



# ASP NEWS November 2006

The Newsletter of the  
Auckland Studio Potters  
Society Inc.  
ASP Centre  
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Renton Murray  
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Email: asp@ceramics.co.nz  
Web: www.ceramics.co.nz

## Studio Opening Hours

Monday	12.30pm - 5pm
Tuesday	12.30pm - 5pm
Wednesday	12.30pm - 5pm
Thursday	12.30pm - 5pm
Friday	12.30pm - 4pm
Saturday	10am - 4pm

Remember to pay \$3 per hour  
up to a maximum of  
\$9.00 per day



## AUCKLAND'S BIGGEST POTTERY FAIR

### Sunday the 3rd December

As you open your newsletter you will find some flyers that we want you to distribute far and wide, to all your friends and acquaintances. We are making a special effort this year to improve the look of the studio and encourage more people to come. But the word of mouth marketing is still our best method, so please let everyone know where, when and what.

On the day there will be the usual delicious selection of food and drink, pot sales, kids' activities, raffles, exhibition, etc... – which brings me to the list of help that's needed.

Calling all bakers – we need slices and cakes to sell with tea and coffee.

Setting up – help is needed on the Saturday to transform the studio, organise tables, tidy up everywhere generally.

On the day – we always need members to help man the various stations, like selling tickets, cooking food, etc...

If you can help with one or more of these activities then please contact the Centre. For all those members who want to sell their pots here on the day, please note that we are only taking a maximum of 30 people, and no late comers. We want more room to properly display your work. Again the same commission rate as last year, 25%, but we do all the work once you've dropped off your pots. Delivery of your work can be from Saturday afternoon through to Sunday

morning (before 10am). Please don't use this event as a chance just to sell off your seconds – we want the public to realise that our Big Clay Day Out is a brilliant place to buy quality pots at reasonable



### President's Report

*Michael J Billington*

Recently I took a much awaited proper holiday and toured around NZ with a relative from Germany. It underlined for me many times how fortunate I am to live in such a beautiful country with so much diversity. My travels covered parts of both islands and it was great to experience places I haven't been to for years, as a tourist. The Lava Glass studio at Wairakei (state highway 5) was interesting to visit; you can watch the glass blowers at work and buy things hot off the press – expensive though! Various artists are doing some great things in Christchurch with ceramics, glass and tin sheds.

The Big Clay Day Out is just around the corner and already people are working away to get things ready. Last year's idea to have the set up day on the Saturday before the event was a winner. In fact I don't know how we managed to get it all together in the past all in one day.

The main thing we need at this point is people to help out on the day and of course ahead of time to prepare things for various activities. Next Sunday (12th November) is the day that people will gather to organise the pots and glazes for the Raku event and the throwing of bowls and plates for the 'paint-a-pot'. If you want to help out with this – be there on Sunday 12th Nov at 10.00am.

The more that can be done ahead of time the better the BCDO is on the day. We are also interested in getting as many volunteers as possible to staff the events so that people can have a break and take part in the day.

Guy Fawkes once again this year went off with a hiss and a roar. Duncan worked for many hours, along with help from some of his students to build the clay sculpture to be fired on Guy Fawkes Day. The kiln structure itself was a true testament to ingenuity and performed very well. The unveiling proceeded

*continued on page 2*

promptly at 9.00 pm whereby the 'firing jacket' was carefully lifted away by willing helpers exposing a living, glowing form. It truly was magnificent. A big thanks to Duncan and everyone who attended and helped out – particularly for all the tasty food – as always there was more than enough for everyone.

Many of you will have heard by now that Duncan Shearer has indicated that he intends to resign from his position at ASP early next year and travel to Australia. As you can imagine this came as a shock and it will be very difficult to fill his shoes. Duncan's position will be advertised so that we get an idea of who is out there and it would be a wonderful opportunity for someone. Duncan fills a vital role at ASP and I think we should organize a full 'Brain Dump' before he goes so that all that 'clever stuff' he does with the kilns and all manner of things is around somewhere. We will keep everyone posted as to any new appointments and Duncan's travels.

## From the Winery

*Peter Lange*

I have been involved with a group that is trying to set up the Mt Eden Methodist Church as an Arts Centre while maintaining a space to accommodate the Church. An interesting concept and one that is new to all of us – the Council is behind it, and the Church is too, but there is a definite lack of consultation with the locals, who will eventually be the tenants, and it is proving to be a sensitive diplomatic exercise that those with more patience than me have fortunately so far been able to survive. I bite my tongue and think of the end result – in short a place right in the middle of Mt Eden that will serve as a gallery and performance space that may be useful to the ASP as a venue for exhibitions. Wine at the openings? John Wesley will be turning in his grave, but to be fair the Methodists are trying very hard to be realistic about these sorts of issues.

The raspberry juice and dry bread we had at communion wasn't all that bad as I recall and may well suit the ASP at the openings.

I'm settled in at Corbans Estate, and it's a busy place with lots of peripheral activities that I hadn't counted on, but not enough to cause any problems – in

fact there have been a couple of useful social events with locals coming through the place and a chance to meet them over the odd glass of wine. Everyone is very friendly and well organised and my workshop is shaping up well – no water provided, but I have jerry-rigged a wheelie bin as a header storage tank so I don't have to run a 50m hose any more. I'm looking forward to a major exhibition of my year's work there in February. Also a "taster" show of three pieces at Objectspace in December.

The Guy Fawkes sculpture firing was a triumph for Duncan and his team of Carbonettes who spent a lot of their own time foot-wedging the clay, pinching out the u-shaped bricks and building the elegant towering inferno. The unveiling drew a well-earned gasp and applause from the big crowd – they clearly didn't expect such a spectacular piece, having been looking at



a large white blob for the previous couple of hours. Each year our Guy Fawkes firings get more interesting, and I suspect that even if the Joy Nazis take away one of our rites of passage, the ASP will find a way of staging a spectacular event that will not need fireworks. The free market has shot itself in the foot again – having carte blanche to provide fireworks means they have got greedy and made them bigger and more dangerous to the point where mayhem takes over. In My Day (here we go) I don't think the urge to cause mayhem was any less – it was just that it was difficult to blow up letter boxes with "Emerald Fountains" and "Fairy Lights", though it was still possible to be fairly creative. I've seen as many large public fireworks displays as I'll ever want to see – they are removed and quite tedious after the first two minutes. You start off Ooohing and Aahing but after a while it's OK guys that's enough I've got a sore neck and it's really hard to hear my cellphone. But wait! Now I can send a photo of them to my aunty in Mexico – they've probably never seen fireworks there. Keep fireworks – limit the bangs and the size.

The news of Duncan's moving on has focussed our minds on the Centre's

standing needs and while it will be coped with, his going will leave a huge gap. We will keep you up to date with progress on that.

See you at the Big Clay Day Out.

## A Review of Two Current Ceramic Exhibitions

*Duncan Shearer*

There is currently a feast of ceramic exhibitions on in Auckland at the moment and you should all make an effort to visit some of them. There is the Portage Ceramic Award at Lopdell House

Gallery, Ann Verdcourt exhibition at Masterworks,

The Pre-Christmas Show at North Art, The Thursday Potters at Marco Gallery, The Bruce and Estelle Martin exhibition at the Gus Fisher Gallery and The Janet Green exhibition at Object Space. It is these last two exhibitions that interested me

enough to write about them.

Both exhibitions display the consequences of foreign influences. In the case of the Martins it is the Japanese connections which have shaped their work, with Green it is the Indonesian experience (in particular the Buddhist temple complex of Borobudur). The Martin's exhibition is beautifully laid out and is a touring retrospective of their lives' work. It illustrates a passion for wood firing and the challenges of combining suitable forms with such a variable glazing/firing process. The pioneering nature of their practice and the strong links with Japanese Anagama firing potters set them apart from the mainstream New Zealand ceramic scene. The Martin's went straight to the source of oriental pottery, unmediated by Bernard Leach's Sino venerated philosophy of Orientalism. This has lent their work an authenticity and allowed them to master a technique that usually has a long apprenticeship. In all of the work there remains an air of tribute to the source and my only regret is in not identifying a more personal interpretation or approach about the work.

With Janet Green's work I found the exhibition an almost overwhelming assembly of objects which seemed only

related by the imagination of their maker and a crackle slip. Individually, or in small groups the pieces showed a lovely use of clay and finish. But displayed on pink boxes and en masse dulled and confused the works. I struggled to find connections between the pieces and was left wondering more about issues of appropriation than about associations. Green has used the architectural form of a stupa and Buddha inspired heads to create a sense of the foreign and the meditative. Alone these would have been enough, the shells, skull goblets and other objects detracted more than they added.

I urge all the members to visit and support these exhibitions, such wealth of ceramics deserves attention and audience numbers help to secure more ceramic exhibitions in the future.

## The Portage Ceramic Awards Review

*Helen Perrett*

This year was only the second time I've been to the Portage Ceramic Awards so I don't have a lot to compare it to. I did not attend the Judge's lunch or Moyra Elliot's talk so I'm just sharing a few of my impressions of some of my favourite works.

Firstly, the winning piece by Peter Lange, was charming and funny and I loved the irony of brick (NZ's ceramic history) and concrete used to describe the lightness of the lilo (am I being flippant (!) thinking beach/bach – an aspect of our recent cultural history).

The scale of the bricks was particularly pleasing and a lot of the work that I enjoyed at the exhibition played with notions of scale.

One was Kristy Palleson's work entitled 'Beresford Street' which was like a small diorama of the sort of street scene a child might make with cardboard boxes. It was finely made with paper-clay and furnished with a tiny pillow and mattress. It was intimate and somehow haunting.

I also liked Danny Rowlandson's 'Witness', a figurative piece presented within a glass tank. The barrier of the glass is evocative, adding to the layers of meaning. It reinforced the tactile nature of ceramics, the frustration of not being able to touch. The sensitively portrayed young figures are separated and linked by a layer of small scale debris.

I also enjoyed Paul Masey's cheeky figures of Peter,

Paul and Mary. I really like his work and stopped on the way home from Lopdell House to peer through the windows of Masterworks at his exhibition there. (Must go when it's open.) I love the warmth and history of terracotta and like the way he has decorated with a white slip and fine black lines – chequerboards and stripes, personal favourites.

A classically beautiful sculptural vessel is 'Vessel' by Mark Mitchell, it is stunning with a richly detailed surface. It's quite a large piece but elegantly proportioned and with a feeling of fragility in its fineness.

I lingered over Verity Kinlaysides' 'Visual Verbiage' work too. I liked the contrast between the fine white clay and the rough coarse red clay, both locally dug. The illustrations which she describes as a 'personal visual journal' are interesting and suggestive. The technique intriguing.

When I think about my favourite works they are generally characterised by either a quality in the material – I really find myself drawn to terracotta, or by the story. I like narratives and I like messages.



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## classified

All phone numbers in these sections are in the Auckland free-calling area unless an area code is explicitly stated.

### For Sale:

Talisman wheel excellent condition (but dirty) with spare parts and seat. \$550 ono. Talsiman pugmill \$500. Phone Michael 8176621

### Situations Vacant:

Part Time Centre Director ASP

Due to future plans to travel our current part time Centre Director will be leaving in February 2007.

The person applying for this position would need to have some flexibility with working hours and the position would be shared with the other part time Director. It is important that the person applying be good at interacting with people, be a competent potter and have some clerical management skills

Duties would include:

- Organizing teaching classes
- Studio management
- Kiln management
- Membership newsletter
- Financial management duties
- Committee work – liaise with President and committee
- Coordination of major events at the centre (Big Clay Day Out, Exhibition)
- Excellent knowledge of a wide range of pottery skills for general running of the centre and the teaching of classes

More specific information about duties and terms of employment can be obtained by ringing ASP (09 634 3622) and asking to speak to Duncan Shearer or Renton Murray.

## exhibitions

Warkworth Craft Gallery

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An exhibition by Past and present members. Venue: the Dragonfly Cafe and Gallery

615 Matakana Rd, Warkworth

Come and enjoy a days outing, a great cup of coffee, and some fantastic craft work.

New Members Wanted

We are looking for Domestic Ware members or commissioned work. If you are producing some good Domestic Ware, and would like to have an outlet, please come and look at the Warkworth Craft Gallery, and submit your work for approval.

Warkworth Craft Gallery, Cnr Baxter and Neville Str, Warkworth. Ph 09 425-8790

### Sculpture OnShore 2006

3rd to 12th November, 10am - 6pm

Takapuna Historic Reserve, Vauxhall Road, Devonport.

Created by over 100 of NZ's eminent and emerging artists, suitable for domestic gardens and corporate settings. A new domestic-scale garden, designed to provide a backdrop for more intimate works, will be installed for 2006. All works are for sale.

### Pots of Ponsonby

"In the Garden" salt glazed work by Renton Murray. 29th October to 12th November

"Silver Jubilee Celebration" a collection of current Member's work to celebrate 25 years since the inauguration of Pots.

12th November to 26th November

"Bearing gifts of..." new work by Barbara Skelton

26th November to 10th December.

298 Ponsonby Rd, Ponsonby. Ph: 3760145

### Marco Gallery

"Thursday Potters"

Through the enthusiasm of students in Peter Stichbury's Thursday morning class an exhibition of our pottery is held at Marco Gallery. It opens to the public on Wednesday 15th November @ 6pm and will be up until Dec 7th.

The show is about what happens in the studio of ASP on a Thursday morning, and the convergence of different levels of skill and experience which all come together for the love of clay and the teacher. The friendships that have evolved from Thursdays are a wonderful example of how clay binds us together, and the language of clay gives new meaning to life. 'Being off center' is universal, and a common com-

ment in the studio - "Too much Grog", and "Throwing up" have nothing to do with drinking, but everything to do with clay.

The Marco Gallery is just one part of marvelous work of the Marco Trust, which was set up by 2 woman over a year ago. Their love and devotion to the arts for the health and healing of all is a wonderful asset to the community. The Trust and the Centre have been established to promote and provide creative opportunities in movement, art and rhythm to the wider community; across age, gender, culture, socio-economic status, sexuality and disabilities and to create the intermodal integration of arts disciplines and therapeutic practices. 47 New North Road, Eden Terrace.

### Artful Gallery

Cone City Clay

We have a wonderful exhibition of over 80 pieces of ceramic opening at the gallery on 19th November, if you would like to meet some ceramicists make sure you are at the opening event on the Sunday afternoon. If your idea of ceramics is a simple bowl or mug come and see some great bowls and pots as well as amazing stoneware eggs, tiles and wall hangings, earthenware figures, masks and a huge brick bell!!

Prices range from \$95 to \$5,000, and Christmas is approaching fast so come and find some unique presents (we love gift wrapping as well, although the bell would be difficult!)

ARTFUL GALLERY

1 Morgan St, Newmarket, Ph 5295036

### Objectspace

Janet Green 'Imaginary Friends'

28th October to 2nd December

Acclaimed Masterton-based ceramic artist Janet Green's 'Imaginary Friends' exhibition is a homage to the long established tradition of devotion to making. Green has created a multitude of ceramic objects inspired by South East Asian Buddhist temple architecture and ornamentation. The scale of these pieces is ambitious and Green's considerable making skills were tested in their construction.

Many of Green's forms are invented or imagined, hence the exhibition's title. Her vocabulary includes large hand built conch shells, ancestor figures, treasure vases, begging bowls, prayer beads, skull cups, stupas and bees. In this installation at Objectspace they will be piled high on oyster pink-coloured plinths that reference the architectural structures many of these forms are based on.

Janet Green is an ex-professional ceramic conservator (once responsible for caring for the Greek vases in the British Museum). She has worked for Edinburgh University and the British Institute on archaeological sites in Cyprus and South Eastern Turkey and spent two years working in Indonesia for the New Zealand Government's Lombok Crafts Project. Since 2000 she has focused on her own handbuilt ceramics. Recent exhibitions include 'The History of the Cup', Aratoi Museum of Art and History, Masterton, and Avid Gallery, Wellington (2005), and 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' (2003).

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