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BC POTTERS

Newsletter of the Potters Guild of British Columbia

INSIDE:

Saggur Firing **4**

Book Review: Thrown **6**

Eclectic Elements **8**

Fired Up! **9**

Modern Eye **11**

The Great Motivator **12**



Photo by Kay Austen.



Gallery of BC Ceramics

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 604.669.3606



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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.*

■ *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.*

Artists must apply to be juried; there are three deadlines annually.

To download and print a Gallery

Jury Application, [click here](#).

For information on Gallery

Policy, [click here](#).

2011 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 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. The following artists will be featured beginning on the 15th of the month listed:

- February: Shannon Merritt
- March: Trezlie Brooks
- April: Kelly Austin
- May: Ann Rusch
- June: Molly Magid
- July: Laurie Embree
- August: Don Jung
- September: Unallocated
- October: Rona Hatherall



Miniature Tea Set, by Laurie Embree.

July's featured artist Laurie Embree: I was first introduced to pottery in a small studio in the Kitsilano area in the early 70s. I loved it! However, at that time in my life I was just starting a family, and so I put it on hold "for a few years". After moving to Dawson Creek in the 80s, there were quite a few years of raising kids, building a house, clearing land to make a farm, fostering, enjoying grandchildren and then adopting two delightful young girls. At age 53, despite the numerous commitments life still held, I was determined to finally get back to pottery. I enrolled in a beginner's course at the college which was quickly followed by an intermediate class and from there I joined the Dawson Creek Potters Guild.

For the last ten years my learning has continued through contact with my fellow guild members and through workshops with

such generous potters as Les Manning, Bibi Clement, Wil Shynkaruk, and Kathy Koop. I also had the opportunity to attend two wonderful Prince George Clayfests and two inspirational Symposiums in Maple Ridge.

At age 63, I have now relocated to the 108 Mile Ranch in central B.C. and I am delighted to be pursuing my passion from my own home studio. Whether creating large bathroom sinks or miniature tea sets, I love the process of bringing a lump of clay to life. I create functional work using mid-fire stoneware. I hope that they appeal to one's artistic sense and are comfortable and practical in their use. 🍵

See Page 12 for an article by August's featured artist, Don Jung.

2011 Gallery Exhibitions

MAY: Spottery

A non-juried members' show featuring work with a dot or spot motif. On till May 29.

JUNE: First Serve

Emily Carr graduates, Kelly Austin, Darcy Greiner, Emma Walter and others begin their conversation with the ceramic community in Vancouver and the art world in general.

JULY: Celebrate the Bowl

A non-juried members' show featuring bowls in support of Project Empty Bowl.

SEPTEMBER: Classic Forms Revisited

Works by Mary Fox. A new interpretation of classic vase and amphora forms that have inspired Mary's ceramics.

NOVEMBER: Wide Open

A juried show of small works by members of the Alberta Potters Association, this exhibition is one-half of an exchange with the Potters Guild of BC.

Cover Photo:

Saggar Fired Lidded Jar (2011), by Kay Austen, 21.5 cm. x 13 cm. Thrown with hand-built knob. Fired with cobalt and copper sulphate, dried leaves, sawdust, salt and steel wool. See [Page 4](#) for story, *Saggar Firing, or, Use What You've Got.*



President's Message

I am pleased to welcome our newest member of the Board, Kelly Austin. Kelly is a recent graduate of Emily Carr University of Art and Design and has also worked part time in the Gallery of BC Ceramics. She is passionate about clay and contemporary craft, and is looking forward to immersing herself in the B.C. clay community.

At the AGM on May 30 we also confirmed two more members who had joined the board after the 2010 AGM. Nora Vaillant attended Swarthmore College and Philadelphia College of Art. She furthered her training in ceramics through attending courses and workshops at Penland and Haystack. She contributed to the recently published book *Thrown: British Columbia's Apprentices of Bernard Leach and Their Contemporaries*, and has been a member of the planning committee for the Canadian Clay Symposium. Denise Jeffrey hails from Nova Scotia where she was an active member of the

Nova Scotia Designer Crafts Council (NSDCC) from 2001 to 2009. She served as a member and chair of the NSDCC Market Advisory committee and in 2006 was appointed to the Board of Directors as Third Vice President. Denise studied at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and has been potting since 1999. Thank you to all our board members who are willing to contribute their expertise and enthusiasm to strengthening and growing our organization.

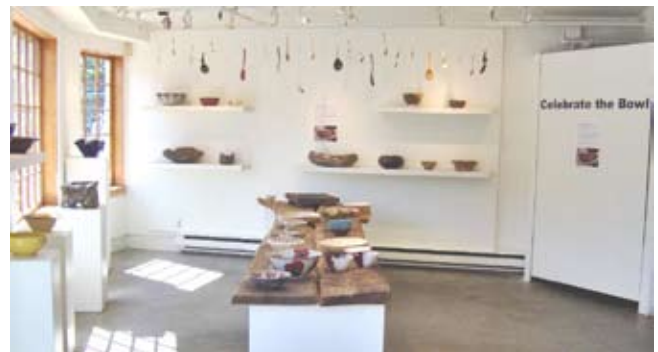
A copy of the 2010 Annual Report is available on the website in the Members Only section ([click here to sign in](#)).

If you are interested in joining the board, don't hesitate to contact me at any time. You don't have to wait till the next AGM. 📧

—Jinny Whitehead

Gallery News *By Sharon Cohen*

What an absolute pleasure it was to host *First Serve*, an exhibition of work by recent Emily Carr University graduates. For starters, the exhibition area looked wonderful. It's amazing how much impact can be generated by work that's predominantly white and unembellished—a really clean, uncluttered aesthetic, sleek and streamlined, but packing a serious punch! Apart from the beauty and innovation of the work, the exhibition allowed for so much interaction with customers. There were so many stories to tell! With five artists participating, there were five times more opportunities to share information and, in the case of Darcy Greiner's work, more opportunity to give the customers a demonstration. I was fascinated by the manner in which Darcy constructed all of his pieces based on innovative "thinking outside the box" ways of combining a single wedge shape into a myriad of sculptural yet functional pieces. Showing exhibition visitors the ways in which the wedges combined to form each piece never failed to elicit an enthusiastic reaction. Emma Walter's sculptural piece also provided a great talking point. Sharing information on why the piece was called *A Non-Rival Good* proved to be very thought provoking, which is what art should be. Only Bethany Scott could translate 1930s gangster movie aesthetics into ceramic art. Again, great stories to tell to customers, eliciting



Innovative set-up generates maximum impact for the *Celebrate the Bowl* exhibition.

smiles and nods of approval and, as an added bonus, some very brisk sales. Andrew Wong's cloud plates were loved by all who saw them, and his mugs that straddle the line between decorative and functional made for great visuals and interesting discussion. Kelly Austin's impeccable work was as well received as it always is. Her combination of rough and smooth, light and dark, with just a tiny hint of added colour for depth and interest made her pieces as perfectly proportioned and delightfully appealing as her many fans expect them to be.

As always, the contrast between all the exhibitions keeps things fresh, exciting and varied—from the fun and whimsy of *Spottery* in May, to the calm, contemporary chic of *First Serve* ending June 28, and then *Celebrate the Bowl* hot on its heels July 1 to 25. A special thank you to the exhibitions committee (Keith Rice-Jones, Celia Rice-Jones, Sheila Morissette, Jinny Whitehead and Maggi Kneer) for doing such a magnificent set-up for the bowls show, the exhibition area looks wonderful. Thank you also to the artists who contributed work, about 25 guild members in total. Your generosity is appreciated. A portion of the value of the *Celebrate the Bowl* sales will be donated to A Loving Spoonful's Project Empty Bowl. As is always the case in a group show, the diversity is truly impressive. Ann Maliatski's loopy, hoopy cut-out bowl generated the most interest; we could have sold it ten times over! Maggi Kneer's rose bowl was also a big hit, as were Elizabeth Harris-Nichols' colourful bowls with cheeky messages. The show boasted some



Darcy Greiner's large cross bowl, constructed from a mould comprised of multiple wedges.

Saggar Firing, or, Use What You've Got

By Kay Austen

I'm primarily a Cone 10, reduction-firing, functional ware potter. But last October, I decided to branch out and try a completely new technique. Over the years, I've never been one to deny myself anything clay related. Raku, Naked Raku, pit firing, New Zealand sawdust firing, crystalline firing, low salt and Majolica were all techniques I'd enjoyed, but what I really wanted was something I could do on my own, using the clay, materials and the gas kiln I already had. I wanted a firing that had an element of unpredictability and fun. After seeing the saggar-fired work of Ruth Allan and Jill Waterfall, I became, 'all fired up' and decided to give smoke-firing a try.

Saggars or 'safeguards' have historically been used in Asia and the United Kingdom to protect fine ware from the effects of flame and smoke and from debris and ash created during a fossil fuel or wood firing. Today, for the studio potter, a saggar is used to create a localized reducing atmosphere around pieces stacked within it, in other words, keeping the ash and debris inside—against the pots, not out.

A saggar can be a large-lidded box made of fireclay or any sandy, open clay which will completely surround the piece. Or, a saggar can be built inside a kiln using any refractory materials, such as hard or soft bricks and kiln shelves. I chose this last method as the quickest and easiest. It also meant that I could change the size of the saggar to take the number of pieces I had to fire.

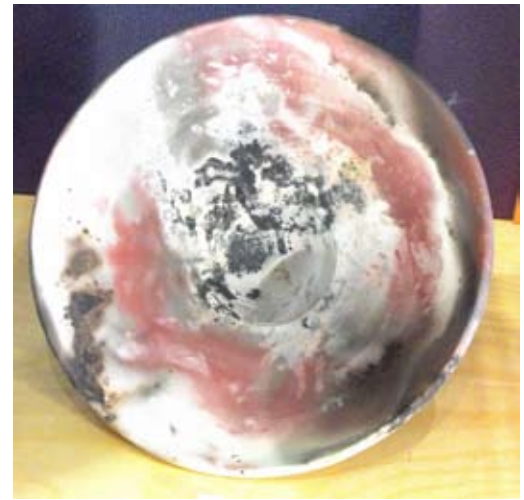
For the first firing, I threw the pieces using my usual clay: B-Mix 10 mixed with plenty of grog. I chose to make lidded jars with extruded or hand built knobs. When the pieces were dry, I brushed them with at least four coats of terra sigillata. I then burnished them with a scrunched up thin plastic bag (the ones you get at the supermarket for packing produce in) and bisque fired to Cone 06.

Next came the building of the saggar. I had quite a few old soft bricks hanging around, the leftovers of a kiln long ago torn apart. First, to protect my kiln's bottom shelves, old shelves were placed over them. Then the bricks were stacked to form the back and sides of the saggar 'box'. Once there were retaining walls, I could start to pack the space with combustible materials and the pots themselves. The saggar was not airtight; my main concern was that combustible materials did not leak out. On

the floor of the saggar went shards, to keep ware from possible thermal shock and then came a layer of sawdust or salt. I decided to pack each individual pot in its own foil wrap, so that materials were held up against the surface of each piece as this was probably a more predictable and controllable way to encourage surface decoration.

For some time, I had been collecting interesting combustible materials: salt-soaked driftwood from the shore of Howe Sound, pine and spruce cones, pine needles, bits of string, grasses, dried seed heads, shredded newspaper and dry leaves. There was also vermiculite, sand, coarse salt, copper and brass wire, shells, B.B.Q. charcoal, old used stainless steel and copper scourers, wire wool, wire mesh, kitty litter and an assortment of oxides and carbonates, including copper carbonate and sulphate, cobalt carbonate and sulphate, manganese carbonate, iron oxide, crocus martis, rutile, burnt umber and granular ilmenite, each mixed with water.

Now the fun part! Grabbing a pot, I wrapped it several times with copper wire, and then I dipped grasses into the copper mix and pressed them onto the surface. Next, I soaked a bit of lichen in cobalt and placed it onto the shoulder of the pot. Lastly, a stainless steel scourer was arranged around the knob. Everything was



Large bowl on display at the Foyer Gallery, Squamish.

tightly wrapped with foil, and then placed into the saggar. It could be stacked on its side, on its base or upside down. Then I surrounded that pot with combustible materials, as closely as I could; pinecones, newspaper, anything to encourage fuming and reduction. A few were left without wrapping to see what just fuming would do. In between pots, as I packed, salt 'bombs' were placed—small bowls filled with coarse salt, designed to specifically fume in that area. Working at wrapping each of 15 pieces, the largest 24 cm tall by 16 cm wide, with materials which would leave a mark,

Continued on Page 5,
Combustibles and bombs



Three walls of the saggar are completed. Wrapped ware and combustible materials are tumble stacked.

Combustibles and bombs,

Continued from Page 4

placing them in the saggar and filling spaces with combustibles and 'bombs' took me the best part of four hours! Then the front wall of the saggar was finished, and kiln shelves placed on top as a roof. An 06 cone was placed at a peep, the kiln door was closed and I was ready to fire.

The kiln was started on very low, the damper and peeps out, for four hours. Then the burners were turned to medium and the damper pushed in to half way. As the kiln temperature climbed, the smell of burning rubbish permeated the kiln shed. The entire firing took eight hours. I crossed my fingers... who knew what the results would be?

The next day, the kiln was cool enough to unpack. It was like being at an archaeological dig! As each revelation or failure emerged, I learned what to do again, and what not to do. Masking tape and 'stick on' dots were a mess, as they took off the terra sigillata and left no appreciable mark. Pieces which had been sprayed with metallic salts had runs and obvious splotches. The pots which were not



Packed saggar with 06 cone ready for firing.

wrapped with foil were subtle to the point of boring. But colour I did have! The wire lines were green, black, brown and grey. The bluishings from copper were pink, purple, even lipstick red. Cobalt predictably gave all sorts of blues. Wire wool and scourers gave burgundies, oranges, creams and tans. There were no cracks or breakages. The terra sigillata offered a soft-to-the-touch satiny surface.

After Christmas, I was ready to have another go. In March 2011, I rebuilt the saggar and included some larger pieces: hand built tiles as well as thrown lidded jars and bowls. I'd been invited to display at the Foyer Gallery in Squamish, so I decided to show entirely saggar fired forms. As well as terra sigillata, I used a flashing slip that I generally used as my trailing slip to cover the surface. This time, the packing included a great deal more salt with the sawdust, as well as more iron and manganese. The firing was sped up to take only six hours. The results were appreciably different. Terra sigillata flaked off. The finished surfaces were dirtier and smokier with lots more grey, brown and black. Some pieces had salt sticking to them. There were several breakages, especially the wide bowls. The flashing slip did not flake and still took the markings of the firing beautifully.

The third firing took place on May 1 in preparation for the Squamish show. This time I allowed the whole eight hours for the firing, as there were several large rimmed bowls and tiles in the saggar and I didn't want to risk breakage. Some pieces were coated with Paul Soldner's flashing slip which he recommends for his low salt firings. The results: no breakages, lots of variety in colour and in surface texture. The Soldner slip was a little dry for my taste, so some of the pieces were finished with a spray of Krylon satin clear acrylic.

This is a fun way to use a fossil fuel or wood burning kiln. As far as I know, an electric kiln's elements would not withstand the corrosive damage from the fumes and carbon being released during the firing. Because my

20-cubic-foot downdraft natural gas kiln is used for Cone 10 firing, all debris was vacuumed out before reusing. The kiln shelves used for saggar firing acquired a layer of salt glaze and fuming from the saggar firing, so they are now used exclusively for saggar firing.



Kay Austen will be conducting a saggar firing workshop for the Whistler Pottery Group in September. Please phone Laurie MacCallum 604.935.0540, lauriemacallum@yahoo.ca for dates and times. See www.kayausten.com

References:

Alternative Kilns and Firing Techniques. Watkins and Wandless. Lark Books, 2004

"Decorating with Volatile Materials in Saggars." Allen, Ruth. *Ceramics Monthly* article, January 1992

www.pitfire.com - very informative site. Step-by-step pictures of loading and unloading the kiln.

www.nelsonmoore.com/art/SaggarFiringWorkshopHandoutwPicsSm.pdf

www.natureofclay.com/saggar.html

www.alexmandli.com/techniques/saggar_firing.html

RECIPES

Basic Terra Sigillata (Cone 04)

1 ½ cups (205.5 g) ball clay

1 ½ cups (172.5 g) E.P.K.

2 tbsp. (30 mL) sodium silicate

Mix sodium silicate with 1 c. of warm water to dissolve. Stir the two clays together, and then add 9 c. of tap water and the dissolved sodium silicate. Stir vigorously, shake or blend. Leave at least 24 hours to settle. Most potters siphon off the top layer, use the middle layer, and discard the bottom layer. I just give it a slight stir and brush on as is. If the brush marks show, or it looks chalky, throw out and start again.

Ideal Slip (Cone 10)

Ball clay, 60%

Talc, 40%

Use a handheld blender to mix to creamy consistency. Brush on and smooth when almost dry with your hands.

Soldner Flashing Slip (Cone 04)

1 c. Gerstley Borate

2 c. Flint

3 c. E.P.K.

Mix to creamy consistency and brush on.



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Thrown *A very personal book review by Keith Rice-Jones*



Thrown: British Columbia's Apprentices of Bernard Leach and their Contemporaries

Editors: Naomi Sawada, Jana Tyner and Scott Watson. **Essays by:** Glenn Allison, Gwyn Hanssen Pigott, Michael Henry, Tam Irving, Charmian Johnson, Glenn Lewis, Lee Plested, Herbert Read, John Reeve, Naomi Sawada, Doris Shadbolt, Ian Steele, Nora Vaillant, Scott Watson, and Soetsu Yanagi.

Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, 2011

304 pages, colour, hard-cover

CDN \$60

ISBN: 978-0-88865-803-6

Thrown: *Influences and Intentions of West Coast Ceramics* was a significant exhibition in 2004 at the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, UBC. The book, *Thrown: British Columbia's Apprentices of Bernard Leach and their Contemporaries*, as well as documenting the exhibition, through a series of essays and letters, provides compelling insight into a critical and important time in B.C. ceramics. As Tam Irving in his personal reminiscences says, "We were too engaged to be concerned about a place in history" (p. 126). Certainly, this rich and informative book anchors so much about this yeasty and formative time.

The book is immediately inviting. Giving recognition to the importance and value of the rhythms of the studio, the cover depicts a torn cover of a kiln log; it is a bit like a silky and shiny version of something on the shelf of my own workshop. A series of evocative photographs take us into the book and an insightful preface by Scott Watson.

In the early 70s, not a fraction of the information for potters was available that there is today. As for so many others, Leach's

A Potters Book was essential reading for me. Beyond practical information that remains as germane as it was then, it provided a philosophical basis for work and working, and it also proposed making pots as part of a whole self-sufficient lifestyle. My own copy is full of underlining and margin notes, especially in the chapter "Towards a Standard." As was the case for all the people in the book, there was no course that gave me all the answers. We learned from a process of trial and error, from successes and failures and gleaning information wherever it could be found. I was a permanent fixture in Hiro Urakami's House of Ceramics, never seemingly getting enough pots. I bought my first pot there—a John Reeve jug.

Reading the book, I found I was amazed by all the direct and indirect connections I had to the people and events of this little corner of history, for, like Tam Irving at the time, I was just getting on with life. We are all doing that, but these pages are filled with passionate and articulate commentary by and about these people, their work, and on all the issues with which potters and indeed all craft people struggle. A useful gauge of a book for me is to note how many passages I want to read out loud to share! The section of letters (pp. 211-237) was particularly vital as it gives a window into the direct thinking and discussions taking place at the time. Whether it is John Reeve questioning his own and others integrity of purpose (even Bernard Leach and Harry Davis!) or Gwyn Hanssen-Pigott's socialist polemic to Henry Rothschild, owner of Primavera Gallery in Cambridge, England, included in a letter to Warren MacKenzie on the proletarian pot, the letters are interwoven with details of personal and daily life. The sense of reality is compelling and what makes the history so relevant. It is a pity that letters like this are rarely written these days; I do not think that our emails and short sound bytes will have the same resonance for future generations. In his essay, "Search for Integrity," Scott Watson, one of the co-curators of *Thrown* explores the starting point of the Leach influence and legacy, the philosophical dimensions of craft, the ethical pot and the art pot as part of the Art/Craft debate with broad and far reaching references. He concludes with an all-embracing positive

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Ideas echo, *Continued from Page 6*

projection for future generations, “And it may come about that the production of studio pots that preceded capitalism by thousands of years will one day succeed it” (p. 36).

These ideas echo throughout the book. Referring to Herbert Read’s “On Pottery,” in *The Meaning of Art* (1931), which is actually the following chapter in the book, Doris Shadbolt looks at Wayne Ngan’s life, work and struggle to find meaning and his own voice within this idea. Glenn Allison discusses the everyday spiritual quality of Charmian Johnson’s quiet and profound bowls that are, “centred in the affection for beautiful, well-made useful pots—pots with presence.” He ranks them “among the supreme achievements in Canadian ceramics” (p. 91).

Nora Vaillant gives a very useful chronology of the period and the culture of high-fired ware, which anchors the details and connections of B.C. pottery in the two decades 1950-1970. The reflective first-person accounts from Ian Steele, Tam Irving and Michael Henry provide not only remarkable insight into the flavour of the times and the craft scene, but also fascinating personal perspectives on their influences and motivations. All three of them evolved their own ways of operating their potteries, finding within the daily physicality and relentless pressure of large amounts of work, a balance between the rhythm of repeated forms and the individuality of each singular piece. Gwyn Hanssen-Pigott states in her polemic, prompted by a gallery’s increasing emphasis on individual pieces, “Every so-called standard ware pot must be made with maximum care and maximum awareness,” and, “there is nothing at all gained from making a thing only once” (p. 228). John Reeve writes in a letter to Glenn Lewis, “The mere fact that a pot is made quickly and simply is no excuse for the abandonment of a personal standard of integrity” (p. 212). That inescapable expression of personal commitment to the making of an individual piece comes up in relationship to Leach Pottery standard work, which was produced by a variety of potters. All would have started by making hundreds of simple forms before any were kept, only later moving on to mastering more complex forms and expanding their repertoire. The work would have been “Standard” for the public, but all the throwers

would have recognized who had made each piece. Ian Steele set up his pottery producing salt-glazed ware on Vancouver Island, and later in England. Michael Henry, after working at Glenn Lewis’ studio, had his own original kiln in East Vancouver, which Charmian Johnson inherited, and later Slug Pottery in Roberts Creek, which he had envisioned as a smaller, simpler version of the Leach pottery. I visited there as an urban and very green potter. One of the things I remember is that there didn’t appear to be any running water!

Though John Reeve was the first Canadian apprentice at the Leach pottery, throughout this intertwined story, Glenn Lewis, who was also a Leach apprentice, seems to hover as a connecting thread to many of the other players through teaching, direct support and help, or as a sounding board for ideas. However, it is from John Reeve that we get the most far-reaching and compelling commentary, whether in his letters to Glenn or in his probing interview with Naomi Sawada. He unravels a fascinating story with a wonderful sense of humour and personal, often quirky, insights and opinions of the work and personalities of many of the major players in the ceramic scene. Nothing like a little scuttlebutt! Throughout, is a constant probing of his own quest for rightness for himself in his own work. The questioning is often within the context of the Art/Craft debate. At one point he says about his pots, “One of the signs I see, which tells me that my pots are still somewhat what I want them to be, is that people are affronted by them and find it necessary to come to terms with them” (p. 225). It’s the antithesis of “nice” and something I can understand. “Nice” gives you nothing to come back to and chew around. I would certainly prefer people to hate what I do than to be indifferent.



John Reeve at Tam Irving’s studio, Fisherman’s Cove, West Vancouver, B.C., late 1970s. Courtesy of Ron Vallis. Photo: Sally Michener

The arrival of the book is touched with great sadness at the recent passing of Ian Steele. *Thrown* is broader and more personal than a mere historical record. It recognizes and celebrates these roots of studio pottery in B.C., enlivening them and making them relevant to a new generation. Whether potters, teachers, collectors or users of everyday pots, *Thrown* is essential ceramic reading. It’s available at the Gallery of BC Ceramics and the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery. 📖

Keith Rice-Jones is one half of *Wildrice Studio*, where he works alongside his wife, *Celia*, in Burnaby, B.C.. He is also a past president of the *Potters Guild of BC*. See www.wildricestudio.com

Gallery News, *Cont’d from Page 3*

fun pieces, some dramatic pieces, some delicate pieces—a bit of everything, and a lot of talent!

Speaking of talent, a **featured artist slot in the gallery has become available**. If any of you talented potters out there would like to sign up, please contact me at galleryofbcceramics@bcpotters.com. The time frame would be mid-September

to mid-October. This gives a non-juried guild member an opportunity to sell work in the gallery for a month. It’s a great opportunity to get your work out there!

Last but not least, a few words of congratulations are in order. Firstly to Ann Rusch, who had a phenomenally successful month as featured artist, we sold every piece of hers but three—an excellent achievement. And, with half the year gone, mid-year totals for artists’ sales have been calculated. Our top five sellers:

- Darrel Hancock
- Penny Birnam
- Junichi Tanaka
- Dan Severance
- Karel Peeters

I’m really thrilled that Dan has done so well. He’s still relatively new to the gallery. Dan has been represented here for just over a year, and already he’s making waves in the best way possible. People just can’t resist those perky, quirky teapots of his. Yay, Dan! 📖

Eclectic Elements

By Lina Martin-Chan, Gallery at Artisan Square

Eclectic Elements is the new exhibit at the Gallery at Artisan Square on Bowen Island. The show focuses on the theme of diversity in form and function, showcasing seven ceramists and one painter. Ceramists Bob Bates, Babette Deggan, Russell Hackney, and Jeanne Sarich are from Bowen Island. Suzy Birstein, Debra Sloan, and Suzanne Starr are all from the Lower Mainland and are all members of the PGBC. The show also includes paintings by Aileen Marie Vantomme.

The works of these artists are not only unique, but also incredibly different within the show, creating an exciting and varied atmosphere that aesthetically will be full of surprises.

Bob Bates, a well-known Bowen Island artist, delivered a large colourful (and very heavy) piece to the gallery last Sunday, a piece that will have you looking for recognizable features in its abstract and textured shape.

Also well-established artists on the island, Babette Deggan and Jeanne Sarrich have contributed more traditional pottery to the show. Babette says that pottery has been a life-long passion and her love for the art is

showcased in her work.

Jeanne's pieces are inspired by "the perfection of Sung Dynasty Chinese ceramics, the asymmetry of Momoyama Japanese ceramic objects and the quiet beauty of the Koryo and Yi Dynasty Korean work."

Russell Hackney works in slip casting, an interesting method which facilitates unique results. One of his notable achievements recently was modeling a replica of a 19th Century clock that was presented to the Queen (see PGBC newsletter article, [February 2011](#)).

Suzy Birstein's work is instantly recognizable. Her exciting and colourful sculptures combine her passions for music and culture and create a mosaic of colour and shapes.

Debra Sloan contributes clay sculptures that curve in a way that create an organic and




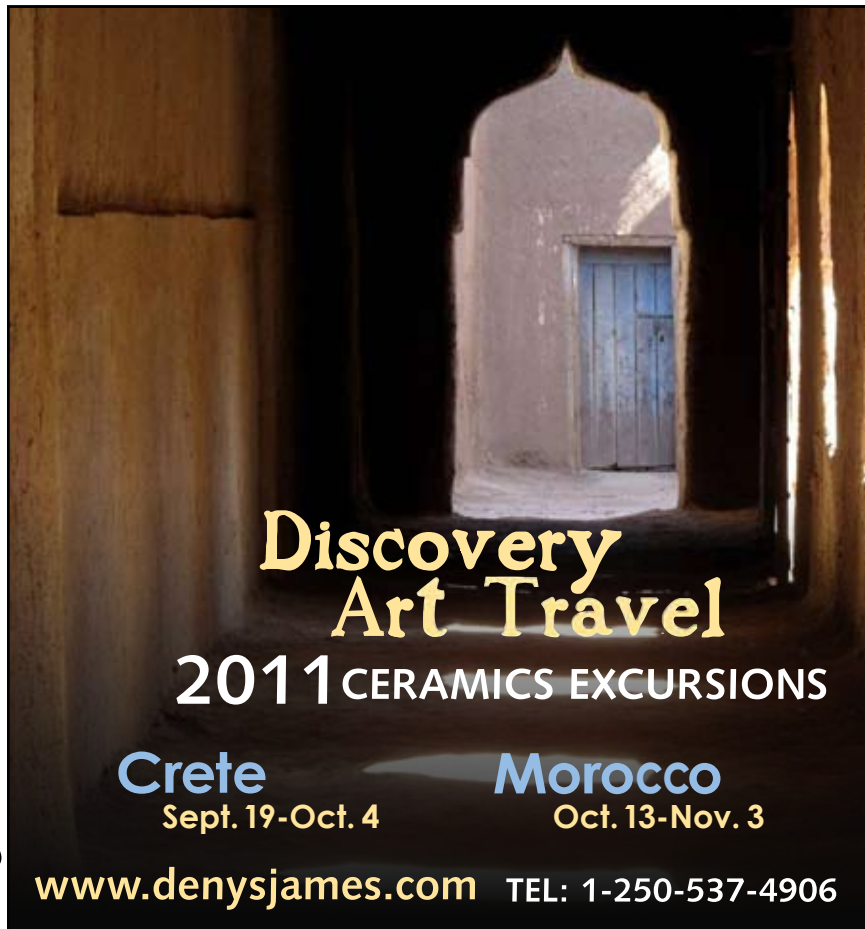
A grouping of Jeanne Sarrich's pieces.

natural aesthetic quality which makes her work special and mesmerizing.

Suzanne Starr works in clay because she "loves the search for a beautiful shape—just the right curve, the over-all balance" which results in an organic and graceful collection. She also works with smoke-fired vessels, a firing technique where the pieces are "fired in a primitive outdoor kiln to encourage marks and blushes of colour on the canvas of the vessel", resulting in fiery and natural colours.

Aileen Vantomme's paintings are an outlet for emotional release with each of her abstract works painting a vivid story.

Eclectic Elements runs until Aug. 7. Artisan Square is a short walk, drive or bus-ride from the Bowen Island ferry terminal. Come and have lunch or a glass of wine overlooking the ocean and mountains in our restaurant / bar. Bowen Island has many accomplished artists who are represented by our galleries or in their studios at [Artisan Square](#). 



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POTTERS
GUILD
of BRITISH
COLUMBIA



Untitled, by Bob Bates.

Fired Up! Contemporary Works in Clay *By Cindy Gibson*

The *Fired Up! Contemporary Works in Clay* 27th annual exhibition *Axis of Art* in Metchosin May 26 to 29 was all about the relationships at work when a piece of ceramic art is made and sold. This "axis" has art at the pivot point, with the artist, gallery and collector connected to each other via the art. In attendance to illustrate this concept were Jonathon Bancroft-Snell and Brian Cooke of London, Ont.'s Jonathon Bancroft-Snell Gallery.

Jonathon and Brian selected pieces from the impressive variety of their Canada-wide stable of gallery artists to compliment the gallery-style group display of *Fired Up!* members' work. *Fired Up!* artists also had their own individual displays.

I initially found it disappointing that some guest artists were represented by only one or two pieces. One can only imagine the logistics of mounting a short-run show with pieces from the far reaches of the country, into a space that is not usually an art gallery—a daunting job. In an ideal world there would have been more, and each would have had its own plinth and better signage.

Nevertheless, it was great to see works from old favourites and to discover a few people whose work I was not familiar with. It took time and contemplation to appreciate all there was to see.

Some of my favourites: I particularly enjoyed the delicate porcelain of Enid Legros-Wise, the gestural expressive pieces by Reed Weir, and the complex yet simple tactile work of Audrey Killoran.

Alain Bonneau and Denise Goyer were represented by several flawless pieces. I was thrilled to see *Pea Soup*. I first saw this rocking soup tureen (from its original casting) as an art student in 1979. Its appeal is timeless, and this limited (40) edition re-issue of their modern classic design was a huge success at *Fired Up!* where eight were sold. There are only four left at \$2000 and five at \$2500 (*yes, each*). The prices increase as the number of available pieces dwindles. This is the 'Axis of Art' in action.

The axis concept relied on the personality of Jonathon Bancroft-Snell to bring it to life.

He did not disappoint. Jonathon exudes enthusiasm about ceramics. Engaging individuals or small groups in conversation about the pieces, he elaborated on the messages he is so passionate about. Some highlights:

- A healthy symbiotic relationship between the 'creator' (artist), the 'connector' (gallery) and the 'collector' (buyer) is vital to the making



Jonathon Bancroft-Snell, gallery owner and ceramic art activist.



French Pea Soup, tureen by Denise Goyer and Alain Bonneau.

of art. Without buyers willing to pay a living wage to artists, no (or very little) art will be made.

- Education is key. Jonathon clearly understands the differences in time required for production work and gallery one-of-a-kind pieces. He calls them "sketches and masterworks". The sketch (i.e. a mug) helps put the worth of a major work (gallery piece) into perspective. What separates the two in price is not quality, but time. An educated buyer is a happy buyer.

- He also understands the issues facing artists in pricing work. Without promotion, prices stay low. A good gallery will put effort

Continued on Page 10, Promoting an artist

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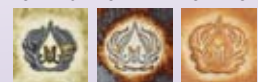


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Promoting an artist,
Continued from Page 9

into promoting an artist and educating the public on the real value of the artwork. With ceramics, the last remaining affordable art form in Canada, consumers love to hear they can start their collection with a piece as humble as a mug.

- Effective and consistent promotion takes a lot of time. This is the gallery's specialty and they work hard to earn their percentage. An artist unable to absorb a gallery commission is in effect selling their work wholesale to the public. Wholesaling to the public has the effect of keeping prices low.

A number of Bancroft-Snell Gallery regulars flew to Victoria from the east (Canada and the U.S.) to attend the show and I found it interesting to hear what they had to say about collecting Canadian ceramics. All said they found the prices 'in the west' very affordable. It was clear that they trusted Jonathon's judgment and a number of very large purchases were made.

Obviously, collectors want to spend their money wisely. Most purchase what they like, but they may rely on a knowledgeable gallery to find new talent. They also want to know about longevity. They like to see the history of a body of work, the development of style and the documentation of progress. They see the role of the gallery as necessary in this, because legitimacy of the documentation is more reliable. Published catalogues carry more weight than an artist's-own file of photos. Increasingly, purchasers of ceramics are interested in following resale value trends as well. The gallery puts it all into perspective and gives them the confidence to spend. 🏠

Cindy Gibson was the promotions coordinator for the Fired Up! show. She creates her own line of ceramics as the owner of **Belle and Dragon Pottery** in Victoria, B.C.

Fired Up! is a diverse group of professional B.C. artists who collectively promote awareness, appreciation and excellence in the ceramic arts.

Current members are: Marlene Bowman, Alan Burgess, Meg Burgess, Susan Delatour LePoidevin, Gordon Hutchens, Cathi Jefferson, Glenys Marshall-Inmann, Gary Merkel, Meira Mathison, Kinichi Shigeno, Pat Webber. **Fired Up!** is the only ceramic group in Canada to have all of its members invited to participate in the prestigious Matter of Clay III (Aug. 4 to Sept. 2, 2011) in London, Ont. For more about **Fired Up!** see www.firedup.ca

Bancroft-Snell Gallery artists represented at **Fired Up!** 2011: Bruce Cochrane RCA, Ont.; Astrid Kruse NWT; Reed Weir Nfld.; Ann Mortimer RCA, Ont.; Jane Wilson, Ont.; ZsuZsa Monostory, Ont.; Judy Blake, N.B.; Goyer Bonneau, RCA, Que.; Ann Beam, Ont.; Renee Gagnon, Que.; Mimi Cabri, RCA, Ont.; Sarah Link, RCA, Ont.; Judy Donaldson, Ont.; Audrey Killoran, Que.; Roger Kerslake, Ont.; Harlan House, RCA, Ont.; Liz Willoughby, Ont.; Sean Kuntz, Alta. For more on Jonathon Bancroft-Snell Gallery see www.jonathons.ca



Two slab pots, by Walter Dexter. The first monograph of the life and work of this influential B.C. potter will be released for Fall 2011.

One PGBC member's experience: BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Guild member Holly McKeen of Greendale Pottery & Country Guest House recently emailed us about her membership experience:

I had a customer come to my shop to buy wedding gifts two weeks ago. I always try to ask how folks find me (to understand which of my marketing efforts are paying off) and here is what she had to say. She knew that she wanted some very special pottery for her sister's wedding gift, so she went online to browse, and found the BC Potters site, where she spent quite a bit of time going through all the links to member websites. When she found mine, she knew it was just what she was looking for. She saw that I have regular showroom hours, so she came out from Burnaby that very weekend. Not only did she buy a number of pieces for her sister, but she also bought gifts for two other people at the same time, and a teapot for herself. Best of all, she was so enthused I trust she will be back, and spread the word about my studio and gallery in the country. This one new client alone covered my PGBC membership and more! Thanks for your very effective website and for linking to member sites. It works.

Cheers,
Holly McKeen



CERAMICS WORKSHOP
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Modern Eye: Craft and Design in Canada, 1940-1980

Modernism dominated craft and design in Canada from the 1940s to the 1970s. This Art Gallery of Greater Victoria exhibition explores the modernist viewpoints held by Canada's most prominent designers and craft artists working in this period.

Guest curated by Allan Collier, *Modern Eye* borrows from local and national collections and is accompanied by an illustrated exhibition catalogue. The show presents more than 100 ceramics, as well as the furniture, radios, record players and textiles that filled common spaces and that best illustrate modernist preoccupation with form, colour, texture, experimentation, functionality, and honest use of materials.

Collier explains that Canadians took inspiration from American and European trends, but also had some signatures of their own. Items chosen for the exhibition reflect an interest in new materials and techniques and an awareness of contemporary trends in abstract art and Modern architecture. The show runs until Nov. 27. <http://aggv.ca>



Ceramics Installation, Canadian Fine Crafts exhibition, Expo 67. © Government of Canada. Reproduced with the permission of the Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada (2011) Source: Library and Archives Canada/ Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition fonds/PA-212926.



Branch bottle, Avery Huyghe, Vancouver, B.C., c.1967. (Can you spot it in the Expo 67 photo at left?) Collection of the Confederation Centre Art Gallery. Purchased, 1967.



Plate, Leonard Osborne, Victoria, B.C., c.1967. Collection of the Confederation Centre Art Gallery. Purchased, 1967.

POTTERS AT WORK



POTTERS AT WORK: This newsletter feature looks at the various places where potters work. Working as a potter can be lonely or social, awkward or easy. Many words may be used to describe that feeling, but why not just send one well-composed photo? We welcome your high-resolution, sharply-focused photos of potters at work, and will include one per month in these pages.

THE IDYLIC LIFE OF A POTTER: *Adolph and Louise Schwenk at home on their patio, Penticton, B.C., 1961. Photo by Selwyn Pullan, photographer and copyright holder.*

This photo was sent in by the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria as part of its current Modern Eye exhibition (see story above), and I couldn't resist including it here as our Potters at Work feature. A potter's life for me...

Deadlines: The great motivator *By Don Jung*



Plate, 30 cm diameter, by Don Jung. Wheel thrown porcelain, sprayed with a copper red glaze and fired in reduction to Cone 10.



Don and his new pug mill.

Ahh, a deadline—it's a great motivator. I've been putting off making pots for a long time. There are just too many other things to do besides making and firing pots. Truth be told, it was more a case of procrastination and laziness. I knew I needed a push so I signed up to be a featured artist at the Gallery of BC Ceramics. If I got selected, I'd have to make something to show.

I got the news: yes, you're in for August. So the deadline looms. I was hoping to get started in the spring when it warmed up. Well, that was a bust! This spring was the coldest and wettest in 50 years. (Yeah, you heard the excuse in there didn't you?) It didn't make me want to wedge up some clay, throw some pots and get a firing going. It finally got warm enough in May, and June was just around the corner and the deadline seemed to be approaching at a faster pace. All my clay had turned into dry bricks, but I was stoked to try my new pug mill/mixer. (Another thing I got to get me going, but not as effective.) So I just opened the bags and left them out in the rain for a few weeks and they were soft enough to cut up and toss into the Bailey pug mill. It was an arm and back saver. In one afternoon, I was set with some nice fresh, soft clay.

Throwing pots was nice. You don't forget, like riding a bike, it came back pretty quick. The thing that took the time was to get the creative energies going again. Getting a good, technically well thrown pot wasn't the issue. Getting one that looked and felt good—now that was hard.

My glazes had settled and dried out. Reconstituting them and applying them again was a little roll of the dice. Past mistakes had been forgotten and repeated. Some were too thick, some too thin, some glazes ran more and some made it out of the whole process.

Spiders sure love the kiln shed. The first bisque firing took forever as moisture must have seeped into the bricks and shelves. The glaze firing sputtered a bit as well, as a pot blew up and the kiln had to be emptied, cleaned out, restacked and fired again. Other than that, the first gas firing in years actually went quite smoothly.

I guess two-thirds of the pots were okay, so the good news is I'll have some new pots to show. Gotta keep going so the creativeness starts to develop and I remember what combination of clay and glazes look great.

Thinking back on it—wow, there's a lot of work going into making pots. So why do I do it? Shear lunacy it seems, as it is with all things of pleasure. Oooh, just getting a little excited about seeing the next batch of pots. I guess it's a good thing that I have a deadline. 🙌

Don Jung lives in Vancouver and has been messing with clay for more than 15 years. He produces wheel-thrown functional ware as well as slab sculptures and hand built pieces. His current work is in porcelain and stoneware, fired to Cone 10 in a fast fire gas reduction kiln. Don is a self-taught potter and enjoys taking workshops and continuing to learn about the technical and artistic aspects to pottery. In his spare time, he works as a computer geek, plays tennis, enjoys travelling and practicing yoga with his wife Donna.

Pottery Discussion Group

Well it's been over a year now since the first discussion group meeting and each meeting has been different and fun. My favourite meeting so far was the post mortem for all our studio sales, craft fairs, etc. that was held in January. Much lively talk there!

As a lot of us are busy in the summer and I have a solo exhibition planned for September at the Gallery of BC Ceramics the next meeting won't be till Sept. 18 at 1 p.m. here in Ladysmith. Mark your calendars. Till then, potterly yours,

—Mary Fox, maryfox@shaw.ca

Book Review *By Patty Osborne*



**Slab Techniques
Ceramics Handbook**
By Jim Robison and Ian Marsh
The American Ceramics Society
ISBN 978-1408110072
6 x 9 / 112 pages / \$26.95 US

The vigorous forms and textures in the pieces that are featured in *Slab Techniques* by Jim Robison and Ian Marsh will make potters everywhere want to jump off their wheels (if they're on them) and start handbuilding. From a honey twirler to a meat tenderizer, from stamps to thumbprints, the tools for creating texture are all around us and the compelling surfaces that result from pressing things into or carving things out of clay invite us to see and feel the world differently. Add to that the voluptuous wave-like forms or strong straight lines (or both) that are features of these pieces, plus the colour that is applied at various stages in their creation, and you've got a lot of inspiration in a little book. The accompanying text is wordy and often obscures the steps it is trying to describe, but the photos and captions will tell readers almost everything they need to know to begin experimenting with their own slab creations. However, this is not a book for beginner potters: most of the pieces described are sculptural rather than functional and some require elaborate systems to support the slabs during construction. 📖

CALL FOR ENTRY, NCECA members

Deadline: Sept. 1

Don't miss the Potters Council's third juried exhibition, *The Chromatic Edge*, to be held in conjunction with NCECA 2012 in Seattle, Washington, March 28 to 30, 2012. If you're not a member, now is the time to join so you can submit an entry to this highly acclaimed show!

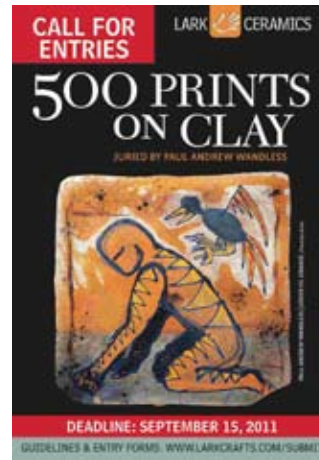
The 2012 Potters Council member exhibition in Seattle addresses not the outer limits of our work, but some of the edges that can occur within it. In ceramics, form is often seen as paramount, and the visual surface may often become subordinate. However, no form can excel without surface, and colour is one of its most evident properties. The edges and contacts between colours, and between surface and clay—can re-compose a work of art, and change our perception of the most humble of pieces. Colour can generate emotion, create meaning single-handedly, or change what we think we understand. Colour gives the edge to ceramists that use it well.

In this exhibition, Potters Council proposes to showcase work that uses colour in thoughtful, subtle, bold or innovative ways. We are challenging YOU to examine and explore the use of colour in your work. The exhibition will be visually dramatic, thought-provoking, and bring colour in from the periphery of our endeavour right to the center.

For more info and to apply: <http://ceramicartsdaily.org/potters-council-members/2012-potters-council-juried-show/>

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Deadline: Sept. 15



Lark Ceramics is publishing an exciting new ceramics book in our "500" series, and we would like you to submit images for consideration. Paul Andrew Wandless, author of *Image Transfer on Clay*, will jury *500 Prints on Clay*, a 420-page, full color survey book. This international collection will be beautifully presented and widely distributed throughout the world in Spring 2013.

We welcome outstanding ceramic works that feature image

transfer techniques. Ceramic pieces may be created with any type of clay and employ techniques including: screening, monoprinting, stenciling, stamping, relief printing, lithography, kiln prints, decals and any combination of these or variations.

Artists whose work is selected for inclusion will receive full acknowledgment in the book, a complimentary copy, and discounts on the future purchase of books. Artists retain copyright to their work. Lark accepts high-quality digital images. No entry fee is required.

Submissions must be postmarked by Sept. 15, 2011. For entry form see: <http://www.larkcrafts.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/500-Prints-on-Clay-entry-form4.pdf>.

Contact Paul Andrew Wandless for submission questions and please share this with anyone who prints on clay.

CALL FOR ARTISTS, Coquitlam

Deadline: Oct. 16

Place des Arts, a multi-disciplinary arts centre in Maillardville Coquitlam, is seeking new artists for its Christmas Boutique 2011.

Deadline for registration is Oct. 16, 2011 and the Boutique will run from Nov. 7 to Dec. 16. Sale items do not necessarily need to be Christmas themed, but can be gifts that hold year-round appeal. All works are for sale; artists set own prices, and Place des Arts retains 30% of the retail price. Artists must submit five work samples to be juried, with a \$10 application fee. The drop off dates for jurying of new artist works are Saturday, Oct. 15 and Sunday, Oct. 16. Artists will be notified of entry status by Friday, Oct. 20.

For registration forms and artists identification cards, see www.placedesarts.ca. For more info, contact gift shop coordinator, Lidia Kosznik, at 604.664.1636 ext.0 or lkosznik@placedesarts.ca.



ClayLines

Celebrating Success in our community

MARY FOX WORKSHOP, Parksville

Sept. 10; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Arrowsmith Potters Guild presents a one-day workshop on Sept. 10 with Mary Fox, a renowned ceramic artist. Whether creating decorative vessels, sculptures, or functional pottery, you'll see why Mary says her work focuses on "expressing the beauty and strength of pure form". This workshop offers a unique hands-on component where Mary will spend time in the afternoon working with each participant. There are eight wheels available for use in the guild and tables for handbuilding. The workshop is limited to 12 participants to give Mary time to spend with each person.

Cost: \$80/person for APG members, \$90/person non-member

Register in person at the Arrowsmith Potters Guild or by phone at 250.954.1872. Payment at the Guild can be made by cash, cheque, debit or credit card. Phone registration requires credit card payment. Questions? Contact Pam Straka: 250.468.1579, strakaen@telus.net

OPPORTUNITY, Vancouver

Deadline: Aug. 20

On Sunday, Sept. 18, 2011 at 2 p.m., the Craft Council of B.C. will be hosting our major fundraising gala for 2011 at Black Box Studios in Vancouver. We are looking for submission of art work to our Silent Auction, raising funds for our new program area- Education and Outreach.

For every item that is sold at auction, the donating artist will receive a cash remuneration of 50% the retail price of their work. Alternatively artists may choose to donate the 50% back to the Council and we will issue a tax-receipt for the cash amount. We sincerely hope you will be able to help us make the event a success by donating a piece of your very best work. We are aiming for a diverse selection of work varying in price points. Our goal is to raise \$25,000. Your consideration and generosity is much appreciated. Please confirm by August 20. For more information: Stephanie French, development@craftcouncilbc.ca

Unclassifieds

FOR SALE: 6 TR10 gas burners. \$100 each or all 6 for \$500. Contact Keith poplarstudio@gmail.com or 604-215-7766 (Vancouver).

FOR SALE: Skutt sitter kiln for sale in Maple Ridge. It is in excellent and ready to use condition. Skutt C 1027-240, Cone 10 electric kiln small cones and pyrometer is included, price \$900 maripottery@gmail.com

WANTED: Studio space in Vancouver, prefer east side, about 400 sq feet; or if there are other clay people who want to join/start a studio please contact Laura van der Linde, 604-709-0533, lauravanderlinde.com

Submissions for the September 2011 PGBC newsletter

Please get your articles and ads in to Melany by Aug. 20 at the latest for the Sept. 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.

WORKSHOP, Salt Spring Island

Oct. 22 & 23

The Salt Spring Island Pyro Pals (part of the Salt Spring Island Potters Guild) are very pleased to announce their upcoming workshop featuring Sumi von Dassow, one of North America's most renowned pit firing experts. You will learn how to make terra sigillata, how to apply it, and how to burnish your work in preparation for a traditional pit firing. To learn more about Sumi: www.herwheel.com. Cost: \$175 payable immediately. Contact: newleafpaper@shaw.ca.

SLIPSTITCH

Circle Craft Gallery from September 2nd - October 4th 2011
Opening Reception Thursday September 1st 2011 from 6 - 8pm



JACKIE FRILOUD *Clay*

Frioud's white porcelain line explores 'stitching' and 'wrapping' within a series of functional limited productions.

slipstitch

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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.

New Advertising Rates for 2011*:

All ads are payable upon receipt of invoice

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- 1/2 page, \$99 + HST
- 1/3 page, \$69 + HST (horizontal, vertical, or column)
- 1/4 page, \$55 + HST
- 1/6 page, \$39 + 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 \$22 extra.

Unclassified Rates:


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

**Advertising rates subject to change*

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Vancouver, BC · V6H 3R7
tel:604.669.3606 · fax: 604.669.5627
<http://www.bcpotters.com/Guild>

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 debraesloan@gmail.com 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. 

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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

Carole Henshall, Membership database
604.215.7766 · membership@bcpotters.com

- 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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