



DACORUM AND CHILTERN POTTERS GUILD



Saint Quentin la Poterie

Conker Festival

Peter Ilsley

Stan Romer Competition

Willow & Adobe kiln - Paul Rowbottom

POD 2011- David & Margaret Frith

Natalie Tabert - Potters from Darfur

Paul Rowbottom - Talk and demo

www.thedcpg.org.uk Issue 4 Winter 2011/12

Potters Open Day

David and Margaret Frith

Always the spirit
of adventure!



£1.50

About the Guild & the Newsletter

Membership of the Guild is open to anyone having an interest in pottery and sculpture and offers members many opportunities each year to see top potters and sculptors demonstrating their skills. In addition, an annual Open Day is held with demonstrations. Exhibitions, visits and workshops are also organised at various times.

Membership Rates

Single £22, Family (one address) £27, Student (full time) £11. Newsletter only: £7 per annum.

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Editorial A stimulating year ahead

Lynne McGeachie

Happy New Year!

I hope you all enjoyed the festive period and are full of renewed energy to participate in the Guild's forthcoming programme.

Since our last Newsletter we've held the AGM at which Peter Ilsley gave a demonstration and acted as judge of the Stan Romer competition; held a very successful Potters' Open Day (POD) with Margaret and David Frith; and in December we had a varied and informative evening with a 'Potters' Question Time' with Guild members Doug Jones and Les Parrott and presentations by members Natalie Tabert and Paul Rowbottom.

At the AGM our chairman, Mervyn Fitzwilliam, gave a report of the year's activities. This covered many events that have been reported in detail in the Newsletter over the past year. Highlights included Music on the Moor, the Conker Festival and the Kiln Building Project all taking place at Box Moor; the 2010 POD featuring

Elaine Peto and Mark Griffiths; the Guild's presence at the Queen's Park centre; the exhibition at Chenies; and the garden party.

Ruby Sharpe reported on the Guild's participation at the Pitstone Museum and thanked Mervyn, John and Ronnie Powell for their support over the year.

During 2010-2011 Ruby has increased the activities from raku glazing and hand building with air-drying clay, to include throwing on the wheel. The turnover during the year has been good and Ruby has been able to give a surplus of £140 to the Guild's general fund. All Guild members are welcome to go along to Raku their pots or just join in with entertaining and educating the public.

For more information contact Ruby.

Stan Romer Competition 2012

It's time to start thinking about your entry for the next competition the theme of which is 'Flight'. All works should be ceramic and newly made for the competition.

DCPG Autumn Exhibition

Sue Lines

DCPG is holding a ceramics exhibition at The Letchworth Arts Centre, putting up on Monday 29 October and taking down a fortnight later on Monday 12 November.

Two years ago we had a very successful show at this time of year at the run up to Christmas and makers sold over £1000 worth of work.

The Arts Centre has asked us to send two images of each (probable) maker's work.

If interested in exhibiting could you please send a CD with 2 no. jpg images as soon as possible to Nigel Carrick, 31 Field Lane, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3LF. Nigel has kindly agreed to bring these together and forward them to the Arts Centre.

Details of the exhibition and how to apply to take part will come later.

NB: Closing date is 28 February for the CDs to Nigel.



Stan Romer Competition 2011

Pots that tell Tales

The theme for this year's Stan Romer competition was titled 'Pots that tell Tales' and was inspired by the BBC series 'A History of the World in 100 Objects'. We had 16 entries and as always Guild members work varied greatly, from sculptural work to thrown pieces.

Some of the entrants had also written a brief description of 'The Tale' that their piece was telling, which helped our judge with understanding the story behind the work.

Peter Ilsley judged this year and he found it a very challenging prospect to undertake, but after much deliberation he decided that Diana Tonnison's pot, shown bottom left, should win. He described it as telling lots of different stories to each individual viewer and that it needed no description. Diana went away with the Stan Romer trophy and a cheque for £85.

First prize to
Diana Tonnison



Second prize
went to
Danielle Bunker
for this slab pot
into which she had
impressed words
and textures.

report by Kirsteen Holuj

photography by Lutz Krainhöfner



Third prize went to Ingrid Thorstad
who made this terracotta smoke fired dish.



At the Potters Open Day in November 2011 a vote was carried out and the theme for next year was chosen, so get thinking and make a piece which embodies the theme of 'Flight'.



Peter Ilsley Demonstration



14th October 2011
report by Sue Lines

Peter Ilsley was booked to talk about the alchemy of macro crystalline glazes on Friday October 14th as part of the AGM and Stan Romer competition Guild evening. Some of Peter's alchemy can be deduced from his beautiful book entitled Macro-Crystalline Glazes published by Crowood. A brand new copy is now in the Guild library.

There are lots of different recipes in the book and plenty of cautionary notes about how sometimes a given recipe can be fantastic while on other occasions it is rubbish. He says that a glaze binder (can use wall paper paste) is put on the pot to prevent shrinkage cracks in the raw glaze or 2 % bentonite in the glaze can be used.

The one thing that seems to be consistent is the need to apply the glaze much more thickly at the top because the glaze will run and can stick to the shelf. Peter usually uses a little biscuit saucer to catch any drips, he can crack it off after the glaze firing using a small burner (such as a cook's creme brulee burner.)

Most recipes seem to need zinc oxide but the seeding of the crystals is the alchemical part and there seem to be many occasions where it doesn't work. Where it does, the effects are quite magical; in one photograph in the book, it is hard not to believe that the crystals are three dimensional. This is clearly a specialisation for some potters who are prepared to experiment and have a lot of failure before something magical appears.





City in a Village Saint Quentin la Poterie

Marshall Colman

Saint Quentin la Poterie, a village near Nîmes with twenty-four pottery studios, has a long history as a ceramics centre (tiles in the Pope's Palace in Avignon were made there), but by 1970 all the traditional workshops had closed. Its revival is due largely to the energy and vision of Nicole Bouyala, its formidable mayor.

Mme Bouyala, who held office from 1983 to 2001, encouraged potters to set up there, created the gallery Terra Viva, the European ceramics festival Terralha, a museum of ceramics and a Centre for Arts and Crafts Training (CFA), the only training centre for ceramics in the Gard or Hérault. The studios and shops along the pretty streets have turned St Quentin la Poterie into a village with a cosmopolitan population and the resources of a city, with national accreditation as a Ville et Métiers d'Art (arts and crafts town).

I visited the studios of four potters - Reindert Overduin, Denis Grazon, Agnès Alex and Marine Maudet - and asked them how they came to set up in Saint Quentin la Poterie.



Reindert Overduin

Like all the potters in the village, Reindert Overduin is not local. He was born in Holland, where he went to art school, came to France for a holiday and liked it so much that he stayed. He visited St Quentin la Poterie, worked in Lilou Milcent Gallot's studio for a day and decided to study ceramics seriously. He trained at CNIFOP, the National Centre for Training in the Ceramic Arts in Burgundy, from which many French ceramists have graduated. CNIFOP offers one-year modules that can be taken alone or combined into a longer course, plus numerous specialist short courses. After CNIFOP, Reindert returned to San Quentin la Poterie to work with Patrick Galtié, who has the largest workshop and the only one with permanent employees.

Reindert Overduin in his studio with a student on secondment from the Centre for Arts and Crafts Training.

Denis Grazon

Denis made an even more sudden decision to become a ceramist. In 2002, when he was working in a Paris advertising agency, he took a holiday in the Périgord, saw some potters at work and the next day decided, "This is what I want to do!" Ten days later, he started work in his flat; three weeks later, he had built a wood-fired kiln and fired his first pots. "I didn't have a clue what I was doing," he said, "only a photo of a kiln, which I tried to copy."

He is still fascinated by kilns and firing. He has five gas and wood-fired kilns, including raku kilns, a fast-fire wood kiln and an open fire, low temperature kiln for the courses he runs in primitive firing - "Original pottery from the original kilns". His studio is called L'Age de Faire, a pun on "making" and "iron age".



Denis Grazon at L'Age de Faire with one of his five kilns.

Photographs by Marshall Colman

Agnès Alex and Marine Maudet share a studio making work that differs from everything else made in St Quentin la Poterie, simple, white and austere.

In 2003, Agnès came from Paris to study at the CFA, then took an apprenticeship with Lilou Milcent Gallot, who has trained several of the potters here. Two years ago, before setting up, she had a show in Paris to see if her work would sell and was encouraged by the response. She and Marine were helped by the council to find premises for their studio.

They like to progress slowly, ensuring that each step they take is well established before they move on to the next one - first their studio, then their shop, then their blog. They sell only from their shop now and will consider later whether to sell in Paris as well.

Conker Festival



Mervyn Fitzwilliam

Thanks a lot for all your support at the Box Moor Conker Festival on 16 October. The event was very successful both from a pottery and conker competition point of view, though there seemed to be slightly fewer people there than last year. Including our commission on pot sales, we raised a total of £263, to be shared between the Hospice of St. Francis and the guild, a really excellent result.

Most of our throwers and hand-builders were children, although we did manage to persuade a few adults to try using the wheel.

I usually ask those participating if they had thrown a pot before. Generally the answer is no, but we did have a few people who had made a pot at "Music on the Moor" and also at last year's conker festival.

At a Saturday night dance in the village, I spoke to Lilou Milcent Gallot, one of the first studio potters in St Quentin la Poterie. She told me that the future of ceramics is uncertain there. The potters are getting older and the success they have made of the village has pushed up property prices. The council is now promoting other activities.

That evening in the market square, there was a pop-up bar, a raku demonstration and a Latin American accordion band.

There was a mix of established locals and people who have chosen the relaxed pace of this Occitan village in preference to the pressures of the metropolis. The community spirit among the potters is well known and many more want to set up here, so hopefully it will survive and grow.

As ever the Box Moor Trust support was excellent and special thanks to Louise Baldwin for the attention to detail that means we always get a flying start to the day, with tent, furniture & materials all ready for us.

We even had a box of chocolates presented to us by Louise, for us all to share at the end of the event, a very nice gesture.

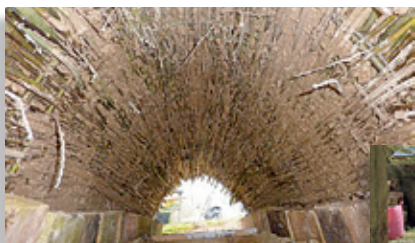
Thanks to Ros McGuirk for pugging the clay for us, it was just perfect for throwing.

Thanks also to Phil Pennington and Peter Ablett for their support and Donice Sousa, Sylvia Fitzwilliam, Sarah Heafield (our granddaughter who helped Ros with sales); Lutz Krainhoefer; Mary Anne Bonney and Linda Ablett for their help on the day.

Well done everyone, and thanks again.



The site for this kiln (located near Steyning, Sussex) has many advantages; managed mixed woodland, local sources of clay generous and enthusiastic hosts. A small group of us (including DCPG members; Jola, Lutz, Paul and Grace) constructed the kiln chamber over 2 weekends in April 2010.



The chamber construction incorporated a woven willow and hazel support. Over this an adobe clay mixture was prepared and applied by hand and various trowels. The first layer was rich in stoneware clay, fire-clay and grog. The subsequent two layers included earthenware and stoneware slurry, fire-clay, chopped straw, perlite, dug clay, sand and cement. An adobe clay shell approximately 100mm thick was formed using the above ingredients.

A shelter was constructed which would allow air to circulate and slowly dry the chamber. Full of enthusiasm the group vowed to return in late summer to fill the kiln chamber with pots, complete the firebox, exit flue and chimney.

In reality we all got busy with other commitments and autumn turned to winter, winter to spring... Renewed commitment was required to make the inaugural firing a reality. It was clear that the adobe kiln chamber would struggle to survive a second winter without

being baked from the inside out. We gathered in late October 2011 to pack the kiln mainly with green-ware pots some finished with terra sigillata others with slips and oxides.

The chamber has three stepped kiln shelves settings. Without the chimney and firebox it was possible to load small pots in at the chimney end and then load a variety of sized pots in the centre of the chamber from the firebox end. Once loading the chamber was complete we then constructed the firebox, exit flue and chimney using more conventional refractory

bricks and kiln shelves. During this process other members of the team had prepared supplies of dried timber ready for the next day's firing.

Two of us woke before sunrise to commence the firing with wood (we

had trickled a drying heat through the kin overnight using a small gas burner and LPG).

It was our intention to fire the kiln slowly for the first six hours and introduce more heat as the day progressed. Our target temperature was around 1100°C and after 14 hours we judged (visually and single pyrometer) the firing was complete. We clamped up the kiln with a heavy reducing atmosphere.

The following weekend we returned with great anticipation to unearth the results of our inaugural firing. We all came to the project with modest expectations and were pleased that most pots survived the process.



Moreover we are confident that the adobe kiln chamber now fired internally could be fired to temperatures which enable ash deposits to flux and shino type glazes to mature. So with resolve we look forward to spring 2012 to test our hypotheses.

For more information contact DCPG members Paul Rowbottom, Lutz Krainhöfner, or Jola Spytkovska.



Members' News



Diana Tonnison

Congratulations to Guild member Diana Tonnison who has won the Oxfordshire Craft Guild Fletcher prize for her piece "Salted Fish from Barcelona Market". The judges described it as "...a robust, unusual and fun piece, surprisingly different from many of the more functional pieces in the exhibition, and is craft for its own sake."



'Salted Fish from
Barcelona Market'

It looks simple at first glance and yet cleverly captures with an absolute exactness the spirit of a Spanish fish market. We loved the way the textures of the old broken wooden barrel had been recreated, with an apparent rusty edging and price tag detail, and within this the more representational sun-dried fish are laid, fluid shapes with a rich green and blue colours and layered slips and glaze, that in the right light match hues on the outside of the rustic basket.

We felt that this was fitting in this time of economic hardship as, for us, it is a reflection of getting away from the aspiration of an 'ideal home' as neat perfection and celebrating the traditional in a fresh new way."

The winning piece has been given to the Oxfordshire Collection of Contemporary Craft housed in the Abingdon Museum.



This year we were given the rare privilege of having the husband and wife team, David and Margaret Frith to demonstrate and talk about their work at our open day.

It felt like I was eavesdropping on a day in the Friths' studio with them working harmoniously at their respective projects, David with his preference for stoneware and love of building large (which he proved with his gigantic platter) and Margaret with her combined magic of throwing and carving, creating pieces of delicate porcelain.

Their potting histories together started when working in a pottery at Mold; both trained at Stoke, David a year ahead of Margaret. Having worked in a pottery, Margaret decorating and David making, in 1975 they took on an old woollen mill that had been used for making malt and then lain empty since the Second World War.

Images showed how with its beautiful surroundings the mill has been developed over the years as a home as well as a thriving business: studio for them both, space for firing wood & gas kilns, showroom, and classroom for the famous 'Frith' throwing courses.

Western and Eastern influences

As well as teaching in the UK, France and the USA, what was most apparent in David and Margaret's work was the influence gained from their travels in Japan from north to south, teaching and learning, as well as exhibiting in Tokyo.

In my view, their work has integrated in an original manner both Western and Eastern influences. Their work is based on the thrown form that is altered by means such as paddling so that, for example, rounded sides become four near flat surfaces, David described as 'four canvases'.

David threw a tall jar in several sections then a metre wide platter; he described the special kiln he has built for this work, minimising the physical demands on his strength. He felt that to meet the challenges of growing older he was becoming ever more skilful with his technical solutions.

Square Round

Margaret demonstrated throwing a porcelain tea pot then paddled the sides to create a 'square round' form then threw the spout and tea pot lid off the hump.

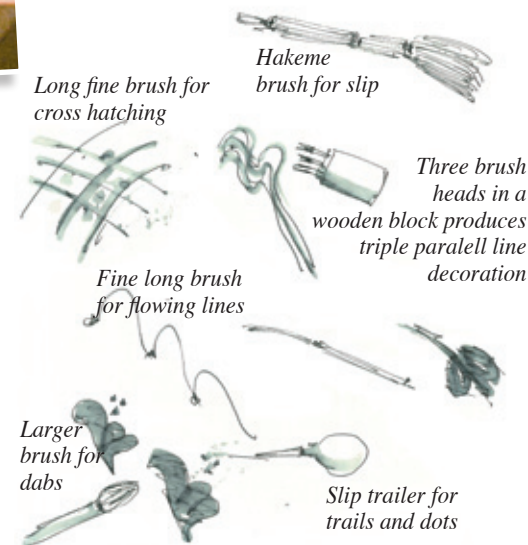


While throwing a bowl that she intended to carve, she constantly took it off and put it back on the wheel, to get the thickness just so, evidently with little or no concern about getting it centred each time!

Margaret constantly assessed her tricky material - careful that the edges did not dry out while she worked.

Then when carving into the surface she noted that she carves quite deeply, intending to apply the Celadon glaze thickly so that it fills the recesses and the pale Celadon glaze colour creates a tonal contrast of colour.

Working together, David and Margaret demonstrated decorating, starting with 'hakame' - literally, brush work akin to preparing a canvas, creating an irregular cream coloured surface, on which both made marks; David, ladling Margaret's white porcelain body mixed with 10% quartz as a slip or slapping on the dark slip made from 15% iron oxide added to the body.





Potters Open Day David & Margaret Frith Saturday 12th Nov 2011

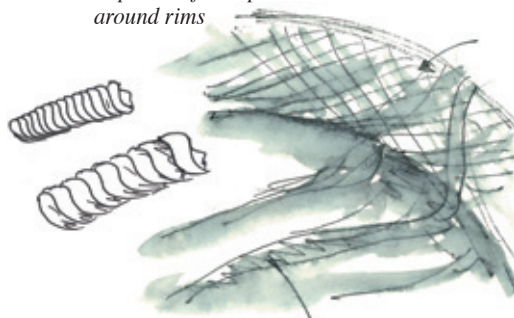


David and Margaret used a number of Chinese brushes making quick, precise movements, Margaret with her wonderful long-haired, old and much used brush, of forgotten provenance.

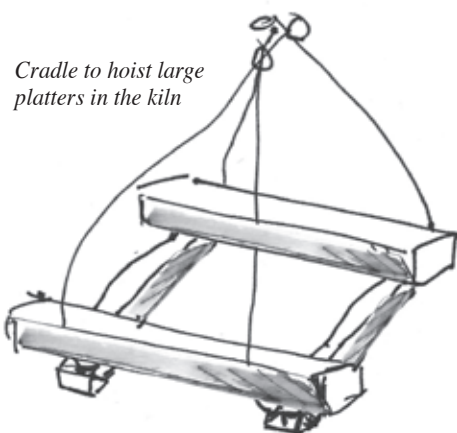


All sorts of wonderful effects were created by mixing numbers of slips, e.g. sieved fire clay and ash used as a wash, absorbed by the blue Celadon glaze creating wonderful swirls of shapes. David creates drama making a white glaze using 1/3 ash, 1/3 flint and 1/3 feldspar which over Tenmoku creates luscious dark blues.

Rope used for impressed decoration around rims



White slip paddled on across whole pot



Cradle to hoist large platters in the kiln

photography by Lutz Krainhöfner
Illustrations by Vivienne Rodwell-Davies



Additionally, they carefully considered changes of form to interrupt the flow of the multiple glazes, encouraging them to spread and fill recessed surfaces, waiting for the creation of unforeseen effects in the firing and the reduction.

Always the spirit of adventure! Tests in every kiln firing! David always on the move with kiln building ideas! There were so many gems of information from both Margaret and David I've only been able to capture some of what they gave us!



Potters Open Day Thanks to all



Ronnie Powell
POD Organiser

November the 12th was an important day in the Guild calendar. We held our annual Potters Open Day at Longdean School in Hemel Hempstead. We are extremely lucky to be allowed to use this facility and as usual the staff members were marvellous in helping us to put on this event.

David and Margaret Frith were the stars for the day. This couple demonstrated in tandem and displayed incredible talent with their creative masterpieces in stoneware and porcelain. We were very fortunate in being able to acquire such a lovely couple to enthral us all day long. We marvel and congratulate them both on their many years of potting together!

Thanks must be given to all the members and friends who attended this year and also much praise should be given to the team of helpers who kindly ensured that the event ran smoothly. If you wish to help us repay our debt to Longdean School then please get in touch with me. The date we help students for the day will be on Tuesday 6th March 2012.



Through a wonderful series of slides, Natalie Tabert's talk provided us with knowledge and insights into a group of women potters from a small rural nomadic community in the region of Darfur, Sudan. Each woman acting as a separate economic unit made pots and sold them to market.

Amazingly this whole process was completed in a seven day cycle!

Natalie made her extraordinary study of women potters in the region of Darfur in the 1980s. She lived with this community over a period of two and a half years and was able to observe and gain an in-depth understanding of their making and firing techniques. Natalie however was never allowed to touch the clay, it was not seen as an appropriate task for a white person; she was only allowed to observe, take notes and make drawings.

The Women Potters

The women potters and their menfolk migrated from their farm land in the dry season for a period of three to four months.



While the women worked as potters, the men worked as blacksmiths. During their nomadic period they lived apart from the settled community, the making of pottery and ironwork being regarded as low status work.

The thirty or so women worked on a seven day cycle starting with the collection of clay from the river bed and ending with selling at the market. Each woman worked independently or occasionally with a daughter to make a range of 22 different types of vessels in terms of their size and function.

The women collected three different types of local clay, which they mixed together to form the basic body. The types of clay and the proportion in which they were used was a knowledge acquired through trial and error over time and passed down through the generations. The clay body was mixed with millet husks or donkey dung, depending on the shape and purpose of the pot being made.

The base of the pot was made using the clay mixed with husks of millet in a 1:1 proportion. The addition of the husks helped the clay to withstand thermal shock during the rapid firing process. Donkey dung was combined with the clay to create greater plasticity, making it excellent for coiling.

Making of the Vessels

The clay was pounded and then left to soak in large jars to soften. A date palm rush mat was used as a surface for kneading the clay and the fillers together, this rush mat also acted as a sieve. A simple mould was made by scraping a round hole in the earth, a cloth or matting was laid over the hollow. A rounded lump of clay was placed in the hollow, and using a stone tool the potter beat and turned the clay to create a bowl shape.



After the base had been made, coils of clay mixed with the donkey dung were used to make the neck and rim of the pot. The potters used their hands and scrappers made from gourds to join and mould the clay. The walls of the pot were around 1/2 to 3/4 inch thick.

Several vessels were made simultaneously so that one could be left to dry a little while working on another. If the clay became too hard, they would soak the top before continuing. Shards from a broken pot were used to make the outside pattern and these markings would identify the individual maker. For the finishing of the vessel, powdered donkey dung was applied and then burnished with a plaited leather thong. The finished pots are very strong and to test this Natalie persuaded someone to stand on the pot and it did not break! Some of the largest vessels made were 20 gallon water jars; being low fired their porousness keeps the water cool.

Bonfire Firing

Each woman fired her own pots; sometimes helped by her daughter(s). In preparation the pots were pre-heated by placing them on their sides, openings facing outwards on a bed of cow dung, which was

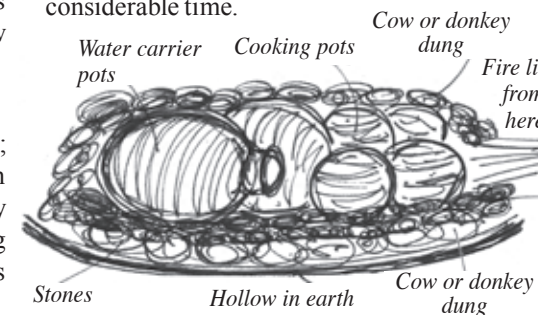
then lit. The air temperature was around 40°C so the pots were fairly dry already.

For the main firing, shallow hollows were dug in the ground of 1-3 metres in depth depended on the individual potter. Stones were laid in the hollow with cow and donkey dung placed on top. The pots were carefully added with a single thin layer of cow and donkey dung placed on top. The larger vessels were placed in the middle of the bonfire area with the smaller ones around them. Water carriers were put on their side while the cooking pots which needed more reduction were fired upside down to produce a black inside more fitting for cooking purposes.

The position of the bonfire depended on wind direction. The women never added more fuel once the bonfire was lit, but would add ash to slow it down if the conditions were too windy. Using a pyrometer in twenty five of these bonfire firings, Natalie recorded temperatures from 659°C - 891°C achieved in a range of eight and 50 minutes.

On the seventh day the women would carry their vessels to market for sale and the very next day would start the whole cycle again!

Thank you Natalie for an extremely interesting presentation, the astounding images of these very skilful women potters of Darfur will remain with me for a considerable time.





Following on from Dr Natalie Tabert's presentation on the evening of 2nd December, Paul Rowbottom continued the theme of Africa, by demonstrating two techniques to make simple vessels 'Malawi' style. Paul had spent three months working with the stone carvers of Tengenenge, Zimbabwe and in the same community he had spent 2 weeks making pots with Violet Erinova, a potter who was from Malawi.

The clay body which he used for the demonstration was Valentines terracotta and Dobles crank in the ratio of 50:50 approx. (60:40 or 40:60 is fine too).

The first technique he demonstrated was the 'pull & drag' method and the second demo the 'pad' method. The basic tools

were a maize husk, a mango pod and pebbles. Old phone cards, being softer and bendy, were also useful toolkit additions in order to finish the surface prior to addition of slips and oxides.

Pull & Drag method:

A crude coil was made by using gravity to elongate a large lump of clay held in one hand while being formed in the sausage shape in the other.

On a simple metal enamel plate two coils were firmly attached to the inside circumference. The enamel plate is used because it can easily be turned round on the table as the African potters did not have a turntable.

The next coil went on the top of the coil on the plate, slightly on the inside of the previous coil.

When three rows of coils were attached to the plate, downward movements on the clay with the thumb and fingers attached the coils of clay together. Then pushing up and in, in similar manner, on the inside, in diagonal movements blended the coils together and starting to form the shape of the pot.

Using a dried maize husk in a semi-circular movement on the outside of pot Paul began to work the coils to give an even surface and refine the dome shape.



A dried Mango pod was used in a similar way to a metal kidney tool, using it on the inside pushing the rim sideways and then upwards. He then checked the top was level and cut away any unevenness.

Paul then continued to pull the clay from the inside vertically and then diagonally. As the vessel took shape he suggested that if the clay is too soft, before undertaking the next stage to leave it to dry a little using newspaper to support it on the inside to prevent any sagging or collapse.

Paul used a serrated kidney tool to refine the shoulder of the pot and used the maize tool to create the lip or rim. Paul explained that he preferred to have a small table to work on so that he can walk round the pot whilst giving it its shape.

He explained that when the rim is finished, leave the pot to get near leather hard, and then turn it upside down, cut away the enamel plate, and finish the bottom of the pot using small pads of clay overlapping each other as in the next technique he showed us (described below).

Finally when nearly leather hard the bowl would have been further refined and smoothed on the inside ready for the application of any slips or oxides

Pad method:

Small 15cm pieces of thick coil were made into round pads using the palms of the hands to round and flatten - make as many of these according to the size of the pot required.

A thick coil of clay was applied to inside circumference of the enamel plate - making sure rim of plate can be seen at the edge.

The pads were then laid on this coil overlapping it a little and each other horizontally, if any smaller spaces were left, the pads were torn to fit the gap.



Another layer of pads were then attached in similar manner, but in a decreasing circle to form the round pot shape.

Using fingers or the basic tools he'd used before, Paul blended these pads together, layering until the pot closed in to form the round base. This creates a very strong structure for the base of the pot, possibly stronger than the usual coiling technique.

The pot would then be finished off by cutting away the enamel plate making sure the top was level, clay can then be added as required, to form the rim or lip of the pot and finished off according to the design required.

The demonstration was informative and it was interesting to see very quick alternative construction methods to the usual coiling for round pots.

I will certainly be having a go!





Book Review by Colin Hazelwood



Colour in Glazes by Linda Bloomfield. Published by A & C Black

"A complete guide to achieving a fantastic spectrum of colourful glazes for the studio potter" says the publisher's blurb and I make no apology for quoting: it is an apt description.

Linda Bloomfield starts with a detailed look at all the oxides which can provide colour in glazes. She is well qualified to do so having a PhD in Material Science. Molecular formulas and Seger Ratios are mentioned but not dealt with in great detail. (See 'Glazes for the Craft Potter' by Harry Davis if you really want to take this approach).

All the available oxides including those of some rare elements (are you familiar with Praseodymium?) are reviewed. Particularly useful for those who want to develop their own glazes is the account of how the colour produced by these oxides is dependent on the fluxes used in the base glaze.



However this book is also very useful for those who want to bypass a detailed understanding and are happy to accept proven glaze recipes. For each of eight colours, a variety of recipes are provided for use with earthenware, stoneware and porcelain.

A total of 114 glazes, with pictures of test tiles to illustrate the resulting colour. It is not clear whether they are the result of her own research. Certainly some recipes are attributed to known experts like Emmanuel Cooper and Michael Bailey. Throughout the book are some

attractive examples of finished pots by well-known makers but the glazes do not appear to correspond directly to provided recipes.

I suppose that the ultimate test is that I don't want to part with the book. However if you already own 'The Potters Palette' by Christine Constant and Steve Ogden then you would find much duplication.

MAAC events **Leach Pottery, St Ives** **Saturday 28th April 2012**

A visit to the Leach Pottery, including tours of the old Leach workshops and kilns, the new gallery and shop and the exhibition entitled 'Heart, Head and Hand'.

The tour will include the new studio where resident professional potters, students and apprentices develop their own work and make the new standard ware, together with a demonstration either by lead potter Jack Doherty or one of the apprentices if Jack is not available. Possibility of a kiln opening with the opportunity to buy work hot out of the kiln.

We hope to arrange a visit to local potters in their studios later the same day, and also to The Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden and The Tate St Ives, which holds a large ceramics resource not generally on display.

With sufficient interest, we could arrange a group visit on Friday 27 April when a selection of ceramics could be viewed.

Cost: £10; students and concessions £7.50.

Please contact Jewels Williams
email: jewelswilliams@hotmail.co.uk
Telephone 01885 488029.



Obituary **David Constantine-White 13.04.48 - 27.10.2011**



Jim Robison



David Constantine White passed away in October last year.

Well known Northern Potter, amateur musician and geologist; David was an all-round enthusiast where clay and glazes are concerned. He was also a bit of a historian, especially on Earthenware Country Pottery. He researched Isaac Button, Soil Hill Pottery near Halifax in West Yorkshire and was one of the very few potters I know who enjoyed prospecting, digging, processing and using the local clays.

His Yorkshire workshop in Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge became widely known for its colourful Earthenware. He developed a very personal style, in the Tin Glaze tradition. Inspired by contemporary painting, he used a vast array of oxides and stains to over-paint the base glaze. Adding small amounts of wax resist to his colours enabled him to build up multiple layers of colour in a very rich and painterly way.

He always contributed much to the glaze courses run in my studio and previously to my classes at Bretton Hall College over many years. His enthusiasm was contagious and his knowledge wide ranging.

With his survey maps, he would point out where to find clay anywhere in the country and with his frugal eye, born perhaps of necessity, he could always say where to get the very best deal on raw materials in Stoke-on-Trent.

His pots, really colourful paintings, were always among the most popular and best sellers in our gallery and we always had long chats whenever he delivered pots to the gallery.

David was not married and lived alone. Having previously lost his only brother and recently his father, the community of potters and ceramic fairs in the UK and in Europe, provided much of the social as well as economic fabric to his life.

The family of potters has lost a unique and valued member.

David came to the Guild to give a talk and demonstration some years ago - around 2006/7. A lovely chap, very interesting to listen to and watch in action.

He had developed a way of painting on tin glaze using wax resist in some of his colours and with this technique he would paint bold marks and patterns on his cheerful pots.

He came all the way from the Pennines, so I put him up overnight and I still have the colourful platter he generously gave me.

Ros McGuirk



Grayson Perry **Tomb of the Unkown Warrior** British Museum

Over the past two years Grayson Perry has been behind the scenes, trawling through the archives of the British Museum collection, selecting 100 objects made by unknown skilled craftsmen made over hundreds of centuries.

This is to complement his extraordinarily quirky imaginary world. Exploring a variety of richly decorated ceramic vases covered in witty captions, elaborately decorated tapestries and amazing creations in metal.

Step into a make believe world, exploring a variety of themes and sacred journeys.

This is an exhibition that will make you smile and occasionally laugh out loud!

Grayson Perry really is a skilled craftsman with an amazing sense of humour, with an intellectual twist.

If you have not seen this exhibition there is still time to make a pilgrimage. It has been extended to 26th Feb. Make a day of it and visit the Contemporary Ceramics Centre opposite and the Austin Desmond Fine Art Gallery round the corner in Pied Bull Yard.



Play is often a time when children process emotional situations through metaphysical games. This is Alan Measles as a military hero, victor in the imaginary battles of childhood.

Degas and The Ballet Royal Academy London

This was a superb exhibition at the Royal Academy combining Degas's love of the ballet and figure movement with his sensual drawings and pastels and his interest in the experiments of contemporary photographers and film makers.

Reviews and drawings by
Vivienne Rodwell-Davies



Events and Exhibitions

by Vivienne Rodwell-Davies

Porcelain City - Jingdezehn

V & A Museum until 18 Mar

Display of porcelain works by Felecity Aylieff, Roger Law, Takeshi Yasuda and Ah Xian

Ai Weiwei: Dropping the Urn

V & A Museum until 18 Mar

Ceramic Works, 5000 BC – AD 2010

Grayson Perry - The Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman

British Museum 6 Oct-26 Feb 2012.

Grayson Perry curates an installation of his new works alongside objects made by unknown men and women throughout history from the British Museum's collection.

40:40 Forty objects for forty years

onviewonline.craftscouncil.org.uk/4040/

Celebrating forty years of the Crafts Council Collection with a major on-line exhibition that showcases work by important makers of contemporary craft.

The Oxford Ceramics Gallery

29 Walton St, Oxford OX2 6AA

A new gallery showcasing contemporary ceramics on a par with the CCC in London. Set in an old Georgian corner house and run by a very friendly, knowledgeable owner. Definitely worth a visit, combined with the Ashmolean Museum.

Alberto Burri 1925-1995

Estorick Collection of Modern Art N1 2AN.
13 Jan-07 Apr.

This exhibition celebrates four decades of Burri's work. Figurative and ground breaking abstract pieces. A revolutionary approach to image making using contrasting textures and materials - matt, glossy, rough, sacking, tar, plastic etc. A varied exhibition of lively work and set in the most beautiful Georgian Gallery.

Henri Gaudier Brzeska

Kettles Yard, Cambridge 14 Jan-01 Apr

This exhibition shows sculptures and related drawings and explores Gaudier's Vorticist work. A must see!

David Hockney RA: A Bigger Picture

Royal Academy, London 21 Jan-09 Apr

There is already an unprecedented demand for bookings for this show. Another must see!

Associates' Gallery Exhibition

CPA Associate Members are invited to register their interest in taking part in an exhibition which we hope to stage in Autumn 2012. Please contact Michael Jones:

e-mail mike_a_jonze@yahoo.co.uk
tel: 01384 255867

Lucien Freud - Portraits

National Gallery 9 Feb - 27 May

Ceramic Art London 2012

Royal College of Art 24 Feb-26 Feb

Annual CPA show, including talks and demos

Collect in London

Saatchi Gallery 1-14 May 2012

Rambling With A Sketchbook

Isle of Wight

Vivienne Rodwell-Davies is once again running her annual ever popular drawing and painting course on the Isle of Wight. Accommodation is in a ramshackled, late 18th Century tide mill overlooking the Yare estuary owned by the family of the famous historian and writer A J P Taylor.

Mon 11th June - Sat 16th June 2012.

Contact Vivienne on 0208 441 0904 or email viviennerodwell@msn.com



Guild Programme and The Committee



Guild Programme 2012

Friday 10 February 2012

Liz Teal's Contemporary Slipware

A few years ago a group of members visited Liz's beautiful studio in the Cotswolds while she was taking a year out to develop a new range of work. Come and see the results. In slipware production a lot of time is spent on the decoration and Liz will show us the methods she has developed and also some of her assembling techniques.

See: www.liztealpottery.com

Friday 9 March 2012

Adrienne Baba's Feast of Japanese Tableware

Adrienne has trained in Japan and now lives in Oxfordshire where she supplies Japanese restaurants with tableware and teaches Japanese cooking. The pottery techniques she uses include rolling, slabbing, impressing and throwing.

See: www.adriennebaba.com

Saturday 24th March 10-4pm
Glaze Workshop

An introduction to Glaze preparation, including Ash glazes. £35 including all materials and refreshments. Contact Vivienne for details.

email: viviennerodwell@msn.com or 0208 441 0904

Copy date for the next edition of the Newsletter is Friday 13th April.

Please ensure articles are accompanied by good quality high resolution images.

Please send to

**lynne.mcgechie@btopenworld
& bipin@thedcpg.org.uk**

The DCPG Committee

President and Chairman

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

'Longfield', Bulstrode Lane, Felden,
Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP3 0BP
01442 242 332

mfitzwilliam@hotmail.com

Vice Chair and Programme Secretary

Ros McGuirk

13 The Park, St. Albans, Herts AL1 4RU
01727 834 326

ros.mcguirk@gmail.com

Secretary Mary Anne Bonney

56 Clarence Road, St. Albans, Herts
AL1 4NG. 01727 860 787

mabonney@btinternet.com

Temporary Membership Secretary

Jan Kent

48 Coleshill Place, Bradwell Common,
Milton Keynes, Bucks MK13 8DP
01908 674 051

jankent1@gmail.com

Acting Treasurer Colin Hazelwood

14 Butterfield Road, Wheathampstead,
Herts, AL4 8PU. 01582 833146

woodhazel@waitrose.com

Open Day Organiser

Veronica ('Ronnie') Powell 01494 774 398

ronnie.powell@btinternet.com

Webmaster and technical adviser

John Powell

2 Abbots Place, Chesham, Bucks HP5 3HL
01494 774 398

john@thedcpg.org.uk

Publicity Secretary Kirsteen Holuj

Railing, 7a Mitre St, Buckingham,
Bucks MK18 1DW. 01280 823 331

kirsteenholuj@hotmail.com

Continued back page

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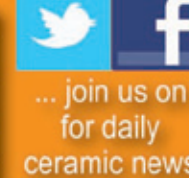
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Library and Exhibitions Sue Lines

78 Bedford Road, Letchworth,
Herts SG6 4DU

sue.lines@nthworld.com

Workshop Organiser Vacant

Newsletter Editor Lynne McGeachie

lynn.mcgeachie@btopenworld.com

Newsletter Design, Production and co Editor Bipin

bipin@thedcp.org.co.uk

Production Assistant and Illustrator

Vivienne Rodwell-Davies

viviennerodwell@msn.com

Advertising Manager Karen George

karen@fireflyevents.org.uk

Newsletter Distributor Judi Tribe

judi.tribe@btinternet.com

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