

KILN' TIME



NOVEMBER, 2017

THE OFFICIAL CLAY ARTS GUILD NEWSLETTER

What is Salt Firing?

Salt firing is a high fire process whereby ordinary salt is introduced to the kiln as it reaches the higher temperatures, and at about 1100-1200° C, sodium from the salt reacts with silica in the clay body to form a glassy coating on the surface of the clay body, thus salt-glazed pottery. The glaze may be colorless or may be colored various shades of brown from iron oxide in the clay, blue from cobalt oxide, purple from manganese oxide. The salt glaze forms on the unglazed body by the reaction of the salt with the constituents in the clay. Some slips and glazes are also affected by the salt to produce various effects.

Besides color and glaze formed on bare bisque, another characteristic of salt-fired pottery is an orange peel textured surface; some of the studio clays are more apt to produce that texture than others.

As is true in our regular studio high fired pottery, salt fired pots can go in the oven, the dishwasher and are safe for foods. Salt firing with any of the clays purchased in this studio is also safe to use. 🖐️

SALT FIRING EVENT Thursday, December 21

5:30 to 8:30 pm

Plus a Bonus:
Three Visiting Artist Presentations

Read Beryl's president's message – she has outlined a special event on December 21 where Clay Arts Guild members may learn how to glaze and wad bisqued pieces to fire in the salt kiln. Attendees of this workshop may then put up to two pieces into the winter quarter salt firing. If you are unable to attend this event, Gregory plans to hold others in the future.

This event has a special bonus: three visiting artists – students from Gregory's alma mater, Edinboro University of Pennsylvania – will be demonstrating their skills all evening. **Brandon Lipe** will be throwing, while **Numpucsh "Punch" Chanakara Semachai** and **Hannah Pierce** will be handbuilding. This is a great opportunity to view and engage with up and coming artists. *See samples of their work below.*

Gregory will lecture and demonstrate for the first 45 minutes to an hour, and then attendees will be free to prepare their own pieces to fire and visit the artist demonstrations. **You must be a Clay Arts Guild member to participate, and you can bring two pieces to salt fire.** They must be already bisque fired. 🖐️



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

Message from the CAG Prez...



The new Salt Kiln is firing beautifully! The results have been great from the first firing. CAG is excited to sponsor a workshop in December that will allow all CAG members to experience the beauties of the salt kiln even if they can't take the Salt class. On **December 21st there will be a workshop at the studio from 5:30 – 8:30 pm** teaching you how to prepare a piece to be fired in the salt kiln. That includes the salt glazes and how to add "wads" to your piece so it doesn't stick to the floor of the kiln. Gregory will explain all the mysteries. Then you can glaze and wad one or two pieces to go into the first salt firing of the Winter quarter. **Your pieces must be bisque fired.** Hope to see you there!

Brad Krebs, Robin Moore and I have been busy moving the content of the CAG website to a new software called WordPress. This brings our website into the modern age and will allow for easier updating of the content. We hope to publish very soon.

On a personal note. I haven't been spending as much time at the studio this quarter but it's not the grandkids this time. My son and his family are settling in and need less of Grandma's help, so I decided to take a few art classes at Diablo Valley College, and I'm loving the experience. I had two goals: to become more fluent in the language of art and to improve my drawing to better decorate my pots. This semester I'm taking two Art History classes, Contemporary and Medieval and Early Renaissance, a drawing class. I'm learning a lot and really enjoy being on the DVC campus. I will be taking more courses next semester, likely drawing and perhaps a design course. I don't think I'm up to taking a clay class yet – too much homework!

Happy Holidays!

Beryl

CLAY ARTS GUILD CONTEST

Classes at the studio will end mid November, but there is plenty of time to plan for next quarter's contest in March, 2018.

THE THEME IS TEXTURE IN ALL ITS FORMS.

You must have taken at least one Center for Community Arts clay class in the past year in order to enter the contest and you may enter two pieces

Arts Benecia
991 Tyler Street
10/14 — 11/19

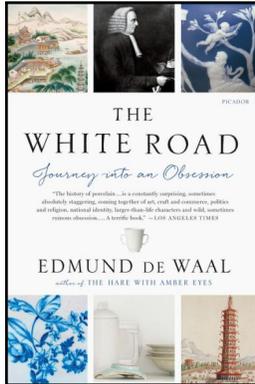
There is still time to visit **Bay Area Clay: A Legacy of Social Consciousness** featuring such notables as Robert Arneson, Stephen De Staebler, Viola Frey, Arthur Gonzalez, Michelle Gregor, Marc Lancet, Mark Messenger, Richard Notkin, Lisa Reinertson, Richard Shaw, Ehren Tool, Monica Van den Dool, Stan Welsh and Wanxin Zhang.

Richard Notkin, one of the featured artists in the exhibition, will be giving a talk on *“Ceramics, Activism, and the Bay Area: A Personal Journey”*, **Sunday November 12, 2-4 pm** in the Arts Benecia classroom. The event is open to the public with a suggested donation of \$10.

Born in Chicago, Richard T. Notkin earned a BFA from Kansas City Art Institute in 1970, studying under Ken Ferguson. In 1973, he received his MFA from the University of California, Davis, where he studied under Robert Arneson. He is well known for his sculptural reinterpretations of teapots, “a universally recognized object, with strong associations to domesticity and tranquility,” which he uses as a “hook to lure the viewer.” Among his awards are fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, and in 2008, the Hoi Fellowship from United States Artists. 🙌

Library Notes

By Librarian, Aletha Wiens



The White Road: Journey into an Obsession by Edmund de Waal

“I catch sight of Mao’s Imperial Tea Set. This is a great moment for me.

“The Tea Set – it demands capitals – consists of an ovoid teapot, teacups on saucers, a sugar bowl, a coffee pot and a wine ewer and eight wine cups, some cake plates and a cake stand. All in bright, radiant, good morning revolutionary-white with candy-pink sprays of peach blossom across each one. It is New Dawn, Great Leap Forward Porcelain, and it is unapologetically suburban. That is, it doesn’t look cheap, it looks Proper.

“It looks how the best china should look, something to put into a glass cabinet and bring out for guests. Nixon perhaps. Cup of tea, Mr President? A cake? Milk?

“The story is this. Mao liked presents, like every emperor before him. And Jingdezhen, having offered tributes in the form of many hundreds of thousands of Mao busts, ceramic badges and plates with happy workers wending their way home from the steel mills, had yet to receive a specific request or commission from the Great Leader. So in the late 1960s the Jiangxi party started to think about what would be appropriate. A new seam of clay of startling purity had been discovered in Fuzhou in Jiangxi Province and this was mined, refined and prepared. Instructions were issued to the Jiangxi provincial party committee for the creation of ‘new wares.’

“...the records tremble with anxiety. ‘The organization and management of the project is extremely tight. All personnel involved in the project have had strict political examination.’ ... very quickly there was panic. The ten tons of raw materials were found to be insufficient and Red Guards were transferred to the project to speed up the refining. No one was allowed to rest and home leave was cancelled. Technical problems were judged as indicative of insufficient regard for the Leader... Twenty-two kilns were fired over the next six months and two sets of 138 pieces were finally delivered to Mao’s compound in Beijing in early September 1975. He approved.

“Mao died a year later. And the special seam of clay was sealed up forever.” 🙌

Fall & Winter Quarter CAG Social Events by Donna Cowan

One of our goals at these social educational events is to meet our studio instructors. Our Fall quarter event on November 5 highlighted **Ed Blackburn**, who spoke about his path into ceramics and showed photos of a wide range of his explorations with clay. He also included some fun anecdotal stories from the vaults of a working ceramic artist. Four of his beautiful plates gave us a close-up view of his intricate design abilities. Ed spoke about the “Heaven on Earth 2018” destination workshop in Todos Santos, Baja Sur, Mexico, at which he is a dream team artist this year. (For more info, see the posting on the bulletin board or talk with Ed.) Ed also brought homemade apple pies with ice cream that complimented the pizza, beer, wine, non-alcoholic drinks, and yummy savory onion pie that Paul Rene brought.

During the winter quarter, **Lesley Jensen** will be the presenter. The date is to be determined, though it will be a Sunday evening once classes have started. Keep your eyes peeled for more info. If you would like to help with this event (and check off your volunteer aspect of CAG membership) please contact Donna Cowan. 🖐️

Bonnie Seeman Workshop By Gary Guglielmino



Bonnie Seeman, the most recent of the Master Potter presentors, is a well-known ceramics instructor at several colleges in Florida and also manages to be a successful ceramicist. If you remember from the flyers, her work is very decorative., ceramic flowers and vegetable looking forms abound in bright colors (she’s partial to reds and pinks) up and down the lengths of her pieces. They look like large or-

nate leaves and celery stalks. She gave a casual and easy to follow presentation and showed us a great deal of detail on how she constructs and paints her work. She admits that she has spent years mastering the techniques to get the look she wants. And they are beautiful for sure!

Bonnie started out by making a simple, plain thrown pot, say six inches tall. Within about 20 minutes she had turned it into a beautiful footed vase that we were all admiring and photographing! Her major “tool” is a very cheap metal paintbrush with short bristle; it looks like something that came out of a bottle of rubber cement. She uses the metal edge of the brush to make deep grooves from base to rim all around the pot, say eight grooves in total. Then, using her fingers and the brush, she “blows out” the clay between the grooves, elongates the top edges, and ultimately has a beautiful vase that reminds me of a lotus leaf. As is the case with all of our master potters, she made it look SO easy!

Bonnie gave lots of great tips on surface decoration, clay-handling, and painting. When I first saw the flyers around the studio about her visit, I was a bit put off by the amount of elaborate decoration and construction that goes into her work. I’m very glad that I decided to attend. It was a helpful and useful presentation, and very enjoyable to boot. All in all a very enjoyable and a very useful way to spend part of a Saturday. I would encourage anybody to attend the workshops—as I said, there is something for everyone!

As usual, the lunch, provided by the CAG, was wonderful, and coordinated and served by **Kathy Minard** and **Linda Shubin**. 🖐️



Meet Monitor Erika Goldstein

by Kit Neimeyer



Erika Goldstein grew up in the San Fernando Valley area of LA (ask her to do her spot-on “Valley Girl” imitation). She attended UC Irvine and went on to get a graduate degree in clinical psychology. She has been working in the field of psychology since 1989 and

is currently in private practice in Walnut Creek. She lives in San Ramon with her husband of 20 years, Michael, an accountant turned professional chef.

Recently, I’ve been making...

Platters with whimsical creatures on them.

How did you learn to draw?

I taught myself.

When I’m not doing ceramics, I’m...

Working. Hiking. Eating my husband’s food.

As a child, I...

Loved camp. Camp was my favorite thing in the whole wide world.

In high school, I...

Was amused by the drama of it all. I chose not to engage.

My favorite place to visit is...

Miraval (Resort & Spa) in Arizona. My husband and I go during the summer when the prices go way down. The highs can get up to 120 degrees. We get up at 4 a.m. and hike. Later, we meditate, get a massage, eat good food. We have a great time.



Erika currently hand-builds and has no plans to learn to throw. That doesn’t mean she can’t make use of the occasional thrown piece that comes her way. “Bette Sindzinski and I have a deal,” she says. “Bette throws a couple of pieces; I decorate one for her and keep the other one for myself to do anything I want with it.”

In the studio, Erika can be found surrounded by her underglazes, earbuds in, listening to Harry Potter audio books.

I met with Erika in October and asked her to fill in a few blanks about herself..

I started doing ceramics when...

I was sick of doing jewelry. Although the truth is, I still make jewelry: beaded jewelry using needle and thread.

What I like most about ceramics is...

Creating fun things...creating something out of nothing.



Thank You from Empty Bowls Sponsors

Dear Ceramic Artists,

We would like to thank everyone at Walnut Creek Clay Arts Guild for donating so many bowls for our Empty Bowls event. We were so excited to have over 400 guests from our community to share our story. Everyone had a very difficult time trying to choose which bowl they wanted, and many of them wanted more than one. Your bowls were beautiful, and each one so carefully made. This event is very important to us, because it helps us increase awareness in our community of the needs of our neighbors.

I am so excited to hear that you are already starting to make some for next year. We used almost all the bowls that were donated, which has never happened before, nor have we ever had so many guests attend. It was exciting for us to have so many people at both locations. You also asked about the sizes of the bowls and from what I saw, they were all the right sizes. If it fits a cup or so of soup, then it works perfectly.

Thank you all for helping us make a difference in so many lives. We look forward to partnering with you again next year.

Sincerely,
Renee and the Food Bank Staff.

HOT TIP!

Have you ever dripped wax on a bisque piece where you didn't want it? Don't bother trying to wash it off; it doesn't work. Eureka! I have the solution.

Take it home and run it through your dishwasher. I tried it and it works.

Now it is your turn to submit a hot tip to the newsletter. First try it, then write about it, give directions if complex, take a photo of what you are doing and send it to Ann at annadele@comcast.net. Your tip could earn you a free bag of clay if it is used in the newsletter.



Important Dates

- * Ice rink starts Nov 10th
- * End of quarter is Nov 18th
- * Studio Clean-up is Nov 19th from 10am-noon
- * Winter registration starts Dec 6th
- * Winter regular class starts Jan 6th
- * Winter intensives start Jan 2nd

End of Quarter Cleanup

1. Must clean out all lockers before last class on 11/18. *(if not, tools & clay will be donated to the studio).*
2. All your greenware must be on carts if you want them bisqued over the break. Anything left in the damp/dry rooms after 11/18 will be donated to CAG or removed.
3. Most glazed work by 11/18 will be ready for pickup 11/30 from 12-2PM and evening (*time TBA*), or, you may pick up first week of next quarter *(Be sure to check in with the monitor during open studio when you are picking up items).*
4. Studio cleanup is 11/19 10:00M to noon *(Get a free coupon for clay and be the first to claim winter quarter lockers).*

Message from the Yard



Salt Kiln:

1. The new salt kiln is yielding great results thus far. We will continue to make the needed adjustments in the amount of salt needed to absorb in the bricks as well as the glazed ware; amount of reduction; and pin pointing trouble spots. It has proved to be a tight and efficient kiln. We hope that CAG members will attend the special salt event on Dec. 21st from 530-830pm (accompanied by 3 visiting artists from Edinboro University of PA).

2. I have a meeting with Public Works about the AC units; we will figure out how to properly regulate the units by next season (when is it working well and when is it too cold?)

3. Humidifier should be fixed by next week (depending on when the contractor gets back from vacation).

4. Blue (Green)/Black tests are in the works; we hope to have a newly working formulae by next week, if not, then next quarter.

Suggestions Box:

1. Throwing buckets: Some folks want smaller throwing buckets; we get the yellow ones for free and it may be difficult to find a better price than that...we'll keep looking

2. Reminder: you can use plaster batts in the damp room; but, not plaster hump and/or drape molds; ask your teacher or me for verification.

3. Rules for studio usage are printed and available next to the catalogs.

Friendly Reminder:

Always keep the studio cleaner than you found it, PLEASE no outside studio projects (work must be made in the studio), you must be enrolled in the present quarter to have work fired, no outside clay, and keep making beautiful work!

Gregory



Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass; it's about learning to dance in the rain.

Anonymous

What's Happening in the Clay World

SALES

Handcrafted Holiday Sale, Shadelands Art Center, Auditorium, 111 N. Wiget Lane, Walnut Creek. Friday, December 1st, 5-8pm, Saturday December 2nd, 10 am-5 pm, Sunday December 3rd, 10 am-4 pm. The opening reception is Friday night with live music, free craft classes and treats all weekend long. Admission is free.

Berkeley Potters Guild Holiday Sale 2017, "Words in Clay". 731 Jones St. Berkeley, 94710. Open 11am-5pm Saturday and Sunday November 25/26, December 2/3, December 9/10, December 16-24 closing at 2 pm on the 24th.

EXHIBITIONS

Schaller Gallery Online: Linda Christianson, Solo Exhibition Mid November 2017.

Stephen Godfrey, Solo Exhibition Late November 2017. <https://www.schallergallery.com/>

Orinda Library Art Gallery, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. Ceramics by the studio's own **Karen Hildebrand** will be featured at the Orinda Library Gallery throughout the month of November.

Trax Gallery 1812 5th Street, Berkeley.

Mark Pharis and Matthew Metz: Reception for the artists is Sat., Nov. 18th – 5 – 7 pm. Please join us to honor these important works and the people who made them.



CLAYARTSGUILD
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Walnut Creek

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To view the CAG Newsletter in full color, go to our website: www.clayartsguild.com