

# KILN' TIME



NOVEMBER, 2008

THE OFFICIAL CLAY ARTS GUILD NEWSLETTER

## DECEMBER SALE INFORMATION

*By Jackie Gerry, Sale Chair*

Time is creeping up on us, and very soon we will be seriously thinking of the sale! The sign-up book is now in the studio (on the music stand) and is close to filled up for work shifts. Please sign up as soon as possible if you would like to participate!

Note the pages to sign up for individual artist spaces, or shared spaces, with a place to fill in the number of pieces, your email address and phone number. **Remember:**

- 1-15 pieces, you work one shift,
- 15-30 pieces, you work two shifts
- 30 plus pieces, you work three shifts
- Bring a dish to share, or a \$10.00 contribution

We will do coding similar to last spring's sale with only minor changes. It will be an **alphabetical coding** instead of your initial codes. That will clear up any confusion with people having the same initials. In plenty of time before the sale, we will do the coding sheets for you and leave them in the studio, either in the library or in your lockers.

Another important item - please price your pieces realistically!! We all want this sale to be viewed as very professional and first class, so if we under-price items, it not only makes it difficult for other artists in the sale, but undermines your own work as well. There are many veteran sellers in the studio who have been in many, many of our sales and have lots of experience pricing pottery. Please do not hesitate to ask for help in pricing.

**Ann Henderson** has volunteered to be there on check-in day (Wednesday, December 3rd) and will gladly help anyone in pricing pottery. Also, we have decided that there will be a \$7.00 minimum on pots for this sale, and this should be on small pieces only! Remember, we don't want to diminish the value of handmade pottery. (*Read article on page 3*)

Sign up ASAP, and do your part to make this the best sale ever!! Also, don't forget to save those newspapers and paper bags too!

**Any questions? Please don't hesitate to call me: (925) 209-5130 Jackie Gerry**



*From top center clockwise: Evelyne Karim -- Walnut Creek (our eldest member at 88), Corazon Victa -- Walnut Creek, Alison Armand -- Martinez, Tim Hanrahan -- Pleasanton, Trish Ogilvy -- Orinda.*

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**Visit our website:  
www.clayartsguild.com  
See the latest *Kiln' Times*  
in full color!**



## Message from Florence McAuley

Fall is here and the studio is buzzing! With all of the work that is being produced, we should have a bang-up sale in December.

Fall has also brought the ice rink to our north parking lot. An inconvenience to say the least, but one we have to live with until mid January. It is very important for you to let me know~

1. if you cannot find parking anywhere
2. how long it takes you to find a parking space
3. if you do not come to the studio because of parking

It is very important that I hear from you. You may email me at <fbmcauley@comcast.net> or register your complaint at the studio. There is a clipboard there for this purpose.

*The kilns are coming! The kilns are coming!* When you return to the studio in January, the studio will have two new kilns in operation. They are being installed in December, which is why the studio is closing earlier than usual. The Clay Arts Guild, you, contributed one-half of the cost of the replacement of the old ones. This is a prime example of your Guild dollars at work to improve the studio. The Guild Board of Directors in October approved the purchase of 20 new kiln shelves and a digital projector. The projector will allow the instructors and workshop leaders to enhance the learning environment for all of us. The Studio Manager, Pete Coussoulis, requested these two items.

*Now it is your turn.* What do you think the studio needs? What would you like the studio to have? Let us hear from you by the Studio Sale in December. There is an orange suggestion folder on the bulletin board. Just drop your suggestions in there; a pen is provided.

Thanks to all of you who so generously give of your time to the Guild and to those who have said "yes" when asked to help in some way. I greatly, greatly appreciate it. I have always been hesitant to ask someone to "do a job" and many times end up doing "the job" myself, so I appreciate it even more that you are so willing when asked.

*Florence*



## The Dilemma of Pot Pricing

Editorial by Ann Henderson

The sale is almost here and you have shelves full of pottery that you would like to turn into cash for holiday gifts... next quarter's class... more clay to make more pots... you get the picture. But what price to charge? That's the dilemma. If you price your pots too high, then nothing sells. There is the inverse issue of pricing your pots too low, however, and that is the issue I aim to address here. The customer may be getting a bargain, but you are devaluing handmade pottery, hurting yourself in the long run and creating problems for every potter trying to make a living from his or her art in the process.

We know ceramics selling from this studio do not bring gallery prices, but if we persist in under-pricing our art, it will get worse, and we are telling the world that what we do is not important, that our ceramic creations are not as good as others — which we definitely know is not true.

There is that vase thingy that you expected to turn out a rich copper red, but is clearly green crackle. You thought it was yuck, but Cousin Irma thought it heavenly. And the bird-shaped teapot that bears a closer resemblance to a ferret, but your friend Charlie thought it was a great mouse. Those are clues. Because you don't like the color or shape doesn't mean everyone else looks at it the same way. Remember beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Try to be objective when you are pricing your pots. Pretend that you like it and you are not a potter. Then what would it be worth to you? Keep in mind that your pieces are handmade, one-of-a-kind; they aren't expected to be production perfect. I am talking about slight variations, not something that is unsightly or unusable.

I also understand that sometimes we are competing with CAG priced pots, and they are often below market value, but many are lesser pieces or ones that did not sell in a prior sale, so they are bargain priced. One of the main functions of the Guild is to raise money to make improvements in our studio. Those donated pots helped to pay for our new kilns, they paid for our lockers, our tables, our chemical bins. The CAG pots that are not lesser pots, and many are not, are supposed to be priced

competitively. If you think that some of the CAG pots are way too low in price, then volunteer to help price pots. Those volunteers doing the pricing are doing what they think is best.

I realize this is anecdotal evidence, but my own experience is that although I sell fewer pots since I raised my prices, I make more money. I also remember a piece I had in three sales. It was priced way too low originally, and it did not sell. Finally, the third time around I increased the price considerably — and it sold. I guess people thought it wasn't worth much when it was so low priced. If you're having trouble pricing pots, I will be glad to help you think through the process. I hope to be there most of check-in day, so ask for my help if you're having trouble deciding on prices. 🖐️

## MASTER POTTER WORKSHOP

By Don Porcella

About 30 potters attended a fascinating workshop last rainy Saturday to meet **Jerardo Tena**, a young and talented potter from Mata Ortiz, about 180 miles south of the US border. Mata Ortiz is a town of potters, working without wheels and kilns for the most part. Tena's



handbuilding skills were on display making a work of art in front of our eyes from clay harvested from the nearby mountains in Mexico. Finished products on display represented work by his brother, his sister, his father, and his wife. The highly decorated pieces are intricate and delicate

works of art that can take up to three months to complete. See the new, exquisite piece in our artist collection, painted with slip using a brush made from his daughter's hair and fired in an open space using cow dung and cottonwood.



(Above & right) Jerardo's meticulously glazed flask, front & back views, purchased by CAG





## The Potter's Encyclopedia of Color, Form and Decoration

Author: Neal French

Review by: Amy Brandon

Some may feel that the title is anything but intriguing; however, once the cover is unveiled, a breadth of valuable information awaits. As a new ceramist, I often find myself overwhelmed by the raw and powerful potential that the clay before me yields. In fact, oftentimes I find myself so overwhelmed that to begin conceptualizing my final goal for a project can seem ominous. Utilizing a book such as this allows one to reference a vast array of potting potential, including a huge assortment of available shapes, colors and decorative techniques. Vividly illustrated, this book categorically depicts an assorted plethora of artistic dimensions. Wherever your inspiration begins, this is the book for you! Shapes for any or no specific purpose other than artistic venture are explored, and its journey through perspective, color and design is comparably limitless.

This book not only provides a valuable resource of information, it also provides priceless inspiration! After all, as I see it, most of life's true inspirations come from others! As a developing ceramic artist, I find this book to be personally one of my favorite finds — Enjoy!!!



## Open Studio Monitors for Fall Quarter

Help support the monitors who make it possible for all of us to enjoy open studio hours. Check in and give your name to the monitor immediately when you arrive. The monitor may have known you for years, talked to you numerous times, know that your great uncle used to roll cigars for a living, yet not know your last name. When the monitor gives you a half hour warning, finish your last project and clean up. Don't make the monitor wait after open studio shut-down time. And speaking of cleanup, try to leave your workspace cleaner than you found it. What a sparkling studio we could have if everyone did that!

### Monitor Schedule

<b>Monday</b>	<b>4-7</b>	<b>Carolyn Young Lynne Bosko</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>4-7</b>	<b>Pam Bivins Shirly Nagel</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>12-4</b>	<b>Suzie Franz</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>NO WORKSHOP</b>	
<b>Friday</b>	<b>12 to 4</b>	<b>Michelle Ostrie Trish Ogilvy</b>
	<b>4 to 7</b>	<b>Peno (Joe Pagni) Lisa Jacobs</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>12 to 4</b>	<b>Lee Ann Hollenback</b>
	<b>4 to 7</b>	<b>Gisela Barrett Lisa Jacobs</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1 to 4</b>	<b>Clarice Judah</b>
	<b>4 to 7</b>	<b>Shirley Towbis</b>

**Head Sub: Janice Holve**

## A Special Treat for CAG Members

By Devany Vickery-Davidson

Have you ever seen the cart coming out of the salt or high fire kilns and been in awe of some of the work of our CAG artists? Do you ever wonder, “How do they do that?” If so, then a special treat is store for you this winter! Five of the Clay Arts Guild long-time members have generously agreed to teach free mini-workshops during Open Studio time in January and February. These sessions are for those in Open Studio and CAG Members only. This is a celebration of the immense talent within our group and an opportunity for you to learn some new skills and tricks from those who have perfected them.

Each class will take place on a Wednesday afternoon during the open studio time. No registration is required. These are demonstration workshops, so no special tools will be needed. Here is a listing of the workshops, all at 1 pm.

**January 14<sup>th</sup> Don Porcella** will be giving a workshop on making small bottles. Don has been doing some beautiful salt-fired pieces recently. He is a master at the wheel and has some unique decorating techniques for his beautiful functional ware, including texturing and faceting. He works in both large and small scale, though this workshop will focus on the sometimes more difficult very small bottles.



**January 21<sup>st</sup> Susie Franz** is going to share her incredible technique for making Nerikomi Style Block Making. Susie generously shares her techniques and her scraps during most open workshops. Her work is done using a dark and a light clay, creating blocks of them and then slicing, re-piecing, then curing for as long

as one year and then slicing again to create her unique baskets, vases and sculptural forms, most of which she salt fires. Her hand-built delicate baskets are one item that creates a lot of “ooh’s and “ahs’ as they come out of the salt kiln. Susie has a trademark on all of her pieces, a single hole made in a prominent place on the piece.



**February 4<sup>th</sup> Laura Morris** will be demonstrating her mastering of the latest rage in decorating thrown pots, the *Steve Tool*. A few months ago Pete added several of the *Steve Tools* to the CAG Pottery Supply Store in his office, and since then many CAG artists have played with the tool to make unique decorations on

pots. Laura has mastered the Steve Tool completely and this workshop will be a lot of fun and very inspirational. By the way, I am on an online group with STEVE (of Steve Tool fame) and he has posted many photos of his own work there. I have to say that the way CAG members have taken to the tool and mastered use of it in creative ways... many of “Our” *Steve Tool* pots look even better than his!

**February 18<sup>th</sup> Martha**

**Kean**, a long time member of CAG and one who also has her own studio and sells her beautiful pots locally, will demonstrate her precise method of carving on leather hard clay. She will be sharing a few unique ways that she creates both freeform and extremely precise symmetrical designs using patterns. Martha, for the most part, uses just a simple loop tool. Many times her functional ware comes out of our salt kiln looking absolutely perfect in symmetry, and for me at least, I am in awe.



**February 25<sup>th</sup> Lin Marion**

will be demonstrating how she creates her beautiful wheel-thrown forms and then decorates them with slip trailing and her unique flowing carvings. Lin too is in the salt firing class and has achieved some beautiful results in glazing. Most of Lin’s work is done in white clays like Porcelain and B-Mix, and the smoothness of her patterns and delicate designs are certainly something that make most of us say, “How does she do that?” Now you will get a chance to find out! 🖐️

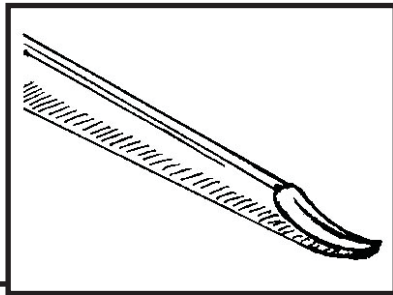


# HOT TIP

From Fery Yashar

Two from one — This month Fery has sent us two tips, both of which she saw in *Ceramics Monthly*, and both of which she has found useful.

The first is a handmade sculptor's tool one uses for scooping carved clay out of the way. Using an X-acto or utility knife, shape the end of a wooden handled brush into a crow-quill tip. (crow-quill is a calligrapher's term used to describe the ink



pen nib that draws finer lines than a standard pen. Artists used to carve these from crow quills, thus the name crow quill). The sculptor's tool is not carved as sharply at the tip, but still bears the curve, giving the tool scoop-ability.

The second tip has to do with using old mascara brushes to ream out colander or teapot holes, especially after applying glaze. They are also useful for cleaning tight areas around handles and other small areas on greenware. Other uses might be to add a fine texture on raw clay or tiny bits of glaze spatter to a pot.



Now it's your turn. Fery earned a bag of clay for her tips this month. You, too, can earn a bag of clay. Just write a description and email [annadele@comcast.net](mailto:annadele@comcast.net) or put a copy in Locker #9 with your clever idea. We don't care where you saw it as long as you're the first one to submit it to HOT TIP. If you get the idea from a friend, teacher, book or magazine, however, it would be nice to acknowledge the source.

# Get Charged Up For: Platters Chargers & Plates!

By Elizabeth Burchfield

You are invited to a party and contest in which all potters, beginning and experienced, will be able to participate! The contest theme is **PLATTERS, CHARGERS & PLATES**. We look forward to seeing a lot of imaginative work from potters, sculptors and hand builders alike, and hope that we can encourage all of you to enter. The contest and party will take place early next year, ample time for everyone to start working on entries!



The party will begin with a viewing, so that all can admire the work on display, followed by the announcement of the winners by our judge (to be announced later...just to keep up the suspense...)

There will also be a "most popular" vote by those in attendance, following the judge's announcement.

Then.....*we PARTY!* Great munchies!

Now here is where you can help out and possibly benefit:

We would like you to submit your ideas for the best award categories! If your idea is selected, you will receive a FREE BAG of CLAY. For example, last year, Pam Bivins submitted an idea for a category: BEST COUNTERFEIT.

Send your ideas to Elizabeth Burchfield at <[Forcia2@sbcglobal.com](mailto:Forcia2@sbcglobal.com)> or leave your ideas in an envelope in locker 10. Please be sure to include your name, and a contact email address and phone number.



Once the date is set for the event, we will announce it.

**Watch for updates!**





# Meet Your Monitors ~ Lisa Jacobs

## Serendipity leads to Holey Dome Lights

By Janice Holve

After spending a lot of time on a piece, the urge to rescue it after trimming a little too much is strong. **Lisa Jacobs** pondered the hole in the bottom of her shallow bowl. With a degree in Fine Arts from UC Santa Barbara, many years as a professional printmaker, and five years of ceramics (three at CAG), Lisa has more skill & creativity to bring to the problem than some of us might.



Loving the interplay of light and shadow, she punched more holes in the piece to create the effect of a luminaria. Lisa's failed bowl became a beautiful light and the beginning of the many carved and punched domes we see in various stages of completion around the studio.

The idea of a luminaria is to light the path both physically and spiritually. This, along with an affinity for three-dimensional curved images, became the inspiration for a series of designs based on Lisa's interpretations of mandalas and other spiral shapes. Her pieces, trademarked as Holey Domes, are being used as sconces, ceiling light fixtures, tabletop lamps and sculpture.

When not perfecting her terrific ceramic pieces and other art projects, Lisa works as an occupational therapist. She found CAG by following a "Ceramics Sale" sign when Studio One in Oakland was closed for renovation. She says she decided to stay at CAG even after the Oakland facility reopened, because of the range of classes, the access to a salt kiln and our community of potters. As Lisa graciously shares her skill and experience, we are the lucky ones. Lisa is a substitute monitor and often fills in when the regular monitor is unavailable.





Note from Tim Hanrahan:

I just received the forwarded newsletter and enjoyed reading it and catching up on the "studio crew". We are living full time up in Arnold now, as our house is under a lease/purchase contract. I am finishing an addition to my house here that is intended to be my studio. With two households of furniture here, I am in constant negotiation to maintain the purity of function of my studio (You don't want to store stuff in there with all the clay dust...).

I have been looking for some rain so I can do a pit fire without burning down Northern California. Hopefully some will come before the snow.

We plan to enjoy the winter, once all the remodeling work and unpacking are done.

Please give my best to everyone in the studio, and a special hello to Pete. Hey, tell Pete that I fixed the chipper he gave me, and ultimately donated it to the Logging Museum in Arnold. They loved it. I guess it was really old.

Later,  
Tim

## Civic Arts Education 45th Anniversary Exhibition

December 3 - December 21, 2008

Bedford Gallery ~ Dean Lesher Center

Honoring forty-five years of distinguished teaching by visual artists at the Walnut Creek Civic Arts Education Program, this show includes an extraordinary breadth of mediums and styles. The mix includes painting from plein-air to abstract, sculpture in molded paper as well as wood and ceramic; assemblage, photography, monoprints, digital art, jewelry, stained glass, weaving, and furniture.

This show celebrates the largest community-supported arts program in Northern California. Stimulating creative thought and encouraging personal self-expression, it brings high quality visual arts instruction and educational experiences to participants of all ages.







***BREAKING NEWS !!!!!!!!!!!***

Our new glaze kilns will be installed by December 20.....

Work begins on removing old kilns and prepping kiln room on December 8....

Please note that there will not be any firing after Thanksgiving.....so plan accordingly.....All work should be bisqued and ready to glaze by your last class meeting.....or take it all home.....This includes any greenware also.....

There will be no safe shelves..... that means NO WORK can be left in studio at all after November 29. We will not keep anything after clean-up ....Any ware left in studio will unfortunately be discarded.....

- SAT. - ICE SKATE RINK OPENS  
11/8
- TUE. - STUDIO CLOSED  
11/11 (VETERANS DAY)
- SUN. - LAST MEETING FOR TILE CLASS  
11/16
- SAT. - LAST CLASS MEETING FOR FALL SESSION  
11/22
- SUN. - WED. - "OPEN STUDIO"  
11/23 - 11/26 (10 AM - 7 PM)
- THUR. - STUDIO CLOSED  
11/27 (THANKSGIVING DAY)
- FRI. - STUDIO OPEN (10 AM - 7 PM)  
11/28 ALL WORK OUT OF STUDIO  
AND LOCKERS CLEARED OUT BY 7 PM
- SAT. - STUDIO CLEAN-UP PARTY  
11/29 (10 AM)
- SUN. - WED. - STUDIO CLOSED  
11/30 - 12/3 FOR SALE SET-UP
- THUR. - SUN. - STUDIO SALE  
12/4 - 12/7
- MON. - BEGIN INSTALLATION OF NEW KILNS  
12/8
- MON. - FIRST CLASS OF WINTER QUARTER  
1/5/09

*Support the Guild  
and look cool too!*

**BUY a T-SHIRT  
or APRON!**

T-Shirts ~ \$15  
Regular Apron ~ \$20  
Split Leg Apron ~ \$25



**THE CAG OPEN  
STUDIO HOURS**

**Mon.....4 - 7 pm**  
**Tue .....4 - 7 pm**  
**Wed.....12 - 4 pm**  
**Thur.....No Open Studio**  
**Fri.....12 - 7 pm**  
**Sat .....12 - 7 pm**  
**Sun.....1 - 7 pm**

## What's Happening in the Clay World

### AMACO First Chili Bowl Fundraiser

Donate handmade bowls, 4-6 inches in diameter for museum fundraiser. Cash prizes for winners.

Email [http://www.ceramicmuseum.org/pdf/CHILI\\_BOWL\\_FUNDRAISER2.pdf](http://www.ceramicmuseum.org/pdf/CHILI_BOWL_FUNDRAISER2.pdf) for more information

### *A juried exhibit of work in clay:* California Clay from ACGA

**Tuesday, November 4 through  
Friday, December 5**

Art Space Gallery, Fresno City College, 1101 E. University Ave. Fresno, CA 93741 (559) 442-4600. Email: <http://www.acga.net/cgi-bin/DJcalendar.cgi?TEMPLATE=shows-detail.html&EVENTNO=00024> for more information

### **Wanted!**

Someone interested in researching information for the back page of the *Kiln' Time* Newsletter each month. We get our information from a number of different sources, and it is an ongoing process, but takes just a little bit of time. Peter often gives us information; pottery magazines (the guild subscribes to a number of them) and the internet are also key sources. If you are interested in contributing to the guild in this way, contact **Ann Henderson** at [<annadele@comcast.net>](mailto:annadele@comcast.net) or stick a note in Locker #9.

## CLAYARTSGUILD

Civic Arts Education of  
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To view the CAG Newsletter in full color, go to our website: [www.clayartsguild.com](http://www.clayartsguild.com)