

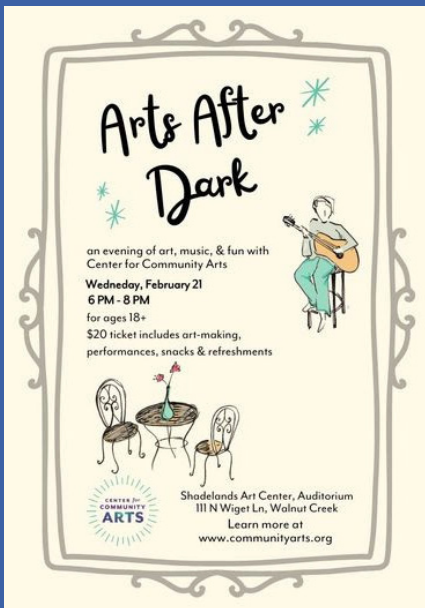
KILN' TIME



JANUARY 2024

THE OFFICIAL CLAY ARTS GUILD NEWSLETTER

Important dates



Arts After Dark will be offered again this year by Community Arts on **Wednesday, February 21** and they are looking for two volunteers to work with the adults. It is a fun evening and no prior experience is necessary. Please let Pat know if you are interested in volunteering.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Holiday Sale Wrap-up
- Master Potter Workshop with Nancy Selvin
- Bedford Gallery Photo Highlights
- Our Favorite Non-Pottery Tools

A Bowl Full of Fun!

by Iris Moore

The First Annual Chili Bowl Fundraiser was an incredible success! There were so many ways to have fun. Here are some highlights.

First, the event started off with an incredible offer: a free bowl! Our talented studio mates crafted a wide variety of beautifully decorated bowls, to be included in the price of a ticket (only \$20!). Choosing the perfect one was a challenge, but in the end, each attendee found their perfect bowl.



Two happy Chili Bowl attendees

The chili was deliciously prepared with care by Brandon and the kitchen team. It was a winner and added a warm touch to the entire event. Attendees and guild members gathered with family and friends around dining tables, enjoying the chili and chips together. It was a comfortable, informal time to talk about ceramics, admire each other's choice of bowls and get to know one another.

The pop up sale was great, with all six vendors selling their unique and interesting items. The Chili Bowl attendees had a spectrum of choices, making it a great opportunity for those last minute holiday gift shoppers to find just what they were looking for.

We added an impressive total of \$2,329. to CAG's scholarship fund! Thank you to Pat, Bette, Brandon and everyone who made bowls and participated in making the Chili Bowl event so fun and successful. We are already looking forward to next year's Chili Bowl Fundraiser!



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Why have we removed
committee members'
emails?

Recently many CAG
members received
spam emails. We
believe that they were
possibly culled from
this newsletter listing
as well as articles that
contained an email.

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

Message from Our Prez ...



Hope you had a wonderful Holiday break and are anxious to get back to the studio.

We had a very successful Handcrafted Holiday Sale at Shadelands this year. Twenty nine CAG members sold 865 items with a total of \$20,649 which was nearly double the amount sold last year! Also, new this year was the Kids Shopping room. We had over 100 children come in to shop for their family members. Proceeds from the sale will go to pay for Ceramics class scholarships and this sale yielded enough to pay for 26 student classes! *Check out the kids' room photos below!*

Our next sale, on May 4 and 5, will be held in the Pottery Studio. More information will be coming out soon, but save the date if you would like to participate. Please invite your friends to our sale!

Thanks to **Mona Moxley** for setting up the Welcome Back gathering on January 13th. It was a wonderful chance to hang out with other students from the studio and enjoy some yummy snacks. Many of you have commented how happy you are that we are doing more social gatherings, and have asked us to do more and we are delighted to commit to doing this. **However, we are hoping to identify two people to co-lead this effort.** Please read more about this on page 4.

Pat Alger



~ Reminder from Brandon ~

All work created during the Fall 23 season is out in the back area of the studio. To avoid class interruptions, please be sure to pick up work during open studio hours which are listed in the line up of winter classes posted in the studio.

The last day to pick up this work is Saturday, Feb. 10. Let me know if you cannot make it to pick up your work by this date.

2023 HOLIDAY SALE

by Katherine Zhao

When I was asked to write an article on my experience as a first time participant in the annual Walnut Creek Handcrafted Holiday Sale, I was both very excited and apprehensive. The prospect of sharing my journey was very exciting, yet there was a sense of apprehension, because there were just so many memorable facets packed into this one weekend. After a handful of unfinished drafts and much reflection, I found my focus: the profound warmth and support of a vibrant community!



The Holiday Sale itself occurred on December 9th, but my personal journey began five months earlier when I made the decision to leave behind my comfortable corporate job. With no clear goals in mind, I embarked on a journey of self-discovery and creative exploration, pottery being one of my chosen areas of focus. The decision to participate in the Holiday Sale provided me with a much-needed sense of purpose and stability during this somewhat nebulous period in my life.

As I meticulously prepared my inventory for the Holiday Sale, I couldn't help but worry about my inconsistent pricing, lackluster presentation, and the overall quality of my pieces. Most of all, I feared the repercussions of a disappointing show. Thankfully, my concerns began to dissipate one by one. Several guild veterans generously shared their wisdom, helping me improve my throwing techniques to the point where my mugs went from potential murder weapons to merely "mild concussion" contenders if

they happened to land on your noggin by accident. Barbara Moreland, who is one of my mentors at the guild, came to my rescue by lending me her risers for my table display on the day of set up. Within the first hour of the sale, I found myself surrounded by members of the Walnut Creek community eager to support local artists, intrigued by the stories behind my creations. It was a joy to meet fellow admirers of the Great Wave off Kanagawa who would use my handmade mug for their morning coffee and to see the sparkle in a mother's eyes as she tells me how much her daughter would love having this black vase with dainty flowers in her college dorm, and to eavesdrop on words of admiration for my neighboring artists, especially when they weren't around.

The crowd ebbed and flowed; during the quieter times, I found myself engrossed in conversations with fellow artists. Bill Schaaf, renowned for his large, iconic sculptural vases, surprised me with a collection of functional wares adorned with vibrant floral patterns. Betty Wang's bottles exhibited a consistent elegance in both form and glazing, while Ken Becker's stoneware mugs, plates, and bowls carried an illusion of sturdiness despite being incredibly light and comfortable to hold. Chip Parham's plates, inspired by his love for birds and fish, were exquisitely painted. Ruth Mannion, with her penchant for exquisite organic shapes, continued

Continued on the next page



Message from Pat and Erika

Hello to all CAG MEMBERS!

We hope you had a lovely holiday season and a happy new year.

Many of you have commented how happy you are that we are doing more social gatherings and have asked us to do more. We are delighted to commit to having more, however, the two of us cannot organize them all.

We are hopeful that a team of two will be able to give back and become our Events Coordinators for our time limited events.

We would like to continue our teaching artist/staff demos and our studio-wide contest. We are happy to assist and meet with you to go over all of the necessary details. And, as usual there are also people who we know will help and pitch in to make the events successful, but we really need leads/contact people to head it up.

While we absolutely want to grow the gatherings and make time for good personal connections, if we cannot find someone to assist CAG with this, we will not be able to have these fun gatherings in the near future. **Please contact us if you are interested in supporting this venture!!!** Thank you.

HOLIDAY SALE, continued from page 3

to push boundaries with her surface decoration and firing techniques. From those conversations, I went from feeling nervous excitement to feeling inspired and invigorated with new ideas for future projects.

As I observed friends and family members visiting each artist's table, I couldn't help but notice the expressions of awe and pride in their eyes. In that bustling ballroom, we felt seen by waves of strangers, but more importantly, by fellow artists who shared our passions. We felt the support of loved ones who had witnessed our journey's ups and downs, and the guild members who shared precious moments in the spacious Civic Park studio.

Simone Weil, one of my favorite philosophers, once remarked, "Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity," equating it with love. All my life, I had perceived art as a solitary endeavor, something reserved for those with extraordinary talent. A prevailing notion suggested that pursuing art was worthwhile only for a chosen few, while the rest of us should prioritize more practical pursuits.

The Holiday Sale and the months leading to it changed that outlook. I might not have amassed thousands of Instagram followers, have my own private studio, exhibited my work in museums, or garnered prestigious awards, but standing next to my 3 x 3 half of table, I got a chance to share the creations I made with so much love and care. In return, I felt embraced by a community that generously gave their attention. Thanks to them, I found the inspiration and courage to persist in my pursuit of the clay arts. For that, I am incredibly grateful.

See you again at the next sale, and here's to another great year of creating!



A REMINDER:

The Spring CAG Pottery sale is scheduled for May 4-5 and will be held in the studio. More details in the next Kiln Times issue.

WORKSHOP SPOTLIGHT:

SATURDAY with NANCY SELVIN

by Nicole Collins



On Saturday Jan 20, the celebrated clay artist Nancy Selvin came to our studio for an in-depth workshop. She is one of the clay artists currently on exhibition at the Bedford Gallery.

During the first half, Nancy shared her life, inspirations, influences and an overview of her

work and career in both clay and watercolors. Her slide presentation touched on her life in LA, where she was born, to her career in Berkeley, first as a student at Cal and later as a California College of the Arts instructor.

Her interest in politics and activism was fueled at an early age by her father, a union organizer, and her politically progressive mother. This social consciousness continued with the teachers and artists she worked with at UC Berkeley. Images she captured during her travels to the East Coast, Japan, Britain, and Italy informed and shaped her work.

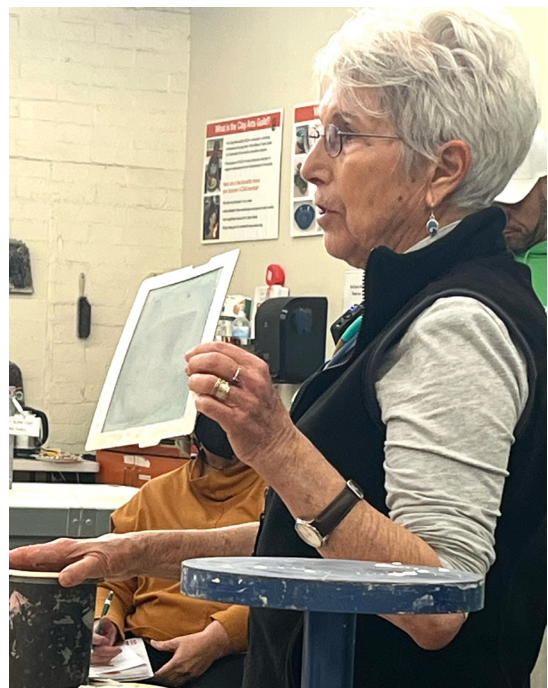
“My influences were Early Americana, architecture, pieces of my community, and travel...” Nancy explained that her work is metaphorical, that she is wedded to color, and that she chooses information, poetry and stories that are meaningful to her to put on her pots.

Several times during the presentation, Nancy urged “DON’T read the instructions! Push what the materials can do! Accidents happen; happenstance and randomness interest me. I like the process to be exposed. You’ll never find the end; it’s ever expanding!”

In the second part of the presentation, Nancy built two tea bowls from Hawaiian Red clay with “a live edge,” underglazed two more bowls and demonstrated how to apply words using a variety of methods.

The easiest technique, we learned, was to use an underglaze pencil, but one could also use a variety of commercial decals, paper underglazes, and transfers. Nancy’s preferred method is to use silkscreens. Her Gocco screens allow her to print directly on greenware, but she encouraged us to experiment and get more information online.

Nancy Selving informed, entertained, made us think and laugh. She is a natural teacher and a delightful speaker. The time just flew by. Thank you to Nancy Selving, the Bradford Gallery team, and Brandon Lipe for this wonderful opportunity.



New Raku Kiln!

Very beautiful and very powerful.



It has a gas line attached directly to it instead of using tanks so it is taking some time to figure out the bells and whistles of it

all. We have been experimenting with where to put pieces with different glazes depending on where the heating sources are, and since it heats up so quickly, trying to see how to manage the temperature so it doesn't over fire... just like when you try a new cake recipe and hope that it doesn't fall! It will take some trial and error but it is fun, even if frustrating, to look at the results.



Meals on Wheels

2023 Pottery Donations

In 2023, CAG supported Meals on Wheels and programs at the Presidio Senior Apartments, both non-profit organizations. *Thank you to all who donated over 160 handmade pieces!*

It's a new year and a new way to support Meals on Wheels! Going forward, we will be holding **Maker Events!** Watch your email for more details on upcoming dates.

Barbara Moreland

BEDFORD GALLERY CERAMIC EXHIBITION



Bedford Gallery had the grand opening for the California Clay exhibit on Saturday January 13 and invited CAG to hold a "pop-up" sale in the lobby. It was fun to talk to all the art enthusiasts and explain all about the process of making our pieces.



Studio Manager, Brandon Lipe, and Instructor-Chris Fortin are featured artists in the show. If you have not had a chance to visit the exhibit it will be there through March.



NON POTTERY TOOLS ~ or "I Could Use That!"

by Kate Chenok

What are some of your favorite "non pottery" pottery tools? I asked several of my potting friends to share some of their clever ideas.



Can opener:

Barbara Moreland suggests: an inexpensive can opener is great for creating texture on pots.



Mystery tool that we think is a back washing sponge: Olga Jusidman compresses clay with a tool whose intended purpose we're not entirely sure...a tool to wash your back in the shower?? It's terrific for compressing clay!

Porcupine quill: Mary Leigh Miller enjoys using porcupine quills (which she collected in Africa) to draw lines on her pieces.



Number eleven scalpel and a piece of Naugahyde:



Those of us who have taken classes with Kathleen Jensen know that she has tons of wonderful ideas. One is to use a number 11 scalpel to cut clay. They come in boxes of 10 or so, and last a long time. Be careful opening and using them – they are awesome for clay because

they're so sharp. CAUTION: they will cut canvas on the tables at the studio. She suggests using a piece of Naugahyde (get at Joanne's or fabric store) which is also good for rolling slabs on and also will resist the scalpel.

Yardstick cut in half to use as rolling sticks for making slabs:

Another great Kathleen idea is to cut a yardstick in half and use the halves as rolling sticks. They are nice and wide and stable, and are a great depth for rolling slabs out.



Wire Comb:

Pat Alger says that one of her most useful tools is a long toothed metal comb. "I cut it into two pieces so I have a narrow piece and a wider piece. These work perfect for scoring my clay and are very comfortable to hold due to the plastic handle. They clean up easily and last forever."



Cheese cutters and potato peelers:

These two items seem to be everybody's favorite non-pottery tools. Cheese cutters are great for faceting mugs and bowls, such as the one here by Pat Alger.



Potato peelers make excellent trimmers of leather hard slab-built pots when their rims are not quite even.

So ... what are your non-pottery tools? Let us know
Email: cag_outreach@wcclayartsguild.com

Line up of Winter classes & Open Studio Times

Center for Community Arts

Winter 2024

January 7th - March 16th

Winter 23	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
8:30 AM	Open Studio 8:30-11:30	Wheel 1 8:30 - 11:30 L Jensen *No Class 1/15,2/19	Open Studio 8:30-11:30	Open Studio 8:30 - 11:30	Glaze Mixing 8:30-11:30 Brad / Karen	Thrown/Altered 8:30 - 11:30 B. Lipe	Raku 8:30 - 11:30 J.Newton
12:00 PM	HB 2 12:00 - 3:00 E. Blackburn	Surface Decoration 12:00 - 3:00 L.Jensen *No Class 1/15,2/19	Sculpture 1 12:00 - 3:00 C.Fortin	Wheel 1 12:00 - 3:00 C.Fortin	HB 2 12:00 - 3:00 E. Sachtshale	Lidded Containers 12:00-3:00 A. Henderson	Open Studio 12:00-3:00
3:30 PM	Open Studio 3:30-6:30	HB 1 3:30 - 6:30 E. Blackburn *No Class 1/15,2/19	Open Studio 3:30-6:30	Wheel 1 3:30 - 6:30 C.Fortin	HB 2 3:30 - 6:30 E. Sachtshale	Open Studio 3:30 - 6:30	Open Studio 3:30 - 6:30
7:00 PM		Wheel 1 7:00 - 10:00 K.Becker *No Class 1/15,2/19	Wheel 2 7:00 - 10:00 B. Kark	HB 1 7:00 - 10:00 pm E. Sachtshale	Teen	Wheel 2 7-10pm K. Becker	

* January 15th MLK Day

* February 19th Presidents Day