

# KILN' TIME



JANUARY, 2008 THE OFFICIAL CLAY ARTS GUILD NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER



**2008 CAG Pottery Contest**  
Wednesday, March 5  
5:00 pm

Pour your creative juices into this — the CAG sponsored **PITCHER-MAKING CONTEST**, open to all civic arts ceramic students. We want everyone to enter a pitcher or two. The judge is **Skip Esquierdo**, ceramics professor at Chabot College in Hayward and an instructor for CAE when it was still in the Quonset hut over the bridge back in the 1970s. He said he helped Pete design the layout of our current studio.

Skip will announce the winners at 5:00 pm, Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> at the contest party in the clay studio. All students as well as friends and family are welcome to see all of the entries and share in the excitement and anticipation of discovering who will be the lucky winners.

The Clay Arts Guild sponsors a ceramics contest once a year, and if you will recall, last year's contest was candlesticks. Interestingly, two of the winners were beginning potters. We are expecting all students, whether long time veterans or first time neophytes, to enter. Although the prizes are great, winning isn't everything. It is an opportunity to stretch your imagination, focus on a project, join fellow sculptors and potters for an evening of fun, and let us not forget, eat and drink.

## **CONTEST RULES:**

- Entries must be made in studio
- Potters/Sculptors must have taken at least one Civic Arts clay class in the past year.
- Up to two entries per person.

## **CATEGORIES** for this year's contest are:

- **BEST TRADITIONAL**
- **BEST WHIMSICAL**
- **BEST COUNTERFEIT** (must be accompanied by picture of original and original artist's name)

"What's a counterfeit?" you ask. Find a photo of a pitcher you would like to copy and do your best to imitate it. It can be a copy of work by a famous potter, or a piece by someone more obscure — just try to imitate it. Make sure to include a picture of the original with the artist's name when you turn in your entry. There is nearly an unlimited source of pitcher pictures online, but there are also ceramics books and magazines available.

For questions contact:

**Elizabeth Birchfield** at [forcia2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:forcia2@sbcglobal.net) or at the Saturday morning pottery class in the studio.

**INSIDE:** • All the results on the December Sale • Book Reviews • Meet your CAG Board

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## Message from Laura

Happy New Year to everyone, and welcome back to the studio. With all the excitement of the holidays, I'm sure we're all looking forward to the fun and relaxation we all get from potting. Other articles in the newsletter will fill you in on the success of our last sale, but I, too, must congratulate **Jackie Gerry** and **Tim Hanrahan** on the excellent job they did in coordinating the sale. We wouldn't have been so successful without their leadership. Thanks also goes to all the participants. What we make from the sale is based directly on the number of you who choose to join in and sell.

Our next sale comes up the end of April, so please, everyone plan to participate. If you can't possibly make something for the sale, then help by working at the sale. Since I was in charge of the cashiers for the sale, I want to thank them for their help. I also want to thank **Gail Sanpore** and **Elizabeth Burchfield** for all their assistance with the inventory sheets and settling of the cash boxes each night. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak to any board member. The Clay Arts Guild is based on teamwork and cooperation between its members. So, should you not be sure of something, speak up, but also lend a hand when asked. Teamwork, openness and cooperation are what makes this studio and the Guild so great.

Laura Morris

### DECEMBER SALES

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
	9,250	8,844	7,775	8,076	6,809	7,965	8,819
	4,496	3,572	3,900	2,584	5,065	2,463	4,595
	2,350	3,118	3,232	2,877	2,648	2,415	4,542
	4,152	3,011	3,540	2,354	4,041	2,723	2,778
	20,248	18,545	18,447	15,891	18,563	15,566	20,734
Participants	50	47		48	49	57	51
Shadelands			1,867	2,315	2,373	2,981	3,022
Total			20,314	18,206	20,936	18,547	23,756

## December 2007 SALE FACTS

By Laura Morris

By now you must all know how successful our winter sale was. It surpassed all our sales since we have kept records for the past 11 years! The number of participants has always been a major factor in determining how much we make, and our success with this sale was definitely helped by the 51 members selling. Check out the table comparing the past few years of December sales. This shows our sales are getting beyond the plateau we had been stuck in and are on an uptrend.

We all wonder about the trivia associated with our sales, so look at these facts:

- 12 members sold over \$400.
- 5 members sold over \$600.
- Highest seller sold \$860.
- 6 people sold over 50% of their inventory.
- 5 people sold over 60% of their inventory.
- 1 person sold over 93% of his/her inventory.
- Highest priced item sold \$225.
- Most items for sale 104.
- 1,600 items of artists' pieces were available for sale.
- Donations generated ~\$3,825 for CAG.
- Artists' 25% generated ~\$3,800 for CAG.

This is the first time that the monies generated by donations and the 25% from artists were essentially equal in generating money for CAG. Normally in the past, donations provided 60% to the artists 40%.

It was a great sale, so gear up; our next is the end of April!

## Sale Thank-You

*As Chairperson for the December CAG Sale, I have one word to say - WOW! I couldn't be happier for the way it turned out! We actually had the best sale we have had since we have been keeping records. And I certainly could not have done it without all the help I got from our fabulous Co-Chairperson, Tim Hanrahan and ALL the people who worked on the sale.*

*I have been forewarned by past chairpersons of the sale not to mention individual names, because one always inadvertently leaves a name out. But I have to give kudos to Tim because he worked long and hard hours before, during and after the sale. No words to express how much he did to help make the sale as successful as it was. I honestly don't know what I would have done without him. He never once complained and always chipped in. AGAIN, THANK YOU SOOOOOOOOOO MUCH, TIM, FOR YOUR WONDERFUL, WONDERFUL JOB!*

*I want to thank all the wonderful chairpersons - they all did a great job!! Some of them took on a chair position for the first time and everything proceeded smoothly. All of you did fabulous jobs! THANK YOU AGAIN AND AGAIN!*

*For all the cashiers, sales personnel, publicity crew, hospitality helpers, cleanup crew, decorating team - every single one of you who pitched in to make this sale the success it was - THANK YOU!!!!*

Jacqueline Gerry

*Read Tim Hanrahan's comments on page 4*

### SPECIAL THANKS TO LOCAL BUSINESSES

If you wondered about all the great food at the winter sale, part of that spread was due to the generosity of local businesses. We owe our thanks and support to those businesses that support us. Special thanks go to **Lucky's in Pleasant Hill, Safeway in Walnut Creek, Target in Walnut Creek, and Trader Joe's in Walnut Creek.** When shopping at these stores, you might mention the connection between their help and your shopping there.

*...and*

A special **THANK-YOU** is in order for the members who distributed 1000 extra post cards and all the email ads. The large number of additional post cards distributed and the personal email ads were added from prior years and were likely responsible for the resounding success this year.



# December Sale Notes



The numbers are in and the December 2007 sale was the best sale in the 12 years we have been keeping records [See chart below]. The numbers only tell one side of the success story. This was a large scale, team effort and would not have happened without the volunteer efforts and attention to detail of our members and Pete.

From the pizza party cleanup, through the grueling set-up, holiday decorations, delicious refreshments, to the ink stained packers hands, cashiers, accounting crew, and studio reset, everyone involved deserves a hearty "Well Done" and "Thank You". We were happy to see a number of new members selling and those not selling also volunteered. The sale also serves as an excellent learning platform for our members. We learn techniques for displaying pots, the value of inventorying items, pricing and what the customer values and will actually purchase. It is also a great place to view and enjoy the work of other artists, which we don't always get to see in the studio. Ultimately, it is the validation of our art and an experience, which allows us to grow as artists.



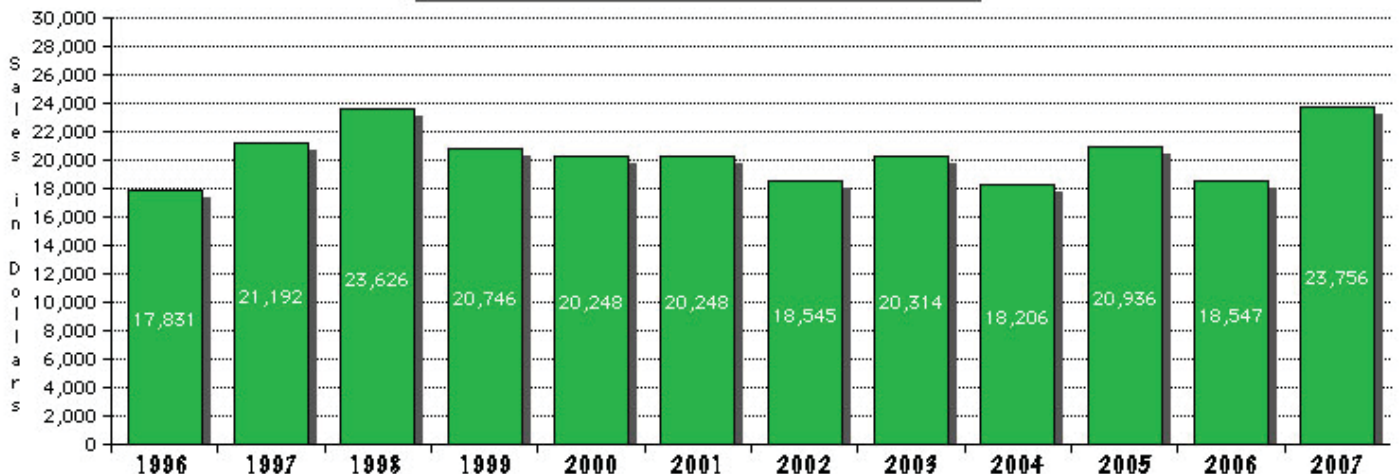
The proceeds of the sale and your volunteer efforts are reinvested to make the studio a better place to work and our pottery time more enjoyable, safe and efficient. This is a long time tradition at our studio, kept healthy for another year.

Again, many thanks to everyone who participated and supported the sale, and a very special thank you to the shift chairpersons, who stepped up to the additional responsibility needed for our success.

Now, on to the spring sale - time is flying, so get your pots ready, and think about what volunteer jobs you would like to perform. Try something new and learn more about the entire process.

Tim Hanrahan

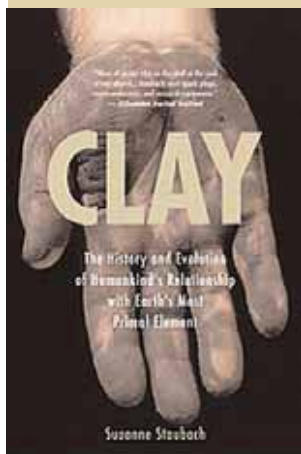
**Total Ceramics Sales for December Events**



## Book Review:

# CLAY, The History and Evolution of Humankind's Relationship with Earth's Most Primal Element

By Gary Guglielmino



Suzanne Staubach, the author of a new book on the origins of clay, is clearly both a potter and a writer. Her interest in both the technical and artistic elements of pottery clearly marks her as a person infected with the ceramics “bug,” while her clear, easy-to-read, and informative style demonstrate her skill as a writer.

This fascinating book traces the development of clay throughout history. From its humble beginnings as a material to make primitive cooking aids, Ms. Staubach guides the reader through the development of clay as an essential element in civilized life. She includes chapters on clay in cooking, clay as a building material, clay’s use as a material in sanitation and water transport, clay as an ancient and modern art form, and so on. Can you guess the essential role that clay plays in modern automobiles?

It seems obvious that kitchen “china” must have originated in China—but Staubach’s description of what caused Chinese pottery to develop the way it did is a fascinating story. The book is full of interesting insights for those who enjoy clay.

While these topics might sound a bit technical, Ms. Staubach includes enough detail about the history of firing clay, different types of clay, kilns, and throwing technique to keep any ceramicist happily amused.

Whether your interest in pottery is artistic, technical, or both, *Clay: The History and Evolution of Humankind's Relationship with Earth's Most Primal Element* will satisfy you on many levels. It is available in many of the public libraries, and can be reserved online. It’s a great read!



## New Library Books

By Martha Kean, CAG Librarian

I have recently added four new books to the CAG library, two at the request of members and two on my own initiative. They all look very interesting and useful, and I hope to inspire you with the following brief descriptions:


### **Raku, Pit, & Barrel, edited by Anderson Turner**

This is a nicely produced book of articles from past issues of *Ceramics Monthly* and *Pottery Making Illustrated*. The largest section is about raku and includes articles on controlling crackle glazes, horsehair techniques, using copper wire, luster firing, and much more. One article I thought was particularly interesting shows the different results achieved by using newspaper, sawdust, dry leaves or grass clippings as the combustible. The pit-firing section shows various looks using this firing method and how to achieve them, including Anasazi-like black-on-white ware. There is also an article showing the results of using various chemicals and materials in the pit. In the barrel-firing section, several techniques are shown, including burnished black ware, smoke-firing, and the use of various colorants.

### **A Pottery Sketchbook, by Aaron Bohrod**

This book is over forty years old and out-of-print, but used copies are available from Amazon (and probably elsewhere). It became popular in our studio during the carving class, and was suggested I buy a copy for the library. It is exactly what the title indicates – a sketchbook of designs and plans by the author, a potter working in the 50s and 60s. There are lots of ideas here about form and, particularly, decoration. Sketches include human and animal forms, as well as plant and abstract forms. Could be just the thing to inspire you if you are looking for carving or brushwork inspiration.

### **500 Animals in Clay/500 Tiles**

I just love this “500” series, of which we have several in the library. There is no how-to here, although each image is accompanied by a brief listing of techniques and firing type. They are filled with image after wonderful image from hundreds of different artists on the given theme. These are the ones from this group of library additions that were my idea. Lark Books keeps coming out with new books in this series, and I’ll probably keep buying them unless someone tells me to stop. Check them out for inspiration and sheer visual overload. 

## HOT TIPS

### Rib Rack

By Pam Bivins



Take a grout sponge and cut slices along the top surface with a serrated knife to accom-

modate your shaping ribs. Stop the cuts about ½ inch from the bottom of the sponge. If you use primarily wooden ribs, leave about ¾ inch between the cuts so the sponge maintains its integrity. If you need your rack to hold only lightweight metal or plastic ribs, the cuts can be ½ inch apart. Wet the sponge when in use. The rib rack keeps the ribs clean, organized and separated from each other, and the sponge continues to work simply as a sponge as well.

The **RIB RACK** was a simple method that my son, who is in grad school, devised to keep his small studio space more organized, clean and efficient. He laughed at me when I gave his sponge a name. 🖐️

*Pam earned a bag of clay for her valuable tip. Now it's your turn. Just write a description and email <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, teacher, book or magazine, however, it would be nice to acknowledge the source.*

## Meet Your Board Members



**Emily Blanc**  
Voice of CAG on Civic Arts  
Education Advisory Council  
By Elizabeth Burchfield

It's been said that if you want to get something done, ask a busy person. A perfect illustration of this adage is **Emily Blanc**, the Clay Arts Guild's representative on the Walnut Creek Civic Arts Education Advisory Council. It is Emily who makes sure that the guild's concerns are heard alongside those of the other arts representatives on the council.

Emily's background makes her an invaluable representative of CAG. She is already a member of two boards (and president of one of them). She was invited to serve on the Civic Arts Education Advisory Council after working as a docent at the Bedford Gallery. Her experience acquainted her with the inner workings of the city and the individuals involved.

The Advisory Council brings together individual representatives from all artistic disciplines in the community to set policies and programming. Members volunteer for a term of six years. Among their tasks are to conduct surveys of the stakeholders in all the arts programs in Walnut Creek. The council uses the feedback from these surveys to assist with funding and program requests. A visiting member of the Walnut Creek Arts Commission attends the monthly meeting.

After the recommendations of the advisory council are consolidated, the visiting arts council member reports back to the council. The council in turn reports to the Walnut Creek City Council, which has ultimate budget responsibility.

Emily credits the success of the Clay Arts Guild to two things: a wonderful volunteer organization and Peter Coussoulis, the studio's vigilant manager. Emily became involved with the guild after many years of working and living abroad. As busy as she is, she still finds time for clay. Although her first love is the wheel, she has been recently focusing on hand building.

Emily is one of those doers that any organization would benefit from having in their ranks, one of those "doers" who jumps right in whenever work needs to be done or when the going gets tough.

We are indeed fortunate to have Emily Blanc representing us on the Advisory Council. 🖐️

# Spotlight ...on Evelyne Karim

By Rob Savre



*Evelyne Karim has been a faithful participant to the ceramic studio, a long time member of the Clay Arts Guild and currently our most senior member.*

**Evelyne Karim** was born in France on June 19, 1920 growing up in Dijon. As a young woman,

she trained as a Montessori teacher for pre-school aged children in Limoges, France, the capitol of French porcelains and enamels industries. Shortly after the war, she was involved with the war's displaced children. It was at that time a young girl, who was a fellow student, gave Evelyne a hand-made little coffee cup and saucer made of clay and fired a lovely shade of green. At that moment Evelyne thought, "that someday I would try my hand at making things out of clay," but her work with orphans left her no time for any other outside activities.

After the war ended, "looking for a new outlook outside France, I landed myself a job in Chicago as an assistant teacher in the Laboratory Pre-School Program of the University of Chicago" says Evelyne. She later settled with her Persian husband in Walnut Creek and raised a family of 6 children. "Some years later here in the U.S. and miles from Limoges, a ceramic studio was being created in my adopted hometown," explains Evelyne proudly, "I participated in one of the first classes offered around 1964 -1965. My children were of preschool age and when a group of parents decided to open a Montessori preschool program, I joined them to be the director. Pottery making would have to wait..."

Some eight years later, in 1972, Evelyne again signed up for a class with teachers Ludell Deuscher or Eunice Prieto in the "hut", a remnant of war barracks in the city park by the creek. Tense and impatient with the wheel process, Evelyne started hand building and has

maintained it mostly even now. Evelyne was elected treasurer of the guild (called the Clay Arts Association) and held that position for 3 years.

"During nearly 40 years or so I have been a faithful participant in this studio and I created many items," Evelyne adds, "big items when I was younger, garden stools, umbrella stands, and lamp bases...now plates, clocks, and boxes." Evelyne has become skillful at making boxes, "always keeping in mind the usefulness of any objects."

"For some 40 years I have seen this studio from it's infancy with make-shift or donated items to operate to a full grown elaborate institution producing recognized art works from hundreds of students." Evelyne continues, "I have seen teachers and students come and go. I have made friends. When the studio moved to this present location, Peter was hired as manager. I have seen his strength, his talent, and his lifetime energy dedicated to this studio the way it stands today."

Evelyne looks ahead by saying, "It will be great to continue to create as long as I am able, as the offerings of this studio provide the activities diminishing the pains of aging and keeping the mind alert."



When you see Evelyne in the studio, stop and say hello. She is truly a gift we have in our midst. 🖐️

## Take time to check out two new Guild Exhibits:

In the studio showcase is **Lynne Meade**, our new CAE instructor, who will also be conducting a Master Potter Workshop on February 24. And make sure to notice the outside studio showcase with **Mimi Wild's** whimsical characters. She was the recent winner of the *Berniece Smith Memorial Award*.

So many people at my extended family (CAG) wanted me to get well soon, and ... so here I am thanks to you and many others of my family, extended family, and friends.

I hope to start classes again in mid-February, so will see you all then. Again my sincerest thanks, and the hugs were extra-fine.

Don Porcella



Clay Arts Guild members were pleased to witness the recent reappearance of Don Porcella in the Studio for a board meeting after a medical hiatus. Later he emailed the following message to be included in this issue.

## Wet Clay Tips

Clay too wet to throw? If the sun isn't shining or a gentle breeze not blowing to help dry your clay, a good method is to stack it about an inch or two thick on a dry plaster bat, put another plaster bat on top. That way water is absorbed from both sides and your clay reaches throwing consistency much more quickly.

Studio courtesy dictates that you do not spread it out on the wedging board, which takes up space for those ready to wedge their clay. The same goes for bags of clay. Store them by your wheel, not on the wedging table. And an added note on studio courtesy is to clean any mess you make on the wedging table before you leave there. It is very disconcerting for someone to have to clean the table before they use it.





## CAG Workshop Schedule

Monday	4:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Tuesday	4:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Wednesday	12:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Thursday	Classes all day
Friday	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Saturday	12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Sunday	1:00 pm – 7:00 pm

**Interested in serving as a monitor? The benefits include free open workshop time for each quarter that you serve. Currently there are several openings.**

**Please contact Michele Ostrie for more information at <michele@ostrie.com>**

*Support the Guild  
and look cool too!*

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

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



## DATES TO REMEMBER: CALENDAR



<b>Sat.- 1/26</b>	<b>MASTER POTTER WORKSHOP with “Shino Man” Malcolm Davis NO OPEN STUDIO</b>
<b>Mon. - 2/18</b>	<b>STUDIO CLOSED Presidents Day Holiday</b>
<b>Sun. - 2/24</b>	<b>Master Potter Workshop with Lynne Meade NO OPEN STUDIO</b>
<b>Sun. - 3/9</b>	<b>Daylight Saving Time Begins &amp; Last Sunday class meeting</b>
<b>Sat. - 3/15</b>	<b>Last class of Winter Session</b>

**\*NOTE: all work must be removed from studio or placed on safe shelves or carts by 7 pm. - Saturday, March 15**

**All work left on safe shelves will be fired during the break and available for pickup at beginning of spring session**

<b>Sun. - Fri 3/16 - 3/21</b>	<b>STUDIO CLOSED Special Children’s Program in session</b>
<b>Sat. - 3/22</b>	<b>STUDIO CLEAN-UP PARTY (10 A.M.)</b>
<b>Sun. - Fri. 3/23 - 3/28</b>	<b>STUDIO CLOSED Special Children’s Program in session</b>
<b>Sat. - 3/29</b>	<b>First Class of Spring Session</b>
<b>Thur. - Sun. 4/17 - 4/20</b>	<b>Studio Sale</b>

### Workshops Nearly Sold Out



• **Shino Man Malcom Davis** workshop, Saturday January 26<sup>th</sup>, 10 am to 5 pm, \$85 (\$75 for CAG members)

• **Carved Vessel Workshop with Lynne Meade**, Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup> 10 am to 5 pm, \$85 (\$75 for CAG members)



## What's Happening in the Clay World

### CALL for ENTRIES:

#### THE 2008 INTERNATIONAL CONE BOX SHOW

**Deadline for entries: February 16, 2008**

Each entry must fit inside a Large Orton Cone Box (3"x6").

Mail up to 2 entries (no slides or photos) to:

International Cone Box Show

Baker University, 618 Eights St.,

Baldwin City, Kansas, 66006-0065

Entry fee: \$30.

For more info and to obtain an entry form: [www.bakeru.edu/conebox](http://www.bakeru.edu/conebox)

#### 500 CERAMIC SCULPTURES

**Deadline for entries: March 14, 2008**

Lark Books seeks images for a book on international ceramic sculpture to be released May 2009. Submissions may span the full range of contemporary ceramic sculptural practice, from representational and figurative to abstract, non-narrative work. **No entry fee**

To submit images of your work for consideration, please go to

[www.larkbooks.com/submissions/ArtistEntry-Form-Sculpture.asp](http://www.larkbooks.com/submissions/ArtistEntry-Form-Sculpture.asp)

For more info: Please email Cassie at: [Cassie@larkbooks.com](mailto:Cassie@larkbooks.com) <<mailto:Cassie@larkbooks.com>> with any questions.

## CLAYARTSGUILD

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