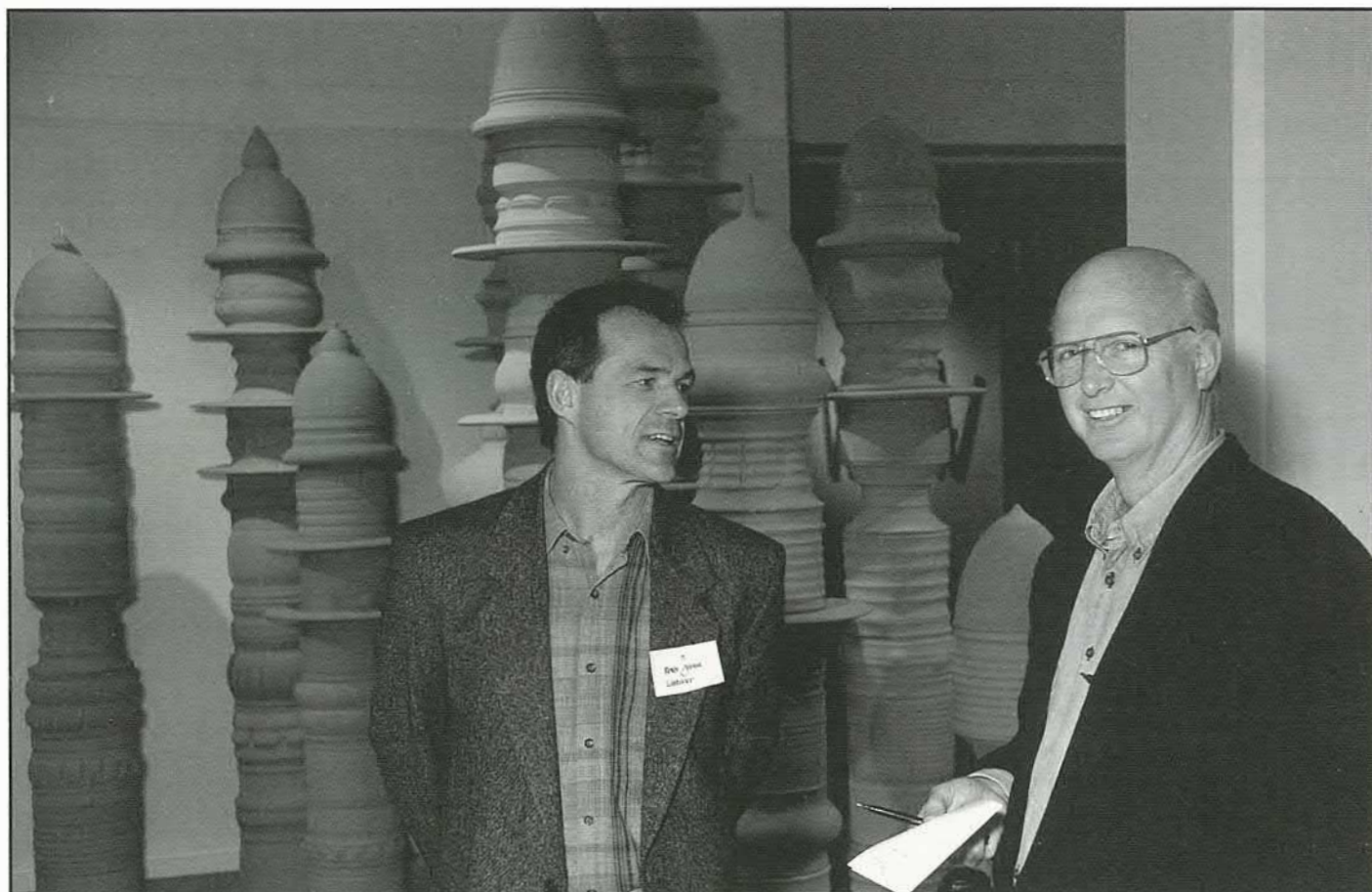
By the final day, all was completed just in time for a borrowed van to transport the work to the Auckland Museum for setting up.

Hans was relieved the pressure of work was over and elated to see his creation in the exhibition hall, though he was disappointed with the final effect. With no subtle colour changes from varying clay mixes or flashing from a flame-firing, the columns stood too uniform, a little bland and new, a little too mechanical.

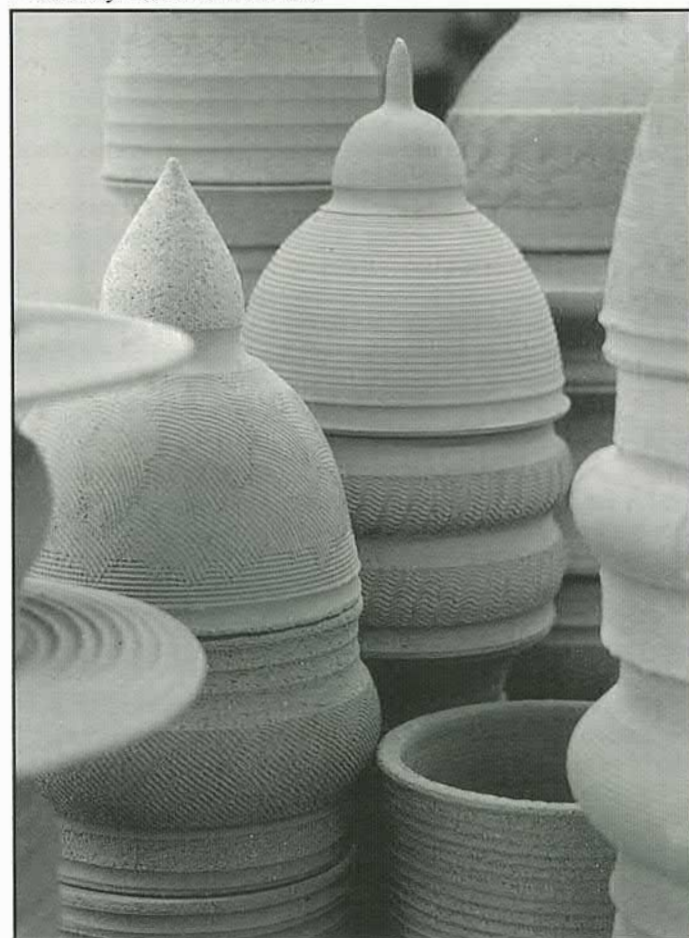
Place this work in a group at the end of a flagged patio backed with pungas and low ferns, and wait a few years for mossy patinas to form, then it would really come to life.

Hans was able to have a quick trip through New Zealand using the 'back-packers' circuit before he left and was impressed by what he saw and the people he met.

Maybe he will work out some way of repeating the exercise for a future *Fletcher Challenge* exhibition. Maybe it could be arranged for several overseas potters to do the same - this could develop into a workshop/symposium system with visitors paying some of their way by taking schools for local pottery groups. A new spin-off from the annual *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award*? ■



Potter and crafts writer Peter Gibbs, left, with arts writer John Daly-Peoples at the Fletcher Challenge Ceramic Award
Photos by Howard Williams



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KEITH BLIGHT GALLERY, Great Northern Arcade, cnr Queen Street & Customs Streets. Phone (09) 303 0177. Mainly ceramics and wall murals. Also wood, fibre, precious metals, silk, wearable art jewellery. Open Mon-Thurs 9.15-5.30pm, Fri 9.15-8pm, Sat 10-2pm.

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Majolica Method

1 Bisque fire terracotta clay to 1000°C.
2 Apply a background of opaque white glaze.

Example recipe:

- 1kg Abbots Zircon white glaze powder

- 1 litre water

- 20 mls glaze medium (Sussett)

Mix thoroughly, sieve through 100* mesh at least.

3 Shake, 'Kiwi Majolica' to mix colour. Paint decoration using good quality glaze brush. Be generous, load your brush fully, allow surplus glaze to run off the tip (avoid wiping brush on rim of container) then lay on the colour. One stroke produces a pale wash, another one or two strokes over this will intensify the colour. Try one colour over another for interesting results. Consider outlining your design in Cobalt Blue or Jet Black for dramatic effect.

4 Glost fire at 1150°C ± (check clay requirements).

Best in an oxidising atmosphere. Best rate of temperature climb 150°C per hour. Leave to cool until you can remove piece with bare hands. Opening kiln too hot will cause crazing.

Decorating on White Clays

1 Bisque fire your clay piece at 1000°C - 1050°C.

2 'Kiwi Majolica' may be painted, dipped or sprayed directly on the clay. However, for tableware it is usually best to apply a clear base glaze.

Example recipe:

- 1kg Abbots clear glaze powder

- 1.5 litres water

- 20 mls glaze medium (Sussett)

Mix thoroughly, sieve through 100* mesh at least.

3 Proceed as 3. above.

4 Glost fire to the best temperature for your clay — Kiwi Majolica is very tolerant (but test first). Best in an oxidising atmosphere. Best temperature climb 150°C per hour.



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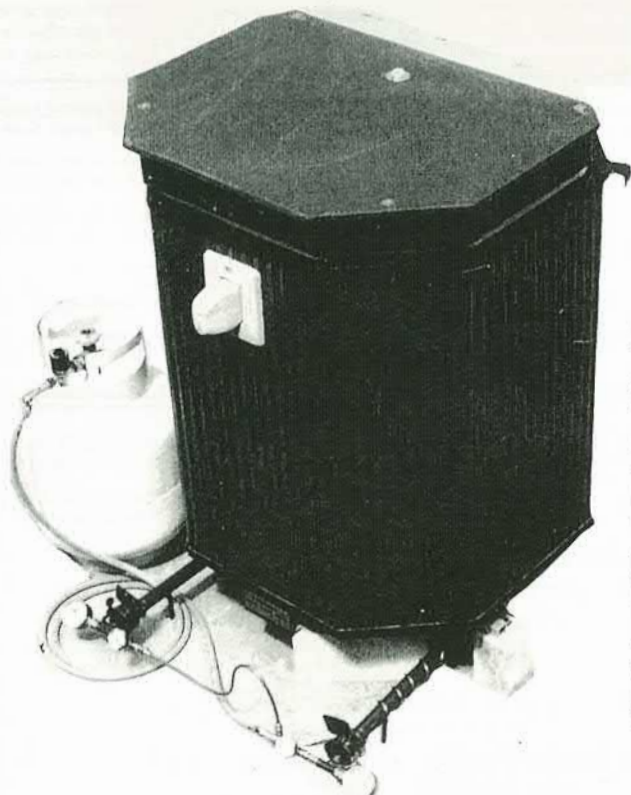
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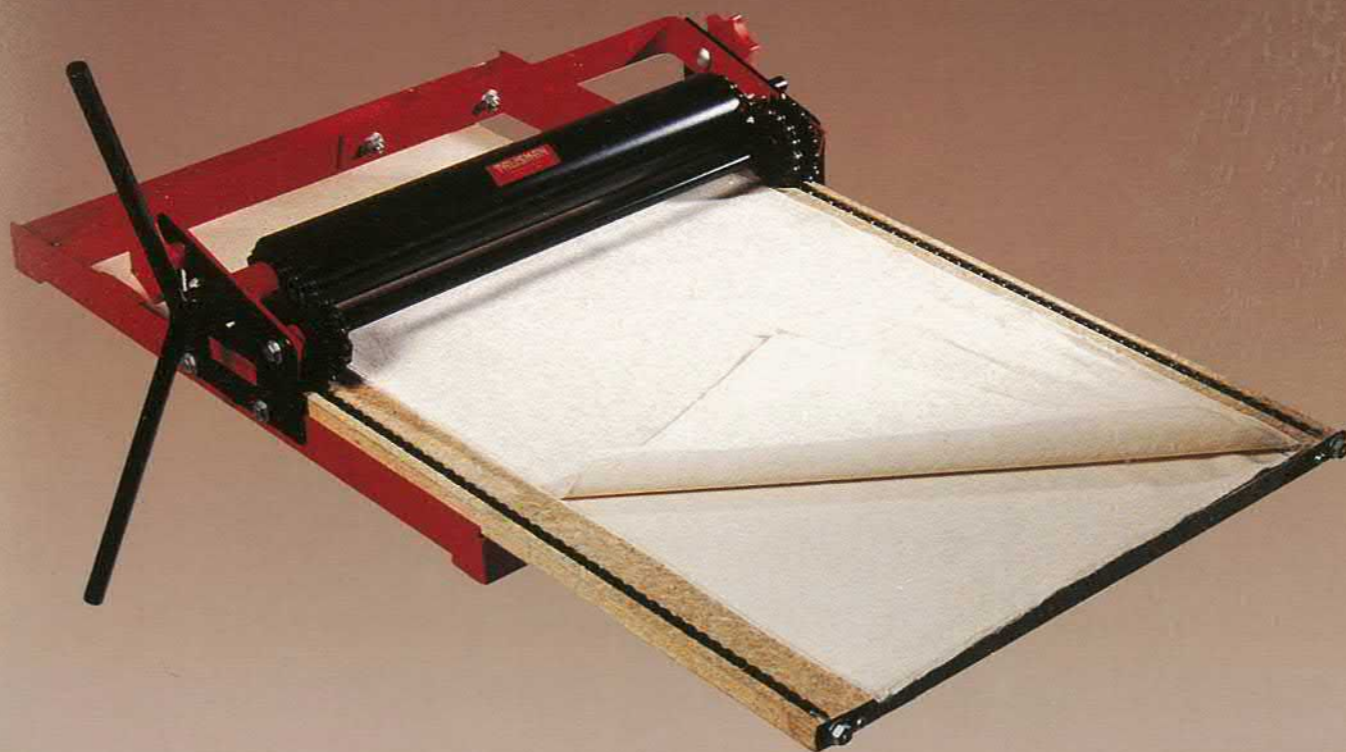
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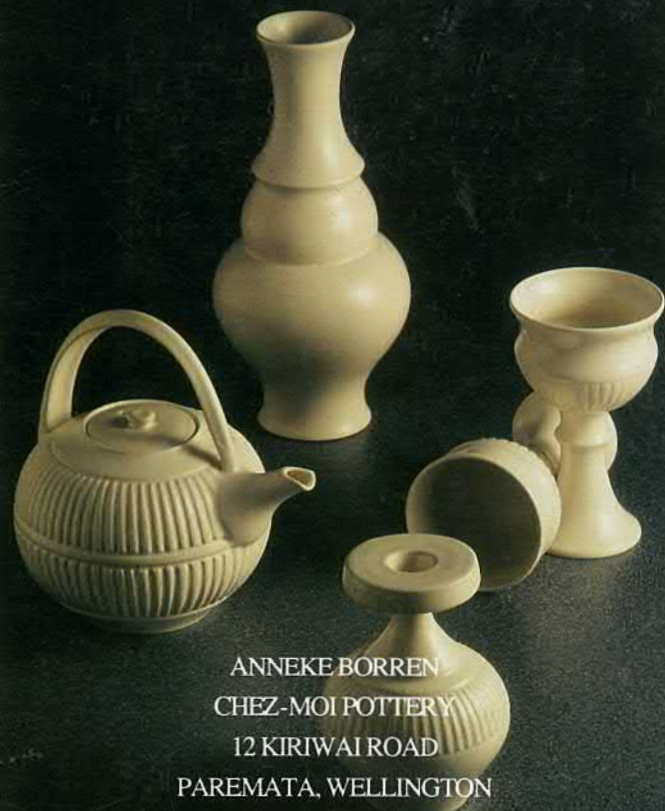
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