

February 2009  
Volume 45 No. 1



# POTTERS

BC

*Newsletter of the Potters Guild of British Columbia*

## INSIDE:

*2009 Featured Artists* **2**

*Canadian Woodfiring, Part 4* **7**

*Touching Hands: A Writing Challenge* **8**

**10** *FingerPlay: Fort St. John*

**11** *Happy New Year! Year of the Ox*

**12** *ClayLines: Residency Opportunities*



**Tom Dog**, 28 cm high, 71 cm long, cone 01 (1998),  
by Debra Sloan. See page 4.



## Gallery of BC Ceramics

[www.galleryofbcceramics.com](http://www.galleryofbcceramics.com)

**Sharon Cohen,**  
Gallery Manager  
[galleryofbcceramics@bcpotters.com](mailto:galleryofbcceramics@bcpotters.com)  
604.669.3606



**Hours**  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



**Gallery Assistants**  
Amanda Sittrop  
Jessica Gilmour-Groome  
[staff@bcpotters.com](mailto:staff@bcpotters.com)



**Gallery Committee**  
Maggi Kneer  
Sheila Morissette  
Pia Sillem  
Jinny Whitehead  
Celia Rice-Jones



*The Gallery of BC Ceramics is a gallery by potters for potters.*

- **The Gallery coordinates and curates nine exhibitions a year.**

*Artists must apply to be juried; the deadline is September each year. To download and print a Gallery Jury Application, [click here](#).*

- **Every month we showcase an artist, usually someone just starting his or her career.**

- **We also sell the work of more than 100 artists in the retail shop.**

*For information on Gallery Policy, [click here](#).*



## 2009 Featured Artists

The featured artist spot provides an opportunity for one ceramic artist/PGBC member to have a small display of non-juried ceramics for sale at the gallery for the period of one month, one time only. Artists must comply with and sign the Gallery Policy before they can be listed as a featured artist.

- **February:** Gem Chang-Kue
- **March:** Sharon Bussard Grove
- **April:** David Robinson
- **May:** Jacqueline Robins
- **June:** Charleen Stroud
- **July:** Roxanne Gagnon
- **August:** Joanne Shaw
- **September:** Jobst Frohberg
- **October:** Elizabeth Claridge
- **November:** Trezlie Brooks

## 2009 Gallery Exhibitions

### March

**FingerPlay**

March 1 to 31

### April

**Tam Irving**

April 4 to 30

Artist reception April 4, 1 to 3 p.m.

### May

**Vincent Massey**

May 2 to 25

Artist Reception May 2, 1 to 3 p.m.

### June

**Darrel Hancock**

June 6 to 29

Artist Reception June 6, 1 to 3 p.m.

### July

**Heather Dahl**

July 4 to 27

Artist Reception July 4, 1 to 3 p.m.

### August

**Karel Peeters**

August 1 to September 7

Artist Reception August 1, 1 to 3 p.m.

### September

**PGBC Members Show:**

**The Black White 100**

September 12 to 29

### October

**3rd Annual Vancouver**

**Collects - TBA**

October 3 to 26

Exhibition Opening:

October 3, 1 to 3 p.m.

### November

**Kathryn O'Regan**

November 7 to 30

Artist Reception November 7,  
1 to 3 p.m.

# President's Message

## Welcome to 2009!

Predictions for this year indicate that we are in for an economic roller-coaster ride. They also indicate a returned interest in unique, handmade products. That includes ceramic arts. The beginning of a new year is a time for growth and the opening of new frontiers. Now is the time to search for that spark of originality or freshness you can incorporate into your work to make it stand out and beg to be picked up!

People often ask what are the benefits of being a member of the guild. For me, one of the main benefits is the sense of companionship that accompanies being part of a vibrant community with a shared passion. A community of individuals and groups, professionals and amateurs, teachers and students—all freely exchanging ideas, information and support. This newsletter reflects that sentiment; so keep the dialogue going. And have a wonderful year! 🍷

—Jinny Whitehead



Platter by Laura Mckibbon.



Metallic lined bowls by Joanne Copp.

## Gallery News

By Sharon Cohen

Thank you to all who answered the call for Featured Artist submissions. We've pretty much filled all the slots now, and there's quite a diversity of work that will be shown—we look forward to some new and fresh pieces to add to our already wonderful array. Our first artist of the year will be Gem Chang-Kue, and we look forward to receiving and promoting the work.

As the year gets under way, we're ramping up for a whole host of exciting events here at the gallery. It's time to start planning ahead, and the list of exhibitions is really impressive. As I think about each one and what it will involve, the excitement levels just keep rising!

Apart from the prestigious solo exhibitions, there are some collaborative ones too. The season gets under way with *FingerPlay*, and I'm looking forward to seeing the work once it returns from its province-wide journey. In the latter half of the year, we'll host the *Black-White 100*, a showcase for work by any (hopefully many!) guild members. To participate, you need to be an individual member of the guild, and submit a black and white (or black or white) piece of work valued at \$100. All pieces must be for sale. Your submission can be one individual piece, or several smaller pieces that constitute one individual item valued at \$100. To continue with the "100" theme, we've set ourselves the challenge of assembling 100 pieces for the exhibition, so we'll need maximum support for this.

As a little teaser for ourselves, we've set up a small display in the gallery showing the predominantly white pieces of Jackie Frioud alongside the predominantly black work of Donna Partridge. Judy Weeden also has some really striking black and white pieces in the gallery at the moment, and the effect is stunning—the overall look, when done large scale, will be spectacular.

As the time draws closer, we'll release further details with a list of the specifics—application forms and delivery timelines—but I just wanted to get the call out there so that people can start thinking and planning and producing.

Going out to buy myself a black and white dress now...! 🍷

## Did you attend an inspiring workshop last year?

Share your experience—write about it for *your* newsletter!

Send your stories to: [editor@bcpotters.com](mailto:editor@bcpotters.com)



## The Dogged Process *By Debra Sloan*

### She was seated on a velvet cushion

—my first attempt at making a life-sized dog in clay. She was 32.5 cm high and weighed in at about 13.5 kg, a veritable brick. There are stress cracks throughout the body where it had threatened to explode, and her little ankles were bending under the weight of her chest and head. It was 1976, and I was in the process of teaching myself how to work in clay. The *Pug on Pillow* was all about love, my love for the pug, and my new love of clay. I did not know how to make her, I only knew I wanted to make her in clay.

simply by the smell, or physical contact, or a fascination with glazes, or the fire—these attachments to all, or particular, ceramic processes, are integral as to why the artist has chosen clay. Nicholas Baurriaud says, making art is “elaborating a form on the basis of raw material.”<sup>2</sup> Artists using traditional media have a commitment to their material, and a part of their process is emotionally interactive. There are many particulars of clay work, all accompanied by physical requirements—insistent subtexts that underpin the methods used to support the central notion. Process

ceramic practice. It is knowledge worth having as it illustrates, from the beginning, the human journey towards a civilised life.

Throughout what has now become a composite interactive process; the conceptual development, the making and experiencing the effect of contact—the clay practice offers time and again choice and chance. Although this is common to all art practices, for the clay artist there are so many transformative stages in the process. The challenge, as we toil, is to not stray into the ‘valley of the shadow’...and fall victim to convention, blind attachment or habit, but to remain alive to those transformative events as they appear out of the mud, or the brush or the kiln. The material and the processes are ever changing. The notion is the engine, and our empathetic process is the fuel that keeps the notion interactive.

Over the past 10 years, I have made a number of dog sculptures, each a result of explorative and learning processes to support what I wanted to convey. Each solution suggests another method. Each method has its own effect. In itself, this series of investigations has been a process of personal, technical and notional, evolution.

I started my clay practice as a potter, and after the *Pug on Pillow* lesson, my early sculptural pieces were disguised pots built around a space. Though my methods have evolved, the notion of the sculptures being containers is irresistible as a metaphorical connection to our own corporeal sentient state—the walking, thinking, emoting containers that we are.

Scale is another critical decision as it impacts not only on the dynamic effect the piece has on the viewer, and the amount of space it absorbs, but scale also has a profound impact on how the work will be made. The process of building large-scale involves acquiring strategies and skills to oppose clay’s adversary—gravity. Moving the work to and from the kilns in the fragile bone-dry stage is another nightmare. These skills can become vanity potholes, a temptation to do something just because you can. However, there is also an exciting dynamic to life-scale where the dog image suggests the notion of shared space and companionship.

After the *Pug on Pillow*, I did not return to



*Dog on Mat*, by Debra Sloan.

Clay is a difficult material to master. It demands that we work with grace. For the purpose of this article, I wanted to walk through that ‘valley of the shadow...’ where virtuosity tempts us to stray. It is a dangerous but unavoidable walk for artists of the traditional media when their chosen material leads them through a maze of process. Philip Rawson so neatly says, “Even though pottery must be based on technology of some kind, it is the good pottery that eludes the tyranny of its technology.”<sup>1</sup>

How often has one heard (usually during question period after a lecture,) “Why do you work in clay, anyway?” Where the clay artist is obliged to defend his or her affinity for the medium. The question implies that those who work in clay are technicians first, and artists second, that their attachment to the material takes precedence. That beingsaid, being moved

is immediately engaged, as in every manner the clay is touched there is a significant effect on what is being communicated. There are physical, sensory, conceptual and historical implications on whether the work is thrown, coiled, slab built, cast or sculpted, electric fired, wood, raku, or gas, slipped, painted, or glazed—or not.

Clay artists have, arguably, the greatest historical resources of any medium. Most clay practices have an historic parallel, and therefore a potential reference. Historical reference also functions as a foil, like a Greek chorus, motivating—or goading—the artist with its running commentary. A ‘good piece of pottery’ should not rely on the viewer being privy to millennia of ceramic tradition, or even cognisant of the contemporary response, however, these allusions add a rich element of insight for those who know and love the



**Dog Face**, by Debra Sloan.

### Return to the Dogs, *Cont'd from Page 4.*

the dog image as my central notion for 20 years. Consequently, on the next go around, I was able to bring to the image more context, experience and skill. I had been making [human] figurative work for some time using thin slabs fluted edge to edge for height, and chose the same process to work the next life-size dogs. In *Tom Dog*, 1998, the body, legs, head and tail were made as hollow tubes and assembled while still soft. The surface was carved with painted-on coloured slips, mimicking my own dog's colouring. It was a direct process, quick and immediate, focused on rapid gesture, and the effect of life-scale. There is no base or division of space between the sculpture, its environs, or the viewer.

One historic model I am attached to is that of the rough and ready 19th century Staffordshire figurine where, in order to speed up the making process, various contrivances were enlisted to prop up figures during construction. The result of those methods was that the central narrative of the work is enriched and invigorated by the props. They become little imaginative worlds.

Wanting to push the dynamics of the dog image further, I looked for ways to raise it up on to its legs. A tapered form made height easy to engineer, and after the shape of the legs was marked, they were bent into a pillar-shape. As they hardened, I started to cut away the supporting clay that was extraneous to the dog-parts. In *Hermes at Rest*, 2001. I have a leggy dog scratching its nose. Here I chickened out because of the extreme angle of the front legs, and made a 'Staffordshire' decision to not cut away all the clay, but left wing-like shapes, which begged to be carved and, suddenly, a mythical Mercury or Hermes was suggested. Choice and opportunity, as a process, affected how the work evolved and started a series of mythical dogs. I textured and applied coloured slips to *Hermes At Rest*, in homage, but a poor substitute, for the marvel of pattern and swirl in the brindled coat of my own rescue greyhound. Again without a base, the dog image has a fluid relationship with the space around it.

The pair of *Grande Chihuahuas*, 2002, started life as tapered slabs as well. When the supporting clay was cut away it left a dramatic space around the chests of the dogs. I decided to keep evidence of the process, so one can reach up to the body all the way to the nose. There was a serendipitous synchronicity to the simple construction and the directness of the dogs' wicked anthropomorphic miming, capitalised

upon by doubling the dogs. There is no barrier, no fixed way to view or share space with these dogs, and they welcome the viewer's input.

In *Green Pastures*, 2004, a life-size dog is finally standing on all four legs. It was an arduous process of building and hardening hollow legs, then supporting the body structure and head, as they were joined. During the process, I became anxious that the legs would be vulnerable and decided to make a base. The immediate effect was that of an imaginary domain around the dog. The spiral surface lines infer a different kind of distance, between the real and the implied. There is some play with the use of the word 'Pasture,' the soft green flocked base, and the bovine style of pattern and colour on the dog. From its own, now defined space and its gaze, the dog shifts from companion to observer.

*Dog Figurine Supersized*, 2007, was made in homage to a favourite small, Staffordshire figurine in my collection. In the process of sorting out how to make this dog, I decided to try a whole new approach. Like the real Staffordshire, I wanted it to be fluid and symbolic rather than realistic. Slabs were of no use, and I let go of the notion of working

*Cont'd on Page 6, A New Approach*



*hands-on experience*

kootenay school of the arts

Earn a 2-year diploma in clay, fibre, or jewellery and small object design, or a 1-year certificate in the metal studio.

Call now for details on full or part-time programs.

Selkirk College

For further details call 1.877.552.2821  
or visit [selkirk.ca](http://selkirk.ca)

around a hollow space and, instead, by sculpting a solid mass of clay it was possible to have a flowing shape. The base, a future context, was incorporated into the structure. After I established the form, it was only a matter of hollowing it out thoroughly. It ended up feeling like a giant press-moulded figure, light and durable. I replicated, as best I could, the lovely orange on the Staffordshire figurine, and its sumptuous purple-blue base.

At first glance, the Staffordshire figurine is just a little ornament, but it is much more. The figurine is imbued with a desire for the 'life-style of the rich and famous.' The dog is a greyhound, a treasured hunting companion reserved for the nobility, or kept illicitly by gypsies for hunting rabbits and betting...a nod to the racetrack hounds of today. The Staffordshire dog is sitting on a bed of purple; the colour reserved for the rich, not the bed of a working collie. Along the base is an extravagant little band of gold, a material more commonly applied to the best porcelain tableware. I love this Staffordshire figurine, and the generous scale of my facsimile reflects just how much.



**Big Dog Head Jar, by Debra Sloan.**

By giving the dog a knowing creatural pose, and stylising the form and the markings, I wanted to place the dog firmly in the imaginative realm, a place where the viewer can enter.

This new process has freed up making and shaping considerably. With attention to the engineering and extreme angles, it suits this exploration of narrative forms. In *Dog With Baby*, 2008, the scale is intimate. Much of the pleasure in making this was in interlocking the two forms. Though they are visually separated by colour and textures, the animal and human elements, clasped in their equivocal embrace, are one continuous mobile surface. I have drawn on the miniature realm of the [netsuke](#) to pull the viewer closely into this little drama. It is an interactive object, not just because of the hand-held scale, but also the two outward gazes, and begs the question whether size matters. This tiny piece, without a base, returns to the notion of interactive fluid space, where, as Philip Rawson says, "...space-modality offers the imagination continuous glimpses of 'the unlimited' and the pure relativity of scale."<sup>3</sup>

Lately, revisiting my potter's origins, I have made dog pots, playing with form and function. I am enlisting the companionable dog image, and inviting it to dinner so to speak. *Daffodil Dog*, 2007, is both a useful and playful object, there for the benefit of the seated diners, to be viewed from all sides and contribute to the occasion. There are various sources for animal pots. The most affecting, for me, are the

tobacco jars of the Martin Brothers. They are perfect examples of superlative attention to detail, using virtuoso glaze and kiln skills, with dynamic, even vitriolic effect. The technical demands and the obsessive detailing do not create a veneer, or diminish the impact, rather it is those processes that were executed with passion, and enlisted all of the composite ceramic requirements, that illuminate these pieces. The expressive characteristics of clay are exploited to the full; there is no subterfuge or ambiguity here. I think they wonderfully illustrate this quote of Mike Kelly: "Art must concern itself with the real, but it throws any notion of the real into question."<sup>4</sup>

Mine is cyclical practice; energised by the process of moving between three or four themes. New information pertaining to those notions is introduced simply through the process of waiting, living observantly, and making. It is akin to the pleasure of rereading a favourite book: each time you bring your new self to the book and discover previously overlooked nuances and allusions. The same can be said of process inside the clay practice. The material is ever changing, and the problems are never ending. Every time a process is enacted or revisited, the clay artist is given yet another opportunity to discover new expressive possibilities. Process need not be a hindrance or a liability, or a tyranny. What is wonderful about the clay practice is that process gives us so many chances.

**REFERENCES:** 1. Philip Rawson, *Ceramics*. Oxford University Press, 1971 2. Nicholas Baurriaud, *Postproduction*. Lukas and Sternberg, New York 3. Philip Rawson, *Ceramics*. Oxford University Press, 1971 4. Nicolas Baurriaud, *Postproduction*. Lukas and Sternberg, New York. Baurriaud quoting Mike Kelly.

This article was originally published in [Ceramics TECHNICAL No. 27](#) 2008. Debra Sloan is online at: [www.bcpotters.com/members/debra\\_sloan/default.html](http://www.bcpotters.com/members/debra_sloan/default.html) and [www.debrasloan.com](http://www.debrasloan.com). 

## Ceramics Production Studio Available

**Where:** The Mergatroid Building  
965 Vernon Drive, Vancouver

**Who:** A coop of Potters

**What:** Your own studio (with door)  
and 2 (shared) kilns

**Cost:** Under \$200

**Contact:** Morley Faber  
*The Mergatroid Building*  
[manager@mergatroid.ca](mailto:manager@mergatroid.ca)  
[www.mergatroid.ca](http://www.mergatroid.ca)



## Canadian Woodfiring: The Kootenays *Woodfiring Part 4, by Keith Rice-Jones*

**Woodfiring is alive and well in the Kootenays.** Natural gas is not available and propane is more expensive, so woodfiring is the natural alternative.

Gunda Stewart lives in Canyon and has a single chamber 36-cubic-foot Bourry box salt kiln. Until recently, wood slab off-cuts were available locally for the cost of pick-up. It costs her more now, but it is still affordable.

Her kiln's cross draught design is a synthesis of plans from Robert Sanderson (see *The Log Book*) and Alan Lakovetsky (see Canadian Woodfiring 5, next month.) She fires for approximately 24 hours, burning about a cord of slab wood, mostly fir and larch with some pine. Salt is introduced at cone 8 over approximately an hour. Gunda uses about 11 lbs. of fine livestock salt, introducing two one-lb. packages every 10 minutes.

Originally using lightly damped "burritos," (newspaper parcels of salt mixed with damp sawdust) Gunda now tends to use dry salt off an angle iron to avoid excessive brick melt around the throat arch area from the concentrated volatilization of the burritos. Gunda works with both B-Mix and her own light stoneware body, firing to cone 10. The kiln is a bit uneven, so often cone 11 is reached at the top or middle while pushing for 10 at the bottom. While it is possible to roughly predict what the pots will look like, there are always surprises. It is the range of surfaces possible with woodfiring that is part of the draw. Even with the Bourry box the kiln gets flashing and light ash and because it is a cross-draught kiln there is a strong directionality in effect.

Unlike the simple twiddling of gas and air levels when firing a gas kiln, for Gunda, the constant monitoring and tending of the woodfiring process keeps her alert and engaged throughout. She built the kiln four years ago, but Gunda still feels she is finding her way. In a sense, it is what we are all doing but you certainly wouldn't think that when looking at her handsome vessels.

Pamela Nagely-Stevenson and Robin Dupont both teach at Kootenay School of the Arts. Robin studied and worked in Australia, part of the time with Robert Barron at Goose-neck pottery, and is currently at Utah State University doing post grad studies with John Neely of train kiln fame. Robin built a lovely 45-cubic-foot cross draught catenary arch kiln in 2004, based on the design of friend Bob Reimer's smaller version. Essentially doub-



**Ember Plates, by Robin Dupont.**

ling the size meant firing less often. This, of course, is always an issue—finding the right balance for one's own rhythms of working.

The versatility of the design—which can give a variety of effects depending on how it is loaded and fired—was a big attraction of this kiln, along with the fact that it is possible to reach cone 12 in 10 hours if needed. This is somewhat important if you need to move stock through quickly. The design of this kiln with the firebox inside the arch allows work to be in close proximity to the ash and embers. This creates work that is more dramatic and simply has more ash on the pots. The further away from the firebox and towards the flue, the more subtle are the atmospheric effects. This is generally where Robin explores his glazed work. Pots can even replace the bagwall, putting them even closer to the ash and embers giving results more like an Anagama, especially if the firing is extended.

Robin, as well as experimenting with different species of wood, cooling speeds and atmospheres, has also been introducing water in the kiln at different times in the firing and incorporating green wood.

In addition to insulating well by backing up the hard brick with insulating brick and using fibre on the arch, the firebox, flue and chimney were all made bigger than perhaps was necessary on the principle that it would be


much easier to make it smaller if necessary. In fact, this worked out well as the large firebox creates a lot of heat and the flue and chimney pull it through the chamber. At the end of a firing, the large firebox can be stuffed chock full of wood—often green—for finishing with a strong reducing atmosphere.

Robin loves the stunning beauty of where he lives and he loves that his source of fuel is a waste bi-product from a local mill that he can use to make beautiful objects that will hopefully enrich people's lives.

Pamela Nagely-Stevenson, originally from Hawaii, has been working in the Slocan Valley since 1975. Her "Mythopoeic" vessels reflect her background of growing up in a milieu of world culture and faiths. She built her kiln, which she called Kibriya (the Glory from Rumi's Persian poetry) in 2000, the year of the Dragon. Pamela's choice for the kiln size and design were dictated by her needs and the scale and rhythm of her work. The 16-cubic-foot firing space gable arch kiln is based on a low-cost, fast-fire design built by George Wright at Portland Community College in Portland, Ore. Jim Schuld built a version of this design and published the plans (*Ceramics Monthly*, Oct 1985.) It has a large firebox so it means there is flexibility in wood size, such as the abundant waste wood from logging slash, sawmill scrap, discarded pallets and demolition lumber of all types. The firebox uses 14-inch auto axles for the grate, free at the auto wreckers, and the walls of the kiln use a layer of fibre between the K 25 brick of the inside and cinder chimney block outside.

The kiln will reach cone 10 quickly, but firing for approximately 21 hours using about one third of a cord of wood gives a good balance of ash deposits and flashing. Pamela uses a Helmer slip and introduces about 200g of soda ash at cone 10 and holds at cone 11 for a few hours on smaller amounts of finer wood.

The wood kiln becomes a fantastic teaching tool for Pamela, giving her students a more intuitive grasp of the whole ceramic process. Through the bonding of the collaborative firing they take a new awareness into other aspects of the curriculum.

Pamela, and her partners Susanne Ashmore and Diane Burt, with help from Cameron Stewart, have built a new noborigama called Ultrea. She is actually firing it for the first time as I write this, so look for another story later in the year. 



**Side Stoke Jar, by Robin Dupont.**

## Touching Hands: A Challenge to Craftspeople *By Bettina Matzkuhn*

Years ago I exhibited a fabric arts work I called “Sharp Turn.” It was hand-embroidered, depicting a memory of driving to Tofino on the west coast of Vancouver Island. There was a clear night sky, a full moon and a pantheon of trees partially illuminated by the headlights. Announced by a yellow sign with a bent arrow on it, the road veered around a cliff. After the show, the gallery passed an unsigned note on to me. The writer described how it evoked memorable road trips and the constant longing to know what was around the corner. The person regretted not having enough money to buy it, but wanted me to know of the many memories it conjured. I keep this scrap of paper in my desk. It reassures me. There is no mention of medium or theory; it is simply a response, a generous gesture.

Gestures of support are important to me as a creative person. I work in textiles, embroidering by hand, printing and painting fabrics to use in my work. It is a slow, solitary pursuit and I am never sure how the work will be received. My friends and family wax enthusiastic, but I fear they are too diplomatic. Even on the opening night of a show, or at a presentation of my work, I have little detailed feedback from viewers. I am discouraged when people look at the work and say “My grandmother does this stuff” or suggest helpfully, “Why don’t you get a machine to do this?” The comment book from a gallery show often has either very kind words or ones to the effect of “what is this crap?”, but they are rarely specific. What that stranger gave me was a small but tangible reply, a sense of how it had spoken to them.

I am reminded of watching my son’s high school basketball games when the teams line up on either side of the basket so one player could take a foul shot. Some wiry boy at the shooting line would focus himself and launch his first attempt out of two. Then his teammates would all step over to touch his hands before the second shot whether or not the first one had gone in. I wonder what would constitute a parallel in the crafts community? How can we find the equivalent of this gesture? How can a process that is often meditative and personal—no cheering fans here—be acknowledged and celebrated publicly?

An obvious way is to acquire another person’s work, but most of us don’t have significant amounts of spending money. Another way is to attend the exhibition openings of our peers, raising a glass to the new body of work. But I think the most significant way of “touching hands” in the crafts community is to write about each other. The written word can be more durable than a pat on the back. Through writing one can toot another’s horn. And toot the horn intelligently: to describe why the work is significant, why the process is relevant to the finished piece, and to describe a greater context for the work. Writing connects the maker and viewer by explaining the impetus behind the work, how the maker has arrived at his/her form of expression (never a straight line) and the adventures, innovations and metaphors bound in with the making. Paula Gustafson, in a presentation at a conference hosted at the Alberta College of Art and Design and the University of Calgary, talked about the absence of a national (English) magazine devoted to craft. She described how writing “documents artistic endeavor” and that the shortage of writing on craft makes us “invisible.” Lack of written documentation means lack of resources for teaching, a lack of analysis of the position the work inhabits, both in the craftspeople’s body of work and on a grander, cultural, international scale. Lack of writing means a lack of promotion and celebration.

It is easy, as craftspeople, to maintain that we are not writers. But

writing is a craft like any other. The first attempts are wobbly but improve with persistence. Writing is a craft-like practice in the sense of working the material, the same way I pin, cut and colour fabric, embroidering, embellishing, ripping it out, re-working the piece. The craftspeople I have interviewed, as a paid or volunteer writer, are articulate, perceptive, witty, well-educated people. There is much to discuss. I feel that we are uniquely qualified to write about each other as we have an appreciation for the process and practices in craft disciplines, the way athletes on a team know and admire one another’s investment, special skills and personal breakthroughs. Describing and analyzing our responses to another’s work often results in the focusing of ideas around our own work.

And so I challenge you to take this on. Volunteer to write a short essay as a handout for a peer’s exhibition. It would serve as an introduction and a record. Send in a review to a local paper. It may be rejected, but that is part of any creative process. The writing could be critical. If it is undertaken in a sincere spirit, it will generate discussion, even controversy. The writing could be as understated as touching the hands of the person taking the foul shot or as jubilant as a high five. The tiny note left to me has the kernel of how we must begin to write: as a generous response. 📖

**Bettina Matzkuhn** has worked in the fibre arts since 1976 (see [www.bettinamatzkuhn.ca](http://www.bettinamatzkuhn.ca)). She also writes professionally on the arts and teaches as a sessional instructor at Emily Carr University. This article was originally commissioned by the [Canadian Crafts Federation](http://www.canadiancraftsfederation.ca). —Editor’s challenge to you: Write something for your guild newsletter this year!

### shadbolt centre for the arts

#### Winter & Spring 2009 Programs

**Programs cover all skill levels.**

**Spaces are still available in:**

#### **Wood/Soda Firing Workshop**

\$212.10/\$180.08 senior

4 sessions, times vary; Th/F/Sa/W; starts Mar. 26

(Linda Doherty & Jay MacLennan)

Barcode 181162.

**Please note: regular refund policy does not apply. No refunds after Feb. 15th, 2009.**

**Registration for Spring 2009 Programs begins**

**Tuesday, February 17 at any recreation centre.**

**Call Shadbolt Centre at 604.291.6864  
or register online: [www.burnaby.ca/webreg](http://www.burnaby.ca/webreg)**



## Greenbarn's catalogue is now available online.

In an effort to be more environmentally friendly, by reducing our use of paper, we are phasing out our printed catalogue, in favour of a downloadable version available on our website.

Now you can check prices and item descriptions just by logging onto  
**www.greenbarn.com**


9548 192 Street,  
Surrey, B.C. V4N 3R9  
Phone: 604.888.3411  
Fax: 604.888.4247

**greenbarn**  
POTTERS SUPPLY LTD.

Tuesday-Friday 9-5  
Saturday 9-1  
Closed Long Weekends  
greenbarn@telus.net

## For the Archives...

- The guild Archive is **missing newsletters** from 1980 up to and including 1985...if anyone has old copies, can you please send them to the guild. Old newsletters become an invaluable resource.
- Does anyone remember **Pam Hansen** (she wrote an article on Ian Steele in 1972)...and could tell us anything about her?


Please send contact Debra Sloan with any information: [sloanyip@shaw.ca](mailto:sloanyip@shaw.ca) 

## Chop Marks & Signatures

Send in your chops and have them available through the guild. For the form, click on the link here:

[www.bcpotters.com/forms/chop\\_marks\\_form.doc](http://www.bcpotters.com/forms/chop_marks_form.doc)

You can email it back to Debra Sloan at [sloanyip@shaw.ca](mailto:sloanyip@shaw.ca) as an attachment. Or print and mail your sheet[s] to

Potters Guild of BC  
1359 Cartwright Street, Granville Island  
Vancouver, B.C. V6H 3R7  
attention: chops. 

## Discovery Art Travel

2008-2010  
CERAMICS EXCURSIONS

Turkey  
Morocco  
Burma  
Laos/Angkor Wat  
Oaxaca, Mexico  
Lombok/Bali



**www.denysjames.com**

**TEL: 1-250-537-4906**



## Call for Entries

The annual Filberg Festival takes place in the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island.

**July 31–August 3  
2009**

This event attracts **SERIOUS** shoppers (some wholesale and gallery buyers too) looking for quality, handmade Canadian art and craft.



Filberg Heritage Lodge & Park  
61 Filberg Road, Comox, BC

**Booth fee reductions  
available for students!**

*Make 2009 **your** year  
to promote your work to an  
educated and discerning  
clientele.*

Deadline for delivery of Jury  
entries is **February 22**.  
See our website for details.

**[www.filbergfestival.com](http://www.filbergfestival.com)**

For information phone  
250-334-9242  
Email: [info@filbergfestival.com](mailto:info@filbergfestival.com)



## FingerPlay: Ft. St. John *By Heather Hannaford*

Fort St. John residents recognize that they live in a vibrant, but “last minute” city. This leads to exciting, and often unexpected, happenings. After months of seeking a suitable space to show the varied and interesting FingerPlay exhibit, École Central Elementary School came to the North Peace Potters’ Guild’s rescue. This proved to be a golden opportunity for the guild, as well as for the students and teachers at the school.

From the guild’s perspective, the situation provided the show with a secure exhibition place, one that didn’t require supervision and a place the community could visit. The show was installed in a series of locked glass-fronted showcases in the entrance hallway at the school. Some concern was expressed, born out to some extent, that, being in a school environment, the show might have become less accessible to adults. It is regrettable that adults are often reluctant to enter the doors of our schools. We hope that placing the show in a school has helped break down this reluctance.

The opening evening reception, largely attended by adults, was jointly hosted by the guild and the school. Included in the evening event was a panel discussion. Panelists (teachers, an educational assistant, an artist/parent with family clay connections and clay artist/potters) discussed pieces that spoke particularly to them. This began an evening’s discussion around the show and the pieces displayed. North Peace Potters’ Guild members contributed to a silent auction and a series of door prizes. Proceeds from the silent auction are going to be used to pay the fees for a student from the school to attend class at the guild studio. Guild members also provided a veritable feast of snacks.

Suzon Tremblay is the specialist art teacher at École Central School. With virtually no experience with clay, she organized a wonderful collection of experiences, exposing all of the children in the school to the exhibition as part of their curriculum. Using different media, the students worked in a number of ways with the ideas generated by the show. All students learned about clay and the techniques that the artists used to construct the work. They learned that clay work may result in utilitarian, sculptural and decorative pieces.

Most of the students visited the school’s clay studio. This was particularly amusing

**Suzon Tremblay,  
art specialist  
teacher at  
the school,  
thoroughly  
enjoying talking  
about the finger  
puppet family.  
The FingerPlay  
exhibit ran  
Nov. 7-28 in Fort  
St. John.**



at times since some of the smaller children had never been in this “older” part of the school. Imaginations ran wild. Students were introduced to the equipment necessary to make clay work: the kiln, the canvas-covered working tables, tools including found tools, and of course the clay, which in this studio is faithfully recycled. Some intermediate students were already aware of the studio and some of its possibilities, having had the opportunity to work in clay with the help of a visiting artist.

Responding to the FingerPlay exhibit, students were involved in a number of projects. Grades 6 and 7 studied the history of Greek civilization and ancient Greek pottery: vases, urns and amphora. Drawings, some of them really excellent, were made on the computer using old Greek patterns. Another class created “pottery” with salt dough, and began to realize that achieving the desired result in any available media provides its own challenges.

Grade 5 students made drawings of potential clay works, described the technique needed to make the work, and were challenged to address the use or meaning of the work.

Even younger students used watercolour to create very imaginative images of teapots. One class made drawings using the sgraffito method used so often in pottery surface decoration.

A different kind of exhibition space, a new audience, potential clay addicts? Adults and children alike, Fingerplay is still on the tongues of many. 🏠

For more on École Central Elementary, see:  
**[www.central.prn.bc.ca](http://www.central.prn.bc.ca)**

## Year of the Ox: Vancouver Potter's Work on Stamp

This year Canada Post celebrates the Year of the Ox: a time of stability, harmony and balance.

The international stamp features a work of pottery, an art form heavily rooted in Chinese history. The vessel was also chosen for its connection to the earth, since 2009 is the year of the Yin Earth Ox. The custom made earthenware pot, created by Vancouver potter Shu-Hwei Kao, is a reproduction of a vessel that would have been used for food preparation.

The pot's big belly means literally fullness or prosperity, the colour red indicates good luck and with the addition of the Ox image, the pot symbolizes a wish for a happy and prosperous ox year. For more on Shu-Hwei Kao see: [www.shkao.com/English/Welcome.html](http://www.shkao.com/English/Welcome.html)




## Put your Guild to work for you!

Many of us have training, education, and experience in life that isn't clay-related. We may have had, or are still working in, careers as website designers, accountants, bookkeepers, interior designers, graphic artists...you get the idea. If you have services to offer or are looking to hire someone, why not work with fellow potters and guild members?

Get your business or service listed with the guild's new Resource Directory and start looking there first when you need a hand with something. Information submitted will be listed online in the members only area of the website.

Please send your information to Melany at [editor@bcpotters.com](mailto:editor@bcpotters.com) and include the following information:

- Your name and the name of your business, if applicable
- Short summary of service or business (25-35 words)
- Contact information (mailing address, phone/fax, email, website)
- Info on any discounts or deals you might want to offer to fellow members 

## JACK TROY ANAGAMA WORKSHOP

### THE DRAGON KILN CROSSES CULTURES

*Presented by Clatsop Community College*



- |                                      |                                |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Jack Troy Exhibition               | • Traditional Glazes Available |
| • 2 Day Clay Workshop                | • Critical Review of Firing    |
| • Lecture with Japanese Koto Player  | • Home Stay Options Available  |
| • Firing Traditional Anagama         | • Local Food                   |
| • Approximately 20 Pieces Per Person | • Dynamic Environment          |

**WORKSHOP FEE \$250.00 USD**

**April 16 through May 2, 2009 in Astoria, Oregon**

[ccc-ceramicsdepartment.schools.officelive.com](http://ccc-ceramicsdepartment.schools.officelive.com) OR  
(503) 338-2449 for Registration

Clatsop Community College is an affirmative action, equal opportunity institution. The Jerome campus Art Center and the 16th street PAC offer ADA accessibility. The Astoria Dragon Kiln is not currently ADA accessible. Contact Disabilities Services at 503 338-2474, TDD 503 338-2468 for further information.



# ClayLines

Celebrating Success in our community

## Residency Opportunity

The Banff Centre invites you to attend an informal presentation about our upcoming residency opportunities for artists.

Wed., Feb. 4; 3 to 3:45 p.m.  
Arts Club Upstairs Lounge  
1585 Johnston Street, Vancouver  
Refreshments provided.

The Banff Centre offers dozens of residencies in a variety of disciplines for artists in all stages of their careers. Come find out more about The Banff Centre's unique professional development opportunities and learn about our inspiring programs!

RSVP to [christine\\_elmgren@banffcentre.ca](mailto:christine_elmgren@banffcentre.ca)

## Medalta International Artists in Residence Program 2009

The Medalta International Artists in Residence program will be in full swing in its new state-of-the-art facility early this summer. The residency will run June 2 to 26, 2009 at the Medicine Hat Clay Industries National Historic District. Now in its 11th session, this year's residency brings new beginnings and a chance to rub shoulders and work with accomplished ceramic artists from across the country.

As soon as confirmations are received from our invited artists, we'll email you more details. In the meantime, keep checking the Medalta website [www.medalta.org](http://www.medalta.org) and follow the links to an exciting adventure.

Email queries may be made to the Artistic Director Les Manning at [lmanning@medalta.org](mailto:lmanning@medalta.org) or the Committee Co-Chair Jane MacKay at [jane.mackay@shaw.ca](mailto:jane.mackay@shaw.ca)



## Exhibition

Jackie Frioud, potter & Mila Kostic, printmaker and painter

February 11 to March 11, 2009  
North Vancouver District Hall  
355 West Queens Road

Please join us at the reception  
February 12, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.



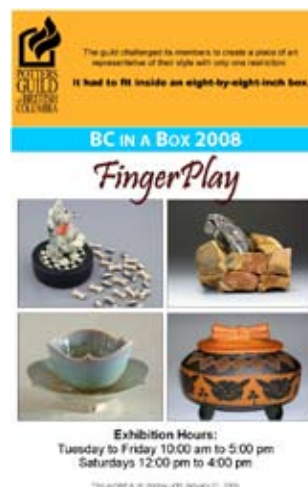
## FingerPlay: Dawson Creek



FingerPlay is at the Dawson Creek Art Gallery till Feb. 15.

The exhibit (Jan. 12 to Feb. 15) was very well received and everyone was impressed with the quality of work that can be done in such a small scale. Dawson Creek has a very active potters guild that has just moved to a new studio. The art gallery is hoping that this exhibit will encourage the local potters to get involved in the BC Potters Guild and perhaps even enter some of their work in the next BC in a Box Juried Exhibition.

Thanks for your support,  
Ellen Corea, Curator/Director  
Dawson Creek Art Gallery



## CARFAC BC Office Space at the Alliance for Arts and Culture

CARFAC BC has rented an office at the Alliance for Arts and Culture until the end of April. Melissa Gruber, the National Communications Coordinator for CARFAC, will be working from the office, meeting with representatives of the visual arts community and acting as a resource for members of CARFAC BC. If you would like more information about CARFAC or are interested in a meeting, contact Melissa at [communications@carfac.ca](mailto:communications@carfac.ca) or 604-681-3535 ext. 208.

CARFAC (the Canadian Artists' Representation/le Front des artistes canadiens) is the national association of Canada's professional visual and media artists. CARFAC defends artists' socio-economic and legal rights through advocacy and professional development and produces a schedule of artists' fees that is widely recognized as the national standard. The Status of the Artist Act empowers CARFAC to negotiate with national organizations on behalf of all visual artists in Canada.

[www.carfacbc.org](http://www.carfacbc.org) / [www.carfac.ca](http://www.carfac.ca)

# ClayLines

Celebrating Success in our community

## Calls for Entry

### Ceramics Monthly, Emerging Artists 2009

In May 2009, *Ceramics Monthly* will feature the works of emerging artists. Those actively pursuing a career in ceramics for less than ten years are eligible. To be considered, submit the following:

- Up to five professional-quality digital images (300 ppi resolution on CD, plus a full-size colour print of each image), with complete description of works.
- Full contact information including email, artist's statement and resume.
- Do not submit materials in binders or folders. Emailed submissions and submissions of more than five images will not be considered. Materials will be returned only if a padded envelope with appropriate postage is included.

#### Mail to:

Emerging Artist, Ceramics Monthly, 600 N. Cleveland Ave., Suite 210, Westerville, OH 43082, USA.

Arrival deadline: February 20, 2009.

[www.ceramicartsdaily.org/magazines/Ceramics%20Monthly/currentissue.aspx/](http://www.ceramicartsdaily.org/magazines/Ceramics%20Monthly/currentissue.aspx/)

## TriCity Potters

### Form Workshop with D'Arcy Margesson

Feb. 27; 9 a.m.–4 p.m.; Leigh Square, Port Coquitlam

Slideshow, demonstrations, and critiques of attendees' work. TriCity Potters members, \$40; non-members, \$50. Contact June MacDonald, [judo@shaw.ca](mailto:judo@shaw.ca); Linda Lebrun, [linda\\_lebrun@telus.net](mailto:linda_lebrun@telus.net); or mail fee to TriCity Potters, c/o Christine Eastlick, 3257 Chartwell Green, Coquitlam, B.C. V3E 3M9. Details at: [www.tricitypotters.ca/newsletters/newsletter\\_jan09.pdf](http://www.tricitypotters.ca/newsletters/newsletter_jan09.pdf)

### Better Butter Box Winner

And the People's Choice Award winner is...Joan Grisley! See the December 2008 guild newsletter for details on the competition. For more info on the runners up, see: <http://tricitypotters.ca/hot3.html> Congratulations Joan!



## Guild Member Chosen to Exhibit at World Ceramic Biennale!



**Untitled.** Approximately 45 cm by 45 cm, cone 10 reduction; wheel with slab additions; Amaco Velvet series (low fire) for the reds.

Judy Burke's work has been chosen for the **5th World Ceramic Biennale 2009 Korea International Competition** to be displayed at The Icheon World Ceramic Center in Korea, Apr. 25-Jun. 21, 2009. The theme is *Adventure of the Fire* and was organized by the World Ceramic Exposition Foundation. There are many prizes which will be given out at the Award Ceremony Apr. 25. Says Judy, "I still can't believe my work was accepted. There were over 3000 pieces entered and 168 chosen to be exhibited!"

## Unclassifieds

**FOR SALE:** 1 x electric kiln-McLennan & Sons, Cone 8, automated Perfect Fire, excellent condition includes shelves & posts; 1 x electric kiln- Skutt, Cone 10, manual, good condition, includes shelves & posts; 2 x Shimpo RK10 electric wheels; worktables & tools. Catherine 604-947-6900.

**FOR SALE:** 30 Ton RAM Press. Includes dies, masters and many extras. Complete set up to start your own wholesale line or add new shapes to a retail line. \$39,500.00 (includes 16.5 cu.ft. electric kiln). Call Neil at 250-283-7782 or Anita at 250-283-2374.

**DEMONSTRATION WORKSHOP:** Hosted by Salt Spring Potters Guild, Feb. 21-22 with Meira Mathison; \$80 fee. Meira is renowned for her unique high-fire altered porcelain and her inspiring workshops. For more information call Beth Feller 250-537-2184. [www.saltspringpottersguild.com](http://www.saltspringpottersguild.com)

### SFU Student Society offers vending opportunity on Campus

The Simon Fraser University Student Society has a regular vending program at the Burnaby campus that offers tables to crafters for \$35 a day. This may be of interest to you, especially around convocation and Mother's Day, for example. Those interested can visit the website for more information: [www.sfss.ca/Vending\\_Tables.html](http://www.sfss.ca/Vending_Tables.html)

## Submissions & Advertising

Published 10 times yearly, the PGBC Newsletter is an information link for members.

#### Submissions:

Send articles, reviews, images, member news, letters and information to: [editor@bcpotters.com](mailto:editor@bcpotters.com) **by the 15th of each month** for publication the following month. Submissions may be edited for space.

#### NEW! 2008-09 Advertising Rates\*:

*All ads are payable upon receipt of invoice*

- Full page, \$185+ GST
- 2/3 page, \$125 + GST
- 1/2 page, \$95 + GST
- 1/3 page, \$65 + GST (horizontal, vertical, or column)
- 1/4 page, \$49 + GST
- 1/6 page, \$35 + GST

Please submit ads as PDF, TIF, JPG or EPS files. For ad sizes see: [http://www.bcpotters.com/Guild\\_Newsletter.htm](http://www.bcpotters.com/Guild_Newsletter.htm). Ad rates are for files requiring no further work by our staff. Ads that are not the correct size, or that need formatting or basic design work will cost \$20 extra.

#### Unclassified Rates:

Members FREE! Non-members: \$22 + GST

*\*Advertising rates subject to change*

Potters Guild of British Columbia

1359 Cartwright St · Granville Island

Vancouver, BC · V6H 3R7

tel: 604.669.3606

fax: 604.669.5627

[www.bcpotters.com](http://www.bcpotters.com)

## Potters Guild of BC Board

**Jinny Whitehead**, President

604.687.3590 · [vwhitehead@shaw.ca](mailto:vwhitehead@shaw.ca)

**Kathryn O'Regan**

[k.oregan@shaw.ca](mailto:k.oregan@shaw.ca)

**Janet Smith**, Treasurer

604.738.2954 · [jrsmith@shaw.ca](mailto:jrsmith@shaw.ca)

**Sheila Morissette**, Secretary

604.484.5090 · [sheilamorissette@mac.com](mailto:sheilamorissette@mac.com)

**Matthew Freed**, Membership

604.899.3383 · [freed\\_matthew@hotmail.com](mailto:freed_matthew@hotmail.com)

[membership@bcpotters.com](mailto:membership@bcpotters.com)

**Don Jung**, Communications/Website

604.873.1836 · [don.jung@shaw.ca](mailto:don.jung@shaw.ca)

[webmaster@bcpotters.com](mailto:webmaster@bcpotters.com)

**Leon Popik**

604.255.3580 · [generalinfo@bcpotters.com](mailto:generalinfo@bcpotters.com)

**Donna Partridge**

604.876.1120 · [donna.partridge@telus.net](mailto:donna.partridge@telus.net)

**Laura McKibbin**

604.720.7835 · [laura@culdesacdesign.com](mailto:laura@culdesacdesign.com)

## Membership

**Matthew Freed**, Chair & Database

604.899.3383 · [membership@bcpotters.com](mailto:membership@bcpotters.com)

#### Membership Fees

For 12 months, including GST: Individual, \$55;

Full-time Student: \$35, Senior (over 65), \$35; Institution/Group/Corporation, \$200.

#### Membership Renewals & New Memberships

- In person: pay by Visa, cheque or cash at the Gallery of BC Ceramics OR
- By mail: pay by Visa or cheque and mail to the Guild; mark the envelope and cheque with either 'Membership Renewal' or 'New Membership'
- Online at our secure site with a credit card by [clicking here](#).

## Communications Committee

**Don Jung**

604.873.1836 · [webmaster@bcpotters.com](mailto:webmaster@bcpotters.com)

**Gillian McMillan**, Newsletter advisor

**Melany Hallam**, Newsletter editor

604.487.1597 · [editor@bcpotters.com](mailto:editor@bcpotters.com)

**Andrea Maitland**, Proofreader