



The Chinese Clay Art, USA

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"CHINESE CLAY ART" is a newsletter emailed to professional artists, curators, collectors, writers, experts, educators and students in the ceramic field, 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.

An earlier newsletter is on the Web at: <http://www.chineseclayart.com>

Chief Editor: Guangzhen "Po" Zhou

English Editor: Rachel Zhou

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



Note: About our past and new English editors:

Our first English Editor was Deborah Bouchette, who participated in our Chinese ceramic tours and exchanges in the year of 2000.

About 2007, when my daughter Rachel was twelve, she expressed that she would like to take the challenge. She worked as English Editor for the past 6 years. And now, my daughter has left for college in New York State.

ACGA Newsletter Editor Bonita Cohn visited China with me in 2005 and she would like to help us as our Chinese Clay Art Newsletter English editor. Bonita is a studio potter living in San Francisco. "I make functional stoneware, specializing in throwing on the potters wheel, and I teach wheel throwing at Rubys Clay Studio. My work represents a lifetime of work, study, and travel. As a friend of Mr. Zhou, through clay and travel, it is important that the language in this newsletter be without grammatical mistakes that can distract the reader from the wealth of the news offerings. I am glad to support the Chinese Clay Art Newsletter."

Special thanks to everyone who has provided help and support, in yesterday, today and tomorrow!

Call for entries:



Big Fish Small Pot, Sixth International Small Teapot Competition

Early Deadline: February 3, 2014

Exhibition: April 12-June 1, 2014

American Museum of Ceramic Art

Pomona, California, USA

Juror: Guangzhen "Po" Zhou

Entry Fee: \$50 for up to 3 pots per artist

Awards: Over \$5000 in cash and prizes including trip to major ceramic sites in China (airfare and most expenses)

For prospectus and entry information please visit www.bigfishsmallpot.com Or email: thuntley@saddleback.edu.

Big Fish, Small Pot, the 6th International Small Teapot Competition and Show

Words from the Juror, Guangzhen Zhou

Ceramics is a vehicle that carries cultures around the world; the ethnic and cultural heritages from different areas each have their own ceramic characteristics, depending on the ceramic materials, cultural traditions and customs of the nations. Some ceramic artists believe that the ceramic teapot was based on the tea culture that originated in the East. Later, it was increasingly used in the West, eventually for drinking coffee and other beverages. As one of the most important ceramic utensils in daily use, ceramic teapots around the world have long been an important art form.

Within the scope of traditional ceramics, ceramic teapots and tea culture evolved closely. Practical function plays an important role in the aesthetics of a teapot. Potters are concerned about the material, the shape, the decoration methods, and the firing temperature, as well as the aesthetic style. Cultural traditions and artistic styles from around the world for the "teapot" have radically different interpretations. In recent decades, the rise of contemporary ceramics and the development of the Internet have brought the whole world together; boundaries are increasingly blurred.

The contemporary ceramic teapot is usually divided into two categories: functional utensils and non-function sculptures, representing two ceramic art groups, the potters and the sculptors. The ceramic teapot is the only ceramic form that brings these two groups together.

A teapot is composed of four elements: body, lid, spout and handle. Compared with other forms of ceramic art, the creation of ceramic teapot requires a lot of the ingredients, and thus requires a great deal of creativity within the structural restraints. Some artists create balance between aesthetic form and practical function; some artists sculpt the teapots, ignoring function, thus firing temperature and the choice of materials and glaze can vary greatly. Although this work is often non-functional, it is indeed excellent sculpture in ceramic art, opening new possibilities. Some artists even use a creative approach integrating

other materials to create conceptual and other contemporary art. Ceramic teapots have gone far beyond the scope of the traditional culture of tea.

Big Fish, Small Pot International Teapot Show and Competition is an international exhibition rich in diverse culture and ceramic art forms. This exhibition will allow artists and audiences to gather across geographical boundaries from East to West to participate in world ceramic cultural understanding, to enhance friendship and enhance the ceramic art community.

Started in 2004 at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, California, this show has grown with every exhibition. In 2012, the exhibition venue was relocated to the American Museum of Ceramic Art. Next year, 2014, will mark the sixth competition.

Professor Tony Huntley and Gloria Gimbrone at Saddleback College have played the most important role in putting the show together and I am very proud to be the juror of the exhibition. I would like to express my gratitude to the following:

Everyone at Saddleback College who has contributed to the Big Fish Small Pot International Teapot Competition and Exhibition!

Thank you to Mr. David Armstrong, director of the American Museum of Ceramic Art and his colleagues for their support and cooperation!

And thank you to all of the artists who have participated in the last five competitions!

Guangzhen Zhou, December 1, 2013

Gossip about the Chinese Ceramic Art Today



The two groups in Chinese ceramic art community

Chinese ceramics has a long history going back thousands of years. Due to differences in the local ceramic materials and local customs, many kiln sites came into existence, such as Jingdezhen, Yixing, Longquan, Shiwan (the new name is Foshan) and many other ceramic industrial areas.

In the origin of these ceramic production areas, skilled workers, craftsmen and masters, all make tremendous contributions to the inheritance and development of ceramic technology. During the past few decades, many ceramic artists were granted the title of "Arts and Craft Master" or "Ceramic Art Master" from the government or organizations in different levels. Established in 1950's, there were only three schools providing ceramic education in the whole of China. There were: Tsinghua University, Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute, and China Academy of Fine Art. Starting around the year 2000, the Chinese government set up a policy to expand enrollment in higher education, and a large number of new campuses were built in major cities. These institutions, educators and their students formed another group in the ceramic art and design field.

The ceramic masters in traditional ceramic towns or villages and the ceramic artists of

academy trained are the two main forces in Chinese ceramic art community.

The group of craftsmen- the ceramic masters in traditional ceramic towns or villages, and the group of artists or art designers whom were academy trained, these are the two main forces in Chinese ceramic art community.

The Cultural and Creative Industries of China

The Chinese people are proud of "China" - the name of the country is the same as porcelain - everyone is proud of the reputation of China as a ceramic cultural country. During the past decade, ceramic art has gained a larger role in the gift market. China does not have a gallery agent system, therefore, the ceramic artworks became one of the projects welcomed by major auction companies.

In the last few years, the Chinese government has been vigorously promoting the creative cultural industries, and encourages the "going out of culture". The government, entrepreneurs and artists, plus educational institutes, together push a new wave of cultural industries movements, vigorously promoting the local culture and their characteristic ceramics.

There are many "art-zones" or theme parks that have appeared not only in the ceramic producing cities, but in other major cities throughout the country as well. Within the new construction of the cultural theme parks, there are many ceramic art studios, ceramic art galleries, international ceramics exchange centers, and so on. You may see a lot of luxury buildings and beautiful exhibition halls, but at same time there is a lack of a kind of spirit. Today, held everywhere, are the events of ceramic arts, such as ceramic exhibitions, seminars and international exchanges programs. They are usually sponsored by the organizations, or educational institutions, or local governments. The host often offers to provide everything free, such as transportation, meals and hotel rooms. However, these activities are mainly invitational within an "elite circle" only. The participants are usually formed with prestigious artists, university professors, and some government officers. Therefore, the content of the exhibits and lectures sometimes overlap. As a result, many of the events became a big party instead of academic study.

Chinese people came to the US for NCECA conferences

Since 1999, I have invited hundreds of Chinese artists, educators and their students, and other ceramic related people to participate in the NCECA conferences. The mayor of Yixing (the purple sand teapot town) came for NCECA with a group of 14 others in 2005. Besides the cultural shock, their most strong reaction was: We have paid the registration fee more than \$200 per person just for a badge and a bag of printed materials? Why is there no flying flags, no red carpet, no ribbon cut, no firecrackers, no banquets together, no provided transportation, no accommodation arrangements, and no government official receptions? When a middle-aged Chinese professor attended the NCECA opening lecture, he saw the hall was filled with a silent audience of hundreds, he exclaimed: "The ceramic art in America is like a religion!"

Most of the rich people in China today would like to send their children to the US for an education. But, on the other hand, anti-Americanism still exists in the hearts of some in the older generation, especially if someone's visa application had been rejected (during 1990's, the application for American visa refusal rate was nearly 80 %).

One time at the dinner table, some Chinese friends were proud of the victory of the Korean War. I argued with them: North Korean started the war and resulted in the huge number of casualties on both sides. There are no winners in the war. However, the young generation of

Chinese people seem to always want a photo together with Westerners. At this moment, I am teaching at Shanghai Institute of Visual Arts. Looking through the window, there is a new and beautiful campus but it is covered by smoky air. I don't know what is going to happen in the country in the next decade.

Natasha Dikareva donated one of her teapots to Yixing Ceramic Museum



Natasha Dikareva, the Grand Prize winner of 5th International Small Teapot Competition and Show handed over one of her teapots to Guangzhen Zhou and had him donate the teapot to the Yixing Ceramic Museum. November 29, Guangzhen Zhou was in Yixing and delivered this teapot to the museum director Zhou Xiaodong, and received a certificate from the museum director.

Experiments in Ceramics, "with one Brick, to Build a World"



Bricks' Subject---the Experimental Ceramics Art of Jacques Kaufmann

Museum of Zhaoqing College.

Zhaoqing College, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Art, College of Art and Design of Architecture and Environments.

Curator: Xu Hongbo; Academic Host: Wei Hua.

October 15th, to 31st, 2013

Mr. Jacques Kaufmann is the president of UNESCO International Academy of Ceramics. Working together with Xu Hongbo and the faculty and students at Zhaoqing College, Kaufmann moved tons of bricks that he gathered from some old buildings, and piled them into a little hill. Kaufmann called this "Yu Gong Yi Shan", a Chinese tale about a foolish old man who was leading his family members, one generation after another, trying to move a mountain, little by little. What the mountain blocked was the way for their exit.

Dec. 16 to 18, 2013, Abu Dhabi-Chinese Intangible Cultural Art Expo 2013



Dec. 16 to 18, 2013, Abu Dhabi-Chinese Intangible Cultural Art Expo 2013

Chinese Culture on Islamic Bay --- the Contemporary Decorative Ceramics Invitational Exhibition

Curator: Guangzhen Zhou

Venue: Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre

Chinese Culture Landing Islamic Gulf - Contemporary Decorative Ceramics Invitational Exhibition

Foreword, by Guangzhen Zhou

Abu Dhabi, one of the United Arab Emirates, lies on the intersection of Asia, Africa and Europe and an important connection point to other Middle East countries. Abu Dhabi is the capital of the United Arab Emirates, bordering with Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Oman and it is one of the most important re-export bases. Prosperous in recent years due to the oil-rich Gulf region, the Abu Dhabi government is investing heavily in building up an "Arab Island of Culture" and "the Cultural Capital of the Middle East". The government has a positive attitude and open arms, welcoming the world cultures to exchange and settled in, with ambitions to make Abu Dhabi a world-class cultural and tourist center.

Chinese ceramics made significant contribution to the world's history. Different eras of the Chinese ceramic culture had unique characteristics: Tri-color glazes of Tang, five famous kilns in the Song, Yuan blue and white, and Ming and Qing porcelain kilns. All reached the pinnacle of history. For centuries, countless Jingdezhen porcelains filled the European palaces, were displayed in museums all around the world, seen in the world's top auction

catalog, and considered to be the world's most expensive artworks.

Over the past decade, the Chinese ceramics cultural environment has improved rapidly. Many traditional ceramic kilns were restored; traditional ceramic processes were inherited and developed. The contemporary ceramics education has been promoted, ceramic artist groups expanded and a large number of pottery studios established all over the country. The Chinese traditional ceramic industry areas and the ceramic art educational facilities together became the dual model of ceramic development, masters of ceramic craftsman, ceramic artist and academic educators and their students. The traditional ceramic technology blended with concepts of contemporary arts has formed a diversified group of ceramic art phenomenon in China today.

The exhibition of Chinese contemporary ceramic art in Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre is a very important event for both sides. The commercial and cultural exchanges between Chinese and Islamic people have extended over thousand years. Tang Dynasty's Silk Road opened up the connections between Chinese and the Islamic cultures; the link between the two can be found in Tang pottery, Dunhuang murals, and other cultural heritage. The cobalt named "Smalt" for Jingdezhen blue and white porcelain was imported to Persian in the early years and became a great legend in the history of Chinese ceramics. Born in China and immigrated to the United States, I understand the Eastern and Western cultures, but my knowledge about the Islamic nation is still limited. Early impression of Islamic peoples and cultures were from "Arabian Nights" stories, sacred and strict Muslim religion, mysterious, brave and wise Islamic nation. Honored to serve as curator of this exhibition, I welcome this opportunity to learn more about Islamic nations and the culture. It is also a big challenge and responsibility.

To select a limited number of ceramic artists from large pool of Chinese ceramic artists is a painful job. The final exhibits are diverse, from the new ceramics from the traditional kilns, contemporary decorative sculptures and vessel forms, and industry design of functional wares. The exhibits have to meet the both standards of commercial value and academic status; the exhibits classifications contain both works of art and functional vessels, combined with contemporary art design and ceramic craft. We have not only invited the masters and experts from Jingdezhen, Longquan, Yixing, and other traditional ceramic kilns, but also professors, industrial designers and artists from schools in Beijing, Shanghai, Jingdezhen and other cities. Through this exhibition, we hope to establish Chinese ceramic art's academic status and market base in the Gulf region.

Thanks to all the participating ceramic artists for their enthusiastic support!

Thanks to the teams of Shanghai Jing Tao Event and Exhibition Co., Ltd. for their hard working and dedication!

Thanks to Dubai MIE Group for their supportive assist and help!

Thanks to all staff members of Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre for their efforts and cooperation! The success of the exhibition will be attributed to the many unsung heroes!

Guangzhen Zhou, in Northern California, USA, August 2013

Visiting professor at Fudan University, Shanghai Institute of Visual Arts

Member of UNESCO International Ceramic Academy

