



Shaping Space

a celebration of **Lantz Clay**



Mary E. Black Gallery

Sept 11 – Oct 25, 2009

Presented by the

Nova Scotia Potters Guild



IT IS BOTH AN HONOUR AND A PLEASURE for the Mary E. Black Gallery to present this comprehensive exhibition on the development and celebration of the Nova Scotia Potters Guild and its use of a local red clay known as Lantz clay. It is a timely tribute.

My sincere appreciation goes to Ray Mackie for his proposing this multifaceted exhibition and his subsequent coordination, curatorial contribution and securing of support from Atlantic Pottery Supply Limited and through a grant from the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage.

Indispensable to the project have been Guild members Sharon Fiske, Judy Gordon, Louise Pentz and Karen Robinson, whose voluntary efforts have ranged from collection of details on artists and their work to production of this publication. Completing the collaboration are Scott Robson, Curator, History Collection at the Nova Scotia Museum, and Chris Tyler, arts consultant, ceramic artist, curator and former arts administrator, who have generously provided invaluable information and expertise.

At the risk of understatement, no exhibition would exist without the artist – thank you for your inspiration, commitment and enthusiasm. My gratitude extends to all whose support and participation in this project contribute to the enrichment of our community.

—Susan MacAlpine Foshay, Director
Mary E. Black Gallery
Nova Scotia Centre for Craft and Design

CONTENTS

Articles

- From Ray Mackie, Curator • 3
- An overview of the use of Lantz clay in Nova Scotia • 5
- History of the Nova Scotia Potters Guild • 19

The Show

- Works by invited Lantz clay artists • 3–8
- Juried works by Nova Scotia Potters Guild members • 10–15
- About the artists and essayists • 16–18

Three-part measurements are presented as height × width × depth

From Ray Mackie, Curator

EXCELLENCE in ceramic art derives from a dynamic tension between technical skill and the expressions of a free human spirit. As potters acquire skill and mastery from teachers, practice, and the study of history, they are better able to give form and expression to an inner resonance. The history of ceramics is primarily that of earthenware. For centuries, potters attempted to transcend this humble, iron-laden material with the goal of producing white gem-like and elegant forms. The postmodern tendency towards exempting materials from value judgment has led to the re-evaluation of earthenware as both a historical and contemporary medium.

In 1982, in the context of a show which he was jurying, Wayne Higby said, "One chooses to work in earthenware because of the softness of the final product, or because of the great range of brilliant colours available, or for the intimacy of the fire at low temperature"(1). Lantz clay, like any other, presents opportunities and challenges. It exhibits exemplary plasticity, a pleasant range of colour, high shrinkage, and a narrow maturation range. When offered the opportunity to work with Lantz clay, many for the first time, the members of the Nova Scotia Potters Guild demonstrated a commendable adaptability and enthusiasm. The range of concerns and technical approaches makes generalization difficult. The work includes utilitarian ware, figurative sculpture, systematic tile work, and sculptural vessels. The work is smoked, oxidized, wood-fired and raku-fired. The juried component of the exhibition (20 artists) embodies a representative cross-section of concerns found within the Guild.

The invited potters (Joan Bruneau, Jim Smith, Tim Worthington, Pam Birdsall, Pat Woods, Walter Ostrom), exemplify high levels of artistic and technical mastery of Lantz earthenware clay. It seems clear that in each instance, the potter has found qualities that have precluded the use of other or commercial clay bodies. Interestingly, all have worked extensively with lighter coloured slips which are trailed, brushed, dipped, poured and incised with a great diversity of effects, and covered by transparent glazes. All have, I feel, remained sensitive to the fundamental qualities of the clay and its inherent "earthiness."

Nova Scotia does not have a long or rich history of ceramic production. Local production was overshadowed by

JIM SMITH

Charger with Mosquitoes, 2009

15"

white slip, sgraffito, stains and clear glaze

Collection of Fran Gregor

I was introduced to working with Lantz earthenware when I came to study at NSCAD in 1980. Having worked previously with both stoneware and porcelain I was enchanted with the strength and sensuality of earthenware and the vast possibilities the material presented. In my work I build up, draw through, and paint layers of decoration that provide for a rich surface with great visual depth. I explore the extensive historical cross-cultural relationships in the development of earthenware, the most ubiquitous clay on the planet. Using our high quality Nova Scotia Lantz clay helps to locate this province as one of the global leaders in the study and practice of earthenware ceramics.





PAT WOODS

Large platter, 2009

14"

hand thrown with slip decoration and transparent glaze

Working with red earthenware over the last decade I have learned that you have to be incredibly focused. The pottery is decorated at the damp/leather hard stage, when it is dipped, poured, brushed and trailed all in the one holding. The process is an intense dance – each hand doing a different job. And there is timing. Some brush marks now, while the white slip gleams – more later as it stiffens. There's a magic to the immediacy of slipware decoration – finger painting through light to dark. Seen through a transparent tinted glaze, the energy presents itself with succulence and depth in the finished pieces.

extensive importation of relatively cheap 'ballast' imports produced in England and New England. It really wasn't until the 1970s that a distinctive, indigenous, communal body of work began to emerge. Walter Ostrom is a pivotal figure in the modern discourse of what ceramics could be about in Nova Scotia. Homer Lord had promoted the use of Lantz clay to students, but he worked primarily in stoneware himself.

Walter Ostrom appeared on the scene during a critical historical shift away from Bernard Leach's "...sweeping arguments and value laden terms when scrutinizing the position of potters within society"(2), and towards the anything-goes ferment which was occurring at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. His persuasive eloquence and personal enthusiasm propelled many students towards a career as a ceramic artist.

The invited potters were influenced by Walter's enthusiasm for and use of Lantz clay during his tenure at NSCAD.

Their subsequent enthusiastic use of Lantz clay further contributed to the diversification of Nova Scotia ceramics, and a shift away from the dominance of high temperature technologies. Simultaneously we see a move away from the Leach/Hamada tradition of the "...hybrid Anglo-Oriental pot..."(3). Some of this shift, I think, can be attributed to the concerns and cultural content found in Walter Ostrom's wide-ranging and comprehensive ceramic history lectures.

I wish to mention the work of Alice Hagen as an early modern practitioner. She displayed a courageous and experimental approach, in the face of a daunting lack of technical training as a potter. Curators like Scott Robson have preserved and documented works from the past, and potters like Martin Wilson and Betty Beaver at Sherbrooke Village are devoting considerable time and resources to the preservation of techniques which are so quickly lost to the past. It was exciting for me to see this show come together as a limited but significant visual record of what has been done with Lantz clay. It is my hope that the members of the Nova Scotia Potters Guild have enjoyed the process of working with Lantz clay, and that the experience will provoke more creative experiments in the future.

—Ray Mackie, July 2009

(1) *Ceramics Monthly*, May 1982, p. 54

(2) *Bernard Leach*, Edmund deWaal, Tate Gallery Publishing, 1998, p. 58

(3) *Bernard Leach*, Edmund deWaal, Tate Gallery Publishing, 1998, p. 6

An overview of the use of Lantz clay in Nova Scotia

THE COLOUR OF CHOCOLATE when wet, Lantz clay is a red earthenware clay widely used by potters in Nova Scotia today. It is made available by The Shaw Group (formerly L.E. Shaw Limited), who use it themselves as a brick clay. Most of the red brickwork seen in buildings around Halifax today is the same clay as potters use. The clay has contributed to making Nova Scotia potters' work known throughout North America.

CONTEXT AND EARLY USE

Nova Scotia is fortunate in having a varied geology. Many ceramic materials are available in the province, though few are commercially exploited. When Europeans settled here in the 18th century, ceramic industries were already developing in Europe and the UK, especially in Stoke-on-Trent. Buying the latest imported manufactured goods became a fashionable in Canada. The imports were white earthenware and china, and usually the decoration was transfer-printed patterns and pictures of Canadian scenery and historic events such as the death of Wolfe. "Picture pottery became a ceramic fashion of the 19th century, widely demanded, widely produced" (E. Collard, *The Potter's View of Canada*, McGill UP, 1983, p. 5). Ceramic historian Collard notes that an advertisement in the *Nova Scotian* on March 13, 1811, refers to a shipment of imported "blue printed ware, now so generally used" for sale. She adds, "By the 1820s printed earthenware was dominant, its place unchallenged from then on as the tableware most commonly found in Canadian homes" (p. 9). The development of a local ceramics industry in the face of such market preferences was unlikely.

Local production of wares made from local materials did take place, however, consisting mainly of crocks and other relatively mundane and ephemeral wares, and also of bricks. The earliest piece of signed pottery from Nova Scotia is a bowl in the Nova Scotia Museum collection. It is signed "Joseph/ D. Halfyard/ July 1850/ Clemments" [*sic*]. The site is in Annapolis County. Red ware generally stayed in the kitchen and scullery, while the fashionable imported ware was displayed and used at the family table and in the parlour and morning room. Today,

PAM BIRDSALL

Lupin Serving Plate, 2008

15"

raw Lantz clay, feathered slip decoration with sponged glaze rim

In 1974 Lantz clay got under my fingernails, stained my clothes and changed my life. Using the clay when it comes straight from the clay pit, with just a little silica sand added to reduce the shrinking, is like working with silk. It's so plastic that you can almost tie a knot with a coil of clay and it won't break.

This magnificent earthenware has taught me so much over the 35 years I've been using it, I understand its nuances and demands very well. Like all important relationships, I know how to prepare it, how far I can push its limits and when I've gone too far and it either cracks or explodes in the kiln.

I have learned to dance the Lantz dance and now no other partner will do.



the attractiveness of such mostly anonymous local work that remains is recognized in the antique and collectibles markets. The strength of form, fine proportions, quality of potting and minimal decoration are now felt to be positive attributes, especially when found in locally produced wares. These early potters used local clays that were very similar in composition to Lantz clay.

EARLY STUDIO POTTERS

When the art of studio pottery began to be practiced in Nova Scotia, before and just after World War II, such pioneers as Alice Hagen, Ernst and Alma Lorenzen, “Tubby” Fox and the young Homer Lord do not appear to have had commercial raw materials available to them, at least not such as there are today. As far as I can determine, most potters of these early generations dug their own clay. When Walter Ostrom arrived to teach at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) at the end of the 1960s, he was surprised to find that the ceramic department did not have a stoneware, high-fire kiln. His admitted prejudice then – shared, as I know myself, by most university-educated potters at the time – was that red clay was a medium for amateurs. Local potters generally used red earthenware clay, as well as Shubenacadie and Musquodoboit clays that are higher firing and generally classed as stoneware clays, although I suspect they were most often used in electric kilns in mid- and low-temperature ranges.

As ceramic activity grew, a key connection was made between ceramists and a reliable supply of clay by Alice Hagen (1872–1972) and L.E. Shaw Limited. The Shaw company, which was established in 1861, must be recognized as having played a significant and enlightened role in the development of ceramics in Nova Scotia through the supply of Lantz clay. Gail Crawford in her definitive book *Studio Ceramics in Canada* (Goose Lane Editions, 2005) establishes that Alice Hagen introduced a six-week pottery course at her home in Mahone Bay in 1938. This course developed into a three-year certificate program and rotated between Mahone Bay and Mount St. Bernard convent in Antigonish. Crawford notes that “With matchless generosity, Lloyd E. Shaw for years donated clay for teaching purposes and fired pots in the Lantz beehive kilns” (p. 28). Clearly then, Lantz clay was established in the late 1930s as a standard clay for studio potters. A ready and reliable supply of a consistent material must have made the development of studio ceramics a much more viable proposition.



underside of rim

WALTER OSTROM

Byzantine Flower Platter, 2006

15" × 2"

thrown Lantz clay, neo-maiolica with polychrome glazes

With few exceptions I make utilitarian pots which function in the everyday world of the home rather than the one-dimensional world of the Gallery/Museum. My goal is that they can work containing/displaying food or flowers but continue to function decoratively when not in actual use.

Equally important is the fact that a pot comes with all sorts of cultural information: social, economic, political, esthetic, etc. The challenge is to keep in mind both the utilitarian and informational roles.

In the 1950s, Ernst and Alma Lorenzen were encouraged by Lloyd Shaw to move to Lantz and establish their studio there. Although their work is also found in high-fire porcelain, this couple was responsible for putting a Lantz body before the public as a commercially viable studio potter's material. Their work, which rapidly became collectible, went further to establish Lantz clay as a respected material. Some early connections were made between the Shaw plant and NSCAD, almost certainly through Homer Lord, and student trips to the plant became an annual event. These trips provided a direct experience of the real origins of clay for people who were never going to prospect for and dig their own and further reinforced a wider knowledge of Lantz as an authentic material identified with Nova Scotia.

CONTEMPORARY PERIOD

Walter Ostrom describes his first encounter with red earthenware clay during a workshop he gave in the Annapolis Valley. He was invited by the local potters to use the local clay, which he describes as being very similar to Lantz. He associated red clay with flower pots and so he made a flower pot. Later, he combined his ambitions as a professional potter with his horticultural interests in an exhibition of *terra sigillata* flower pots titled *Pots de Fleurs* at Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery in 1976. This exhibition also included high-fire porcelain pieces, thereby asserting that Lantz clay belonged in the same class of seriousness as porcelain in the context of a major art gallery. Walter was almost certainly the first to exhibit Lantz clay in this way, and his insight into the value of having local clay was a vital step in the wider use of Lantz clay. Other factors were timely, such as a reaction against the high cost of fuel for high-fire ceramics that was spurred by the oil crisis of the early part of the 1970s. Also, an aesthetic reaction to the by then familiar muted colours of high fire now gave way to the appeal of the opportunities for bright colour offered by lower temperature ware.

Walter Ostrom is quick to give credit for the wider use of Lantz clay to Tim Worthington and his partner, Pam Birdsall, who were his students at NSCAD. Tim and Pam researched earthenware traditions and developed slips and glazes that fit a Lantz body. All NSCAD students of ceramics were exposed to Lantz clay by the mid-1970s. Tim's exhibition for his MFA in 1977 consisted entirely of Lantz pots, as did mine in 1978. NSCAD faculty member John Reeve, a Canadian who had



TIM WORTHINGTON

Stuart, 2006

14"

raw Lantz clay, underglazes, clear glaze

I started working with Lantz clay during graduate school in 1975 and have never wanted to use anything else. The limitation of slips and transparent coloured glazes has ironically provided so much freedom. It has allowed me to really understand the process to the point that I see in terms of slips and glazes. Pattern in slipware has so many possibilities as it allows both additive and subtractive approaches. I can dip, brush and/or sponge the coloured slips or coloured transparent glazes. I can also draw in the slip as well as scrape it away providing infinite possibilities for pattern. Our fabulous retail location in Mahone Bay has allowed us to really experiment with decoration because we weren't locked into just the craft show circuit or wholesaling which wouldn't necessarily lend itself to slipware. We have had to work within a retail context as this has been our sole means of income. We have had to fully embrace that compromise with time, what we like and what people will buy. I still really enjoy the relationship with form and function, trying to create pottery that you don't tire of.

| Clay | Lantz % | Middleton % |
|--------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| SiO ₂ | 56.94 | 61.21 |
| Fe ₂ O ₃ | 4.61 | 5.20 |
| TiO ₂ | 0.89 | 0.87 |
| Al ₂ O ₃ | 20.51 | 19.02 |
| CaO | 1.61 | 0.34 |
| MgO ₂ | 2.83 | 5.65 |
| Na ₂ O | 0.8 | 0.15 |
| K ₂ O | 3.7 | 4.96 |
| LOI | 6.12 | 5.95 |

Technical Information from The CANMET Report 78-21, L. K. Zemgals, J. G. Brady, K. E. Bell, *Ceramic Clays and Shales of the Atlantic Provinces*, The Canadian Centre for Mineral and Energy Technology, 1978. Courtesy of Barry Roberts, The Shaw Group

worked with Leach in Cornwall and had experience with traditional earthenware potteries in the United Kingdom, made earthenware at NSCAD at the end of the 1970s, and the coming and going of visiting artists ensured that the practices at NSCAD became widely disseminated to ceramics departments elsewhere. Other NSCAD students continued the trend. Most notably of those who remained in the province to work, Jim Smith's Nova Scotia Folk Pottery, who has always used mostly Lantz, continues the assertion that the use of local clay connects to a tradition and locale. Works in Lantz clay have been exhibited across Canada and the United States. Walter Ostrom has received the Saidye Bronfman Award for Excellence in the Crafts, partly in recognition of his revitalization of earthenware, based on Lantz clay, and has recently received the Order of Canada.

Barry Roberts of Shaw Brick, one of The Shaw Group's divisions, told me that the Lantz deposit is a river-bottom clay and does not extend beyond the local area of Lantz, although the company has plenty in reserve. It is a clay with very fine particles; over 99% will go through a 200 mesh screen. He provided analyses of Lantz clay and of a similar clay in the Middleton area, given at left for comparison.

Lantz clay is known to contain calcium sulphate (gypsum), a soluble compound that can migrate to the surface of a fired body, giving an unpleasant crust. Although this surface has been used as part of the aesthetic effect of the surface, most potters regard it as a contamination.

JOAN BRUNEAU
Four Season Flower Bricks (four elements),
2009

10" × 15³/₄" × 15³/₄" each
wheel thrown, hand built, Lantz earthenware slip, glazes
Collection of Joanne Young



It can be counteracted by the addition of barium carbonate in the wet stage of clay preparation, rendering the sulphate insoluble.

Lantz clay can be used without additions and fires reliably to cone 04. It can be bought in dry powdered form or bagged straight from the ground. The dry form tends to be a little short despite its small particle size. Shrinkage is about 10%. Many potters add some sand to give more strength to the plastic body and reduce shrinkage.

Lantz clay may be used as a glaze ingredient but melts better if ball milled first.

Very few potters today prospect for, dig and process local clays. Doing so is not in itself difficult, but the costs of land acquisition or rights, labour, equipment and testing generally rule it out. Instead, local potters depend on commercially prepared materials that may originate in Ohio, California or Cornwall, and which pass through secondary processors who may be in Toronto to warehousing and distribution via Atlantic Pottery Supplies in Dartmouth. The handcraft movement may have begun as a reaction against industrialization, but ironically, potters necessarily depend heavily on the existence of a sophisticated bathroom or construction industry for cheap and reliable raw materials.

The continued use of Lantz clay is an important statement about the core value of hand-made pottery – namely, a connection to individual experience and to a specific environment.

—Chris Tyler, May 2009

I worked with both earthenware and porcelainous stoneware as a student from 1985 through 1992. The richness and variation of soda fired stoneware was very seductive but red earthenware offered a direct and shorter production cycle with electric firing as well as colourful saturated glazes. While in graduate school at the University of Minnesota from 1990 to 1993, I developed an earthenware palette influenced by some of the desirable qualities of soda-firing such as variation in depth and texture which with electric firing could be addressed through juxtaposing *terra sigillata* with matt and translucent glazes over brushed slip. On returning to my home province of Nova Scotia in 1993, I was excited to work with Lantz clay primarily because of its plasticity and minimal warpage. Unlike most earthenware claybodies, the Lantz earthenware body contains no added fluxes which reduce the clay's plasticity. Lantz lends itself to my shaping methods which involve bending, folding and stretching the soft clay membrane. In 2005 Jim Smith and I did a residency at La Meridiana Ceramics Studio in Italy where we researched and produced maiolica ware. Since then, I have introduced pattern and a lighter palette into my repertoire.



MINDY MOORE
Couple #1 Vases

9" high
Lantz clay, wheel thrown and altered,
clear glaze inside, outside treated with
tung oil, bisqued Δ04, glazed Δ06

I chose to use the Lantz clay raw with no added chemicals and decided to throw a few of the forms that I have made for many years with porcelain and white stoneware. The redness of the clay captivated me. I approached the clay as I have any clay body, with a sense of spontaneity, allowing the clay to speak to me as I threw vessel after vessel. I was most in awe of the colour and lusciousness of the wet clay.



FRANCE ARRUDA
Carved Expressions Jar I

11" × 5"
wheel thrown carved Lantz clay, layered
low fire glazes, bisque Δ06, glaze Δ04,

Passion: an intense overpowering
emotion.

The intricate patterns carved into clay,
The delicate lines and shadows revealed,
The brilliance of glaze, deep and flowing,
The joy of holding a piece in your hands,
of sensing its potential, of finding its way.

The Clay calls to me.
This is my Passion.



SHARON FISKE
Home Sweet Home Pitcher

17" × 11" × 7"
NSCAD's intro earthenware, Δ04, clear and
maiolica glazes, oxides, underglazes, plas-
tic embellishments

When I turned my mind to shaping space with Lantz clay, the thought of "bricks" would not go away and so when I put this piece together, the space I created was an amalgam of a potter's dream house — delightfully whimsical and animated — which is how I like my space.



DOUG BAMFORD
Sacrificial Flowers

9" × 9"
slip cast earthenware with 10% Lantz clay,
neo-maiolica glaze

This piece carries on my investigation into the uses and meanings of historical ornament. The cutting of flowers and bringing them into the domestic space was perhaps the first and simplest of sacrificial practices.



ROSEMARY METZ
*Watching for the
Next Ride Home*

28" × 7" × 7"
earthenware (1020°C), paper clay with
Lantz clay engobe, non-ceramic sealant

Inspiration came from articles read at various times in the Halifax Chronicle-Herald about UFO sightings. The August 8, 2008, article read shortly after we had just moved into the Prospect area from BC, trumpets, "Close Encounters of the Weird Kind."

The article featured a tourist who spied strange lights over Prospect — a navy official said they were just shooting off flares. . . . Apparently, 2008 was a stellar year for UFO sightings in Canada. The sculpture is an attempt to visualize the possibility that some interstellar visitors may have been left behind.



MARYANNE FISHER
Luxor

9¼" × 7½" × 4"
low fire red clay with Lantz clay-based
black slip, crawl glaze, acrylic paint

This piece is about unity. Just as the ancient city of Luxor is composed of individual artifacts of historical significance and yet a functioning urban metropolis, this piece represents the tension between the singular and the whole. We perceive it as a singular unit, and yet it is composed of distinct elements that exist in isolation. With this piece, I balance the singular and the whole in an effort to introduce the third issue of the clay's substance. Substance is the real, physical matter of which an entity exists. The carvings suggest the substance of the designs while the shape indicates the substance of the whole.



JUDY GORDON
Old Time Bottle

7" × 4½"
wheel thrown in Lantz clay and glazed;
wood fired on its side with seashells as
wadding Δ04

Shaping Space . . . for the Lantz clay project — I think of the pots that were made in Nova Scotia by the potters of long ago. What did they make? How was it fired? How do I embrace that aesthetic in my voice? Bowls, jugs, crocks, bottles — wood fired. Simply made, simply fired, useful shapes.



NANCY ROBERTS

Vivian

12" × 14"

hand built of Lantz and white earthenware, crawl glaze, Δ04

Evolutionary theory tells us that existing justifies existence: every creature can take its life seriously. "Here I am, so that's that." For me, an invented life form says this better than a real-world creature would.

The challenge of life-form sculpture is movement — a body swaying or waving, roots or tentacles that clutch and feel, a bumpy exterior maybe tender underneath.



SHAUNA MACLEOD

Bird Books

4½" × 4½" × 3¾" (in box)

Lantz red earthenware, *terra sigillata*, electric fired to Δ03, recycled paper, linen thread

These books represent the unearthing of a love of book binding with my passion for clay and represent prospective journeys as well as the concept of freedom.



BARBARA LUKWINSKI

Torso No. 6

14" × 10½"

press molded, embedded glass, under-glazes, electric fired to Δ04, white crawling glaze

I studied pottery, printmaking and bronze casting for five years in Vancouver and Alberta. For 25 years my focus in clay was Δ10 reduction functional pottery. In the last three years I have been working with earthenware, which has pushed me to create in a sculptural form. My main interest in art is the human figure. In this piece I made a mold from a living model. The individuality of each piece is expressed through the physical manipulation of shape, texture, glaze and method of firing. Of equal importance, the torso is also shaped by the emotional voice of impressions. Through this process the clay transforms into a raw and abstract form, becoming a metaphor of the human spirit.



MARY JANE LUNDY
*Ode to the Lorenzens /
 After the Rain*

20" × 11½"
 hand built water fountain with underglaze
 and glaze, fired to Δ04

Water gushing forth is a symbol of the life-force of Man and of all things. The gushing up and flowing back within this ceramic vessel completes a circle. This is a commemoration piece to Alma and Ernst Lorenzen who had worked in their studio in Lantz, creating different species of Nova Scotia mushrooms out of Lantz clay.



SHANNON POTTER
Incacio-Goetsch, 2009

12" × 6½" × 4½"
 sculpted with NSCAD sculpture body,
 painted with oxides, wood fired

This piece uses classic earthenware sculptural forming and firing methods, yet comments on contemporary society by means of the figure striding confidently forward while engaged with technology.



LOUISE PENTZ
Singer

52½" × 12" × 5"
 Lantz clay, ochre, slip, pastels

Based on over 30 years' experience, I am currently exploring the "clay vessel" theme through the female form. Women's truths and experiences are given rough-hewn expression utilizing the textural qualities of the clay. The final smoke firing of the sculpture produces a surface reminiscent of ancient artifacts, reminding us of the continuum of women's roles throughout the ages.



CAROL MORROW
Nova Celiosa

25½" × 25½"
 Lantz clay, press molded, burnished

This piece is my first experience with the wondrously smooth Lantz clay. It references the intricate pierced screens of Islamic architecture, a perennial inspiration for me, and also has overtones of Celtic knot work to celebrate the Nova Scotia origin of the material.



CYNDI YEATMAN

Green Dragon

16" × 11" × 5"
100% Lantz clay, wheel thrown and altered, underglazes, crawl glaze, Δ04

Lantz clay's smooth velvety texture leaves a lasting impression. The clay has a distinguished personality and requires some skill to enjoy it to the fullest.



MICHAEL MORRIS

Platter

14½"
70% Lantz clay (+ fire clay and silica for vitrification), dark brown transparent glaze with opaque green glaze feathering, Δ2

I believe that by using hand made crafts the life of the user is enriched. Decoration is consciously kept to a minimum so as not to interfere with the presentation of food. The use of rich solid colour as well as the subtle use of either glaze feathering or carving characterizes Morris Pottery.



ZIMRA BEINER

Floral Relief

33" × 22"
carved Shaw Brick clay

My work addresses the complex and meaningful history of ceramic objects as serving both decorative and utilitarian functions. I intend to excite and inspire by bridging the humour and peculiarity of pottery with the order of urban architecture and the dirty details of graffiti.



CAROL SMERALDO

Mother Boat: Hatchery

15" × 17" × 10¼"

Lantz clay, burnished *terra sigillata*, naked raku and copper rod

This is part of a series of "boats" making up a fleet entitled "Under Sea Fleet: Rock the Boat – The Energy and Inspiration of Chaos," metaphorical Ritual Double Rocking Suspension Boats inspired by the Greco-Roman myth of Demeter and Persephone and Greco-Roman Red and Black ware. This work expresses my search for understanding the creative cycle through myths, metaphors and motifs.



CHRIS TYLER

(Amaryllis-) Vase

7½" × 10"

Lantz clay (no additions), thrown and hand built, glazed

Returning to making pots after 20 years, I developed matte glazes using two or three main fluxes with combinations of oxides, such as copper and nickel, aiming at surface richness from a total of about 16 related but dissimilar glazes on the pot. Attempting to find coherence in two distinct forming processes and a variety of glazes suitably addresses the perversity of making things by hand today.



KAREN ROBINSON

Sleeping Fantasy Animals

10" × 1½" each

Lantz clay (Δ04), buff stoneware(Δ6), Lantz slip, commercial stains and under-glazes, clear glazes

This set of sleeping fantasy animals has one piece made from cone 04 Lantz clay and the other from cone 6 buff stoneware. The stoneware has Lantz slip stripes and dots. I wanted to reflect levels of interrelationships: the mirror images, the "happy to be together" pair of animals, white and dark clay bodies using the same colour technologies at different temperatures.

About the artists and essayists

ESSAYISTS

RAY MACKIE is originally from Saskatchewan. He obtained his BA at University of Saskatchewan, his BFA from NSCAD, an MFA from Indiana State University and a BEd from Memorial University, Newfoundland and Labrador. In 1980–1999 he chaired the fine arts department of the College of the North Atlantic, Newfoundland and Labrador. From 1999 to the present Ray is co-owner of Lucky Rabbit Pottery, Annapolis Royal, with Deb Kuzyk.

He was named Atlantic Craft Trade Show – Industry Leader in 1999 and in 2008 he received the Government of Nova Scotia Artistic Achievement Award.

Ray has participated in many solo, curated and juried exhibitions. He is currently on the Exhibitions Committee of ArtsPlace gallery in Annapolis Royal and curated their show in April 2009 of contemporary baskets by artist George Goodin.

CHRIS TYLER came to McMaster University from the UK, receiving an MA in English in 1966. He co-authored a book on raku, the first on contemporary ceramics by a Canadian. Chris received his MFA from NSCAD in 1978 subsequently working for the Nova Scotia Designer Crafts Council and was the first head of the NS Centre for Craft and Design and of the Mary E. Black Gallery. He has written widely on the crafts and curated exhibitions in Canada and the USA. His studio,

St Joseph Pottery, operated from 1978 to 1989 and re-opened in 2006.

LANTZ CLAY MASTERS

PAM BIRDSALL graduated with her Bachelor of Fine Art and Bachelor of Art Education from Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in 1974. Before moving to Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia in 1977 to establish Birdsall-Worthington Pottery Ltd. with partner Tim Worthington, Pam taught in the Ceramic Lab at St. Patrick's School in Halifax. While teaching children in the day and adults in the evening, Pam ran a small studio in Dartmouth. It was there she began experimenting with Nova Scotia earthenware clay and slip decorating.

Pam's work has been documented in six books over the decades, most recently in *Studio Ceramics in Canada* by Gail Crawford. Pam has also been included in magazine articles and on television, and her work is in private and museum collections in Canada.

JOAN BRUNEAU'S biographical information is contained in her statement on page 9.

WALTER OSTROM has been a major force in the earthenware revolution that began during the '80s. Educated in Europe and the United States, Walter came to Canada in 1969 to teach at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Since his first major exhibition using Lantz clay at the Mount

Saint Vincent University Art Gallery in 1976, Walter has participated in more than 150 group and solo exhibitions throughout North America and has given over 200 workshops and lectures in Canada, the United States, Europe and Asia. His work has been collected by major institutions including the Museum of Civilization, Ottawa, the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. He has received the Jean A. Chalmers Award for Crafts and the Saidye Bronfman Award for excellence in the fine crafts. He was appointed an Honorary Professor at the Jingdezhen Ceramics Institute, Jiangxi, People's Republic of China and, most recently, appointed to the Order of Canada.

JIM SMITH is celebrating 25 years of working out of his seaside studio in Chester. A graduate of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Jim has taught workshops across Canada and in the United States. His work is widely collected, published and exhibited, both nationally and internationally. He has travelled extensively, delving into the ceramic history of China, Mexico, Europe and Turkey. Jim was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal by the Canadian Government in recognition of distinguished career achievement and significant contribution to Canadian society. He had the honour of being a juror for the 2007 Saidye Bronfman Award/Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts.

Jim has won numerous awards for his work and in 2008 he was inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. This October Jim will present a lecture at the Cheongju International Biennale of Fine Craft in Cheongju, South Korea.

PAT WOODS immigrated to Ontario from the UK in 1973. Two years later she began working with stoneware and porcelain. Producing wheel-thrown functional ware, she participated in many craft shows and ran a retail showroom from her home-based pottery business in the Buckhorn Lakes tourist area. In 1997 Pat moved to Halifax and spent the next year at NSCAD learning about working with red earthenware as a change of direction. A year later, Pat moved her studio from Ontario and set up Red Handed Pottery in the tidal village of Bear River, Nova Scotia. She has participated in all the shows of work put on by the members of the Nova Scotia Potters Guild.

TIM WORTHINGTON came to Nova Scotia after completing a Bachelor of Arts in Ceramics from Ohio Northern University to enroll as a "special student" at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Tim was the first graduate in Ceramics from the newly created Graduate Program at NSCAD in 1976. Tim used the same local Nova Scotian earthenware clay in his graduate show that he would use for the next 30+ years in the pottery he would produce to start an operation with his

business partner, Pam Birdsall. Birdsall-Worthington Pottery Ltd. was established in 1977 in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia.

Tim's use of slips has changed dramatically from the feathered decoration on his first brown earthenware bowls. He is now using combinations of drawing through the clay, sponging it, brushing it as well as painting with underglazes and coloured transparent glazes.

Tim's work has been featured in 6 books (most recently *Studio Ceramics in Canada* by Gail Crawford) and several magazines and is in private and museum collections. Thirty years has only served to increase his fascination with pattern and form and their endless combinations.

JURIED EXHIBITORS

FRANCE ARRUDA has been in love with clay since she was nine years old when her family moved to a farm edging the muddy banks of the Bay of Fundy. She is currently teaching pottery classes at Findlay Community Centre and is involved in a mentorship program with Carol Smeraldo at Atlantic Pottery Supplies.

DOUG BAMFORD lives in the North End of Halifax. He splits his time between a vibrant studio practice and his position as Senior Ceramics Technician at NSCAD University. He holds a BFA in Ceramics and a BEd Art Education from NSCAD (1995), and a diploma from Sheridan School of Design (1975) where he majored in

furniture design and ceramics. Bamford has a rich background as a ceramic artist, builder, cabinetmaker, educator and public artist.

ZIMRA BEINER is a Toronto based artist, initially studying architecture at the University of Toronto; he went on to receive a diploma from Sheridan College in Ceramics and is currently working towards a Bachelor of Fine Arts at NSCAD University. Zimra is the recipient of the William and Mary Corcoran Craft Award and the Shirley Clifford award in 2008.

MARYANNE FISHER has been working with clay since 2003 and is in the process of creating her first studio in Dartmouth.

SHARON FISKE is an accomplished Nova Scotia artist. Since 1980, she has studied and practiced her craft as far away as Japan, China, England and Australia. She developed a diverse body of work that catches the interest of both art enthusiasts and those seeking functional production wares. Her one-of-a-kind pieces are often humorous, always colourful and interesting.

JUDY GORDON works in hand thrown stoneware, raku and earthenware. She uses carving and layered glazes to form subtle seascapes on her pieces. Her idea of fun is firing raku, gas or wood kilns – often long into the night. She teaches

pottery at Findlay Community Centre and at Atlantic Pottery Supplies in Dartmouth.

BARBARA LUKWINSKI studied pottery, printmaking and bronze casting for five years in Vancouver and Alberta. For 25 years her focus in clay was Δ 10 reduction, functional pottery. In the last 3 years she has been working with earthenware which has pushed her to create in a sculptural form.

MARY JANE LUNDY from East Dover, Nova Scotia, graduated in 2003 from NSCAD University with a BFA major in Ceramics. I use low fired red earthenware clay to create sculptures that are inspired by what inhabits our land and our sea.

SHAUNA MACLEOD is a third-year Bachelor of Fine Arts ceramics major at NSCAD University. Currently in a stimulating state of exploration, every project is exciting and challenging with current focus on function in all its facets, whether it is the use of a bowl for salad, a flower brick for spring flowers, or a pot possessing a political statement. Her aesthetic has developed into including earthenware clay, slip decoration, personal narration, and ornament.

ROSEMARY METZ is a sculptor who lives in Prospect, NS. After finishing her BA (Hons) at St. Martins School of Art in London, Rosemary's artistic interests were directed toward sculpture and ceramics.

Postgraduate studies led her to Goldsmith's College, University of London, for a Diploma in Ceramics and later an MA in Art and Design. Rosemary regards the development of her ceramic work as a life-long project which is accompanied by an on-going interest in art criticism, and cultural production. Rosemary has taught art and ceramics in England and Canada including teaching ceramics in the Arts Cooperative Education Department at the University of Victoria, British Columbia.

MINDY MOORE has been a potter for over 30 years, focusing on the textural and sculptural aspects of clay.

MICHAEL MORRIS has been making pottery using Nova Scotia clay since 1976. His studio is located in Dayton, Yarmouth County. He studied under Homer Lord, Halifax and mentored under Phyllis Atkinson, Montreal. Morris Pottery is designed for daily use.

CAROL MORROW comes from a family of vigorous women who have been makers of objects for many generations. In mid-life she was smitten with the possibilities of clay, returned to school, and upon graduation moved to Nova Scotia to set up a studio in Lunenburg. There she makes tiles, both production work and one-of-a-kind pieces and installations.

LOUISE PENTZ has studied in Canada, the United States and Mexico and has

exhibited her work in Canada and France. She has received grants from The Canada Council and the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage. Her work has appeared in *Fusion Magazine*, *Craft Report* magazine, *Making Marks – Discovering the Ceramic Surface* and *Ceramics Monthly*.

SHANNON POTTER resides in Halifax and has a BFA from NSCAD University with a major in ceramics. While she has experimented with many mediums she has truly found her niche with clay. Shannon feels a piece is most successful when something unexpected happens; when the material and process inform her thoughts and the piece evolves.

NANCY ROBERTS is a graphic designer by day. She has been working with clay about five years, including at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in Maine. She sold her first pieces last year and this is her first juried show.

KAREN ROBINSON (BSc, BEd, BFA) studied clay, fabric design and sculpture at NSCAD and at the Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia. She ran a full-time clay studio and taught both adult and children's classes at NSCAD's Continuing Education Department. Karen's work has been shown in numerous shows and is carried in galleries in both Canada and the USA.

CAROL SMERALDO has achieved international recognition over her 37 years of experience. Carol attended Rhode Island School of Design, Massachusetts College of Art and Design and NSCADU. She holds the designation of Master Artisan from the Nova Scotia Designer Crafts Council and participates extensively in the craft community. Her work is included in public collections in Canada, the US and Japan. She teaches at Atlantic Pottery Supplies and School.

CHRISTYLER (St. Joseph Pottery) obtained an MFA from NSCAD in 1978, has mainly used Lantz clay since, and likes and respects its character.

CYNDI YEATMAN was born in Ontario and moved to Nova Scotia in 1996 where she now makes her clay creations at home in Dartmouth. She started specializing in clay dragons about four years ago and has earned the nickname "Dragonlady." Cyndi has taken several courses at NSCAD and Atlantic Pottery Supplies and is a member of the NS Potters Guild and Canal Street Potters.

Published in accompaniment to the exhibition *Shaping Space: A Celebration of Lantz Clay* September 11–October 25, 2009

© Mary E. Black Gallery and Nova Scotia Potters Guild in the publication, photographers in the images, and the authors in their texts, 2009

All rights reserved.

Photography by Ray Mackie except as noted: Jim Smith photo by the artist
Joan Bruneau photo by the artist
Louise Pentz photos by Garry Woodcock
Karen Robinson photo by Arruda/Fisher

Cover images:

Front – upper left Joan Bruneau; upper centre Louise Pentz; row of four Mindy Moore, Mary Jane Lundy, Chris Tyler, France Arruda; lower right Pat Woods

Back – Louise Pentz

Catalogue design by Nancy Roberts

Mary E Black Gallery
Suite 140, 1061 Marginal Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 4P6
t 902-492-2522 f 902-492-2526
e info@craft-design.ns.ca
<http://www.craft-design.ns.ca>

The Nova Scotia Centre for Craft and Design is funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage and is a program of the Nova Scotia Designer Crafts Council.

Nova Scotia Potters Guild

History • 1991–2009

THE NOVA SCOTIA POTTERS Guild has been a vibrant and valued part of our Provincial arts community since 1991. The Guild was formed by an enthusiastic group of potters who wanted to learn and teach and enjoy one another's company. We are all about education and support for anyone in the province working in clay. The Guild supports work from production to one-of-a-kind, covers topics from artistic and technical



support to business operation, and opens the channels for sharing information. Our members, now 60 in number, cover a wide

range of profiles from internationally recognized ceramic artists to those who are just beginning to work with clay. We share our news and skills through meetings, workshops and our newsletter, *The Dish*.

PROJECTS

Throughout our history, we have initiated exhibitions throughout the province in all categories – open, juried and curated. They have been presented in public, private and commercial galleries, including the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and our public gallery for craft, the Mary E. Black Gallery. Lieutenant-Governor Myra Freeman hosted the Guild's *Crowning Achievements* exhibit at Government House in 2004–2005. In 1996, *The Year of Earth and Fire*, the Guild organized numerous displays, sales, public hands-on workshops and clay related events in collaboration with business, government and other organizations. Exhibitions included: *From the Ground Up* (opened at Mary E. Black Gallery and travelled around the Province); *Metre²: The Art of Tile* (Dartmouth

Heritage Museum); *An Invitation to Dinner – Contemporary Nova Scotia Dinnerware* (Dartmouth Heritage Museum); and *Potters of Our Past* (Art Gallery of Nova Scotia). *Ceramics Monthly* Magazine covered these shows at the Dartmouth Heritage Museum.

WORKSHOPS

Excellent workshops have been presented by Guild members who have generously shared their expertise. The Guild has also worked with the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University's Ceramics Department to bring nationally and internationally known ceramists to Halifax. Our workshops have dealt with raku, gas, wood and smoke firings, mould making, big pots, photographing techniques and health concerns. Some of the well recognized artists who have instructed the Guild are Les Manning, Jim Robison, Robin Hopper, Cathi Jefferson and Randy Brodnax.

LOOKING FORWARD

The guild continues to encourage the creation of fine ceramic work, to build awareness among the public of the value of this work and to offer clay artists resources to strengthen their art form and to grow as artists. We invite you to enjoy our new show that features Nova Scotia's own Lantz clay and to watch for the next efforts of the Nova Scotia Potters Guild.

Visit our web site – novascotiapottersguild.com

WE ARE INDEBTED to many people for the help, friendship and tolerance extended to us during the making of this catalogue.

Assisting with the historical aspect of this exhibition by donating from their collections are the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History and Sherbrooke Village Pottery, whose motto is “Our past is your adventure.” Private collectors who generously loaned their pieces for this show are Bob Campbell, grandson of Alice Hagen; Alex McCurdy; and Paul Primeau.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to Fran Gregor and Joanne Young, patrons of the arts, who have let us have pieces from their collections for the invited artists portion of the show.

We are grateful to the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, The Shaw Group and Atlantic Pottery Supplies, who helped us tremendously through monetary donations and without whom we could not have published this catalogue. Public and corporate support for projects such as this is not only good for the arts, but necessary for the survival of our culture.

Among the people who went above and beyond the call of duty in compiling this work is Susan Foshay, editor extraordinaire. Volunteers from the Guild who deserve particular recognition are France Arruda and Maryanne Fisher, Suzi Cameron, Mary Jane Lundy, Liz Mason, Louise Pentz and Karen Robinson.

Special thanks go to our most talented curator, Ray Mackie, whose vision of this exhibit was so clear and far reaching and whose energy has been boundless. We are indebted to Chris Tyler for his succinct overview of Lantz Clay and to Nancy Roberts for her patience, guidance and her imaginative aesthetic throughout this entire process.

To quote Sharon Fiske in correspondence surrounding this exhibit – “Wow, isn’t it great that we can have so many people involved in this project.”

—Sharon Fiske and Judy Gordon on behalf of NSPG



Mary E. Black Gallery hours:
Tues–Fri 9–5 • Sat & Sun 11–4

1061 Marginal Road, Suite 140
beside Pier 21 National Historic Site
Halifax

NSCCD

NOVA SCOTIA CENTRE FOR CRAFT AND DESIGN
MARY E. BLACK GALLERY