



Newsletter



SUMMER 2021

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



It's now just over a year since we were forced to shut down most of our activities, and I'm pleased to say that things are gradually opening up. I am writing at the end of April, and we have just launched the Spring Online Exhibition, which started well. This replaces our exhibition in Norwich. The Online shows have been successful, and have allowed us to address a new audience for the work of our members, as the coverage isn't restrained to the local area. However, the vast majority of sales still come from people on our mailing list, so any ideas for getting the message across to a wider audience would be gratefully received by the Exhibitions team.

A group of 20 members have also set up a 'real' exhibition at the Ferini Gallery in Pakefield, near Lowestoft, from the end of April until the end of May. This gallery has been a venue for exhibitions by our members for several years now, and yet again will host a range of work, plus demonstrations by a number of

members on each of the Bank Holiday weekends. It's great to be back in the realm of 'physical' exhibitions again. It will be over by the time you read this, but we wish everyone a successful show.

We're holding an online AGM this year on the 16th May, so it will all be over and done by the time you read this, but, as with last year, we are including an Annual Report on our activities with this Newsletter, so everyone can be kept up to date with what we have managed to achieve in the last year. Please feedback or ask questions of any of the committee members.

As there hasn't been much of an alternative, we have moved a lot of activities online this year, Exhibitions, chat sessions, feedback on work, and even a demonstration day. Whilst it will be good to restart our 'in person' activities, we will probably keep some of these going, as they do keep the connections between members alive, and cut down on travel. It's not easy for everyone to participate online, so they can't take the place of us getting together. I hope that by the time I write for the next Newsletter, we'll be able to announce some real world action. I would like to thank all of the members who have contributed to keeping things going over the last year, adapting to the circumstances, and also to every one of our members for being patient and staying with us through dark times. If you haven't paid your subs for 2021/2, now is the time to do it, before it's too late!

Hope to see lots of you soon.

John Masterton

THE REYNOLDS FAMILY EXHIBITION 24-30 JUNE

Sisters Joanna and Kate Reynolds, both longstanding members of Anglian Potters, will be showing their ceramics and mixed media work at Artspace, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 1AL, from 24th-30th June. The exhibition will also include some of their late father, Bernard Reynolds', sculpture, drawings and prints and their late mother, Gwynneth Reynolds', paintings. All works will be for sale. Bernard and Gwynneth Reynolds were well-known figures in the art world of East Anglia, Bernard having assisted Henry Moore, created public commissioned sculptures around Ipswich and Norwich as well as having a long teaching career in sculpture at The Suffolk College. Gwynneth Reynolds made paintings, inspired by gardens and plants, typical of Cedric Morris's East Anglian School of painting in Hadleigh, Suffolk, where she was taught in the 1950s. Many years later she documented her time there, amongst other artists' reminiscences, in the book she compiled, *Benton End Remembered*. The Reynolds sisters hope the exhibition will celebrate their creative heritage, their family influences, and be of interest to the art lovers of East Anglia.

COVER

Ray Auker
Cauliflower Teapot

Photograph
Ray Auker

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The Keith Brymer Jones 'Teapot Challenge' (this page) has afforded the opportunity to look a little more closely at the subject with a view to proffering advice and inspiration to those choosing to pick up the gauntlet. Within this edition there is a little background history of the development of ceramics in Britain; a guide to teapot construction; a comprehensive gallery of teapots by contemporary makers; a closer look at the work of Jeremy Nichols; the solving of a thirty-year old mystery and a selected item from the archives.

I am indebted to members who donated images of teapots for the 'gallery' pages and thank members for their contributions. The response was astounding and I hope that the owners of images which are not published will forgive my leaving them in the file for another edition.

Thanks to Sheila Madder, Martin George, Chris Bullock, Ray Auker, Jeremy Nichols, Maureen Flannery and Maureen Minchin for their articles and the various people who have helped with research and the supply of images with particular thanks to Linda Clark, Images Librarian at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and Lucy Lead, Archivist at the Wedgwood Museum, Stoke-on-Trent and the images library staff at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

The story of the development of ceramics in England from the arrival of teapots in the seventeenth century to present day studio pottery is fascinating and I have just scratched the surface. The secret is to realise when the time has come to stop scratching.

If you are taking up the teapot challenge, I wish you well and I hope that some of the contributions to this edition will be of use and will inspire you.

Peter Warren

KEITH BRYMER JONES TEAPOT CHALLENGE

Who will be the one to bring Keith to tears
in the teapot challenge?

I was very sad that we had to cancel Keith's demonstration day in Mundford this year due to Covid-19. However, I was equally delighted that we could arrange the Zoom demonstration which was fully booked within 24 hours: what a great response! All being well, Keith will be doing a live demonstration for us in January 2022 when he will judge the teapots.

"The Quintessential challenge for any potter, a perfectly functioning teapot. It can be thrown, coiled or slab built as long as it works and looks beautiful and interesting." If you already make teapots please challenge yourself and experiment: we need to see Keith cry.

Good luck, members, you have exactly seven months to complete this challenge.

Trudy Heather Staines

SHEILA MADDER: LOCKDOWN INSPIRATION



The seemingly never-ending lockdowns and exhibition cancellations throughout the last year have really freed up my calendar. Usually, I would have been frantically making pots for the upcoming shows. However, in March 2020, upon my return from a lovely holiday in Wales (visiting sculptor Felicity Lloyd-Coombes' amazing farm) the exhibition cancellation emails started flooding my inbox.

While the UK plunged into lockdown, I was lucky enough still to have access to my workshop. My main body of work is slip cast coloured porcelain tableware. Being frugal and conscious to minimise my waste, I keep all my coloured trimmings and scraps. This has inevitably led to many buckets full of colourful scraps of clay which, when reclaimed and wedged together, turn into an unpleasant brown-green colour. As I stood in my workshop listening to the news talking about a long lockdown, I decided to do something with those buckets of scraps. Images of the Coronavirus were everywhere at the time, though when I looked out of my window it was nowhere to be seen. I started sculpting it, trying to make the invisible visible, picturing the garden full of colourful

porcelain virus particles. Being predominantly a mould-maker and slip-caster, my hand-building skills were rusty. My first attempts cracked and broke apart while drying, and it didn't help that I was using reclaimed porcelain slip for hand-building. After a while, hand-building skills returned to me and I managed to make my first large COVID-19 virus cell. I made lots of little ones to go around it and dated each month of the first lockdown on the bottom of them.

The rainbow, having long been a symbol of hope and togetherness swiftly became the image to bring the nation together during these difficult times. Rainbows and 'Thank You NHS' banners started popping up everywhere: hanging in windows, painted onto walls, adding a splash of colour and joy to the world. For the last few years, I have wanted to make rainbow-themed work but was never brave enough to attempt it. Feeling inspired and emboldened by the rainbows all around me, I decided that now was the perfect time.

Anglian Potters were putting on their first online show with a charity hug challenge. This also helped encourage me finally to make some rainbow mugs.

My favourite ended up being sold during the hug challenge and the rest were sold separately with 50% of the profits also going towards the Nelson's Journey charity.

As the pandemic raged on, I started seeing blue surgical masks discarded on the street, as though they are the new crisp packets and cigarette ends, dirty and sun bleached. I see these discarded masks as a symbol of the current times. People walk past them, afraid to think of what might lurk unseen. Now whenever I look at a discarded mask, I visualise it covered in virus particles. With this image stuck in my head for months, I finally decided to create it. I made a classic blue surgical mask out of porcelain. The porcelain symbolises the strength and purity of the mask, yet much like a real mask that strength of protection can be easily shattered if treated incorrectly. I created varying sizes of virus particles for the inside of the mask, rainbow Corona peeking out at the edges where the breath would have escaped, a juxtaposition of the danger threatening to escape, and the hope for the future just around the corner.

Looking back on this last year, I have found the pandemic quite inspirational. Spending the days playing with clay in my workshop has been a fantastic source of catharsis, as well as allowing me the time to develop and evolve my style and skills as a potter. Now that the vaccines are being rolled out and there appears to be some light at the end of the tunnel, I have been tentatively applying for craft shows for the second half of the year. All going well, I look forward to seeing my fellow Anglian Potters there.

Sheila Madder





Photographs: Sheila Madder

TEAPOTS: The Development of English Pottery 1600 to 1846



David and John Philip Elers, 1690-1698 Bradwell Wood, Staffordshire. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

The East India Company, founded in 1600 by Royal Charter from Queen Elizabeth I, was responsible for the transporting of millions of teapots and tons of tea from China to England for almost three hundred years. During that period the ceramic industry in England developed through several stages, to such a point, at the end of the eighteenth century, that English pottery was considered to be the world's finest. The East India Company ceased trading in Chinese porcelain in 1791.

According to legend, the Chinese Emperor Shen Nung is credited with being the first person to have, inadvertently, produced an infusion of tea in 2737 B.C.

By the ninth century A.D. tea drinking had acquired a reputation for its medicinal qualities. Various processes would have been used over the many

centuries culminating in the generally-agreed principle that leaves introduced to boiling water within lidded vessels produced a better infusion. Such lidded vessels would, originally, have been the size of small drinking bowls and made of either porcelain or red clay. But it is worth giving some consideration to the developments in the ceramic 'industry' in England following the introduction of tea and its accompanying utensils in the early seventeenth century.

17 Century Europe

The turmoil caused by the political state of Europe in the first half of the seventeenth century is

worth bearing in mind when considering ceramic manufacture. Although Italy and Spain had been at the forefront of the Renaissance with sophisticated patronage and the development of consumerism, Europe underwent major mercantile shifts. The Thirty Years War, concluded in 1648, involved most European nations at some stage and, although its main protagonists were France and Spain, the ramifications were far-reaching. The war had a devastating effect on the continent, causing widespread disease, famine, and vast areas of evacuation, depopulation, and, subsequently, the complete decline of former states and a shifting of power towards France and the German states. At the same time, the Dutch had been pursuing an eight-year-long struggle for independence from Spain and, in England, the nine years of brutal civil

war brought about the trial and execution of King Charles I in 1642.

Tea and Coffee Drinking and the desire for Porcelain

During the 17th century the drinking of coffee and social gatherings in coffee houses had

become firmly established. Probably emanating from Portugal and steadily spreading throughout Europe, such coffee houses provided places for the meeting of the prosperous classes: places which were informal liberal public institutions. In what was one of the most turbulent times in British history, coffee houses were seen as sanctuaries where discussions could be held in comfort and safety. The vessels or 'coffee dishes' for drinking the coffee were made of clay.

The drinking of tea was even more popular and part of its attraction was the curious and delicate equipment required for it to be consumed. With the tea from China, therefore, came teapots of both impervious red clay (Yixing) and porcelain (Jingdezhen). The pure white porcelain body with its blue decoration became a very desirable acquisition amongst the steadily growing middle classes. They sat very comfortably with the aspirations of the wealthy: a status symbol representing sophisticated and high-ranking modernism.

By 1650 Porcelain was pouring into Europe. In the years between 1540 and 1650 it was estimated that 46,000 pieces were shipped to Portugal each year. The amount of ware brought from China to Northern Europe escalated massively to such an extent that an observer of the day claimed that, "The quantity of it is so great that whole fleets, let alone single ships, could be laden with it". Single cargoes of 200,000 pieces were not uncommon throughout the seventeenth century and this figure was regularly exceeded during the eighteenth century. By the end of the eighteenth century at least 300 million pieces of porcelain had been brought to Europe.

The Dutch were the first to import teapots: red clay wares from Yixing which were mingled with mountains of blue and white decorated porcelain. They sold them to the English who anxiously bought them up. When transported from China, the teapots were stored in the bottom of the ships where they could be utilised as ballast; they could withstand a little water without much ill effect, while the tea was stored, with other goods, above, away from the water.

From the middle of the seventeenth century, the British East India Company attempted to satisfy the growing need with increased imports but by the beginning of the eighteenth century British potters made the form their own by developing kiln technologies



Nanking, China, Export Porcelain Teapot circa 1780

and clay bodies and developing working practices. There is precise evidence of the beginnings of a change from the importing of German and Dutch salt glazed stoneware. It is widely acknowledged that, at this time, the British were consumers of large amounts of alcohol. Two important innovations caused a shift in the balance. By 1650, the drinking of both coffee and tea had become extremely popular and the deployment of porcelain to facilitate such consumption became an important acquisition for British families. The second, and perhaps more critical factor, is the patent granted to John Dwight in 1762 to make stoneware at Fulham. Dwight faced competition from a number of factories opening across the country: Nottingham, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Lancashire, Northumberland and the West Country. Such competition led to Dwight's taking legal action against those factories but with only limited degrees of success, the production of English salt glazed wares became common.

Elers Brothers Red Teapots

A notable litigate success for Dwight was against the Elers brothers: two Dutchmen of German extraction, John Philip and David who are recorded as practising their trade at the Crown and Sceptre near St Clement's church, London, in 1686. Their father, Martin, is known to have had dealings in East Indian rarities in 1672 whilst their uncle dealt in expensive Oriental china and 'lackery ware' at his shop in St Mary-le-Bow. They produced red coloured stoneware teapots in a manner emulating those of the Yixing potters, some of which were octagonal in shape rather than round, with applied sprigging. There is a certain mystique and intrigue about the Elers brothers' production. They were silversmiths by trade and applied their transferred skills to producing pots which were made in moulds and then turned by lathe to obtain an extremely thin body. It is clear that the red clay they used was dug from a plentiful and excellent seam of red haematite at Bradwell Wood, Staffordshire. It is also clear that pots were made by the brothers at Bradwell but what is not entirely clear is whether they transported the pots to London for sale in the Poultry, Cheapside, or whether they brought the clay to their establishment in Vauxhall for further production. Confusion arises out of what appears to have been an out-of-court settlement between the brothers

and John Dwight. A communication from Martin Lister, a leading naturalist of the day, to the Royal Society in 1693 states:

"I have this to add, that this clay, Haematites, is as good, if not better than that which is brought from the East Indies. Witness the Tea-Pots now to be sold at the Potters in the Poultry, in Cheapside, which not only for Art, but for beautiful colour too, are far beyond any we have seen from China. These are made from the English Haematites in Staffordshire, as I take it, by two Dutchmen incomparable artists."

The problem was that the Elers' production methods were extremely slow. The teapots, round or octagonal, were all painstakingly produced and their methods were time-consuming and conducted in a degree of secrecy. The result was that, at market, an Elers teapot cost 7d while the Yixing teapots were only 5d: probably one of the reasons that the brothers were declared bankrupt in 1700. They sold their assets in Vauxhall and John Philip is understood to have been set up as a merchant by Lady Barrington in Dublin, supplying quantities of Chinese porcelain bought from the East India Company.

It is said that while working at Bradwell, the Elers brothers, in order to preserve the secrecy of their production methods, employed only 'local idiots'. The waters of this part of ceramic history are considerably muddled by the myth circulated by Simeon Shaw over a century later, in his book *History of Staffordshire Potteries*, that Joshua Twyford and Thomas Astbury had insinuated themselves into the Elers' Pottery by feigning idiocy, after which they stole the secrets in order to exploit them for themselves and their fellow potters.

English Delftware

The general term 'Delftware' refers to earthenware which has been dipped in tin glaze and then decorated with oxides painted on to the powdered surface of the glaze. The oxides were predominantly cobalt but manganese and, later, red iron and antimony were also used.

Although the role of Delftware was an important one in the development of ceramics in Britain during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the 'genre' was not the most suitable for the production of teapots given that the tin glazed earthenware was not heat resistant to the degree required to accept boiling water.

The growing prosperity of England under Elizabeth I provided a fertile ground for immigrant Dutch craftspeople, notably weavers, to establish manufactures of luxury goods. Amongst the new skills were the secrets of making painted maiolica which arrived via Italian workers who had first settled in Antwerp.

Assisted by other Flemish potters, Jacob Janson moved to Aldgate from Antwerp in 1571 to produce tiles and pharmacy pots using the same Norfolk and Suffolk clay beds, which had previously been exported to Antwerp, and tin and clay from Cornwall which could easily be transported by sea. Aldgate pottery moved to Southwark and the Flemish quarter of London. Further potteries were established at Pickleherring Quay and Montague Close.

The arrival of the first large cargoes of Chinese blue and white porcelain, 30 tons, in Amsterdam through the capture of the Portugese galleys San Iago in 1602 and the Santa Catarina in 1604 created



English Delftware Teapot. Johnathan Chilwell, Vauxhall, London 1720 ©2019 John Howard



Thomas Whieldon and Josiah Wedgwood teapot 1760-1765
DAR Museum Washington DC USA

a demand that only locally-made copies could satisfy. The East India company's porcelain imports were affordable only by the upper classes but the delftware served as a cheaper alternative and was more sophisticated than the commonly used lead glazed earthenware.

By the late seventeenth century Chinese blue and white porcelain was being emulated by the delftware potters and the Yixing red ware, by the Elers brothers and John Dwight. By the early 18th century, the industry fuelled a demand at every social level for blue and white. There was a great expansion of the industry and potteries were established in Bristol, Liverpool, Glasgow and Belfast, all ports with facilities for exporting ware to the New World and elsewhere. By the middle of the century, the increased import of Chinese ware by the East India Company and the rise of the Staffordshire creamware potteries meant that the call for delftware could not be maintained. Beautifully decorated though it was, delftware was easily broken and could not compete with the strong white porcelain and stoneware which were extremely tough and heat resistant. The Pennington factory in Liverpool was able to produce a salt glazed vitrified stoneware with an extra firing of tin glaze which was resistant to boiling water and, therefore, ideal for teaware. This and other improvements, however, were no match for the mass-produced Staffordshire creamwares and, by the end of the century all the Liverpool factories had closed.

Salt Glazed Ware

Salt glazed pottery had been known in England from at least 1500 and, paradoxically, it was the humble brown glazed stoneware that could lay claim for the great rise of the Staffordshire potteries during the eighteenth century.

stoneware, glazed or not, had the unique advantage of being immensely strong, capable of being lathe-turned to the thinness of porcelain and of being impervious to liquids.

In the early 1600s it is certain that nobody in England had any knowledge of the whereabouts of suitable clays, details of high temperature kiln designs or of the salt glazing process. Unidentified German potters set up a kiln at Woolwich Ferry bringing their own moulds, equipment and German clay in 1636 but it wasn't until 1672 that John Dwight secured his fourteen-year patent. Despite the patent it proved impossible to prevent the highly active Thameside potteries of Lambeth and Southwark from discovering and exploiting the secrets of salt glazing. With rich supplies of coal available in the county and access to rock salt from nearby Cheshire, the salt glazing potteries of Staffordshire flourished during the first part of the eighteenth century.

Creamware and Josiah Wedgwood

Innovation in Staffordshire came about largely by the clustering of businesses and a good deal of interaction between factories thereby achieving continual improvement. Improved communication systems increased the size of the market massively. The historian George Miller described the increased sense of industrial energy as follows:

In the second half of the eighteenth century, a revolution took place

By the time of its decline in the 1600s, an estimated ten million brown beer mugs and bottles were shipped, by Dutch merchants, along the Rhine from pottery centres in Raeren, Cologne and Frechen. Unlike the lead glazed earthenware produced in England, vitrified

in the ceramic industry. This period saw the introduction of transfer printing, calcinated flint, liquid glazes, Cornish clays, calcinated bone, canals for transporting raw materials and finished products into and out of the potteries, steam power for working clay and pottery, tariffs against Chinese porcelain, favourable trade treaties with the Continent, and astute marketing of creamware which culminated in English domination of world tableware trade by the 1790s.

The North Staffordshire potteries had the advantages of being sited on coalfields which were close to the surface and having access to seams of fire clay which were essential for the building of kilns and saggers. It is estimated that it would have taken between five and twelve tons of coal to fire just one ton of pottery.

Miller went on to inform his readers that the marketing of creamware wreaked havoc in the pottery industry both at home and on the Continent. Tin glazed ware, white salt-glazed stoneware, and to some extent even oriental porcelain, were displaced from the market.

Several producers ran establishments of considerable size and sophistication and had widespread reputations and recognisable products. Enoch Booth, for example, is widely recognised as the initiator of creamware, William Greatbatch the production of cauliflower and pineapple ware using the recently introduced plaster moulds for both slip casting and press moulding, and Thomas Whieldon the producer of tortoiseshell pottery and agate ware. It is clear that such potters worked closely together. For example, a company with a large order might seek the help of other companies in fulfilling their commitments: a sense of working collectively to satisfy a



Josiah Wedgwood cream coloured earthenware teapot with Guy Green print Circa 1780. © The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge



Soft-Paste Porcelain Teapot. Lowestoft Porcelain Factory circa 1765.

Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA

requirement.

Josiah Wedgwood was a product of this system and he most certainly took every aspect of the trade to a much higher level, utilising innovation and globalising the industry. With the development of the ability to print onto glazed pottery surface by the Liverpool printers, Sadler and Green, Wedgwood hired a wagon from Mr Morris, the carrier, of Lawton, to take pottery to and from Liverpool on a fortnightly basis, by roads, such as they were at that time. Such journeys, often using pack horses, were not conducive to the safe transport of pottery. The completion of the Trent and Mersey Canal in 1777 which passed Wedgwood's factory at Etruria, and which Wedgwood was involved in the construction of, greatly aided, not only the carrying of pottery to Liverpool for decoration but, also for the exporting of completed work through the port to the New World and for the transportation of raw materials brought to the canal, and then to Staffordshire, by sea from Devon and Cornwall. The Trent and Mersey canal was used even more effectively to transport pottery to the River Humber and the port of Hull on the east coast and thence to Europe and, particularly, the Russian market.

Given the close working relationships of the Staffordshire manufacturers, it is something of a surprise that Wedgwood, instead of using local artisans, transported his wares to the enamel painters Josiah Robinson and David Rhodes in Leeds for on-glaze decoration. Further, in 1768, Wedgwood employed Rhodes to oversee the painting of his Queensware range at his newly established enamel painting studio in Chelsea. In 1774 Wedgwood was able to display his 952-piece Frog Service at his London showroom which was destined for the palace of Catherine the Great.

German states.

The development of hard-paste porcelain after the discovery of china clay in Cornwall in 1768 by William Cookworthy, promoted the rise of factories in Plymouth, Bristol, Caughley, Worcester, Derby, Lowestoft, Bow, and Chelsea amongst others producing teapots in the blue and white Chinese style: all reducing the reliance on imports from China to the extent that the East India Company ceased to import porcelain in 1791.

Pottery Workers

Despite such apparent success of the industry and the wealth of factory owners, pottery workers suffered long periods of hardship. The Napoleonic Wars had prohibited all trade with Europe and the wars with America had greatly limited the exporting of pottery to the New World. Pottery which had been made was stored in warehouses and production was minimalised. There was a shortage of food and wages for workers were greatly reduced. The introduction of steam powered machinery for printing and press moulding meant great reductions in the workforce and major strikes occurred in the 1820s and 1830s. Workers were forced to move away to secure employment. The Potters'

By 1780, with the addition of Basalt, Jasper and Cane wares to his range, 80% of Wedgwood's output was exported and by 1790 he had agents in Antwerp, Amsterdam, St Petersburg, Italy and the

Joint Stock Emigration Society, for example, proposed to raise £5,000 to purchase 12,000 acres of land in Wisconsin to accommodate any potters whose livelihoods were affected by the new machinery. The founding and subsequent failure of Pottersville was an ill-conceived disaster.

Nineteenth Century and the next stage

During the nineteenth century potters were able to revolutionise the mass manufacture of ceramics. Mechanised decoration; the perfection of creamware, pearlware and bone china, all led to Britain being established as the most dominant and innovative producer in the western world. As a result of the Reform Act of 1832, almost every aspect of British life and business was under scrutiny. Schools of Design were established and companies such as Spode and Minton along with Wedgwood were able to set high standards at the Great Exhibitions of 1851 and subsequent international trade fairs.

The pathways were now open to even greater innovation: the philosophical studies of Ruskin, Pugin and Morris, The Arts and Crafts Movement, and the introduction of Art Pottery studios and individual artists: George Tinworth at Royal Doulton in Lambeth, for example, William De Morgan at Fulham, Charles Voisey, Richard Joyce, Gladys Rodgers, W. S. Mycock and Gordon Forsyth at Pilkington's Lancastrian Pottery and Bernard Moore and William Moorcroft in Stoke-on-Trent. These were to be the forerunners in the development of the individual studio potter.

Peter Warren



Worcester Teapot, circa 1770

© Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA

CELEBRITY TEAPOT GALLERY



Walter Keeler

Photograph: Ray Auker



Colin Saunders

Photograph: Ray Auker



Robert Wickens

Photograph: Kate Reynolds



Alan Burgess

Photograph: Alan Burgess



Sue Bruce

Photograph: Sandy Larkeman



Jayne Hamblyn

Photograph: Joy Vaisey



Mike Dodd

Photograph: Vivienne Rodwell Davies



Steve Harrison

Photograph: Vivienne Rodwell Davies



Susie Atkins

Photograph: Margaret Gardiner



Andrew Holden

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Ian Godfrey

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Peter Starkey

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CELEBRITY TEAPOTS GALLERY



Photograph: Rima Page

Matthew Blakely



Photograph: Kate Reynolds

Morgan Hall



Photograph: Tudy Heather Staines

Peter Swailes



Photograph: Margaret Gardiner

Nick Chapman



Photograph: Ian Vance

David Leach



Photograph: Sara Wilkinson

Andrew and Joanna Young



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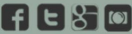
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RAKU DAY – 29TH MARCH 2021



As the Covid Lockdown eased, we held our first Raku Day for over a year. The four people in attendance – Nuala, Barbara, Julian and Chris – social distanced and wore masks throughout the day. One advantage of the masks was that they helped to keep the worst of the smoke from the two home-made kilns and reduction bins from being breathed in.

The kilns were built last year, one by Julian, and one by Barbara and Chris at their home in Ardleigh, Essex.

Armed with a mountain of pots, a selection of glazes – mostly home-made, feathers from our geese, fur from our dog, and hair from Barbara's head; we were ready to let battle commence.

Being quite new to Raku firing, this

proved to be our most successful attempt so far, with over 10 firings in the day, relatively few losses and an improved efficiency in setting up and putting away. The arrangements worked well with two people per kiln, which allowed a rapid production line to get through the majority of pots and minimize time between firings. This even allowed time for the pots to be pre-warmed in the cooling kiln, before



subjecting them to the rapid heat of the gas burners.

With the balancing of orange-hot pots in our tongs, singed eyebrows, and steam-quenching in water, we were pleased and excited as each item became cool enough to handle. The variety that four different potters could plan and make was amazing – it was a fantastic experience.

Nuala had the largest item which only just fitted in a kiln when stood on its side – it survived with some subtle colours to make a nice leaf-patterned dish.

Barbara had made three coiled penguins, two of

which survived to make a striking pair.

Julian had a nice piggy-bank and some strange human forms which were unusual and impressive.

Chris was selected as 'Potter of the Week' with his white vase decorated with hair, dog fur and sugar.

We decided it best to bring our own sandwiches to reduce contact, but tea/coffee and cakes were provided by Barbara and Chris.

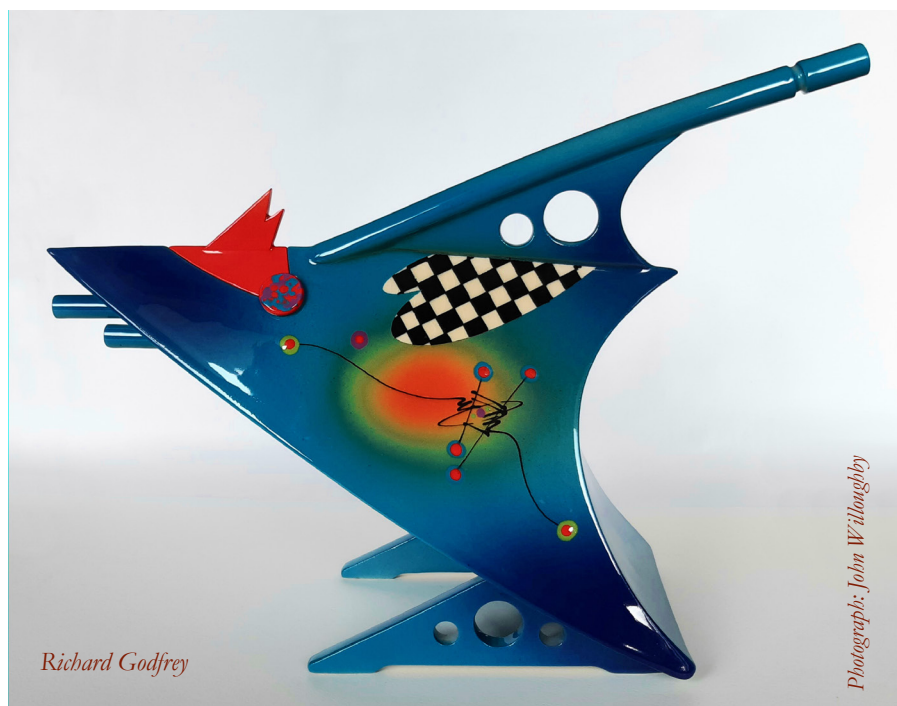
An added bonus was that Nuala and Julian were able to collect clay from the Clay Store without an extra trip.

We hope to hold another Raku Day in a few months time with, possibly 6 people and three kilns – we will have to start making more pots now!

Chris Bullock

Photographs: Chris Bullock

RICHARD GODFREY



Richard Godfrey's work combined thrown and hand built forms made with white earthenware clay, inspired by observing his surroundings and found objects. His teapots were often made using non-traditional press moulding techniques, utilising cut cardboard boxes. Hannah McAndrew has described Richard's work as, "Bright beasts, immaculately made, vibrant and smiling".



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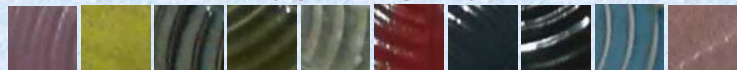
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DUSTBIN KILN RAKU



Hopefully people who have made kilns or are thinking about it will want to fire a Raku kiln. If you need a reminder, in the absence of camp, I thought I'd write down a guide to Raku firing. I hope it's comprehensive enough but if anyone wants more: my number is 07268180783, and I'm happy to talk through any problems.

I usually biscuit fire to about 920°C. If you have burnished your pot then don't biscuit above 960°C, and I see no need to go above 900. If you have grogged clay then great, but this is not essential, it just means you have less risk of breakages, but will have a less smooth pot. You can Raku any clay from earthenware to porcelain, but the earthenware clay is far more fragile than stoneware (at least at the beginning of the firing process, below 120°C).

Bottles and vases are great, but plates or things with a large footprint are difficult as you are often placing the pot onto a very hot kiln shelf. Thrown ware is best as there are no joins which can fall apart.

Hopefully you have made your pots and biscuit fired them. Bat wash all kiln shelves. Raku is a messy business with glaze running off pots, or falling off if they are too wet.

You need a small shelf in the kiln at the bottom, on top of the ceramic fibre (**photo 1**). This allows you to put kiln shelf supports in the bottom of the kiln on a level. A second shelf, (here I have used two kiln shelves to maximise the floor area and also have a gap for the

heat to circulate above the kiln shelf), goes on above the flame entry level on stilts. This raises the ware and allows the flame to roll around the kiln *under* the pots, (**photo 2**). The burner needs to be at an angle so that the flame rolls around in a spiral fashion and spreads over the kiln evenly. Even if you have a square kiln, doing this will spread the heat over the kiln, (**photo 3**). If your flame is going in square it won't work well.

When you load the kiln don't over pack it. Do not treat it as a normal kiln. Remember you are removing the pots at

1000°C and they are sticky. If they touch each other they will not come apart easily. If needed, practice removing them when cold. Always mentally pack the kiln with a view to getting the pots out in an order that allows this: i.e. usually big pots first out.

You only have one layer in a Raku kiln, don't be tempted to have two shelves.



Remember Raku is fast: there is no need to pack a kiln closely, you can fire again. The first firing is when the kiln is cold. This is an advantage if you have some delicate pots (flat ware) or earthenware pots, or you are firing from green; this is possible but you must go VERY slowly at first and start off with dry pots. Once the kiln has been fired it will retain most of its heat. If you then stack in flat ware or bowls with a flat base there is a high risk they will crack at the base. You can use a cold shard of broken kiln shelf to give a cool surface for your pot to stand on.

Alternatively balance the pot on edge so that it stands at the perimeter of the kiln. This makes it easy to get out and if you have a clean base it will not stick to the walls of the kiln. This is great if you want to fire tiles or plates. (see flat ware (dark tile) balanced on right hand kiln wall in **photo 4**).

It's best to leave pots that have been glazed overnight to dry, but it's not so much fun and Raku is immediate. Always clean any surface of any glaze that is in contact with the kiln as it will stick when the glaze fluxes. I would try to leave them for 20mins after glazing and this is usually while the previous kiln load is firing. Warm them by the kiln or on the kiln lid. If they are too wet the glaze usually peels off. If this happens then remove the pots (clean the shelf) and start again.

When packing a hot kiln leave it for about 5 minutes to cool down before reloading; this will help new pots survive the hot kiln. Also when you have repacked a warm kiln leave the lid off for 5 mins and then have another 5 mins with the lid on for the pots to warm up slowly, before you ignite the burner.

When you start the kiln be careful to have the burner OFF before you open the valve on the bottle. If you have everything open (when you re-open the bottle) the kiln will fill with gas before you have ignited it. When you do it will go off with a bang. This is not very dangerous as there is not a great amount of gas in the kiln but it is loud and disconcerting.

The placement of the burner is quite important. DO NOT push it too close to the kiln. Have it at least 4" away. This will allow oxygen into the burner and it will burn better. Experiment with the placing to get the hottest flame. This often depends on the amount the burner is turned up to. Usually as you turn the flame up you move the flame away so more oxygen is gathered.

This is where the thermocouple comes in. A 'K' type will do but try to avoid going over 1000°C with them. They are less than £5 on ebay. A cheap meter will cost about £30. In Raku firing, you don't really worry about temperature, you do it by colour, and the amount the glaze has fluxed. However if you have a thermocouple then use it to view how the temperature is increasing or decreasing when you alter the flame, in



this way you get a better understanding of the heat going into the kiln and the firing is quicker and more efficient.

You are aiming to hit about 1000°C, but this is not critical and you don't *need* a thermocouple. This should take less than an hour and when the kiln is firing consistently it will only take 20 mins to get to temperature.

Raku gives you the opportunity to watch the firing as it progresses. At first things are dull and colourless, but as the temperature rises the pots start to glow. The glaze will then start to flux. This is seen when the glaze expands and bubbles on the surface of the pot. If your pots are packed tight there is a chance that glazes will bleed from one pot to another at this point. Leaving at least an inch between pots to avoid this cross over.

As the temperature rises past 800°C the glaze will start to calm down and flux around the pot. Keep firing and watch the changes. The kiln colour will change from red to orange and then yellow. It will then start to glow white. This is about the correct time to remove pots. However, not all glazes behave in the same way, so look at the pots, particularly bowls which have the glaze pooling at the bottom. These often bubble and you really need to leave the firing until all the bubbles have burst and the glaze is smooth and flat. This is why Raku kilns are top loading and have a window in the lid so you can see inside the pots. It is possible but much more difficult with a side loading kiln. Using a torch to shine into the top is really valuable, as you can see how liquid the glaze is (they

look wet). If you have over glazed a bowl it can take a considerable time (an hour) to flux properly so that all bubbles have burst.

Now the fun really starts. But so does the danger. Raku is dangerous because you are working in the kiln at maximum temperatures. ALWAYS wear sensible footwear, no open-toed sandals. Feet are the most vulnerable in a Raku firing. Always wear good gloves (Kevlar are the best) but good welding gloves are cheap and obtainable from

ebay. You can also get arm gloves that protect the whole arm and are a Godsend. DO NOT get gloves wet or they will lose a lot of their protection. Have a spare pair around if this happens. If you have long hair, TIE it up, it may fall into the inspection hole.

You now need to remove the kiln lid. Do this wearing gloves and place the lid (HOT SIDE IN) against the side of the kiln. Be aware that it is still very hot.

Be aware that you are working with molten glass. If it touches another pot or the kiln shelf as you are removing it, there will often be a long glass hair emerging from the bottom of the pot. This can be VERY sharp and needs breaking off.

Remove the pots with a good pair of tongs that you are comfortable working with.

Alternatively if you have a lot of bottles



to fire, you can use a metal rod to lift the bottle via its neck opening. This is skilful. Using tongs is easier.

You now have a choice. If you want bright colours, place the pots on a brick and leave them to cool outside the kiln. This will allow the pot to remain oxidised

and the base colour of the clay (unglazed parts of the pot) will remain the same (usually grey). However most Raku artists *reduce* the colours of the glazes to bring out the metallic colours of the oxides in the glaze. To do this remove the pots as quickly as possible (if you want a crackle then wave the pot about for 30 seconds this rapidly cools the surface before plunging it into a bin of sawdust or newspaper (anything that burns). Place a lid on the bin to exclude oxygen. If you are using sawdust, pat it down to put out all fire and leave it (this will stop the smoke, often completely. Consider your neighbours).

Be aware that the thicker the pot is (especially at its base), the hotter it will remain. This will cause it to reduce heavily. Reduction will cause any unglazed area to go matt black. Reduction is just a chemical reaction. The glaze is usually coloured by metal oxides; if these get plenty of oxygen they remain oxidised (and bright), but if you 'reduce' the oxygen by burning (or in gas and wood kilns stopping all air flow), they will burn up all the oxygen around. Flame needs oxygen or it will go out (fire extinguishers). The flame does not want to go out, so once all the local oxygen is used up it grabs it from wherever it can; in this case the glaze. This 'reduces' the amount of oxygen in the glaze and results in changing metal oxide (metal + oxygen) to just metal. Copper and other metal oxides will undergo a large, and noticeable colour change.

Leave the pot in the burning bin for anything from 20 mins to overnight: there will be little difference.

Remove it with gloves as it will probably be very hot. You can then douse it in water in a bucket, which will cool it. This is how the Japanese did it when the west discovered the technique in the late 1950s. However this will cause a great deal of stress within the pots and many will break. It's a party trick, and very exciting but to my mind not worth the risk.

Let the pot air cool and then clean the pot with water and a Brillo pad (or any abrasive). This will reveal the pot in all its glory and hopefully it will be very pleasing.

Keep potting.

Martin George

CONSIDERATIONS FOR TEAPOT CONSTRUCTION



Teapots come in all shapes and sizes and some of the more outlandish forms are obviously designed for novelty collectors rather than for brewing a cup of tea. But if you want to make a teapot that is both functional and aesthetically pleasing there are some basic things to consider.

First, the fabric of the teapot must be able to survive the thermal shock of having boiling water poured into it and it should also be capable of keeping the tea warm. It must allow hot liquid to be poured out in a controlled way and it will also need to be easily emptied and cleaned. Other functional considerations essential for safe use include the need for it to be balanced in its actions, to have a stable base and to feel secure when held by a suitable handle that keeps fingers away from the hot surface of the pot. It should not feel too heavy or too light. Aesthetics are just as important in handling as in looking! In addition the lid needs to fit securely so it doesn't fall out too easily when tipped, the opening at the top of the pot shouldn't hinder the water being poured in or being emptied out and the area of the body where the spout is connected should be pierced to act as a strainer for loose tea or to stop teabags blocking the flow in the spout.

Importantly, the rituals associated with tea drinking, which is often a shared experience, can be best served by a generous form. My wife Isobel's Irish relatives could always offer a 'hot drop' when you were halfway down your cup. Teapots have always served a social agenda even when tea was an extremely expensive commodity and, as a result, their forms have evolved to accommodate this. Teapots have tended to stay quite similar in shape, the result of design built out of function. Having

said that, my own teapot form has as much to do with the shape of a Tang jar as it has to do with commercially produced slip cast teapots such as, for example, English tea ware of the 1760s.

A generous globular teapot offers the best shape in terms of capacity but, certainly in a thrown body, it has the additional advantage of coping with thermal

shock since there are no sharp corners to form stress points. Such a globular form requires a turned foot-ring that echoes the internal shape of the thrown body and provides stability. If too squat, a rounded shape could present difficulties when attaching a handle to the side by leaving insufficient room for the fingers to avoid touching the hot body. While handles should offer confidence to the user by their appearance and by being fit for purpose they should not dominate by being too clunky! The positioning of a handle will make a lot of difference to the balance. I like to pull handles with a thicker central core and tapered edges to give both strength & elegance. Another consideration might well be the visual proportion relative to the spout on the opposite side. Of course, other types of handles can be used on teapots including bamboo, wood and even plastic tubing.

The spout needs to pour well and a key factor in achieving this is the relationship between the strainer holes and the size of the exit hole, the combined area of all the smaller holes must be greater than the area of the hole at the lip. A thrown spout needs to be thrown quickly and be thinner at the lip. A spout that has been thrown hesitantly will have more of a tendency to twist in firing and adjustment needs to be made for this even in a quickly thrown spout if the lip is to be cut back. How much adjustment, can only be judged by trial and error, but a guide would be what is known as 'twenty to two', in other words, slightly higher on the left. Does it drip? This is often the first question asked by potential buyers. There always needs to be a compromise between having a sharp edge on the lip and being easily chipped. I have found it best to leave the outside

edge softly rounded, but with a sharper inside edge, achieved by rubbing with a round tool. I use a section of broken radio aerial, which also serves to cut the holes in the strainer. Yet another consideration is to make sure the holes in the strainer are big enough to take account of a glaze layer. Always blow down the spout when glazing to ensure the holes are not blocked!

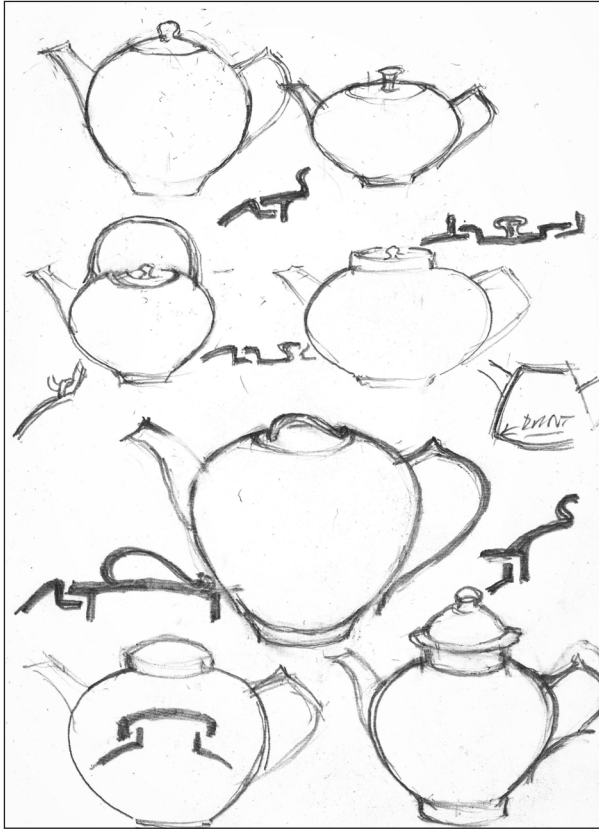
The teapot lid has a vital role in closing off the form, so to function and fit properly, it needs to be measured accurately. In addition, the knob or handle on the lid must be comfortable to hold. I distinguish between what I call a fitted lid against what to my mind is just a cover (see drawing opposite). While this form is quick and easy to make it is often unpleasing both to use and in appearance.

All these separate functional considerations must be combined in a way that works aesthetically so that the whole form is pleasing to the eye. I see no difference in the decisions I make in putting together a teapot or when making any other three-dimensional piece of work.

I will end with a description of glazing a teapot. Since I fire with my lids in place, I start by very carefully painting with wax the gallery and any areas on the lid that will touch the gallery. Then with a thumb over the spout I pour the glaze inside the teapot using a small funnel and a jug to prevent drips of glaze on the outside. The glaze is swirled around under the gallery and into the spout and then poured quickly out through the spout. With a hand inside the lid hole, I tip the body upside down and lean back the teapot so that any drips from the spout are at the top edge, away from the pouring lip. As soon as possible I blow sharply down the spout to clear the glaze from the strainer. Before dipping or spraying I roll a small piece of clay and insert it into the spout to stop any glaze running inside. The outside can be dipped immediately or once the inside is dry. If you leave it and the outside of the spout looks damp, dry it with a hair dryer.

So many considerations and so many challenges to overcome and, after all this effort, perhaps the last consideration of all might be 'How much can I charge for this teapot?'

Ray Auker



Drawing: Ray Auker

RAY AUKER'S BIG TEAPOT

Ray Auker is synonymous with teapot making. This is a slightly larger version which was made at Potters camp in the summer of 2009. Note the 'normal' sized teapot: middle row, right.



Photographs: Nicki Darrell



MAUREEN MINCHIN TEAPOT



Last December I received a message, via email, from Maureen Flannery, a member, enquiring about a particular teapot. The message read as follows:

"Hello, I was given a wonderful teapot many years ago (over 25yrs). It was bought in a Christmas market believed to be in Harleston? It is one of my favourites. I can't see any maker's markings, but it's decorated with fish and looks like sea creatures. Does anybody recognise it? Who made this very beautiful decorated teapot? Thanks."

Two of the pictures are posted here: there are very few clues apart from the wadding marks on the base which indicated that the pot was salt glazed. I spent some time studying the pictures and cross referencing with images of work by potters who might have worked in the area at the time. My efforts were completely unsuccessful. The potter could have been from anywhere and the twenty-five year time span was by no means definite: it might have been longer, and was it really bought at a Christmas Market in Harleston? Finding a needle in a haystack was beginning to be simple in comparison to this problem.



I sent messages out to members whom I thought might have been living and working in the area at the time, and there were not very many. I was looking for a salt glazing potter who sold domestic ware and, possibly, lived in the Norfolk and Suffolk area, possibly, during the 1980s and 90s. The question was

passed around along with the images but, although, many names were provided, those who provided such names were not optimistic.

It was Ray Auker who had suggested, amongst several others, the name of Maureen Minchin, who had worked in the area during the period and had fired salt glazed ware but now lived on the west coast of Scotland. Ray owns a jug by Maureen Minchin and the wire marks on the base are very similar to those on the mystery pot. I searched for images of work by Maureen Minchin and immediately dismissed the notion that the teapot could be one of hers on the grounds that the images I was looking at were brightly painted earthenware pieces which bore absolutely no resemblance to the teapot.

There was no noticeable stamp or maker's name on the teapot but I continued to blow up the images looking for clues which led nowhere. I decided that perhaps I could show the teapot in the Newsletter to see if anybody recognised it. In fact, I actually filed the images to be placed in the next edition.

What happened next was astonishing. I was looking for something completely different when the name

'Maureen Minchin' appeared on my screen and it turned out to be a salt glazed pot for sale on eBay and it actually showed the pot from various angles including the base where the turning was identical to the mystery pot.

Our member managed to contact Maureen Minchin, which was not a straightforward exercise, and Maureen was able to confirm that the teapot was made by her. Until around 1989 Maureen produced salt glazed ware on a farm just over the River Waveney from Harleston and was a selected member of East Anglian Potters Association. About that time Maureen moved to another farm but, by this time her kiln was well salted, could not be moved and could only be



broken up. She built a small gas kiln and concentrated on decorated earthenware, before moving to Scotland in the early 1990s.

During my investigations, I came across another coincidence: the following note from Victor Knibbs in his Chairman's notes in the Autumn 2013 edition of the newsletter.

"While holidaying in Devon, Jannie and I visited Tim Andrews at his studio and Gallery. Tim has a lovely set up and his Maureen Minchin exhibition had just ended, though we were still able to see most of her work. Maureen was a former Anglian Potters Selected Member, but now lives and works in Scotland. Her work was wonderful and Tim was pleased that the whole show had been a sell-out!!! Victor."

After 32 years our member is delighted to have been introduced to its maker.

Peter Warren

Photographs on this page by Valerie Bevan



Photograph: Maureen Minchin



Photograph: Maureen Minchin



Photograph: Maureen Minchin



Photograph: Carolyn Postgate



Photograph: Carolyn Postgate



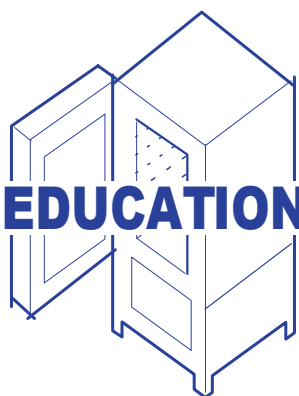
Photograph: Maureen Minchin



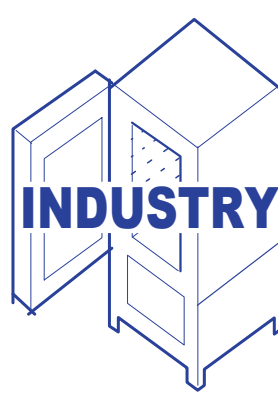
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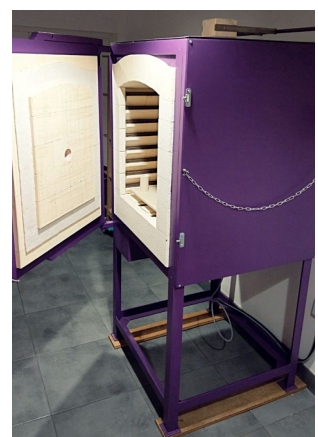


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ZOOM MEETINGS

Members are invited to join the Zoom meetings which are held each Sunday at 2.30 pm. A 'Feedback' session is held every fourth Sunday.

The Zoom chat sessions have become very popular and lots of AP members old & new are joining in to talk about pots, kilns, wheels, glazes and just about anything else.

Bring your questions, show us a new pot, or just come to have a talk with the rest of us.

6 June	Zoom Chat
13 June	Zoom Feedback
20 June	Zoom Chat
4 July	Zoom Chat
11 July	Zoom Feedback
18 July	Zoom Chat
1 August	Zoom Chat
8 August	Zoom Feedback
15 August	Zoom Chat
29 August	Zoom Chat

Editor

JEREMY NICHOLS TEAPOTS



It was only when the editor invited me to contribute an article to this edition of the Newsletter that I realised that 2021 marks a significant anniversary for my teapots. It's now 21 years since the initial versions of what has become a long series of open handle designs were first exhibited, namely at the CPA's two Millennium Exhibitions in 2000 in London and Folkestone. It's particularly pleasing then to be asked to say something here and at this point about the origins and development of the designs, and about the technical problems that required solving to make them happen.

How the shapes of the teapots came about

My work lies on the sometimes fuzzy boundary between Design – that's to say 'doing what it says on the tin' in terms of utilitarian function – and Sculpture or, in the words of John Houston, the writer and commentator who was my course leader at Harrow, the Abstract Vessel.

I trained at Harrow in the late 1990s, having had a twenty-year career in Social Work following initial career ambitions, and a degree, in Aeronautical Engineering. Both these professional experiences fed into my aim, when I set up my studio following graduation from Harrow, to make pots that combined utilitarian function with the expression of a particular set of ideas and feelings. These related to my childhood love of making and flying model aircraft, the subsequent associated worlds of aviation and engineering, and a number of other interests developed and nurtured at Harrow. Amongst these were modernist design, the Bauhaus in particular, and contemporary architecture.

During my time at Harrow, as a kind of supplement to the programme

there, I had made a trip to the Vitra Furniture Company's Design Museum in southern Germany. The museum is a wonderfully sculptural building designed by Frank Gehry in deconstructivist style, and its more functionally organised interior

houses, amongst other things, a remarkable collection of twentieth century chairs. Well-known pieces on display at the time of my visit included Marc Newson's highly sculptural 'Lockheed Lounge', Gerrit Rietveld's barely more practical 'Red Blue Chair' and Marcel Breuer's radical but, by contrast, perfectly practical tubular metal 'Wassily Chair'*. In my Harrow studies I was also looking at architect-engineer

Santiago Calatrava's rethinking of conventional bridge design and both these, Breuer's chair and Calatrava's bridges*, subsequently became touchstones for my approach to making teapots when I started work following graduation.

Teapots are complex objects with parts that need to fit together, both aesthetically and structurally, so my first decision was about what aspect of conventional teapot design I could rethink in a way that would satisfy my aim of combining function with expression. The handle was the obvious choice and the first pots featured panhandles with the idea of simultaneously suggesting the spread

of wings and flying forwards (1). It was these that I exhibited in the Millennium exhibitions mentioned above and though they attracted attention and had some success, I soon began to feel that I was attending too much to the expressive side of things and not enough to the practical – too much of the Lockheed Lounge and not enough of the Wassily Chair.

For a teapot, a cantilevered handle works well enough as a side handle, as in some traditional Japanese pots, but not as an inline pan-handle. Looking for a solution to this I came across a brand of breadknife that featured a handle in the form of an inverted pistol grip, and I decided to try this out. The new pots (2) now had a vertical(ish) handle that resulted in an overall form which I quite liked, but the ergonomics still weren't right. The answer, obvious in retrospect, was to bring the handle over the top of



the body, not only making the handle ergonomic and balanced but giving the pot a sense of movement and energy from the relationship between handle and spout. It was only subsequently that I realised that this change, made entirely





and, though every now and then I try out other options, these are what I continue to use.

The second major problem that had to be solved, if the designs were to be realised, was how to prevent the handles from collapsing during the high temperature salt firing. The solution in the end involved devising structures

point of view has been to collaborate with CAD designers and engineers to produce the patterns, from which I make my handle and spout moulds, by the use of 3D print technology, having previously modelled the patterns in clay or carved them from plaster blocks. The advantage of having the patterns made up into, and printed from, 3D print files is that modifications and new variations can be produced easily and quickly. Aside from this, adopting new practices is always an exciting thing to do and inserting new technologies into traditional processes is the way that craft has always refreshed itself and moved forward.

What next?

In 2019, whilst CPA chair, I organised an exhibition of members' teapots for the Yixing International Ceramics Festival in China, and attended the opening ceremony. The shapes of our modern teapots derive in large part from the Yixing tea wares imported into Europe in the 16th century, so my all too brief visit to Yixing was something of a pilgrimage. Though brief, the visit enabled me to see something of the similarities and differences between Yixing and UK ceramic practice and professional culture. Directly or indirectly, this will, along with my continuing exploration of the uses of 3D print technology, be an important influence in the way these teapot forms develop in the coming months and years.

Jeremy Nichols

* For pictures of the Vitra museum and the chairs go to www.design-museum.de and for Calatrava's bridges www.calatrava.com

for ergonomic reasons, gave the pots distinctly human characteristics. An unintended consequence but one which benefitted the pots as they could now be read in either of two ways: figuratively (dancers, fencers etc) or from an engineering perspective.

With a basic configuration thus established, the development of the series has, since then, been through modifying and varying the handle, body and spout shapes. Along the way some designs have acquired foot rings, others wide flat bases. Handles have been curved and angular, spouts straight, curved or S-shaped. Lids, however, have so far remained canopy shaped in tribute to the aeronautical aspect of the designs' origins.

For the salt glaze surfaces, I've been following a path of using the contrasts in texture that different vitreous slips can provide, smooth on the one hand, so-called 'orange peel' on the other, in order to accentuate the forms. The chemistry of salt glaze to some extent limits colour options but I've found that blues and blacks give the kind of clarity and definition that my forms require in order for them to 'work' visually.

Technical Development.

With throwing being my method of choice for making the teapot bodies, the first question that arose concerned what technique to use to make the handles and spouts. After experimenting with press moulds I decided slipcasting would be the best solution. The task, then, was to find a throwing body and a casting slip which, when joined together, would 'fit' in terms of drying and firing shrinkage. After many trials and much testing, I found that Valentines Earthstone Original and a recipe for casting slip based on Hyplas 71 worked well together

for supporting the handles in the kiln, made up of sacrificial thrown and slipcast components that would shrink with the pot and be discarded after the firing. Though tweaked and refined over the years, this is a method I have continued to use and is pictured with more detail on my website.

With these basic problems overcome, much of the technical development has concerned the use of slips, glazes and colourants to create contrasting surfaces, as mentioned above. In my current kiln I've found a porcelain style slip over the clay body, as a ground for blue/black stains, gives a particularly clear and well defined 'orange peel'. The contrasting smooth satin surfaces come from spraying blue stains over plain and white shinos according to the colour depth and intensity I'm seeking. As can be seen in the images, the transition on my current pots is from very pale to a deepish blue, a change from the very deep intense blues previously.

My most recent change from a technical



All Photographs: Jeremy Nichols

OPEN STUDIOS 2021

At the time of writing, I have been able to provide the following information:

CAMBRIDGE OPEN STUDIOS

camopenstudios.co.uk

First four weekends in July (Saturdays and Sundays)

Excellent website with links to individual participants, maps, opening times etc.

SUFFOLK OPEN STUDIOS

www.suffolkopenstudios.org

Members' pages give individual details of opening times. The site is easier to use than it looks. Check for June/July dates.

HERTFORDSHIRE OPEN STUDIOS

www.hvaf.org.uk/our-events/herts-open-studios-2021

Check the website for exhibitions and Open studios. Good website but only brief information available for September 2021 Open studios at the time of going to press.

NORFOLK AND NORWICH OPEN STUDIOS

openstudios@nnfestival.org.uk

applications being taken for Autumn Open Studios
25 September-10 October

FROM THE ARCHIVES

EAPA Newsletter: April 1993

Oriental Day Yi-Hsing teapots

Nigel Wood at Ixworth

At Ixworth there was a small collection of fine tiny red teapots known as Yi-hsing ware. Actually wherever you find references to them they are spelt differently (Yising, I-hsing, Yi-Hsing, Y-hsing) but all names refer to these unglazed red low temperature 'stoneware' teapots.

Nigel Wood showed slides of one of the factories at Yi-hsing near Shanghai. One showed a large room filled with potters working at their own benches hand building (slabbing) their teapots from start to finish. Unusually for factory production, he says, there is no division of labour and potters are allowed to design their own forms rather than producing standard shapes. He told me that the red clay is identical in composition to Potclays red clay fired to about 1120°C.

The earliest examples are from the 16th century but the 17th century saw large scale exports of Yi-hsing teapots to Europe with the tea trade, where they quickly became collector's items for their neat, well-finished forms, polished surfaces and low relief of incised decoration. They soon began to influence teapot design in the west; first Bottger's red stoneware at Meissen which in turn influenced the Elers brothers who were working in England (they were in fact Dutch) who lathe-turned their pots.

Nigel also had a collection of tools which he had bought just outside the factory at a roadside stall (the potters had to provide their own tools). He paid £2 for the lot, so no wonder he wasn't in the queue for the Reward Clayglaze merchandise! I particularly liked a tool that could cut both parallel slabs and circles.

The V&A has a good collection of Yi-hsing pots which I look forward to seeing again soon.

Richard Baxter

Editor's note:

This was a remarkable 'find' given the information in my article on page 6 and Jeremy Nichol's article on page 27.

CHRISTMAS TREE CHARITY DONATION

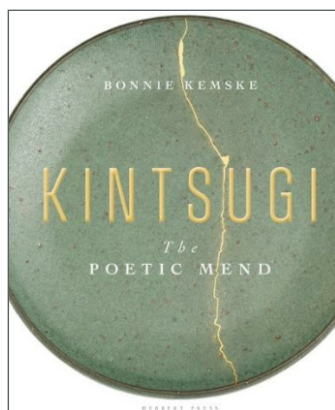
Traditionally, participants at the Anglian Potters Christmas Exhibition provide trinkets for the Christmas Tree. The decorations are for sale and the proceeds are donated to a charity of our choice. This year our chosen charity was The Motor Neuron Disease Association and we were delighted to be able to donate £750.



Celia, thank you so much for your kind donation of £750.00

Your gift will help fund world-class research projects and improve care for those living with Motor Neurone Disease today. It will also help us to continue campaigning and raise awareness of MND, so that people affected by MND tomorrow, their carers and their family, get the help they need, when they need it. Thank you, Celia.

BOOK REVIEWS



KINTSUGI: The Poetic Mend

by Bonnie Kemske

Published by Herbert Press. Hardback £30.00

20% Discount Code for Anglian Potters members AP20 until 1 July 2021

Use at the checkout: www.bloomsbury.com/kintsugi

“A broken pot is made whole again, and with its golden repair we see a world of meaning. First, we acknowledge the sadness of its breaking and the pain of our own tragedies. We accept the pot’s imperfection and the imperfections in ourselves. Then we may find joy in the beauty of its repair, as we might accept and bear our scars proudly. And we glory in how the pot has taken on a new life, just as we begin again after life’s hard lessons. In the new pot we see hope exemplified. And it is hope that shows us that we can put our pots, ourselves and our Earth back together, as imperfect entities in an imperfect world.”

Kintsugi is a Japanese repair technique that puts a broken pot back together but allows the breaks and scars to be highlighted by using urushi lacquer as an adhesive and gold to fill the seams. A broken pot becomes a new entity, not perfect but more beautiful and stronger than ever. Kintsugi’s greatest strength is its metaphoric narrative of loss and recovery; breakage and restoration; tragedy and the ability to overcome loss and hardship. The repair does not conceal the object’s damage but highlights it. The metaphor links the breaking of inanimate objects to human damage and disability.

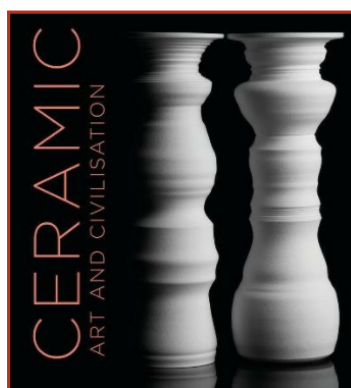
Besides the explanation of the use of urushi and the care needed to avoid its dangers to sensitive skin, Bonnie Kemske delves into connections with our modern world and its relationships with

Japanese history, popular culture and contemporary art.

This beautifully presented and thoroughly researched book presents a superbly photographed documentation of Kintsugi in its many forms, following the author’s connections and meetings with many of the finest ceramic practitioners to be found in Japan and the United States together with, amongst others, a local vicar and a maxillofacial surgeon, discussing their personal connections to the techniques.

The author presents a thorough understanding of the culture and character of kintsugi and the examples she uses are delivered with reverence and, in some cases considerable human emotion. She discusses various aspects of a ‘metaphoric world’: the language of cracks and breaks, religious and cultural overlays, healing, trauma, illness and recovery, disability and sustainability and their various forms of repair.

I can highly recommend Bonnie Kemske’s excellent book.



Ceramic Art and Civilisation

by Paul Greenhalgh

Hardback £30. Bloomsbury

Anglian Potters Members discount 35% until 31 July 2021

Use code ANGLIANCER35 at the checkout www.bloomsbury.com/uk/ceramic-art-and-civilisation

In February, 2017, I, along with several members of the Icknield Potters group, visited the Sainsbury Art Centre in Norwich and were introduced to the Director, Paul Greenhalgh who, very kindly, explained how the ceramics department operated, gave us access to some rather special pieces being kept away from public exhibition, and told us of his forthcoming book to be published, he hoped, in September of that year.

Four year later (or, late) Art and Civilisation has been published in hard back format and is everything it was promised to be and far better than might have been expected.

The author has produced a dissertation, of considerable magnitude, decrying history’s lack of acknowledgement of ceramic: both the product and its makers. He laments the failure of critics to recognise the importance of the subject as a major player within the History of Art and has made an excellent job of repairing the situation.

The book traces the story of ceramic art and industry from the ancient Greeks to the Postmodern potter. It explains how pottery has underpinned domesticity, business, religion, recreation and architecture for millennia and is not just a story of ceramics but is linked inextricably to human life itself. A difficult concept actually to quantify but produced with excellent results.

This is a splendid production, lavishly illustrated with superb images. It is a book to be ‘dipped into’ for reference, information, or simple fascination. This is a collection of details which explain why a particular piece of ceramic is as it is: the circumstances surrounding its creation whether physical or ideological, displacements of populations, development of technology, functional necessity and the need for beauty. The importance of the Renaissance, the ‘Thirty Years War’, Ruskin and Morris in the nineteenth century Britain and of Peter Voulkos in mid-twentieth century West Coast America and the different backgrounds of Lucie Rie and Bernard Leach: these are just a very few of the areas covered.

“In trying to describe this magnificent cultural legacy I have tried to show that ceramic is a *thing in itself*: a many-headed but nevertheless singular entity, with an ongoing intellectual discourse. That is why I have used the term ‘ceramic’, rather than the commonly used plural. My point in doing so is to identify the singularity, the consistent character at the heart of the practice. Let’s call it this *ceramic continuum*.”

The book will not provide solutions for clay faults or remedies for glaze flaws but, for art historians and ceramics enthusiasts, this is an outstanding book and I have no hesitation in recommending it most highly to our members.

Peter Warren



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Margaret Gardiner: salt/soda firing
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Editor

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www.brickhouseceramics.co.uk

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1 AUGUST 2021

FOR PUBLICATION BY

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