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EDITORIAL

Aren't we very lucky? What Suzanne Rampton says - that we make with what is essentially mud - in her note about BK2023 on p2, is so true. That such a common material can bring so much pleasure to so many, makers and collector/users alike, is remarkable. It is also unchallengeable that for the artist the therapeutic effect covers a wide spectrum including allowing expression and connection where the written word may cause difficulty. This edition's Member's Profile is such a case.

Neil Dewey



Group Update

CHAIR'S LETTER

Waiting for the promised thunderstorms as I write... real ones nothing metaphorical. But they seem to be passing us by. I hope it has been a good summer for everyone. It certainly been busy, one way or another.

Lots of members have been doing Open Studios and Art Trails, with mixed success from what I gather. Some locations have done better than usual, others have done unexpectedly badly. There doesn't seem to be much sense in the patterns. The same unpredictability seems to have affected exhibitions. The SCG put up a wonderful display at Handmade at Waterperry Gardens, Oxford organised by Lynn Nicholls, but both footfall and sales could have been better. The tough economic climate may have had something to do with it. The Bishops Kitchen exhibition on the other hand (we will probably be calling it the Great Kitchen from now on – there is a new issue about the existing name) did pretty well, so who knows!

Members of your committee have been working overtime (well, given that it is all voluntary, it is all overtime!) in organising and running these exhibitions (huge thanks to Lynn, Helen, Suzanne, Nick and Anton) and in organising workshops and demos (thank you Cabby) and keeping the wheels of the SCG running smoothly (thank you Caroline, Neil D and Neil R and Jo).

I have been having discussions with some members about confidence. Or, rather, about a lack of

confidence. I am surprised by the number of extremely creative makers who are frequently hit by the impostor blues. A show goes well you feel good. One goes badly you think you are no good. Roller coaster rides. In one way it reassures me that I'm not the only one who feels this way. But in another, I wish there was something we could do to help each other trust our own artistic impulses and judgements and reach the kind of critical appreciation which doesn't get constantly bashed about. Getting together with other makers and seriously – and critically – discussing each others' work seems to be a good way to start.

You may have gathered from the AGM this year that in less than two years' time we are going to be having our 50th anniversary. We are going to have an extra exhibition in 2025 as a celebration. Having checked out various – hideously expensive – sites, we have agreed to have a two week exhibition at the Oxmarket Gallery in Chichester from 18 November 2025. What would be good, though, would be to have other smaller events in celebration. Anything – from working in schools, to working in the community, to decorating inner cities, to charity events and so on. Get your thinking caps on! And tell us about your ideas and your endeavours.

Vasu
September 2023

scg_chair@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



NEW MEMBERS

We have had 20 new members join since May and total membership is now 216.

Hollie Thornley	Southsea	Maria Sharipo	Chichester
Rachel Haynes	Emsworth	Lucy Hogan	Godalming
Chiara Cattri	Chichester	Charlotte Notcutt	Prinsted
Donna Jameson	Fleet	Marianne Potgieter	Winchester
Elizabeth Brook	Emsworth	Claire Scott	Storrington
Catherine Claasen	Rowlands Castle	Jennifer Kenny	Fernhurst
Caroline Larcombe	Shedfield	Peter Wells	Aldwick
Nicola Scott-Taylor	East Sheen	Annie Watts	Shoreham by Sea
Carolyn Knight	Pennington	Liz McKenzie	Winchester
Deb John	East Chiltington	Honor Walsh	Surrey

A warm welcome to all these new members and apologies should any have been missed.

Caroline Piggott scg_membership@southernceramicgroup.org.uk

BISHOPS KITCHEN 2023

The Bishops Kitchen exhibition is a main focus in the Southern Ceramic Group calendar with the opportunity for the shared endeavour of working with clay to be seen in all it's glory. The diversity of making with what essentially is mud as the starting point is a wonder that BK shows most brilliantly. This year was no exception with newcomers sculpture to table wares, and totem poles by Katie Neatly. The transformation of the space is quite astonishing and symbolically reflected by the ancient reminders in the building that the sum total of human endeavour is far greater than the individual parts.

The picture shows the space just before opening for the preview evening. Many thanks to the curators of this years show Jo Tricklebank, Lois Mahoney and Lola Claeys-Bouuaert.

The team were faced with over 600 items to curate and what an amazing job they did for us. Footfall was good with nearly 4,000 people coming to the exhibition over the two plus weeks in Chichester. The systems and process to help make the exhibition run more smoothly were refined again thanks to Nick Taylor so that members enjoyed notification emails when they had made a sale at the end of each day. Total sales value and numbers were a little less than last year but good given the economic gloom.



One of enjoyable elements as coordinator has been the opportunity to get to know members and their work in more detail and meet new comers exhibiting for the first time. If you have a flare for organising and connecting with people the Committee are looking for next years coordinator and have decided that a duo rather solo person would support the needs of this exhibition as it grows. Please contact the Committee if you are interested in the opportunity of co-ordinating this amazing exhibition.

Suzanne Rampton

CERAMICUS, ALLEN GALLERY, ALTON



Ceramicus 2023
Exhibition of Ceramics
Allen Gallery
 Church Street, Alton GU34 2BW

7th October - 5th November
 Tuesday to Sunday
 10.30am - 4.00pm
 Entrance Free

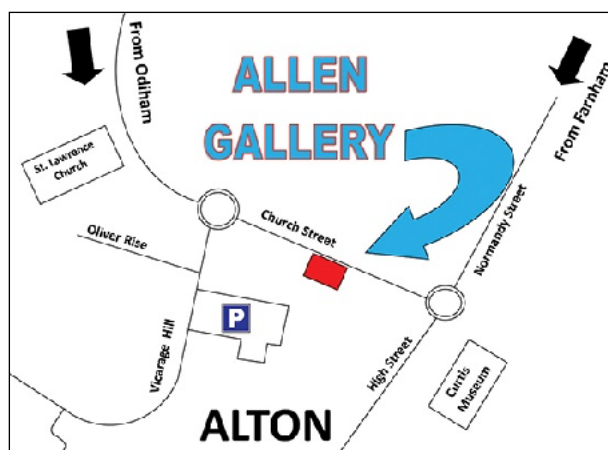
CLAYMAN
www.ceramicus.co.uk
www.hampshireculture.org.uk/allen-gallery

MEET THE POTTERS
 here on the morning of 7th October

SCG members Nigel Hobbs and Mike Bush, both members of the Ceramicus group of potters will be taking part in their annual exhibition from 7 October to 5 November.

They also wish to remind members that the gallery has an excellent permanent collection of traditional and Studio English Pottery (including Lucie Rie, Pleydell-Bouverie and Alan Caiger-Smith). Tea and Cakes are available in the cafe.

The Allen Gallery has recently received a grant from the National Lottery and is developing plans to better display its work and engage with the public. Ceramic leaves made by local pottery groups are available to purchase as part of a fund-raising initiative



HORSHAM CONTEMPORARY ARTS FAIR

Pippa Honess is taking part in the Horsham Contemporary Arts Fair which is being held on October 14/15 at the Parkside (County Hall North), Horsham.

Pippa lives and works in West Sussex. She hand-builds her forms - vessels inspired by modernist and art deco architecture - from white stoneware which is burnished, smoke fired and waxed.

pippahoness@hotmail.com





**'FIRE, FORM, FEELING'
COLONNADE GALLERY, WORTHING**

John Evans and Janet Branscombe collaborate in this two week exhibition of their naked clay ceramics and Janet's abstract paintings filling Colonnade's lovely gallery spaces.

John displays a wide range of burnished ceramic sculptural and vessel forms enhanced by surface markings from a range of naked clay techniques using smoke and fumes.

www.colonnadehouse.co.uk

*Janet Branscombe
John Evans*

*Fire
Form
Feeling*

*Nov 21 - Dec 3
10am - 5pm
Closed Mondays*

*Naked Clay Ceramics
Abstract Paintings*

*Colonnade House Gallery
Worthing W.Sussex BN11 3DH
www.colonnadehouse.co.uk*



ELAINE KING - CREATIVE GALLERY, WAREHAM



Fiona Kelly reports that SCG member Elaine King will be exhibiting her colourful, hand painted, earthenware ceramics at the Creative Gallery in Wareham throughout October. The Gallery will be open 10-5, Monday to Saturday. And she says, 'If you're in Dorset do pop in for a look'.

'The Gallery is up for sale at the moment, family pressures (namely having our 2 & 5 year old grandsons now living with us) mean there just isn't enough time in the day for everything.' If any member would be interested in learning more please ring Fiona Kelly on 01202 396788.

www.creativegallerywareham.co.uk





SOUTHSEA MINI ART TRAIL - 21 & 22 Oct 2023

Artists in Southsea had been excited about the return of the Arts Trail which last ran before Covid in 2019. At the end of August they received some disappointing news that it had been postponed until 2024. Lynn Nicholls, a SCG member, and another 19 artists decided to 'go alone' and do their own mini trail with houses and studios open in Gains Rd, Waverley Rd and Albert Rd in Southsea.

With a shoe string budget and sharing via artists' Instagram pages we hope enough people will see this to support the trail.



Follow [Southsea_mudlark](#) on Instagram for further details.

HANDMADE, WATERPERRY GARDENS, OXFORD The International Contemporary Craft Festival update

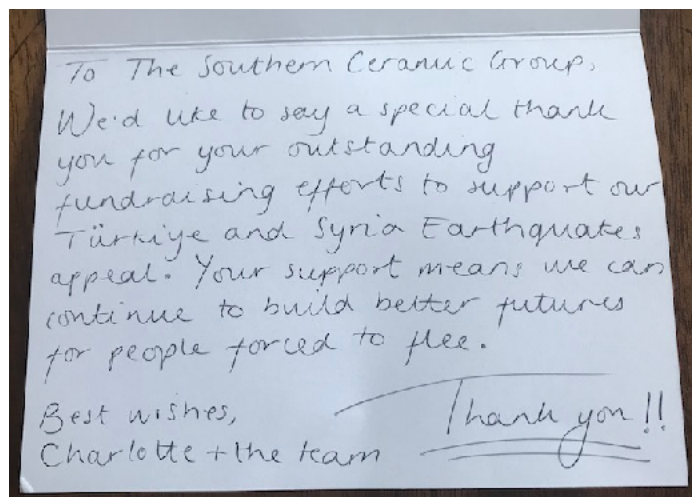
What a fabulous team effort by all who participated in the Handmade Oxford event. SCG members demonstrated their commitment, camaraderie and camping skills over the 3 day event. We had plenty of positive feedback from customers about the quality and pricing of ceramics on our stand but despite best efforts the event was unfortunately not the resounding success we had hoped. We have made a series of recommendations which we hope will benefit future exhibitors.

Lynn Nichols





UNHCR - Donation Thanks



Alec Roberts, who had organised a sale of ceramic art donated by SCG Members at Chichester Cathedral in aid of the Turkey/Syria earthquake appeal, has on behalf of the group's efforts received these copies of UNHCR's official thanks and a more personal note from the appeal team.

Your Committee would also like to thank all members who contributed and particularly Alec for his initiative and organisation.

RECEIPT
The Southern Ceramic Group
23 Festing Grove
Southsea
Hampshire
PO4 9QB

Invoice Date:
05th September 2023

United Kingdom for UNHCR
We Work
131 Finsbury Pavement
London
EC2A 1NT
UNITED KINGDOM

Dear Alec,

I am writing to confirm receipt of your donation of £833 to UK for UNHCR via bank transfer.

A huge thanks to The Southern Ceramic Group for raising vital funds for refugees, we are incredibly grateful for your support and solidarity. Your donation will help provide lifesaving aid and assistance to people forced to flee their homes.

On behalf of all of us at UK for UNHCR, thank you for your kindness and generosity.

All my best,

Saige
Saige Jennings
UK for UNHCR

Description	Amount £
Donation - Received with thanks on 30 th May 2023	833
TOTAL £	833

UK for UNHCR is the British national partner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).
Registered charity 1183425 (England & Wales). Address: WeWork, 131 Finsbury Pavement, London, EC2A 1NT

Social Media



TWITTER ACCOUNT

We now have a fully functioning [twitter](#) account. [Click this link](#) or search [@SCG_Ceramics](#) to view the page, follow and get chatting with fellow SCG members and fans of ceramics around the world. Remember to include [@SCG_Ceramics](#) on your posts. We'd love you to follow the account and Direct Message the account if you have ideas or questions.



INSTAGRAM - STORIES

Not content with beautiful and informative posts, our [SCG Instagram account](#) is now getting more and more active. You will have seen eye-popping posts about member's work on the hugely popular Instagram Stories function. SCG member and volunteer, Libby Daniels, had created animated posts to music to build momentum ahead of the summer exhibition. Please [@SouthernCeramicGroup](#) on your own Instagram stories so that Libby can re-post your stories for even greater exposure. Don't forget to follow [@SouthernCeramicGroup](#) & [#SouthernCeramicGroup](#) when posting your amazing pictures of your ideas, work in progress, hacks etc.

We now have two members who have taken on the shared role of Social Media Coordinators to help with social media posts and creating content for sharing across the three social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter). They are:

Niraja Samant (niraja415@gmail.com)
and Abi Jonas (abi@abijonas-pottery.com)

To learn how to market on social media, or use social media to your advantage please get in touch.



FACEBOOK

If you have not already done so, please follow [@southernceramicsgroup](#) on Facebook - also a great place to see posts from fellow members and find out about local opportunities too.

The [Members Chat room](#) is a great place to share ideas, get advice and offer up unwanted equipment etc. If you are a SCG member and have not got access simply use the Facebook messenger function, with your name and membership number.



HELP NEEDED

Please try and use the SCG social media tools available to you to help keep the feeds active and engaging for fellow members. It really helps us get the word out to the broader community about the great work everyone is doing - and will help footfall at exhibitions - and that means better sales!!

Demonstrations

JEMMA GOWLAND

And now for something completely different....

DEMONSTRATION AND WORKSHOP

The Leisure Centre, Crundles, Herne Farm,
Petersfield, GU31 4PJ

Saturday 28 October 2023

10am for 10.30am start - 3.45pm

We are delighted to be welcoming the renowned artist Jemma Gowland to host a hands-on demonstration/mini workshop. Jemma's sculptures are prized by collectors both nationally and internationally and she has recently had an amazing summer exhibition at the RSA.

For participants the aim of the day is sculpting a small figure using an armature.



(cont. on next page incl. details for booking and attendance)



JEMMA GOWLAND - cont.



Attendees will learn about basic body proportions and how these change with age and how to make an armature using drinking straws to help with proportions. With Jemma's expert guidance, hints and tips will be given on changing stance to create a story, a theme that is evident in her own amazing sculptures providing narrative and context to her figurative work.

SCG will provide clay but participants should bring basic pottery tools, and if possible a thick piece of polystyrene or rigid foam - roughly A4 size, or 20x20cm ish, about 4cm thick, can be more. Also participants should bring a shoebox or similar sized box to transport the sculpture safely home.

Bookings should be made via the Southern Ceramic Group website link as below:-

<https://southernceramicgroup.org.uk/event/demonstration-by-jemma-gowland/>

Cost is £30 for SCG members and PACS potters members, guests £40. Guests are most welcome so please do share this information with friends, family and other pottery enthusiasts!



Participants should bring a contribution to a buffet style meal - clearly labelled with meal type (vegetarian, vegan, dairy, non gluten etc). Strictly no nuts/nut oils please.

Tea, coffee, biscuits will be available with fruit juice or a glass of wine for lunch.

There will also be a raffle for one of Jemma's beautiful pieces. For more information on Jemma and her wonderful work please visit her website at <https://www.jgowland.com/>

Spaces are very limited so book soon!

For any queries please contact CabbyLuxford at scg_demonstrations@southernceramicgroup.org.uk



MARK DALLY

Save the date!

Please make a note in your diary! We will be having an in-person demo by the fabulous Mark Dally on Saturday 27 January 2024.

Mark is internationally known for his fantastic monochrome pieces decorated in his unique style using his very own patented slip trailer. These amazing tools for potters offer exceptional control and comfort when decorating and are designed to avoid the 'splurt' that can be experienced with the more traditional slip trailer bulbs.

His black and white distinctive tableware often have gold accents for a touch of luxury and his teapots have a distinctive whimsy about them!



To see more of Marks amazing pieces do visit his website <https://www.markdallyceramics.co.uk/>

The demonstration AND an extended lunchtime to include our AGM is at

Portchester Community Centre, Fareham on Saturday 27 January 2024.

Lots more information to follow but do save the date!

Cabby Luxford
scg_demonstrations@southernceramicgroup.org.uk

RAKU FIRING DAY WITH MIKE BURRELL - by Libby Daniels

West Sussex based Mike Burrell makes thrown stoneware functional pots which are electric fired but echo the aesthetic of wood fired and ash glazed work. He also works with Raku firing techniques. He offers a Raku firing day which takes place at Milland Pottery bookable via his website www.mikebpottery.com.

Angela Carter has given over her lovely, traditional pottery in Hampshire for Mike to host a series of days where anyone, even non potters, can get an exciting, hands on (with thick heat proof leather gauntlets!) taste of this fascinating and unique technique.



(cont. on next page)



RAKU FIRING DAY WITH MIKE BURRELL - by Libby Daniels (cont.)

I attended along with 4 others. After some of the hottest days in September, I was expecting it to be a bit of a baptism by fire for the Raku firing day but luckily the temperature had cooled a little. The bit of rain we had was inconvenient but Mike kept everything progressing and we were all able to complete at least 4 pots using various post firing techniques.

Mike describes Raku firing as "a flame thrower firing into essentially an insulated dustbin!" This Japanese method of glaze firing, originating from as early as the 16th Century, achieves a humble, rustic aesthetic with accidental surface effects. Traditionally it would have been on tea bowls but is now seen on an incredible variety of contemporary ceramics with stunning decoration and colours. Pure alchemy!



We aimed to complete 3 different post firing decorative techniques over the course of the day. Mike instructed us how to correctly lift pots from the kiln and ensured everyone was up to speed and well informed. Raku has obvious dangers so is not something to enter into unprepared.



We were all able to choose from Mike's pre-fired pots or our own and an array of glazes to apply. The grogged clay body is one which will stand the thermal shock it goes through so not all clays will be suitable. Different decoration was tried by everyone, wax resist, free painting designs or using leaves to mask a pattern as well as naked Raku. I particularly enjoyed hand painting two pots using several glazes freely brushed on in circular patterns.

Firstly we did a simple reduction method where after reaching about 1000 degrees the red hot pots were carefully removed from the kiln with tongs and placed in metal boxes of wood shavings, covered with more wood shavings and then sealed to cut out the oxygen. The "magic" reaction that takes place is where oxides in the glazes are altered, due to the starvation of oxygen, taking on metallic qualities. Green and turquoise glaze becoming pure copper and crackled white contrasting with the carbonised bare clay.

The second method we tried was aiming for rainbow flashing by way of a copper carbonate rich layer applied to the pot then, after removal from the kiln, they were placed in a nest of shredded paper. As soon as you see the desired surface quality created from the flame effect, a tin or lid must be placed quickly over, sealing out any further oxygen. This proved to be a tricky process and there were tears in the eyes from face-fulls of smoke as we tried to judge when to smother the flames but some lovely results were achieved.

(cont. on next page)





RAKU FIRING DAY WITH MIKE BURRELL - by Libby Daniels (cont.)



Lastly came the naked Raku! Definitely not a process to take your clothes off for, after all there are health and safety considerations! Naked Raku, Mike tells us, is actually a modern development by American potters around 1980's. They discovered they could "paint with smoke" and leave the ghost images of the materials on the surface of the pot. This is the most hands on decorative effect as you can lay feathers, hair, sugar and other combustibles directly on to the hot pot.

The course was such an exciting, action packed experience and actually even a complete non-potter would be able to attend as Mike provides the ready made pots. It's so immediate, you take completed pieces home the same day. You just need a sense of adventure and some creativity. All of us went home feeling pretty chuffed with our handiwork if a little smoke scented!

Libby Daniels

Useful articles:

<https://thepotterywheel.com/what-is-raku-pottery/>

<https://www.designinsiderlive.com/raku-with-david-roberts/>





Member's Profile - Gordon Ferrie

Hi everyone,
I do find writing about what I create and why I make these things very difficult.

My grandparents met at the Royal College of Art, then went to Shanghai and set up their own studio. My mum was a children's story writer and puppeteer who raised money regularly for Singapore children's societies. My Dad was a well known architect in Singapore, and apart from his talent in that field he produced the most beautiful water colour paintings of Singapore, the country where I was born.

I started clay modelling around the age of 6, and have been doing so ever since. I went to Leeds College of Art at barely 17, the year of the crazy gang! We were an experimental year, and the fine art students there were allowed to do anything and everything.



My first picture, is 'A Sculptural Head Picasso' style for a First Unit MA in Art Education. I unfortunately did not finish the MA as the work I completed had to be emailed to Brighton University, but sadly me and computers do not mix, since I have acute dyslexia. Meaning I often need help with such technology!

Next is a 'Diving Whale Tail' which has a bronze glaze.



The third picture is 'Torso Figures', again with a bronze glaze, which tends to work when it wants to but can decide to ruin kiln shelves.



My fourth picture is of one of my sculptures based on 'Princess Leia from the Start Wars Movies' which will become part of a fountain.



(cont. on next page)



My fifth picture is of my sculpture of 'Sharks Fins'. Since I regularly swim in the sea off Aldwick Bay in Pagham from Mid May to the end of October, to support the charity 'Surfers Against Sewage'. I am passionate about supporting the environment.

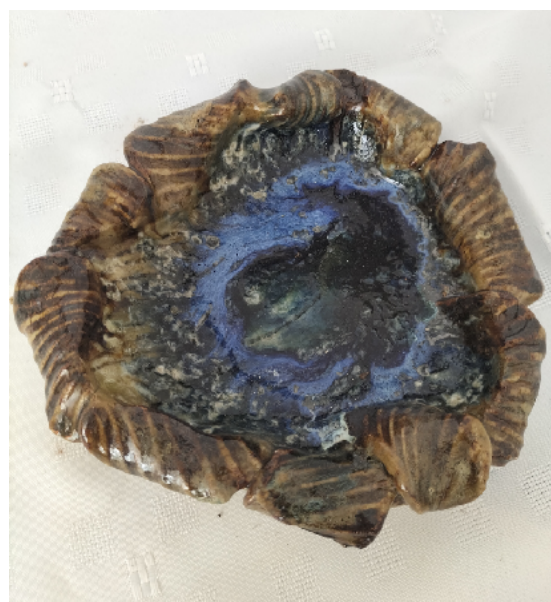
Below is a picture is of a sculpture depicting a 'Gallop Horse', which I sold recently to a governor of a school that I teach at regularly as a supply teacher.



Picture seven is a 'Small Ash Glazed Bowl', since I love using ash glazes because they're a mystery how they end up after firing.



My final picture is of one of my 'Shell Dishes', which in fantasy would be from an undiscovered island with a beautiful peaceful culture. I make drawings and prints of such an island.



If it was not for making sculpture, being so dyslexic when I was at school, when there was no understanding at the time of being word blind, I would have just been left behind. So thank goodness for clay !!!

Sculpture is my joy in life, which for me is sheer pleasure!

Thank you Everybody !!!

Gordon Ferrie

(Provided with edited assistance from Nigel Filmer)



CERAMICS IN PRAGUE - by Gary Kramer

Recently, I spent some time in the Czech capital. Amongst other things, I was curious to see what style of ceramics had been produced there over the years. It turns out that there are very good displays of ceramics of all types in most of the major museums and art collections housed in Prague.



In the "Narodni Muzeum" (National Museum) there was a huge collection of low and high relief mould-made tiles many of which dated back to the 15th and 16th centuries.. The tiles were mainly related to the heraldry of medieval times or movements in Czech history such as the Hussites, a group who were founded after the death of Jan Huss in the year 1415 (see <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hussite>).

Many of the tiles showed Hussite soldiers armed to the teeth for battle in this tile - (opposite) - for example the four Hussite soldiers are shown carrying sword, flail, crossbow, mace and shield.



Another - (above) - depicted a lion with two tails. This is the Bohemian "double-tailed lion" that is said to represent a brave and courageous protector of the Czech people and their lands. It also forms part of the Czech Republic's coat of arms. I believe that the tile would have been cast from a mould that was made from bisque fired pottery. As you can see the modelling is quite well defined.



Other tiles showed mythical creatures so beloved in the medieval period - lots of dragons, griffins, mermaids and assorted monsters. Some of the tiles had little in the way of detail and were obviously made very quickly by a provincial potter, others were well modelled and probably intended for use in buildings of high status. Most of the tiles that I saw on display were made of earthenware (terracotta) and unglazed. The tile opposite shows a knight in armour doing battle with a dragon - this is either St George or the mythical Czech hero Prince Brincvic.

(cont. on next page)



CERAMICS IN PRAGUE - by Gary Kramer cont.

These tiles would have been used in Royal buildings such as Prague Castle and they were often used to cover the large fireplaces made of clay known as "stoves" that were found in most rooms within high status buildings. There is an interesting archeological research article online that looks at the Prague pottery workshop of Adam Spacek (1531-1572) which has identified nearly 200 different tile designs. Also there is a chapter in "English Medieval Tiles" by Elizabeth Eames dedicated to relief and counter relief tiles (chapter 5).

Some tiles from the same period were made using what looks like quite coarse clay with simple motifs that must have been made in large quantities at a low cost. These may have been made to cover large communal areas where a lack of artistic skill or details would not have been noticed. This example is glazed and might have formed part of a tiled floor or wall. The image shows what looks like a hybrid form of a knight's upper body joined to the lower section of a dragon's body.



Gary Kramer. Sept 2023

LUCY RIE - THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM, BATH - by Kevin Akhurst

Lucie Rie will need no introduction to most SCG members. Often described as one of the greatest potters of the 20th century, she forged an independent path for almost seventy years of making, starting in Vienna in 1922 and not ceasing until 1990. She fled to England in 1938 to escape the horrors of the Nazis and established a small workshop and home in London, where she lived for the rest of her life.

This exhibition at the Holburne Museum in Bath, features over a hundred of Rie's works ranging across the whole of her career, from the early days in Vienna, through the war years where she made a living through making ceramic buttons (here displayed in a small room on another floor), to her later glorious years, making beautiful bowls and vases which now sell at auction for vast sums.



In addition, in an odd alcove under the stairs, the museum is showing, on a loop, the TV programme about Rie, by David Attenborough, in which he famously holds her ankles while she is unloading her kiln to stop her falling in.

(cont. on next page)



LUCY RIE - THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM, BATH - by Kevin Akhurst cont.

The book that goes with the exhibition contains an interesting article by Nigel Wood, about Lucie Rie's potting techniques. Rie had developed her own technique for glazing her pots, which did not require bisque firing. Instead she brushed on her glazes, thickened with gum arabic, as the dry pots spun on her wheel. It is said that she wanted to avoid bisque firing because when she was working in Vienna she had to transport her pots across the city to be fired and did not want extra trips for bisque firings. Also, she constantly experimented with new glazes and disliked the delay that bisque firing introduced between making and glazing. The use of brushed-on glazes also had the benefit that, in a small studio, she did not need the large buckets of glaze required for dipping or pouring.

Rie's glazed surfaces are famously complex, and the brushed-on technique was probably an important factor in this, applying multiple layers of

glaze. She also experimented with and developed glazes which made use of features that other potters might regard as defects, such as crawling, pinholing and the 'scumbled' effect you can get when brushing on a thick glaze. Rie disliked discussing the aesthetics of her pots, preferring to let them speak for themselves.

The main display in this exhibition is housed in a grand 19th century room surrounded by wall cabinets containing superb Renaissance maiolica. In fact if you are so inclined, the other galleries of this small but perfectly formed museum, combining a permanent collection with various temporary exhibits, are well worth a visit.

The Lucie Rie exhibit at the Holburne Museum continues until 7 January 2024.

Kevin Akhurst August 2023

THE WEDDING CAKE AT WADDESDON MANOR - review by Neil Dewey

A 12 metre tall ceramic sculptural pavilion by Joana Vasconcelos

This extraordinary playful and kitsch work of art, part sculpture part garden folly, continues the Rothchild family's history of commissioning and placing fanciful buildings and objects within the landscape of their extensive estate at Waddesdon near Aylesbury. At the present time it may only be accessed by booking a place on a guided tour. These end on 26 October but will continue next year after winter cleaning and protection is complete.

Joana, a Portuguese artist, has with the collaboration of a large team designed, and constructed a four-storey steel framed celebration of festivity and joy. Already, wedding ceremonies have been conducted within. Joana has said, "Above all, I always thought of it as a temple to love". Possibly not knowing it, her choice of sherbet candy colours are very much in tune with this Summer's 'Barbie' zeitgeist.



(cont. on next page)



THE WEDDING CAKE AT WADDESDON MANOR - review by Neil Dewey. cont.

The thousands of glazed tiles and other repeated ceramic ornaments which clad the structure inside and out were all manufactured and inspired by the Baroque buildings and decorative traditions of Lisbon where Joana Vasconcelos lives and works. The site was specially prepared close to the water gardens and dairy which were, other than the Manor house itself, originally built as a focus of pleasurable visual entertainment for the extravagant house parties of Victorian and Edwardian times.

Twin staircases in each of the three tiers of the cake allow easy access to the viewing platforms from where other building and the wonderful mature landscape of the estate and distant views may be enjoyed and finally to the forth storey which is the platform on the top of the uppermost tier.



As to is it 'Worth a Visit'... To my eyes it is kitsch, vulgar, over-decorative, twee in places - tiny fish decoratively spouting spray from their mouths into shells below, ridiculous, crazy, an extravagant money-no-object indulgence, something that could be a basis for revolution in other people's eyes and times BUT it is such very naughty fun it just gave me a huge amount of pleasure for the limited stay of the one hour tour. Probably wrong on so many levels but to me it is a delight that something so extravagant and purely dedicated to joy can still take place.

So, yes, most definitely visit. You've only seventeen (yes 17) years left before its temporary Planning Permission ceases!

Neil Dewey Sept 23





GRAYSON PERRY: SMASH HITS - ROYAL SCOTTISH ACADEMY, EDINBURGH

by Neil Dewey



This is the biggest ever exhibition of Grayson's works and covers his 40-year career. Occupying all of the Academy's major gallery space, it contains many of his subversively decorated pots together with huge tapestries and prints full of humour, social commentary and some sexual imagery. I was also pleased to see some of his sketchbooks and more modest paper works were included.



In the introduction to Grayson's show, on the wall of the first gallery, the text notes that in the early 80s, "His plates and pots offended pottery lovers, who objected to the crude, sexually explicit imagery, and upset contemporary art lovers, who objected to pottery." I suspect the same may be said today as his pots may not have progressed in terms of technique and possibly quality, although the decoration is more sophisticated in the techniques applied and intense with social commentary and humour. I am happy to accept the work partially as entertainment by a 'blokey transvestite' and self-declared National Treasure.

The exhibition is visually dominated by the huge tapestries so cannot be seen as a ceramics exhibition alone - but although less in their physical presence what the pots have to say are their equal. And as Editor of this 'august' publication I feel I may take the liberty of recommending a mixed media show as very much "Worth a Visit" if you possibly can before it ends on 12 November 23, but with the proviso that it is not a show to take too seriously especially if you are looking for breathtaking ceramic artistry.

Neil Dewey Sept 23





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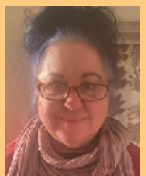
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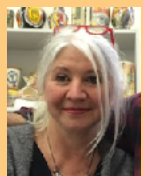


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Newsletter Publication - Dates and Guidance

Please send contributions to: scg_newsletter@southernceramicgroup.org.uk

NEWSLETTER DUE: 1 February 2024
1 June 2024
1 October 2024

COPY DEADLINE: 17 January 2024
17 May 2024
16 September 2025

Keep me posted, please, at any time before the deadline with your news of galleries and exhibitions showing your work, studio tips, memories, and especially images that might be shared.

Photos and other images. Please send these as separate .jpg files. If your document contains embedded photos that is not a problem as it shows me where they should be placed but I always need them as separate files as well with descriptive file name please, (e.g. Freda blue pot). And please remember the reproduction limitations of the newsletter if viewing your technical or aesthetic detail clearly is paramount.

Neil Dewey



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Acknowledgments

Thanks go to regular contributors to the Newsletter and all the new ones prepared to have a go and submit something.



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