

KILN' TIME



SEPTEMBER, 2019

THE OFFICIAL CLAY ARTS GUILD NEWSLETTER

Fall Social/
Educational Event
Sunday,
September 15
7 - 9 pm



Our presenter will be **Mark Sullivan**, who used to be one of our very active members. This summer as Mark entered retirement,

he was privileged to participate in two diverse 10-day anagama wood-firings. The first was at Chris Gustin's studio in South Dartmouth, MA, and the second at Peters Valley Craft Center in northern New Jersey. Mark will share his observations of the process, its results, two different firing approaches, practical details of the 10 days, keys to success and results from numerous artists. One firing involved a four-day making workshop by two wood-fire potters – John Dix and Nick Schwartz. Mark will also share his view of the synergy of this workshop with the firing.



CAG BLOWOUT SALE WRAP-UP

By Patricia Alger, Sales Chair



This year we decided to try out a simplification to the annual CAG pottery sale, held on August 18 and 19. We did not have a sale on Friday evening, running it only Saturday and Sunday. We also did not move any of the tables or pottery wheels. We

were able to try this out since many people were traveling so we had about half the total number of participants as we typically have for the Spring Sale. We had a total of 15 artists as well as a table to sell CAG donations. We once again had the "\$10 and under" sale shelves and they were very popular with the customers.

This sale offered a great opportunity for some of our newer members to try out selling their pieces for the first time. Everyone did an awesome job setting up their table and helping others as needed to make the sale area look fantastic. We are looking forward to even more artists participating in the future sales!

We have a very dedicated team that helps with some key functions each sale. A huge thank you goes out to **Mary Leigh Miller** for creating our wonderful poster to advertise the sale as well as all the signs, name tags and name cards for each table. Once again **Nicole Collins** printed up our price tags for the sale even though she was not able to participate in the sale this time. Special thanks also goes to **Gary Guglielmino** for sending our poster out to our entire mailing list as a "save the date" and then a reminder a week before the sale.

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Kiln' Time Newsletter

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Please submit all articles to Jane

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

Message from the CAG Prez ...



Welcome back! I hope you all had fun summers.

Here are some thoughts, short and sweet:

1) Recently, we have realized how valuable first aid training and CPR training is for all. Our average age at the studio is 55+ and the incidents of medical issues increase as we get older. I know I was trained in emergency medicine and have, over my life span, intervened 20 plus times outside of a medical setting. When I have intervened, I noticed that other people were just standing and watching, possibly hesitating because they didn't know what to do. So, if you are interested in CPR or First Aid training, please email me at bettesindzinski@hotmail.com. If enough people are interested, I will schedule a training.

2) Many changes have been made in the studio, and so many are for the better and are wonderful. Take a moment to thank Takemi and the staff for all their dedicated hard work. Also, please be supportive of the changes that are happening; if you have other ideas, please tell your teacher, Takemi or me.

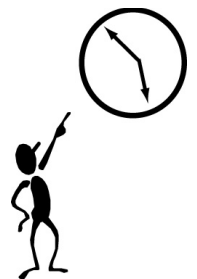
3) CAG board meetings are open to all CAG members and are held in the dance studio (door is next to the slips and engobes). Next meeting is Sept 25th at 1pm.

Thanks and keep potting on ... *Bette*

CAG MEMBERSHIP DUES

by Ann Henderson, Membership Chair

It's that time again, the best time to sign up for the Clay Arts Guild. You get the most benefit by signing up this quarter, because it is for the complete year, from August first until August first of the following year. The full year is only \$80.



The benefits of a CAG membership include: a substantial reduction in your open studio fees (must be concurrently enrolled in a CAG class), reduced fees for master artist workshops, participation in at least two annual CAG sales, participation in Walnut Creek exhibits and sales, participation in CAG's regular social/educational nights, and subscription to Kiln Time, the CAG newsletter, hard copy or online.

Members do have responsibilities, however. We expect all students, but especially CAG members, to help maintain a clean, efficient studio, and to actively participate in the Guild's effort to cultivate a quality ceramics program. Voluntary donations are also encouraged.

EMPTY BOWLS

by Mona Moxley

Empty Bowls is a benefit put on each fall by the **Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties**. Clay Arts Guild and Community Arts contribute to this important project by donating soup bowls made by ceramic artists in our studio. This year Clay Arts Guild and Community Arts contributed 174 beautiful soup bowls to be used for the benefit.



We wrapped up the project on August 12, preparing the bowls for pickup by the Food Bank.

Thanks to all of you who contributed bowls, made signs about the project for the studio (**Mary Leigh Miller**), and the team that helped with the preparation for the final pickup. Special shout out to **Andrea Bennett** who made sure that all the bowls that were donated unglazed were glazed and found their way to the Empty Bowls bins.

We'll be starting next year's collections in September. **Look for the Empty Bowls bin in the library!** 🙌

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BLOWOUT SALE



We sold over \$4,000 of pottery over the two days. The average sale amount per artist was \$237 selling an average of 15 items. We made \$1,284 for CAG that will be put to good use in purchasing new equipment for the studio.

The graphs, posted on the studio bulletin board, show sales in dollars per hour. It is interesting to see where the high and low points of each day occur.

I would like to personally thank our President, **Bette**, for all her help in pulling off this sale. She was there many hours before and after the sale getting the studio ready for the sale as well as spending most of Saturday and Sunday helping customers find the perfect pieces to purchase!

We are always looking for more people to become involved with the sales. The more people who participate, the easier it is on everyone involved. Please let me know if you are willing to help, and we will find the perfect volunteer opportunity for you! 🙌

A big thank-you must go to Pat Alger, who did an enormous amount of work coordinating the Blowout Sale with Bette. As Pat noted in her thanks to Bette and the other members, it was a team effort, which paid off. The online sign-ups worked smoothly, as did the timely notifications.

MIKE MELEYCO HONORED

Michael Meleyco, a long time guild member, was awarded first place in ceramics at the Marin County Fair this summer for his stunning piece. While noting that it is wonderful to get formal appreciation of his work, he extended his thanks not only to his sister who entered the work but to the studio community, and also "to the instructors who taught me, the tech staff who mixed the glazes and did the firing, and most of all to the community of our Guild who for 23 years has created an atmosphere that supports my work". *Congratulations to Mike!* 🙌



Clay Play at Camp Panther

by Laura Taylor

CAG volunteers provided another fun and educational time for Parkmead Elementary School's annual Camp Panther event. On March 22, six CAG members helped 30 kids express their creativity with clay. Each teacher had a table of six kids to inspire and assist. Each child was given a ball of clay to build whatever his or her imagination wanted. There were examples of animals, baskets, creatures and structures that had been premade on the tables to inspire the kids. At the end of the event, boxes were provided by Parkmead Elementary and each child was able to take their creations home with them.



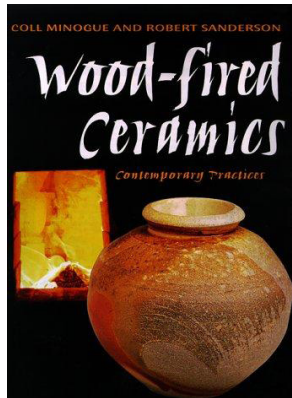
Parkmead Elementary is always grateful for our assistance in this big event.

CAG appreciates the helpfulness and good nature of our volunteers. Those who helped this year were **Jackie Gerry, Cherylene Robison, Clare Macy, Marina Klotz and Forrest Lowe.** The lead for the event was **Laura Taylor.** **Takemi Tsurata** pugged an ample amount of clay (heroic process!) for us and also provided a few other colorful clays for accent. **Bette Sindzinski** assisted getting volunteers and helped with each aspect of the event. Many thanks to each Clay Artist for their assistance!



Library Notes

by Librarian, Aletha Wiens



Wood-Fired Ceramics

Contemporary practices,

by Coll Minogue and
Robert Sanderson, 2000

Spare the Air days have battered our beach firings, and the people I know with wood fired kilns live part time in Montana. This book, a series of short articles quoting ceramicists active in 2000 with a yen for firing a kiln for 'six or seven' days using 15 square meters of pine includes obsessives who have 21 foot long anagama kilns, 'six feet wide at the widest point.'

"Wood-firing is an aesthetic choice; the greatest issue, ... is quality and whether the work asks new question ... Wood-firing the pots is a process of constant surprise, not a random process, but with a direction towards control ... it is a process justified by its unpredictability, by the mysteries that lie beyond our control," Randy Johnson internet research yields. Randy Johnson's web page looks up-to-date.

Douglass Rankin and Will Ruggles closed their North Carolina Rock Creek Pottery; the last entry on their website is dated 2008. They are looking for a 'wild and private' property to buy near Santa Fe. *"It is our view that the simplicity of process and materials, and a limited palette had a lot to do with the sense of power, warmth and integrity that we derived from those pots."*

Thiebaut Chague is represented on an up-to-date website run by a foundation named for Joanna Bird, whose mission is the Advancement of the Arts. *"It's obvious that choosing wood-firing is not an accidental choice ... During the process of making, I think pieces through in terms of taking risks during the firing. Sometimes the result surpasses my expectation."*

Horst Kerstan died in 2005. One of his vases is on Etsy for \$140; *"The idea of wood-firing implies that the final outcome of one's work can far surpass our imagination and wishes, in many different ways impossible to plan or contrive. Something beyond one's power takes over. This for me makes firing my anagama a transcendental discipline."*



TWO CAG SOCIAL-EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

by Jane Burns



CHRIS FORTIN WORKSHOP July 20

Chris has been teaching at the studio for three years. At this event he gave a truly remarkable presentation that covered his early years to the present day revealing the extraordinary depth and mastery of his chosen medium. His love of nature began as a child and this, coupled with his love of working with his hands, carried him through many of the challenges of life. Studying at Humboldt State and later at New Paltz in New York, where he received his MFA, gave him the opportunity to develop a body of sculptural work that expressed social and political comments. I was particularly struck by the sheer monumentality of one of his pieces that showed a decisive mastery of form.

The second part of the evening was devoted to a demo on applying color to pieces that relate to a real object. Using Velvet Underglazes, Chris emphasized the importance of not hiding the fine details of a piece. Glazes can be brushed in layers. He demonstrated the application of a second layer using a patting motion. Oxide washes can be added in dribbles and the whole piece sprayed with water to bring back the color as a final point.



His lesson on how to approach the application of color was invaluable. This was an evening to remember; the studio is very fortunate to have a teacher who demonstrates such skill and mastery of clay. 🖐️

SALT FIRING WORKSHOP with TAKEMI TSURUTA August 14

Members of the CAG studio community are fortunate to get the chance to fire a piece in the salt kiln. If you have never taken a salt firing class, this is a great introduction to the process. The studio director, Takemi Tsuruta, gave an overview of the nature of salt glazing to a packed house of eager participants on August 4th. Continuing with a brief history of the firing of German and early American ware, he mentioned some notables who utilized this process and who had presented workshops in our studio, i.e. Don Reitz and Ruthanne Tudball.

One extremely important part of the process is wadding one's piece to elevate it above the kiln shelf and prevent the bonding of clay to shelf. Wadding may also be used in a decorative way to enhance the form by loading the piece sideways, or using seashells as a barrier. Balance and structural integrity are key here as an inadequately wadded piece could tip and knock other pieces over. Takemi concluded his presentation with a review of the flashing slips, dedicated salt glazes and the appropriate glazes to use as liners for functional ware.



This was a great introduction to the process of salt firing. I would certainly urge any interested CAG member to take advantage of the next open opportunity to put pieces in the salt kiln. 🖐️

Read more about our Sunday evening social event with Roger Yee on the next page!

Annual Clay Contest Help Request

Although our annual contest is months away, I've been on the lookout for a theme for a while now. Nothing has grabbed me yet and I'm hoping you might have some ideas. The topic needs to be something broad enough that both hand builders and throwers can participate, yet not so broad that anything and everything goes, and must be something attainable in our studio. Other than that, the sky's the limit. Rather than list past topics, I'd like to present a blank slate for your input. My goal is to have the topic chosen by October so people can start creating for the contest.

Finding a judge is also a challenge sometimes, so if you know of anyone that you think would be a good one, please send me the name and contact and a little info about them. It needs to be someone who does not teach at our studio.

As we get closer to the contest itself, there will be slots where help would be appreciated - and I'll let you know what's needed then.

Thanks, Donna Cowan
dccsunburst@gmail.com




Roger Yee Workshop by Donna Cowan

On April 28, longtime instructor **Roger Yee** returned to the studio to give a presentation at our Spring Social Event that opened the eyes of students to a host of new ideas.



Roger talked about his upbringing and his path to his current standing in ceramics, from semi-interested high school student to instructor in ceramics at a high school to owning his own studio, Red Ox, in Concord. I was particularly interested and impressed with his knowledge and that he would consider his role as a teacher paramount to that of an artist, although he is an artist in his own right.

A wheel demonstration finished up the evening with Roger illustrating his teaching process by asking questions designed to guide the creation of the form. As he created a cup, he asked "who will drink from this vessel" thus determining size and thickness. In demonstrating a vase form he asked when the belly should be formed and why leading to the shaping of a neck that would balance the form.

Roger definitely disproved the old saying that those who can, do, and those who can't, teach. It was a pleasure watching him in action. 

HOT TIP!

by Forrest Lowe

A Trimming Tip

I was watching a woman in the studio (I do not know her name) working on trimming a tall and perhaps slightly too dry cylinder piece. It was too tall and stiff to be held in place by clay blobs directly on the wheel, so she was trying to use one of the chucks. She was having trouble stabilizing it in the chuck as well.



I suggested she use sponges to pad the piece in the chuck. They are more flexible than clay, and if you move the work around, the sponge recovers better than the clay. She tried it, and it worked.

Packing foam sheets protect the work from the chuck's hard inner surface in addition to helping to stabilize it.

Good luck when you try this! 

Important Dates

9/15: CAG Social/Educational Event, 7-9 pm

10/5: Master Potter Workshop, Ehren Tool

(No class or open studios)

11/11: Veteran's Day

(no class or open studios)

11/17: Fall studio clean up, 10 am-12 pm

12/6-12/8: Holiday Hand-crafted Sale

12/4: Winter registration begins

1/5: Winter classes begin

Upcoming Fall Workshops

11/ 18-21: *Pouring Vessels* with Ann Henderson

12/9-11: *Ikebana Vase* with Bruno Kark

The Clay Arts Guild

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Clay Arts Guild is to assist and encourage ceramics students to develop and improve their skills and understanding of the media and to contribute actively toward improving the program of the Civic Arts Ceramic studio through appropriate financial and operation aid.

By-laws, October 25, 2005

The Manager's Office

Greetings All,

Although we got some heat waves, it seemed like a pretty mild summer. I'd like to thank everyone for making the summer quarter such a great time in the studio!



A few notes about the studio as we head into the fall quarter:

• I'm happy to announce we have two new instructors joining our team. **Darren Cockrell** will be teaching the Wednesday evening class and **Lisa Tsubouchi** will be teaching the Friday night *Ceramics for First Timers*. Both are young and energetic artists who come to us with a wealth of experience. Please introduce yourselves if you see them in the studio.



• Coming up: Master Potter Workshop artist, **Ehren Tool**. Ehren is an internationally renowned artist whose work is heavily influenced by his service in the U.S. Marine Corps and his subsequent return to the civilian world. He has given away over 20,000 of his cups since 2001. "I just make cups...I would like my work to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the world. That is a lot to ask of a cup." He received his MFA in 2005 from the University of California, Berkeley. He is currently the studio manager for the ceramics department at UC Berkeley. He was recently featured in the New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/01/magazine/ehren-tool-war-cups-smithsonian.html>

The Ehren Tool workshop is on Saturday, Oct 5 from 10 am-4 pm.

• Late Add Workshops: We added a couple workshops for Nov/Dec that did not make it into the paper schedule. **Ann Henderson** is teaching a *Pouring Vessels Workshop* in November and **Bruno Kark** is teaching an *Ikebana Vase Workshop* in December. Check out the descriptions online for details.

• Lastly, as we head into our holiday season this quarter, please be mindful of our timeline and capacity of the studio regarding production of work. The staff and kilns can only process a certain amount of work at a time. No special firings will happen leading up to the holidays.

And as always, please remember the studio policies and protocols and continue to make the studio a special place for all of us. Please be mindful of others and considerate of the communal space that it is.

Thank you. *Takemi*

What's Happening in the Clay World

GALLERIES and EXHIBITIONS

Visions in Clay, San Joaquin
Delta College, 5151 Pacific
Ave, Stockton, Ca.

September 5-27, 2019.

National ceramics show
with exhibition juror Sarah
Millfelt, Northern Clay Cen-
ter, Minneapolis, MN.

Master Potter Workshop
with Ehren Tool, October 5,
2019 at Studio E, Center for
Community Arts, Civic Park,
Walnut Creek.

ART FESTIVALS

Columbia Fine Art Show,
September 15, 2019,
Columbia State Historic Park,
Columbia Ca 95310.

San Carlos Art and Wine Fair,
October 12 and 13, 2019 at
San Carlos Ave and Laurel St.

Danville Fall Crafts Festival,
October 19 and 20, 2019.
Hartz Ave, Danville.

CALL to ARTISTS

Marin Society of Artists.

Theme: Fresh Arts.

Deadline to enter September
23, 2019.

Website link:

<http://www.marinsocietyofartists.org>



CLAYARTSGUILD
Civic Arts Education of
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