



# ASP NEWS October 2008

The Newsletter of the  
Auckland Studio Potters  
Society Inc.  
ASP Centre  
96 Captain Springs Road  
PO Box 13-195 Onehunga  
Directors: Peter Lange,  
Renton Murray  
Phone: (09) 634 3622  
Fax: (09) 634 3626  
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



## 2008 Portage Award

The highlight of New Zealand ceramics' glamour night of the year was the presentation of the Premier Award to our very own Matt McLean, one of this country's most consistent and ambitious ceramic sculptors, who deserves the honour richly after decades of producing work of integrity and adventure. The judge, Grace Gochrane, a prominent applied arts curator from Australia, made a popular choice with this one - congratulations to Matt. The \$12,000 plus the purchase price of his excellent work will keep him in bicycle puncture repair kits for a while .... he rode his bicycle up to Lopdell to set it up and was late for the lecture at AUT because he got a puncture on the way back. She also gave out six \$1,000 Merit Awards and ASP member Helen Yau came away with one of those; the others went to Richard Parker, Madeleine Child, Michael Michaels, Philipa Durkin and Tim Holman and the \$3,000 John Green Award went to West Auckland potters Sang Sool Shim and Keum Sun Lee.

The opening event was bigger and more glamorous with a red carpet and topless dancers (this is actually true by the way), a range of musical acts and pizzas cooked on the spot (the pear and gorgonzola was delicious - is it first course or pudding? one of those dilemmas that Italians have to wrestle with). Well done to the Lopdell House team - Lesley Smith

### Members' Evening

### **SURPRISE GUY FAWKES EVENT**

### **SUNDAY NOVEMBER 2nd 7pm**

Bring friends, fireworks and food for an evening of fire and fun. BYO drinks and sausages - we'll provide BBQs and bread and butter. One of the features of the evening will be a bonfire firing so, if you dare, bring along biscuited pots (best made from an open body) and we'll fire them for you and they'll go straight to the pool room when you get home.

And there will be a surprise pyrotechnical sideshow.

and Kate Wells and to the Portage Trust; now go and see the show - it's a broad representation of many different styles and approaches. Other ASP members in the show are: Simon Leong, Elena Renker, Rick Rudd (2), Jo-Anne Raill, Rene Boyd, Rachel Carter, Grandy Fu, Chuck Joseph, John Parker, Brendan Adams, Greg Barron, Susannah Bridges, Penny Ericson, so with Matt we counted for nearly 30% of the exhibits.

### **President's Report**

Michael Billington

The Annual "Fire and Clay" exhibition was again a great success. I can't speak highly enough of the amount of support and effort that went into the lead up to the exhibition and the large turnout on the opening night. I spent a little time working with our selector, Barbara Hockenull, and very soon realised why she had been asked to do the job. Barbara's criterion for selection was based on a large amount of experience and an inherent knowledge of "what works and what doesn't." Many thanks Barbara, you did a splendid job. It can be very disheartening if you have spent considerable time working on a piece only to have it rejected. It must be remembered that our annual exhibition has to reach a high standard as it is a premier event and something to aspire to. It is very important to find out why a piece was rejected and work from there. I noticed that some experienced people had pieces rejected. Whatever you do don't let the selection process put you off entering!!

One thing I didn't do during my opening night "speech" was to officially thank Jo Raill for the huge amount of effort she put into making our exhibition the success it was. Jo is one of those people who makes sure important details are not forgotten, is a great problem solver and is so much fun to work with. I had her name on my list of people to thank individually on the night of the opening and in the flurry I missed her out.

**ASP Library:** The message is quite simple really. No books should be borrowed from our library without due process i.e. issuing from the office and returning and having them marked as returned. Our librarian (Judy Rae) does a great job organising our library but must find it almost impossible to make any headway if the books are here, there, and everywhere without any traceable record. It doesn't take a minute so please do the right thing.

**Use of Facilities:** Mostly people are very good at making sure they tidy up after themselves both in the studio and in the kitchen. But once in a while we have found that some things are not left in a tidy state. This is probably because the excitement of a successful result may transport you into another dimension where earthly things such as tidying up don't apply! Well sorry folks that's not how it happens – Lois has enough to do. If you use it, clean it. I won't go into details here (to protect the innocent).

**Mystery Gardener:** I would like to thank the person(s) who does some manicuring of our gardens every so often without being caught. Whoever this Guardian Angel is – thank you so much. It is really lovely that when everyone is “so busy” these days that they still find time to do a bit here and there just because they have a passion for our Centre. I wish I had a mystery gardener in my garden.

## Diploma Class Update

Suzy Dunser



Otago Polytechnic organised a weekend at the end of September for the Diploma students from around the country, and a few of us from Auckland went down to Dunedin for it. This was the first time they've done this, and it was really worthwhile - we got to actually meet the tutors of the distance courses as well as get to know Diploma students from other parts of NZ and see the facilities Otago has to offer.

The weekend officially started with afternoon tea on Friday, which was mostly a chance for us to meet each other, as well as set up a small exhibition of our pots, which we'd been instructed to bring along. Saturday was full on. First we had a workshop with Jim Cooper (pictured), whose Sgt. Pepper exhibition was recently in Auckland. He introduced us to Egyptian paste, and in the space of two hours we had not only made but fired a zoo's worth of multicoloured animals. After that we headed over to the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, where his new exhibition, Peppermints and Incense, has recently opened. Psychedelia is alive and well... and no drugs necessary... Besides seeing Jim's work, we were invited into the restoration area of the gallery, where we got to see Martin Brothers pots from the late 1800s-early 1900s: unconventional motifs (for the time), amazing detail, and all salt fired. Immediately after that we headed over to the Otago Museum to see the ceramics collection there, as well as The Emperor's Dragon, an amazing and extensive collection of objects from the Shanghai Museum. I have to admit, by the end of the day I was collapsed on a bench, unable to process any more art or culture at all... fortunately we had a couple hours break at that point, before meeting up again for dinner.

Sunday morning we had a tour of the school's ceramics facilities, which were extensive and impressive. Next we had a session with Peter Stupples, the art history instructor, and we discussed ways the delivery of that class could be improved. Then we had a critique of our exhibition by Neil Grant, which, while not always ego-inflating, did point a way forward for each of us. That was followed last by a session with Lawrence Ewing, where we discussed various aspects of the glaze technology course.

In between and around all that we had the chance to see a bit of Dunedin and the Otago Peninsula, check out the Farmer's Market and the Octagon nightlife - a good weekend.

## Plaster Problems

Helen Perrett

People making plaster moulds in the studio aren't always aware of the consequences of particles of plaster getting into clay. This is particularly apparent where people have been putting plaster contaminated clay into the baths for recycling. Poor George has had to discard

mountains of the stuff.

Plaster pieces less than 4mm in size are OK as they turn into lime during firing and this combines with the clay body, but over that size – which is the size of a tiny bit of grit – there can be problems. If the plaster is close to the surface of the work after firing it absorbs moisture and swells – up to three times its size; this causes pressure in the work and either a bit of the body will flake away or a bit will pop out, this generally happens after biscuiting and can take weeks.

If the particle gets through the biscuit and then survives a glaze firing the work may be ok, at the higher temperatures the lime should have dissolved into the body of the clay plus the clay is stronger and less likely to pop. Work containing plaster chips fired at lower temperature (ie earthenware) may still pop. Unfortunately weeks or even months later.

So, people working with plaster in a studio, please clean up very well, don't let any get into clay for recycling, and please put the contaminated rubbish on the trailer to go to the dump. Or bury it in your garden – lime helps break down clay and clay, lovely stuff, releases a lot of nutrients into the garden - roses love it.

## ASP news

Peter Lange

The last couple of weeks has seen the crew abandon the ASP ship en masse – Renton to Maine, Trien to Belgium, me to Rarotonga and Jo-Anne sadly only to Papakura but saving for Alaska. Fortunately it all fitted in more or less with holidays at the Centre and in any case we have excellent back-up people on the bench – Mike D and Helen Perrett been able to baby-sit the place, and Jo-Anne has been in control. It has still been busy with the Exhibition to take down, new term's enrolments to deal with, the usual kilns to fire and a wood firing thrown in for a bit of excitement. Helen, by the way, is best known right now for her People's Choice Award at the ASP exhibition – her “Immigrant Song” sculpture took the prize. Bravo!

The biscuit shed is chocka again! And it's the end of term - doesn't make sense. Where does it all come from? By the time you read this the entire contents of the biscuit shed will be on the front porch – if you have pots that you are feeling fond of then make sure that you get in soon and claim them and put

them back in the shed, because all the left-overs will eventually end up over the road at the rubbish transfer station from where they will be returned to the earth to complete a vaguely poetic circle. Archaeologists of the future digging into the landfill at East Tamaki will be heartened to find initials and dates under most of them and they will happily go into their research storage facility which may in fact look a little like the biscuit shed does right now. They will scratch their heads and work out that a small but well-fed village existed on the site with the villagers happy to dine from a huge range of heavy bowls, wobbly mugs and ashtrays, and that in the year 2008 this village had still had no contact with craftspeople from the North bringing glaze recipes.

"This one's going straight to the pool room." That's got to be the best pottery line in any film. It's worth viewing "The Castle" just to hear that line. We use it quite a lot when we're unloading the kilns.

Quite a number of ASPers are heading to Napier mid-October to attend the "Volume" conference. Here's the organisers' aim: "Volume will explore and challenge the position of the craft/object maker in New Zealand today. Presenters from both contemporary art and craft camps will come together and question the function, position and future of the crafted object in New Zealand." Check out <http://www.hbmag.co.nz>

As well as dealing with the Art/Craft schism we also need to apply ourselves to the Art/Object sub-schism. My feeling is that Art is anything that stirs your emotions; Objects are things you trip over or have to dust. Then again that can cause emotions too so now we're no further on.

Good to have Peter Stichbury back with his class after some time off to get

over a nasty fall. His students missed him and it will be great to have his class back to its usual numbers and morning teas. Diane's scones are worth just happening by for at 11 on a Thursday. When I had my health blip I was humbled to find my class bringing only healthy food for morning tea and giving up their sticky buns. That lasted about 2 weeks and now we have a weekly feast of wonderful goodies for me to (try to) resist and the class to enjoy.

Potters world-wide seem to be affected by health problems, but I guess it's a demographic thing; there are a lot of greying potters out there from the class of 1972. Sadly David Miller from the UK (and South of France) died earlier this year – he entertained us at the Waikato conference and corresponded with the ASP for a while trying to figure out a way to come back to NZ. Regrettably that won't now happen. And Simon Carroll who was the star of last year's Christchurch conference is very ill in the UK. I will be in touch with him to give him our best wishes. He has had a full-on, physically exhausting life, and was full of ideas for the future while he was here – though he was tired as well.

Renton, who damaged his shoulder wrestling a sheep in the corner of a paddock in Queensland last month (I keep humming "Ewe really got a hold on me" for some reason), is now kayaking with Rosie in the Maine area based at Scott Goldberg's wonderful waterfront house and studio, and the shoulder is holding up except for cooking and signing cheques. Good on him for finding a corner of a paddock over in Oz, they are about 200 km square, so corners are a day apart and sheep 2 hours apart as well. He'll be back mid month.

See you at the Guy Fawkes night on the 2nd November. Surprise firing and a good time to get around a fire, have a

few drinks, light a few crackers and get ready for the election by remembering Guido Fawkes the mercenary, referred to as "The last man to enter Parliament with honourable intentions."

## From the US

Sarah Guppy

Autumn is just beginning in the Rockies, and the landscape is on the cusp of change. I am at the end of the first of two weeks here, doing "Finding Form" - exploring the surface and texture of the clay body. My own body is finding new cracks, and surface tensions too !!

Our teacher is Mary Bassinger, who has a terrific sense of humour, as do our guest teachers Sam Clarkson and David Pinto. In fact I think the course is as much about storytelling and laughter as it is about clay.

Lessons in slip and glaze have filled my head, and the combination of altitude, sleep deprivation and laughter makes me feel the mushrooms served here are more than local.

Last night Sam and Mary had an exhibition opening at Harvey Meadows Gallery in Highlands Village ([www.harveymeadows.com](http://www.harveymeadows.com))-a terrific gallery, very devoted to ceramics.

Each day we begin at 9 and break at 12 for lunch, then straight back to it till 6pm; some continue after dinner - there's no TV, papers or radio and it feels as if the world is many moons away. It is a unique place, with fantastic facilities, and set in the dramatic alpine Rockies.

## Hawkes Bay Wood Firing

Gaeleen Morley

Hello from sunny Hawkes Bay ... a group of us are planning the 5th wood firing on the site of Taradale Pottery Group at the Waiohiki Arts Trust in our 200 cuft kiln. Any potters out there who would like to be involved with either providing stoneware or porcelain work plus being one of the stoking team would love to share the experience.

The last firing had great results - lots of ash on the work.

Packing around 29th November, lighting on 6th December and firing for three days. Pots would need to be delivered on or around the 25th November.

Any interested and energetic potters must come with a sense of humour...for more information phone John Gisborne on 021 1444821 or Gaeleen Morley 06 8446086 email [gaeleenm@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gaeleenm@xtra.co.nz)

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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.

### Wanted

Someone to organise and co-ordinate this summer's anagama kiln firing at the Centre. Phone 6343622

### Wanted

Extruder to buy or borrow Phone Annie 8200773

### Corbans Summer School

12 – 16 January 2009

In January each year Corban Estate Arts Centre (CEAC) presents its Summer School, a week long programme of inspiring workshops. There will be seven courses to choose from; each course will run for five days. These include:- Theatre and Performance with Warwick Broadhead; Bronze Casting with David Reid; Oil Painting with Jenny Dolezel; Jewellery Design with Fran Allison; Creative Cape Making with Henriata Nicholas and Kelly King; Film Acting with Vicky Yiannoutsos; and Fabric Construction and Soft Book Form creation with Beth Serjeant and Ingrid Dubbelt.

For more information, prices and bookings contact Corban Estate Arts Centre Ph 09 838 4455, email info@ceac.org.nz or visit www.ceac.org.nz

### Capital Clay:

Check out Jeroen's new work! I hope a lot of you Aucklanders will be coming to watch him ( and the others) at Capital Clay 2009. Cheers, Aimée

From Jeroen: I'd like to share my new works with you: the new catalogue will be on my website: www.jeroenbechtold.nl Click on "recent works" then "catalogue"

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## exhibitions

### Masterworks

The Collectors Series: Jackie and Graham Guthrie, 16 - 31 October 2008

Two pivotal collectors, Graham and Jackie Guthrie, have been invited to work with the gallery as guest curators. The Guthries have a longstanding relationship with Masterworks and, bearing in mind the restrictions of space, have chosen a group of object artists whose work they particularly admire. Each of these ten artists will be creating a new work for the exhibition. Contributing artists are Galia Amsel, Emma Camden, Len Castle, John Crawford, Penny Ericson, David Murray, Louise Purvis, Terry Stringer, Christine Thacker and Chris Weaver. Preview Wednesday 15 October from 5.30pm.

### Remuera Gallery:

John Nicol "New Works" paintings by our Diploma drawing teacher October 17 - 31

### Edge City

Have a look behind the green door at 65 Old Mill Road, Westmere. www.edgecity.co.nz ... Louise Rive and Chuck Joseph 3763692. Open Fridays 10am-5pm, Saturdays 10am - 2pm

### Lopdell House

Portage Ceramic Awards 2008, 10 October – 7 December (see page 1)

In keeping with our Portage Ceramic Awards tradition, a handsome full colour catalogue, featuring all or the finalists will accompany the exhibition.

If you're a keen collector, an aspiring ceramic artist, or just

plain curious, don't miss this chance to see this year's Top of the Pots in New Zealand.

### Northart

"Efflorescence" a show of work for Marilyn Wheeler's Year 7 Diploma Course featuring self-glazing pots! Until 19th October, Northart, Norman King Square, Northcote Shopping Centre, phone 4809633.

### Satellite Gallery

From Steve Bailey (frequent Merit Award winner at the ASP Exhibition)

"I will be showing my work alongside paintings by artist Jo Barrett at Satellite, corner of St Benedicts St and Newton Road, from October 7th - 19th.

*The creative is the place where no one else has ever been. You have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. What you'll discover will be wonderful. What you'll discover is yourself.*

The increasing cost and use of some expensive oxides like cobalt, tin and copper means that we will have to charge for them - check with the office.

Boat forms - towels soaked in slip and fired by Barbara Ward at the ASP



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