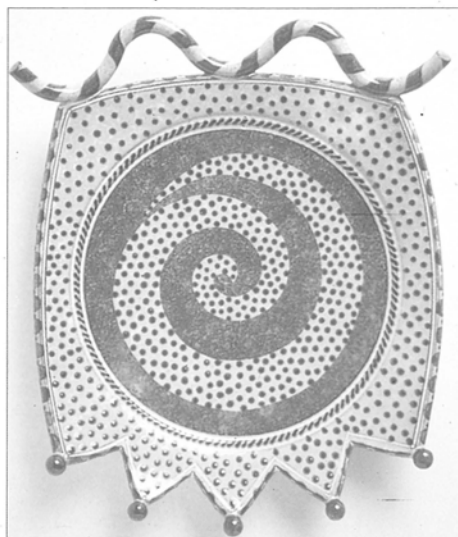


THE INTERNATIONAL

MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL
POTTERS' FESTIVAL AT ABERYSTWYTH





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Demonstrators

Christine Boswijk *New Zealand*
 Brian Gartside *New Zealand*
 Mark Pharis *USA*
 Annabeth Rosen *USA*
 Gabriele Koch *Germany/UK*
 Morgen Hall *UK*
 Tulla Elieson *Norway*
 Iain Barber *Eire*
 John Pollex *UK*
 Václav Šerák *Czech Republic*
 Greg Daly *Australia* was Master of
 Ceremonies.

As part of its involvement in the Festival,
 Aberystwyth Arts Centre organized the visit
 by the USA ceramists, together with the
 exhibition *The American Way*.

The New Zealand Society of Potters supported
 Christine Boswijk and Brian Gartside.

Lectures

Lectures were given by demonstrators and:
 Betty Woodman *USA*
 Scott Chamberlin *USA*
 Mike Hughes *UK*
 Wally Keeler *UK*

Betty Woodman and Scott Chamberlin spoke
 about their selection of work for *The American*
Way. Mike Hughes and Wally Keeler spoke
 about the new National Electronic and Video
 Archive of the Crafts and their collaboration
 with the Ceramic Archive at Aberystwyth to
 develop research material. The lectures were
 arranged by Moira Vincentelli.

Photographs, front cover and above:
 Morgen Hall, pastry project; ceramic dish

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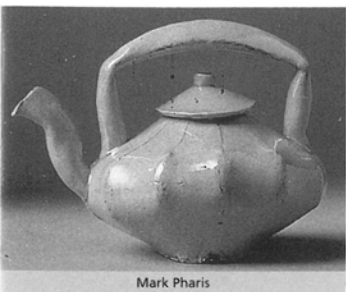
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 Václav Šerák reveals aspects of his life and work to Paul Scott

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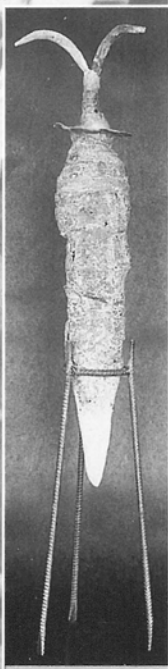
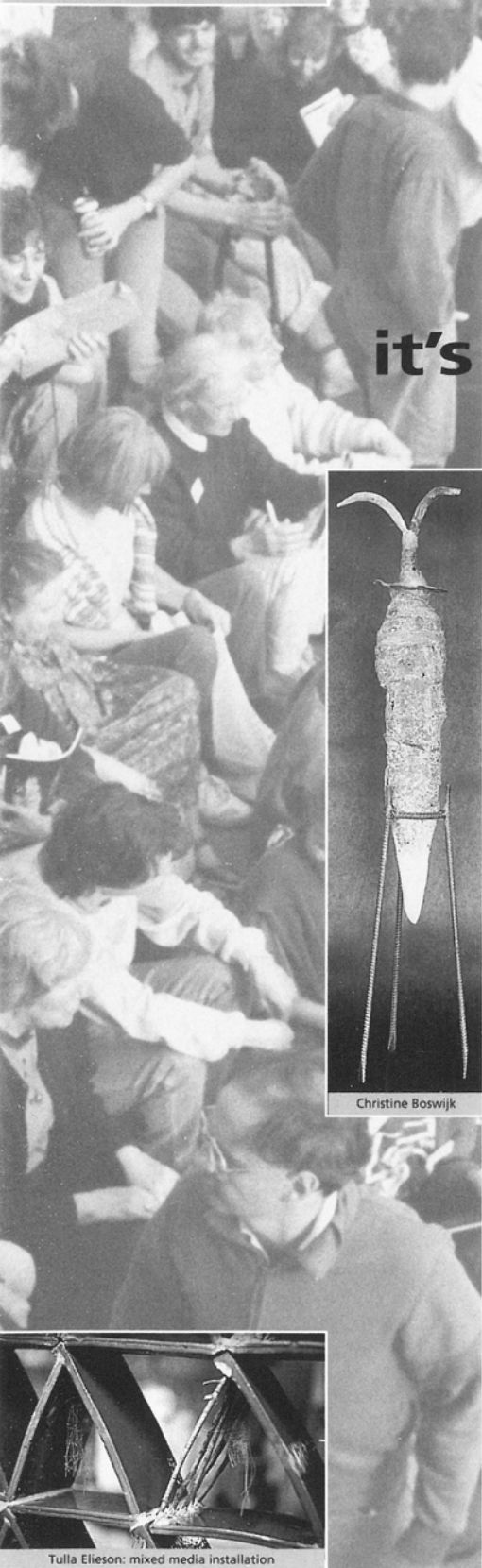
Feminine persuasions
 Three ceramists' approach to clay are considered by Jo Dahn

—sixteen—

Update
 Round-up of news, information and inexcusable gossip, by Sheila Tyler



Mark Pharis



Christine Boswijk

Welcome to a celebration of the 4th International Potters' Festival.

This biennial event is organized voluntarily by potters motivated by enthusiasm for clay, fun and intellectual refreshment. Thus the Festivals have an accommodating raw edge that fosters accessibility and directness. They are also forgiving: ideas and process are paramount, not perfection and end products.

The fourth Festival, held at Aberystwyth Arts Centre in July 1993, was thorough-going in its internationalism. It hosted ceramists from the USA, Australia and New Zealand, Europe, the UK and Eire. There were bold and quiet personalities; there was bold work and quiet work. Non-stop workshops, more formal demonstrations, a full lecture programme, three hands-on projects and plenty of social events both planned and impromptu, meant that the makers and the broad, mixed audience had different kinds of opportunities to interact, to contemplate, to listen and to do.

To experience all that the Festival had to offer was impossible - simultaneous events require choices. This was a Festival in which one could immerse oneself in clay technique, or, surprisingly, almost avoid clay all together. The first option had interesting ports of call - Mark Pharis, Tulla

Elieson and Annabeth Rosen used slab building in very different ways to produce strikingly different work from functional to non-function, at least in domestic terms - the phrase has to be added since terminology turned out to be

The way it's s'posed to be

unexpectedly emotive. Informal debate about craft and art, skill, function, intuition and self-indulgence continued all weekend and long into the night in gatherings around tables and Iain Barber's pit kiln. Gabriele Koch, Christine Boswijk and Václav Šerák would also have been included in a journey around clay techniques, with coiling and burnishing, bandaging and more slab building but with less conflict over terms of reference.

The second option would have taken one on a voyage around Tulla Elieson's other work - a mixed media boat project, in which clay was minimally used, primarily as a printing tool. The route would have taken in Morgen Hall whose medium was pastry dough, Brian Gartside who made 'paper' clay at one point, John Pollex's unprogrammed Tai Chi sessions, and computer technology which cropped up as a design tool and educational device.

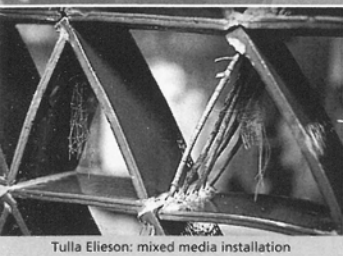
For some the clay medium was fundamental, others revealed their flexibility and in both cases raised important issues concerning rules, value judgements, expectations and shared meanings. All impinge on notions of acceptability.

Annabeth Rosen challenged the audience when she said that when she runs out of clay she makes the same kind of work in plaster or concrete. She challenged the audience with her treatment of clay, the seemingly clumsy, quick and dirty approach to it that left harsh edges and brashness which many perceived as lacking in skill. But the audience accepted Tulla Elieson's wire mesh and plastic boat and never sought to discover whether she welded the metal herself. 'There are no rules' was an oft-heard cry by those who felt compelled to justify or mediate. The trouble is, there are in the sense that we all possess many sets of deeply-rooted criteria for making sense of things. And we often parcel them neatly - this set for that situation, that set for this context. Annabeth Rosen's alternative 'break the rules; if you don't ask permission, no-one can say no' was a tacit acknowledgement of this subtext. Makers and their audience alike would seem to have to undergo an aesthetic development from the descriptive, through accepted norms and ideals, to, finally, independent thinking and questioning of convention. At this level there is constant exploration of our own experiences and concepts. Skill, function in all its senses, levels of sophistication, abstraction and meaning might be said to exist along separate continua that are not necessarily associated except by convention. Artists who challenge convention force us to experience art at the post-conventional level and to explore ourselves and our socially-derived judgements. One can be easily undermined: there are no easy rides, many mismatches between maker and audience, and few constants (today's revelation is tomorrow's platitude). Small wonder many seek comfort and confirmation in ceramics' cosier mainstream.

So ultimately the Festival did what it was designed to do. By placing side by side what is perhaps usually compartmentalized in our minds, it required us to expose and examine our criteria for acceptability.

Sheila Tyler, Editor

Sheila Tyler is a journalist and experimental psychologist whose academic research field is cognitive development and pictorial representation. She is married to a potter and has a particular interest in folk art and ceramic coarsewares; she researched the exhibition 'Buckley Pottery: 1300 to the 1940s.'



Tulla Elieson: mixed media installation

Why was the audience so fascinated by some roughly-edited pieces of video film of Marianne de Trey?

Oral history records a particular person at a particular moment in time; an interview or piece of film becomes another fragment in the patchwork of history which can be used to construct, re-construct and interpret the past. Small details of dress or accent or turn of phrase may be as revealing as anything, and different things will strike each viewer/listener.

The huge increase in student numbers and the new kinds of training offered mean there is a great need for original material for students to work with for writing essays, projects and dissertations, and all of these can eventually feed into more ambitious historical and critical writing much needed in all the crafts. Equally oral history and video film can be used to create more accessible educational material for schools or the general public. This is where the new electronic multimedia systems can come into their own so that pieces of film or sound recording can be combined with text and image to create 'computer books' which can be browsed by the user in the way they want. If you need to know more about a

particular technique or a name that is mentioned, at the click of a button you can bring up a new screen of information.

The Ceramic Archive at Aberystwyth and the newly-established National Electronic and Video Archive of the Crafts (NEVAC) are both involved in this kind of activity and are working in collaboration on some projects.

Mike Hughes and Wally Keeler of the University of the West of England in Bristol, director and associate director of NEVAC respectively, intend to record on video and sound tape as much as they can of British craftspeople this century, beginning with potters from the earliest recoverable days.

In the collaborative pilot essay, Marianne de Trey speaks with precise and witty eloquence on a fascinating range of topics: her own family background, the Royal College in the '30s, her life with Sam Haile, New York during the war, the development of her own standard ware in the late '40s and '50s, workshop discipline, developments in the '60s and '70s and a continuing involvement in all sorts of things to date.

NEVAC will publish material in different forms: first with the minimum of editing as source material and then edited to meet the needs of different audiences. The different editions will normally be accompanied by supporting documentation from the conventional archives together with suggestions for how materials might best be interrogated. Electronic multimedia techniques are being developed to help with this process.

Both the NEVAC at Bristol and the Ceramic Archive at Aberystwyth would be pleased to hear from anyone who has film footage, sound recordings, photographs, anecdotes or other materials which may help to illuminate the pioneer days of ceramics.

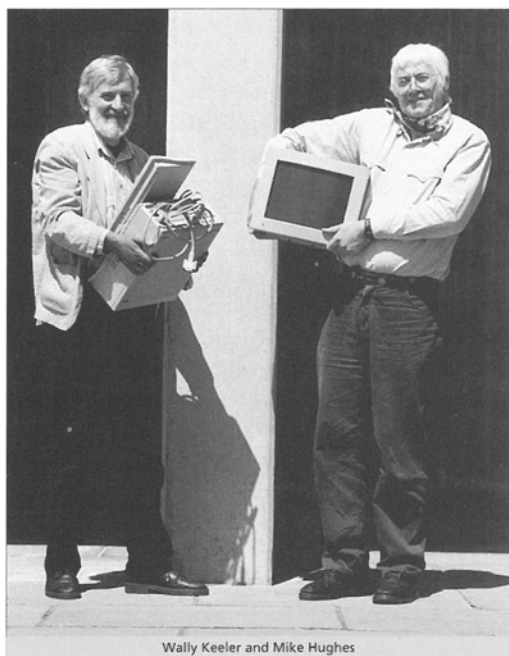
Contact: Anna Hale, Ceramics Archive Officer, University

College of Wales, Llanbadarn Road, Aberystwyth, SY23 1HB, or Mike Hughes, NEVAC, Faculty of Art Media and Design, University of the West of England, Bower Ashton Campus, Clangage Road, Bristol, BS3 2JU. The NEVAC is currently funded by the University of the West of England and the Crafts Council; its advisory panel comprises Michael Casson, John Colbeck, Victor Margrie and Oliver Watson, Keeper of Ceramics at the V&A.

By Moira Vincentelli with additional material by Mike Hughes and Wally Keeler.

Moira Vincentelli, an art historian with the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, organised the lecture which included a demonstration of how archive material will be used in computer-books.

Making history: ceramics and the electronic revolution



Wally Keeler and Mike Hughes

Thoughts from the trade tent: it's the drains again

Suppliers of pottery materials are an important part of the synergy of the Festival, providing technological information and receiving feedback on products. But what do they think of each other's ideas; what are the criteria for a good product? Paul Stubbs, a potter and one of the Bath Potters team, surveyed the new equipment.

Innovation is a catch word of the decade but it is easy to over-design or stretch an idea to produce equipment we don't really need. Innovation should lead to better products.

The new '3000' kiln controller by IPCO looks good and is sensibly priced. It's an example of a new breed of 'friendly' controllers by a company which has been very receptive to positive suggestions.

For some potters, the momentum wheel has much to commend it. The Stow Wheel is a new and compact example: it can be used anywhere and it functions well too, once one has got used to a slower working routine. The Roma Medical Aids wheel aimed at wheelchair users has been designed with great care with controls at the finger tips for a very particular and demanding application.

Power wheels with remote-control pedals allow for a comfortable working position but there are complications due to friction, or worse, electrical shorts. The solid-looking Gladstone Wheel showed an elegant and simple solution. The pedal contains an air bulb that connects via a plastic pipe to the speed controller in the main body of the wheel. However, it would be better if the pedal had more movement and would hold a set position.

Last but not least, drains! None of the four wheels on show had decent provision for run-off water. The excellent Cowley Wheel imported from New Zealand by PotteryCrafts comes without one.

Companies represented at the festival are listed on the inside back cover.

Domestic dramas

Spectacle is the essence of the International Potters' Festival and in different ways Annabeth Rosen and Morgen Hall brought drama to the event, both making objects that allude to the female domestic domain: Morgen Hall making tea-sets out of pastry, Annabeth Rosen tiles whose floral decoration exploded off the surface. Their work was subtly subversive for pottery purists steeped in the values of modernism but Hall's pastry-making could be read as a joke while Rosen's radical minimalism (especially in the work in the exhibition) was, for many, beyond a joke.

In the modernist aesthetic the work is paramount. The viewers' gaze must focus on the pots itself where all aesthetic judgement converges. Although not always recognised, the Leach tradition is essentially modernist: it is about pure form given life by the maker's hand and there is no hint of irony in its (oriental) borrowings. In a postmodernist aesthetic the production of layers of meaning is paramount, exemplified in much of the work in the exhibition *The American Way* where the enigmatic references are at their most obvious in the direct quotation from historical ceramics.

Morgen Hall strode into the hall on the opening night of the Festival pushing a trolley laden with pastry pots and wearing a pinny - she collects pinnies, preferably the 1950s sort with bright florals and braid round the edge. It was a gesture that helped to create the connotation that she seeks in her ceramic work - the celebratory nature of

decorated cakes, the delight of spun sugar candy or the nostalgia of children's birthday parties. Her performance and the firing (cooking) of teapots and teacups was a fun activity but its message was entirely serious. Although joyfulness is a core quality, the polished, decorated surfaces and precision finish of her ceramics subvert the 'spirit' of hand-crafted clay.

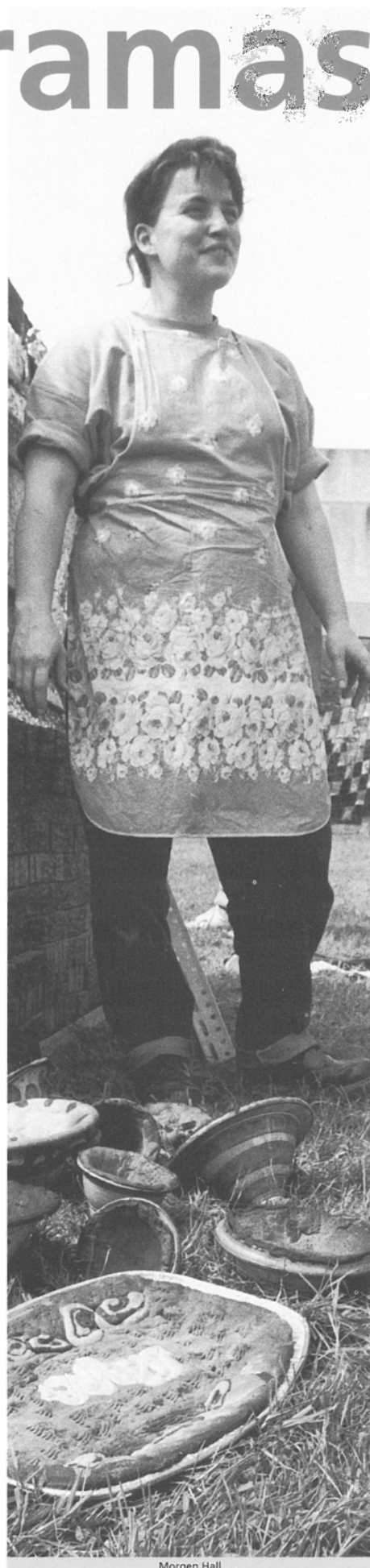
'Loosen up,' they said to her at college.

In her lecture Annabeth Rosen opened up her house to the audience revealing a frenetic enthusiasm for clay and decorative tiles. Her work was a celebration of the domestic environment and demonstrated her deep personal commitment to the medium. However, the minimalism (crudity, some would say) of the simple white basket in the exhibition is at first shocking, but that is precisely its power. It is the archetype of ceramic baskets, the great grandparent/child of the Belleek basket; it

makes reference to such elegant forms but its blocky, angled sides loudly refute it. In her alternative ebullient mode the decorative motifs on the tiles erupt wildly into a thick incrustation. While demonstrating she worked at speed, creating a two-foot square tile in ten minutes.

Both these artists make works that draw strongly on broad traditions of decorative domestic ceramics, but self-consciously stand outside the core tradition of functional studio pottery; both make reference to gendered imagery - Morgen Hall masquerades as the tea-lady and plays with metaphors of cooking food/pots while Annabeth Rosen, among other things, plays with metaphors of female sexual imagery in fruit and flower forms. One turns a tidy pot and is the acceptable face of femininity - just; but the other is uncontrolled, wild and subversive, straying into territory where good women (potters) are not supposed to roam.

Moira Vincentelli.



Morgen Hall

Replicas: a time traveller's ticket

In 1976 I went to teach maths in a large government boarding school in Zambia, confident of abilities in matters practical: I could change a light bulb or an electric plug with equal facility. Before I left the country three years later, my Renault 4 had taught me how to wield a spanner, screwdriver and lump hammer with an occasional smile. I also discovered that Renault designers had included several unnecessary parts.

When I came back to Dublin, teaching maths seemed to be my lot in life and I enjoyed it. On acquiring a house, I revealed my practical abilities by almost laying an egg when a few bits of plaster fell out after Sue, the brave and fearless, tore a shred of



wallpaper off the wall 'to see what was there.' We ended up replacing ceilings, floors and windows: I found I liked working with my hands. I thought of wood carving or stone carving, but pottery seemed a smarter option for someone who didn't know what he wanted to make. Clay is cheap.

Liz Eaton introduced me to clay at evening classes in the Arts Society in Trinity. She would demonstrate the basic techniques with her rubber fingers and then left the rest to the class. As Confucius said: 'If the master picks up one corner, the student should pick up the other three.' I was immediately hooked and decided I would give myself four years to try to make a decent pot. I was quite pleased with my progress and asked Liz for her comments. She said my lips were weak and my bottoms were crude. Why not, she said, concentrate on hand-building.

In Autumn 1985 I signed on for the night class in ceramics with Paul Martin in NCAD in Dublin. They had huge kilns and an excellent library. I maximized the use of both over the next three years. I became a weekend stall holder to sell my pots and Sue, over one 10-month period, made about 20,000 biscuits to pay for the rent on the stall.

While Liz had introduced me to Hamada and Leach, the library introduced me to Staite Murray, to some modern ceramics, to American Pre-Columbian pottery, African pottery and to China. I took photocopied papers home with me and translated my chosen imagery into clay.

I was, at this time, into African pottery. I sold for £50 an extraordinary object resembling a space creature of African origin and simultaneously realised that if I was to try to make a business out of pottery, African whimsy in a Celtic country was not an immediately guaranteed route to success. The Celt hunt was on. From any available source I would make a few copies of pots I liked, then move on. I needed a cash crop.

Dublin declared itself to be 1000 years old in 1988, as good a year as any. A section of the original Viking town was reconstructed and populated by belching, scratching Vikings, and I became Ragnar the comb-maker on a full-time basis. This gave me time to research, to make pottery and put bread on the table. I decided there had to be a market for replicas, if properly presented. At an exhibition opening, Dr Pat Wallace, director of Ireland's National Museum, told me to go down to the basement of the museum and look at the



wealth of Irish Neolithic and Early Bronze Age pottery. I arranged a visit. As I picked up one particularly beautiful pot with barley-type decoration, I knew there had to be two opposing finger marks on the inside. I slipped my fingers inside the lip and they fitted exactly into the marks made 4000 years ago.

I spent time photographing, measuring and

Iain Barber (Eire), who makes replicas as tourist ware, demonstrated making and firing processes at the Festival. The invariably popular low-tech projects which successive Festivals have sought to include, point up both the simplicity and the problem solutions that give pottery its unique fascination. Iain's pit kiln also proved functional in a different way as a focus for social gatherings, helped by a generous donation from the Guinness company.

caressing the past. Then the Wexford Heritage Park invited me to investigate the practicality of making replica Neolithic pottery.

One day one we took clay from two separate sites. We used pick, shovel and wheel barrow rather than antler and basket, but our intentions were honourable. First task was to sort the clay by hand, remove roots and stones. We powdered the clay by hand and stone. Separately, we worked on a large flat rock surface to make grog from previously-fired pottery shards. Making this grog caused lots of dust on the working surface, which acted like flour in pastry-making.

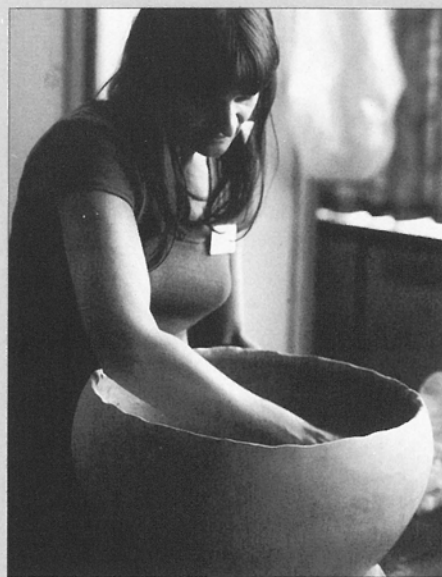
Using a shell or old shard as a support for the base, the pot is begun by pinching a ball of clay. Slip is daubed round the edge and a coil of clay pressed on. In all, four or five coils are used. For an object made in the lap, anything larger presents problems of control and technique. The large quantity of grog (50 per cent) makes the clay prone to shortness and cracking in a shape much larger than cupped hands, and the need to keep the clay moist makes it floppy. Few of the historical pots of this type are greater than 17 cms in any dimension.

Working on a sunny day, four was a good number for a batch. The basic technique turned out to be a mixture of coiling and pinching. Just pinching caused cracks in the outer surface. One is compelled to compress these cracks with a sharp-edged stone, and this I think was the practical impetus to incised decoration¹. We stored the pots for drying. For firing, we built a low saucer-shaped mound of clay as a base and used logs about 20 cm thick to make a kiln wall and draught excluder which would also protect the pots as fuel was added. We placed the pots on to a bed of closely-packed sticks to provide fuel and insulation from the ground. Surrounding the pots, like cladding, we put dried rough sheets of clay to act as saggar-like protection against dunting and to provide material for grinding into grog for the next set of pottery. Firings could take just one hour, with the pit kiln reaching around 800°C.



1. Other surface techniques include applying oiled barley-grains to the wet clay, use of combs, wood and bone, cork and shell to produce incisions, patterns and raised decoration. The surface of a vessel can be smoothed with a wet hand to give the appearance of a slip finish, burnished, then decorated.

Gabriele Koch came to England in 1973 from her native Germany after taking a degree in English, history and politics. She opted for this 'more intellectual attempt to grasp reality' despite a strong interest in art, and developed a critical social awareness. Questioning Western cultural values, she came to see linguistic means of communication inadequate.



Wider spheres

A term's study in the interior of Spain and repeated visits there had left a deep impression: an open desert-like landscape with simple horizon lines and strong earth colours from black to ochre to red; the experience of a still largely-rural more contemplative yet also quite dramatic society; the warm randomness of handmade, wood-fired terracotta; the sensuousness of Gaudi architecture; the evocative power of Antoni Tàpies' paintings; the passion of flamenco; the physical confrontation with heat-earth-water - the potter's raw materials.

With my English degree came the opportunity to teach in London for a year. Free from career pressures and social expectations this proved a very liberating experience: the possibility of 'self-realisation' became more tempting than the prospect of material security. I decided to stay and learn how to make a pot.

I enrolled at Camden Institute pottery classes and after three years there found work space in a crafts co-operative. Most potters at that time were working in the Leach tradition and so was I for a time, but I had to go back to the ideas and feelings I started to develop in Germany and Spain. I began to think more about the potential meaning of the vessel and decided to explore my ideas more thoroughly. I enrolled for the post-graduate course at Goldsmiths' College. In my search for form and content, I abandoned the wheel and started coiling - one of the most ancient and intimate ceramic techniques. Formally, I arrived at the sphere. Qualities like balance, simplicity, tactility and chance - working with nature rather than its total control - had to become integral parts. References to aspect of early or so-called primitive cultures are not seen as a nostalgic yearning for the past but as a reminder of certain values and qualities lost which are vital for a perspective of the future that is life-enhancing rather than life destroying.

Gabriele uses T-material, often mixed with 25% porcelain or red earthenware, for her pinched and coiled forms. Surfaces are burnished by beating with a metal spoon and treated with slips enriched by commercial body stains. No glaze is used. The pieces are bisque-fired to 950°C, then sawdust-fired to 750°C in a dustbin, oil can or simple brick kiln over three to seven days.



Consuming passion

Morgen Hall (Wales) was born in California, north of San Francisco where her parents kept a restaurant, giving her a close connection with food. A family holiday in Scotland led to their relocation in Scotland when Morgen was 13. She trained in Aberdeen and gained an MA at Cardiff College of Art. She makes tea wares - 'they sum up a lot of things about this country' - and likes 'food-specific' pots whose colours complement their interests were given rein at the on' project involving the making of tea ware made of pastry and icing and marzipan.

contents. These Festival in a 'hands-entirely edible decorated with

'Most of the work is wheel-thrown and turned with additional non-circular pieces being press moulded and turned. As well as the table ware I make large jars and vases.

I chose to work with red earthenware for the richness of its colour which breaks through the tin glaze on edges, giving a warm burnt orange. The blue slip decoration is applied using paper or polythene and latex or copydex resists with

sponge and brush; I also use slip trailing and scraffito.

I sponge a mustard yellow glaze stain on to the tin glaze to soften the

boldness of the blue slip patterns under the glaze, and because I very much enjoy the colour combination of mustard yellow with deep blue and burnt orange on a creamy white tin-glazed background.

The work has had many direct influences - anything from 18th century Staffordshire tableware to tents from that period and later, plus all the less direct sources that everyone gathers. At the moment I am particularly enjoying the food element in the work, making food-specific pieces like a plate specially made for cream cakes and lidded jars to store liquorice allsorts in. Full tea sets including ceramic tea trays are another favourite as I very much enjoy the idea of the The Tea Party. Although the work does tend to end up very decorated, I hope it is inviting and comfortable to use as I do not consider pots finished when they emerge from the kiln, but only when they have been christened with their first delicious mouthful. You can understand my delight at being able to try out the edible tea sets workshop at the Festival!

Morgen's Mix

18 oz flour

4 oz marg

6 oz sugar

1 egg

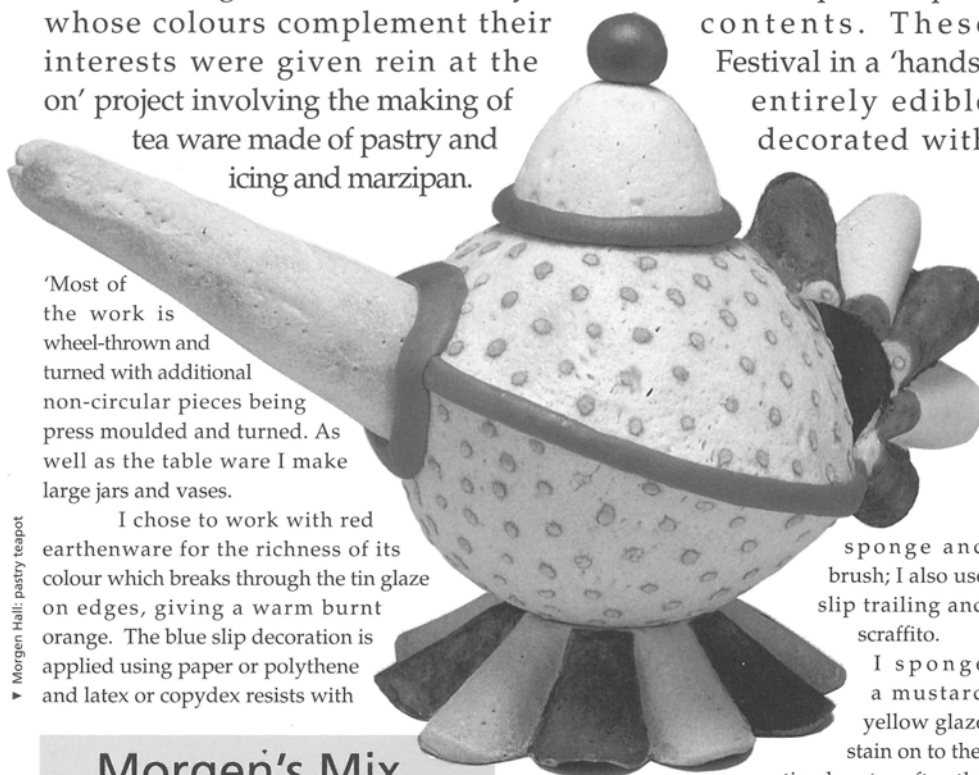
110 ml water

4 tbsps food colouring (optional)

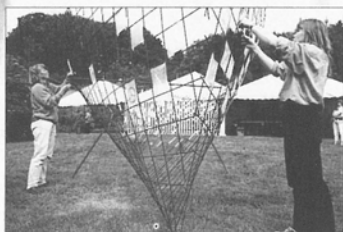
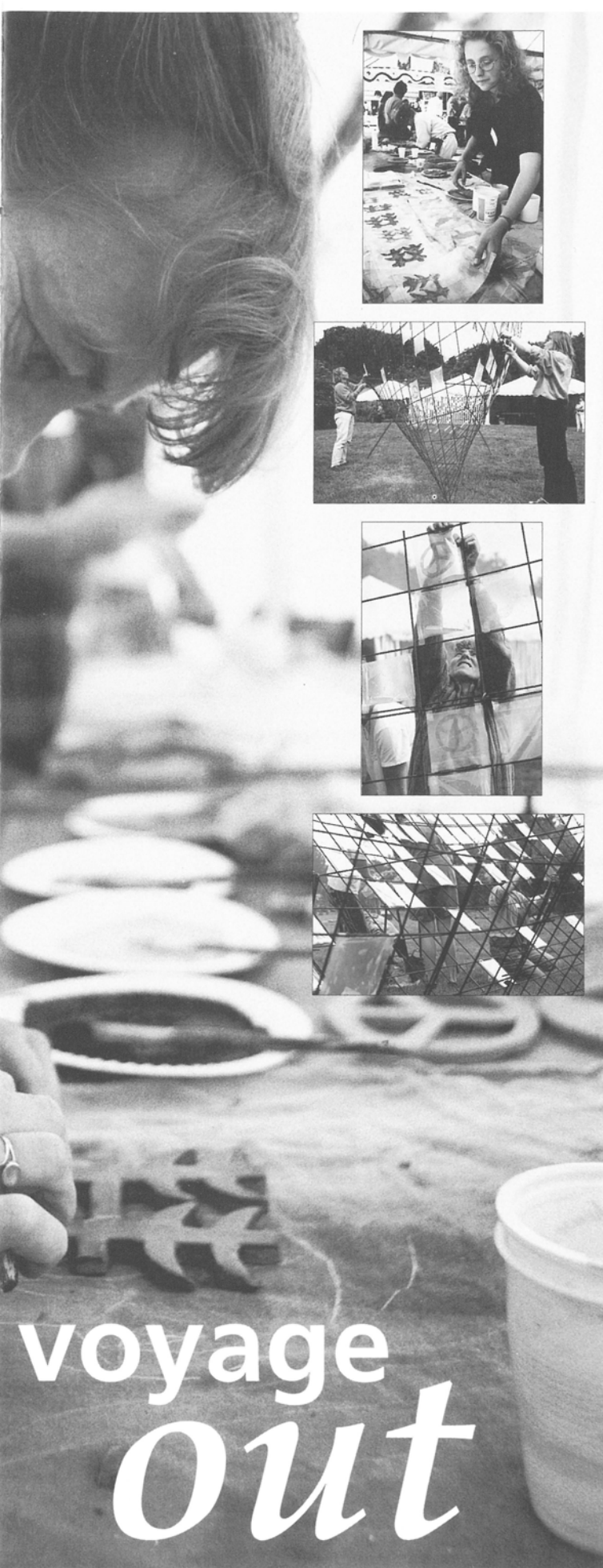
Rub marg into flour; add sugar. Mix egg, water and food colouring; pour into dry ingredients. Mix lightly. Turn out on to floured board and knead gently.

To use: roll thinly (3 mm) or use different colour strips to line greased and floured baking moulds and trays. Stab all over with fork, brush water on edges to prevent burning and bake as pastry. Pastry shapes may be combined to form larger pastry objects - Morgen's teapot and tray was made with oval ceramic moulds, trays, petits fours tins and cream horn moulds. Decorate with marzipan and slip-trailed icing.

▼ Morgen Hall: pastry teapot



The



Tulla Elieson, a Norwegian who trained at Bath Academy of Art, makes large plates inspired by the Norway coastline, and constructs installations which are mostly mixed media. Her Festival installation - a 32' long boat - was constructed from rusty metal armament mats and small plastic bags, some containing polluted water, some printed with danger symbols, which filled about half of the squares of the mats. At the front was a clay figurehead, behind was a dirty, water-filled acrylic globe bearing a roughly printed world map. Wind and heat played on the structure, as well as light. Evaporated moisture in the globe and filled bags made them misty giving the illusion of a closed atmospheric system in the globe, while occasional breezes made the boat sway, suggesting fragility. 'The boat is a journey, human life, our doing. The dirty globe is the result.'

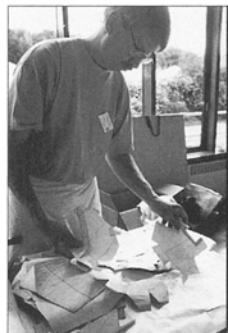
Tulla's large cushions (85 cms square) are a recent exploration, constructed from very large clay slabs which are marked and unevenly slipped. The middle is cut out and put back again; the slab is then turned upside down in a cloth cradle and the corners are folded over an inflated plastic bag placed in the centre of the slab. The bag is punctured when the clay can support itself sufficiently.

She also makes large plates. Here she talks about the two main strands of her work and her cushions.

ABOUT THE LARGE PLATES: It took me about seven years after graduating from Bath to leave behind the final traces of a functional ware education and to get to the original root. The unconscious reason for having chosen clay was obvious when first revealed: rocks in the colours from off-white to black, the same palette offered in vitrified clay; rocks rounded by water and set alive by the changing light of sea and weather. I did not need more to decorate the clay than a couple of slips vitrifying near top temperature. Of course, I didn't think about it until after I had done it. Slips should not cover the clay, but make the colour of the clay come alive, just as water makes rock come alive. For patterns I needed the heights and the depths in the surface, the glossy and the matt slip and the thin and the thick. One firing was enough.

ABOUT THE INSTALLATIONS: Most of the installations are spontaneous. Their inspirational sources vary and the site of their construction decides their final appearance. They present themselves for what they are - quick events: a tree trunk forming a coastline, a path in a park with shadows of people, a garden house with clay flowers and cardboard columns. They (are) made in a day or two after a couple of days' reflection on the site and the materials lying about. Only the installations Grave and Creativity were completely different, the former being the first piece of work breaking with the functional, the latter (...) involved several months of planning.

NEAR PAST AND PROBABLE FUTURE: A major travelling grant sent me to Africa for several months and the mental shock of that journey is only slowly fading. Thinking beforehand that the meeting with the Sahara sand dunes should inspire me to move on from the coastal theme, that vast emptiness of striking dry beauty has so forth only inspired me to empty my house of objects. The recent large cushions are more of a technical research than an actual desire for making cushions. They shall probably lead on to tall arched shapes. These shapes may fetch their pictures from mountains or dunes. Whether they will be vases or sculptures I don't know. (Photo page 15)



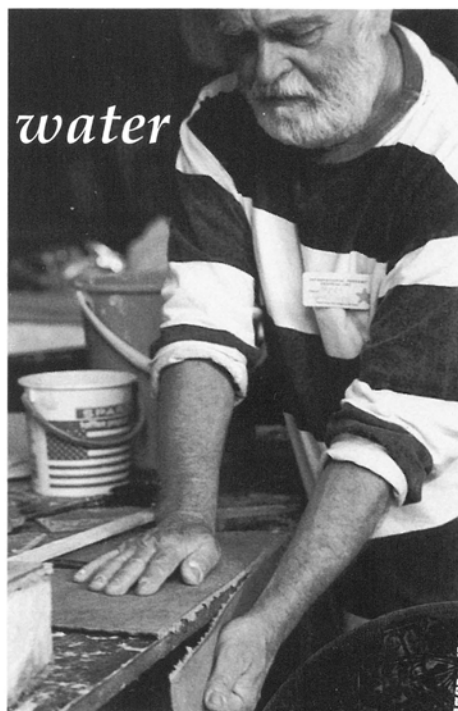
Brian Gartside, New Zealand, makes simple forms which are altered and reworked, and transformed by colour using all manner of techniques from dipping to printing. At the Festival he also demonstrated the making of paper clay and lectured on computer-aided design. Jim Robison watched.

Runaway thoughts on water

Humour and inventiveness, a willingness to take a chance, rejection of the straight-line approach is what Edward de Bono calls lateral thinking. Referring to de Bono's recent book *I'm Right, You're Wrong*, Brian Gartside illustrated 'fluid thought' with a bucket of water and a piece of clay.

If you put several lumps of clay into a bucket, you can count them, pick them out and consider them one by one. But if you put several cups of water into a bucket instead, the question 'how many waters do I have' becomes more difficult to answer. And if you pour the water out, it moves freely into cracks, around objects, over, under, through everything in its path. His suggestion is that similar, freely-moving thought processes should be applied to our making efforts.

By asking the question 'what are the basics,' we look again at what we do. Perhaps clay is a product of all the elements - earth, air, fire and water - but Brian Gartside suggested that the most significant element is the water. In practical terms, moisture content is crucial to clay in all of its stages, from forming to firing. But it also becomes symbolic of the creative thought processes we seek to employ during our productive cycles. In simplest terms, his demonstration involved blending paper pulp and clay slip, drying the mixture



on plaster bats and using the resulting slabs for construction. In more subtle ways he opened our eyes to fresh opportunities and a more open-ended methodology.

I had expected rather more discussion about the fibre and rag content of papers mulched and added to the clay: his use of the common bog roll came as a surprise, as did the lack of specificity about properties of particular clays. The fresh clay/paper mixture

behaved a bit like papier mâché - in need of some support while wet. But when the mixture was used in slabs, the paper addition produced the extraordinary characteristic of being workable, able to accept attachments and joints when dry, and having great strength in an unfired state.

Brian amused us all by combining elements of his travel to Wales with his demonstration, producing a suitcase filled with dry paper/clay sheets prepared in advance. Surprisingly light and strong, they survived the rigours of air travel and could be joined with the freshly-mixed clay/paper slip. He suggested the next step in his demonstration could be to construct a suitcase complete with straps and a handle, to be carried off for firing and, possibly, the flight home. Unfortunately, lack of time discouraged him from this undertaking. Perhaps the suitcase is a good analogy for the nature of events such as the Festival: we fly in with our own pre-conceived baggage, then we fly home again with additional baggage, fresh ideas and new experiences jostling for space.

Jim Robison, USA, is a ceramist and teacher resident in the UK. He has participated in most of the International Potters' Festivals in various ways, including demonstrating.

Simply cut and fold

by
Phil
Rogers

How many American potters can you name? There are not many British potters, past or contemporary, I cannot connect with a style of work.

But as for America, I know few. Before the International Potters' Festival I could name Warren Mackenzie, Paul Soldner, Jeff Oestrich and a handful of others.

I am sure American potters take a greater interest in what is happening here than we do there. After all The American Way is only the second major exhibition of American ceramics to tour

this country in the last twenty years.

I came to Aberystwyth knowing I would be writing about Mark Pharis. What, I thought, was I going to find? I knew neither the name nor the work. I just hoped that whatever I did find I liked. I needn't have worried: Mark Pharis's pots shone out from the exhibition like a beacon and his demonstrations of intricate handbuilding techniques made sense to, and struck a chord in even an old thrower like me.

To describe Mark's building methods in simple terms is probably a contradiction in terms. He is so

comfortable with his idiosyncratic techniques that, like all consummate craftspeople, he makes the whole business appear confusingly easy. Essentially and as simply as possible, he prepares paper patterns much in the way that a dressmaker would and then cuts out his 'pots' from flat sheets of clay. From these sheets he folds, cuts and makes seams with a light and gentle touch, much in the style of a tinsplate metal worker, until a volume has been enclosed with a tension and vitality that belies the

jars and jugs that vary in the juxtaposition of lid to handle or handle to spout, seemingly in series. He has that understanding of form that a good thrower develops, the intuitive feel that puts the swelling in the right place and makes the diameter just right in relation to the height. How he manages this, working from a flat paper pattern that includes segments that have to be removed to allow for angles, lids and changes of direction is a minor miracle.

Mark says that he is not any more



rather slow and intense making process. The pristine seams and joints left for all to see as evidence of the process play their part, for they are the bones, the framework of the pot, serving as lines of force and energy

'intimidated by colour.' Certainly the teapots in the exhibition glowed in their uninhibited yellow and orange earthenware glazes, the glaze fluid enough to highlight the seams and joints that run from lid to base. Much of his work has been lightly saltglazed and he says he will return to salt in the near future. For the present he sees no reason why the two can't live happily side by side,

something he would not have contemplated even a year or so ago.

emphasising a roundness or a contained pressure eager to escape.

The echoes of Mark's throwing roots are strong in his work. The forms are vessels after all: teapots,

Phil Rogers is chairman of the Craft Potters' Association and a working potter. He is the author of *Ash Glazes*, published by A&C Black and is currently writing a book on throwing.



The American Way, a travelling exhibition of work by 21 US ceramists that opened at the Festival, features work dealing with aspects of function that may surprise and challenge. Sub-titled Views on Use: Function in Contemporary American Ceramics, the show was organized by Aberystwyth Arts Centre as part of its Festival contribution. Here, Paul Vincent reviews the show that is now touring Britain.

Utility: straining the pot

'What do you mean by use, function, utility, domestic pottery?' 'In making your selection did you see slides or get to see the real thing?'

Woodman and Chamberlin explained their position with clarity and honesty. No, the show did not represent all cultural groups in the US, or an even geographical spread across the country. The show was more a sampling of the American art school establishment with which the selectors were familiar. Thankfully the pots were chosen because they liked the work, which is the best reason of all.

By contrast with UK studio pottery - and here I make a large generalization - the American potters are uninhibited. They have a looser feel for clay (Peter Voulkos and Abstract Expressionism received more than a passing mention at the lecture, Bernard Leach rather less), they have a grander conception of scale, no reservations about using colours, either in striking combination or in remarkable intensity and - maybe the biggest contrast of all - they are using the two-dimensional surface of the pot as a whole new canvas for working, either graphically or with applied ornament. UK pots might seem sober, discrete, even deferential by comparison. But that is the UK's preferred style and its national trait. Irrespective of individual pots and potters, the character of a nation, its mood, its strengths and uncertainties are always revealed in its pottery.

In Eve Ropek's introduction to the exhibition in the accompanying catalogue, she boldly identifies a characteristic common to both American and UK potters. 'An eclectic plundering of the past and a referential habit,' she writes. The difference is possibly that the plundering is either more blatant or more honest (depending on your viewpoint) on the American scene, and the references more specific and readily identified. UK potters don't 'plunder', surely, they simply 'borrow'! It is all a question of degree and attitude. For the lay person the enjoyment of this show is a matter of personal taste. For the potter it is an opportunity to compare personal and national characteristics, and no doubt do a little eclectic borrowing or plundering of ideas and techniques.

The outstanding question arising from the pots and from the choices of the selectors and organizers is the awkward one of use. This is an enduring issue on both sides of the Atlantic. To help identify the function of pots, words such as 'ceremonial' and 'ritual' have been employed, but these terms fit uncomfortably into the patterns of ordinary life. A suitable parallel might be drawn between the work of our exciting studio potters and that of top fashion designers whose products at the fashion show are largely unwearable, mighty expensive and so delicate as to be spoiled by the least contact with mundane life. And yet such works - called 'couture', 'high fashion', 'garments' perhaps, but never mere 'clothing' - set the mood for a whole industry with stylistic gestures that take months, maybe years, to permeate, diluted, into designs for mass-market clothes shops. The exhibition teapot, cup and platter have the same purpose: to set new directions in ceramics and to keep the field lively. We need not strain to justify these pots in terms of utility; it is not their job. Theirs is another mission, a vital and important role to play, to an audience that must be sought and to patrons who must be encouraged. When a major exhibition takes place, the world must sit up and take notice.

The artists featured in The American Way are: Ann Agee, Peter Beasecker, William Brouillard, Sarah Coote, Deirdre Daw, Kim Dickey, Jane Dillon, Ann Gabhart, Alec Karros, Paul Kotula, Andy Martin, Mark Pharis, Gregory Pitts, Annabeth Rosen, Judith Salomon, Linda Sikora, Sandy Simon, Julie Terestman, David Regan, Bruce Winn and David Wright. The exhibition will visit London, Cleveland, Manchester, Wrexham, Cardiff and Warwick. A fully-illustrated catalogue is available. For further information contact Aberystwyth Arts Centre. Photos of the work of Mark Pharis, Annabeth Rosen and Ann Agee are featured elsewhere in the magazine.

Paul Vincent is editor of Studio Pottery and runs a gallery in Exeter. He has a degree in Japanese studies. Further details of Studio Pottery are given on Page 16.

Parts of Annabeth Rosen's statement and responses to the audience during a lively, free-ranging discussion are reproduced here to give a flavour of her work and approach to it.

I do not believe in the object, but it is all I have to tell me what I'm thinking, what I understand and what I know. The work is not important, but it's often the only thing that counts.

I try to create an atmosphere that allows unplanned things to happen and allows me to see the very obvious. These are instigators of invention. Working is wanting to be aware of the things I cannot yet recognize.

I think art is about perception, about how people view themselves in the world. You look at my pieces and you can't image what possessed this woman. I know you think that. But if you can share in an experience (the artist) had then (the work) makes some sense for you.

Accountability? You mean you must be responsible for what you do make, for good or for bad; that you must somehow stand up and be responsible? (...) It's essentially an issue with Annabeth, an intimate thing and a universal thing; it's just Annabeth and Annabeth on earth.

You think I'm bold and have a lot of courage but it covers enormous self doubt and insecurity. If I didn't have that



I wouldn't have to be so bold. If you say a great thing you can just whisper it.

What happens when you intend something and the viewer brings away from the work something different?

But that's always the case. You make a bowl

for apples: it's only done when the apples are in it. You make the form (...) but when is it done? It's done when you break it up and set it into the wall as mosaic. You have to leave room for the next thing, when the next person sees it, you can't control that, (not) even the people who want to control it.

On skills and ideas:

As visual artists, we have to make things to see things to know them to be able to go on. It's the idea that directs, not the lemons on the table. Who needs the thing for lemons? Everyone has a hundred things. (...) Every two things together make a third thing: two people make one kind of relationship; Annabeth and clay make one thing.

You know, I love to teach throwing. (...) At the end of the term everyone knows exactly what they've learned, they can make this cylinder, it's concrete. That's the easy part.

I said I'm self indulgent because I feel I make what I want. I don't care if you call it sculpture. In my house I made my orange juice squeezer, I made my candelabra - is it art, is it craft, what is it?

I do have a closed mind, as closed as anyone else, it's just closed in a different way towards other kinds of things. I'm equally as limited. I try to push my limits.

Even arbitrary things are in a way directed: when you put your hands up in the air there's something that maybe directed you at that moment to look for something maybe you're not aware of. But the point is (...) to

Visual art, *visible thinking*

The hard part is to teach, you know 'why did you make that thing; why does your thing look like your thing and your thing doesn't look like her thing?' Those (questions) are hard to investigate, not the aesthetic things, but the intangibles.

Where does what you add come from?

It comes from conversation and it comes from looking in the world and seeing all the people and all the things that exist and you chew them up and you spit them out. It's like - I'll say a foul thing - like you eat peas but you don't shit peas, you eat them, you take them in and you use what you need and then you get rid of...that's everything. You see...these rows of red chairs, you take them in, those little points, that red line? Maybe you may need that one time.



try and pay attention to sometimes the most obvious things. Like why I make white dishes. I used to make a joke about this but maybe it's true, I don't know. When I was little my mother used to say underwear, dishes and linen should be white. I don't really think that's why I make white dishes, but I don't know, you know. Why does my thing look like I made it? I didn't intend that, it's my limitation I work within.

Annabeth Rosen (USA) hand builds with very soft earthenware clay. Some forms are coated with white slip; glazes are clear borate or lead frit with additions of iron oxide, copper, manganese or cobalt. Pieces are once-fired, taking as long as 40 hours.

John Pollex (UK) decided to become a potter when in his mid-twenties and in 1966 attended the Sir John Cass School of Art, Whitechapel. He worked as a technician on the studio pottery course at Harrow College of Art and then as an assistant to Bryan Newman and Colin Pearson. Once known for his traditional slipware, John has effected a colourful transformation in his work. At the Festival John involved visitors in decorating large earthenware discs, he playing the role of 'chess master' responding interactively to decorative marks made by others. He also demonstrated Tai Chi, which he teaches.



Captivated by colour

My concern as a potter is primarily to keep my work enjoyable to make and decorate. Everything follows from this. I am also concerned with the possibility that a functional pot may never be used and yet still give pleasure simply by its appearance.

I have often been asked why I gave up making traditional slipware at a time when I was one of the leading makers. After 14 years I felt I had exhausted most of the techniques for decorating slipware. The sense of play was diminishing: I felt safe; it was too easy; I didn't have to think. It was 1984 when I decided to change everything. I bought some brushes, cut up some sponges and mixed about 15 body stains with a white slip. I improvised for about six months. I was enjoying myself again.

In 1985 I went to see an exhibition of Howard Hodgkin's paintings at the Whitechapel Gallery in London. It was a breathtaking experience. I knew I could learn something from looking at these paintings. I soon found myself studying a large round painting entitled *Valentine*. It was the first round painting I had ever seen. Maybe it was because I had made so many plates in the past that I was attracted to this painting first. I remember saying to myself 'this would look good on a pot'.

I have spent many hours looking at Howard Hodgkin's paintings. The enjoyment of them increases. Alongside Howard Hodgkin, the paintings of Robert Natkin, Patrick Heron, Ben Nicholson and Hans Hoffman have influenced the surface of my work.



I have always liked American pots. The ones I'm attracted to blossom with colour, have improvised forms and look enjoyable to make. During a visit to Brussels in 1983 I went to an exhibition entitled *Who's Afraid of American Pots*. I certainly wasn't. I loved them, in particular the ones by Betty Woodman and Andrea Gill. In 1981 I had the pleasure of demonstrating alongside the American potter Don Reitz. We were both guests of the New Zealand Society of Potters. Don's performance was unforgettable. Don ate clay like Zorba the Greek ate mountains. I believe the seeds were sown there for my eventual transformation from slipware to my present thrown and altered work.

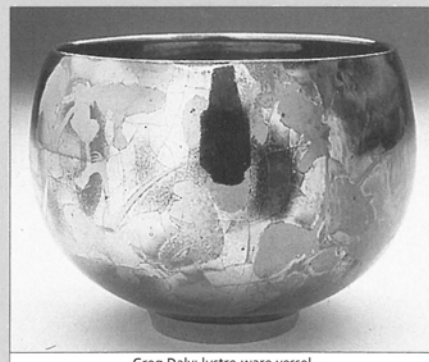
Sandy Brown described me as a colourist and spiritual potter. I can't argue with that. However I'm not just a potter. I play Tai Chi and pool; I swim and ice-skate, boogie board in the summer surf and sit for hours at the flight deck of 'concord,' my word processor.

Look now, sift later

Greg Daly, the Australian lustre-ware maker, was invited to be master of ceremonies at the 1993 Festival following his popularity as a demonstrator 1987 Festival. He is currently writing a book on glazes. Here he gives his perspective on the Festival.

One thing that gathers us under an umbrella is the fact that we create permanent objects by firing them, be it a fine porcelain bowl or large sculptural installation.

Maybe a problem today is we don't see the ceramic realm in a holistic view but as a specialization we are channelled into during college education or by peer group pressure to do away with unnecessary acquiring of skills and knowledge. Did you know that most ceramic studios have the materials to make super-conductors, or, historically the first tenmoku ware was a white glaze similar to shino? We are not going to use all of this found knowledge but we will have a grand view of what ceramics is and has been.



Greg Daly: lustre-ware vessel

One is able to see clearly the inter-connection of things in the ceramic realm. It gives one the ability to think laterally about a problem, to bring together techniques and knowledge from seemingly unrelated areas, be it from traditional techniques or the cutting-edge of ceramic technology.

But one has to remember that work can be born of the best technician but be dead in feeling. The work needs a soul breathed into it by the maker.

I like to think that at a gathering of potters/ceramists an exchange of ideas and knowledge will take place so that we depart with a broader view than when we arrived. In *The Unknown Craftsman*, Yanagi says one needs to put aside the desire to judge immediately and to acquire the habit of just looking. I like to collect up everything, sifting later on, never saying no to observing.

Greg Daly

A personal

Christine Boswijk was a children's dentist before turning to ceramics, and it was later still before she began to reflect on her roots and her identity as a New Zealander.

home-coming

Randomness in the natural landscape of New Zealand, the scale of the rain forest and her early experiences - she was born with a defective lung and was also badly burnt as a child - informed a major development of her work.

'I looked at my need to be tidy. I began tearing at clay; I began to look at beauty in a different way. I saw tearing and patching as having a beauty of its own. With clay I talked about things I hadn't talked about before.' Thus rock faces, trees, skin and scarring were included in the illustrated lecture that Christine gave at the Festival on her intensely personal work.



'I was born in NZ and spent my childhood on the east coast of the South Island - a land mass backboned by glaciers, snow-capped peaks of the Southern Alps, native bush and the vast plains of Canterbury. Though we lived close to the sea, we had from our garden a clear view of the mountains and the majestic Mount Cook. These strong images of height, depth and distance became the scale from within which all things become relative.

My family, fourth generation New Zealanders, still referred to Britain as home; Welsh hymn singing set the criteria for church choirs. Like homing-pigeons we completed the cycle of our youth by returning to Europe in order to further our education. It was as if we were a nation living on the edge of the world, standing on a cliff and looking outward for inspiration; we took what we wanted from it and brought it back to use.

Since, attitudes have changed. The country is coming of age. We look to our own icons - our bi-cultural heritage, our place in the Pacific and our spiritual base, the land. Looking outward serves as a reminder of our isolation; the distance beyond the horizon signifies our historic past. But it is the Aotearoa of now which sustains our vision for the future.

My work in clay has grown equally from the past influences of my childhood, travel, and the return home. It is essentially regional work - about my love of this country, its geology, its lush growth and the light, the scale of the mountains and the sea. It is also concerned with the continuum of life, the complexity and fragility of the human condition and the simplicity of the life/death equation. It is concerned with the process of doing, in preference to the talking about it, and the magic which can sometimes happen within that process.'

Christine Boswijk uses white earthenware and terracotta clay, alone or mixed by laminating and patching. Her work is either coiled or made with slabs which are stretched, torn and patched together with slip. Strips may be used like bandages. For colour and surface texture, fired and crushed glaze particles are mixed with sulphate silicon carbonate and other dry materials, and pushed into the wet clay slabs before stretching and tearing. Sometimes a light wash of glaze is added after the bisque firing, though some pieces may be once-fired and others several times.

'Have you ever stood amidst a forest of Nikau palms, followed the curve of the trunk to a lofty height where the gentle swelling of the boll converts into the thrusting spread of a branched palm head; looked through the criss-crossed patterns of the leaves to the sky; felt the textured trunk and smelled the earth beneath your feet?'

Sometimes one may be forgiven for thinking that coming from another country is reason enough for a ceramist to be featured at an international event in the UK. After all, it is the fascination with the little known and our insatiable appetite for the new that kindles our imagination.

In Václav Šerák's case, a ceramist from the Czech Republic was of interest itself, but here too was a man with an impressive background. He has spent his whole working life from the age of 16 involved with ceramics. Not just one aspect, but many: from designs for industrially-produced porcelain (both decorative and tableware) to sculptural and architectural clay works. He has pieces in museums and galleries from the V&A to Faenza, and in situ in Prague and Rychnov.

Greg Daly introduced Václav as a 'quiet sensitive man' and his first demonstration was a quiet, thoughtful, almost private affair punctuated by occasionally waving arms as he constructed a sculpture from slabs and a thrown disc. When finished and back at his off-stage workspace, this modest man continued to decorate with poured slip and scratched line, explaining that the final

A quiet way with

clay

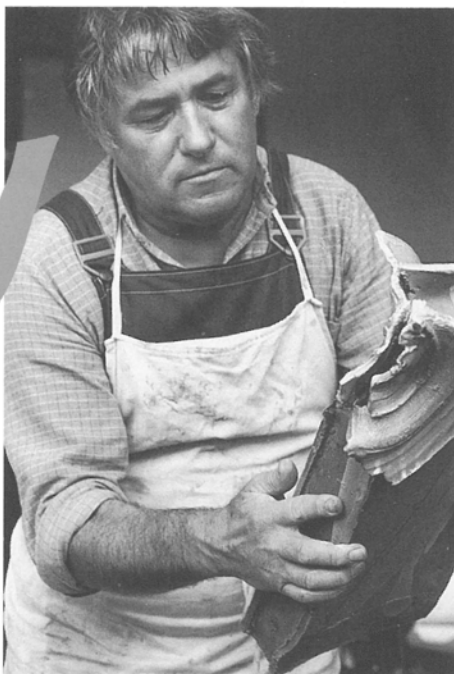
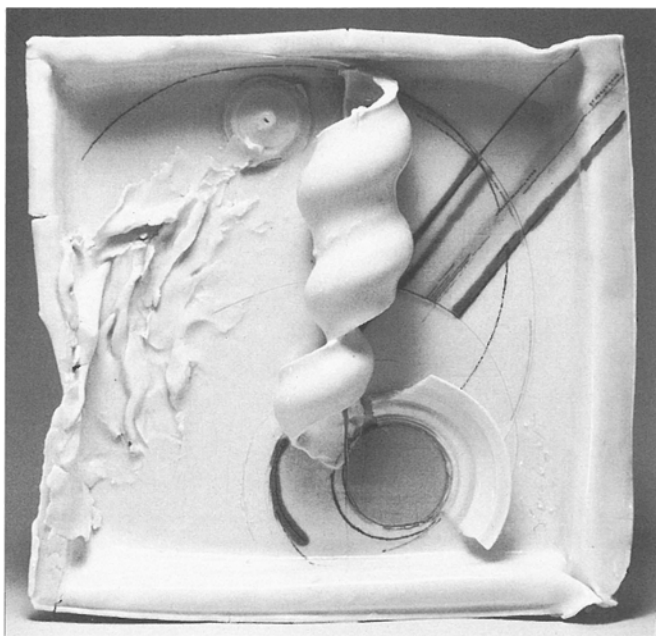
surface qualities would be matt and stone-like. He was not immediately accessible, but was generous with smiles, photos of his work and, eventually, explanations. Over the weekend it became clear that he is influenced by the Bohemian and baroque, by the sandstone and architecture of his native Prague.

On Sunday Oldrich Asenbryl, a fellow Czech living and working in Wales, was on stage with a more relaxed Václav. The two formed the perfect double act, obviously enjoying the banter and holding audience interest with the animated conversations they had before the equally animated translation emerged. Václav constructed a spiral column from simple thrown cylinders explaining that he had never been happy with 'just round thrown pots' and one day started cutting them up. Some of his spiral sculptures are three metres high and are clear references to the baroque architecture of Prague where he is Professor of Ceramics at the Academy of Applied Arts.

Not all demonstrators are natural verbal communicators even in their native tongue; it is more difficult in a foreign language and it is worth the Festival visitor being a little more investigative. Those who did take the time to watch Václav working offstage and to talk to him were richly rewarded. He provided insights into his ways of working, the variety of his work,

his enthusiasm for the work of his students in Prague and into the life of a ceramist in the new Czech Republic. For me, one of the most exciting images I retain of the weekend are not actually of ceramic but of snow: Václav's photographs of enormous snow sculptures made with other artists at a mountain ski resort.

By Paul Scott who is a ceramist and printmaker. He writes for Artists' Newsletter and edits AN's twice-yearly Clay supplement. He is currently writing a book on clay and print for publication in 1994 by A&C Black.



▼ Christine Boswijk

Christine Boswijk of New Zealand and Tulla Elieson of Norway are both ceramists of long-standing, but I have to confess I had not previously encountered their work. Gabriele Koch, on the other hand, is based in London, and her immaculately-coiled pots were already known to me.

Koch's shapes are carefully controlled but her work never loses an organic quality: she works slowly, each piece developing out of an intimate relationship with the clay. Although there is an element of chance in her sawdust firings whereby the vessel acquires the subtle, smoked patina so characteristic of her work, she has become extremely adept at anticipating the results.

Koch's pots are imbued, she feels, with the perpetual contact of the maker's hand. She hopes that they can also call forth wider, more universal connections. The process of coiling is one of the most ancient techniques and Koch is well aware that the same methods were used by the earliest female potters. She was delighted when the piece she sawdust-fired over the weekend was bought by a group of women potters who will take it in turns to have it in their homes.

Christine Boswijk coils, but where Koch draws on the strength of tradition, there is an emphasis on fragility in Boswijk's work. She too displays a tremendous affinity for her material; with a whole body movement she

Feminine persuasions

they are perhaps figures or forests - triggers for the imagination. Boswijk's methods are intuitive; she spoke of her hope to evoke the ambiguity of the human condition by her work: so complex and so simple.

Tulla Elieson's pieces in the exhibition of demonstrators' work showed her to be fearless in her manipulation of huge slabs of clay. There was a large black bowl of outstanding presence and a 'pillow' which

excited the curiosity of many other potters. More importantly for Elieson, this year's Festival gave rise to a unique experience. The clay and wire figure she

incorporated into her boat installation was unplanned and it was the first time she had used the human figure in her work. The installation had an ecological theme influenced primarily by the Braer tanker disaster and its affects on the Norwegian coast, but also referring to the growing awareness of environmental issues in everyday lives. Plastic bags full of polluted water from the Festival were suspended across a 3D metal boat-shaped grid, and the figure, also encased in plastic, occupied the position of a traditional figurehead.

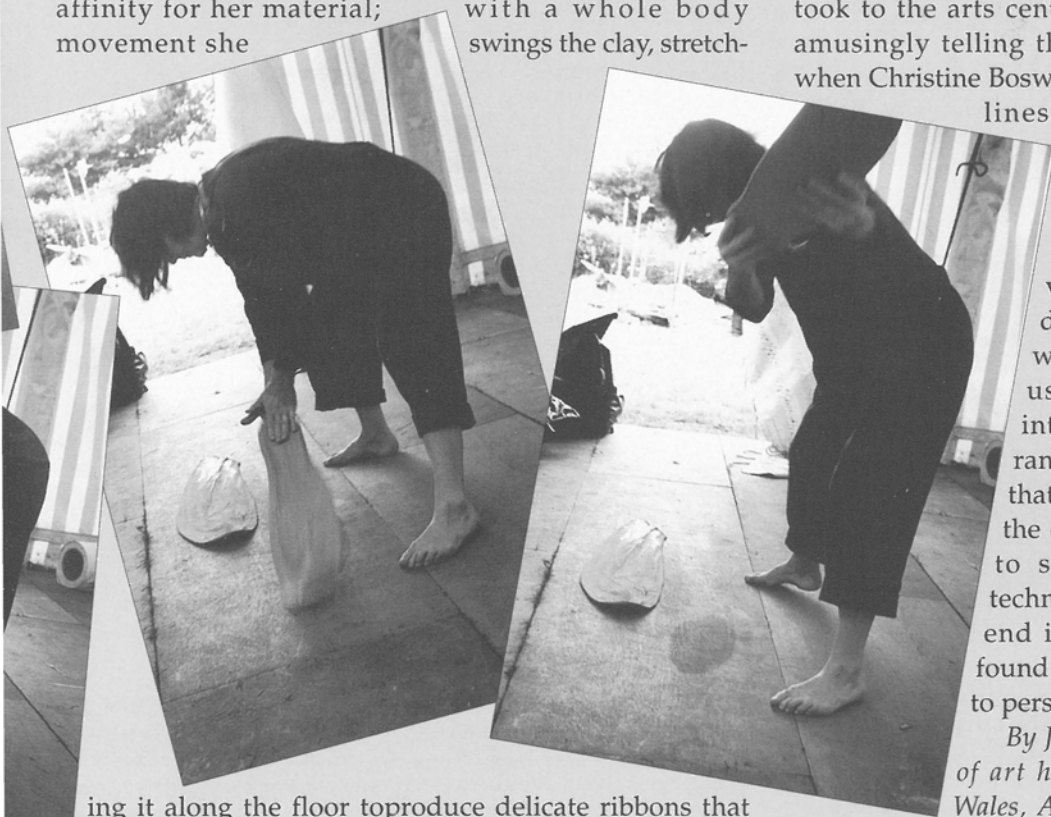
Can one find legitimate issues of gender in the individual approach to working clay? The demonstrators took to the arts centre stage in pairs and I thought it amusingly telling that at virtually the same moment when Christine Boswijk explained the absence of straight

lines in her work, beside her Brian Gartside was using a blade and a ruler to produce such an edge. It would be a mistake to make sweeping generalizations and no value judgement is intended, but it did seem to me that for these three women, at least, the clay was being used with a certain philosophical intensity. Their work covers a wide range of technical approaches as does that of their male counterparts. Perhaps the difference was that the men tended to subordinate ideas to form and technique, settling on the process as an end in itself, while these women had found techniques and forms to give shape to personal concerns.

By Jo Dahn who is a post-graduate student of art history at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and has studied women's ceramic traditions across different cultures. She has a particular interest in women's art practices and contributes articles to *Women's Art Magazine*.



Tulla Elieson - Cushion



ing it along the floor to produce delicate ribbons that miraculously never stick. Then she wraps air. She winds the ribbons upward until they form long spindly structures. When these are viewed en masse

Update

Captive audience:

children at the Festival put together their own circus act for the benefit of visitors under the guidance of Professor Panic, a professional puppeteer who ran workshops over the entire weekend. Puppet-making



and story-telling were also on the under-14s' agenda. With children from various parts of the world taking part, lack of a common language might have been a problem. But humour and slap-stick proved universal.

One of the nice things about the Aberystwyth festivals is bumping into friends and catching up on gossip.

Perhaps that's the cause of the usual 'Friday night outbreaks of over-indulgence' as Murray Fieldhouse has called them. Not that we noticed Murray being less indulgent any other night. Could it be because he's finally laid to rest Pottery Quarterly? Sad, but a relief to his nervous system, he says.

Not one to tell tales against other people,

I'll even up the score. Years ago Adrian Childs and I visited Betty Woodman and her husband George in Italy, during one hot summer of the sort that invited unabashed sunbathing in pre-UV-consciousness days. One always hopes there is something memorable about one's persona, but not in this case it seemed. At the Festival, finally Betty remembered me: George still had the photo. Photo? A bad case of 'Sorry, I didn't recognize you with your clothes on.'

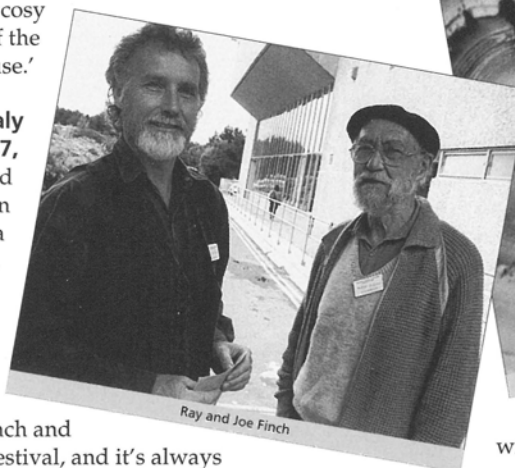
Anyone who coveted Iain Barber's interesting coat

('a tapestry with sleeves') may like to know its history. It was made by Lily van Oost. Iain says he used to act as gofer to Lily whenever she came out of the mountains to work in Dublin. She's the one who made a pullover for a double decker bus and 'almost succeeded in making a tea cosy for the copper dome of the Customs House.'

Since we last saw Greg Daly in Aberystwyth in 1987,

his partner has had a son and a daughter; Jim Robison arrived at the Festival in a state of mild culture shock, fresh from Beer Shiva, Israel, where he worked in ceramic factories for five weeks with 40 others from all over the world.

It was good to see Ray Finch and family members at the Festival, and it's always heartening to spot previous Festival participants who return as visitors, such as Anne Lightwood, the Scottish potter who was a demonstrator at the first Festival, and Alex McErlain who helped Switzerland-based Patrick Sargent at the 1991 Festival.



Ray and Joe Finch

Increasingly, the Festival attracts

publishers of journals and books on ceramics. A&C Black, the Scottish publishers, were among them this year, with a topical tip for would-be writers. 'Philosophy' and 'intuitive' - the sine qua non of the potter's vocabulary - are on strict ration.

A new publication has appeared since the 1991 Festival -

indeed it is the first new UK ceramics magazine to appear in 20 years. *Studio Pottery* is edited by Paul Vincent, an Exeter gallery owner, and Victor Margrie, formerly head of ceramics at Harrow School of Art. Its target readership is more the pottery buyer, both the collector and the gallery or shop owner, though the magazine will be of interest to makers, teachers, students and curators as a companion to studio pottery in the UK.

It contains critical reviews of exhibitions, profiles of potters, historical background, discussion, and selected exhibition listings. Refreshingly, there is no affectation of coyness over pottery prices: the first issue carried an article on the effects of the recession. It also gives information about pottery in public collections. *Studio Pottery* is produced six times a year at £23 including UK postage from 15 Magdalen Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4TA. Paul Vincent reviews the exhibition *The American Way* on Page 10 of *The International*.

Another contributor to *The International* is Paul Scott,

a potter and print maker from Cumbria who is the person behind Artists' Newsletter's *Clay* supplement which appears in the January and July issues. *Clay* first appeared in AN in 1984 as the Northern Potters' Association newsletter, but has developed in breadth with recent articles covering such issues as ceramics and the environment, and international opportunities. Paul has plans to develop the supplement further as a forum for the UK potters' network. AN itself provides news and debate on all areas of art practice and includes specialist articles on, for example, copyright law and accountancy.

It also publishes a number of handbooks, fact packs and sample contracts.

AN is published monthly; the discount price for UK subscribers is £17.

Contact Artists' Newsletter, PO Box 23, Sunderland, SR1 1BR.

Speaking of magazines *Ceramic Review* needs no

introduction, but 1994 is a special year: it celebrates its 25th anniversary.

A bumper issue will coincide with a conference, *Ceramics Towards the 21st Century*, at the V & A on 5 November.

Speakers will include international figures. See forthcoming issues of *Ceramic Review* for details; for subscriptions write to: 21 Carnaby Street, London W1V 1PH.

Festival feedback is often fast and constructive. It's been suggested that at future festivals, representatives of regional potters' groups should meet and exchange information about members and events. Meanwhile contacts for North Wales Potters and South Wales Potters are, respectively: Steve Mattison, Cae Carrog, Aberhosan, Machynlleth, Powys, UK, SY20 8SE. Tel: 0654 703247. Alan Clark, 17 Falcon Crescent, Moorlands Park, Weston-super-Mare, Avon, UK, BS22 8RX. Tel: 0934 511422. (Please send SAE).

Sheila Tyler

This magazine was produced and edited by Sheila Tyler (Tel: 0766 830601), with photography by Stephen Brayne (Tel: 081 858 6286), in conjunction with the Welsh Arts Council (Tel: 0222 394711).

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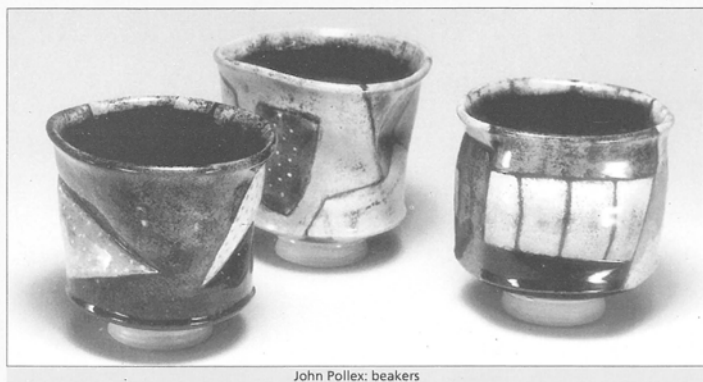
The Welsh Arts Council, 9 Museum Place, Cardiff CF1 3NX, or Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Penglais, Aberystwyth, Dyfed SY23 3DE, on receipt of your name and address, and £2 per copy plus postage - 50p per copy for UK mailings; Europe (EC and non-EC, printed paper rate) 70p; USA and Canada £1.42; Australia, New Zealand and all other parts of the world £1.66.

Festival organization

The Festival was organised by North Wales Potters, South Wales Potters and Aberystwyth Arts Centre.

The 1993 committee comprised Adrian Childs, Gwenllian Ashley, Beverley Bell-Hughes, Jean Grant, Wendy Green, Gavin Killerby, Sue Lane, Steve Mattison, Lyndon Thomas, Alan Tucker, Alan Hewson (Director of Aberystwyth Arts Centre), Eve Ropek (AAC Exhibitions Officer), Cath Sherrell (AAC Education Officer), Moira Vincentelli (University College of Wales, Aberystwyth) and Roger Lefevre (Crafts Director of the Welsh Arts Council).

The organizers wish to thank all those who assisted and to gratefully acknowledge the Welsh Arts Council, the Development Board for Rural Wales, West Wales Arts and the New Zealand Society of Potters.



John Pollex: beakers

Sincere thanks are also extended to:

Bath Potters Supplies (Tel: 0225 337046); Butterley Brick Co Ltd (Tel: 0773 570570); Calor Gas - South Western Region (Freephone: 0800 626 626); Potclays Ltd (Tel: 0782 219816); PotteryCrafts Ltd (Tel: 0782 745000); Medcol (Cornwall) Ltd (Tel: 0208 72260); Potclays Ltd (Tel: 0782 219816); PotteryCrafts Ltd (Tel: 0782 745000); Potters Connection (Tel: 0782 598729) and Reward Clay Glaze Ltd (Tel: 0538 750052) for generously supplying materials; to A Guinness, St James Gate Brewery, Dublin 8, for hospitality, and to Aberystwyth Arts Centre staff, student helpers and donors of raffle prizes.

The following companies took trade stands at the Festival:

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Ceramic Art & Perception
35 William Street, Paddington, NSW 2021, Australia, (Tel: 02 361 5286)

Craft Potters' Association
21 Carnaby Street, London, W1 (Tel: 071 437 6781)

Industrial Pyrometer Co
66/76 Gooch Street North, Birmingham, B5 6QY (Tel: 021 622 3511)

Paul Vincent Studio Pottery
15 Magdalen Road, Exeter, EX2 4TA (Tel: 0392 430082)

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Stow Potters' Wheels
2 Gawcombe, Church Westcote, Chipping Norton, OX7 6SS (Tel: 0451 830744)



Ann Agee: platter featured in The American Way



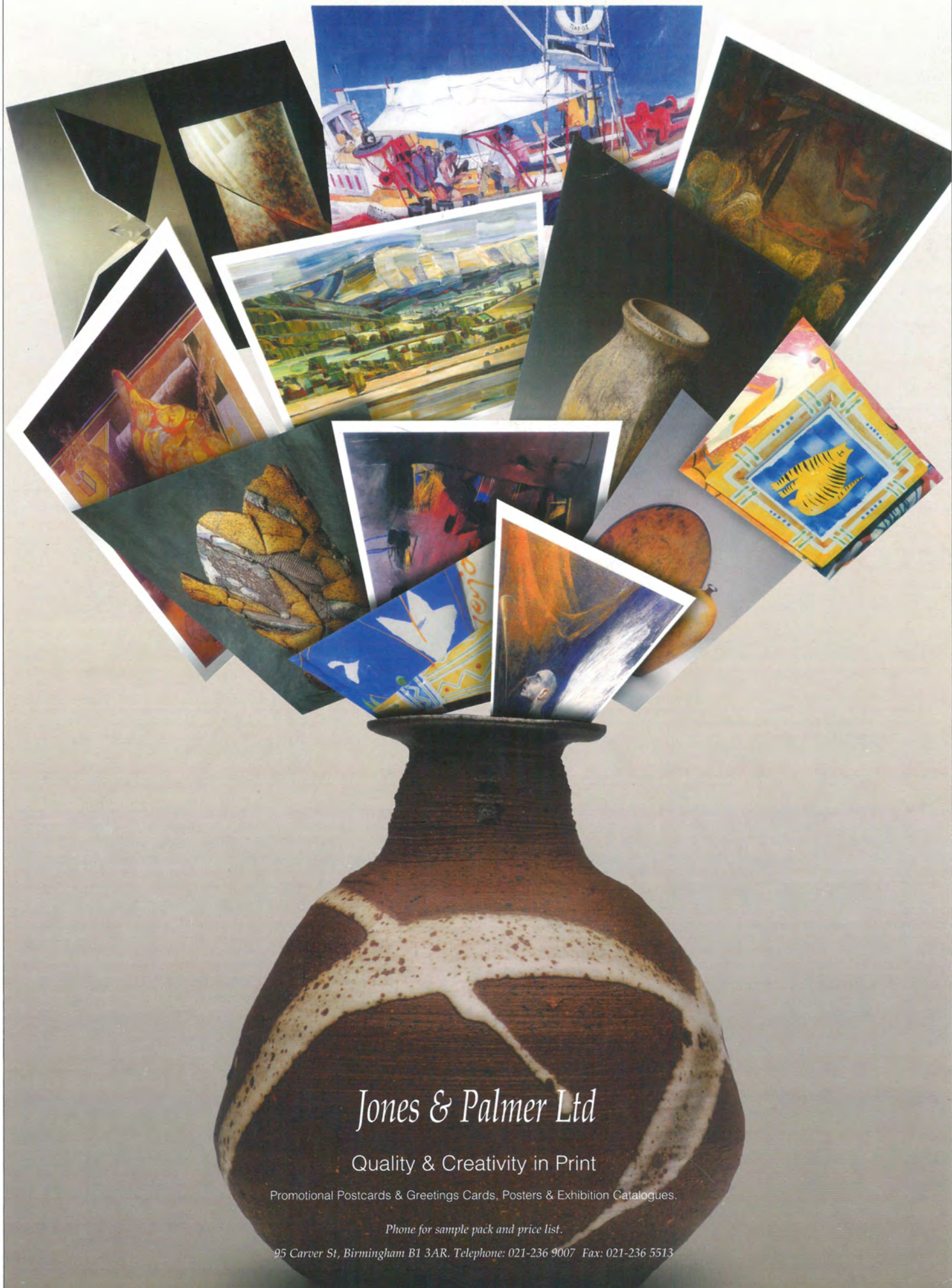
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