

KILN' TIME



NOVEMBER, 2009

THE OFFICIAL CLAY ARTS GUILD NEWSLETTER

Help Needed From EVERYONE!

By Marlea McKinstry,
New PR Chair

There I was standing at the wedding table last week when Fern approached me with the sad story of how CAG had lost their PR person. Next thing I knew, there I was sitting at the CAG board meeting this week having somehow volunteered to help out with the PR for the Holiday Sale. It must have been a combo of Fern's charm and my soft spot for helping out friends in need.

But the truth is, I am in the midst of a new job/venture search so I am happy to lend a hand and do whatever I can while I have the time, for as long as I can. Though I had worked in a great studio in Palo Alto before moving here two years ago, we didn't have anything like CAG there. I joined CAG right away just to be able to use open studio. But as I got to know people and heard about all that CAG has done, I realized how lucky we are to have an active group supporting the clay arts program.

The Clay Arts Guild has been consistently operating for over **40 years**. That's a feat for any organization - especially a group of creative, independent thinking artists! Just about all of the capital equipment

Continued on page 3

DECEMBER SALE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4th
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5th
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6th



It's time to get serious about making this December sale an exciting and profitable event.

There are some changes to be aware of this year. First, the sale begins not Thursday, but on Friday, December 4th, with the **opening night big party from 5:00 to 9:00 pm** and continues Saturday and Sunday. Check-in is Thursday and Clean-up is after the sale on Sunday.

Set-up – Wednesday, Dec. 2nd
Check-in – Thursday, Dec. 3rd
Clean-up – Sunday after the sale *UNTIL DONE*

REMEMBER everyone needs to plan on picking up his or her own work or arrange to have it picked up as well as staying to help with cleanup. All unsold pieces need to be out of the studio Sunday, or they will be considered a donation (instructors also).

The signup book is out. **Read carefully the information in the sales book as to number of pieces and number of shifts, so you understand the agreements.** There will be both shared and individual spaces; be sure to sign up for individual space if you want it and **read carefully the sheet of information with the signup forms.** All your questions should be answered when you do.

There will be some changes as well to the configuration of the studio that we hope will make it even more attractive and accessible and help us mitigate some of the effect of the ice rink on our sales.

It is not too early to let me know what jobs you are willing to do. Check out the sales book for various areas where we need specific help. For example, we need a **Sales Display Chair**, someone with experience and flair in sales design, to magically transform our working studio into the exciting,

Continued on page 3

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Kiln' Time Newsletter
Published 6 times a year

Editor ~ Ann Henderson
Layout Editor ~ Mary Miller
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at <annadele@comcast.net>**

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



Message from Florence McAuley

Happy Halloween!

I am seeing lots of pumpkins in the studio! It must be fall and time to get those pots ready for the December Sale. This quarter will be over before you know it, so I hope everyone is getting work ready for selling. Fern Skowlund and her committee chairs will be asking you to help in some capacity in the next few weeks, and I hope you will enthusiastically lend your support. See all of the sale information in this newsletter.

Those of you who missed the workshop on the tenth missed a good one. **Deborah Schwartzkopf** is an outstanding craftsman and had lots to teach us. Look for the piece of her work that we purchased in the display case after the Trax Gallery exhibit where it is on display. It is an outstanding example of her work. I hope you have noticed also that Pete is expanding pieces of our collection to the new cabinets (purchased by CAG). Take a look!

As I indicated to you in the last newsletter, the ice rink will again be next to the clay studio. Your board is **actively** working with the City and ice rink committee on a better solution to the parking problem, especially during our sale. I think the City is aware that the solutions put in place last year were inadequate, as not only did we lose money at the sale, but class enrollment suffered. We will keep you posted on our progress.

I want to again stress that part of the responsibility of Guild membership is to volunteer. We need all of you, especially for the December Sale, so no matter whether you are selling your ware or not, volunteer to do something. **Let's have the best sale yet!**

Florence

Bring Hors D'oeuvres

Friday evening is our grand opening reception for the sale. In order to help make it an even bigger success, be sure to bring finger foods — **on a serving dish!** Do not bring bag/chips unless it is meant to accompany your contribution. We will serve wine or punch, therefore do not need bottled liquids. You will be charged \$10 if you do not intend to bring anything.

Thank you, Sue Ferro, Hospitality Chair

Email Your Sale Inventory By Robert Shelton



CAG will again use email to submit inventories for the December sale. Special arrangements will be made for those without email and/or computers.

Sending in sale inventories by email worked well last sale, allowing us to have a computerized record of each piece, what sold and what did not sell in record time. The result was a more accurate financial accounting.

The process is easy; if you used a computer to type your inventory sheets in past years, you already have the know-how. Specific instructions will be sent in a couple of weeks telling how to list your items and what formats are known to work. Sellers need no longer type up a formal inventory when they use email — two copies of their printed inventory will be available for them at check-in.

This sale we will be asking sellers to begin each of their descriptions with one of a dozen types of pieces, such as bowl, vase, sculpture, plate, etc. Such descriptions will allow us to report back to the membership what types of pieces sold best and which least well. More on that in our messages on inventory input.

Watch your email for messages from **clay-arts-guild@sbcglobal.net**. Non-email users will receive more info by U.S. Mail.



Continued from front page – December Sale

dynamic sales gallery it can be. In addition, we need an **Individual Spaces Chair**, someone who will be in charge of those aspects of the sale that have to do with people who opt for their own display space.

Please take a moment to think about what you would like to do to help make this sale a huge success. Even if you will not be submitting your pieces for this sale, it's great experience and a lot of fun. I've volunteered both when I have items in the sale and when I haven't, and, either way, enjoyed it a lot. It is a chance to contribute to the guild, which provides so much to make this studio outstanding, and to catch up with other people you don't get to see that often.

Right now **Laura Morris** has graciously agreed to continue as cashier chair and **Ron Dadami** will be chairing setup, cleanup and security. If you can work a shift or lead a shift helping Ron, please email and/or call him: rdadami@comcast.net. **Marlea McKinstry** is our new publicity chair and **Robert Shelton** will continue to do the postcards and signage.

You will find a copy of the **CAG Sales Application Form** the **Instructions and Conditions** and **FAQS** on our CAG website. Please download these and bring your signed copy of the first two forms when you check in along with your self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE). You will find a few of these forms when you sign up for your shifts, but please leave them for people who don't use computers.

Thanks! Fernskow@aol.com VOLUNTEER! 

Continued from front page, Help Needed!

in the studio was purchased by CAG. Some of the wheels we throw on, the tables, the stools, the extruders, slab rollers, the lockers, the raku, salt and electric kilns, a pug mill, display cases, bats, hydrator in the damp room, shelving and more. Half of the cost of the two new gas kilns was paid by CAG last year.

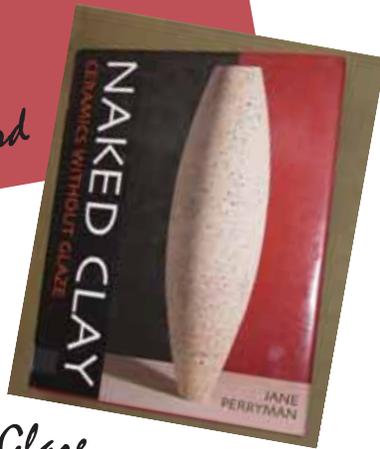
And the holiday sale is the major source of income that makes these purchases possible. So it's in the interest of everyone to support the holiday sale efforts. This year we face two big challenges:

- the down economy - people buying less (thrift is the new black now!).
 - the ice rink - limits our street exposure and creates parking issues.
- So I sure could use some help! I welcome any suggestions/ideas of how and where we might get the word out to attract more buyers to the sale in the face of our obstacles. Here's what you can do:
- Volunteer to help out - talk to Fern, me or any of the board members - we especially need people to talk up the sale in each class.
 - Please help to pass out the post cards to friends, family and put in public places (the postcards have been a major source of drawing people in).
 - Sign up to sell in the sale.
 - Drop me a note in locker #260 with any other ideas you might have.

Thanks! Marlea 

Book Review

Reviewed by
Kathy Minard



Naked Clay Ceramics without Glaze

Author: Jane Perryman
copyright 2004

Check it out! (of our CAG library that is) While perusing the shelves in our library, I found many “how to” ceramics books and “the complete book of ...” books, and many volumes circa 1965. Then my friend Manuela said... “Hey, check this one out; I like the title!”

The title and the cover’s photograph popped out as a possible interesting read, and it was an inspiring choice. The Naked part naturally caught my eye, but the “without glaze...” clause sucked me in.

The book is written by Jane Perryman and consists of interviews with various artists. Her interviews consist of a quick biography of the artist, and then an in-depth description of their special styles of ceramic. The photography of the works is exceptional!

The artists in this book have one thing in common – they do not use any final coats of glaze. Not being a big fan of glazing myself, I was excited that works pictured in this whole book, with its beautiful featured artworks, were glaze-free!

Jane has broken up the book into categories: artists who create their forms and then use a variety of slips, stains, oxides and resists to *dress* their final pieces; pit firing, just plain clay, and those who use color and aggregates in their clay, layering or blending the colors to become part of the form itself. The artists mostly follow a tenet that it’s the form, and the making of the form,

that is of a higher importance to them, not hiding the form under a glaze. “With naked clay you can see the process – with glaze you will hide what is going on,” stated Swiss ceramicist Philippe Barde, who coined the term naked clay.

In the background section in the beginning of the book, Jane explains that there are many traditional societies in the world whose ceramics (art and practical pottery) still remain unglazed today. Potters from India, Africa, North and South America, Indonesia and parts of the middle and near east all still create today sans glaze. Wow! I thought I’d be learning about some of these methods that have their roots in ancient ceramic production, the type of primitive art that I have always been drawn to. But the artists in Jane’s book are mostly modern artists with unique methods that they have developed, loosely taken from the primitive styles of other cultures. She interviews mostly ceramicists from Switzerland, England, Australia, Belgium and the US, not the primitive artists of Japan and Java, or the Mayan and Incan artisans of South America.

Many beautiful abstract sculptures and vessels are featured in this book, and I know I mentioned this earlier, but I’ll repeat for emphasis, the photography in this book is spectacular and truly inspiring. You will no doubt be able to leaf through this book and find one or two artists who really pop out for you, and you will want to know a little more about their unique methods. Since this is not a “how to” book, the descriptions of the methods can be somewhat vague, but enough information to get you started thinking. At the end of each interview, she kindly gives you a suggested reading list, which I assume will allow the interested reader to explore in more detail whatever the artist is willing to divulge.

Some of these artists are figurative sculptors, and clay without glaze really lends itself to the texture of animals, (human and otherwise). Anna Noel is one of my favorites from this book; her sculptures are of horses and people. Others throw or hand-build forms, and it’s the surface treatments that are spectacular. Elizabeth Fritsch, with designs on her vessels that bring to mind the works of M.C. Escher in beautiful colors, is another one of my favorites. And if I had to pick a number one favorite, I think it would be Thomas Hoadly, the most amazing combination of rich color and texture and intricate design — without a drop of Glaze!

Check it out! (from the CAG Library, that is) 🙌

James Newton, New CAE Instructor

By Gary Guglielmino

The City of Walnut Creek's Civic Arts Education Ceramics Program will offer a daytime raku class for the winter quarter, tentatively scheduled for Friday mornings. The course will be taught by James "Jim" Newton, a longtime Bay Area potter and pottery instructor who is new to the Walnut Creek program.

This longtime Bay Area resident lives and has his studio in the Berkeley hills. He did some ceramics in junior high, and apparently spent a great deal of time doing ceramics while attending, yes, Berkeley High School, a true child of the Bay Area. He went on to UCSB, graduating with a degree in Performing Arts, but found his true medium, clay, soon thereafter.

If you "Google" Mr. Newton, most of your hits will be listings as a teacher for various classes around the Berkeley area. He has clearly won his spurs making a living teaching ceramics and potting in the Bay Area for around twenty years. Currently, he is a full-time instructor at the ASUC Berkeley ceramics studio, along with teaching workshops in raku and pitfire techniques, including both thrown and formed work.

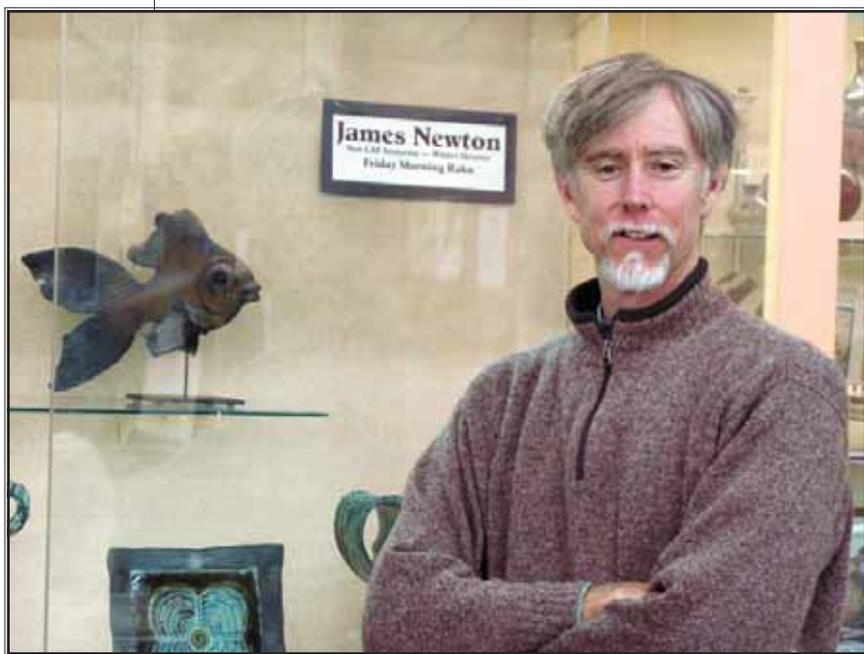
In his classes he teaches students at all skill levels, and he seems to really enjoy that variety. Among other things, he appreciates the curiosity and openness of the beginning student and the intensity and work ethic of the advanced student. In particular, as fits his approach to potting, he enjoys helping students at all levels solve technical problems with their work — be it with cracking, centering, slumping of forms, and so on.

Jim describes himself as a *practical* potter, and he is currently producing the mugs, bowls, and things likely to sell over the holidays. He prefers to sell from his studio rather than display at large galleries. He sells much of his work from his studio off Grizzly Peak in Berkeley. He also participates in the weekend craft sales along Telegraph Avenue, which are held annually over the last three weekends in December.

Jim notes that he runs into a lot of old friends and classmates while working the Telegraph Avenue event. His perspective on professional potting was very interesting. Jim mentions the fickle nature of colors and finishes from year to year, and how a potter has to gamble, making pieces well in advance, hoping that whatever choices he or she makes will be popular that year.

Jim also spends a great deal of time on more eclectic artistic work. He enjoys making garden art, and currently is experimenting with combinations of spraying and terra sigillata over natural items like leaves and twigs. His class in Walnut Creek will be a raku class, and there are some beautiful examples of his work on display in the studio. One piece in particular seemed to have a combination of raku and leaf overlays that I hadn't seen before.

First impressions are always interesting. Jim found our studio large, well-cared for, and well organized. He was excited by the quality of the work he saw on the shelves. My impression is that Jim Newton will be a great addition to a really gifted stable of instructors at our Walnut Creek studio. His career as an instructor for all-comers in Berkeley, plus a long background as a professional making practical pottery to sell, should make him another great asset to our program.



HOT TIP

By Mary Miller

You probably all have heard about *Fimo*, a polymer compound similar to clay that can be molded and “fired” in your own oven at home. It even comes in many bright colors, eliminating the need to ever glaze.

But... did you know that Fimo can be used as a filler of cracks in your fired ceramic ware or sculpture? Fimo can be ordered online or purchased at Richards or Michaels craft stores. Follow the directions by kneading the compound until it's soft and pliable, then work it into the cracks. Put your ceramic piece in a 250° oven for 30 minutes to bake the Fimo. If your vase still leaks water, then repeat the process. Acrylic paints can be used to blend the repaired area with the rest of the piece.

NOTE: Do not use this process on ceramic work that will be used to hold food and do not reheat your piece in the oven or microwave.

Now it's your turn. Mary earned a bag of clay for her tip this month. You, too, can earn a bag of clay. Just write a description and email annadele@comcast.net or put a copy in Locker #9 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, it would be nice to acknowledge the source.

Tad Kikugawa 1928-2009

By Mimi Wild

If a friendly hug and smile could be personified, they would be **Tad Kikugawa**. He always threw at the same kickwheel by the front door, and you could be guaranteed a warm greeting upon entering the studio when he was there. Tad was a master of pottery; his simple designs were elegant, the masterpieces, featherweight and salt firing was his *coup de gras*.

Tad was in pottery classes when the studio was still in the old Quonset huts (in the 70's). Pete remembers him as an excellent potter even back then. If you called attention to his beautiful pots Tad would blush; notice the one displayed with the master potter group on the top shelf of the new studio exhibit case. (photo above.)



Above: Tad with Sonja Biberman, Laura Morris and Florence McAuley

At right: With Peter following the first firing of the newly rebuilt salt kiln two years ago.



We will miss his generous soul, his friendly hugs and especially his warm smile. Jean Calicura summed up his presence, “He made you feel like you were the most important person in the world when he talked to you.”



Beer and Pottery Share A Heritage



Way back in 1910, a German immigrant named John Herold began a porcelain company in Golden, CO. The Herold China and Pottery Company made ovenproof tableware and ovenware

in a factory that was leased from Adolph Coors, founder of the Coors Brewing Company. Coors was also on the board of directors and was a stockholder in the pottery.

Herold left the pottery in 1914, and in 1920 the name of the pottery was officially changed to the Coors Porcelain Company. The company continued making table- and ovenware lines until 1980. Currently the company (now CoorsTek) is making highly regarded industrial porcelain used by scientists and industrialists around the globe.



Meet MARLEA MCKINSTRY Guild PR Rep By Jeanne Franke



After first meeting Marlea, as we walked to a table in the park, she commented, “I wish I had brought that twenty-pound watermelon from my garden to share with you.”

That’s the type of person Marlea McKinstry appears to be: warm and generous, with a major green thumb and a love of clay. She explains, “A good day is one where I can create something, grow something, do a little yoga and also share my talents to help others in some way.” She added that her large garden’s bounty has recently fed neighboring raccoons and deer as well.

Marlea is a highly accomplished woman with a career as varied as her art and interests. Growing up on a ranch in rural Nevada established by her Italian immigrant grandparents, she had an endless array of opportunities to be creative and enterprising. She and her brother as budding entrepreneurs started their first successful business together when she was eight, selling their highly prolific rabbits. She says she was lucky to have been instilled with a strong work ethic and independent spirit from her father, but also infused with creative genes on her mother’s side.

A seasoned sales pro with diverse experience in a number of industries with both large and small companies, she, along with so many others, lost her job this year. She is doing freelance projects while looking for a new venture and was happy to lend a hand to CAG while she has the time.

Marlea came to CAG from the Palo Alto Art Center when she moved to Concord two years ago. Though she had exposure to the clay world her entire life from an uncle who is a ceramic sculptor, it wasn’t until fifteen years ago that she found respite and renewal from the stresses of a busy schedule of work and travel when she began working in clay herself at the studio in Palo Alto. She says since moving here she’s gained much from the group studio environment and all the talented instructors and artists here in the Walnut Creek studio. While she continues her work with slab-constructed forms, her challenge these days is, “...to master that pesky wheel”.

She has generously come to CAG’s rescue with her creative marketing background and agreed to assist the Guild with promoting our Holiday Sale.

You can help her by completing a **CAG Bio** if you plan to participate in this year’s sale. Showcasing our talented members helps draw community interest. So do your part! Thank you, Marlea, for helping the Guild, which helps us all!



Bonus Tip

Create your own reusable slip bowl. Start by first creating a simple pinch pot out of a small amount of clay, then flatten it on the bottom to allow it to sit on the table without rolling over. Fill it with water. As you work, the clay will begin to dissolve and slip can easily be made by rubbing the inside of the pot with a brush. The slip can be controlled and used in a variety of desired thicknesses from thin to thick. When you are finished working, reuse the clay for less mess and no waste.

(Tip taken from Pottery Council website and provided by Judy Davies)



More Hot Tips...

can be found by going to:

"Ceramic Arts Daily"

<ceramicartsdaily.org>

an "online community serving active potters and ceramic artists worldwide" where you will find ceramic tips and other useful information. If you subscribe (it's free), you will receive emails almost daily with lots of links to videos and ceramicists' websites.

Precision & Elegance

Deborah Schwartzkopf Master Potter Workshop

By Mary Miller

I asked several CAG members who attended the Saturday, October 10th Master Potter Workshop, what they took away from the experience.

Pino Pagni was impressed with Deborah's neatness and ability to imagine and then execute the elaborate altering procedures to create exactly what she envisioned. He loved the way she was able to pull up tall cylinders on the wheel using only two fingers on each hand. Pino particularly enjoyed the "tug boat" shape that inspired her juicers. (See photo at right)



"I was amazed at how drastically she manipulated very thin slabs to achieve her beautiful geometric shapes," was one of **Ann Henderson's** comments. She was also impressed at how carefully Deborah prepared her shapes before cutting and how she shaped the thin slabs.

Pam Bivins, who hosted Deborah while she was in town, commented on how very user friendly she was: personable, approachable, and willing to field any question. "She invites interaction and demystified the process of altering clay. I felt energized and hopeful about making work after her workshop. I came away being even more impressed by her designs after watching her construct them and had the sense that there is an element of humor and laughter in each piece."

Jean Calicura was amazed at how she held a very thin thrown cylinder and was able to cut away parts of it in her altering process. "However," Jean commented, "Her pieces were so well constructed that there was almost a factory-like quality to them."



After the four-women show at the Trax Gallery closes, one of Deborah Schwartzkopf's juicers will be gracing our Master Potter collection.



Notes from the Desk of the Studio Manager

Yes, the ice skate rink is back again ...It will be open from Nov. 12 thru Jan. 19 and tear down will be done by Feb. 2...So we remind you all again...please be patient when looking for parking in the lot for your classes... We are working diligently with the skate rink folks to alleviate any parking problems.

Please check the studio calendar closely for important dates such as end of quarter, which ends the weekend before Thanksgiving this time...The studio sale will be the week after that and then we will be open for one week for pickup of finished work and then closed thru Jan. 8, 2010. So plan your studio time carefully in order to get any work meant for holiday giving fired and out of the studio before we close. Remember that the kilns are not micro-wave ovens....firing of ware may take up to two weeks, depending on volume of work produced.

New instructor coming this next Winter session...We are pleased to announce the addition of Jim Newton to our already fine instructor roster. He comes to us from the ASUC studio at Cal. Berkeley, and his expertise is in Raku techniques and stoneware. He will be taking over the Friday morning Raku class beginning in January.

Yes, we had a low fire clay meltdown at the beginning of the fall sessionThis plays havoc with our \$200.00 kiln shelves and other students' work to boot....Not a good thing! **All clay used in this studio must be purchased from this studio.....No outside clay allowed !!!**

DATES TO REMEMBER



WED. 11/11	STUDIO CLOSED VETERANS DAY
SAT. 11/14	LAST SATURDAY CLASS MEETING
FRI. 11/20	LAST CLASS MEETING OF FALL NOTE: •All work must be removed from damp-room, drying shelves, bisque shelves and finished glazeware carts by 10 pm Fri./ Nov. 20. •Work left to be bisqued or glaze fired maybe picked up week of Dec. 7 / Noon – 7 pm.
SAT. 11/21	STUDIO CLEAN-UP PARTY 10 AM - NOON
SUN– SUN 11/22–11/29	STUDIO CLOSED
MON–WED 11/30–12/2	STUDIO OPEN FOR SALE SET-UP ONLY !
THUR–SUN 12/3–12/6	STUDIO SALE
MON– FRI. 12/7–12/11	STUDIO OPEN FOR PICK-UP OF WORK ONLY ! (NOON – 7 PM)
SAT–FRI. 12/12–1/8	STUDIO CLOSED

Studio Hours & Monitoring Schedule:

- Monday 4-7pm:
Lynne Bosko & Betty Wang
- Tuesday 4-7pm:
Pam Bivins & Kathy Minard
- Wednesday 12-4pm:
Susie Franz
- Friday 12-4pm:
Michelle Ostrie & Tricia Ogilvy
- Friday 4-7pm:
Pino Pagni

- Saturday 12-4pm
Betty Gadd
- Saturday 4-7pm:
Clarice Judah
- Sunday 1-4pm:
Dinah King
- Sunday 4-7pm:
Sara Kimber & Sandra Ritchie
- Head Monitor:
Clarice Judah
- Head Sub Monitor:
Bridget Moar

What's Happening in the Clay World

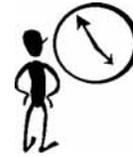
Women in Whiteware with Mary Barringer, Mary Law, Deborah Schwartzkopf and Elizabeth Robinson. **Through November 8th**
Trax Gallery in Berkeley, CA
<http://www.traxgallery.com/>

Objects of Virtue: A national exhibit of Contemporary Pottery at the Bedford Gallery, Walnut Creek. Juror: Julia Galloway Show dates Dec. 1-Jan. 31

California Clay Competition. Functional and sculptural work. Held at the Artery in Davis, CA
Deadline: February 13, 2010
530-758-8330
www.theartery.net
artery.cc@att.net.

NCECA Conference
Independence will be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, March 31-April 3, 2010. Call for entries for full-time students working toward a degree in art. https://s44678.gridserver.com/app/applications/rsje_entry/

Clay on the Wall Contest!



It's not too early to be working on your masterpiece wall hanging: tile, plaque, plate, vase, sculpture for the CAG upcoming contest in early March.

Era Cherry is chair and Erica Clark Shaw (former Studio Instructor) will be the judge.

CLAYARTSGUILD

Civic Arts Education of
Walnut Creek

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