

# Guild at a Glance

February 2017

www.victoriapotters.ca

Volume 18 Issue 6

## February Meeting

Monday 7:30 PM February 13, 2017

### Program: Chinese Tea Ceremony

Special guest Yujia Xu introduces us to the Chinese tea ceremony and the uses of special ceramic ware for its various aspects and traditions.

## January Program in Review – Members Sharing Tools and Tricks:

With thanks to Melissa Jane for these comprehensive notes to help you remember some great ideas shared:

- When transporting a glazed piece, use Spray on Starch to keep the dried glaze from rubbing off.
- For trailing slip (or underglaze), Accordion Bottles from Lee Valley work well. They fit nicely in your hand, easily press out the slip, and also don't dry out. Sally adds a little water to her underglaze in these bottles and they last for over a year.
- Joy has found that acupuncture needles work really well for holding on small decorations without deforming them. After bisque firing, you can break off the top sticking out and the glaze then works to secure the pieces on fully. For example, she made a little dish with holly berries and used the acupuncture needles to secure the berries to the dish until bisque fired.
- For slab building dishes and bowls Joy uses a thick foam



**Joy Finlay Explaining Custom Tool Use**

pad, a layer of plastic, the clay slab, another layer of plastic, then simple items such as a children's ball (partially deflated), balloons filled with sand, a smooth beach stone, end of a 2X4, to press down and create the desired shape of her piece.

- The Mud Tool HAX was passed around for people to check out. It is a great multi-use tool, especially for hand building and joining. Made of thin metal, it has a straight serrated side, a smooth edged convex side with two pointed ends. It is also great for texture, detail, smoothing and corners.



**Muriel Sibley listening to presentations**

- Re-glazing tricks: rub raw garlic on the glaze, wait for it to dry, then re-glaze. Spray on hair spray, then re-glaze. Use a cotton ball with hydrogen peroxide to cover your piece then re-glaze. Spray on a thin layer of glaze, wait for it to dry and spray on another layer.
- Muriel's favorite fix is paper clay, easily made with your own clay, toilet paper blended together in the blender. This is great for repairing, joining and making little animals to add on to your pieces.
- For making those cute hand or foot prints of your grandchildren, use talc or talcum powder on the clay so they don't stick to the clay.
- Use a paint brush to smooth the inside of your pot once bone dry.
- Many potters suffer from dry skin on their hands, especially in the winter! A few ways to keep from drying out are: Dream Cream for Gardeners found at your local health food store, probably also Thrifty's; coconut oil, or take fish oil or omega 3 oil orally.



**Esther and Belle Discussing Tools and Tricks**

## ***Robin Hopper –Named Member of the Order of Canada***

Guild Members were thrilled to learn in late December their own lifetime member Robin Hopper was named a member of the Order of Canada. The honour recognized



“his contributions as a ceramist who has advanced the discipline by introducing a number of innovative techniques.” Hopper, 77, is originally from England and moved to Canada in 1968. He has taught ceramics and shown his artwork around the world. In 1977, he moved to Victoria where he runs the 'Chosin Pottery Gallery with his wife, Judi Dyelle.



The Times Colonist reported that Hopper said he was thrilled to hear he had been named a member of the Order of Canada. “I am very excited to be able to represent artists, particularly ceramic artists of the world,” said Hopper, who has written six books about ceramics and produced several educational videos. He also helped found the Metchosin International Summer School of the Arts. “It is important to me in that it shows the possibilities of self-employment and that an artist can make a good living in their chosen field,” he said. “Most artists work in isolation and to be recognized in this manner is amazing and gratifying.” Hopper said it is particularly rewarding to have been able to help people to learn a complex art form in a meaningful way on a global basis.

Portion of the above article was reprinted from Times Colonist article December 30, 2016

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## ***Ceramic Workshop Instructor – how do I get there? By Meira Mathison***

The Metchosin International Summer School of the Arts (MISSA) gets deluged with requests from artists wanting to teach workshops. I thought it might be valuable for potters who are interested in teaching workshops now, or looking at future prospects, to have some tips and insight into the selection of instructors.

When a workshop is mediocre there can be a number of repercussions. Students may not register the next year or request the refund of workshop fees. The school's reputation is damaged and it will take time some for a student to have their faith restored. The selection of workshop instructors has been integral in keeping MISSA's reputation as offering one of the most notable ceramic programs in North America.

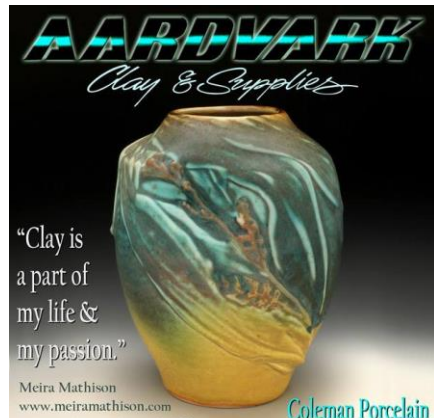
1. Being a good artist is only a starting point.
2. Teaching Experience - it is very different to teach a night class versus a one week class with 12-15 students. Running out of steam or ideas can be fatal.
3. Students want different.... Different forms, different surface treatment, different firing, however, sometimes the technique is too specific and there would not be enough students who would be interested in taking a class.
4. Presentation of a bio – professional presentation of images – a website is a must.
5. A resume can look good on paper but school directors will be checking other schools, web information and any other contacts that can give a full picture of experience. On the other hand, if the presentation is not professional in appearance, you will most likely not get a second glance.
6. Workshop presenters should be enthusiastic, articulate, have a sense of humour and have the ability to keep students excited and interested in clay.
7. The ability to handle difficult, needy and demanding students who can turn a class into a negative demanding group is important. How you isolate a student who is so disruptive but not be rude is a challenge.
8. Instructors work with students who have a wide range of expertise. A class for “experienced” potters does not necessarily mean an instructor will get potters that will know how to center a piece of clay. Experience to students can mean they have taken one set of classes at a community centre. Instructors will need to give the advanced students enough information to continue yet spend time working with an inexperienced potter so they do not become discouraged.
9. When an instructor spends too much time on their own work, students feel a lack of attention, yet you want your demo piece to look finished and professional.
10. Instructors must be prepared to give all – including glaze recipes.
11. Visual presentations must be professional – students will be interested in your own work – where you came from, how you got to where you are now. Showing one image after another without explanations or discussions is very uninteresting.
12. Try to get your work published in books, magazines, social media etc. Networking and social media will help to keep your name in the forefront. Involvement in community, fund raising, and volunteering also helps.
13. Some of our best instructors come thru personal recommendations from other students or knows someone who has taken a course from the special instructor.

### **MY OWN JOURNEY:**

I have been very fortunate... sometimes in the right place at the right time! Some 40 years ago, I took a class at the Panorama Rec Centre – most of the course was hand building (which I was quite dreadful at) but I had one lesson on the wheel... I was hooked ... I still remember the feeling of wet luscious clay in my fingers with absolutely no control.



Within six months I was teaching a children's class at the Cedar Hill Rec. Centre and shortly after, an adult's class. Twenty years of teaching at the rec centre taught me, I am sure, much more than what my students learned from me. I started to teach from my own studio – raku classes and mentoring the Muddy Women group.



**Recent Ad in October  
November Ceramics Monthly  
2016**

I was hired as the Executive Director of the Metchosin International Summer School of the Arts, which, for close to 25 years gave me unlimited exposure to exciting and accomplished artists. Hiring world renowned instructors and dropping into their classes helped me in my own teaching journey. Weekend workshops held locally and off island led to an offer to teach a 5 day workshop at the Red Deer College, and then an offer to teach a one week course in Mexico. I realized that I loved teaching, and loved exploring new areas I had never visited. I attended a workshop at the Tom Coleman studio in Las Vegas. A return stint working as a residency student was life



**Meira giving a workshop in Michigan  
Over 200 students attended**

changing. Tom loved glazing... whereas I felt it was only a necessary evil. My glazing techniques changed along with my attitude and of course my work. For many years I would travel to Vegas and work with Tom and Elaine in their studio.

I taught a hands-on raku workshop for his studio – 40 students!!!! And that was the jump start into the U.S. workshop circuit. I have been fortunate – throwing/altering and personalizing your work workshops in North Carolina, Colorado, California, Michigan, Massachusetts, Nebraska which led to multiple workshops in B.C., Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Northwest Territories, and England. The pottery world is very small and word of mouth is very powerful. As my reputation grew so did my ability to get published in books, magazines, videos and ads.

I choose to not teach as many workshops these days as I never seem to have enough time in my own studio. Teaching is exhausting – a two day workshop can consume up to 5 plus days. Travel and other activities get attached to the workshop including wonderful meals and sightseeing. Lifelong friendships are an added bonus.

**M. Mathison  
January 6, 2017**

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**Current Exhibition at the Victoria Art Gallery**  
Pottery and sculpture by Jan and Helga Grove  
January 21 - May 28 2017 | Curated by Allan Collier | Pollard Gallery

This retrospective of pottery and clay by Victoria artists Jan and Helga Grove is the most extensive exhibition of their work ever held. Comprised of roughly 60 pieces of pottery and 40 sculptures, the exhibition will include work made by the Groves from 1953 to 2005, shortly before they retired.

Born in Germany, both Jan and Helga Grove trained and worked there in the late 1940's and 1950's. They lived in Istanbul for 5 years, where Jan taught ceramic design, before coming to Canada in 1965. From 1966 to 2009 they operated studios in Colwood, and later in Metchosin where they produced pottery with bright colors and matte glazes, often decorated with geometric and abstract designs. Their work was included in Expo '67 and other national exhibitions and sold across the country. Included in the exhibition will be several experimental pieces - unknown to the general public - highlighting Jan's modernist forms and glazes and Helga's unique geometric and fable animal decorations.

For over 40 years, they also produced clay sculptures assembled from wheel-thrown and hand formed parts. Often whimsical and thought-provoking commentaries on human existence, the sculptures are at once a synthesis of unique artistic expression and advanced technical skill. The exhibition will also consist of photographs, exhibition catalogues, artwork, and other historical material documenting the work and lives of these extraordinary artists.

## ***What's Up with Programs?***

*Submitted by Rosemary Neering*

### **February: Chinese Tea Ceremony**

A change in program. Special guest Yujia Xu introduces us to the Chinese tea ceremony and the uses of special ceramic ware for its various aspects and traditions.

**March: Jane Murray Smith** comes down from Coombs to talk about her pottery. Check out <http://www.dragonflypottery.ca/> to see her eclectic raku, horsehair & feather, saggar, and stoneware pottery, with a sample of her animal masks, large animal sculptures, animal ornaments, custom pet portraits, large wall pieces, tiles, lamps as well as assorted vases.

**April: Marlene Bowman** demonstrates her hand-building techniques. See <http://www.stinkingfishstudiotour.com/Marlene-Bowman/> for some examples of her colourful and unusual creations.

**May: tentative:** Photographing your work and other presentation tips. **June:** spring get-together and gallery.

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See Next Page for Dates to Remember for February and March

FEBRUARY						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 Coast Collective Art Studio Deadline for submission for Methods of Making Gallery Exhibition	9	10	11
12	13 Guild Meeting Souper Bowls pick up	14	15	16	17	18 Saltspring Potters Guild Adam Field Workshop
19 Saltspring Potters Guild Adam Field Workshop	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				
MARCH						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 Guild Meeting Souper Bowls pick up	14	15	16	17	18 Canadian Clay Symposium Shadbolt Centre Burnaby 9am-5pm
19	20	21	22 NCECA's 51 <sup>st</sup> Annual Conference Portland, Oregon March 22-25, 2017	23 NCECA's 51 <sup>st</sup> Annual Conference Portland, Oregon March 22-25, 2017	24 NCECA's 51 <sup>st</sup> Annual Conference Portland, Oregon March 22-25, 2017	25 NCECA's 51 <sup>st</sup> Annual Conference Portland, Oregon March 22-25, 2017
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## ADVERTISING RATES

Business card size (2" x 3 1/2"):  
\$10 per issue  
or  
\$75 for 10 issues

Quarter page ad (3 1/2" x 4 3/4")  
\$20 per issue  
or  
\$150 for 10 issues

Sales announcements, events, classified ads:

**FREE**

Contact the *At a Glance* editor  
helen.pedneault@shaw.ca

## *Guild* at a *Glance*

... is the newsletter for the South Vancouver Island Potters Guild.

It is published monthly, September through June. It's distributed by email to all members and some copies are available at Guild meetings. The newsletter is also posted online at [www.victoriapotters.ca](http://www.victoriapotters.ca)

Articles and items of interest to members are welcome and will be included as space permits. Items for inclusion are best emailed to the editor  
helen.pedneault@shaw.ca

**SUBMISSIONS REQUESTED BEFORE  
THE FIRST OF THE MONTH**

## The Executive

President:	Muriel S.	250.652.5434
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Secretary:	Derek K.	250.995.2905
Treasurer:	Linda V.	250.479.5966
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	Rosemary Neering	250.477.7032
Raffle:		
	Ester G.	250.658.4523
	Tobias T.	250.383.3893
Webmaster:	Nancy Fraser	250 508-2053



**Victoria  
Clay Art**

654 Burnside Road W.  
Victoria BC V8Z 1M8

*Here is a list of my favorite pottery tools, glazes and things. Dan*

**All available at Victoria Clay Art**

Mud Tool Ribs  
Amaco PC-20 Blue Rutile [cone 6]  
Alphabet Stamp Set  
2" Goat Hair Fan Brush  
Magic Water  
Stroke & Coat SC-74 Hot Tomale [cone 08-10]  
MKM Finger Rollers  
Xiem Telescoping Sponge on a Stick  
Mud Tool Blue Sponge  
Amaco Velvet Underglaze V-361 Jet Black  
Aardvark Cone 5 BEE-Mix  
Mud Tool Clay Cutting Wire [green handle]  
MKM Wood Stamps  
Paper Clay cone 06, 6, or 10

**Come in and look around, we're open  
10:00am to 5:00pm Mon-Sat**

## Vancouver Island Pottery Supply

### Has Moved

Hello to all our valued customers, This is notice that VIPS has moved.

Our new address is:

515 Stanford Avenue E.  
Parksville, BC  
V9T 6V6

We have the same phone number and website address. We have a new email address.

Cheers, Donna

Ph: 1-250-248-2314

E-Mail: [sales@vipottersupply.com](mailto:sales@vipottersupply.com)  
(new email address!!)

Web: [www.vipottersupply.com](http://www.vipottersupply.com)

**REMEMBER** – among others, 2 great benefits to being in the South Vancouver Island Potters Guild are:

- 1) the library
- 2) access to the BC Potter's Guild newsletter online. Roger C. sends us the username and password each month.

So ... check them out! They're worth using!

*... When you shop – please mention  
to our advertisers that you learned  
about them in the Guild Newsletter.*

## DISCOVERY ART TRAVEL



### OVERSEAS CERAMIC WORKSHOPS & TOURS WITH DISCOVERY ART TRAVEL DENYS JAMES

**MOROCCO 2018, April 9 - 30.** The Full Circle - Fez, Chefchaouen, Essaouira, Volubilis, Marrakech, Zagora, Meknes, Rabat, Casablanca. Studio visits, adobe architecture, tile art, Roman mosaics, traditional and contemporary ceramics, fabrics, a camel ride in the desert, and much more. [www.discoveryarttravel.com](http://www.discoveryarttravel.com)

**ANDALUCIA, SPAIN, 2018, November.** Moorish influence on Ceramics and tile art, Art, Architecture. Seville, Cordoba, Granada, Ronda, Ubeda. Optional add on trips in Spain. [www.discoveryarttravel.com](http://www.discoveryarttravel.com)

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