



CHINESE CLAYART NEWSLETTER

May 2003, Vol. 33

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CHINESE CLAYART

" **Chinese Clayart**" is a newsletter emailed monthly to professional ceramic artists who want to know about ceramic art in China and things related. This newsletter will be a bridge between China and Western countries for the ceramic arts. Comments and suggestions are very welcome. (Copyright 2000, The Chinese Ceramic Art Council, USA. All rights reserved)

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CALENDAR

March 6-22, Yixing Artists Delegation visited in the US.

March 9, Yixing Ceramic Art Exhibition at the Clayground, San Jose, CA, in conjunction with slide presentation and Yixing Teapot workshop.

March 10, Slide presentation and Yixing Teapot workshop at San Jose State University by Yixing ceramic artists.

March 12-15, the Yixing delegation participated in the NCECA conference at San Diego, CA.

March 21, Yixing Teapot workshop at San Francisco Asian Art Museum by Yixing ceramic artists.

April 25-27, Yixing Ceramics, Traditional Teapot and Figurative Sculpture, workshop presented by Meiqun Gu and Guangzhen Zhou, The New London Art Center, Minnesota.

May 2-4, 2003, 14th Annual California Conference for the Advancement of Ceramic Art (CCACA), Davis, CA. Guangzhen Zhou was one of the presenters.

May 13 - July 11, 2003, Yixing Ceramic Art Traveling Exhibition, USA 2003-2008, at d. p. Fong Gallery, San Jose, California. Opening Reception: 5:30 - 7:30 pm, Saturday, May 17. (See details below).

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EXHIBITIONS

Yixing Ceramic Art Traveling Exhibition, USA 2003-2008

May 13 - July 11, 2003, d. p. Fong Gallery, San Jose, California

Opening Reception: 5:30 - 7:30 pm, Saturday, May 17, 2003

Admission is free.

Address: d. p. Fong Gallery, 383 South First Street, San Jose, CA 95113

Tel. 408-298-8877, fonggallery@california.com.

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PROFILE

The Unique of Yixing Teapot

Yixing Teapots are made out of a high-iron brownish clay, which is very fine and plastic, and works very well for detailed surfaces.

Yixing Artisans use no pottery wheels, and no rolling pins. Their perfect rounded teapots are just paddled from slabs, using paddles and many other traditional tools.

Yixing clay teapots, when fired to the right temperature, will be able to hold water without any glaze inside.

Chinese Clay Tools of Water Buffalo Horn

Buffalo Horn Sculpting Tools

Sculpting tools that made out of buffalo horn are used for sculpting clay works and burnishing the clay surface when leather hard. Among the different sizes and shapes of tool, the sculpting thumb and horn tip spoon are the most popular tools.

Water Buffalo Horn Scraping Sheets

Horn Sheets are also used for burnishing clay surfaces. Soak the sheet over-night and the horn sheet will get soft and flexible; then cut it into the shape that fits your need. Always soak it before use.

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CONFERENCES

Ceramic Sculpture Conference, Davis, California 2004

According to Mr. John Natsoulas, director of the Annual California Conference for the Advancement of Ceramic Art, next year's conference will focus on the ceramics of Asian Culture and its influences. The presenting artists will be Richard Notkin, Esther Shimazu, Xiaoping Luo, and Ah Leon. In cooperation with the conference, the Chinese Ceramic Art Council USA will organize a delegation of Chinese clay artists to participate the conference.

CONFERENCE AND EVENT

YIXING CERAMICS IN NEW LONDON, MINNESOTA

This successful workshop was sponsored by a grant from the Southwest Minnesota Arts & Humanities Council (SMAHC) with the State Legislature and the McKnight Foundation; and organized by the New London Art Center's vice president Craig Edwards and director Emily Deuth, along with Guangzhen Zhou, director of the Chinese Ceramic Art Council, USA. The Yixing Ceramics, Traditional Teapot and Figurative Sculpture workshop presented by Meiqun Gu and Guangzhen Zhou concentrated on the hand-building techniques used to create the brownish, palm size elegant teapots. At the same time, the Yixing Ceramics Exhibition was held at the Art Center Gallery, and about sixty teapots made by many different Yixing artists were shown.

The twenty five participants enrolled were from the local area, and also areas of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Northern Minnesota. Some of them were experienced clay artists, some were art instructors, and some of them were new in the clay art field. By the end of workshop, each of them successfully made a nice brownish teapot with personal styles using the Yixing tools, Yixing clay and Yixing techniques. In the second day, all of the artists visited Craig Edwards' Banner Oak Pottery. People were amazed by the Anagama kiln (a type of Japanese kiln) and the fired bowls, plates, vases and mugs on display.

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FEATURES

New Concepts Purple Sand Teapot Series

Eight pieces of Purple Sand Teapots that were designed by Guangzhen Zhou and completed by Meiqun Gu will be in the show together with the Yixing Ceramic Art Traveling Exhibition, USA 2003-2008 at d. p. Fong Gallery, Downtown San Jose, California, May 13 - July 11, 2003. The New Concepts Purple Sand Series include the categories of "Generations," "Shifted," "Growing Up," and "Colon Technology."

The first category of the New Concepts Purple Sand Series is "Generations." "Generations" is a main, larger teapot body surrounded by many small baby teapots, and the spout, lid, and handle of the teapot are formed by three medium size teapots. The "Shifted" category contains the pieces that are like shifted slices of cut apples. The "Growing Up" category contains teapots stacked three or five high, representing the repetition of human life. And the "Colon Technology" category contains two or three pieces connected to each other. For example, one teapot with three spouts can pour three cups at same time. All of these pieces function well. My clay works in the past were figurative with sense of a humor, but my new ideas for Yixing Teapots are abstract and associated with of human life.

It is an Yixing tradition that calligraphers or painters (literati) and artisans work together. I have had the idea of working together with Yixing artisans, but it was difficult to find the right person who would transfer my 2D images to be the actual 3D teapots.

In October, 2002, Meiqun Gu went to the University of Hawaii for an Yixing workshop. I invited her to come to the San Francisco Bay Area and I organized a workshop presented by Meiqun Gu and an exhibition of her works in our Clayground Studio.

Just after New Year's Day, 2003, I went to Yixing and showed her some of my drawings of teapots that I had in my mind for long time, and asked her to work with me for the New Concepts Purple Sand Teapot Series. In early April, I went to her studio in Yixing and discussed with her the details of these pieces. Finally, she made these pieces from my two-dimensional sketches into three-dimensional teapots and brought them to the US.

-- by Guangzhen Zhou

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TRAVEL

Cancellation of the China Trip of May-June 2003.

Due to the SARS-Travel Restricted Areas of China, we have canceled the China trip of June 2003.

Please check out our website www.chineseclayart.com for the next available China trip.

My China Trip in April 2003

I went Shanghai, China, April 6 to 15. I had planned this trip for a while. I needed to complete two new designs of textural mats, and ship some new items for our web-store. I felt very excited about these new products. At noon on April 6, at the check-in counter of Air China at San Francisco International Airport, the long line of passengers was missing. I checked in without waiting a minute. After passing the customs and security check, I got to the gate and saw there was over ten crew members and about the same number of passengers in the waiting area. Only about one-tenth of the seats were sold out in the airplane.

"Am I crazy to travel into China now?" My mood was really bad on the airplane.

China is a very big country both in the territory and population. The SARS-infected areas of Hong Kong and Guangdong Province (Southern China) are almost a thousand miles away from Shanghai. It's just like the distance between Key West Florida and New York City. Shanghai, the city where I had planned to go, was not in the disease area.

Before my trip, I saw the news of SARS. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the areas of Hong Kong and Guangdong Province were restricted for traveling and Shanghai was not on the list.

During my eight days in the Shanghai area, I saw articles and programs of "How to Protect Yourself from SARS" in the newspaper and on TV, and I saw fewer western travelers in shopping areas than there used to be. Other than that, everything looked normal in Shanghai and no one wore masks on the street, but a few did in the subway.

I had a good time in Shanghai, and got my business done on time. I called the airlines and was told that several flights had been canceled due to lack of passengers. I decided to leave Shanghai two days earlier.

On the way home flight, I got nervous again. The flight was directly from Shanghai to San Francisco this time. I told myself: "Don't cough, don't get an asthma attack, or you will be treated as a SARS patient and be sent to an isolated room in a hospital after you got off the airplane."

We received the SARS Fact Sheet of the Public Health Dept., County of Santa Clara, California, from my daughter's school. It says: "SARS can only be spread by someone that is sick with the disease. Persons who are not sick but may have been exposed or traveled to the areas above probably can not spread SARS..." "People usually get sick 2-7 days after being exposed but it may take as long as 10 days. Illness usually begins with a fever, chills, headache and body aches, followed by the respiratory symptoms."

After I got back in California and called one of my friends, I was told "You have been in China and you have to stay home for 10 days." Fortunately, I had no problems, and got to Minnesota for the Yixing Ceramic Workshop by the eleventh day.

To help to defeat the SARS in China, please call: 1-800-help-now (American Red Cross).

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LETTERS

Dear Glass Artists and Professors,

My name is Jian-zhong Wang, a professor of the Academy of Art and Design, Tsinghua University. Three years ago, our school established a glass studio, a new field in China. I have been teaching ceramics for many years, and since I am in charge of the glass studio, we need a lot of information about techniques, curriculums, and the history of glass art. Also, I would like to compile a Chinese-edition book, which might be titled "the Glass Art of the World," and will be mainly to introduce famous glass artists and their works. Suggestions are very welcome and thank you in advance!

Best Wishes!

Jian-zhong Wang

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NEW ITEMS at OUR WEB-STORE

First, I would like to thank everyone who visited our NCECA booth or bought any of our clay tools or books. We had a very success sale at San Diego last March. Meanwhile, I would like to apologize to some of our new friends and old friends, since we got very busy at that time, and I did not had a chance to talk to many of you. Please feel free to contact us by email or phone. Please check out our newly available items below, and we are going to get more items from China which will be in our stock by the end of July. Please check our website www.chineseclayart.com for [updated information. Thank you!](#)

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