



POTTERS

BC POTTERS

Newsletter of the Potters Guild of British Columbia

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Work by Kathleen Raven.
See *DIG THIS*, the Canadian Clay Symposium Collective, Page 16.



Gallery of BC Ceramics

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Interim Gallery Manager

Carita Ho

galleryofbcceramics@bcpotters.com

604.669.3606

■ Gallery Hours as of May 1:

10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

■ Gallery Assistants

Karisa Evdokimoff, Melissa Pipe,
Janine Grant, Katherine Neil,
Cathleen Chow

staff@bcpotters.com

■ 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](#).

2014 Gallery Exhibitions

Opening receptions for each exhibition are held on the start date of the exhibition, always on a Thursday from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Gallery of BC Ceramics on Granville Island.

Oct. 2 to Nov. 2

Horsing Around: In the Year Of The Horse

Debra Sloan

December

Staff Picks

Nov. 6 to 30

Sticks and Stones

Keith Rice-Jones

Exhibition Juries

This is a reminder to members that you can now apply for an exhibition at the Gallery of BC Ceramics at any time during the year.

For more specific information on either jury, please see the guild website www.bcpotters.com/Guild/. Select "Forms" and then "Get a Form," which will take you to a page with forms. For the gallery, select "Gallery Jury Application," and for exhibitions, select "Exhibition Jury Application." The direct link is:

www.bcpotters.com/Guild/forms.php

Retail Jury Sessions for 2015

For those interested in selling a full line of work in the Gallery of BC Ceramics (other than mugs and salt and pepper shakers, for which you do not need to be juried), please note that the dates to drop off physical work, all completed paperwork, forms and fees for jury in 2015 are: **Mar. 6, June 5 and Sept. 4.** The Jury members will sit sometime the following week and letters will be sent the week thereafter. 📧



POTTERS
GUILD
of BRITISH
COLUMBIA

A Message from the Board

Once again, it was a lovely summer but the shorter days make the coming of fall undeniable. So many of us I am sure are getting ready for (dare I say it) the Christmas market season. If you are reading this in October, thank you for renewing your membership. Hopefully the rest of you will quickly follow suit this month (along with some new members).

Fall signals that time on the board when we begin to plan the events for the coming year. Next year marks the 60th Anniversary of the PGBC and to commemorate this, we have a few things lined up. We will be having two member shows, *Celebration* in April and *The Art of Tea* in September. Call for submissions are now posted on our web page here <http://www.bcpotters.com/Guild/forms.php>. As well, in conjunction with the Canadian Clay Symposium Collective one-day workshop "Dig This" (March 21), PGBC will host a dinner/reception in the evening to follow at the beautiful Shadbolt Center for the Arts.

The PGBC board has begun planning for the AGM in February and, as always, are looking for a few good people who are interested in shaping the future of this organization by joining the board of directors. New members bring fresh views and skills that help our organization remain vibrant and meaningful to its members. If you are thinking about volunteering, why not consider joining this active, dedicated team? Or, if you know someone who might be a good candidate, please contact me or any other board member for more information (contact info is on the back page). 📧

—Denise Jeffrey, President
terranme@telus.net

Gallery News

By Carita Ho

Fall at the Gallery

Calling all of our Juried and Non-Juried artists! Fall is here and the gallery is gearing up and getting ready for the holiday season. Customers of the gallery are getting their holiday purchasing done earlier and earlier every year and we want to make sure we have what they are looking for when it comes to our artists' ceramic work.

Please contact the gallery to speak with our gallery assistants, Janine, Melissa, Katherine, Karisa, or Cathleen. They will be able to help you with your inventory and what needs to be brought in for the holiday shopping season. You can reach us by phone at 604.669.3606 or by email at staff@bcpotters.com.

Current Exhibition

Horsing Around – In The Year Of The Horse, with Debra Sloan

Exhibition is on display from Oct. 2 to Nov. 2. See article [Page 12](#).

Upcoming Exhibition

Sticks and Stones, with Keith Rice-Jones

In November, come visit the gallery's exhibition space to see the amazing work of Keith Rice-Jones as he explores size and shape through his ceramic vases.

"They all start with the same size and shape of slab. It is about exploring the possible variations of the basic form and then working back against the form, using created space from cutting and re-joining and also the negative spaces. The sticks become like three-dimensional line drawings complementing the form, as does the colours, picking up on some aspect of the glazing," says Keith.

Sticks and Stones will open Nov. 6 and closes Nov. 30. The opening reception will be Thursday, Nov. 6 from 5 to 7 p.m.



Vases 1 & 2, by Keith Rice-Jones, from his exhibition *Sticks and Stones*.

John Reeve: The Unknown Craftsman *by Alex Lambley*

The following article was first published in Ceramic Review Issue 268 July/August 2014, and has been re-printed courtesy of Ceramic Review magazine and the author, Alex Lambley.

Alex Lambley sheds light on the life and practice of the late John Reeve (1929-2012).

Bernard Leach (1887-1979), acknowledging Canadian potter John Reeve's place alongside North America's ceramic greats in *Beyond East and West* (Faber and Faber, first published 1978), described Reeve as being 'so different from [American] Warren MacKenzie in temperament, yet I think of them almost together.' Concurring with Leach, MacKenzie was asked, while delivering a masterclass at the Leach Pottery in September 2013, who his 'favourite potter' was; his answer was 'John Reeve'. In addition, MacKenzie not only confessed to borrowing Reeve's bent spout for his teapots, he also referred to him as 'a great potter' whose 'pots were elemental but powerful.' Reeve was scheduled to give the masterclass with MacKenzie but died in 2012.

So, who was the elusive John Reeve? And why is there little record of his work outside of Vancouver? When I interviewed him in 2012, he joked that at various moments throughout his career he felt like the unknown craftsman due to lack of acknowledgment.

Leach apprentice

Reeve was the first of four Vancouver School of Art (VSA) students to apprentice at the Leach Pottery, St. Ives. He was there from 1958-61, revisiting on numerous occasions.

On completing his apprenticeship, Reeve embarked on an unlikely career as a peripatetic potter, on which he commented, 'It was a very awkward and difficult way to be a potter but there was a lot of pleasure in it for me and a lot of meeting of interesting people.'¹ He worked at myriad potteries and art schools across England, Canada, and the USA, such as Aylesford Pottery, Aylesford, England; Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, Halifax, Canada; University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA; Big Creek Pottery, Davenport, California, USA; and Castle Clay, Denver, Colorado, USA, among others.

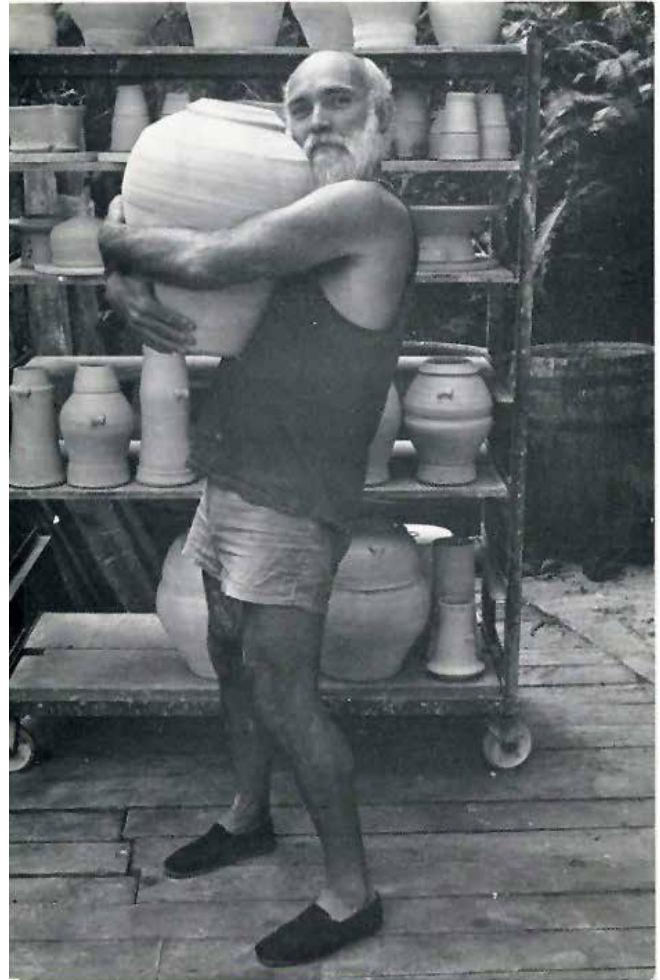
From Reeve's perspective, his journey began at the Leach Pottery, where he said, 'The intention was not to train people to be country potters who could throw pots, but for artists to create their own pots. It was about an artist as potter.'²

A distinct style

When Reeve left St. Ives, he hoped to train with Shōji Hamada (1894-1978) in Japan. However, he was unable to secure the funds, instead returning to Vancouver where he taught pottery at the University of British Columbia. Here he began to develop his own distinct style, more in keeping with Hamada than Leach. By not preparing detailed drawings, Reeve allowed the clay greater participation in the making process, which loosened his work.

Establishing a pottery

In the early 1960s the demand for handmade pottery in Vancouver was rising but not enough to sustain a professional potter and his family; evidence being Reeve's decision in 1963 to return to England, via MacKenzie's pottery in Stillwater, Minnesota. It was at this point



ABOVE: John Reeve at Tam Irving's studio, Fisherman's Cove, West Vancouver, B.C., late 1970s. Courtesy of Ron Vallis. Photo: Sally Michener. **BELOW:** This and all other works pictured throughout are by John Reeve. Images courtesy of the Belkin Gallery, Vancouver.



Continued on Page 5

that Reeve first attempted to establish a studio, the Longlands Pottery, Hennock, Devon, depicted by Reeve as 'a thirty-acre farm and a beautiful big house that'd been built in 1450.'³ Reeve said, 'People came up from the [Leach] pottery and from other places, I had lots of visitors once it was discovered that I was there.'⁴ MacKenzie, Canadians Gerald Gilbert (1936-2009) and Glenn Lewis, Dane Jørgen Hansen, and American Clary Illian spent time there. Reeve said he 'was interested in making special objects. Even though there was a row of cups or a row of plates, they had to have some special quality that made them better to use and could improve the quality of life of the person who would use them... This notion was a driving force and it connected with Leach and with Japanese and Oriental culture...'⁵

Reeve said that he managed to create 'a pretty functional pottery... to build a kiln and... had a big showroom and people came and bought pots, but not a lot...'⁶ He therefore, while at Longlands, taught at Farnham School of Art (now part of the University of the Creative Arts), alongside Henry Hammond (1914-1986) and Paul Barron (1917-1983), and worked as an external assessor at Harrow School of Art, with Michael Casson (1925-2003), Victor Margrie, Colin Pearson (1923-2007), and Walter Keeler.

Porcelain pioneer

During this period Reeve became captivated by porcelain, creating new work that either had traces of his earlier forms or echoed traditional porcelain ware.

Due to the lack of availability of porcelain clay bodies, Reeve was forced to produce his own; he was one of just a few potters who were pioneering the use of porcelain in studio potteries at that time. He stated, 'When I first began to make porcelain, I used this recipe:

- 56 china clay (Grolleg)
- 28 feldspar
- 14 quartz
- 2 bentonite

'It worked very well. My [Longlands] kiln had an extremely long soaking period above Cone 8, and this porcelain fired to Cone 10 produced very good qualities – the pots were white, translucent, had a good glaze fit with no crazing, and a degree of distortion, which I



John Reeve at Longlands, Hennock, Devon, mid-1960s. Collection of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery Archives.

found more pleasant than alarming.'⁷

Reeve went on to perfect his porcelain, writing numerous articles that revealed the outcome of hours of experimentation.

Return to Leach Pottery

In 1971, despite growing recognition, for family reasons Reeve chose to go back to British Columbia, securing a teaching post at VSA. Responding to studio pottery's professionalisation, he described the department as 'much bigger than when I was a student... and much more ambitious.'⁸ Yet, in 1973, an invitation came from Bernard and Janet Leach (1918-1997) asking Reeve to act as Bernard's successor. Bernard had relocated to his Porthmeor flat, a consequence of his failing eyesight. Reeve promptly left for England.

Regrettably, due to a misunderstanding regarding Reeve's role, the post was short-lived and he headed back to British Columbia soon after he arrived. He was under the impression that he would replace Bernard, working from his old studio, creating his own unique pieces while overseeing the aesthetic and production qualities of the Leach Pottery standard ware. In reality, Janet was not prepared to hand over the responsibility.

Cold Mountain

Reeve tried again to start a pottery, finding a twenty-acre plot of land in Robert's Creek, in rural British Columbia, which he described as being 'all wooded and it was just beautiful.'⁹ He named it 'Cold Mountain Pottery', after the ninth-century Chinese poet Han-Shan or Cold Mountain.

Reeve said of Han-Shan's poems, 'They were wonderful poems that would express the oriental view of the old man who lived in the mountains, meditated and led a life separated from the turmoil of the world.'¹⁰

The wayfaring nature of Reeve's existence caused the collapse of his family, and with that his dreams of Cold Mountain. Shortly after, recognising the strength and discipline necessary to become a master





potter, he wrote, 'It requires special abilities, a strong sense of purpose, and a delicate balance to maintain such simplicity and directness of purpose in the midst of contemporary distractions.'¹¹

The desert

On leaving Robert's Creek, Reeve criss-crossed North America giving workshops and taking up teaching posts. He also underwent extensive therapy to overcome his restless past.

Reeve's Vase, made in the early 1980s is a wonderful curvaceous example of his later work. It has the elegance that comes with porcelain's purity yet contains his loose approach to making. Indeed it is figurative; its form is a response to Reeve undertaking 'sitting therapy' in the Californian desert.

Reeve arrived in New Mexico in the late 1980s, finally settling in Abiquiu. Here, not only did he make pots in his studio but he also contributed to, and was instrumental in establishing, Santa Fe Clay. Run by Avra Leodas, Santa Fe Clay is both a ceramic supply business and an education centre with an established summer workshop programme where masters in the field teach week-long intensive courses. Leodas opened a gallery as part of the offer in 1998, which showcases the work of significant American ceramists.

Perhaps, it was out in the high desert surrounded by the mountains of New Mexico that Reeve finally escaped 'from the turmoil of the world.' 📌

Notes:

1 John Reeve interviewed by Alex Lambley, 2012.

2 John Reeve, quoted in Scott Watson (Ed), *Thrown: British Columbia's Apprentices of Bernard Leach and their Contemporaries* (Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, University of British Columbia, 2011) p173.

3 Reeve interviewed by Lambley, 2012.

4 *ibid.*

5 Reeve, quoted in Watson (Ed), *Thrown*, p181.

6 Reeve interviewed by Lambley, 2012.

7 *John Reeve, Porcelain* (pamphlet comprising a number of published articles), 1975.

8 Reeve interviewed by Lambley, 2012.

9 *ibid.*

10 Reeve, quoted in Watson (Ed), *Thrown*, p185.

11 John Reeve, 'Warren MacKenzie and the Straight Pot', in *Craft Horizons*, June 1976.

Alex Lambley is a Doctoral Candidate/Associate Lecturer at Falmouth University and Research Fellow at the Leach Pottery. Email alex@leachpottery.com.

Visit www.ceramicreview.com to purchase the issue of *Ceramics Review* in which this article originally appeared or to subscribe.

A Visit with Shoji Hamada *by Joan Beck*

In 1970, I met Shoji Hamada and his family and neighbours. How did this happen?

My husband, Reg, and I had decided to travel to India on an around the world trip after he had finished his Master of Science Degree. I finished my teaching position that June and off we went.

My husband is also an amateur radio operator and wanted to visit ham radio friends and I wanted to visit potters and potteries. A friend joined us on her way to Australia and New Zealand. Reg went on to visit radio friends in Hong Kong and Lise and I went to Japan. We travelled with backpacks and a tent around northern Japan and then went to the potters' village of Mashiko where Shoji Hamada lived. Hamada, a Japanese potter declared a Living National Treasure of Japan, was a friend of the British potter Bernard Leach. The two travelled throughout the USA in the 1950s.

I had taken pottery classes at The Ross-Huyghe School of Pottery and had read books about Hamada and Mashiko. Knowing very little about pottery, I decided to visit Mashiko and maybe see Hamada's pottery. Why not?

We took a bus to the outskirts of Mashiko and the bus driver pointed off into the distance. We started through the paddies saying "Hamada-san?" to everyone we passed and they pointed the way. We finally reached the gate house. Gathering up our courage we walked



Joan Beck and Shoji Hamada, 1970.

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Ceramics

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Continuing Pottery

Wednesdays, September 24 to November 26, 7pm – 9:30pm
Thursdays, September 25 to November 27, 9:30am – 12pm

Kiln Operations Workshop

Learn all about electric kiln operations from the kiln manager at the Surrey Art Gallery. Topics include trigger adjustments, kiln loading, re-wiring, firing schedules, cones, troubleshooting, and safety.
Sunday, November 30, 2pm – 4:30pm



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up the driveway where we met Hamada's wife and daughter. They showed us around and when we asked about tenting space in the area. The daughter (just back from university in the USA) said it would be better if we stayed with them. They said that we should leave our very big packsacks and tour the village coming back in time for dinner. We couldn't believe it.

When we came back Japanese beds had been set up on the floor of Hamada's museum. With a, "Please be careful of the treasures" we were left to wander the gardens. We saw the large kilns, the studio and workers there throwing pots and making press-mold jars.

At supper we met Hamada. I wish I could remember every word, but I can't. He did explain about the food we were eating. He was a very kind man and was interested in where we lived and our travel plans after Japan.

He also said the next day his son Shinsaku would take us on a tour of the Mashiko potteries.

After a restful sleep in the museum, I awoke and wandered around the garden and at the studio, I heard someone working. It

was Hamada having a quiet work time on his own. He talked about his work and the gallery show he was soon to have in the city of Utsunomiya at a friend's Steak House.

He explained about the Japanese wheel. I was used to a kick wheel. He also said that he would like to give me a pot but he realized it would be too hard for me to carry it in my backpack. I was too shy to say I would find some way to look after it. I've given myself many kicks for that over the years.

Later that morning we toured all the potteries in Mashiko. When Lise and I thanked Hamada's son for taking time to show us around he thanked us for giving him an excuse to visit all the studios and workshops, something he couldn't normally do.

We ended the tour at a potter next door, Shimaoka-san, a student of Hamada and also a Living National Treasure. While we all drank tea, Tatsuzo Shimaoka explained how his father was a rope maker and tied many different patterns into the rope. Shimaoka learned this trade and used the rope patterns wound onto a paddle to decorate his pottery.

After the tour and a lovely almost Canadian-type lunch (we had peanut butter) we learned the plan for us was to go with Shimaoka's car and driver to Utsunomiya where we would meet Hamada and say good bye.

Hamada was at the Steak House discussing the show, and he introduced us to the men with him. Again we were fed, steak this time (food for the wealthy I was later told) and the next morning we were taken to the train going to Tokyo.

It was a wonderful experience. Did it make me a better potter? I wish! But I do have some fabulous memories.

Before I left Mashiko Hamada told me about a potter who owned Delhi Blue Pottery in New Delhi, India but that is another story.

Joan Beck lives in Williams Lake and has been making pots since 1964. She's a member of the Cariboo Potters Guild, and wrote about a workshop with PGBC member Gillian McMillan for last month's newsletter. See more about Joan on her website here <http://www.beckspottery.com/>.

**Greenbarn's Hour of Operation
are CHANGING!**

Beginning in January 2015, Greenbarn will
update its hours to the following schedule:

Saturday:	Closed (NEW)
Sunday:	Closed
Monday:	Open: 8:30-5 (NEW)
Tuesday:	Open: 8:30-5
Wednesday:	Open: 8:30-5
Thursday:	Open: 8:30-5
Friday:	Open: 8:30-5

Please give us a call if you have
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Monday Morning Eye Candy



Each Monday on her blog, *Musing About Mud*, potter Carole Epp posts images of ceramic artists' work that has caught her eye. Barbara Fiore's work (above) is one of her recent posts. See more of Barbara's work here www.barbarafiore.com. Take a look at Carole's blog here <http://musingaboutmud.blogspot.ca>. It's always a treat!

Horses and Riders at the Leach Pottery

by Debra Sloan

In 2009, Phyllis Schwartz instigated publishing a book, *Seeking the Nuance* [*1], featuring glaze cards and recipes belonging to Glenn Lewis, former Leach apprentice 1961-63. Glenn composed the recipes and cards while teaching ceramics at the UBC Education Faculty in the early 70s. (Glenn was one of six B.C. potters who studied with Leach from the 50s to the 70s. [*2]) I assisted Phyllis with editing and we all wrote about the historical context. In 2011, Alex Lambley, doctoral candidate at the Leach Pottery, found *Seeking the Nuance* online and contacted me. Consequently she spent a month in Vancouver at my home in 2012, interviewing potters who had studied with or been influenced by Bernard Leach. Upon Alex's return to St Ives, Julia Twomlow, Director of the Leach Pottery, invited Glenn Lewis for a return residency in 2013. Julia also invited me to be artist in residence, as a sculptor, for the month of April 2014. She asked me to respond to and research a rare horse and rider sculpture, *Returning From Work*, made by Bernard Leach in the late 20s or early 30s. This sculpture is on a long-term loan and is displayed in the Cube Gallery, part of the Leach Pottery complex.



Returning from Work, Bernard Leach Earthenware, 1930.

Leach had designed *Returning From Work* to be cemented onto a clay ridge tile. It had been placed on a roof in Carbis Bay for many years and was removed by its present owner in 1994. The sculpture was Leach's own response to traditional earthenware horse and rider ridge tiles that up until the early 20th century could occasionally be found on roofs in the western counties. In England, inspiration for horse and rider images can be traced back to the Wuoton and his hell-horses. As centuries passed other historic horse and riders images - St George, crusaders, pilgrims, Jacobean messengers and Chevaliers - have been referred to. Images of roof finials can be found in the Bayeux Tapestries. To this day a roof-thatcher will attach a straw figure, usually a bird, when the roof is completed. Brick chimneys came into use from the 16 to the 18th centuries, and large clay ridge tiles were fashioned to cover the defunct smoke holes that had been situated in the centre of roofs. More elaborate equestrian tiles would grace the finer homes and manors.



17th century equestrian roof tile, Royal Cornwall Museum. Donated by RJ Noall.

When I arrived in St. Ives, I was able to study Leach's horse and rider tile, *Returning From Work* in the Cube Gallery. I was also told that Leach might have made three other equestrian tiles, still on roofs of homes near the Pottery. I eventually found all three, and Matt Tyas, a doctoral candidate working at the Leach, photographed them. I visited the St Ives Archives, the St Ives Museum, and Alex took me to interview the curator, Sarah Lloyd-Durrant, at the Royal Cornwall Museum in Truro. There we saw a 15th century equestrian tile, and two 17th century tiles that had been donated to the RCM by R. J. Noall, who had been a friend of Leach. Matt put me in contact with Peter Smith, who as well as being a very respected potter in the UK, is an expert in early English ceramics, and has written books and studies on wood firing, and published *The First Leach Climbing Kiln* in 2011. After looking closely at the photographs and at the Leach sculpture in the Cube Gallery, we all agreed that the equestrian tiles on the roofs were not made by Leach. They were made in an entirely different manner and they were not as old or eroded as those in the Royal Cornwall Museum.

Peter recognized their ash glazes and the clays as being similar to what had been used in the local roofing potteries. He was also able to date the Leach piece by its mark and by the type of earthenware clay, which was in use at the Leach Pottery up until 1935.



Going to Work, Bernard Leach, Earthenware, 1930. Courtesy of St Ives Archives. [*3]

During the 1920s Leach had been a member of a group called the Old Cornwall Society Project, dedicated to preserving regional history. After locating the three equestrian tiles near the Leach Pottery, we realized that these tiles had all been placed on the roofs of homes of society members. We can only speculate that the group commissioned the traditional tiles to support the local potteries that were still active in Cornwall at that time. Leach would have seen the 17th century tiles in his friend's collections that were later donated to the Royal Cornwall Museum. These factors combined with his interest in medieval pottery, may have contributed to Leach attempting to make his own versions of equestrian tiles. Very little else is known about Leach's sculptures and so far only one companion piece, *Going to Work*, has been confirmed.



Ayr Manor Horseman, 1920s. Photo by Matt Tyas.

Leach's sculptures are made in a modern spirit, intended to depict individualism. They are very unlike, in manner and manufacture, to the traditional equestrian tiles, which, though charming and spritely in their modeling, are anonymous and impersonal.

I was at the Leach Pottery for the month of April, and was the first occupant of the new spacious studio situated on the ground floor of the Beagle Cross Residence, the house built just after WWII by Michael and Bernard Leach for Michael's family. The Leach Pottery re-acquired Beagle Cross in 2010. It had been used as a B&B for a religious group in the intervening years. The Beagle Cross is situated about 50 feet from the kiln sheds and old studio, and now houses four residents with bedrooms, kitchen and bathrooms, on the top floor, and below is the new studio - also used for weekly children's classes. Beside the new studio will be a library and study centre, now under construction.

During my residency I was able to observe the standard ware being made by the production team presently under the supervision of Roelof Uys. There was one apprentice, and two other professional potters. At the end of my residency, the Pottery was in the process of interviewing nine candidates shortlisted from 54 applicants, for one apprentice position. A local business, Seasalt, was providing the Pottery with a bursary to support the new apprentice. This step and involvement with activities, such as the 'On the Cornwall Ceramics



Hamada Comes to the Leach, 2014, Debra Sloan. Photo by Matt Tyas.

Trail', children and adult classes, and public lectures, have started the reintegration of the Leach Pottery with the community.

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of a residency is exposing the artist to interactive experience. The potters and staff were very welcoming, though bemused by the project, and I was given much practical assistance. Prior to arriving in St Ives, I experimented with various technical problems concerning fitting the horses to a standardized ridge tile, but I wanted to leave my 'response' open. The only equestrian tile I had ever seen was an image of the Leach sculpture, and I had no idea of its historical context at that time. I did not worry about elaborate surfaces and glazing, as these pieces were intended for roofs, and the main concerns would be profile and form. Upon arriving I took samples of all the clays available in the Pottery and made sigalattas. For my first piece, I used my own imagery, and the horse ended up with a baby/proto human rider - leaving me pretty nervous about where this 'response' was headed. Matt Tyas took one look at the rider and commented that it looked like Hamada, and in that instant I knew what I wanted to do.

I did not want to make anonymous riders, like the traditional ridge tiles, nor did I want to express a state of being, as Leach did. Instead, I wanted to respond to where I was and to make the horse and rider of those who had founded and shaped the Leach Pottery - Bernard Leach, Shoji Hamada and Janet Leach, and Matt's comment was all I needed. I also made the ultimate Canadian horseman - the Mountie, and two anonymous horsemen. Everything was made in 19 intense days. In order for the pieces to be ready for a gas firing at the end of the four weeks, I had to nurse each piece through a bisque as soon as it was finished - while still leather hard - in a small electric kiln in my studio. (Only one out of the eight, blew.) During those weeks I was emailing people at night, trying to find out more about the Leach horseman sculptures and the traditional roof tiles. I remain in contact with Julia, Alex, Peter and Matt, as many questions are unanswered, and the research is still underway.

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Continued from Page 10



TOP: *Visitors From Across the Pond*, 2012 – 2014 exhibition. Photo by Matt Tyas.
ABOVE: *Janet at the Leach*, 2014, by Debra Sloan.

Matt Tyas curated an exhibition *Visitors From Across the Pond*, 2012 – 2014 - Debra Sloan, Warren Mackenzie, Glenn Lewis, Jeff Oestreich, in the Leach Gallery.

Alex Lambley arranged that I give a talk at the Pottery on the research about the Leach sculptures, and I included a presentation about contemporary ceramics being made in British Columbia.

These recent residencies and exhibitions continue the fifty-four years of exchange between potters in British Columbia and the Leach Pottery. This fruitful connection has shaped many ceramic practices in British Columbia, and perhaps, conversely, after each visit some trace of the B.C. ceramic culture lingers at the Leach. I am honoured to have worked at the Leach Pottery, and thank Julia for the invitation. I am the first sculptor in residence at the Leach Pottery since its founding in 1920, and have been deeply enriched by the experience. 📷

I would like to gratefully acknowledge FUSION, the Ontario Clay and Glass Association for their Scholarship awarded in support of my residency.

NOTES:

*1 - Glenn Lewis, *Seeking the Nuance*, eds. Phyllis Schwartz and Debra Sloan (Vancouver: Potters Guild of British Columbia, 2010).

*2 - Scott Watson, Naomi Sawada and Jana Tyner, eds., *Thrown: British Columbia's Apprentices of Bernard Leach and Their Contemporaries* (Vancouver: Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, University of British Columbia, 2009).

*3 - image courtesy of St Ives Archive, and a similar image can also be seen in the 1978 publication *The Art of Bernard Leach* edited by Carol Hogben.

See [PGBC Newsletter April 2014](#) for article about Glenn Lewis' residency and exhibition, *Picturing Alchemy*

More Images of the Leach pottery and the residency can be found at www.debrasloan.com.

For more information about residencies and apprenticeships, www.leachpottery.com.

Horsing Around *by Debra Sloan*



As horse in garden



Ode to Leach, Debra Sloan, 2014



Horsing Around, Debra Sloan, 2014

My first passion was imagining that I could run as fast as a horse, as what I really liked to do was run about, all the time, and it seemed four legs would make that even more fun. I memorized all the horse breeds, read any book about a horse that could be found – and there are a lot of those – and drew horses obsessively throughout primary school. I was never happy with my drawings – they seemed so flat. I was terrified of riding.

Horses were abandoned when I turned 13. I kept thinking that one day I would return to the idea of horses – and re-discover them in form. So when Julia Twomlow, the director of the Leach Pottery, in St. Ives, invited me to be artist in residence, with the specific task of researching and responding to a horse and rider earthenware sculpture, made by Bernard Leach in the late 1920s – it seemed like a match made in heaven. Please see accompanying article in this newsletter (*Horses and Riders at the Leach Pottery*, [Pages 9-11](#)) for images and story.

This exhibition has given me the perfect opportunity to continue with the theme of horse and rider. The horse is no longer the essential people-mover that was, and the close connection has been lost. Imagine having an animate relationship with your transporter, beyond the mechanic. The horse has a beautiful form that is perfect for indicating strength and motion and motion means change, good and bad. The horse is not a predictable animal, it does not always go where we direct. My figures have become 'proto-human', neither female nor male, neither adult nor baby. They are fun to make – bodies composed of many fulsome shapes, and there is even more enjoyment when I interlock their shapes with the horses'. The human presence increases emotional range, and the interaction of human and animal adds narrative and metaphor.

I have used three different clays for this exhibition – mid-range red clay, and two Cone 10 reduction clays, a gray throwing clay and a porcelain. I have used earthenware



Swept Along, Debra Sloan, 2014

slips on all three clays – to avoid confusion and to migrate technologies. I could go on about wobbly legs and shrinkage; however the greatest challenge I always face seems to be how to treat the surface. The surface is an extension of the idea or intention behind the work, and that is where many of my pieces fail – trying to 'paint' on top of form and make it work visually and intellectually. What ever I do to a surface – landscape, pattern, imagery – I try to avoid turning it into a predictable

DEBRA SLOAN
HORSING AROUND - IN THE YEAR OF THE HORSE

OCT 2 - NOV 2, 2014
Opening Reception: October 2, 5 - 7 pm

Gallery of BC Ceramics
Operated by the Potters Guild of British Columbia
1359 Cartwright Street, Granville Island
Vancouver BC V6H 3R7 Canada
604 669 3606 | staff@bcpottery.com

solution that simply covers space. What I am attempting to do is marshal attributes of the ceramic process to describe notions that seem to matter to me. An object shares space with us, and I try to make specific objects that can contain and will carry those tacit notions – unspoken understandings and memories. I try to observe these understandings in such a way as to posit questions about our common experience. 📍

Studio Visit: Kathleen Tennock

by Sam Knopp

PGBC Studio Visits is interested in interviewing and spreading the word about the amazing ceramic artists that call our province home. Thoughts, suggestions and volunteers for future articles are welcome so please contact us if you want to be involved.

Sam

knopp.sam@gmail.com

Heading out of the Lower Mainland this month, I got to visit with PGBC member Kathleen Tennock who makes her home and studio in Whistler. The contrast between her refined and modern forms with the dramatic surface effects of the naked-raku process creates work that is both quiet and complex and as a newer addition to the Gallery of BC Ceramics her work has quickly become one of my favourites! I picked an ideal time (admittedly for me) to visit, as she was busy in the throes making and stockpiling work for Vancouver's IDS West Show (Sept. 25 – 28), and her studio, a beautifully converted garage, was full of pieces with a lingering aroma of smoke.



Pieces in process. Dipped in a slip that flakes off during the raku firing to reveal a textured naked surface.

Five adjectives to describe your work?

Organic, Elemental, Minimalistic, Quiet, Raw

When did you first start working in ceramics?

I started working primarily in clay when I moved to Canada 20 years ago and joined a local community studio. I was hooked right from Day One.

What sort of training did you have?

I studied both Fine Art and Graphic design at the Johannesburg Art Foundation. It is during my time at the Foundation that I developed my love for primitive art and where I learned the power of a single gesture or form, simplified to its most basic state, a strong characteristic of all primitive works of art and something that I am always striving for in my work today. I feel lucky to have had such broad training prior to working with clay. I believe that my time spent painting, drawing and designing, has given me a greater understanding of the balance of form, tone and texture. Unfortunately, as with a lot of us, a lot of my time studying was wasted on my youth and I often wish I had the luxury to re-live those years today.

Johannesburg, South Africa, to Whistler, Canada, definitely feels like a switch! How do you think your work has changed from then your upbringing to your current setting?

I really like to think that you can still see my African roots in my work. However, when I think of Africa and the African people I think of rich colour and powerful rhythms. My work has definitely become more West Coast - quiet and subdued. I think the primitive shapes and raw texture of my work draw from African art and culture, but living in and around Vancouver has exposed me to Asian art and that has had an influence on my work. I have great admiration for the way the Japanese culture has mastered the art of simplicity. They have a way

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Continued on Page 14

to know exactly what is essential and do away with everything else. Also living on the West Coast and now the mountains of Whistler have undoubtedly influenced my work.

Have you been able to support yourself through your practice alone?

I have always had a "real job". Two years ago, the pendulum shifted and now my main source of income comes from selling my work... a very good feeling. I do feel that even though I am often resentful of my job taking me away from what I really want to be doing, it also gives me the freedom to experiment by taking away some of the pressure of having to sell everything I make. I currently only work one-day-a-week outside of my studio.

What methods do you use to sell, market and exhibit your work? Any thoughts on these?

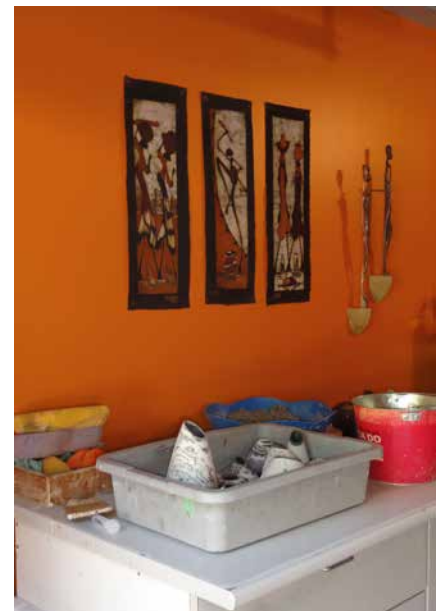
I know what I should be doing (social media, building an online presence and an e-mail list, seeking out commissions) but I don't do any of those things, for the same reasons as I don't do any commissioned work, because it changes the energy around the way I work. One thing I have learned from the African culture is that, what we make with our hands serves us in many different ways than just the end result. In North America we tend to want to quantify our time spent on any given project. My work does not owe me anything, because it has given to me what I need from it before it is even completed. If I take on a commissioned work, for some reason all of that changes and that piece owes me something.....sounds a little strange but it is true!

That is definitely a tricky a balance, making our art practices viable but also not losing the love of what we do! I noticed you've participated in quite a few different craft fairs over the years. How do you find that balance and any advice to others on craft fairs/design shows?

Pick a show that fits what you sell. Some shows people are coming to buy for themselves and while others are more gift orientated, like around the holidays, and often with those people seem to be inclined to spend a little less - so make sure do your research and that your price-point will fit the customers. One of the dangers I'm leery of (with doing too many shows) is that you soon discover what sells and what doesn't and before you know it you have sold your soul to the consumer and have



LEFT: Finished pieces, by Kathleen Tennock. Photo by Sarah Mickel. RIGHT: African batiks on the wall for inspiration and pots fresh from the pit.



lost all creativity....but strangely enough you can pay your bills for the first time in years. It is a strange dangerous beast!

You are working now mostly with the naked-raku process – a technique that involves slip that cracks and falls off during the firing to reveal “naked” surface of the clay underneath. When did you discover this firing process and what draws you to this method?

I have always worked with primitive firing methods like sawdust firing and pit firing. I love the texture of the raw clay and the tactile feel of a burnished piece. I love the relationship that Naked Raku has with natural stone both in appearance and texture. I want my work to invite touch. Even though I don't make functional pieces it is very important to me how my work fits in someones hand, the way someone would pick up a smooth or a textured stone to feel the surface. I started working with Naked Raku five years ago when a fellow potter, Laurie MacCallum, introduced me to the technique. I have been experimenting ever since.

Raku is definitely one of the more spontaneous methods, for better or worse. How do you mitigate loss and also embrace process?

I often have to stop myself from wanting to force the mark as the spontaneity of the method is always what makes for the best piece. It is without a doubt a lesson in learning how to let go! My biggest challenge at present is my clay body. Most clays that can

withstand the thermal shock of Naked Raku do not fire as white as I would like and so I have negotiate my aesthetic tastes with the technical realities and accept that some clay bodies will mean up to 60% loss in a firing! But the ones that make it are worth it.

You talk much about being inspired by primitive art and pots. Traditional African and Mexican pottery are influences for you but what about contemporary? Any artists you draw inspiration from?

Big fan of David Roberts, Magdalene Odundo and Gabriele Koch.

What is your advice to those wanting to make a go of it as an artist? What should they be prepared for?

Try not to keep too close track of the time you spend on your art. Instead, enjoy every moment of it. That way the rest becomes less important, you become better at what you do and everything else will fall into place. 📌

To see more of Kathleen's work visit her website www.kathleentennock.com, or get in touch with the Whistler Pottery Club where Kathleen is both a member and instructor, <http://whistlerpotteryclub.com>.

PICTURE THIS! Ceramics and Pictorial Spaces by Amy Gogarty

The North-West Ceramics Foundation is pleased to announce **Paul Mathieu** as its featured speaker at a **free public lecture Thursday, Oct. 23, at 7:30 p.m.** The lecture will be held in Room 245 in the North Building of Emily Carr University of Art + Design (1399 Johnston Street, Granville Island, Vancouver). All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Paul Mathieu is known nationally and internationally as much for his provocative ceramics as his writings, which constitute a significant contribution to contemporary craft theory. Born in Bouchette, Qué., in 1954, Mathieu studied in Montréal, Calgary, Stoke-on-Trent and Banff prior to attending SFSU in San Francisco, where he received an MA, and UCLA in Los Angeles, where he received his MFA in 1987. Currently on faculty at Emily Carr University, he has participated in residencies at the Banff Centre, The Tama Art Studios in Machida, Japan, the International Ceramics Studio in Kecskemet, Hungary and at the San Bao International Ceramics Studio in Jingdezhen, China. Mathieu has received many awards including *Le Grand prix des métiers d'art du Québec* in 1985; the Chalmers Award in Crafts in 2000 and the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts (Fine Craft) in 2007. His work is in numerous public collections including The Montreal Museum of Decorative Arts, The Gardiner Museum for Ceramic Art; The Shigaraki Museum for Contemporary Ceramic Art; The Victoria and Albert Museum and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

An important theorist and commentator on contemporary ceramics, Mathieu describes his work as "an investigation of the role and function of ceramics within culture in general and art in particular." He considers ceramics (and pottery) to be "an independent, autonomous and specific art form." In addition to numerous essays and reviews, he is the author of *Sexpots: Eroticism in Ceramics*,



Paul Mathieu, *Abu ghraib Flower Vase*, 2004, Porcelain, 38 cm h.

published in 2003 by A&C Black, and *The Art of the Future: 14 essays on Ceramics*, which is available online free of charge with texts and images at www.paulmathieu.ca/theartofthefuture.

Mathieu's lecture will expand on material from "The Narrative Esthetics: Framing and Fiction," in *The Art of the Future*. He asserts that "function and decoration; form and surface; object and image" come together uniquely in ceramics not as "opposition or polarity but in continuity and symbiosis." He will trace the narrative impulse through figurative motifs on Attic Greek pottery, Italian maiolica and Asian ceramics, in the process teasing out numerous insights relating

to perception, framing and relationships between ceramics and the arts of photography, painting, printmaking and sculpture. He will discuss a number of contemporary ceramic artists who both extend and contest conventions of representation found on historical ceramics. 📷

"PICTURE THIS: Ceramics and Pictorial Spaces" will take place Thursday, Oct. 23, at 7:30 in Room 245 in the North Building of Emily Carr University. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

For more information on Paul Mathieu, please see his website at www.paulmathieu.ca.

Mia Muse

PRELUDE:
Aug. 22 - 28

CERAMICS WORKSHOP

with **SUZY BIRSTEIN**

on Greek island paradise Skopelos,
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Aug. 28 - Sept. 12, 2015 - Skopelos Foundation for the Arts

Info & registration: 604.737.2636, www.suzybirstein.com

Dig This: Exploring B.C. Clay

by Mike McElgunn, Canadian Clay Symposium Collective



March 21 at the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts in Burnaby

Due to scheduling conflicts in 2016, the 7th Canadian Clay Ceramics Symposium has now been set for March 18, 2017. In the meantime, on March 21, 2015, the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, with the support of the Canadian Clay Symposium Collective, the Potters' Guild of BC and the North-West Ceramics Foundation, will be hosting a full day workshop titled **DIG THIS: Exploring BC Clay**. We will celebrate the skills and diversity of BC ceramic artists as well as the 60th anniversary of the BC Potters' Guild.

DIG THIS: Exploring B.C. Clay will bring together four dynamic British Columbia-based ceramic artists, **Brendan Tang** (Vancouver), **Sarah Lawless** (Kaslo), **Robin Dupont** (Winlaw) and **Kathleen Raven** (Salt Spring Island). Each of these artists will work for two three-hour demo sessions during the daylong event. Registrants will be able to focus on one, two or all four presenters by moving between studios, allowing you to customize your day to suit your personal interests.

The cost for early bird registration including lunch will be \$95 until January 15. After that date the cost will be \$110. Registration is now available online through the City of Burnaby's "Webreg", or by calling the Shadbolt Office at (604) 291-6864. Quote barcode #342124. Other related events at Shadbolt will include a pre-conference wood

firing workshop with Robin Dupont, "Firing the Train Kiln", barcode #344861, and a post-conference workshop with Kathleen Raven, "Teapots With Attitude", barcode #344248. More information for these workshops can be found in the current City of Burnaby Leisure Guide.

To round out this celebration of clay, on Friday, March 20, the evening preceding the workshop, the Gallery of BC Ceramics on Granville Island will host a reception from 5 to 7 p.m. featuring an exhibition of our presenters' work. Artists will be in attendance. Following this reception the North-West Ceramics Foundation is sponsoring an artist talk and slide show with our four presenters at the Emily Carr University campus.

The 2015 date also gives us the opportunity to join the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Potters Guild of British Columbia with a special dinner event sponsored by the Guild at the Shadbolt Centre on Saturday following DIG THIS. Tickets will be purchased through the Potters Guild of BC.

More details about each of these events will be included in future newsletters and through the event sponsors listed above. Mark the dates on your calendar. These are events you will not want to miss! 📅

Jason Walker: *On the River, Down the Road*



Exhibition: Oct. 3, 2014 - March 1, 2015
Artist Talk: *Perception of Nature*, Oct. 3, 7 to 8 p.m.
Bellevue Arts Museum, Bellevue, Wash.

Northwest artist Jason Walker is widely celebrated for his skillfully executed ceramic sculpture. Treading a fine line between storytelling and social criticism, Walker's work explores the human experience as reflected in Nature. His painted porcelain works, often taking the form of wild animals domesticated by industry, are simultaneously thought-provoking and unsettling. Bridging the dichotomous worlds of nature and technology represents, for the artist, "a journey to define for myself what it means to be human in the present time."

On the River, Down the Road is a site-specific installation created by Walker, who will transform the gallery into an enveloping, fantasy-driven world that—through richly detailed narratives and surrealist, apocalyptic imagery—offers an incisive comment on the indelible impact of humanity upon the natural landscape.

Jason teaches at Emily Carr University in Vancouver.

See more at:

http://www.bellevuearts.org/exhibitions/jason_walker.html



On the River, Down the Road (detail), 2014, by Jason Walker. Photo David Scherrer Photography.

ClayLines

Celebrating Success in our community

RBC EMERGING ARTIST AWARD

Voting open till Oct. 14



I should like to give you a kiss (detail), 2014, by Robin Lambert. Bone china, wood, mixed media.

The Gardiner Museum presents the 4th Annual RBC Emerging Artist People's Choice Award, with voting open online from Sept. 2 to Oct. 14. Supported by the RBC Emerging Artists Project, the \$10,000 award – voted by the public at the exhibition and online – honours a Canadian artist (or permanent resident) who has been out of school and practicing professionally with clay as part of his/her artist practice for seven years or less. A national panel of artists, curators and arts educators nominated the five exceptional artists.

One of the five nominees is from B.C. Artist Robin Lambert was born on the Sunshine Coast. During his childhood he travelled throughout Western

Canada before his family eventually settled in northern Alberta. These wandering ways continued through his adult life, before he too settled down long enough to earn a BFA in 2004 from Alberta College of Art + Design in Calgary and an MFA in 2007 from the University of Regina in Saskatchewan. He has received numerous grants and awards including a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Master's Grant and his projects and exhibitions have been shown in Canada, the United States and Australia.

Artist statement: "My ceramic practice is dynamic and non-traditional, though it references and respects the traditions of the material and culture of ceramics. I work specifically with the relationship between the ceramic object and the audience with a focus on the interstices between object and owner. My practice fits perfectly in the small space between Social Practice, Performance, and Ceramics with the Ceramic part of this equation driving most every artistic inclination that I have. The inspirations for my work and the themes I work within come from all aspects of my life – art, literature, movies, pop culture, personal relationships and observations of daily life. My practice is a multidisciplinary investigation into the need to connect, to belong, and to be a part of a larger social or cultural system."

Online voting for the award ends Sunday, Oct. 12 at 11:59 pm.

For the full nominee list, see: <http://www.gardinermuseum.on.ca/exhibitions/current/rbc-emerging-artist-peoples-choice-award-2014>

Submissions for November 2014

Please get your articles and ads in to Melany by Oct. 20, 2014 at the latest for the November 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.

ANDY BLICK

The Potters Guild of British Columbia would like to let you know of the passing of Andy Blick in September 2014. His friends and family are preparing an article about Andy and his accomplished work. Our deepest sympathies.

In the meantime, some thoughts on Andy's life with clay, from his website:

"There are certain visual experiences—dawn, dusk, fire light, the ocean's surface—that have the power to both still the mind and provoke a state of alert aesthetic pleasure. The refraction of light on a patterned surface, a momentary union of the ephemeral and the essential, an economy of form and line. These are the always elusive elements of the place where truth and beauty seem to coexist without need of further elaboration or comment. Artists are always in search of it. Architects sometimes achieve it. Andy Blick has spent a lifetime seeking to express the inexpressible by working with clay."

2015 RESIDENCIES, France

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Oct. 19

Applications are open to all artists (fine-arts, crafts, design, sculpture, architecture, filmmakers) seeking an opportunity to present and realize a project in a rich cultural environment. Artists who have been working independently for at least two years may apply for an individual residential work period in A.I.R. Vallauris, France.

Residencies are for a six week period. Includes a private bedroom and workspace, a common kitchen and dining area and WiFi connection. Work studios offer facilities for working in clay including wheels and an electric kiln, multimedia and painting.

- Application deadline for the 2015 residency season is Oct. 19.
- Applications are reviewed, scheduled and confirmed during the week after the submission deadline.

To request an application form or for any inquiries concerning the residency program, please email contact@air-vallauris.com, or see online here <http://www.air-vallauris.org/residency/application/>

Unclassifieds

FOR SALE: 18x18 inside measure estrin cone 11 kiln on wheels. High temperature shelves & other hardware; kiln sitter with boxes of cones and new heating elements. Existing elements relatively new & all brick in very good shape. Very good, modest sized kiln at reasonable price, \$1,000. Similar new kiln would cost well over \$2,500. Also: 15" half shelves priced well below wholesale. Arthur symons, arsymons@mac.com.

Submissions & Advertising

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

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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.

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Memberships for a 12 month period, not including GST are: Individual, \$55; Full-time Student, \$35; Senior (over 65), \$35; Institution/Group/ Corporation, \$200. Members will renew on the anniversary of their date of joining. For most of the existing members this occurs in the month of September. Please note there are no longer any prorated fees. For detailed information see: www.bcpotters.com/Guild/membership.php

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