

Newsletter
May/June 2011



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Dear All

Welcome to the early Summer edition of your newsletter. Many thanks to contributors to this issue and especial thanks to our members who are opening their homes and studios for social and making activities for the Group. These are so important for us to get to know each other particularly in view of the geographical distribution of our membership.

I hope your ceramic work is going well - if you're thinking of taking part, remember the Bishop's Kitchen exhibition runs from 21 July to 08 August. **Please contact Veronique NOW for an entry form - her details are on page 20.**

Suzanne



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Members' Work

The front and back pages show work by Alison Milner-Gulland:

On the front page: a craft crank piece, incised and rubbed with oxides entitled "Shout". On the back: a slab built piece made using recycled clay and depicting Alison's friend David on his mobile.

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Letter from the Chair

Hello all, and isn't it lovely to see the signs of spring and even summer breaking forth after a long cold winter?

The committee had its last meeting on Saturday 19th March, at which Veronique, our treasurer, website manager and exhibition organizer announced that she will be standing down from either the role of treasurer or website manager at the next AGM and so we **will need to find a replacement**. Suzanne will also be standing down from editing the newsletter at the AGM, as she only elected to do the job for one year, so **that post will also need to be filled**. We are also currently lacking someone to **organise future exhibitions** other than the Bishops Kitchen and someone to handle the **advertising for the newsletter**. All these jobs need to be done by someone for the Southern Ceramic Group to carry on in its present form. So to summarise we need:-

**TREASURER
NEWSLETTER EDITOR
NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING ORGANISER
EXHIBITION ORGANISERS**

There must be someone out there who can help!!!

To other matters, our new demo venue, the gallery "Above the Blue" in Port Solent proved very successful and a really enjoyable day was had watching Nic Collins expertly throwing his rustic pots. It was a beautiful, clear day and the boats in the harbour were a spectacular backdrop to his talk.

There are many more events planned for 2011 amongst which are a trip to the V&A with tour of the ceramics galleries, three social workshops at Jan Griffith's studio and at the time of writing - the Jon Barrett-Danes demo, and the very successful summer exhibition in Chichester. A lot to look forward to, so come along and meet old friends and make new ones.

All the best,

Marion

Networking and Social Events



Coach trip to the
Victoria and Albert
Museum London

Wednesday 12th
October 2011

The Southern Ceramic Group is organizing a trip to the newly renovated ceramics galleries at the V&A museum in October 2011.

We will be hiring an executive coach with toilet, drinks machine etc to take us to London. The coach will pick up its first passengers at around 8.30am and arrive at the museum just after 11am. There will then be time to look around and have lunch and at 2pm there will be a 90 minute tour of the ceramics galleries given by a specialist ceramics tutor. This tour will be "tailor made" specifically for our group's interests with a particular emphasis on studio ceramics and its history. After the tour, there will be time to visit the gift shop or have a further look at the galleries before heading off in the coach at 5pm, arriving home around 7.30pm.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to have a guided tour round a ceramics collection that is unrivaled anywhere in the world, and be a great opportunity to get to know other members of our group better, besides being a fun day out!

The V&A will only take 25 people at one time on a tour, so it's first come first served as to available places. Please see the booking form opposite.

Networking and Social Events

Booking form for
Victoria & Albert Museum, London
Wednesday 12th October 2011

I/we wish to book _____ place/places on the above mentioned trip.

The price for members of SCG is £30.00 per person. Non members price £35.00 per person. This includes coach trip and 90 minute tailor made guided tour of the ceramics galleries

Name.....

Address.....

.....

..... Phone.....

Mobile.....

Email.....

I enclose my cheque in the sum of £ _____ Payable to **SOUTHERN CERAMIC GROUP**

I understand that no refunds will be given in the event of my/our non attendance on the day)

Signed.....

Making patterned bowls, using coloured inlay

Carolyn Genders 26 – 30 June

Pattern, colour, texture and line – fine drawing in clay

Joanna Veivers 8 – 10 July

Throwing and hand-building, including a raku firing

Alison Sandeman 23 – 29 July

Exploring porcelain – throwing and hand-building

Jack Doherty 12 – 15 August

Japanese ceramics – exploring form

Shozo Michikawa 12 – 26 August

Creating impact with wheel-thrown ceramics

Duncan Hooson 26 – 29 August

Hand built domestic ceramics with modelled details

Anna Lambert 9 – 12 September

For a full list of courses please contact us or visit our website:

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Carolyn Genders

V&A Ceramics: Phase 1 The Galleries



The refurbishment of the V&A's Ceramics Galleries has created the most important national and international centre for the enjoyment, understanding and study of ceramics and a collection that is unrivaled anywhere in the world.

Opened in September 2009 by HRH The Princess Royal, Phase 1 of the new galleries includes a major new introductory gallery, presenting a 'world history' of ceramics, highlighting connections between ceramics of different cultures and periods. Another major gallery is devoted to ceramic materials and techniques, and there are smaller rooms for temporary

exhibitions, changing displays of international contemporary ceramics, and the study collections of 20th century pottery and architectural ceramics.

Phase 1 of the Ceramics Galleries has been funded by a lead donation from the Headley Trust and the Rt Hon Sir Timothy Sainsbury, together with very generous support from the American Friends of the V&A through the generosity of Lydia and Manfred Gorvy, DCMS/Wolfson Museum and Galleries Improvement Fund and other private donors.

Review: Glaze Group Meeting April 12th

This month's glaze group had the theme of photography. John Howell gave a talk and demonstration together with tips on how to photograph pots and sculptures.

He brought along a folding wooden structure, (as seen in the picture), which he had made himself, to support a backing paper against which he was to photograph pieces of work. The folding support was hinged and secured with butterfly nuts for easy assembly and could be used on a table, the floor or anywhere with ease. He used a white roll of paper this time but explained that various backdrops could be used to create the desired effect.



John stressed that the most important thing was to switch off the flash when photographing pots so that you don't get nasty reflections ruining the composition.. He used a tripod for steadiness and tended to fill the frame with the subject. Setting the scene for the photo shoot is important and the angle at which you take the picture to make the most of the subject, in the case of a pot, getting

the rim in shot to help portray the three dimensional quality of the piece.

Members of the group took it in turns to photograph work they had brought along and with John's help get some good and useful shots for their portfolios. We all then had lunch which was the usual chatty, good humoured and noisy affair with lots of laughs and news of each others pottery projects. Another, thoroughly enjoyable glaze group meeting. Next glaze group meeting 11 am on Tuesday 14th June 2011 at Diana Carters, Delcroft, Hensting Lane, Owlesbury, Nr. Winchester, SO21 1LE. Tel 01962 777297.

Marion Stewart

Marion Stewart.

Review: Ceramic Art London, 2011 by Fiona Kelly

My annual trip to Ceramic Art London 25-27 Feb. 2011 was, once again, a most enjoyable and informative experience. There were quite a few changes in the potters exhibiting and the Discovery Programme had a more focused theme than in previous years. Of the 78 stands some 25 were new exhibitors and 10 hailed from Korea or Japan (though several working in the UK), a large proportion had London workshops (21 of 78), but as always there was a wide variety of work on show.

First off on the Friday were tours of the clay and glass facilities for MA students at the Royal College of Art, which became more relevant as the talks progressed as most of the speakers had studied at the RCA in recent years. The space per student seemed somewhat limited, only to be expected in Central London, but the provision of equipment, particularly for the glass students, was impressive.

The first talk of the Discovery Programme was **Katherine Morling** (RCA MA student) and **Susan O'Byrne** (Edinburgh MA) talking about their early professional practice. Katherine Morling emphasised the need to apply for everything – she got funding from the Arts Council for a larger kiln; and the need to follow up contacts – while a student at the RCA she made oyster shells for Bond Street jewellers windows which helped with her funding. She's always sketching and keeps a photo diary of all her work. She emphasised the need to have contracts with shops/galleries so there isn't confusion over sales/ownership. Her work has moved into the fine art market and she is represented by the Long and Ryle Gallery. Amazing progress since graduating from Falmouth in 2003 (see her website!).

Susan O'Byrne had a more challenging path to where she is now, but gave a very entertaining account of her early workshops in the countryside outside Edinburgh with no floors or ceilings. Animals were dominant in her BA work, she learnt more about them studying dead animals at the Veterinary College, and she then won a travel bursary and went to Africa where she studied cheetahs and

Review: Ceramic Art London, 2011 by Fiona Kelly

zebras, which featured in her MA show. She moved into a shared studio space in Glasgow and has found that more supportive and gives better access to equipment. A Creative Scotland grant helped to buy a large trolley kiln, essential for firing her large, very delicate animals (see Ceramic Review 248 for making details). She emphasised how easy it would be to give up on ceramics, it is not an easy choice. She has been encouraged by residencies at Edinburgh Zoo and in East Germany and she now supplements her income teaching workshops for people with learning disabilities. Her stand at CAL showed her latest project making life sized birds which seemed to be well received, contrasting with her previous larger than life animals.

On Day 2 there were four talks looking at different approaches to production. First off **Louisa Taylor** who only graduated from Bath Spa University in 2003. She had concentrated on salt glaze in a gas kiln at college, but on graduating went to work in Lincolnshire as a self employed potter. The space was cheap but the kiln was unknown and the pottery and flat upstairs freezing cold. After a bleak year, when she supplemented her income by teaching workshops in schools she applied to do an MA at the RCA 2004-6. She researched "fine dining" and needed to sort out her glazes for an electric kiln. Her "multi" collection at her MA show demonstrated her dedication to excellence, stacking functional forms with extravagant handles. In 2008 she got a Crafts Council Development Award which enabled her to buy a bigger kiln for her studio in Deptford and in 2009 she was awarded the Batch Production prize at the British Ceramics Biennial in Stoke.

Teaching one day a week at Brighton University has enabled her to carry out extensive colour testing which married to her interest in fine dining pieces produced in the past led to the "Oriole" supper set which takes its colours from a supper set in Stoke City Museum, exhibiting a modern twist on an old theme for serving food elegantly. This study will be taken further in her current project with York Museum. She also has a book (70,000 words) on Tools and Techniques coming out in the summer and has been doing free lance colour trend prediction work for the

Review: Ceramic Art London, 2011 by Fiona Kelly

last few years. All this has taken its toll, she hasn't had a holiday in 4 years, so next year she plans to take a break for her wedding! A truly exhausting 8 years.

After lunch **Sue Pryke** exhausted us further with her whirlwind career in the world of mass production (as well as having four children). Leaving school without much idea of what to do she went to work for a production thrower in Lincolnshire, then went on to college, but found that throwing was not really for her and discovered plaster and the lathe. During her MA at the RCA she won the student design award and went on to work for Wedgwood. She uses sketches, computer graphics, foam and plaster models to create and present her designs. In 1996 she joined the IKEA design team – her 365 range has been in production since and is the most produced range of tableware in the world. She has also designed plastics, metal, glass and melamine for IKEA and done small scale production projects with Hornsea, the Conran shop and Heals. Most recently she has been Design Manager for Sainsburys. These companies are so commercially driven that they use trend prediction agencies to predict what colours/patterns/styles/textures will be on trend in 2-3 years time. The design team are not expected to create anything new, just tweak designs/colours, etc. She attends Trend Shows – Ambiente in Germany and Maison in Paris are some of the best, and does a lot of snooping in other shops to make sure their designs are on trend. As most large scale ceramic production is based in the far east these big companies have sourcing offices in the area to oversee production. Then they have press events for launching new ranges in store. Sue has recently left Sainsburys and is working free lance again.

Tilla Waters talked next of her and **John's** life as small batch production potters. They both trained in Fine Art before going to work with Rupert Spira as apprentices. He had very exacting standards and they learnt one thing in very great depth – batch production, but did not feel they had found their personal voice; unlike those studying ceramics at art school who are encouraged to explore all avenues. At their pottery in Wales James concentrated on throwing and Tilla did the decorating. They

Review: Ceramic Art London, 2011 by Fiona Kelly

encountered lots of technical problems, and felt they were trying too many ideas. After the birth of their child they reined in the variety of work produced, concentrating on their "fine line" decoration before expanding again into work with a more painterly nature, with a balanced composition coming to their work. Tilla now has her own wheel and throws again as well.

For selling they suffered many knock backs from galleries and now do 2 trips to London each year to Origin and Ceramic Art London, always sending out lots of email invitations. They enter lots of Ceramic competitions, for which images are very important and they are always upgrading their website.

Finally **Chris Keenan** took to the stage. He was an actor until he was 35. He had met Edmund du Vaal and bought a couple of his pots in Sheffield, just because he liked them – then in 1994 he decided he needed a change in career direction and contacted Edmund who took him on as an apprentice. He wanted to create objects that would be used and loved and live in someone's home – he wanted to throw and started with porcelain. He had his first show in 1996 and his own studio by 1998 – career building which he never felt he had as an actor.

In 2005 he was asked by Habitat to design a Japanese inspired range of table ware, these went into production and he went to Japan to see the production. This all went well because of very clear communications, and the work was different enough from his own small batch production work – people would buy at Habitat and then come to him for the "real thing". His most recent project has been with 60/40 Starting Point Series II, a site specific work for a dance studio in SE1. He started with three thrown, porcelain forms, a column, a cone and a sphere and produced several of each in three colours. He constructed a small cupboard with instructions to students/teachers passing by to use the shapes contained within to create a structure on the shelf above. A camera was positioned opposite the site and each participant was instructed to take a photograph of their creation. His "Continuing Drama" gave him over 900 images, some of which he shared with us – an amazing interaction. He again stressed the importance of applying for opportunities – he is currently benefitting from a years sponsorship from American Express with business mentoring.

Review: Ceramic Art London, 2011 by Fiona Kelly

Sunday was a quieter day. **Paul Scott**, famous for his “willow pattern” variations, told us about his involvement in a huge mural project in Hanoi, Vietnam, initiated by an artist to brighten up a 6km concrete wall along the main highway into the city. The project has created 100 jobs locally with the regeneration of a mosaic business; sections of the wall are sponsored by local businesses and foreign companies/embassies. He took an image from Vietnamese ceramic history – prunus with cracked ice – enlarged it and went to Vietnam to watch the production and initial installation. His Cumbrian Blues have print at the forefront of his ceramics. His first plate was a fantasy landscape based on Sellafield, as a joke, in 1996. They sold and further jokes followed – Seascale Pigeon in 2000. During his doctorate he studied the blue and white pottery of the 1700 & 1800s, which were printed from engravings. He does his own screen printing onto manufactured plates, tureens, etc, some of which are antique and some bought off ebay. Recently he has been working with a Danish potter Ann Linnemann, she produces the ware and he decorates it, and he has been firing his work in a salt glaze kiln and adding gold to lift the work. The closure of Spode really saddened him and he produced a series of pieces to commemorate its passing. www.cumbrianblues.com

Finally, **Annie Turner** talked about her work produced in her Peckham studio but inspired by the tidal estuary in Suffolk where she grew up and sailed with her father on the river. The meanders in the mud and fragments of manmade structures that remain in the creeks inspire her, and she takes her palette from the bleak, grey but beautiful landscape in winter. She has produced a series of spoons, some very large, igniting memory, with fossils, shells and feathers impressed; ladders feature – a record of time passing. The discovery of the Sutton Hoo informed some of the latter, as well as the sluices and grills along the river. Her father died in 2003 and she made a series called “sinkers” – net forms made from very fine coils, forms which she still works with today, pushing the work to collapse in the firing. Poetry is important to her inspiration and she read us two poems which she related to specific sculptures. A quiet ending to an exhausting weekend.

Fiona Kelly

Review: Nic Collins at Above the Blue 06 March

Nic Collins drove up from his studio on the edges of Dartmoor to talk to us and show us how he builds pots. He has been throwing large pots for the past twenty odd years, and all are wood fired in kilns he has built.

He remarked that the Above the Blue Gallery was the venue with the finest views (over Port Solent Marina, up to Portsdown Hill) at which he had ever done a demonstration.

I have to say that prior to this talk I had not understood or appreciated either wood fired pots or ash glazing. By the end of the day I was a convert – I will look at them in a new light. Each of Nic's pots is unique, in shape, colour and size, and with the unpredictable nature of wood ash glazing, in the final glaze. The pots look large and feel large, and each time I looked at one, I found new features.

Nic started with a slide show – views of Dartmoor in light moods and dark, kilns -building, filling, firing and opening; working with other potters, and pots – large and larger.

Nic's stoneware pots are single fired, with some glaze applied on the inside and around the top; other glaze and flashes of colour come from the wood ash, generated from hard and soft woods used to fire the kiln. The firings take up to 4 days, starting very gently, ending up at 1300 C (the temperature at which ash glazes are formed). He uses no pyrometers, just experience to judge how the firing proceeds.

After the slides and questions (and a look at his just published book and a break for lunch) we watched as Nic gave a masterclass of throwing and building.

Using a wheel at low speed he centred 3-4 kg of stoneware clay as a cone, prior to opening up and drawing up. He then showed us how to make clay doughnut (like pinch pots without a bottom), and how to get gravity to shape and enlarge the rings. He then fits and join them to the top of the cylinder he had built, and draws them up. Drying the

above the blue



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Art Gallery at Port Solent



Gerda Wardell



Annabel Owens



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Ashley Greenwood-Glodham

above the blue

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Wednesday - Saturday: 10.30am-7pm ...quite often later on a warm, sunny evening Sunday: 11am-5pm

Review: Nic Collins at Above the Blue 06 March

outside of the pot using a propane blowtorch (to stiffen the outer layers of clay), he then added further clay doughnuts, each of which he drew up. The initial cylinder had been some 30cm high, and each added clay doughnut raised the wall by 20cm. A bottle, over 1metre high was built in about 20 minutes.

He then showed us how he builds large pots by joining two thrown bowl shapes. The first bowl was thrown with the opening going right through to the throwing batt. It was about 20cm high, 30cm wide at the 'top' and 16cm at the 'bottom'. It was left on the batt and set to one side. Once inverted and fitted to the second bowl would form the top of the complete pot.

A second bowl that thrown to about the same dimensions, but the bottom was left intact. The rim was measured and an inner lip formed, so that the overall diameter was the same as the first 'bowl'.

The first bowl was then turned upside down, (tricky bit!) and fitted on top of the second bowl. The upper batt (which sealed the pot's opening) was now carefully cut off, and the two bowls were now joined (inside and out). Hey! , we had a powerful looking large pot which Nic recons it is unlikely could have been made by conventional throwing.

He also showed us how he makes pouring spouts, and how he makes and attaches handles – if you want to know how (and more) , then get Nic's book 'Throwing Large' which has just been published by AC Black.

Nic is one of Britain's leading potters with an international reputation. He quoted one entry in the visitor's books at his studio:
'What a wonderful shop of seconds'.

From what we saw him build and examples he brought to show us, all I can say is - Some Seconds!

Zyg Kruk

Networking and Social Events

On Sunday 10th April the first of three planned social, hands on days for 2011 was held at Jan Griffiths home and studio in North Boarhunt. There were only six of us on this occasion, and we started the day sat on the patio outside Jan's fantastic, purpose built studio in the brilliant sunshine surrounded by the wonderfully peaceful naturalistic woodland chatting and sipping coffee.

We had all come prepared with pottery projects we were working on, or to sketch or do what ever took our fancy, but we actually all ended up making tea bowls supervised by Rob Dunster. Rob had brought along a number of bowls



which he had "prepared earlier", made by flattening a ball of clay and pulling up the sides to form a chunky tea bowl shape. The next stage was to carve away at the bowl with a specially made curved tool until the bowl felt thin light. The art is to judge this stage precisely, (which most of us didn't do successfully), and there were cries of dismay, one after another, as each of us found our tools disappearing through the wall or base of the pot we were working on. There was a lot of laughing,

joking and general bonhomie around that table.

We had a superb lunch in Jan's spacious kitchen, and as always, (a matter which never ceases to amaze me,) the amount and variety of food brought was just right. After lunch we took a stroll into the garden, peering at newts in the natural pond and looking for slow worms and grass snakes, and then it was back to our pots, which we intend to fire at the raku firing day planned for Sunday 3rd July.

I cannot recommend this event more highly. It was a superb day, and what better way to spend time but with like minded friends, chatting, laughing and working with clay! Marion Stewart

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Networking and Social Events

Angmering Pit Fire: As in previous years we shall have the annual pit and Raku firing at Angmering on the first Sunday in September i.e. the 4th, I would ask everyone to bring something towards lunch and there will be a charge of £8 for the day. I will put a booking form in the next newsletter.
Anne Lovejoy

What's On

CERAMICUS 2011 Following a very successful exhibition last year at the Oxmarket Centre of Arts in Chichester, the Ceramicus group will soon be exhibiting their new work at the Winchester Discovery Centre in conjunction with ancient pottery from the area.

The work of the participating artists represents a wide range of styles and techniques and it will be fascinating to compare these with the Iron Age to Tudor pottery, some shown for the first time, from the museum archives. The exhibition runs from may14 to june12
opening times Mon-Fri 10am-6pm Sat
11 am – 5 pm
Sun 11am- 4pm.

More details on www.ceramicus.co.uk



Trip to the RA Summer Exhibition: I am running a trip on Sunday 10th July, at a cost of £14.00 for members of Eastleigh Art Society and £16.00 for friends. maybe SCG members might be interested?

contact:- janicefry@tiscali.co.uk

The Committee

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Exhibitions West: **Vacant: Could you fill this spot?**

Newsletter Advertising: **Vacant: Although we may have an offer!**

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