

November 2010
Volume 46 No. 9



BC POTTERS

Newsletter of the Potters Guild of British Columbia

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Gallery of BC Ceramics

www.galleryofbcceramics.com

Sharon Cohen,
Gallery Manager

galleryofbcceramics@bcpotters.com
604.669.3606



Hours

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Gallery Assistants

Carita Ho, Roxanne Gagnon,
Sarah Cannon, Nadiya Chettiar,
Kate Metten, Kelly Austin,
Natasha Chettiar, Dave Carlin
staff@bcpotters.com



Gallery Volunteers

Maggi Kneer, Sheila Morissette,
Elizabeth Claridge, Jinny Whitehead,
Celia Rice-Jones



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

- **The Gallery coordinates and curates several 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](#).*



2010 Featured Artists

The Featured Artist slot affords a non-juried artist the opportunity to sell work in the gallery for a month-long period. All Potters' Guild members are eligible to apply, and may show work other than the mugs and tiles to which non-juried potters are usually restricted. Please apply (include images of your work) directly to the gallery manager at galleryofbcceramics@bcpotters.com

- **February:** Carole Henshall
- **April:** Richard Tanaka
- **May:** Ekta Nadeau
- **June:** Sarah Cannon
- **July:** Kwai-Sang Wong
- **August:** Katie Janyk
- **September:** Linda Lewis
- **October:** Mike Allegretti
- **November:** Elaine Futterman

2010 Gallery Exhibitions

March

Vancouver Collects
Doris Shadbolt Collection
March 6 to 31

July

Laura van der Linde
Three
July 3 to 31

September

Keith Rice-Jones
Size Matters
September 4 to 30

October

Amy Chang
Imperfection
October 2 to 30

November

Student Show:
West Point Grey Academy
Head, Heart, Hands
November 6 to 26

Invitation to Exhibition Opening

The Gallery of BC Ceramics is proud to host *Head, Heart, Hands*, an exhibition of the work of students from West Point Grey Academy. Please join us for the opening reception on Sat., Nov. 6, 1 to 3 p.m. The diverse, eclectic works promise to be interesting and innovative. Let's lend our support to the next generation of potters!

Cover Photo:

Kosmeo Wall by Nathan Craven of Helena, MT. Ceramic, glaze. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Nora Atkinson.

This piece is just one of the many on display at the *Clay Throwdown!* on until Jan. 16 at the Bellevue Arts Museum Biennial 2010 (known to some as the BAMBi) in Washington State. See Page 11 for the full show review from the Oct. 1 PGBC road trip.

President's Message

I am sure that most people by now have heard that the 2012 National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) Conference will be held in Seattle March 28 to 31. This is the closest it will ever be to B.C. and the board is working hard to put something together to ensure we have a presence. If there are any other groups thinking of participating in the exhibition program, the deadline is November 30, 2010. For more details go to the NCECA website, concurrent independent exhibitions section: http://nceca.net/static/conference_concurrent_info.php

I can feel the heat rising as kilns barely have time to cool before they are filled with another load as we prepare for the biggest sale season of the year. I wish everyone successful sales! 🙌

—Jinny Whitehead

Gallery News *By Sharon Cohen*

It's good to have stories to tell to our customers. It helps them to connect with the work that we sell, it makes it more meaningful and more personal. We always like to tell stories and share information about the pieces and the artists who created them. We discuss the artists' inspiration and influences, we explain the various production techniques, and we share humorous anecdotes if and when we can. Our pieces are hand-made and as unique as the people who created them, and stressing this fact influences the customers in a positive way. It encourages them to relate to a piece and, hopefully, buy it.

Hosting Amy Chang's *Imperfection* exhibition has made our job easy in this regard. The pieces in the show tell stories all on their own, we just have to introduce them. We've had fun trying to get customers to guess which fairy tale each of Amy's evocative pieces represents, and then pointing out some of Amy's subtle and wry twists. In addition to novelty, humour and mystery, each piece presents an alternative take on things, a re-shaping of a traditional or predictable outcome in a fresh way—a totally unique perspective. Apart from being so evocative and so challenging to pre-conceived notions, the pieces are beautiful. Amy is a brilliantly accomplished ceramic sculptor and also a superb painter; the painting detail on the pieces is exquisite. What a treat it's been!

From the abstract and whimsical to the practical and functional: teapots. For the month of December, to capitalise on Christmas trading, we'd like to create a little section in the gallery to showcase teapots.



Amy Chang's *Little Mermaid*—as evocative as it is beautiful.

We had many requests from customers for teapots last Christmas, so it makes sense to put them all together in one area. To make a strong statement, we'd like to ask juried artists to send us teapots if they can. Please be kind enough to call the gallery to discuss and make arrangements if you can contribute to our teapot drive!

What? Did I say "Christmas"? Is it REALLY that time of year already?! Time just flies when you're having fun! 🙌

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/Guild/chops.php

You can email it back to Debra Sloan at 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. 🙌



A comment from a customer at the Gallery of BC Ceramics:

"Thanks to you and your artists for making the world more beautiful!"

Class of 2011

A Preview of Emily Carr University's Clay Program Grads

This article is the first of a series to be written by members of the Emily Carr University of Art + Design Clay Program graduating class of Spring 2011. We hope to show, through these first-hand accounts, where the B.C. clay world may be headed in the future. Many thanks to PGBC member Kathryn O'Regan for persuading her fellow ECUAD students to share their clay philosophies and future plans. This month's account is from student Kathleen McGiveron.

It was in grade ten that I discovered my love for clay.

All my life I have been an artist, but my material use was restricted to pencil, charcoal and acrylics. As I grew older and began high school, my love of mark making faded and I was no longer inspired. That is, until my fingers submerged for the first time into clay.

On the first day of Ceramics 10 at Brookwood Secondary School in Langley, I created a small horse. The horse was dreadful and the legs fell off because I didn't attach them properly. Despite the loss of limbs, I still loved clay.



The Thug: Awkward, 2010, by Kathleen McGiveron;
18" high, 8" wide.



Jester: Shot Gun, 2010 by Kathleen McGiveron. Approx. 23" high, 12" deep. Earthenware. Satin glaze tinted with mason stain.

Even when my first two-inch-thick, lumpy coil pot blew up, I still loved clay. In Grade 12, I realized that I could create creatures of my own world. My grad piece became a set of nine faces, each with a different expression. Since that day, I have been infatuated with creating faces.

At this point, I must thank my high school art teachers, Mr. Hamilton and Ms. Hansen, for re-introducing me to my love of art. I must also thank them for preparing me and helping with my enrolment at Emily Carr University (ECUAD).

In fall of 2007, I began my life at ECUAD on Granville Island, Vancouver. For the first three years, I experimented with materials from latex to sheet metal. However, I always made sure I took a ceramics class because I cannot stay away from the material. I spent these years trying to understand who I was and what direction I would be taking with my work in my fourth year. In spring of 2010 I went to Philadelphia with the ceramic department to the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) conference. Since then, I have come to understand the quality demanded of ceramicists in their work, and that I can produce this quality of work for myself.

Now, as a ceramicist with a strong imagination, I produce figurative works of personalities that reflect intriguing emotions ranging from

Continued on Page 5, A world of uncertainty

A world of uncertainty, *Continued from Page 4*

sorrow to ecstasy to anger. I allow my work to venture in to a world of uncertainty that comes from my own imagination. I find it intriguing to create a realistic bust of a figure that engages the audience, and is embellished with the flora and fauna of my own world. I push the limits of clay as it allows me to produce any image from my imagination.

I enjoy producing works with a low fire clay to maintain an energy-efficient practice. I also recycle all scraps of clay and re-use it in future works. The way I stylize the flora and fauna décor on my figurative sculptures is influence by video game graphics because, as a gamer, I understand that video games are able to capture the imagination of a viewer and submerge them in a world for tens and even hundreds of hours.

I am currently working with the character of a jester who morphs physically and mentally with each rendition. I hope to introduce new characters into my practice and into my world, and will start by imagining new renditions of old decoration techniques of historical sculptures. 🎨



Kathleen McGiverson will be completing her Bachelor of Visual Arts degree at ECUAD in spring 2011, and will be looking to submit to local galleries as well as seeking out an art-related career, whether it is working in the Vancouver Art Gallery or working at a local auction house. More information and work can be viewed at www.kmcgiveron-art.com.

LADYSMITH, B.C. Potters Discussion Group

Hello fellow potters:

The next Discussion Group meeting will be on **Sunday, Jan. 9** from 1 p.m. onward at my pottery in Ladysmith on Vancouver Island. Everyone is welcome, beginners to professionals, and there is no charge. The idea is for a free flow of discussion covering any problem areas. I personally like to help with problems around finding your style and the creative process but am happy to help in other areas too if I can. Mary Fox Pottery is located at 321 Third Ave. Ladysmith 250.245.3778, maryfox@shaw.ca

An email or phone call to let me know you are planning on attending is welcome but not a requirement. Looking forward to seeing you,

—Mary Fox

(See article by Hilary Huntley, Page 8.)

Book Review *By Patty Osborne*



Ceramic Projects

Ceramic Arts Handbook Series

Edited by Anderson Turner

Published by The American Ceramics Society

ISBN 978-1-57498-307-4

136 pages / \$29.95 US

If you're an intermediate potter who is looking for ways to expand your repertoire or a pottery teacher who needs to satisfy more experienced students, the 26 projects in *Ceramic Projects* will keep you busy. Included are an extruded lotion dispenser, a citrus juicer, lanterns and lights, several innovative teapots, three-piece pots, and joined pots. The step-by-step instructions, accompanied by photos, are easy to follow and the forms are simple enough that it would be a natural next step to encourage oneself or one's students to modify them and thus move toward a personal style. Many of the essays begin with a reflection on how the author/potter came to a technique or design—valuable information for potters who are ready to move past imitation and on to making their own unique work. The best of these is an essay by Annie Chrietberg who describes how one of her students took Chrietberg's technique of slab-built mugs and, by adding thrown elements and linocut texture, came up with mugs that, while inspired by Chrietberg's, bear little resemblance to them. Whether you just need new ideas or if you're ready to spread your wings and take off with your own designs, *Ceramic Projects* will be a big help. 🎨

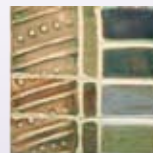
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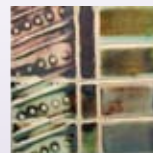
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The Humble Mug

By Keith Rice-Jones

Some time ago, a small group of us were visiting a fellow potter. After the meal, the coffee came out with four different mugs. The coffee went cold while we all discussed the different aspects of the four mugs.

I make large ceramic sculpture and, before this discussion took place, I can't recall ever having spent as much time talking about the aspects of my work in such animated detail. However, what is interesting to me is that when discussion happens around the attributes of either a mug or a piece of sculpture, the language is just the same.

I am not quite sure what makes the mug humble. In order to be successful, a mug has to be functional while dealing with the same sculptural issues of the parts in balance and the parts of the form working together. Perhaps it is the pretension of sculpture, standing around saying "Look at me" that makes the mug humble, while it sits waiting quietly to be put into use.

A piece of sculpture has the possibility of an ongoing dialogue and can transform a space quite profoundly. The mug most likely lives a lot of its life in a cupboard but its dialogue



Top Row (L-R):
Celia Rice-Jones,
first 3, Mike
O'Donnell, Ross
Michel-Anyon, last
three.

Bottom Row (L-R):
Sandy Lockwood,
Wally Keeler, Toff
Milway, Ron Vallis,
Byron Temple,
Winchcombe, Ruth-
Ann Tudball.

can be quite profound when it is in use. I am sure that most of you have a favourite mug, and it can become that for all sorts of reasons. I don't have a specific singular favourite mug; I have many favourites for different qualities, for different liquids and different times of the day. Currently, when I get up and start the day with a slice of lemon in hot water, it is one of Celia's Southern Ice translucent porcelain mugs that I reach for. There is a big one for me and a slightly smaller one for Celia. Before the

porcelain, my first choice had been another of Celia's which is finished in our old house ash glaze (when we renovated our house, burned all the debris and saved the ash) and has a flashing of fugitive copper on one side.

When we travel and visit potters, what we often collect, as well as other work, are mugs, usually in pairs. After the day has started, we usually stop (actually it's sometimes before we have started...) around 10:30 a.m. for coffee. It's one-a-day and strong, with a breakfast top-up of toast. The question is always, "Who shall we drink coffee with this morning?" Today it was Sandy Lockwood from Australia, the day before it was Ross Mitchel-Anyon from New Zealand, before that, Ron Vallis from Vancouver, Wally Keeler from the U.K., Mike O'Donnell from New Zealand and Sandy again, I think. All the coffee mugs are smaller than my morning lemon one and not ones we would generally think of for tea unless it was a fruit tea. In the afternoon it is Earl Grey tea and other, slightly larger mugs come out.

I am not quite sure what puts a mug into a particular usage category but the wide range of solutions to mug design is evident in the Gallery of BC Ceramics mug wall. When I was in the gallery recently, someone was going through a whole range of them, choosing one that suited. It's very personal. People at our studio sometimes buy beer steins as coffee mugs and I can't conceive of drinking that much coffee! Once at home, a customer who had broken her favourite Celia mug, had the whole shelf of ostensibly identical mugs out on the floor, trying out the balance and lip edge, the slight nuance of each, that would mark it as special for her.

Specialty Workshops at the Surrey Art Gallery

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604.501.5100, press 0 | www.surrey.ca/register

Please register no later than 7 days in advance.

Kiln Operations Workshop

Learn all about electric kiln operations from the kiln manager at Surrey Art Gallery. Topics include trigger adjustments, kiln loading, re-wiring, firing schedules, cones, troubleshooting, and safety.

Nov 21, 10:30am-1pm

1 session \$26.50 | Course 4217972

Instructor and full-time potter Murray Sanders has taught at the Surrey Art Gallery for eighteen years, and is the ceramics studio technician. He holds a Fine Arts diploma and a diploma in Adult Education.

Winter programs are coming up quickly...

... and registration begins November 29 for more of Surrey Art Gallery's terrific courses and workshops!

Pottery-Level 2

Jan 25

8 sessions \$135

Instructor: Eliza Au

Surface Decorating Workshop

Feb 20

2 sessions \$98

Instructor: Fredi Rahn

Energy, Continued from Page 6

This is how it is with hand-made things; they all have their own energy that is captured in their creation. If Celia hasn't thrown for a while, she will usually start with a run of mugs. It's like playing scales to warm-up a musical instrument. The first couple of mugs might get discarded. If a mug doesn't come off the wheel quickly, it's not likely to have any vitality.

The mugs of Ross Mitchel-Anyon that we keep in our cupboard are crazy little things but superbly functional. They were thrown incredibly quickly, the handles are not fussed and they retain all the verve and energy of the making process even after, finally, being individually kissed by the fire. Every time they come out they get appreciated over again. All this for only \$10 each.

There are some fundamental design considerations for mugs. First is the deviation from the basic tube. If the bulk of the form is at the base it is very stable but can look heavy and tired. In addition, if the top is too narrow you will get a liquid rush over the transition. How the mug addresses where it sits is important. This is often the weakest part of pots. To take the opposite extreme, if the top is very wide in

relation to the base (as with Mike O'Donnell's) then the liquid cools quickly. The position of the handle will seriously affect the balance and must be a complement in character and weight to the rest of the mug. Then there is the all important lip, the part that mediates the mouth and the liquid. If you think of the shape of the mouth, a very slight turn out will conform to the lips. Too much flare and you wear the tea! An inward curve doesn't invite the liquid or the lips. When you get all the basics working together, there is the glaze, the fire and any possible whimsy like Celia's seal on a button of clay up near the handle that, for many people, becomes a stroking focus.

Ultimately, with different-sized hands and mouths it becomes a very personal choice. I remember reading about a potter who, like most potters, laid a very eclectic table. His teenage daughter complained and asked why they couldn't have sets of nice things like all her friends. Her younger brother, who obviously hadn't been peer pressured into conformity, piped up, "But if they were all the same, you couldn't have favourites." 🏠

Empty Bowls 2010 Sunshine Coast

By Elaine Futterman



Potters with their bowls at the Sunshine Coast Empty Bowls 2010 fundraiser. (Photo by Allan Forest courtesy of The Local.)

Sunshine Coast potters definitely put the "fun" back into fundraising with **Empty Bowls 2010**, a benefit for the Sunshine Coast Food Bank, which took place Oct. 16 at the Roberts Creek Community Hall.

The hugely successful event was completely sold out, netting some \$3,000 from ticket sales and donations which came in even from those unable to obtain a ticket.

Nineteen potters donated a total of 170 bowls and displayed them in a beautiful array on a long central table in the hall. As people came in they chose a bowl and then headed to the kitchen for their choice of four delicious soups made by Joe from the *Gumboot*, Roberts Creek's own eclectic cafe. Attendees enjoyed their lunch listening to the music of local favorites: The Rakish Angles, Gemini, Ken Dalglish and Randeesh. A bite of homemade sweets (made by the potters, of course) left everyone happy and ready to go on with their afternoon.

The bowls went home with their new owners as a reminder that bowls in other homes may still be empty. 🏠

Elaine Futterman and **Mike Allegetti** work together as *Creek Clayworks*, located in Roberts Creek on the Sunshine Coast. See their holiday sale poster on Page 15.

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Mary Fox Discussion Group, Ladysmith *By Hilary Huntley*

It was a beautiful Island afternoon

with the warm, moist air surrounding me as I checked the tire pressure on my bike and then went inside to close the plastic sheeting that surrounds my wet work shelving. I had no idea what to expect once I got to Ladysmith and finally met the well-known Mary Fox.

I have been a potter-for-a-living for the last four-and-a-half years and have run into all sorts of potters from all walks of life. I have heard it all: that the club in my area was not running this year, that they were not accepting new members, that I couldn't be in the show because I would have to be a member for a year first, etc. (pause) So you can understand my trepidation with the 27 km. bike trip to meet Mary and a few others with clay under their proverbial fingernails!

The bike ride was perfect, which meant that I arrived as planned about 15 minutes before the 1 p.m. discussion was to start. Mary was alerted to my arrival by a beautiful small, white dog named Judy who, I soon found out, had a wonderful little bunk-bed right beside the wheel close enough to get clay splatter on her! Mary opened the door and welcomed me in with a wide smile and assumed I was there for the clay chat despite my neon yellow cycling jacket, helmet and gloves. I was immediately put at ease and I knew this afternoon would be spent among friends.

As I gobbled up the most beautiful studio space I had ever been in, I bent over to realize that she actually had so many finished pots that they filled every carefully-designed drawer at the bottom of each shelf. Stunned at the sheer volume of work that was there, I heard Mary say to the next people who came, Joe and Pam, that we were going to sit outside and have a fire with our discussion, so we all wandered through the throwing area and into the courtyard in the back to find a tiny fire pit made out of a few refractory bricks.

The preliminary discussions of how we were all related to clay began straight away and I was amazed to meet two people who actually share a studio and work on the same pots! The pots are thrown by one person and then decorated by the other. Such teamwork and patience was a treat to have described to me. Valerie and Rose-Lynn came in next and we all found a seat around the fire and started to chat easily about clay, art, getting an art education, the current clay work we are seeing in galleries, the craft and the endless work that is a life in



Above: Mary Fox and her dog, Judy, await discussion group visitors at the door to her home studio. **Inset:** Mary's gallery.

clay. Sharron joined us after a long drive up Island and brought some photos of her many wonderful clay works. She also added to the conversation about an art education having recently finished her own studies.

The major questions about life as a working potter were fielded by Mary but she is so comfortable with her life's work that she is not defensive about being the source of all information. She has spent a few lifetimes already learning about her decorative lithium and copper glaze that, in all its outer beauty, seems to have been born in a completely different time and galaxy. In order to work with it at all she has had to learn a whole different language just to ask it a question. Anyone who has made a few glazes from scratch knows that there is a certain amount of magic put in the tub with the kaolin, but the work she has done developing this unique line of decorative pieces deserves a medal.

The special beauty of this discussion group is that we weren't trying to DO anything. We weren't planning a show or working out a teaching or firing schedule, we weren't trying to jury a new show or gallery hanging—we were just there to talk. It was an amazing break from the endless hours that most of us spend alone in the studio working without time parameters (except the number of hours to the kiln finishing) or days of the week (except for the number of days until our respective studio sales.) We were able to talk and listen with respect for each other and the clay. Everyone seemed to feel safe and open, the way I would imagine clay workers from

a hundred years ago might have been as they loaded a huge beehive kiln with the season's work they had all made together.

I have searched long and far for a safe place to talk and listen about the life I have chosen, without commitments towards how many pieces I will have ready for this event or that one; just an afternoon out of the studio with people who share some of my love of (and possible obsession with) clay. After quite a few attempts at other venues where I was not quite able to relate to others, at Mary's I felt relaxed and at home, as though I could just as easily have put down that trimming tool and stood up to answer the door or to go get Girl Guide cookies for everyone.

As I rode the 27 km. home to Duncan, I am totally sure that I was glowing with potter's conviction. I felt that I was truly on the right track for myself because other people were able to do this work and survive in today's world full of mortgage payments and Wal-Mart.

Now, a few days later I am on the back porch of my home with a group of just-the-right-moisture-to-trim oval baking dishes calling my name, the bottom of my favourite coffee mug showing, the sun shining on my hands and it just struck me: The clay conversation group at Mary Fox's studio is kind of like plugging in to a solar charger for your pottery batteries. It was a welcome break from the studio but also a good charging up that only a common

Continued on Page 9 /
Purpose & true kinship

Purpose & true kinship /

Continued from Page 8

purpose and true kinship can give you. As potters, we get used to, and have clearly chosen, a life full of vague discomfort—from the long hours of work to the many throwing stools that we have tried until we find one that is just right. To find a place and time with such comfort and rejuvenation was, almost... indescribable.

The next clay discussion group will be on Jan. 9, 2011 at 1 p.m. at Mary Fox's Studio in Ladysmith, at 321 Third Ave. I would highly recommend that anyone in the area join us in warm conversation about clay and a potter's life, be it yours or hers. We will be there without pretence or judgement waiting for you to ring the doorbell announcing your arrival to the lovely little dog, Judy, who will make you feel as welcome as she and her owner made me feel the first time I met them. 🏠

Hilary Huntley is a potter living and working in Duncan, B.C. See her holiday sale poster on Page 15 and her blog at: www.trialbyfirepottery.ca

Thoughts on creativity: preparing work for a show

By Don Hutchinson

Shows for me are exciting and problematic, so I want to share some thoughts on how I go about making work for a show. For my last show in March, I set out problems requiring creative solutions outside of my normal working methods. I wanted some small sculptures that explained natural phenomena in a poetic rather than a scientific way. This allowed me to invent a mythology with creatures having some supernatural powers or to go to another time frame and wonder how a child might solve some imagined need. I made a list of 10 problems and then began to work. Here are a few examples of the problems I like to explore:

1. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. What kind of creature could carry the sun under the earth so it would be able to rise again each day?
2. Why does the moon appear so tentative in revealing itself? Why does it want to hide so quickly after becoming 'full'?

3. If I was the uncle of a pharaoh who was about to turn seven years old, what kind of a gift would I give him?

4. Waves at the beach line up one behind the other in parallel lines. What creature would have the power to be a 'wave straightener'?

This current show, *Formed in Fire*, has solutions to these kinds of questions. Please come to the Semiahmoo Arts Gallery Nov. 4 to Dec. 1 and see what all three of us do with clay. White Rock potter Peter Daniels will have his vigorous, athletic pieces and Connie Glover will show her marvelous refined salt-glazed works. I will have my decorated platters and some soda-fired sculptures.

Semiahmoo Arts Gallery
Windsor Square
90-1959-152nd Street
South Surrey, B.C.

(See holiday sale poster on Page 13)

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The Olea Davis Collection

By Sharon Cohen

When I began working at the Gallery of B.C. Ceramics two years ago, I noticed some boxes in our attic storage area. The name “Olea” was scrawled on the outside. It was early days and I was still ignorant. “Who or what is ‘Olea’?” I asked Jinny Whitehead. I was told that Olea Davis was one of the founding members of the Potters’ Guild of British Columbia, and was a historically relevant potter, one of the great influences in the B.C. pottery movement several decades ago. At the time that I joined the gallery, I knew very little about historical pottery; I tend to have more contemporary leanings myself. But I was curious. What was in those mystery boxes?

Soon after, Dave Carlin (a gallery customer, ceramic historian and keen collector), got me curious about the historical B.C. potters. He and I were fortunate enough to be invited to the home of John Lawrence, a prolific collector of early B.C. ceramics, in order to view his personal collection. John sells pottery (amongst many other treasures) at his store Doda Antiques in downtown Vancouver (434 Richards Street). Having seen John’s store, I knew instinctively that his home and his personal collections would be awe-inspiring. I wasn’t wrong! In what was probably the most magnificent home I’ve ever seen (all quaint and quirky and overflowing with personality—and pottery) was the most extensive and impressive personal collection I’ve ever seen. John has hundreds of historical ceramic pieces from B.C. in his collection, including dozens and dozens of Wayne Ngan pieces. Charmian Johnson, Thomas Kakinuma and many more of the greats are represented, too.

John and Dave were both lamenting the absence of Olea Davis pieces in their personal collections. I mentioned the bequest that the PGBC had received from Olea and that there were these mystery boxes in our roof storage space. Apparently no one really knows when the boxes arrived, how long they’ve been here, who delivered them and under what circumstances. The collection came to us via Olea’s son, who is no longer alive. No one knew what was in them. There was just this vague knowledge that it was Olea’s collection and that it was now ours.

Collectors chomping at the bit

Dave and John were chomping at the bit, so it seemed it was time to brush off the cobwebs and see what lay inside the boxes, as I had two keen collectors all fired up with curiosity! I must confess I was rather curious myself at this point...

With Jinny Whitehead away at the time, the happy task of dusting, unwrapping and exploring the contents of the boxes fell to Debra Sloan and I. Debra is the keen archivist, and, as I said, I’m more of a contemporary girl myself! But as we were unwrapping, Debra’s enthusiasm was infectious and, buoyed also by Dave’s and John’s keen interest, I found myself getting drawn in.

Mystery and allure

The newspaper in which some of the pieces were wrapped was dated 1980, which means it’s likely that the work has been sitting here for 30 years—wow! This all just adds to the mystery and allure. It turns out that the pieces were not just Olea’s work. We also found several pieces by Santo Mignosa and Thomas Kakinuma. Debra explained to me that Santo used to work closely with Olea and, apart from ceramics, he was involved in the theatre as well. He had designed masks for certain theatrical productions, and they shared an aesthetic similar to that represented in some of his sculptural forms that we found in the



Vases by Olea Davis.

collection. Examples of glaze tests were found, too. Very interesting.

Needless to say, John and Dave came to view the collection and were very excited by it.

A week or two later, as we were hosting the opening of Keith Rice-Jones’ exhibition here at the gallery, Santo Mignosa attended. I was introduced to him, and the first thing I said was, “Come into my office, I have a surprise for you!” This must have taken him aback more than somewhat! The look on his face when he saw pieces he’d made decades ago—pieces he’d not seen or thought about for many years—was truly priceless! He was delighted, and the reminiscing that ensued was extremely gratifying. A real trip down memory lane for him; stories to tell, fond remembrances rekindled, glaze experiments revisited.

“That Thomas Kakinuma cat used to sit on a table in Olea’s hallway!” he told me. It was wonderful having all these personal recollections associated with the pieces, it brought them all so much alive, added meaning and deeper relevance.

So now what? Will the pieces go back in their boxes and back into storage? Hopefully not. John Lawrence mentioned our collection to David Bellman and Meirion Evans, who will be curating a ceramic retrospective exhibition for the Surrey Art Gallery sometime next year or the year after. They’ve selected some pieces from the collection they’d like to borrow for the show. It will be exciting to debut these pieces; give them the public exposure they deserve. What will happen to the collection after that exhibition? Nothing is decided yet. These are issues for the board of directors to consider. In the meantime, it’s been a wonderful learning experience for me, and a really exciting ride!



Glaze experiments.

The PGBC Takes a Trip:

BAM and the Clay Throwdown!

By Amy Gogarty

On a sunny, warm, first day of October, twenty-three members of the Potters Guild of BC undertook an excellent adventure, travelling by bus to Washington state to view the Bellevue Arts Museum (BAM) Biennial, *Clay Throwdown!* Board member Jackie Frioud organized the trip and arranged for the curator, Stefano Catalani, to give us a tour. The BAM focuses primarily on arts, craft and design from the Pacific Northwest. This biennial inaugurates an on-going series of exhibitions of fine craft, with the first one showcasing ceramics. For the purposes of this and subsequent biennials, Pacific Northwest includes British Columbia as well as the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Alaska. In all, 170 proposals were submitted and 34 selected by a jury that included Stefano Catalani; Namita Wiggers, curator of the Museum of Contemporary Craft in Portland; Akio Takamori and collector Bif Brigman. Given that the show represents the preferences of a jury rather than a single curator, there is no one dominant aesthetic. While this makes for a somewhat uneven exhibition, it also ensures diversity.

British Columbia is well-represented in the mix. Dirk Staschke was awarded the *John & Joyce Price Award of Excellence*, worth \$5000, with *My Beautiful Nothing*, a wall-mounted cornucopia of fruits and vegetables that transform into organs and offal as they descend the wall. Dirk was present during our tour and able to comment on his use of glazes (a low-fire matting glaze applied over stoneware forms), construction techniques and his interest in 17th-century Dutch still life painting. Brendan Tang's work, a particularly successful example from his *Manga Ormolu* series, consists of a contemporary robotic form emerging from a delicate Ming Dynasty vase "skin." Paul Mathieu is represented by three of his *Odalisque Bowls*, which merge exterior and interior images based on well-known European paintings to comment on issues relating to originality, craft and desire. Kathy Venter, whom many saw working at the Canadian Clay Symposium last March, presented a series of life-sized female figures modelled in terra cotta and splashed with coloured paint referencing puberty rituals familiar to her from her native South Africa.

Figural work predominated overall, raising questions of the relationship of ceramics as an art form to sculpture. Tip Toland's *Avadhut* is a life-sized Bodhisattva figure depicted in a moment of ecstatic laughter. The high-real figure was modelled solid and later cut and hollowed, and all but eyes and open mouth is covered with gold leaf. It is an impressive piece, although its relationship to ceramics (other than being made from clay) is open to question. A more clearly ceramic influence can be seen in Saya Moriyasu's delightful *Dog Travellers*. Moriyasu, whose influences include chinoiserie, Americana, consumerism and a love of beauty," created a bevy of brightly coloured and vigorously modelled Fu dogs, who disport themselves in a surrealistic landscape of stacked porcelain saggars reminiscent of Chinese landscapes with romantic mountain peaks. The work is both attractive and devilishly clever. Heidi Preuss Grew similarly approaches figurative work while retaining strong ties to ceramic traditions. She recently completed a residency in Japan, and her odd little monster sculptures are based on creatures who greet people at Shinto temples, sumo wrestlers and "sleepers," people who sleep on trains. Preuss Grew's work retains a high degree of personal expression, all the while



Chris Antemann (Joseph, OR), *The Slip* (detail) Digital print by Kendrick Moholt.

exploiting the numerous effects possible with the ceramic surface. A favourite work of mine is *Vault Alarm*, by Cynthia Lahti, whose small works based on "expressive images of the figure" are arranged in an organic grid on a table top. The figures are incomplete—not fragments, which would imply destruction and violence—but coming-into-being. She describes them as ideas as they gradually emerge in her mind, and thus one finds a leg and a skirt blown by the wind, a head laughing, two crossed legs and other whimsical yet enigmatic components. No one surface treatment unifies the disparate works; instead, each is treated in an independent yet appropriate manner, generating a mood that is intimate and psychological.

A *tour de force* among the figurative works is Chris Antemann's *A Slip Betwixt the Cup and the Lip*, an enormous table-top sculpture based on eighteenth-century Meissen or Sèvres figurative works. Antemann has modelled more contemporary versions of these figures, adorning them with delicious hats, lustre-bedecked wigs and blissfully naughty expressions. She places her figures on floral-decaled chairs at tables

Cont'd on Page 12, Objects of desire

overflowing with food and other objects of desire. As if this were not sufficient, she teamed up with a photographer, who, concentrating on the expressions, gestures and glances stealing between figures, introduces narrative and cinematographic elements in the form of large colour photographs on the walls surrounding the work (see *The Slip* photo, previous page). The installation is truly impressive and worth a trip to the BAM in and of itself.

Another amazing work is Nathan Craven's *Kosmeo Wall* (see photo on the cover), which consists of many hundreds of hollow extruded elements stacked within a rectangle cut into the wall. The extrusions assume a limited number of shapes, but these are multiplied by compression or manipulation into other shapes. Each is highly articulated, with a complex perimeter resembling bones, diatoms or other sea creatures. The ends are glazed in soft colours, increasing the overall appearance of complexity. Light striking one side of the wall highlights the shapes and surfaces. Filtering through the hollows, it creates bursts of star-like patterns on a dark wall beyond. In Craven's work, the components "function as both decoration and as structure," creating architecture that "actually grows from decoration." The effect is mesmerizing, a meditation on nature, structure, light and pattern, made all the more impressive by simplicity and repetition.

It would have been nice to see more functional work included, but one wonders if the modesty and straightforwardness of functional work is overshadowed by more showy and clearly "blockbuster" submissions. Kevin Snipes presents lovely hand-built porcelain vases decorated with wonderfully animated figures scratched into the clay. The extremities of hair and feet project out from the edges, moving the eye around the form, and surfaces are rich and expertly designed. Robert Fornell, who has travelled extensively in Japan, throws traditional tea bowls, which he single- or multi-fires with a variety of ash glazes. Damian Grava wood fires large plate and globe forms, luxuriating in the colours, crackles

and markings generated by flame moving across the work. One of the most interesting functional ceramists, Gwendolyn Yoppolo, produces soft, pneumatic forms including spoons, mortar and pestles and two-person bowls. Calling her work *Visionary Dysrhythmia*, she explores metaphorical implications of function: a sieve becomes "a signifier of our own internal processes of holding things in and letting other things pass through"; a plate or bowl for two "becomes a metaphor for the way the act of eating together creates a unified experience." Clearly, she operates in the realm of the conceptual, as many of her works are covered with rather toxic-looking crystalline glazes, pairing shiny and matte, pastel and colourful surfaces to create quite luscious works. That she uses her exceptional skill to address functional ceramics and their engagement of the body is intriguing.

In such a large and diverse exhibition, it is impossible to comment on every work. More documentation, either in the form of a catalogue or material on the web, would be most welcomed. Photographs are not permitted, and it is difficult to recall the many details presented in the artist statements and labels. The tour given by Stefano Catalani was extremely informative and went a long way towards making the artists' intentions available to us, but not all visitors have that advantage. Some artists seem to be included based on their seniority and significance to the local community, as their work did not appear to be made specifically for this show. While this is a bit disappointing, it is still a good opportunity to see the signature works of senior artists. All work on view was of high quality, and collectively, the individual works manifest the immense diversity available to the ceramic artist. We are extremely fortunate to have such a compelling and thoughtful showing on our doorstep. *Clay Throwdown!* will be at the BAM until Jan. 16, 2011, and it is well-worth anyone's effort to take it in. 📍

Note: All quotations are from published artist statements available at the exhibition. The Bellevue Arts Museum is located at 510 Bellevue Way NE, Bellevue, WA. 98004 (425.519.0770) www.bellevuearts.org.

Submissions for the December 2010 PGBC newsletter

Please get your articles and ads in to Melany by November 20 at the latest for the December 1 newsletter. If you submit your material after that date, it may have to wait till next month's newsletter. Submissions can be sent to editor@bcpotters.com.

PLEASE NOTE:

There is no newsletter in January.
The next newsletters will be published
Feb. 1 and Mar. 1, 2011.

Crackerjack 2010

Craft sale, Nov. 12 to 14, West Vancouver

This beautiful show will highlight and sell many locally hand-made and unique decorations, prints, cards, ceramics, hand woven pieces, etc.

The sale will feature many returning craftspeople and artists such as Leslie McGuffin (fine art), Celia Pickles (prints and decorations), Heather Aston (prints), Kaija Rautainen (tapestry weaving), Lemonpark (jewellery), Carolyn Bruce (decorations), Jill Allan (glass) and Jinny Whitehead (ceramics). Among the many new faces at this year's show will be Heather Cairns (ceramics), Paula Grisdal (prints), Mary Bentley (weaving), Catherine

Nicholls (textiles), Deb Dumka (textiles), Patsy Kolesar (jewellery) and Gloria Shaw (prints).

**Please come to a meet the artists
Reception on Fri., Nov. 12; 7 to 9 p.m.**

Regular sale dates:

Sat., Nov. 13, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sun., Nov. 14, 12 noon to 4 p.m.

**The Music Box, 1654 Argyle Avenue, (on
the waterfront in West Vancouver)**

Time to start shopping for the Festive Season! For more information email crackerjack10@shaw.ca

Holiday Sales & Exhibitions, Lower Mainland

SUZY BIRSTEIN'S SALE & OPEN HOUSE

New Tableware (small and large),
Ceramic Sculpture, Paintings
and Hartley's yummy treats...

Fri., Dec. 3 & 10 - 4 til 10

Sun., Dec. 5 & 12 - noon til 6

Sat., Dec. 11 - noon til 6

3436 W. 2nd Ave, Vancouver
(back of house); 604.737.2636

www.suzybirstein.com



WILDRICE STUDIO

Wildrice Studio

Open House and Christmas Sale

- Keith and Celia Rice-Jones -

November 13 and 14 • 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

8072 11th Avenue, Burnaby, V3N 2N7 604 522 8803

www.wildricestudio.com • keith@wildricestudio.com

Join us for nibbles, coffee or a glass of cheer.

There will be a few pots around too.

Formed in Fire

A group show & sale by
ceramic artists

Peter Daniels

Connie Glover

Don Hutchinson



Students are invited
to submit a piece
of ceramic artwork!



Semiahmoo Arts Gallery

Windsor Square

90-1959 152nd Street

South Surrey, BC

Nov. 4 – Dec. 1

Reception Nov. 4, 7-9 pm

Photos & Poster Design by Warwick P. Thompson

Semiahmoo Arts
Columbia

BRITISH COLUMBIA
ARTS COUNCIL

STUDIO TOUR & SALE, South Surrey/White Rock

December 4 & 5, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

You are invited to tour the studios of 19 artists. Don't miss the chance to meet the artists, have them explain their methods and what inspires them. The tour includes: paintings in oil, watercolour, acrylic and mixed media, stoneware, turned wood,

glass and jewelry. The tour is a free event and participating artists will have work for sale.

See: www.peninsulaarttrtour.com. A map is also provided indicating nine locations and which artists can be found at each.

Christmas Craft Fairs 2010

Maria Palotas



maripottery.com

November 11, 10:00 - 5:00

November 12, 10:00 - 5:00

November 13, 10:00 - 5:00

November 14 10:00 - 4:00

Burnaby Arts Council

Heritage Christmas Craft Fair

Shadbolt Centre

6450 Deer Lake Ave, Burnaby

November 27, 10:00 - 4:00

November 28, 10:00 - 4:00

16th Annual Happening

Arts and Crafts Fair

Thomas Haney Centre

23000 116th Ave, Maple Ridge

November 19, 10:00 - 9:00

November 20, 10:00 - 6:00

November 21, 10:00 - 4:00

Chilliwack Arts Council

Christmas Craft Market

Chilliwack Heritage Park

44140 Luckakuek Way

Chilliwack

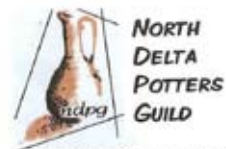
December 5, 10:00 - 4:00

Delbrook Christmas Craft Fair

Delbrook Community Centre

600 West Queens Road

North Vancouver



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS

POTTERY SALE

Nov. 26, 5-9

Nov. 27, 9-5

Nov. 28, 9-5



**GIVE A UNIQUE
GIFT OF
POTTERY ART THIS
YEAR!**

ARTSPACE
11425-84TH AVE
DELTA

Holiday Sales & Exhibitions (Lower Mainland, Cont'd)



The Semiahmoo Potters 2010 Christmas Sale

The SPC annual Christmas sale will be

- **Saturday, November 27th**
from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m.
- **Sunday, November 28th**
from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

at our usual venue, the **Ocean Park Community Hall,**

1577 - 128th Street, Surrey, B.C.

A wide variety of hand built and thrown

vessels ranging from tiny Christmas decorations to large elaborately crafted pieces will be available.

For further information contact us at semiahmoootters@gmail.com or find us on [Facebook](#).



Dunbar Pottery Open Studio & Sale

MARTIN PETERS AND RON VALLIS

Sunday, December 12 10am - 3pm

4056 West 27th, Vancouver



LINDA REEDMAN'S 10TH ANNUAL POTTERY EVENT

~Functional Stoneware~

Friday, November 19, 4 to 8 p.m.

Sat, November 20 from 11-4 p.m.

Refreshments, door prize and a room full of pottery to choose from!

11957 194B Street, Pitt Meadows, B.C.

604.465.7093 • blreedman@shaw.ca

for photos and more info

*Remember to bring your own bag or box

Studio 3 Annual Sale

Joan Barnet • Hsiao-Chen Peng

Cheryl Stapleton • Yi Wei Wang

Jinny Whitehead

As part of the East Side Culture Crawl

Fri., Nov. 26; 5 p.m.-10 p.m.

Sat. & Sun., Nov. 27 & 28; 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

Suite 265 - The Mergatroid Building,

975 Vernon Drive, Vancouver



Delta Potters Christmas Sale

Friday, Nov 12th

10 am to 5 pm

Saturday, Nov 13th

10 am to 5 pm

Sunday, Nov 14th

10 am to 4 pm

South Delta Rec Centre
1720 56th St. Tsawwassen
www.deltapotters.com
No HST



CHRISTMAS SALE

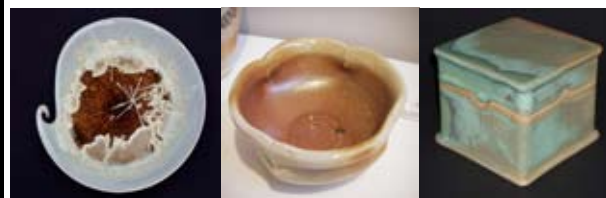
Connie Glover Pottery

December 4 & 5 • 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

1872—136th St., South Surrey, B.C.

Drop by to see new work in high-fire
soda glaze and sawdust fire!

www.connieglover.com



The Fraser Valley Potters Guild

On their 35th Anniversary presents

"Fired up at the Firehall"

Opening Reception Friday Dec 3rd, 2010
(7:00 – 9:00 pm)

December 3rd to December 31st 2010

Hours: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm Tuesday through Saturday
12:00 pm – 4:00 pm Sunday
(Excluding Holidays Dec 25, 26, 27th)

Newton Cultural Centre

13530 - 72nd Avenue

Surrey, BC

Contact info: fraservalleyvg@hotmail.com

Unclassifieds

HIRO's STUDIO CLEAR OUT: Everything must Go! FREE Glaze materials, clay, batts, shelves, miscellaneous items. FOR SALE 1 Estrin 8 cu. ft. kiln \$300. 1 McLennan 7 cu. ft. kiln \$200. Call between noon and midnight 604.685.8469 to arrange a visit. You pick up and take away.



POTTERS
GUILD
of BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Holiday Sales & Exhibitions, Islands/S. Coast/Interior



Salt Spring Island Potters Guild

Biennial Exhibition: New Explorations

Nov. 6 to 11; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Opening reception Fri., Nov. 5, 5 to 8 p.m.

New work by Salt Spring Island potters and clay sculptors. Each artist has chosen a new direction of exploration in their medium for this show. Artspring Island Arts Centre, 100 Jackson Ave. Major credit cards accepted. www.saltspringpottersguild.com



Trial By Fire Pottery

Will be holding it's

5th Annual Christmas Pottery Show and Sale

TO BE HELD AT THE CLEMENTS CENTRE

5856 Clements Street Duncan, BC
Just west of the Library

Saturday November 27th and
Sunday November 28th, 2010

For more information check the website at www.trialbyfirepottery.ca
or call 250-746-6895

10 am to 5 pm both days

Christmas Sale

Saturday, November 27th
11 a.m. til 6 p.m.
at the
Florence Filberg Center
411 Anderton, Downtown Courtenay
Admission \$1 includes festive tea and doorprizes

For the Love of Art Almighty!

Okanagan Valley Potters & Artisans 20th Annual Fall Gift Show & Sale

Nov. 13, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Nov. 14, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Pottery, Clay Art, Mixed Media Paintings, Digital Arts,
Drawings, Glass work, Sculpture, Jewellery,
Printmaking & Collage Works, Silver & Gold Smiths,
Fabric Art, Weaving, Photography, Wood Work,
Quilting, and other high quality Art and crafts.

All artists are in attendance.

Rotary Centre for the Arts
421 Cawston Ave., Kelowna, BC
Call 250-763-1875

Sponsored by Potters Addict Ceramic Art Centre
and the Rotary Centre for the Arts

Westbank Pottery Studio Open House & Sale

Gillian Paynter invites you to the 27th
annual Christmas open house
and customer appreciation:

Dec. 4 & Dec. 5, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

101-2565 Main St., Westbank (Kelowna).

The studio will close permanently on
Dec. 31. For details: 250.768.3722.

CHOSIN POTTERY'S

27th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SALE

November 27 + 28

Works by Robin Hopper and Judi Dyelle.

We are also featuring Sterling Silver
Jewellery by Morgan Ann Designs.

Join us for some hot mulled cider,
coffee and cookies while browsing through
a wonderful selection of sale items.

Come and see Robin's
new Glaze Paintings.

4283 Metchosin Rd., Victoria.

Open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

250.474.2676 • www.chosinpottery.ca

Visa, MC, Interac

2010 studio sale

MARY FOX POTTERY



Saturday, November 6
11 am to 5 pm

Sunday, November 7
11 am to 5 pm

321-3rd Avenue
Ladysmith, BC
250.245.3778



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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 by the 20th of each month for publication the following month. Submissions may be edited for space.

2010 Advertising Rates *:

All ads are payable upon receipt of invoice

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

Please submit ads as PDF, TIF, JPG or EPS files. For ad sizes see: <http://www.bcpotters.com/Guild/newsletter.php>. 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 + HST

**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

<http://www.bcpotters.com/Guild>

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The next newsletters will be published Feb. 1 and Mar. 1, 2011.

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Membership

Membership Fees

For 12 months, **not including HST**: Individual, \$55;
Full-time Student, \$35; Senior (over 65), \$35; Institution/Group/
Corporation, \$200.

Annual membership is from September. New members joining at other times of the year pay a pro-rated fee the first year. If you are rejoining after a break, please use the new membership pro-rated link. All subsequent renewals will take place in September, regardless of your initial joining date. For detailed information see:

<http://www.bcpotters.com/Guild/membership.php>

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](#).

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