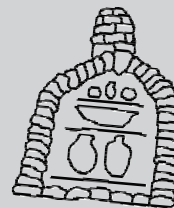


KILN' TIME



APRIL 2005

THE OFFICIAL CLAY ARTS GUILD NEWSLETTER

THE SEDUCTIVENESS OF CERAMICS

Pushing the Envelope

What keeps potters coming back again, and again, and again? Tell a potter that it can't be done, and that is just the incentive to stretch beyond the realm of possibility to prove the axiom wrong. And it is those outer limits that keep us coming back again, and again, and again. It may be a skill one is trying to develop, a goal one is trying to reach or that impossible achievement that someone is trying to master.

A quick observation on a Friday afternoon of some of the more committed potters revealed **Robert Shelton** (*photo at right*) throwing a thirty-seven pound pot, slightly beyond where he had gone before. And **Bridget Mohr** was holding a stick to help **Don Porcella** (*see photo on page 3*) who was trying to raise a narrow candlestick to thirty inches. **Laura Morris** was bent over her wheel trying to throw small plates off a hump, similar to ones she observed **Clarice Judah** making. The

Continued on page 3



JUNE SALE June 23-26

By Don Porcella

Studio E & Shadelands

Clarice Judah, Janice Ketley, Linda Bodie, Virginia Rigney and I are starting work on the June Sale. Unlike last year when CAG did not have a June Sale, we are going to try something different (Where have we heard that before?). Just to recapitulate, we had an artist's sale at the studio in Civic Park in December while some artists also participated at the Shadelands site. Then we had a sale of CAG pots only (donations) in Studio D at Civic Park in mid-January. These were very successful, gaining about 22k for CAG and its members.

This June 23-26 will be our third sale of the year and will take place in the studio and at Shadelands. It will follow the same schedule as the December sale with opening night on Thursday from 5-9 pm, all day Friday and Saturday, with closing at 4 pm on Sunday.

Artist's premier work should be on a table at the Shadelands site (tables cost \$28 and can be shared; one person rents the whole table and is reimbursed by the other(s) proportionally) and seconds, old stock, and CAG donations will be sold at the studio at Civic Park. So you can get rid of your best stuff (Oh no! Somebody bought my favorite piece!), or old stuff that you just have hanging around (groanie, roanie!).

We really want you all to participate in both sales. CAG needs all the help that it can get. Even if you don't have pots to sell, sign up for a shift. You will get to know others up close and personal, and will be inspired by all the pieces produced by CAG members. There are all sorts of choices from setup to wrapping, cashiering, floor-walking, pot-buying (I thought I would sneak that in) and cleanup. A signup book will be out in about a month. *See ya around the studio.*

C.A.G. POT GLAZING PARTY

FRIDAY, APRIL 15th

Take a few minutes to help glaze CAG pots in readiness for the June Sale.

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Vice President ~ Bridget Moar
bmoar@sbcglobal.net
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Layout Editor ~ Mary Miller

*Please submit all articles to Ann at
annadele@comcast.net*

Visit our website:
www.clayartsguild.com

Of Special Interest:

Did you miss out on Gerry Wallace's Poured Slip Slab Construction & China Painting Workshop offered in February? She will be teaching another class on May 1. See page 11 for details



MESSAGE from the PREZ

*Spring is sprung
the grass is riz
I wonder how the birdies is
...start of official spring poem.*

So what's new? Some great stuff! First of all, thanks to Pete, the lockers are up and the whole area just looks better. I've found I can actually fit more stuff in these lockers than the old ones.

The library, thanks to **Martha Kean**, is open. She has done so much organization and really gotten it in shape. If you have any suggestions for books you would like to see added to our collection, please let her know, and if you have books to be donated, let her know. The library rules are clearly posted (in the library). Only Martha and one of her three assistants, Robert Shelton, Clarice or Fern Skowlund can help you check materials out and in. Later on we will have a book slot through which you may return library material.

Our monitor rules have been tweaked and finalized and most all monitors have been trained or retrained. We have lots of new people taking classes. Please, everyone, old and new, familiarize yourselves with the studio rules. One that is going to be rigorously enforced is *only CAG members* may use the studio during open studio time (other than to drop off or pick up work). Pete is the person to see for special, written permission in case of any exception to this rule. Open studio is *one* of the privileges extended when you join CAG, a bargain at \$85.00 per annum.

Hail, another successful studio clean-up party on Saturday, 3/27/05! Despite it being the day before Easter, 21 people showed up and did the deed, each earning a bag of clay, a fun lunch after clean-up and eternal gratitude from everyone. And one lucky duck, **Dan Hunter**, whose week this has definitely been, won the drawing of a \$25 gift certificate towards CAG membership. The clean-up crew: **Fern Skowlund, Robert Shelton, Laura Morris, June Bowen, Cathy Hawkins, Kim Gray, Jean Calicura, Tim Hanrahan, Tom Reich, Ann Henderson, Janet Ketley, Mimi Wild, Era Cherry, Susan Tulley, Dan Hunter, Emily Blanc, Don Porcella, Alex Klevan, Jeff Graves, Carolyn Young, and Jackie Gerry.** *Merci, mille fois*

We will be holding annual elections for board positions. If you are interested or know anyone who might be, please get in touch with **Bridget Moar** or **Tamara Selvig**.

*The bird is on the wing
how absoid;
everybody knows
the wing is on the boid.
...end of official spring poem.*

**THE SEDUCTIVENESS
OF CERAMICS**

Continued from front page

challenge for Laura was to get those tiny plates level while cutting them off the hump.

The unpredictability of what comes out of the glaze kiln can also be an incentive. If we could predict exactly what would happen each time, the mystery would disappear and so would a lot of bored potters. It is the WOW! pieces that keep us trying, and the many challenges to conquer — with pottery, they never end.



Don Porcella (above) gets help in throwing tall.

(Below) Laura Morris tries her hand at throwing off the hump.



THE CAROL LEVIN SCHOLARSHIP ★ AWARD WINNERS

By Bridget Moar

The Clay Arts Guild is pleased to grant three new scholarships from the Carol E. Levin Ceramics Fund. The Scholarships are being given to:
Daniel Hunter, Elyse Marr and Pitter Scanlan.



Daniel is currently a high school photography teacher. His craving to work more with his hands bright him back to clay work. Daniel is looking forward to becoming a full-time potter upon retirement sometime in the next 4 to 5 years.

Elyse still in high school in Orinda, has made a strong commitment to art by eliminating other activities, like sports, that were a demand on her free time. Elyse will be attending a summer session at Rhode Island School of Design studying both basic design and ceramics.



Pitter returned to ceramics in 2001. Her father remembered her ceramics talent from high school and encouraged her to resume her work with clay. Pitter enjoys both and building and throwing. She hopes to someday have her own studio.

We congratulate Daniel, Elyse and Pitter on their well-deserved awards and wish them well in their pursuit to ceramics!

June Pass (onleft) attended the award presentation. The Levin Scholarship is named in memory of her daughter.



Levin Scholarship winners are recognized for their talent and potential in ceramics. Instructors recommend candidates, but students can, and are encouraged to, acknowledge fellow students and peers by making suggestions to the instructors. The next award will be granted in early May. If you recognize special talent and creativity in any of your peers, please suggest to person to any instructor.

Next CAG Contest

Continuing with the annual tradition (teapots, bowls, mugs), our next CAG ceramics competition will be held March, 2006. For that you must make something using a combination of two of the following three formats: **1) Sculpture 2) Hand-built/Extruded, and 3) Thrown.** For instance, a thrown cup with a hand-built cat for a handle, an extruded teapot with a sculpted head on top, a thrown wine bottle with a hand-built cover made to look like cloth.

Categories for judging will include: **Best Functional, Most Other Worldly, Best Representational, Looks Most Unlike Clay,** and we may also include a **Best of Show.**

Jackie Gerry, Curator

POTS: OBJECTS of VIRTUE

Ceramic Exhibition at the
Bedford Gallery
June 1 ~ August 28, 2005
Opening Reception: June 1,
5:30-7:30 pm

Our local Walnut Creek gallery will be presenting its first all-clay exhibition in many years this summer. Ceramic artists, including many CAG members, have submitted slides for the juried part of the show. On display will also be much of our Master Potter collection, which CAE's Dave Hanney has been cataloging over the past few months.



C.A.G. MUG CONTEST

. . . AND THE WINNERS ARE . . .

By Lois Andreotti

Thursday evening's Mug Contest was a wonderful success. There was a large turnout, which may have something to do with all that wonderful food and drink. Former Civic Arts Education instructor **Mary Law** had the difficult task of judging the fifty-six entries.

There were three categories: **BEST FUNCTIONAL, MOST CREATIVE** and **MOST WHIMSICAL.** *The envelope please — and the winners are:*

BEST FUNCTIONAL went to **Roger Yee** for his beautifully balanced temoku and copper red mug. Roger wins a great looking book entitled *500 Cups* and a certificate worth \$25 toward a class.

Honorable mention (and a free bag of clay) went to **Ellen Codner** for her beautiful gray bird mug. **Ann Henderson** also won honorable mention for her very well designed mug.

MOST CREATIVE went to **Ann Henderson** for her woodpecker cup. She also took home the *500 Cups* book and a class certificate.

Honorable mention went to **Gail Ruvalcaba** for her "cat" mug, which she modeled by slowly turning the cup for us. She also gets a bag of clay. **Suzie Franz** came late to discover her beautiful set of three two-clay cups received honorable mention also.

MOST WHIMSICAL Mimi Wild swept this category with her three entries; her wonderful elephant trunk mug took first. The snake handle mug and upside down opossum shared honorable mention. Mimi received the wonderful *500 Cups* book, a \$25 certificate toward a class and two bags of clay.

(right) Mugs in action!



DINNERWARE CLASS

Look who's coming to Dinner!

Rumor has it that the dinnerware class ended with an explosion — an explosion of big pots for the CAG. After their formal dinner amid seventeen beautifully crafted place settings arranged on a tablecloth complete with candlesticks, a vase of flowers, salt and pepper shakers, casseroles, teapots, French butter keepers and platters, the students took part in a clay relay.

Twelve wheels were set up, each with about ten pounds of clay. Students began to center the clay on a signal from the instructor. After about three minutes, they moved to the next wheel, and continued where the former potter left off. Students who were not originally at a wheel cycled in, and no one was out more than about five minutes. When the relay finally ended, there were twelve large keeper pots for the CAG — and everyone had fun to boot!



(above and right) Dinnerware class members enjoy the fruits (and meat and veggies) of their labors!



★ CAG Library Re-Opens!

By Martha Kean

Good news for CAG members: **Your library is finally open, again!** Almost a year ago, the board agreed to close the library until we decided how to address the alarming rate of book loss that we were experiencing. Some changes have been put in place, which we hope will solve the problem:

- ◆ The keys on the library cabinets have been changed. Only the Librarian and a few designated Library Aides have keys. When you want to access the library, one of these people must be present. We are working on getting a locked box into which books may be returned, but for now the Librarian or a Library Aide must be present to return, as well as check out, books.
- ◆ If you want to use the library, you must have a signature card on file. The Librarian or a Library Aide can help you with this.
- ◆ The checkout and return procedures have been simplified. No more cards! You will simply fill in information about yourself and each book you are checking out in a log, then note in the same log when the books are returned. Again, the Librarian or a Library Aide must also sign the log when you check out or return books. All procedures are posted prominently on the library cabinet. Please take the time to read and follow them.

The Library Aides are **Clarice Judah, Robert Shelton** and **Fern Skowlund**. They tend to be in the studio at different times, so we think that this will provide adequate coverage. If it is impossible for you to arrange to access the library when one of the Aides is available, please phone or email me, and we will work it out.

Now that the re-opening job is complete, I will be turning my attention to improving our already wonderful collection. If there are any books that you would like us to have in the library, please let me know. All requests will be carefully considered.

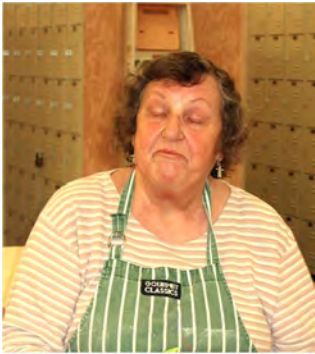
I hope that all CAG members will use the library, and that the new procedures will preserve our valuable collection of books for all of us to enjoy.

Martha Kean
CAG Librarian
925-820-3012
mkjv@pacbell.net

MEET YOUR MONITORS

Get to know Gisela

by Justin Soffer



Come to the studio on some Saturday night, and you will be greeted and encouraged to sign in by one of our longest-serving monitors, **Gisela Barrett**. I recently had the pleasure of getting to know her a little bit, and am glad I

did. We met at her apartment in Walnut Creek, which is adorned with the neat clutter of someone who has lived a lot of life — pots, masks, stamps, and trinkets collected during her travels of the world. She greeted me, a virtual stranger, affably and offered me coffee, properly made by hand in a French press, which I gladly accepted. We had a seat and got to talking.

“So, how long have you been going to the studio?” I asked. “Since 1978. I’m an old broad,” she replied.

Gisela then unleashed her comforting, unfettered laugh. It’s the kind of laugh that cannot be faked, and is only acquired through years of practice. This is one of my favorite things about Gisela: she is able to laugh at anything, and does liberally. As she says with a chuckle, “There’s always a hair in the soup.”

I looked warily at my coffee. We laughed again.

Gisela came to the U.S. in 1969, and she and her husband settled in Berkeley during “the hippie days.” She misses those days in Berkeley, when it was not so rough as it is now. That’s where she learned colloquial English, which is markedly different from the British English she had learned in Germany. She still has a propensity to use the word “man” to punctuate the end of sentences. She and her family moved from Berkeley to Walnut Creek, and she came to the “Pot Shop” in 1978.



She had done ceramics as a young person in Germany, and rekindled those skills as her children grew and she had time from the housewife role. She remembers the old building, where they would pit fire alongside the building. There was a real sense of community and that’s where Gisela began some friendships that have sustained her through the years. “People there are about the nicest people you will meet—when I went through a divorce 10 years ago, they took care of me. They are honest, good friends. Everybody should have a place like this to go.”

Nowadays, she relishes being a bachelorette. Freedom to do as she pleases when she pleases, whether knitting, clay work, or reading a good murder mystery, is central to who she is now. She has two granddaughters who live in Canada with her daughter and son-in-law. She visits twice a year, and loves spoiling them.



Gisela doesn’t throw anymore, as it is hard on her back. She enjoys handbuilding masks and using stamps for surface decoration. Her favorite glaze is Temmoku. “I believe in Temmoku—you always get something different. In Japan, Temmoku is the most expensive.” Her favorite pot sits atop her bookcase loaded with classic books. It is a large, round vessel, handbuilt with lugs and a lip made for pouring. “My ashes will go in there,” she says. “Then they will take me up to the top of Mt. Diablo and roll me down.” Speaking with her arms and hands, she intimates the dispersal and laughs heartily.

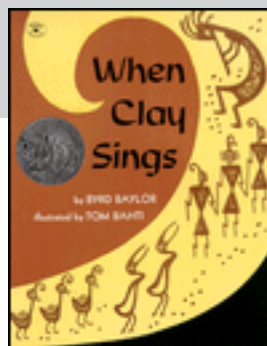


Perhaps the most obvious thing you will notice when you encounter Gisela is her German accent. This is, of course a common first topic of conversation, and another thing that she applies her sense of humor to. When asked where she’s from, she replies, “Walnut Creek” with her hearty laugh. Thank goodness.

Book Review ~ When Clay Sings

By Byrd Baylor

Illustrated by Tom Bakti



Reviewed by
Virginia Rigney

This Children's Caldecott Honor Book was written in 1972. The book's summary:

The daily life and customs of prehistoric southwest Indian tribes are retraced from the designs on the remains of their pottery. I bought this little book at the museum in Flagstaff after a rafting trip down the Grand Canyon. It seemed particularly significant to me after living for two weeks in an Anasazi environment unchanged by modern civilization and with guides that reverently replaced discovered pottery shards back into their resting place.

It begins:

There are desert hillsides where ancient Indian pottery still lies half buried in the sand and lizards blink at other dusty lizards that were painted on those pots a thousand years ago.

Now Indian children make a game of searching for bits of clay that were once somebody's bowl or mug or cooking pot or dipper.

Their parents look at what they find and tell them: "remember, treat it with respect. It is so old..."

They say that every piece of clay is a piece of someone's life....

They even say it has its own small voice and sings in its own way....A windy voice? A sandy voice? A voice like a far bird's cry?

The text and designs from the ancient potters of the Anasazi, Mogollon, Hohokam and Mimbres cultures are integrated. To quote a few pages:

Sometimes children may have said: (but in that other language) "Mama, make a bowl with pictures of big animals for me...big fierce creatures that I'll hunt someday."

So she drew mountain lions and wildcats and even a man wrestling a bear.....

There were a thousand shapes to draw-Horned toads and lizards. Butterflies. Turtles and beautiful leaping fish...

Indians who find this pottery today say that everything has its own spirit-even a broken pot.

They say the clay remembers the hands that made it...

And it ends:

They say that even now the wind sometimes finds one of those songs still in the clay and lifts it out and carries down the canyon and across the hills.

It is a small sound and always far away but they say sometimes they hear it.

We might ask ourselves—Do our pots carry songs of our life into the world...?

COMING UP ...

More MINI WORKSHOPS

By Kim Guay

Guild Members Demonstrating Techniques for Other Guild Members

We have had a wonderful response to last quarter's workshops. Many thanks to Don Porcella, Laura Morris, Clarice Judah, Ann Henderson and Robert Shelton for their wonderful contribution to helping us learn new skills and techniques. Tamara Selvig has lined up another group of creative and knowledgeable CAG members willing to share their secrets. Note: This quarter, all workshops will be held on **Wednesday afternoon at 2:00 pm**. Again, the workshops will NOT interfere with open studio time. All interested CAG members are invited to participate.

April 27: Tamara Selvig – **ABOUT FACE** ➡

Tamara will facilitate a roundtable discussion and demonstration on sculpting faces. All interested sculptors, experienced and new, are invited to share and show their tips and ideas on shaping faces, eyes and other anatomically challenging parts (of faces!) Please bring your examples or any works in process to help the group learn how to more accurately portray faces.



May 4: Teri Sugg – **AS CLEAR AS A WHISTLE**

Everyone has seen Teri's fabulous whistles. Terri makes whistles using feminine forms and stylized heart shapes. Not only are they beautiful, but the whistles have a beautiful tone and sound. Join Teri to learn how to shape these elegant and sculptural musical instruments.

➡ May 25: Martha Kean – **REED RIGHT**

Martha will show us her process for making her beautiful reed handles. She will cover tips on preparing, bending and wrapping the reed to make unique and perfectly sized handles. There will be a limited amount of material to purchase for people who want to make their own handles. Bring a pot with holes in it if you want to try it, and Martha will help you make your own. Martha has two sources, a local shop and a mail order supplier, if you wish to purchase more.



June 1: Barbara Calhoun – **THE SMALL OF IT ALL**

Barbara makes wonderful cats, turtles, birds and other animals using unusual tools and decorating techniques. Barbara will demonstrate how she makes these miniature animals and also uses them as models for larger projects. She will also bring a small tree with examples of some of the ornaments she made for the holidays. Please bring a small lump of clay to the workshop so you can participate in making your own miniatures.

NEED
RELIEF?

Workshops
by our
Members

By Ann Henderson

Although there are many ways to create relief patterns on pottery, creating a relief design on a handbuilt or a thrown



piece is a fairly simple process done with shellac. When the piece is leather hard, paint the part of the design you want raised with shellac. I don't suggest using your best brushes, but using a medium quality brush is essential to developing a nice design, and the brush is easily cleaned with denatured alcohol followed by a soap and water rinse. Shellac and the denatured alcohol are kept above the sink in the glaze area.

When the piece is bone dry, use a sponge to wash away the surrounding clay. Since the shellac resists the water, the design you have painted remains raised above the parts you are washing away. Very thin lines are not suggested since the clay beneath the thin lines tends to erode, and the relief is compromised.

During bisque firing, the shellac burns out, leaving your relief design in the clay. This is subtle, but can be very beautiful in salt fire or with a thin glaze. Glazes that break, like Temmoku, can create interesting effects as well.

CRAFT YOUR OWN GLAZE BRUSHES!

Workshops
by our
Members

By Robert Shelton



For less than \$ 20, and in a few enjoyable hours, you can craft custom glaze brushes that will be the envy of your fellow ceramicists. If you have a fly tying

fisher person in the family or neighborhood, the cost might be even less. This article will tell you what you need and how to go about it.

MATERIALS AND TOOLS

- Animal hair patches of your choice: buck tail is the most versatile; elk mane, moose mane, or antelope work well also.
- Small scissors from toiletry or sewing stuff.
- Spool of sturdy fly tying or sewing thread.
- Fly tying or other liquid cement (non water based).
- 5-minute epoxy to hold hair bundle into handle.
- Single edge razor blades to trim hair bundles.
- Dry Bamboo for handles; hardwood dowels will work well also.
- Fine comb to clean fluff from the straight hairs.
- Fine toothed saw and small electric drill & bits.
- Fly tying bobbin holder (\$ 7 to 9) - optional, but worth the money.
- Bobbin holders, thread, cement, and many kinds of animal hair are available at Creative Sports, 1924C Oak Park Blvd. in Pleasant Hill, a couple blocks west of the County Central Library and at other fly fishing shops. Color is unimportant.
- Pieces of bamboo can be obtained from gardener friends, nurseries and Orchard Supply Hardware. I like black bamboo is best, but it is hard to find.



with desired amount of hair still attached.

• **Fasten with Thread.** If using a bobbin holder, put the thread through the tube on the bobbin holder and the bobbin between the round knobs. Without a bobbin holder, hold the bobbin in the palm of your hand with your little finger and control the thread between thumb and forefinger and have someone else nearby when you need a third hand. :-} It may also be possible to fashion some wire and rubber bands to keep the spool from unraveling.

• **Start wrapping** the butt ends of the hair firmly but not super tight. To start the wrap, hold the thread end with the same hand as the hair, then wrap over the thread end to lock it in place. Thirty turns around the bundle is not excessive. How tight? If you wrap too tightly, the hairs will splay out in every which direction. Try to wrap as tightly as you can without causing the hairs to splay out — unless you want that shape brush. Tie off by making a loop in the supply thread and dropping it over the butt end, pull tight. Here is where the bobbin holder really pays off because you can let it hang in mid air without the thread coming unrolled.

• **Cut Away the Hide.** Cut the hide away from the bundle now. Then make some more wraps with the thread and tie the thread off as above. Trim the butt ends of the hair neatly so that the stub will fit neatly into the hole you will drill in the handle. Avoid cutting your wrapped thread!

• **Cement the Butt of Hair Bundle.** Fly tying cement is quite liquid, so it will flow between the threads and into the butt of hairs to cement them to each other and to the thread. Use a toothpick, nail, or needle tool to dip drops of cement from the bottle to the hair bundle butt. Also cover the thread completely with cement, using two or three light applications. The threads should be well covered to seal them together for long brush life. Set the bundle aside to thoroughly dry.

• **Make a Handle.** Bamboo pieces between four and eight inches are the most useful. Select a section whose length and diameter seem in good proportion with the size of your hair bundle. Remember, the bundle of hair



Some finished examples

must fit into a hole you drill in the end of the bamboo. Cut handle section out of the larger bamboo spear using

Continued on page 10

CONSTRUCTION

- **Cut Hair from Supply Piece**
- **Select a piece of animal hide.** Cut a squarish 1/2 to 3/4 inch chunk away from the supply. For small brushes, it is easiest to cut out a small piece of hide



SAFETY NOTE!

Holding the bamboo while you drill is *not* a trivial issue. Drill slowly and you *may* be able to hold it by hand. Try to “hot dog” it and

you may whip the bamboo out of your hand, perhaps injuring yourself if you have a tendency to be extraordinarily unlucky. I have a work bench vise equipped with a rubber jaw insert which works nicely, but I still drill slowly so that I don’t split the bamboo. A

MotoTool works particularly well due to its excellent speed control, but ordinary drills will work fine.

• Glue Hair Bundle into Handle.

The hair bundle should slide into the hole easily and far enough for most of the thread to be hidden inside. Follow the safety precautions on the tube and epoxy the hair bundle into bamboo handle.

So, now you have a brush. Congratulations. You can make some more to expand on what you have learned. When the epoxy is fully hardened, get out some glaze and give it a try!

For ways to get fancy about appearances and for other notions about materials and tools, contact me for a copy of the full class handout or leave me a note in my locker, # 55.



HAPPY TRAILING

By Laura Morris

Trailing slip is a thickened colored slip, which retains its 3-dimensional shape when used and provides another method to create surface decoration on your pieces.

Why use it? It adds another dimension to the surface decoration, stays raised, and when finally glazed, causes the glaze to break over it in interesting ways. In addition to those pluses, it comes in 6 different colors that can add another element of interest to the final product.

The colors are: black, white, yellow, green, aqua, and navy blue. The slips are stored in gallon jars atop the stainless steel chemical bins, and there is a display plate that shows you how the final product will look.

How do you apply it? You use some kind of an applicator. There are two different kinds of syringes located to the left of the sink in the glaze room. One is tubular and looks more like a normal syringe minus the needle, and the other is a bulb syringe. I find that the bulb one works best for me and is a bit easier to control than the tubular syringe. The trailing slips tend to separate with time and you’ll have to thoroughly mix them before using them. Once the slip is mixed, squeeze the air out of the bulb syringe and insert the tip into the slip. Slowly release your pressure on the bulb end and allow the bulb to fill with the slip.

If you haven’t used trailing slip before, it’s a good idea to practice applying the slip on some paper toweling before you use it on you pot. It’s much like decorating a cake, you squeeze the syringe, and a rope of slip comes out going wherever you direct it. Prior to your first squeeze, shake the bulb to get any air out of the neck of the tip. Air causes “splats” which you don’t want.

Where do you use it? Trailing slip can be used on greenware that has just been thrown, still on the wheel, or to greenware that has dried somewhat, but isn’t bone dry. Choosing which stage to apply the slip depends mainly on



Continued on page 11

SLIP TRAILING

Continued from page 10

where you wish to apply it. Since the slip is wet, applying it on a rim right after throwing may soften the rim even more and possibly lead to its collapse. This same problem would happen when applying it to the shoulder of a pot. Interior walls, or the floor of the pot are ideal for application right after throwing. Depending on how you wish to decorate, you may keep the pot stationary or slowly turn the wheel while applying it. The key is to go slowly and brace your applicator hand.

How can you correct mistakes?

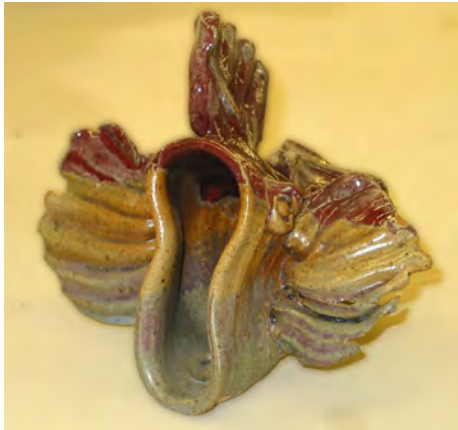
You can carefully scrape or gently sponge off the slip, or you can get a brush and spread it out just like regular slip. Once you've decorated your piece, if it's been wheel-thrown, make sure you wire it again, because the wet slip can cause your piece to attach to the bat.

It's fun to use and hopefully you'll give it a try.



Workshops by our Members **FISH THAT BREATHE AIR**
By Clarice Judah

A person can learn only from experience how to hook and play (tire out) a fish properly. To catch a particular species of fish, an angler must study its habits — what it eats, the kinds of waters it lives in, the water depth and temperature it prefers. The habits of a fish influence the choice of bait, the fishing technique used, and the place chosen for fishing. One needs equipment, (pole, hooks, sinkers, floats, bait, how to make fishing knots, etc, etc, also needs to know how to use all that equipment and where and when to be successful.



FORGET IT! Throwing off the hump, center a doorknob size piece of clay to make the body. Depending on the size you want, open and pull up, cut it off, shape the opening as a mouth and attach small balls of clay

for eyes. Let it set up a bit, cut the fins about a half inch thick from a block of clay using the curly wire, attach those fins, stick a little worm in his mouth and bingo, you have a fish. Most importantly, the raccoons won't eat them out of your outdoor pond.



DON'T MISS OUT!
POURED SLIP SLAB CONSTRUCTION & CHINA PAINTING WORKSHOP
with Gerry Wallace
SUNDAY, MAY 1, 10 ~ 5
\$50 (for CAG members)

Join this hand-on workshop with Gerry Wallace. You will china paint a small piece, which will fired later in the studio. Also included will be demonstrations on building a teapot with poured slip. Students will pour a slab with slip and build with it. There will be discussions on glazing, firing in an electric kiln and making slab pieces, as well as image development, surface treatments and drawing on clay forms. *This is a repeat of Gerry's earlier workshop, which had a long waiting list!*

HOT (WAX) TIP of the MONTH

By Cathy Hawkins

So I'm carefully (?) applying wax resist on the bottom of my bisque pots, and (oops!) drop some wax on the pot itself. I used to try to rub some of it off with a green Scotch scrubber, but I could never get it completely off.

Two tips from Ceramics Monthly (several months apart) that I've used include either (1) putting the pot through bisque again to burn it off, or (2) using rubbing alcohol on a cotton swab. (Do not use denatured alcohol — it must be straight rubbing alcohol) Either way — the pot is now ready to be very c-a-r-e-f-u-l-l-y waxed again.

► Cathy wins a free bag of clay for submitting the *hot tip of the month*. Now it's your turn. All you have to do is email your tip to Ann Henderson annadele@comcast.net 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, book or magazine, however, it would be nice to acknowledge the source.

(below and right) Don's examples of texturing with sodium silicate



TEXTURE CHANGES YOUR APPROACH TO POTTERY

By Don Porcella

Workshops
by our
Members

On Saturday February 5, about 15 CAG members had a fun workshop on the use of sodium silicate (Na_4SiO_4), also called *water glass*. Roger Yee first introduced the use of SS to the studio. Certainly, use of texture changes your perspective on how a pot should look. People use combs, slips, carvings, inlays, shellac, and many other techniques to add a particular texture. SS provides a particularly exciting technique for adding texture. Its use is part of the throwing process, and requires three steps at the basic level. These are making a cylinder, adding the SS, and then pushing out on the inside of the walls to create the texture. By letting the SS soak into the clay and partially dry for shorter or longer periods, one controls the size of the *islands* created during the pushing out step. These steps can work on hand-built pieces as well (see work by Jim Barbour).

Basically, SS is a deflocculant and is used for slips and glazes in the studio. I add the SS with a paintbrush, working from the top down. I usually put on two coats. An important caution is to rinse your tools, bats, brushes, as soon as you can to avoid letting SS dry. It will provide a thick crust on the bat, dissolve your bat grabber, ruin your brushes, etc., if it dries. I especially clean up the bat with my sponge as quickly as possible. SS is water soluble, so it is easy to clean. Also, if it dries around the lid of the SS jar, it will be like glass shards and can cut you. As always, cleanliness is next to godliness.



Getting fancy broadens your options. The order of doing some of these options has an effect on the end product, so there are many opportunities for experimentation. For example, you can add slip to the formed cylinder (step 1) before or after adding the SS. Similarly, you can add texture before adding the SS by using a comb or other tool. As it dries, the SS resists water (therefore, glazes, and slips). So you need to account for that in glazing. One thing I discovered is that some glazes do not work well with the SS treatment. Yellow bird appears to react with the SS to form



thin-walled bubbles during the glaze firing. A wire brush works well to remove these dangerous bubbles that can slice open your skin when they break open. I have had success with slips and other glazes that don't bubble or run (white and black matte, laterite, temoku, teal sage, for example) as well as salt. I look forward to seeing your experiments.

NOTES from the KILN ROOM

PLEASE NOTE: For the first time we will have a regular ceramics class meeting on Sundays from 10 am - 1 pm..... This will change the open studio times to 1pm - 9 pm on Sundays...

This brings me to introducing a new instructor to our studio..... **Willie Hulce** will be teaching a regular ceramics class on Mondays (1 - 4 pm) and also offer her expertise in the "Extruded Clay" class for 5 weeks on Sundays beginning May 15 (10 am - 1 pm) and while we're at it

Ann Henderson will be exploring "Ceramics with Emphasis on Surface Decoration" (1 - 4 pm) on Thursdays..... and look for the Raku class on Tuesday nights this quarter being taught by **Roger Yee**

TIPS FROM THE GLAZE ROOM

If you are using white clay such as B mix or Porcelain and don't particularly like those nasty little chipped feet on the bottom of your pots...we recommend that you take a little wax resist and add a tablespoon or two of Alumina Hydrate to it before applying to the bottoms of your ware.....Ask your instructor for more details on this...

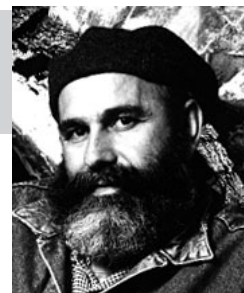
Don't forget - plan ahead!

**STUDIO SALE
JUNE 23 - 26**

✓ C.A.G. DONATIONS
✓ YOUR QUALITY SECONDS

DATES to REMEMBER

Notes from the Desk of the Studio Manager



MONDAY - 4/4

SPRING CLASSES BEGIN

SATURDAY - 4/9

RUTH BANCROFT GARDEN & SPRING PLANT SALE

SUNDAY - 4/10

"RAKU FIRED METAL/CLAY with NON-CERAMIC FINISHES. Workshop with Andrée Thompson (NO C.A.G. OPEN STUDIO)

SUNDAY - 4/17

RAKU WORKSHOP ~ Second Meeting (NO C.A.G. OPEN STUDIO)

SUNDAY - 5/1

"POURED SLIP SLAB CONSTRUCTION/ CHINA PAINTING WORKSHOP" with Gerry Wallace (NO C.A.G. OPEN STUDIO)

MONDAY - 5/30

STUDIO CLOSED

SUNDAY - 6/12

LAST CLASS of SPRING SESSION

MONDAY~FRIDAY - 6/15~6/17

C.A.G. OPEN STUDIO, 9 am ~ 9 pm

FRIDAY - 6/17

ALL WORK OUT of STUDIO & LOCKERS CLEARED OUT by 9 pm

SATURDAY - 6/18

STUDIO CLEAN UP PARTY

SUNDAY~WEDNESDAY - 6/19~6/22

STUDIO CLOSED

THURSDAY~SUNDAY - 6/23~6/26

STUDIO SALE

MONDAY - 6/27

FIRST CLASS of SUMMER SESSION

What's Happening in the Clay World

CALL for ENTRIES

VISIONS IN CLAY 2005,

A National Juried Exhibition

JUNE 30, 2005 Entry Deadline

- Categories: Functional and Non-Functional (includes sculpture).
 - Over \$3,000 in cash awards
 - All entries by slides
 - Juried exhibition sponsored by the San Joaquin Potters Guild and the Reynolds Gallery, University of the Pacific, Stockton, CA
 - \$12 per entry – limit of 3 entries per artist
- of Ceramics, University of California Los Angeles
- For entry prospectus send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Visions in

- Call 209-933-9373 for questions or log on at:

www.pacific.edu/reynoldsgallery

Show open to the public from August 30-September 24, 2005.

EXHIBITIONS

April 23 – May 22 Feats of Clay XVIII, Gladding McBean, Lincoln CA. Reservations required: (916) 645-9713.

April 29 – May 28 CA Clay Competition The Artery, 207 G St. Davis

May 16 - July 1 Craft and Cultural Art Gallery, 1515 Clay Street, Oakland

Reception: Thursday May 19, 5-8pm

July 9 & 10 – ACGA Palo Alto Clay & Glass Festival

WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES:

April 10 & 17 Raku Fired Metal/Clay - Andree Thompson, Walnut Creek CAE,

April 23-24 Paul Soldner, Mother Earth, 866-311-0244

April 23-24 Ceramic Wall Mural - John Toki, Mendocino Art Center, 800-653-3328

April 29 – May 1 CA Conference for Advancement of Ceramic Art, Davis www.natsoulas.com or 530.756.3938

May 1 Naked Raku - Asselberghs, Clay Planet, 408-295-3352

May 7 Monoprints in Clay, Eduardo Lazo, Mother Earth, 866-311-0244

May 21 Learn to Photograph your Pottery, Mark Youmans, Mother Earth, 866-311-0244

CLAYARTSGUILD

Civic Arts Education of
Walnut Creek

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Walnut Creek, CA 94556