



CHINESE CLAYART NEWSLETTER

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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.
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LETTER

LETTER from the editor Guangzhen Zhou

Since I have gotten very busy during the last a few months, we had to skip the May issue of our

newsletter. I am very sorry about this.

I visited China for almost one month. In late May, Elaine Henry and Susan Filley (past chairman and chairman of NCECA, respectively), a few other American clay artists, and I visited Yixing, and we had a lunch with the mayor of Yixing. We hosted an International Ceramic Art Conference in Yixing in May 2001. Now, sponsored by the Yixing People's Municipality, we are planning the International Teapot Art Conference in Yixing in 2005.

On June 3, I flew to Beijing to meet other American artists. With total of 15 participants, our group visited Beijing, Xi'an, Chenlu (a ceramic village of Song dynasty), Jingdezhen, Yixing, Shanghai, and Hangzhou. Besides the normal tourist sightseeing areas, we also visited the top Chinese art schools: the Central Academy of Fine Arts and Academy of Art and Design of Hsinghua University in Beijing, and the Jingdezhen Ceramics Institute and China Academy of Arts.

The large lecture hall of the Jingdezhen Ceramics Institute was full of the students that evening. Many of them were standing against the walls. Bob Dixon, professor of Illinois University, Lee Maddleman, the chairman of the California Artists of Clay and Glass Association, Sandy and Bob Kinzie, and the group leader Guangzhen Zhou, all showed their slides and were received very well by the Chinese students.

In Yixing, after we visited a few national masters' studios, we had a larger lunch party with over twenty Chinese artists who were invited and had visited in the US before.

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CONFERENCE AND EVENT

International Teapot Art Conference, Yixing, China, 2005 (proposal)
June 2-4, 2005

Visit the teapot center of the World.

Learn the unique techniques of Yixing teapot.

Meet the national masters of China and many other artists.

See the town of hundreds of thousands of potters and its teapot market.

Observe the teapot history and tea culture.

Scholarships are available for members of NCECA.

The International Teapot Art Conference and other programs are sponsored by international and domestic organizations:

International:

The National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA)

The Chinese Ceramic Art Council, USA

Domestic:

Yixing People's Municipality, Jiangsu Province, PR China

Ceramic Art Branch of the China Ceramic Industrial Association, PR China

Association of Yixing Ceramics, Jiangsu Province, PR China

Conference Events:

Slide lectures, teapot workshops, and local tours to selected Masters' studios, the Ancient Purple Sand Mine, the local Dragon Kiln, the teapot market, Bamboo Mountain and tea plantation, and much more;

Conference Exhibitions:

International Teapot Exhibition Invitational

International Teapot Competition

Chinese Teapot Competition

Other programs:

International residency/workshop programs:

1. Teapot workshop in Yixing (June 5-11, 2005). Tour after the workshop to Jingdezhen, Xi'an, and Beijing (June 12-20, 2005).

2. Porcelain workshop in Jingdezhen (June 5-11, 2005). Tour after the workshop to Xi'an and Beijing.

Pre- and post-conference China tours:

Enter Shanghai before May 30, 2005, with two days touring in Shanghai.

Post conference tour to either:

1. Jingdezhen, Xian and Beijing (June 5-15, 2005);
2. Hangzhou, Guangzhou, Foshan and Hong Kong (June 5-12, 2005);

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EXHIBITIONS

Exhibition I.

Purple Sand and Fragrant Tea - Invitation

Hosted by Chinese Culture Center and Chinese Ceramic Art Council, USA.

Opening Reception: Thursday, July 29, 2004. 6-8pm.

750 Kearny Street, Holiday Inn - Third Floor. San Francisco, CA 94108, Tel. 415-986-1822.

Exhibition II.

Da Yu Xiao Hu, Big Fish Small Pot - Report

International Small Teapot Competition and Show

-- Dr. Tony Huntley

The results of "Big Fish Small Pot," an international small teapot competition, were on view February 24 through March 31 at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, California. Ceramic teapots holding less than sixteen fluid ounces and constructed in the last three years were eligible. Ninety-three teapots were judged by Guangzhen "Po" Zhou, ceramic artist and director of the Chinese Ceramic Art Council, USA. Selected works represented artists from four countries and 18 US states. The winner of the Grand Prize, a trip to visit ceramics production sites in China, was Annette Corcoran, of Pacific Grove, California. It's seen at the left. At only 2 inches in height, her entry, Wood Stork Teapot, was one of the smallest pots in this "small teapot show." Corcoran was a student of ceramics at Saddleback College in the early 1970's. While she was at the opening reception, she reported that Tom Gaines, the first ceramics instructor at Saddleback College, tried hard to get her to use the wheel; however, she was determined to master the construction of small hand-built objects. Today, Corcoran is an internationally known for accurate and artistic representation of birds on her porcelain teapots. The other winners in the competition included John Hopkins of Grand Terrace, California, First Place; Susan Speck of Mission, Kansas, Second Place; and Mei Qun Gu of Yixing, China, Third Place. Honorable Mention was awarded to Joan Ulrich of Brooklyn, New York; Shelley Shreiber of Denver, Colorado; Shula Paz, Irvine, California; Pat Singley of St. Charles, Missouri; Diana Donaldson of San Clemente, California; Stephen Fabrico of Bloomington, New York; Meryl Ruth of Portland, Maine; and Yi Chiu Tseng of Oswego, New York.

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TRAVEL

TRAVEL About the China trip of 2004

Dear All,

Here's a synopsis of our trip to China in early June. Read it if you're interested:-).

Hope you're all having a great summer! Ours sure started out well. Now, Bob is back at work on the roof project and I'm making pots for the Palo Alto show in two weeks, then we'll relax a bit!

Last Saturday we returned from an 18 day fantastic trip to mainland China, led by a wonderful

man, Guangzhen "Po" Zhou, who's from Shanghai, but lives in Cupertino. He does these trips nearly every year.

We flew to Beijing, and the 15 of us started out our city tour with the Forbidden City, within walking distance of our hotel. On to Tiananmen Square, then on to Academy of Art and Design, Tsinghua University to see student work and studios. The local tour guides squeeze in the tours to the silk factory, hoping you'll buy. Some of our group did. However, it was fun to see the process. The next morning, off to the Great Wall with a stop at the "pearl factory" - then on to the cable car ride to a high point on the Wall and then we hiked for over an hour - what a sight and what a feat to construct.

The end of the day found us on the overnight train to Xian, sharing a compartment with another couple. Amazingly comfortable and the sights out the window were wonderful. The train food was lacking, but the tea was good in the morning. Had breakfast near the train station before we boarded the bus for the hotel and by mid-morning we were off to see the Warriors. On the way we went to the Warrior factory - fun to see them making the reproductions. The movie at the Warrior museum is an "in-the-round" reliving of the making and placing of the warriors and their destruction. Then we saw them - the real ones - truly amazing and quite overwhelming. We were there most of the day and stopped at a street market on the way back - great bargaining!

The next day was another trip highlight - our 3 hour bus ride to the pottery village of Chenlu. Electricity, satellite dishes and no running water. One town WC - amazing! One town restaurant, and the food was spicy and good. The pottery was wonderful, celadon's, black on white and a huge variety of other more contemporary things. Everyone made things out of clay and they even have a small museum. Visited many studios and a couple of factories, working conditions were not great, but the folks were warm and friendly. Stopped on the way back to the city at a large museum displaying the ceramic work of the area.

Bob and I both felt bad that night, but it was short-lived. The next morning we visited a mosque and great market before we caught the plane to Nanchang. Bob was feeling considerably better by the time we had a meal on the plane and boarded the bus to Jingdezhen. Had dinner at the hotel.

After a walk around the lake in front of the hotel before breakfast, we were off the Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute, Great faculty show! Much creative work. Next was the visit to a water mill where the clay is crushed, soaked and cut into bricks, then to the porcelain factory where two guys throw the same pot, in 2 foot sections, as high as 8 feet. On to the next market - more wonderful bargains.

Today we visited another, even more charming, village. Felt like we were transported back in time, then off to the original kaolin mine, and an old dragon kiln site. All of these places were loaded with chards! At the end of the day, we went back to the Ceramic Institute for a slide show of our work. There were only 5 of us with slides and little did we know that we were going to present to over 300 people with our stuff on a huge screen. Speaking of overwhelming!

The next day we had some time in the morning to enjoy, our favorite city, Jingdezhen - all of the street lights and traffic lights are housed in blue on white porcelain stations. Museums and markets were wonderful. That evening we caught the overnight train to Chang Zhou. The next morning a bus met us and drove us to Yixing - we thought a small village, how about 100,000 population! Unbelievable teapots! Many trips to studios, factories, treated to tea and catalogues. Shopped at the teapot market and a great ceramic tools store. Could have stayed much longer!

As if that wasn't enough we went on to Shanghai, the city that's going vertical! The marvelous Shanghai Museum of Art is not to be missed. We were treated again to a wonderful meal, given by one of the wealthy ceramic masters who is a friend of Po's. We finished up our trip in Hangzhou, a beautiful town south of Shanghai, situated on a lake and has the best art university in all of China.

The only rain we had was two hard days in Shanghai, but it didn't dampen our spirits or our schedule. We had very little sickness, great hotels, wonderful and plentiful food, good beer and a whole lot of fun. There were no hidden costs, so the trip was really inexpensive. Our schedule was

full, but we always had everything taken care of - even the adventures were handled well. Po already has next summer's Yixing teapot symposium planned. Even if you're not into clay, it's a truly wonderful trip to make.

Got a bit carried away - hope you enjoyed it if you made it to the end!

Hugs, Sandy and Bob Kinzie

CHINA TOUR AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Touring China with Guangzhen "Po" Zhou will be one of the most memorable adventures you will ever have. My 19 days with "Po" left me with lifetime memories and lifetime friends. This tour promises you a spectacular view into the past and an unparalleled view of present day China across many culturally important cities. From the time you arrive you will come face to face with the people, history and landscape of cities large and small across eastern China.

This tour is not for the meek. Those who stay in their room on their annual DisneyWorld excursion may wish to book Florida again. You are about to see a world like no other. You will get a true taste of Chinese cuisine. Enjoy this opportunity to try many exotic dishes seldom served in Chinese fare in this country. You will see not just the cities but also much of the countryside as you travel by plane, train and bus.

While the tour focuses on ceramics you will see a lot more than ceramics. But even those of you with only a fledgling interest in the world of clay will find yourself drawn into the excitement of seeing extraordinary pieces made more than two thousand years ago. Ceramics of the past, ceramics of the present and current ceramic process will be at your fingertips. Museums, showrooms and marketplaces will be on your itinerary.

Our tour filled my camera with more than a thousand photos and I wouldn't have missed it for the world. Knowing the kind of tour director Po is, tells me that yours will be just as exciting.

Rich D'Arcey - ceramic artist

PRACTICAL TIPS AND INFO:

- Traveling light is always an advantage. This is especially true on this tour.
- The flight from San Francisco to Beijing is approximately 0 to 11 hours. We were served two meals and a snack.
- All of China is in one time zone and is 12 hours ahead of EST, 15 hours ahead of PST, during daylight savings time.
- Airport taxes were a modest \$6, coming and going, Spring 2004.
- Make a copy of your passport, visa and all pages of your airline ticket and carry in a separate safe location. Note: If you lose your airline ticket, you will be required to purchase a new one. This may or may not be wholly reimbursed.
- Your passport is your key to movement when traveling. You will be asked for it often, such as in airports, train stations, hotels and banks. Carrying your passport, airline tickets and money in a safe but accessible place such as a money belt or daypack is imperative.
- You will be asked to fill out several short forms at the airports and on the plane. These forms often require information from your airline tickets, such as flight number, city of departure and destination and from your passport such as passport number and city of issue. I found it helpful to have this info copied to the back of a business card in my shirt pocket. This limited the number of times I needed to "dig out" my passport and airline tickets.
- Carry a pen or pencil in an easily accessible location.
- Phone cards are available in China. They are available at \$12 each and offer approximately 20 to 30 minutes to the west coast. Po will help you locate these. Consider buying two to start due to limited purchasing opportunities.

- I found it useful to exchange \$100 at the airport into Yuan (or RMB). My next opportunity to exchange was at the hotel.
- Smaller denominations such as 1, 5 and 10 Yuan were very useful. The 20, 50 and 100 Yuan were seldom used.
- Traveler's Checks have a slightly higher exchange rate but were difficult to exchange. Most banks and businesses did not accept them.
- If you have never traveled by train be advised that train compartments are relatively small. Be sure to pack for 24 hours the day before the train. That is; have anything you need access to available from your carry-on. This will assure you the greatest amount of comfort and make your travel by train enjoyable.
- Many areas in China are unpaved and somewhat dusty. Respiratory ailments are not unusual. Bring appropriate precautions such as throat lozenges. You may even wish to bring dust masks available at most pharmacies.
- Paper is not readily available. This includes toilet paper. Even the hotels provide only small rolls, which can be replenished with a simple call to housekeeping. On the road many public bathrooms offer no toilet paper. Carry your own in a daypack or carryon. I found it useful to carry travel-sized packets of Kleenex.
- China is one of many countries that utilize the porcelain "pan" built into the floor. For the unacquainted this system can seem intimidating but even with a bad back I found it much easier than it initially appeared. Nonetheless, if you are not feeling adventurous most facilities we visited had at least one "Western-style" commode available. A good rule of thumb each morning is "go before you go".
- The buses are not equipped with bathrooms but bathroom breaks are routinely taken.
- As is common in this country, hotels provide 1 small cake of soap, toothbrush with toothpaste, 2 small bottles of shampoo, 2 bottles of body cleanser and 2 combs for each room daily, as needed.
- Most of the hotels did offer 24 hour laundering at a reasonable price. This helped lighten my load. My 20 year old son had a great method of dealing with socks. He brought 19 pair of his oldest and threw them out daily.
- All of the people we encountered were warm and welcoming. I enjoyed having local postcards (showing where I live) available to hand out. This was a wonderful way to cross the language barrier if you don't happen to speak Chinese. Token gifts of any kind are fun.
- I made small medallions to give to the studio hosts. I was glad to have a small ceramic gift as a thank you for the hospitality shown to us often by not just the artists but also the family members and studio workers. I gave out approximately sixty.
- If you have a digital camera - Don't leave home without it.
- Bottled water was available everywhere for between 12 and 60 cents. Usually 36 cents. It tasted fine and was safe to drink.
- You will have many opportunities to make purchases at remarkable prices. Small suitcases for the return trip were available for under \$10.
- Flights inside China allowed 44 lbs. baggage. From China to U.S. we were allowed 70 lbs. of luggage. Check before you go.
- Although umbrellas were inexpensive and available, a lightweight raincoat/windbreaker was useful one evening. Warm clothing was not used. Our tour was the first two weeks of June.
- Mosquito repellent was handy but not necessary.
- Cab rides are extremely inexpensive and very available in the larger cities.
- Traveling with strong medicine for diarrhea is always smart.
- During the tour you will receive the services of several bus drivers and tour guide. These professionals work hard to make your trip more enjoyable. I found them to be personable and helpful and was pleased to "chip in" when a tip envelope was passed around. The total for all tips came to about \$45 for me.
- To keep the tour as interesting as possible Po makes frequent changes to the schedule. This means when he finds a way to get you into an interesting tour only the day before, he does so. So the rule here is: If you are a bit flexible, many interesting places, events and people will come your way.

A few words about haggling:

Most street vendors as well as many stores are willing to haggle over the price of an item. This can be very enjoyable and you will find many great bargains. In the end I hope each of us can remember that we are often haggling over only a dollar or two with people who have far less than

we have. That dollar can mean a lot to them. I often found myself dickering them down to a very low price for the enjoyment of getting such a bargain then paying the vendor a much higher price. This may have added \$40 or \$50 dollars to my total trip but the enjoyment I got from spreading a bit of my much more easily derived cash was worth it. And I won't ever admit it to my fellow travelers. To them I'll always be the greatest bargainer.

Lastly, a few words worth learning:

Pronounced: Means:

nee - how hello

tzy - jen goodbye

boo - yow No, I don't want to buy it. I can see that it is a great deal, it's it's just that I don't think I can find another place in my suitcase for yet another great deal.

Have a great trip!

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OPPORTUNITIES

Invitation to the Jingdezhen 1st International Ceramics Fair

Back in the Jingde age of the Northern Song dynasty (A.D. 1004-1007), Changnan Town in Fuliang county, Jiangxi Province, was named "Jingde Town" by the emperor Songzhenzong. The palace had decreed that the fine porcelain wares produced in Jingde Town would be sent to the palace, sealed "made in the year of Jingde" at the bottom. Since that time, Jingdezhen has become the famous world capital of porcelain.

For the millenium celebration of the establishment of Jingdezhen, the Jingdezhen 1st International Ceramics Fair (JDZICF) will be held October 12-18, 2004. The event is sponsored by the China Association of Light Industry, the China Association for Promoting International Trade, and the Government of Jiangxi Province. More than three thousand guests are expected from everywhere in the world.

The event includes the exhibitions of all kinds of ceramics, exchanges of ceramic culture, and ceramics trade fairs. JDZICF will be held at the China Ceramic City and the China House in Jingdezhen, which provide a big platform of 2,000 showrooms 230,000 square meters large. Come to Jingdezhen in October, the season of the golden autumn. All guests from at home and abroad will be warmly welcome by the forward-looking and warmhearted people of Jingdezhen. Thank you!

The Organizing Committee of Jingdezhen 1st International Ceramics Fair

Note from the editor Guangzhen Zhou:

On the behalf of the Chinese Ceramic Art Council, USA, we are going to lead another group to travel to China. The cities include Shanghai, Suzhou, Yixing, and Jingdezhen. Please contact us at chineseclayart@hotmail.com for details.

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BOOK

BK 014, Reality & Realism-The Ceramic Art of Ah Leon \$20.00

This 96-page book is a new version of the ceramic art of Ah Leon and the catalog of the Crocker Art Museum of Sacramento, California. Along with his new series of Tofu, other teapot pieces and his "Bridge" were exhibited in Crocker Art Museum Feb. 7- April 18, 2004. The internationally known Taiwanese artist Ah Leon graduated from the Taiwan National Academy of Art in 1976, and, influenced by the Yixing tradition, his clay works have developed using the unique style of illusion, called trompe l'oeil style.

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STORE

STORE Back-to-School Sale at Chinese Clay Art

The Chinese Clay Art Corp. is going to provide many popular clay tools and brushes with very low prices for the Back-to-School Sale. For example: a regular set of 8 pottery tools plus a stainless steel knife are just \$6.50.

The big sale will start in mid-August and end October 30. Please check the details at www.chineseclayart.com during that time.

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