

Guild at a Glance

South Vancouver Island Potters' Guild meets the 2nd Monday of the month at 4733 West Saanich Road, Victoria

April 2, 2007

Volume 8, Issue 8



Fern walker

SVIPG members Fern Walker and Heidi Roemer gave a delightful presentation at the March meeting. Both are sculptors who work in clay, and although they work and exhibit together, their finished pieces are very different.

Fern started the presentation by showing some of her figurative finished pieces – a bust and a high relief wall piece depicting a young woman. It was refreshing to hear that she is not particularly bothered by type of clay or firing temperature, using whatever suits. As a finish, she sometimes uses a wash of red iron oxide to warm the colour, rubbing it in and wiping off. The work is not glazed.

Fern then described how she makes multiples of favorite pieces using plaster press-molds. She first splatters a thin skin of plaster on the model piece, being sure to get into all the little nooks and crannies. This layer is then covered with plaster of a thicker consistency to build up some thickness. Without using a cottle box, Fern is able to use less plaster, and with a couple of thick blobs for feet, the irregularly shaped mold is made stable. She doesn't use any separating compound, even when the model is a fired piece of clay, and finds no trouble with the plaster separating from the original.

To use, Fern presses pinches of clay into the plaster mold, carefully pushing it into all the details. A thickness of clay is built up, and the piece is left to stiffen slightly before removing from the mold. This is a great way to capitalize on all the hours that have gone into making the original piece.



Heidi Roemer

Heidi Roemer also makes figurative sculpture, for indoors and out. She says that her house was full of her clay things that eventually migrated outside, where they live very happily. She entertained us with tales of scrounging used equipment, finding pieces of furniture useful to sculptors and planning to make a fortune quickly producing garden gnomes. The garden gnomes are charming, but no fortune has been forthcoming, as all their little details are time-consuming to produce, despite Heidi's best efforts at streamlining production.

Continued on pg 2

Don't Forget The Raffle!

Next Guild Meeting is
Monday, May 14, 2006
7:30 p.m. at St. Michaels Hall

Continued from pg 1

Heidi quickly and adeptly demonstrated the making of one of her mask-planters, suitable for wall mounting. She started with a slab base, for the back of the planter, and another soft slab for the front, which will be the mask face. She joined the two slabs along the sides, leaving the top open to receive plants, and the bottom “chin” area closed only to the curved-up tip, which remains open to serve as a drainage hole. To support the front slab while she is working on it, Heidi inserted custom support made of a cut up pop bottle covered (and stuffed?) with a soft material. Within a few minutes, Heidi had attached a nose, lips and eyes, using soft slabs, coils and balls of clay. She also used a custom “eye” stamp to make the mask’s eyes come alive. This simple mask makes a very effective decorative piece, and with 3 holes in the back slab for hanging, a useful planter too. Finally, Heidi said that normally she would spend a bit more time pressing out and shaping features such as cheeks, working from the inside of the front slab. These pieces are simply left as they are with no glaze. Sometimes Heidi finishes her figurative pieces with non-fired surfaces, such as acrylic (or oil?) paint, which goes on well and survives outside.

Many thanks to Heidi and Fern for sharing their work and working methods with the rest of the guild.

–Cindy Gibson

Upcoming Guild Programs

April 2— Tony Mochizuki & Priska Stabel (members show and demo work)

May 14—Ron Douglas

June 11—Wind Up Party and Swap ‘n’ Shop and Silent Auction

Sept —Elections

October 1 –possibly Brendan Tang?

Souper Bowls of Hope

This event will be held on Thursday, June 7 at Fairmont Empress, from 11:00 AM to 1:30 PM. The set up will be on Wednesday, June 6 after 5 PM. There will be only one Guild meeting between now and then so if you wish to bring items Souper Bowls, please do so on May 14. Please include your name, address and value for income tax Receipt purposes. Any kind of pottery or other crafts or items are needed for the auction. If you would like a pickup, phone Helen At 361-0217 or email at hhughes@victoria.ca Thanks to all who are helping to give at-risk youth a positive summer downtown.



the

for

The Gallery of Artisans at 811 Fort would like to invite potters to take part in the May window display and sale of Teapots. The window display will consist of teapots, either for sale or for display only, while the rest of the gallery will have space for sale items. There will be a contract to sign, and the commission will be 50% of the sale price.

We are trying to get an idea of who might be interested, and how many teapots they might bring into the shop. If you're interested, please contact Tobias Tomlinson at 383-3893.

Pacific Rim Potters 22nd Annual Spring Show & Sale

Saturday, **MAY 12th** from 10am to 4 pm

At Knox Presbyterian Church Hall, 2964 Richmond

This one-day sale, just in time for Mothers' Day, features work by Vancouver Island potters. Come and enjoy a variety of ceramics from functional to fun. You will find teapots, mugs, plates and bowls as well as pet dishes, arty ornaments and decorative raku. The quality is high and prices are reasonable. FREE admission, refreshments and door prizes. Potters are: Jane Van Alderwegen, Nora Lewin, Darrel Hancock, Ester Galac, Betty Fulton, Betty Burroughs, and guests: Andre Gogul and Laura Van der Linde.

YOUR 2006-2007 EXECUTIVE

President	Nancy Wall	(479-3524)
Vice-Pres.	Pam Wood	(642-0638)
Secretary	Bonnie Kreye	(598-8791)
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	Alice McLean	(642-3522)
	Kyoko Kusano	(592-4638)
Membership:.....	Betty Burroughs	(382-0974)
Newsletter	Ann Semple	(478-2341)
Program Co-ordinators:		
Raffle.....	Ester Galac	(658-4523)
	Tobias Thomlinson	(383-3893)
Coffee.....	Maria Green	(474-1593)
Directors:		
	Meira Mathison, Betty Burroughs, Betty Fulton	

Cindy Gibson is one of 16 artists participating in the 4th annual **Victoria Saaninch Scattered Artists**

Studio Tour, to be held Saturday and Sunday, May 12 and 13, 12noon to 5 pm. The tour includes the 2 and 3 dimensional work of artists "scattered" around Cedar Hill Golf Course, in the area bounded by Hillside, McKenzie, Quadra and Shelbourne.

Come have a peek in Cindy's studio, and view her colourful, whimsical porcelain and stoneware pottery, including mugs, bowls, tea sets, bird feeders and decorative pieces for the garden. Pre-view the tour and download a map from www.GoBC.ca (BC art & studio tours / scattered artists). Everyone welcome, free admission. www.gobc.ca/cindygibson



Library Corner

Should we archive old Ceramic Monthlys?

In the last month we have had two requests for specific old copies of Ceramic Monthly. We have a small stack of 1970's and on. They are not in any order at present so we do not know if we have duplication. Access to past issues is a search and find project for anyone looking for a specific issue in our stock at present.

The Central Library keeps copies for 10 years back. We, meaning some members, as well as our library stash, are the only source for "ancient" copies.

What say we have a small work bee next meeting in May? Come early, say by 7 P.M., and help sequence the magazines according to month and year. The extras can go to our June Swap and Shop sale, to cover the cost of a file box to store the collection in.



Insults with Class

"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire."

-- **Winston Churchill**

"A modest little person, with much to be modest about."

-- **Winston Churchill**

"I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure."

-- **Clarence Darrow**

June Show Update

If you would like to take part in the Saturday, June 16th Guild Show, please make sure you have signed up. The forms will be passed around at the April meeting. If you aren't able to attend the meeting in April, please let me know and I will sign you up by phone, or email.

Phone: 721-2976 or email: cowardr@telus.net

We need to know the number of entries there will be as soon as possible, so that the Committee can start planning for the big day.

There will be room inside the Hall for a few displays, the rest will be on the lane that runs around the church. We are hoping for lots of color to make the Show look festive, seeing our theme is "Parade of Pots".

There will be a "Central Cashier", with 10% of the sales going to the Guild to help cover the cost of the Show.

The kitchen will be open all day, we need someone who isn't involved in setting up a display to make coffee and set out cookies. **Remember the entry fee is two dozen cookies !!!** we are hoping to have 4 volunteers, so that it would mean only working in the kitchen for 2 hours each.

Ann Semple has been very busy designing beautiful postcards and posters for the Show that you will be seeing at the May meeting.

Caryl Wilford is looking after advertising for us, which is a big job, and you will be seeing those closer to Show time.

Cindy Gibson, is coordinating the money end of things, and helping with the many organizational details.

SOOOOooooooo, we hope you are getting excited about the Guild Show. It will be great to introduce the public to what our Guild is all about, and educate them on the art of Pottery. If there is anyone who would like to demonstrate any form of pottery, and would be willing to bring the equipment necessary to do it, that would be wonderful, let me know and we will plan for it.

I will be waiting to hear from you if you have any questions,

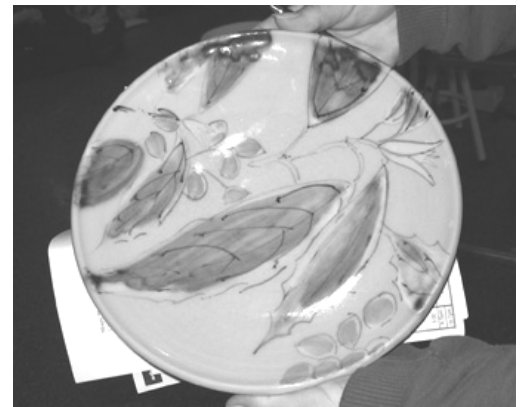
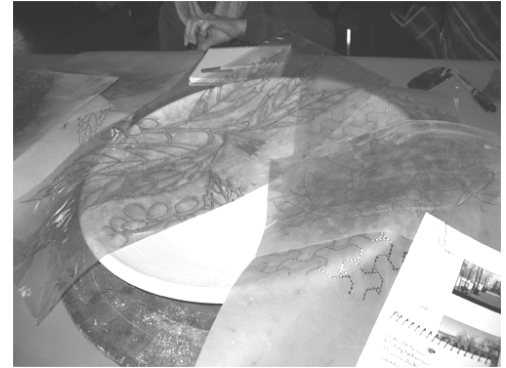
Rachel Coward

The following 4 pages are a review of the Canadian Clay Ceramic Symposium "Surfacing"

Karen Burk uses a technique which was used in China and England in the past. After choosing a pattern she likes, she transfers it by putting a piece of Mylar over it, and by perforating holes along the lines of the drawing using a burning gun. (she gets it from Lee Valley) She then puts the Mylar sheet on top of the pot or plate which has been covered with a coloured slip and with a piece of soft cloth like old sheet, she puts charcoal over the pattern, which will be transferred to the pot or plate. It is called pouncing. She will take out the excess of charcoal using a brush she made out of peacock feathers and a bamboo stick. She then applies slip or engobe on her pot and with a very fine brush with long hair she paints the contour. For leaves, or green she puts a white slip first and then applies a copper wash on top of the slip.

The lighter material she uses for pouncing is "denril vellum" from Universal Art Supplies
2344 Wycroft Rd
Oakville, Ont.
Phone; 905-465-0295
Fax. 905-465-0218

Liner brushes
Sable, #2, around \$20 (Soc.Int. Tobgi Mtl)
Art tec Inc.
355 Sherbrooke Ouest
Montréal, Québec
514-288-9892
Fax: 514-288-4915



- Alice McLean

Diane Creber's

"History of Crystalline Glazes" presentation was excellent! Starting alphabetically Diane globally circumnavigated the world of crystalline pottery. Starting in Australia and ending in the U.S.A. Diane covered numerous talented potters in all their colorful glory. The Canadian potters really are front and center with all the rest throughout the world. Diane's talent is also included in this presentation of exceptional crystalline pots. Thanks Diane for introducing us to the world of crystals.



-Barb Llovick

Mark Hewitt

While Mark is known for his very large pots, he is also well-versed in weaving large stories about North Carolina potters, their eccentricities and traditions. He recently co-curated the exhibition "The Potter's Eye: Art and Tradition in North Carolina Pottery," with an accompanying well illustrated book. Mark regional stories are not for the faint of heart, nor the innocent ear!



-Faro Sullivan

Robin Hopper had a very busy time at the 2007 Clay Symposium. He moderated a very lively discussion panel "MORE THAN SKIN DEEP", with Magdalene Odundo, Mark Hewitt, Karen Burk and Jeannie Mah, as well as giving two full, very interesting presentations; "MAKING MARKS" AND "JOURNEY OF A LIFE TIME".



Robin's life-story, "Journey of a Lifetime" started in Southern England in 1939 just before World War Two broke out, and was fascinating. He talked about the environment we live in and how the whole of one's life experiences shape the way we express ourselves as Artists.

Robin said with a chuckle in his voice, "it was the war and chickenpox that started my love of clay". Just as all the little London children were being evacuated from London to a safe place away from the bombing, he came down with chickenpox, and had to stay behind. His brothers and sisters, and neighborhood children were sent away to the countryside and he didn't see them for about 5 years. He spent a lonely childhood, with no children left to play with, and living in the midst of bombing, death and destruction. One of his main play time media, was clay found in a bomb hole near his home. At an early age remembers the pleasant hours he had making clay shapes.

Robin went on through his life story, telling of his growing up years, his first jobs, his studies and teaching years. His stories were accompanied with slides of his different homes, studios and gardens, in Southern England, in Eastern Canada, and then finally out here on the West Coast.

Robins showed slides of some beautiful pottery, and talked about the Artists who had influenced his life, and his Art, right up to the present day. This is where the story really begins for me and many others at the Symposium who only know Robin from his West Coast life. It was a real insight into Robin's whole life, the real Robin Hopper, and it was very generous of him to share such personal memories with us.

-Rachel Coward

Bob Kingsmill



Bob Kingsmill was undoubtedly selected as one of the presenters for this year's Clay Symposium on surfacing because of his 3-dimensional, multi-layered, multi-textured murals, made not only with several kinds of clay. Watching Bob creating his master piece throughout the day, however, one realizes that the valuable lesson



he is teaching is how to enjoy the process as much or more than the final product itself. Bob had as much fun "playing" with his creation as we did watching him play. He had a tray of beautiful little pots all of the same size and symmetry that a budding potter, like myself, would be proud to have produced. Bob used these pots for target practice on his mural. I never dreamed as I heard him promise throughout the day to throw some pots at his mural that he meant literally. With a gleam in his eye and an uncanny sense of placement Bob threw his beautiful little pots at his mural, as I gasped when they swooshed, splashed and gooshed into the character that was the mural.

- Pam Wood



Jeannie Mah says she came on her technique for transferring photographs to the ceramic surface by accident. However it happened, she also claims it is easy, but between the meticulous care she takes to leave no stray clay near her work, and the exhaustive rolling and re-rolling of the clay, most observers would disagree. The results of her work are nearly paper thin vessels with clear photographic images of the surface. The technique is as simple as wetting the photocopied picture, and smoothing it onto the clay. But there are some qualifications: the ink toner must have iron oxide in it (see below for more info) and, no air bubbles can be allowed to remain between the paper and the clay.

- Ann Semple

Photocopy Transfer Copier Information (handout)

-While I find my copiers that work by testing, here is some information on photocopiers and toners that work, based on the Banff centre



experience;

The information about the copier is:

-Trade name - Document Centre 220/230/332/340/420/425/432/440

-Toner Cartridge - DocuPrint N24/N32/N40, DocuPrint N3225/N4025

-Active ingredients - Iron oxide (45-50%)

Styrene/acrylate copolymer (40-50%)

Polyolefin (1-10%)

During the **2007 Clay Symposium – ‘Surfacing’**, **Sam Uhlick** explained the various stages of his work cycle ~ beginning with mixing his clay, then blunging, pug-ging (*using a pugmill he built in 1983*), drying in the sun, bagging & moving via backhoe to the studio; then throwing (*on a kick wheel still after 30 yrs.*), decorating using mainly slips & sgraffito or resist designs ~ and describing along the way ‘what he does and why’. Sam is soft spoken and obviously loves his work. He’s built most of his equipment and his studio, and says, “my favorite tool these days is my backhoe.” Sam lives with his wife Antonia Huysman, also a potter, just east of Edmonton in Ardrossan, Alberta – view their website at www.uhlick.com Sam was born in Edmonton, studied at Banff Ctr. and Nova Scotia College; apprenticed with Michael Cardew in England (1977) and traveled to Japan to study pottery in 1972, 1978 and in 1999 had a show in Kyoto. He’s been a functional potter for almost 30 years, and says, *“I love the way pottery can enhance the food and drink that it serves. The feel, form and colour .. the touch of a cup to the lips, all have an enriching and important effect on daily life.”*



– Nancy Wall

Kinichi shigeno There were crowds of potters vying for viewing space in room 101 where Kinichi Shigeno was demonstrating his mold making and decorating techniques. Kinichi makes intricately decorated, molded pottery and shared both his method for molding a giant high heeled shoe and decorating an enormous platter. One of the techniques for decorating that he uses is stencils. He paints the back of the stencil with latex which is coloured with red ink, then applies it to the clay. The coloured ink allows him to easily see any drips of latex and remove them. An astounding amount of time is involved in producing ware with the kind of detail Kinichi creates, and it was fascinating seeing how he goes about it. Kinichi was born in Japan and studied ceramics at the Ceramic Institute in Seto. After a seven year apprenticeship and a year in Arita researching porcelain bodies, he moved to Canada in 1981.



- Ann Semple

From the CLAY SYMPOSIUM 2007
“Copying, Plagiarism, Influenced by . . .”

In a stimulating and articulate talk and slide presentation Karen Burk increased our potential for growth and eased our minds by giving us permission to copy. She started with an image of Vincent Van Gogh, the complete individualist, and illustrated how the development of his unique style came about by copying Japanese prints. Picasso, too, sought out art ‘that’s worth copying’. For centuries a main method of art instruction was the task of copying the masters. It is only since the 1950s that artists have been constrained to think that all their work should come solely from some unknown place inside themselves.

Using double slide presentations Karen showed many examples of the borrowing and influencing that makes the art world revolve. She urges her students in New Brunswick, where she has taught for 20 years, to carefully choose pots they ‘just love’ and then to copy them - not from memory but by having them or their images right there so that proportions and all other aspects of form are evident. After mastering the copying of a loved pot the next steps adapt and transform the work until it becomes unique to the maker. The personality of the maker, the circumstances, the time, the place and countless other factors can all become a part of the work. Examples that I remember include a tea bowl transformed by a potter who doesn’t drink tea into a tall cup for iced lemonade and the particular brush strokes of a Japanese print gradually becoming, in the hands of Van Gogh, more energetic, even frenetic.

There is a distinction of course between copying to learn and copying for profit. Karen spoke proudly of a former student whose publication in *Ceramics Monthly* acknowledged the person who gave him the glaze recipe he had adapted for his work. In fact, all the presenters I heard at the symposium mentioned their influences and gave credit where credit was due.

Karen’s presentation was not only inspiring and entertaining it was also thorough. It’s a tribute to her teaching methods that, although I wasn’t prepared to write about her and didn’t take notes, I’ve been able to recall so much. I wish I could remember more. If you get a chance to talk to anyone else who heard her, pick their brains and if there’s ever another chance to learn directly from her, do take it.

-Marlene Bowman

Keynote Speaker

I was excited to learn that **Magdalene Odundo** was coming to the clay symposium “Surfacing” held recently at the Shadbolt Centre in Burnaby. I first met Magdalene in 1999 when she did a workshop for students at Farnham College where I was working as art technician. Like many the world over, I love her sensual organic forms with their warm burnished surfaces, and was looking forward to seeing her work again. Her work is often categorized as being highly influenced by her African roots, and it is. However, that label is too simple and the journey to her current status as Britain’s most well known Anglo-African artist was not as straightforward as it might seem.



Magdalene Odundo was born in 1950, in Nairobi, Kenya, and was educated as a child in New Delhi, India. She immigrated to England in 1971, and earned a BA in 1976. Early in her art training, she studied commercial art, but found it to be superficial and disposable. She went back to study (Royal College of Art London, MA1982) “in order to understand the significance of the skills she had learned” in her first degree.

Today Magdalene’s work is strongly connected to Kenya. When she is asked where she is from, she always says “Kenya” (which can get her into trouble when she travels on her British passport). However, she credits Michael Cardew (himself fascinated and obsessed with West-Africa) with insisting that she go back to the African continent (Nigeria and Kenya in 1974/5) “to look and to listen”. She believes that she would not be a potter today, if she had not met Cardew. She began to see that in studying African art in Europe, she was seeing it through European eyes, as an outsider, and that this vision was not accurate.

In Africa, Magdalene was struck by the multitude of uses ceramic objects have in daily life, the rituals surrounding them, as well as the meanings these objects embody. Her travels re-connected her to her roots, but also inspired her to travel more, and to look at historical pots of other cultures, including Greco-Egyptian and pre-Columbian shapes, forms, and textures. She said that she began to burnish her own pottery as “an excuse to explore other cultures”, and that put her on the road to discovering her own voice in clay.

Her most recognizable work is burnished, coiled earthenware, fired between 2 and 5 times to achieve the colours and surfaces she desires. The orange pieces are fired in a gas kiln and the black ones are, of course, smoked. This work derives from, but does not imitate, African pottery, being, as it is, “a conversation between African and European modernist forms” (R.H.). She was influenced by not only the pottery of other cultures, but shapes, textures and cultural significance of common objects, for example the asymmetrical headdresses of the women in eastern Zaire. Magdalene says, “my work is about surfaces”, and truly it is. “I *have been* obsessed by form. What was once an embellishment (burnishing) has now become an engagement.” She also said that it was in preparation for this symposium that she went back and re-examined the pottery (of others) in her own collection. She came to the realization that she simply loves surfaces, of all kinds: surfaces that add to what is already there in the meaning of the piece; surfaces that evoke a mood, or tell something of the maker.

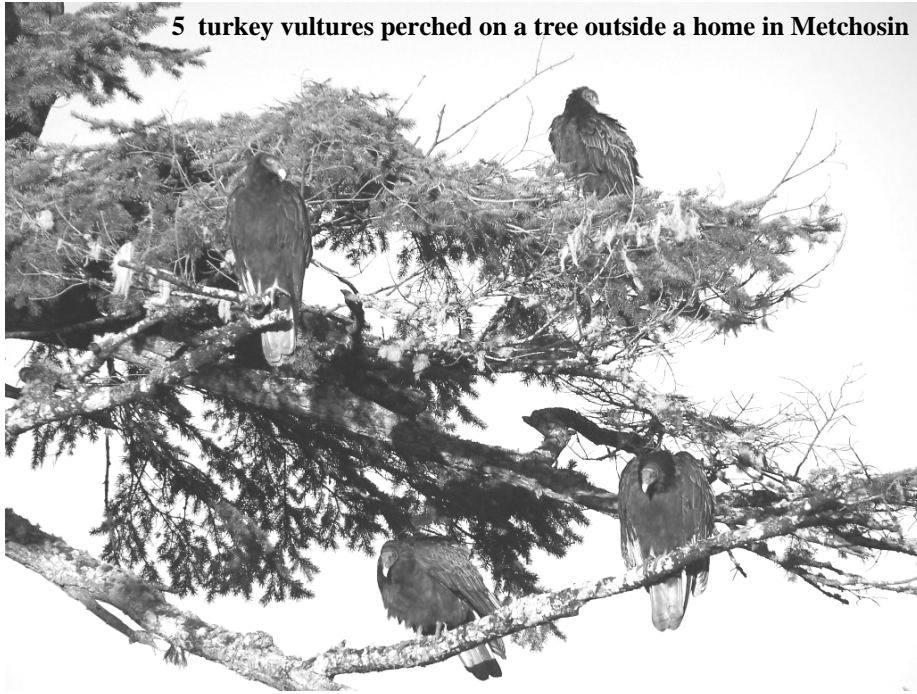


Sadly, Magdalene was not scheduled to do a demo at this symposium. She was, however, the keynote speaker and was on a panel titled “More than Skin Deep” earlier in the day, together with Karen Burk, Mark Hewitt and Jeannie Mah.

The panel was introduced thus: “The topic is discussed from the simple concept of form and surface relationship to the vastly deeper variations in ethnic or cultural traditions that may lie beneath what any artist might bring to their work from personal experience.” In this talk Magdalene described a recent project and exhibition in which her work deviates far from her well known burnished pieces. She worked in a museum setting where she clothed marble statues with bright African fabrics, and challenged European preconceived ideas of “what is art”. She created a table setting, making dishes that had the look of fine china, white, with borders of William Morris inspired designs. Combining cultural influences (British) with her history (African +) to produce the unexpected, she “inconceivably” adorned these dishes with photo-transfers of her family, past and present. Comments from museum visitors confirm mixed reactions: “Lovely dishes. Oh, they’re *not British!*” (Yes, they most certainly are.) It was interesting to see another side of Magdalene’s work, and I wonder if this will trigger a shift or change in her burnished pieces. I look forward to finding out.

-Cindy Gibson

5 turkey vultures perched on a tree outside a home in Metchosis



Onion Soup with Guinness

Other tasty options to try: I've made this with wild boar bacon and used organic soy ginger broth instead of beef or chicken broth.

Serves 8

- 4 strips bacon, diced
- 1 large white onion, sliced
- 1 large red onion, sliced
- 2 large yellow (Spanish) onions, sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp thyme
- 2 large bay leaves
- 4 cups Guinness beer
- 4 cups beef or chicken broth
- coarse salt and ground black pepper
- 8 slices crusty bread
- 8 slices brie, or 3 cups grated Gruyere cheese

In a heavy pot over medium heat, cook bacon until almost crisp. Drain off most of the fat, leaving about 1 tsp. Reduce heat to medium-low, add onions and cook slowly for about 30 minutes until they're soft and caramelized.

Add garlic, thyme, bay leaves, beer and stock. Simmer for another 15 min-

Clay studio space wanted: I prefer sharing space and experience with another potter. I have a new Shimo wheel and many glaze ingredients. Could share yours or bring my own kiln. I do not make a lot of pots, but am serious about my work. So, I find it difficult to focus in an environment with a lot of talking. If a garage or large room with enough amperage to run a kiln was available to rent, I can set up my own studio. Call Chrystal 995-2295

Banding Together by Irene Baker

Here's a little 'heads-up' for all potters, twitchers (birders), and Ikibana lovers.

Our very own Librarian, Joy Finlay, and her husband Cam are having a very BIG multi-event.

Joy is participating in the Saanich Pottery Tour which will be held on May 5th & 6th (that's a Saturday and Sunday), from 11 AM to 4 PM.

She has graciously invited two other Guild members to attend this tour at her home. Kyoko Kusano and Irene Baker will be showing their pottery along with Joy's. Kyoko has another talent which she will be demonstrating ... the art of Japanese Ikibana flower arranging.

Cam Finlay is also very talented. He holds a Master Bander's permit-to-band Hummingbirds. (His was one of the first Hummingbird banding permits issued in Canada!)

He and his team have banded over 10,700 of these beautiful tiny birds for over ten years. In doing this, he has documented the birds' movements throughout southern BC plus recording measurements, gender, age and pregnancy status. He even tracked one that went from Quesnel (near Prince George) to New Orleans in southern USA. To see Cam demonstrating this delicate work, you'll have to be up early on Sunday, May 6th, from 6am to 11am.

Joy and Cam live at 270 Trevlac Place. For more information you can contact Joy at 479-9833, or via email at joy-andcamfinlay@shaw.ca

As you can see, the Finlays have much to offer - hope you can make it.

**Pottery Studio Tour
&
Hummingbird Banding Demonstration**

Saturday May 5 & Sunday May 6 2007
270 Trevlac Place Victoria BC

Saturday and Sunday 11am - 4pm:
-Krinkel Pots by Joy Finlay.
-Ikebana flower arranging with Kyoko Kusano.
-Hummingbird Mugs by Irene Baker.

Sunday only from 6am - 11 am:
-Hummingbird banding demonstration with Cam Finlay.

REFLECTIONS THROUGH RACHEL'S LENS



Kyoko Kusano demonstrating Ichebana Flower arranging



SVIPG 2001—1st guild show and sale



Guild members Penny Jones, Ann Semple Cindy Gibson and Pat Smart at 2004 guild sale



Betty Fulton manning the cash table at a guild sale



Guild members returning from the “surfacing” symposium

HORSEHAIR RAKU

-Betty Burroughs

"I do a lot of horsehair as well as 'naked raku' and raku.

I have a few little tips that may help you.

Colour: Pots can be sprayed or painted with underglaze prior to firing for added colour. Also coloured slip or terra sig can be used. (Regular raku glaze is questionable. You only need to heat the pot enough to burn the hair so most glazes won't be mature and the hair markings might be lost if you do reduction).

Colour can also be achieved with ***ferric chloride**. It can be painted on the pot prior to firing and sprayed on the pot after the horsehair is applied. Ferric chloride is VERY corrosive! It eats metal and you must wear an organic vapors respirator and protect your eyes and skin. It does give beautiful results.

Applying the hair: Yes, there is a time frame. If applied too soon the hair will burn rapidly and really smoke up the pot. If applied too late it just won't burn. You're going to have to play with this part depending on your pots. Thicker pieces hold heat longer and give you more time. Thin pieces you will have to work fast before they cool off. I take my pieces out and wait about 10-15 sec. before applying the hair.

This gives the pot time to cool just a bit and I get a nice distinct line, not all the black smudgy stuff. After the horsehair is on I then spray the ferric chloride. If you try this cover your banding wheel or whatever pedestal you are using with several layers of aluminum foil to protect it. Wear protection!

Wax: Trewax is the best I have found. I don't use a sealer of any kind. I don't like the way sealers make the surface look: kind of plastic-like. Make sure that the pot is completely cool and has been well cleaned. Any carbon on the surface will be caught up in the wax and leave ugly smudges. Dirty raku gloves will leave ugly marks also.

Tips: Heat a soft brick in the kiln with your pieces. Take it out first and then set your piece on it for decoration.

If you set the hot pieces on something cool then they very well may crack.

Set pieces on a metal banding wheel for easier application of hair. If using ferric chloride, cover the banding wheel with several layers of foil. **Use a Preval disposable sprayer** for ferric chloride. They have no metal parts to be corroded and they produce a nice fine spray. Wear protection.

Drop paper into the pots after they are removed from the kiln to get a blackened interior. (Meira Mathison uses dry peat moss which burns and smoulders, giving a good black interior).

Lidded pots: Most of my horsehair are lidded vessels and I have a problem with them cracking if I place the lid on the pot while decorating with hair and ferric. Try setting the lid to the side of the pot if you have this problem.

Have the horse hair separated into strands before removing the pot from the kiln. Single strands or just a couple applied at a time are best. Big clumps of hair will not make a nice mark. Since more than one of you will be doing this have your friend hand you the hair a few strands at a time.

Feathers are also very nice but you need to hold them in place with needle nose pliers".

--- From: Allyson May, Stoney Creek Pottery, Bloomington, IN AMay4@msn.com (courtesy *Clayart*)

* "An alternative to oxides and underglazes is **soy sauce**. Put the soy sauce in a spritzer to get a fine mist. After applying the horse hair and while the pot is still quite hot spritz on the soy sauce, it dries immediately leaving a very nice warm patina - light brown. Reverse the sequence as well depending upon what is driving your composition on the surface.

We stumbled on this when looking for non-corrosive applications that did not present significant health hazards. There is a high salt content in soy sauce and a soup of other chemicals. And it's cheap. I am told there are different types of soy sauce but we have relied on Kikkoman variety. Maybe worth a try".

--- From: Anthony Vodraska avodraska@YAHOO.COM (also courtesy *Clayart*)

TO SCORE or NOT TO SCORE?

Segment from *Ceramics Monthly 'Comment'* Feb. 2006 (by Nils Lou, Prof. at Linfield College, Ore.)

Ways of doing things in the clay world vary greatly. Each of us learns our own way in the skill areas, but some mechanical **practices continue by dint of unexamined tradition.** How about the myth that trapping air inside a form will blow up the whole load of pots in the bisque kiln? NOT! ~ pots blow up because of moisture, not bubbles of air.

Attaching handles, knobs and other protuberances has a history worthy of critical review ~ scoring and slipping is a perfect example of practice continuing from teacher to student and onward because it has the status of edict. The rationale for scoring is flawed. It assumes that by providing more surface area for attachment, the protuberance is fully secured ~ in fact scoring may do the opposite by encouraging small air pockets. Understanding the nature of clay [ionic attraction of molecular interfaces that depend on hydrostatic interaction] is all one needs to know for successful attachments. In other words, if the two clay parts are hydrologically similar (leather hard, soft, etc.) a simple addition of slip [& pressure] will weld them together. For all the scorers and slippers out there, I urge you - Let your scoring tool rest! I recommend a slip recipe called Gorilla Slip, which will stick anything to anything and stores indefinitely in an airtight container: 1 cup each kaolin and ball clay; 1 cup Dr. Pepper cola; ½ cup stale beer; 1 Tbsp. each white glue and white vinegar; 3 Tbsp. gloss acrylic medium. The acrylic medium makes the mixture thixotropic, so stir well before using. If desired, thin with 50/50 white vinegar/ water.

Acrylic Medium -Gloss: Thins acrylic paints. (avail. at Art stores like *Opus* \$8.50)

CLAYWORKS SHOW & SALE

Hope to see you all there!

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Donna Rankin will lead it again and glazes will be provided.

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Cost is only \$20.00 and you can bring 3 small to medium pieces., if there is time and room and everyone has had an equal number fired other pieces might get in. Please let me know if you will be attending. Please bring your own lunch and water or beverage as there are no nearby services.

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Ann Semple 478-2341

E-MAIL: annsemple@shaw.ca

Snail Mail: 4531 Lindholm Road
 Victoria B.C.
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Please make sure it is in my hands one week prior to the meeting.

THANKS

South Vancouver Island Potters Guild's newsletter

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