

# THE CRAFT FACTOR

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL • WINTER 1990/91 • VOL. 15/4 \$3.00



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**Saskatchewan Craft Council** is a non-profit organization formed in 1975 to nurture and promote the craft community. Craftspeople, supporters of crafts and the general public are served by the many and varied programs of the Saskatchewan Craft Council including gallery and touring craft exhibitions, craft markets, workshops, conferences and publications. The Saskatchewan Craft Council is an affiliated member of the Canadian Craft Council.

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*Those were the days: an early SCC Board meeting. Marge Foley-Jacob speaking.*

FRONT COVER:  
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*So Where's the Fish* Blown and hot  
worked glass, cold paint 9 1/2x8in.



# FOR THE RECORD

## THE SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL 1975—1990

by June Jacobs

*Numbers in brackets refer to the volume and issue number of The Craft Factor.*

**53** dedicated, enthusiastic craftspeople and craft supporters paid in advance a \$5 membership fee to become the Founding Members of the Saskatchewan Craft Council (SCC). The founding conference was held on October 4 and 5, 1975 at the Unitarian Centre in Saskatoon. Of these original 53 members, 7 have served as SCC Chairperson, 25 as Board members, 8 have been employees of SCC, and 14 currently hold an SCC membership.

### Founding Members/1990 Members

Mel Bolen	Olesia (Elsie) Kowalsky
Dorothy Doepker	Karen Leitch
Charley Farrero	Marge Foley-Jacob
Sally (Buck) Dressler	Emma Radfelder
Wayne Pollock	Sandra Ledingham
Annemarie Buchmann-Gerber	Helen Cooke
Lee Brady	Jane Evans

Five points were made in support of the formation of a Saskatchewan craft council at the founding conference (TCF 7/7). They were that: a craft council was needed to deal with such common problems as materials supplies and the need for sales outlets; an organized body of craftspeople could work more effectively with government than could individual craftspeople; a craft council would provide the most appropriate vehicle for the recognition of craftspeople as a professional group; various craft support agencies at an October 3, 1975 meeting had expressed the need for a provincial craft organization because they could provide assistance more effectively to an organized group; and a provincial craft organization could increase public awareness of the availability of a professional level of crafts in Saskatchewan. These five points have been reflected in the programs of the Saskatchewan Craft Council throughout its 15 year history. In the Bylaws these five points have been translated into the Aims and Objectives of the SCC.

In compiling this history I have kept in mind these five reasons for having a craft council and have tried to group the story of our activities accordingly. Of course, programs often fulfill more than one objective and tend to overlap each other. The opinions I have quoted are of Founding Members who are current members of the SCC.

### information for and about crafts people ...

Immediately in 1975, the SCC began collecting resource materials such as craft magazines, newsletters, periodicals, catalogues, pamphlets and books to form a resource centre. These materials were, and are, available to members to browse through at the resource centre or to borrow. Descriptions of some of the publications acquired by the SCC have appeared in The Craft Factor and the Bulletin and there is a partial index.

As well as providing information to craftspeople, the SCC wanted to provide information about crafts and craftspeople. A questionnaire to provide information for a future Saskatchewan Craft Index was included in the first SCC Newsletter (later The Craft Factor) and a portfolio system, fashioned after the system implemented by the Ontario Crafts Council, was introduced in 1977. At the 1979 Annual General Meeting the portfolio system was made a priority, a detailed policy was formed and a Craft Portfolio insert was mailed with The Craft Factor in March 1980 (TCF 5/1). By September of that year, 16 members had participated. There are now 207 portfolios meeting the minimum requirements in SCC's Resource Centre. Information in the portfolios has been made available to other professionals, galleries, organizations, businesses, government agencies and the public.

### 1975 Bylaws, Article Three

The aims and objectives of the Council shall be:

- to promote and encourage communication among crafts people (*now reads 'crafts community'*) in Saskatchewan
- to promote and facilitate the growth of craft excellence in Saskatchewan.
- to serve as an advisory body in matters of professional interest
- to encourage close cooperation among similar provincial and national associations.
- to actively promote exhibitions and marketing of craft members' products (*now 'members' craft products'*).
- to inform and place before the public the services and objectives of the Council.

### marketing ...

The need for sales outlets and marketing opportunities was clearly voiced in 1975 and continuously throughout the council's 15 year history. It has appeared at times that the SCC was associated solely with marketing. The first newsletter included a column on sales outlets and opportunities to market; feature articles and reports on marketing strategies and outlets have continued in The Craft Factor and Bulletin to the present day.

In 1976 the SCC became directly involved in marketing with its active participation in the market at the Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival at Battleford and the Regina Christmas Craft Sale. At that time the Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival was sponsored by the provincial Department of Industry and Commerce. In 1980 SCC hired its own coordinator on contract and has sponsored the Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival ever since, taking total responsibility for the market and the juried exhibition. The SCC's first juried market, the Regina Christmas Craft Sale was held in December 1976 at St. Paul's Cathedral Hall. It was held again in 1977 at the Exhibition Grounds and in 1978, renamed Wintergreen, it was moved to the Centre of the Arts where it continues to this day as SCC's best craft market, both in quality of work represented and in revenue generated. Profits generated by SCC sponsored markets are returned to the craft community through craft council programs.

Several attempts were made to hold a SCC Spring market in Saskatoon. In 1984 Spring Winds was held at the Exhibition Grounds but it was not a success. In response to marketing member's demands, the SCC sponsored a combined wholesale and retail Spring Craft Sale in Saskatoon at the Field House in May 1990. Plans are underway for a similar event in 1991. The SCC also participated in a wholesale trade fair, the Albert Gift Show (Southex), in 1989 and 1990; increasing costs made it uneconomic to continue. A number of production craftspeople were promoted through a sales booth, and craftspeople interested mainly in commissions exhibited one-of-a-kind work in a gallery setting. For some years the Wintergreen Christmas Sale had also included a Commission Display area hoping to attract gallery owners, interior decorators, architects, business firms and government agencies.

Marketing strategy has often been a bed of thorns for the SCC. The first marketing symposium for members was held in Regina at the Pasqua Centre in January 1981. Resource people came from the federal and provincial governments, and the Canadian Crafts Council. Such topics as research, selling, costing and pricing, copyright, hazardous products legislation, provincial taxes, programs available to craftspeople, promotion and SCC involvement provided a healthy agenda for eager craftspeople (TCF 6/1). Programs for the 1989 Marketing Conference in Regina and the 1990 Conference in Prince Albert show that these topics continue to be discussed as new marketers join and new twists are given to legislation and programs.

A nine member Marketing Committee was formed in 1982 to act on the recommendations of a survey conducted in 1981. These included establishing an SCC marketing branch to develop provincial, national and international markets, and setting up an effective jurying system (TCF 7/1, 7/2, 8/1). An Active Marketing Membership category was established in 1983 for which craft council members had to apply, acceptance depended on work reaching SCC standards (defined in 1976 and 1978), and was juried by craft council members knowledgeable in that medium. Acceptance entitled the craftsman to apply for all SCC sponsored markets in addition to the other benefits of an Active General Membership. By 1986 the problems of the jurying procedure, its implementation, supervision and costs of operating led to a re-evaluation. At the AGM that year, several motions to amend the SCC Bylaws were brought forward but defeated (TCF 11/2). It took three more years for this problem to be resolved, in 1989 the jurying system was restructured and Active Marketing Membership ceased to exist. However all SCC markets continue to be individually juried to ensure SCC standards are met and excellence in crafts pursued.

A brief flurry was caused by the formation of a new provincial organization, the Craft Marketing and Business Association of Saskatchewan, in January 1989. Craft was an industry and had entered the age of the entrepreneur, the word was go and the consumer was the only judge of what was craft. Voices quickly rose to set a distinction



Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival participants 1979





Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival 1977

between SCC and CBMAS, primarily for the benefit of funding agencies and government departments.

The SCC Think Tank sessions of 1987 and 1988 set goals for the marketing program including hiring a full-time marketing person in the 1988-89 fiscal year, a permanent year round gallery and craft outlet in Regina within the next two to three years; and a downtown location in Saskatoon for a gallery, craft outlet and office within the next four to five years (TCF 12/4, 13/1). SCC's full-time marketing co-ordinator was hired in December 1989. The responsibilities include all SCC sponsored craft sales, member portfolios and promotional display opportunities for commissioned work (TCF 14/4). The position guarantees the commitment the SCC has to its marketing mandate and to the needs of those members, part or all of whose income depends on the sale of production, one-of-a-kind or commissioned craft works.

### working with government ....

In 1975 the Department of Industry and Commerce wasted little time in coming to the newly formed SCC with a request for jurying standards to be implemented at the third Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival in 1976, a festival sponsored by the department in co-operation with the SCC and the Town of Battleford. The SCC's standards were borrowed from Prince Edward Island (who got them from New Brunswick, who got them from the Society of Connecticut Craftsman's Handbook) and were revised by the SCC Board of Directors into six points which craftspeople were recommended to incorporate into their work (1). These six points form the basis of the current SCC standards.

The SCC Board of Directors also set several conditions before becoming involved in the Juried Exhibition of the Festival. These included separate and appropriate exhibition space, three paid jurors, insurance coverage, security — nine points in all had to be met. Prizes (Industry and Commerce Merit Awards) totalling \$300 were given at that 1976 Festival. After lobbying the government in 1977 a Premier's Prize, \$1000, was instigated for the best work in the exhibition. The Merit Awards, awarded at the discretion of the jurors, were also increased to a total of \$1000. These awards suddenly boosted the calibre of the exhibition and entrants increased threefold. This directly influenced the prestige of the Festival and the SCC, and the government's involvement with and commitment to craft.

In 1980 the Festival sponsorship and organization was handed over to the SCC, however direct government funding of the Festival continued until 1984. In 1982, the Handcraft Festival Juried Exhibition and the SCC Biennial exhibition were combined to become Dimensions.



Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival, Premier Alan Blakeney, Premier's Prize winner Pat Adams and Market Co-ordinator June Jacobs 1981

The Premier's Prize was increased to \$2000 in 1984, however Merit Awards continued to total \$1000 until 1987 when they became the SCC Merit Awards totalling \$1500. The Saskatchewan Arts Board also got involved in the first 1976 Handcraft Festival with the announcement of the Saskatchewan Arts Board Purchase Awards which continued until 1988. Additional awards have added to the credibility and prestige of Dimensions as a showcase of Saskatchewan crafts, and to the SCC for its sponsorship.

The SCC's contact with government and supporting agencies has directly focused on securing operating funds, and developing and expanding programming. In 1975 the provincial Department of Culture and Youth supported the newsletter (The Craft Factor), the Saskatchewan Arts Board provided an operating budget and workshop funding, and Sask Sport Trust grants secured office space. These agencies, under various names, have continued to be the funding agencies for the SCC. However the process of securing these funds has never been a simple one, Board members required (and continue to require) training in financial management and fund raising skills.

In 1975 the first of numerous briefs went to the provincial government echoing support for continued funding to the Saskatchewan Arts Board as "it was the only agency which meets the needs of the SCC, the organization and its individual members" (TCF 2/1). In 1979 an SCC brief to the Cultural Policy Secretariat outlined the views and directions the SCC wanted government to take regarding cultural policy and funding (TCF 4/3). A response came in 1982, the Saskatchewan Arts Board, the Department of Culture and Youth, and Sask Sport Trust policies on funding presented what each would support and to what degree cultural funding would be from "the Funding Lottery" (TCF 7/2).

At the 1984 AGM it was decided that the SCC should join the Saskatchewan Council of Cultural Organizations (SCCO), a move which in the past the SCC had fought against "tooth and nail". The SCC felt that "SCCO was just another layer of bureaucracy which would reduce the power and independence of SCC". However a change of provincial legislation (Bill 58 Sec 4) and Federal legislation (Bill C24) made it more important to join forces with other cultural organizations rather than be in opposition (TCF 9/2). Yet today Mel Bolen, Olesia Kowalsky and Marlene Zora still feel too much of the funding which could be put in the hands of craftspeople "is lost to that extra layer of bureaucracy — its organization, its staff and the time and thus the dollars spent trying to secure a share of the funding". All one has to do in 1990 is to look at the SCC Application for Global Funding submitted to Sask Trust, a text of 136 typed pages plus an auditors statement whose compilation took many hours using both staff and volunteer resources, to wonder if the SCC has become subservient to the funding quest.

Footnote:

1. SCC Board Minutes January 1976

June Jacobs is a SCC member, a past contractual employee of SCC and owns the Handwove, a craft gallery and shop in the village of Meacham. ■

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# GREG PAYCE:

## THE "POST-MINOAN" POTS

by Susan Menzies

This is a family of wheelthrown red earthenware vases, symmetrical and frontal in presentation, voluptuous in form. They are narrow-footed and high-shouldered. The shoulders sprout vestigial limbs, mutant handles in the form of snail shells or vine tendrils. The necks are taut, extending to ample mouths. Applied to the surface of some are sprigs resembling molluscs and insects: these protrusions may be glazed to contrast with the satin skin of the vase, or buried under layers of stucco-like black slip.

Cut to a scene from Peter Greenaway's film *A Zed and Two Noughts*: In a Dutch field, two formerly Siamese-twin brothers, zoologists, prepare to document their own death and decomposition, just as they have done with time-lapse photos of rotting prawns returning "to where they came from". Their swan song, their musical accompaniment: Michael Nyman's fever-pitched minimalist violin riffs, Philip Glass on speed. Closeup shot: An infestation of garden snails swarms over the turntable of a small phonograph, spinning hysterically, surfing on the tonearm, clogging the works, thriving.

Surface marking and coloration has evolved in two directions. One has produced a matte black species Payce calls the "light-suckers". Their rough coating, built up over the entire surface, covering beetle and snail bulges, is a dense accumulation of flicked slip. Incised horizontal grooves document the spiral motion of the pot's growth, emphasizing its volume while the black silhouette denies any sense of depth. The interiors of these are glossy, vivid glazes that show on the lip, turning the notion of concavity — of vessels as containing the dark — inside out. This conceptual flip-flop is part of Payce's ongoing dialogue with the interplay of two- and three-dimensional forms.

**Look and they can't be found,  
Laying their presence down.  
Listen, they make no sound,  
Look and they go to ground.**

...  
**Inky Bloaters**  
**They're consequence of never being sure.**  
(from "Inky Bloaters", a song by Danielle Dax reissued on the album *Dark adapted Eve*).

The second set of variations explores the relationship of volume and surface decoration by juxtaposing stylized organic motifs with running spiral patterns in a triad overlay of black, red and orange "terra sigillata". These pots take their cue from the sophisticated polychrome syntax of late Minoan Kamares or "Palace" ware unearthed at Knossos. Struc-

turally, they are not strict copies of the historical models, some of which were lentiloid or flattened. These are fully rounded and their shapes are phrases from Payce's own vocabulary, which he builds by manipulating a pliant set of parts through various combinations. They do echo distinctive structural features of late Minoan vessels: a tendency to closed shapes, exaggerated height and generous profiles, and the knobbed or raised bands characteristic of certain oversized storage jars. In the decoration, however, Payce quotes explicitly. Using postmodern licence, he lifts specific marine motifs — the nautilus, lotus and octopus — directly from these key historical artifacts. By designing the painting primarily for frontal viewing, he acknowledges not only the ceremonial aspect of Palace ware, but also the irony of knowing the original only through the flat face of photo-reproduction. (Payce admits: "I make up a lot on the other side".)

### **Nautilus Pompilius**

#### **A Family Nautilidae**

**Shell** Very large ... moderately thick, robust, coiled into a flat spiral, convolute ... The internal subdivision of the shell into successive chambers by calcareous septa is characteristic. The septa are laid down by the animal during its growth and have at their centre a hole through which the mollusk, which occupies the last chamber, remains in contact with the previous ones. The shell surface is smooth ... The terminal third of the body whorl is white, the intermediate is white with orange-brown stripes, and the remaining third is black.

**Body** Like all cephalopods, the foot is transformed into a funnel and arms and tentacles ... The eyes are of the primitive pit type. The extensive mantle cavity contains four large gills, hence the name "Tetrabranchia" ...

**Habitat** Pelagic, at depths of 50 to 100 meters.

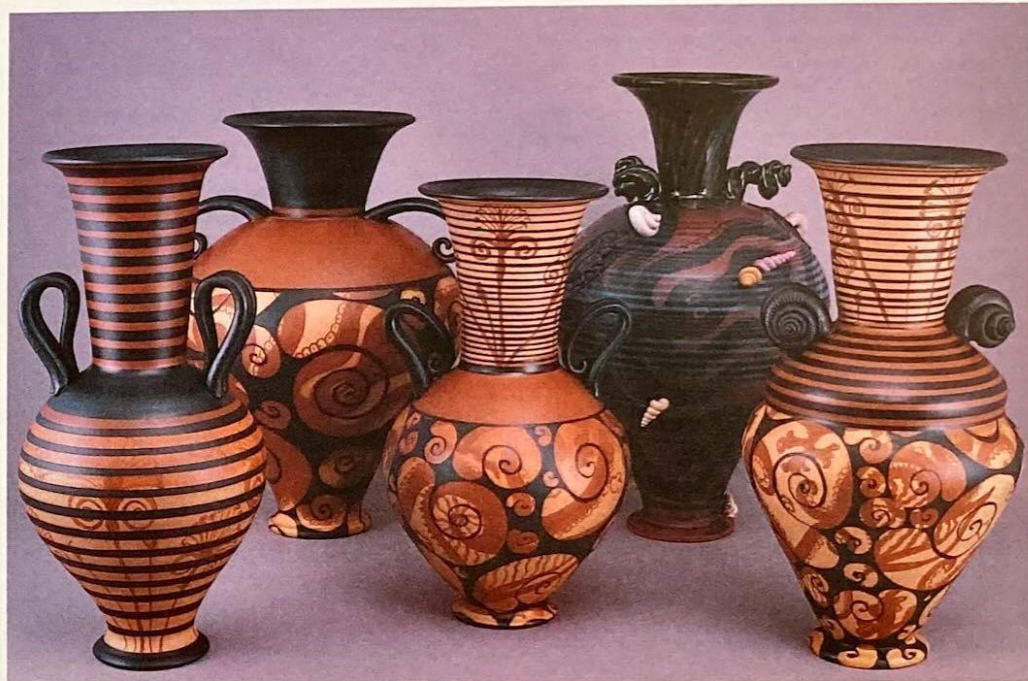
(Bruno Sabelli, from *Simon and Shuster's Guide to Shells*, 1979).

Payce's cover versions of a well-known jar capitalize on the virtuosity of Minoan design techniques: an octopus, its tentacles rendered in simple, graphic curves, clasps the body of the pot in a whirling, radiating movement that leads the eye out from the centre to encircle the object. Counter to this, yet integrated with it, is an overlaid pattern of spirals, stripes and solid zones. These organize the vessel according to its structural parts, using variable width and contrast for emphasis. The sepia undulations of the octopus are seen through a reversed-out cluster of blunt shells in a black overlay. In another version, a skein of blue stripes runs interference. These screening devices allow the

identity of the initial reference to emerge only in fragments, just as our perception of ancient cultures or primitive life forms is filtered by our position in the present. Payce is well aware that the collective knowledge of prehistory is a memory bank built of clay, made up from patched-together pot shards and chance fossil impressions in long-gone river beds. His use of the shell motif refers to the way in which the shell is itself a vessel that contains its own history: the chambers of its fossil replica are a cumulative index of its growth and decay, a window to the past. Similarly, the black pots' embedded roaches recall charred Pompeii victims, lives arrested in death, preserved in spite of it.

**Oh! Run to the log that's rotten ...**

(from "Oh ... a song by the Breeders on the album *Pod*)



Greg Payce *Untitled Earthenware*, terra sigillata, coloured glazes 20 in. approx.

Payce's allusions to ceramic history have ranged from Sung Dynasty porcelain and Renaissance Italian majolica through the Rococo flourishes of Sèvres palace ware to the lushness of English botanical ware. He culls stylistic features from many exotic sources and recombines them with forms derived from nature, taking liberties with traditional icons, redefining them by placing them out of context or bending them through improbable exaggerations. Venerable objects may rematerialize as an overblown cabbage, a swimming banana leaf or a dervish wearing a minaret. The process is about mimetic response [the reaction to a stimulus which causes one species to mimic another]. The impulse comes from sensitivity to the fluid, sensuous quality of the materials and to the character of the historical work. While he evidently respects the primacy and craftsmanship of the originals ("I don't know anyone today who can do what the Minoan potters could," he says, "... the cohesive mesh of image and form"). Payce also takes

pleasure in what has been called polymorphous perversity. Though elegant and well-made, his work demonstrates a sensibility that delights in gorgeous excess and rude puns, that likes the quasi-vulgar and is fascinated by the ickiness of slugs in a salad. There is a certain audacious humour at work in a pot which combines the grace of a lotus plant, the designerly fineness of water-level stripes, the geometric precision of a nautilus shell, and then has the nerve to plop on a pair of snail shell grips that look suspiciously like Mickey Mouse ears. This is serious play.

**Dance the Manta Ray  
Dance the Manta Ray  
Dance the Manta Ray**

...  
**Your head can go real through  
With saucers chasing you.  
(Fish don't swim: fish fly.)  
(Pixies)**



Payce's concerns are informed by contemporary issues in printmaking, painting and music, linking traditions in clay to a distinctly modern perspective. Since his earlier experiments with applying print-based methods to clay (photo-screen, decals), he has been intrigued by the way layered images elicit a number of simultaneous readings. He cites the paintings of David Salle and Chris Cran as influential: juxtaposing discrete images within a single work, they juggle the conceptual and perceptual ambiguities that hover in the balance. Payce uses this approach to investigate the connections between diverse influences and ideas between nature and culture, form and function, past and present. It also allows him to include references to personal interests such as music. The conceptual parallels with music are apparent in the rhythmic turning of a pot on a wheel, in the idea that vessels can contain sound, in the fact that shells and breath made early wind instruments, in the whorl shape of the human cochlea. Musical references may be formal puns: stripes as slaves, snails as notes, the mouth of a vase as a glazed bronze horn. Among his previous efforts to combine clay with acoustic and recorded sound were Mayan-based ceramic ocarinas and a pair of big "breathing" jars that resonated with taped, phase-patterned pulsebeats. The personality of Payce's work marries the spare, measured subtleties of minimalist composers Michael Nyman and Steve Reich with the hell-bent, hybrid exuberance of the Pixies and the lush disco poetry of Danielle Dax.

Payce manoeuvres in a territory that, while full of permission and possibility, is also charged with some land mines. Style-plundering is often legitimized in the name of appropriation and fueled by a brand of cynicism convinced that today's art is bankrupt of meaning. Cultural colonialism is its next-door neighbour. At its cheapest, pastiche can amount to nothing more than self-validation through aesthetic namedropping. However, Payce steers clear of these, largely because his work springs from conviction, delight and intelligent inquiry. He attempts to come to terms with the implications of producing permanent cultural objects, and he recognizes the decadence and ironies of postmodern culture as it undertakes an archaeology of its own time. At the heart of these pots is affirmation and vitality.

Carefully I sift for pearls  
And spoon away the greying soil  
To store them in a scented cask  
To fondle on a boring day.

And I watched them glow in their coloured charm  
But it tainted all 'cause I knew the ends  
Each sequence flickered on the screen  
Was repetition though camouflaged.

(Danielle Day "The Spoil Factor")

Sources:

Philip P. Barancourt, *The History of Minoan Pottery*, Princeton University Press, 1985.  
Franklyn Heisler, "Greg Payce Ceramics", *Contact Magazine* #77, Summer 1989.

Warm congratulations to the  
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# THE SCRIBBLER'S CRAFT

by Margot Coatts

Writing about art, crafts and design, especially reviewing, is nothing more than scribbling an account of what you have seen, in other words—a letter to a friend or a colleague. But underlying this form of 'direct action' are strands of knowledge, memories and comparisons, which will sometimes surface. These are gathered by reading, looking at work and talking to makers. I find a personal approach to critical writing much the most readable (and writable) because it is a particular reactive process which is instantly recognizable. When a writer is honest, it shows.

*Writing about art, crafts and design, especially reviewing, is nothing more than scribbling an account of what you have seen*

I never think of myself as a critic, a word which implies a theoretical stance from which to view the world, but fundamentally as a researcher, trained in the old school of fact-finding. My interests are practical, I like to know how works of art or craft come into being, and that includes the various mental, emotional and analytical, as well as the technical processes. To find out about an artist's thoughts and feelings, to see sketches and models, to understand a special technical process, takes time and patience. Invariably one has to work backwards, interviewing the maker or his or her close associates and assistants. The next stage is to ascertain how a work or works fit into the maker's career and into the artistic field in question; this can take hours of background research—hours for which one is rarely paid!

As with any profession, it is useful for a writer/curator to buy, or see, a range of magazines, learned journals, newspapers and books. Developing a library and cuttings system can be invaluable and maintaining it is possibly a job which can be shared with a colleague or student. Getting to know art gallery and various museum collections, not necessarily of art, is also important, especially if you normally work with a relatively narrow range of media. In my work as writer and curator I might deal directly with only 200-400 objects in a year and this is a minute amount with which to get properly acquainted. That is why I try to look at every kind of artefact I can, take photographs and hoard postcards and catalogues.

Perhaps I have given the impression that passive observation is all one needs; that is not my belief. I think that making, or having some understanding of the making process is equally important, especially in the crafts. For

instance, in 1981-82 I was writing a biography of the pioneer British handweaver, Ethel Mairet (1872-1952). In order to interview elderly and distinguished craftsmen and women I thought it prudent to learn to weave myself, so as to be able to understand, if not converse in, the appropriate tongue. I took private weaving lessons from Hilary Chetwynd, at that time an art college lecturer; my equipment was a table loom which just fitted into the back of my minute French car. In exchange for weekly insights, I edited Hilary Chetwynd's articles and helped to run her import business for silk yarn. Her partner tried to teach me the rudiments of yarn and spinning; I think we all enjoyed our bartered services. Since that time I have learnt to make paper, administered a weaving summer school, directed the public exhibitions programme at John Makepeace's School for Craftsmen in Wood, lived above a block-printed fabric workshop and helped to design and hand-colour my own limited edition cookery books. Working alongside people engaged in the crafts has taught me the ways and means of many different professions and given me the confidence not only to ask questions but to understand and make use of the answers.

*I like to know how works of art or craft come into being, and that includes the various mental, emotional and analytical, as well as the technical processes*

At Incite in Saskatchewan this Summer I was impressed by the members of the writing workshop which Peter White and I led; they had all this professional craft understanding in-built. Many of them readily translated it into their assignment to curate a small group or thematic exhibition, based on the material brought to Incite by other participants. The notion of research, by observation and interview, also came naturally and we found ready reporters on the weekend's 'construction' project which ran in parallel to the writing workshop. It seems appropriate to say here that all this was marked by a relaxed good humour which is essential to make work a pleasure, both as a process and, hopefully, in the result.

*Margot Coatts trained as an artist and is a British free-lance curator, consultant and writer on arts and crafts. Wish Peter White, she taught the very stimulating Critical Writing*





## SOMETHING NEW ON BROADWAY

Saskatchewan Craft Gallery December 1990

by Miranda Jones



top:  
Ned Herperger *Ascension* Maple, purple heart, acrylic lacquer,  
brass 113x83x35cm

left:  
Myrna Gent *Medley* Silk, Hand-dyed, woven 50x180cm

right:  
Wendy Parsons *Blue Dragon Teapot* Porcelain 38x15cm

The opening exhibition at the dazzling new SCC craft gallery in its new Broadway premises is one of which the SCC can really be proud. The show contains one or two stunning pieces, some weaker ones and a majority of strong representative works by some of Saskatchewan's finest craftsmen and women. This was an invitational show of new works by past prize winners, still living in the province, from the annual SCC Dimensions exhibition.

The exciting thing about this show was the inclusion of pieces by one or two craftspeople whose work is rarely seen

in Saskatoon. Ned Herperger of Regina is one such craftsman. He has created a sidetable of elegant proportions. Titled *Ascension* this piece rises from the floor in Neo-Classical style and grace. It is constructed from maple and purple heart finished with acrylic lacquer, with details in brass. The table top consists of a silver-gray layer sandwiched between rich red maple. This construction gives the table top a floating quality while its finely tapered legs with red maple footings enhance the ascendant theme. Like a silver moon in a desert night the central curved contour of the table's surface is reflected in a rising circular backboard. This is flanked by symmetrical flat topped pyramids of maple. Each carefully thought out element of Herperger's design adds to an uncluttered symmetrical whole. This piece with its Post-Modern echoes would live comfortably in either a contemporary or period setting.

By way of comparison Michael Hosaluk has contributed a piece straight out of the annals of Modernism. He has titled it *Random Disorder*, which indeed it is. In a feat of mastery Hosaluk has pulled this hodge-podge of interlocking planes and cutout shapes into a piece of surprising architectural calm. Built from a synthetic known as Surell, the creators of which praise the material's "translucency, subtle colour and amazing versatility", the piece attests more to Hosaluk's versatility as a designer than to any material aesthetics. It would be quite easy to lose one's glass of gin and tonic on any one of the table's myriad surfaces. The design, inspired as it is by an age when all that was man-made was touted over and above natural materials, is eminently appropriate to this random jigsaw puzzle of glorified plastic and glass.

While on the subject of furniture, Jamie Russell's delicate *Tern Table* and Don Kondra's *Untitled* cherrywood bureau invite comparison due to their close proximity in the back regions of the gallery. The grandfatherly presence of Kondra's desk pervades the entire room pulling the viewer back into the space for a closer look. The sweeping curves and generous proportions give this piece a certain authority without it being cumbersome. One would expect to see this desk in a magistrate's office or similar haunt of power. The craftsmanship and finish is flawless right down to the desk back which is delicately arched to echo the curves of the side panels. The entire desk, handles, drawers and shelves is simply finished in clear lacquer so that nothing detracts from the beauty of the pale wood grain. In contrast the use of painted wood and glass appear poorly integrated in Jamie Russell's table. Curved laminated wood has been carved into two stylized terns crudely painted in black and white. The birds support an unadorned circular glass tabletop on their wings while wing tips and tail provide delicate floor support. A lack of attention to fine finishing mars this potentially beautiful piece, the opacity of paint on wood seems out of character with Russell's transparent table top and Russell's pun, which could have been taken even further, falls flat.

Clay is well represented in this exhibition with strong pieces by Charley Farrero and Mel Bolen. Farrero's *Gaudicherie 34 "Goulamine III"* consists of a glazed platter which has been broken and reassembled into a jigsaw puzzle of roughly interlocking pieces with a rich black

grout. The result is a larger, dramatic circular platter. The matt texture of the black edging offsets the beauty of the dazzling peacock blue glaze which is shot through with black and gold, pink and green. Farrero has been experimenting with this reassemblage technique for a while now and seems to have brought it to a fine art in this beautiful piece. Mel Bolen is well represented as always with a sturdy wheel-thrown vessel in stoneware clay. The vessel stands 50 centimetres tall and is glazed in rich earth tones.

It is interesting to compare the two raku fired pieces in this show because of their structural similarities. Both have an oriental feel about them with a circular bowl resting on angled block supports. While Sandra Ledingham's attempts to integrate the crudity of unworked clay with manmade forms remain unresolved, Donovan Chester has achieved a harmonious integration of the two. Ledingham appears to be in a transitional phase in her work, moving away from the elegant tall forms of earlier years towards a gutsier and at times more intellectual manipulation of clay. Here that intellectual process undermines Ledingham's final presentation however, resulting in a boring symmetry, stunted proportions and awkward integration of rough with finished clay. Chester, on the other hand, has created a piece full of association and poetry. His proportions sing while his control of the raku firing has resulted in rich red and purple coloration of the circular bowl with a dynamic edge of oxidized blue-green and shimmering silver. Looking down into this piece is like viewing an aerial landscape of dry riverbeds and gullies etched by time and the elements. This is not a functional vessel although it has the feel of once having been functional, like an archaeological find which has retained its beauty despite the ravages of time.

The prize for the most humorous piece must surely go to Wendy Parsons, whose porcelain *Blue Dragon Teapot* with a fat belly and drivelling blue snout would brighten up the duller tea party. Anita Rocamora's *This is the House, This is the Hill*, in handbuilt porcelain is probably the most intriguing. A black moon overshadows a white house which is balanced precariously atop a very pointy hill. The piece is fanciful and despite the ominous face of the moon, I caught myself wondering how the occupants of the house would gain access to it. Flying seems to be the only way, indeed it conjures images of witches and fairies, goblins and other creatures that inhabit the night.

Myrna Gent steals the scene in fibre with her hand-dyed silk shawl *Medley*. Soft tones of purple, mauve, lilac, blue-green and burgandy are interwoven with delicate simplicity in this fine piece which is beautifully draped on a clear, free hanging dowel. Orpha Perschke also has a show stopper in her carefully executed *Fine Feathered Star Quilt*. A series of concentric star motifs radiate from a pink centre while a secondary motif of applied serpentine stems and leaves snakes around the inner and upper borders. This theme is echoed in the pattern of Perschke's beautifully quilted off-white ground. This is definitely a king-sized quilt measuring 265 x 240 centimetres and it is displayed to full effect on a south wall visible to passers-by. In contrast to the traditional elegance of Perschke's quilt, the crudity of Annemarie Buchmann-Gerber's *Red Chair*

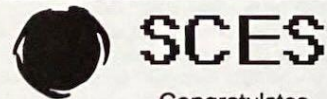


*Amongst the Maple Leaves* shocks our senses. It is not clear whether Buchmann-Gerber is poking fun at painting and at tapestry or whether she simply can not do either. Either way whatever symbolism she may have intended with her subject matter of a red chair surrounded by blue-green maple leaves and barely visible cross stitched details is lost in a mess of dirty charcoal and pink stained linen. Buchmann-Gerber is to be admired in her attempts to push traditional media beyond their usual limits, however, this piece ignores aesthetic considerations basic to a work of art.

Kaija Harris' *Untitled Forest*, a double woven wool tapestry, and most definitely a work of art, is very striking although subtle in colour. Vertical ribs in white and cream resemble tree trunks while in between a gentle gradation of roughly triangular shapes form an abstracted backdrop. If you squint your eyes you will indeed see the wood for the trees in subtle colour shifts from cool to warm to cool. The subdued Fall colours and a mere hint of a horizon suggest a forest and a lake reflecting a gentle sky. Cathryn Miller's tapestry leaves less to our imaginations. It depicts a series of torsos from chest to foot dressed in a colourful array of sporting attire. She has titled this *Pillars of the Community* perhaps in reference to society's adoration of the physical self; perhaps because the bodies form a rather straggling visual array of pillars. Despite its lofty title and the fact that this piece is well executed it looks ordinary. This may be due to her subjects' casual stance although I suspect it has more to do with Miller's unfortunate choice of ground colour, an insipid green and that icky yellow-brown you find in cheap floor carpets. A third tapestry by Ingrid MacNeil, *In the Deep*, is a little gem. Set in a glass box containing a sprinkling of bubbling glass beads it depicts three colourful fish-like shapes floating in the area of blues and greens.

While there is an abundance of fibre in this exhibition, Lee Brady is the sole representative of glass. Brady has created the perfect gift for the sushi lover who has everything, a large sushi platter in slumped and fused glass with metallic lustre, metal overlay and fused aluminum details. Brady's colour sense is at its finest as he juggles the centre of the piece pulling its various sections together and reflecting the careful positioning of two aluminum chopsticks.

This is a large exhibition in a very accommodating space. Unfortunately I do not have the space to mention some of the many other exhibits, jewellery, rugs, a violin, containers and a variety of garments. All in all the exhibition was a fine start to what will undoubtedly be a new era for the Saskatchewan Craft Council.



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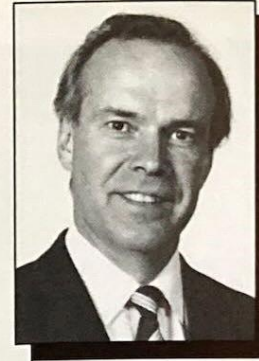
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To The Saskatchewan Craft Gallery I offer my sincerest best wishes for great success at your new location. I know the people of our province will express their loyalty to the craft industry by frequenting your gallery on many occasions.

Again, best wishes for great success.

Grant Devine  
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# A GALA OPENING

On Friday, December 14th a festive crowd packed into the new Saskatchewan Craft Council Gallery at 813 Broadway Avenue, Saskatoon. The Celtic band Clan played the Vice-Regal Salute and the Opening ceremony commenced.



top:  
Her Honour, Sylvia Fedoruk declares the Saskatchewan Craft Council building open

left:  
The gallery begins to fill before the Opening ceremony

right:  
Executive Director, Terry Schwalm discusses an exhibit with Peggy McKercher (a member of the Building for the Future Advisory Committee) and Robert McKercher

Brian Gladwell, SCC Chairman, introduced the official guests and in a graceful speech thanked all those who had contributed to the acquisition of our new building through donating time, energy, money and craft works. He was followed by the Honourable Beattie Martin, Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Recreation, speaking on behalf of the provincial government. Mr. Martin congratulated the Board and members of the SCC on the new building. He said that he was not surprised by the quality of the work exhibited because the province had always turned out remarkably talented people.

Kate Waygood, Saskatoon City Councillor, said that she was happy that the SCC had found a permanent home on her favourite street and would give renewed life to a Heritage building. Ray Morin, District Director of Communications Canada, speaking on behalf of the Federal government brought congratulations from the Minister, Marcel Masse and commented on the important part craft played in the province.



Official guests, the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, Sylvia Fedoruk, Beattie Martin, Kate Waygood and Ray Morin, wait for the opening ceremony to begin

Saying how delighted she was to be present, our patron Her Honour, Sylvia Fedoruk, the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, continued by pointing out that the opening of the new gallery and offices was a great event for the craft council, the city and the province. The new facility would help to promote crafts and had an exciting potential for expanded programming and exhibitions. Coming to the end of her speech she declared the new building officially open.

Founding members, members, donors, official guests, staff and well-wishers talked, toasted the new gallery and nibbled on hors d'oeuvres —seeing the exhibits proved to be almost impossible in the crush. Approximately 600 people attended a most successful Opening and despite the frigid weather many returned to view the opening exhibition in the week before Christmas.



This photograph of our new building represents the total fundraising objective for the Building For The Future campaign. The solid area illustrates the amount we have obtained as of December 1, 1990, about 73% of our objective. The lighter represents the amount that we still need to raise. Your efforts and your contributions can help make this a totally solid picture.

The following individuals and businesses have made donations since the last issue of The Craft Factor. We very much appreciate their support

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# WHO ME?

Text and Photographs by Therese Reitler



There has been considerable discussion of late, on how we as craft people need to expose our fellow citizens to and enlighten them about crafts. The public by and large is hopelessly ignorant as to what craft really is, who makes it, and why. Beyond these basic facts there are the issues of quality and aesthetics, concepts not easily grasped by a public whose most common experience of craft is of the 'things' that their children bring home from camp or kits that can be ordered from the backs of magazines. While the reality of the situation is perhaps not quite that bleak, there is a growing need to increase the public's awareness of exactly what we mean by craft.

The most obvious way in which to begin this ambitious task is with children. The minds of the young, as most parents and teachers will tell you, are ripe for new ideas. The more stimulating and enjoyable the idea is, the more involved children become. Once they are exposed to making crafts they often become really excited and eager to explore all the possibilities. If children are excited about a new concept they take it home to their family and friends.

What a brilliant idea you say; let the schools do it, after all it is not their job. Unfortunately while education is the job of the school, crafts (except in an extremely limited sense) are not part of the educational scheme. This is beginning to change. There has been much discussion and some action on the arts in education and while this is encouraging, it may be years before we see any real shift occurring, especially with regard to the inclusion of craft. This is not to suggest that the average teacher is against the idea of crafts in the classroom, far from it. Most would be eager to introduce it, however they cannot teach something that they themselves have not experienced and do not understand. Aside from this, budgets for such "extra-curricular" activities are constantly shrinking, especially in the rural schools.

So, where do we go from here? I'm so glad you asked ... we are the answer.

We, the collective craft community, hold the power to change the future. Such lofty goals? I think not. We, as individuals, can make a tremendous difference to the perception of crafts. We have an obligation and a duty to raise this awareness wherever possible. It seems only logical then to approach this subject with a revolutionary idea ... Volunteering ... Ah, that dirty word, volunteer. Yes, to give, to donate, as in, not being paid for your services. We have the skills and the expertise, we have the tools and equipment, and I hope we have the generosity of spirit. Young impres-

sionable minds will benefit tremendously from the direct contact and stimulation that only you, a real crafts person, can give.

As an example of a volunteer venture take a truly magical day, a day that the children of Coronach, Saskatchewan recently had. A group of fifty children and their teachers watched and learnt about the craft of pottery. Bruce Reitler, a potter from Khedive, Saskatchewan, demonstrated wheel throwing and hand building. For that forty minutes the children sat mesmerized, their eyes glued to his every movement. The room was so quiet that at certain critical moments, the group would utter a collective gasp as the wall of a pot was pulled or when one was collapsed. That their interest was totally engaged could be measured against the number and depth of the questions they asked. It was wonderful to see how excited the children became.



They carried their excitement home with them and "talked and talked" about what they had seen. Some of the children even convinced their parents to come to the demonstration being held that evening at the town library. These parents could not believe how excited their children were after seeing the demonstration.

Bruce Reitler has a constant flow of children touring his studio. They come from the local schools of Pangman and Ceylon and surrounding area. He has been providing this volunteer service for years and has a collection of wonderful letters from the children, which express their delight at seeing how pottery is made. Bruce when asked why he does this says, "It is the least I can do to help spread the awareness of craft. Besides, what does it cost me but a little of my time and the kids really get a kick out of it."

Out of the fifty children who watched the demonstration, only four had ever seen the craft before. One had seen a potter working, while the other three had seen it on television. These are appalling figures. Is it any wonder that we have a problem with the public perception of craft? By targeting children we are ensuring an awareness and sensitivity towards craft that can last a lifetime. From their ranks will emerge the craftspeople of tomorrow and for those of us who want to preserve a viable market place for our work, we need to look no further for the future craft connoisseur than

those children in whom we have invested our volunteer efforts. If craft is to survive, we (practicing craftspeople) need to cultivate and nurture its future.

You can make an impact as an individual. It is up to each one of us to help spread an awareness of craft. If we do not, will not, then who will? So no matter who you are or what kind of craft you do, take some time, show some initiative and volunteer. Call your local school or community center, they will love to hear from you. It is worth any small trouble and time when you see the shining eyes and smiling faces of the children.

*Therese Reitler is a potter and is currently a member of the SCC Board and chairs the Membership Committee.*

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**PORTFOLIO 4: CAROLE McLEAN**



*Carole McLean with A Walk Down Bloor Street at a gallery in Toronto 1989*

Twelve years ago I stepped into a clay studio for the first time. My sole purpose was to make a few pots to go with my weavings and macramé. I joined a ten week course conducted by the Haliburton Guild of Fine Arts Pottery Group at the Sir Danford Fleming College Northern Campus. The pottery group was a co-operative one and part of the course was to learn everything — from loading and unloading a kiln, firing, mixing glazes to, of course, clearing up — in order to run a successful studio.

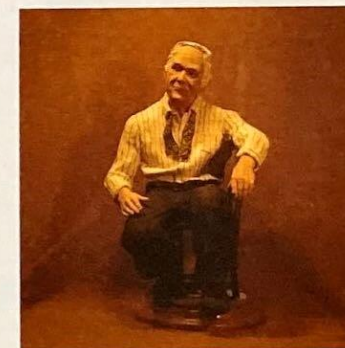
It did not take me long to discover that although I found clay fascinating, doing wheel work was not "my thing". But handbuilding, that was a different story. Clay became all consuming. This I felt sure was to be my special path in life. The knowledge that with clay I could take what I saw in my mind and make it a three-dimensional reality was like nothing I had experienced before either in painting or weaving. Sometimes I take the clay on a disciplined journey, reducing my design to the basic techniques — slab, pinchpot and coil. Other times, and I must confess I find these the most exciting, the clay will take me.

Figurines, the most disciplined in technique, still give me the greatest challenge as well as pleasure. Whether the figurine is a commissioned portrait or out of my imagination, I know I have accomplished what I set out to do if I have successfully captured the essence of that person and it gives me a special feeling when I look at it.

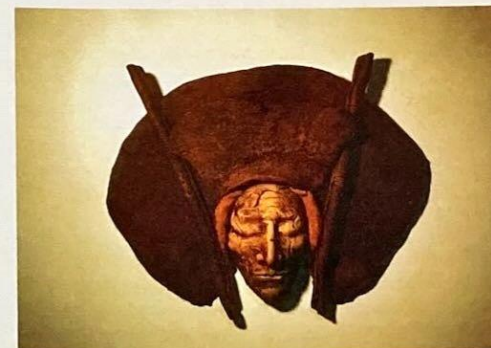
All figurines start out in basically the same way. I first form a stick man, position him or her the way the finished piece will be, then allow it to become leather hard. Next I go over the body, defining the muscle and bone structure. At this point I cut it into sections, hollowing out each, before re-assembling them. Then I add the head and since all my figurines start out nude, it is now time to clothe them. The figurine is allowed to dry and is then bisque fired and hand-painted using underglaze stains. Finally it is high fired.

In creating my sculptures I strive for positive feelings, ones of joy or humour or just a nice warm feeling. I want the piece to become part of your environment not dominate it, after all you will live with it for a long time.

In retrospect I wonder what would have happened if I had not needed pots for my fibre pieces and had never discovered the world of clay. I have to acknowledge the encouragement and support that the pottery group at the Haliburton Guild of Fine Arts so unselfishly bestowed on an enthusiastic novice. It set me on a journey that is always exciting and rewarding.



*Pierre Burton 18x8in.*



*Face Series 2 20x21in.*

Born in Whitby, Ontario, moved to Saskatchewan in 1981. Mainly self-taught. Course in pottery and sculpture at the Haliburton School of Fine Arts, Sir Sandford Fleming College Northern Campus 1977, later trained with sculptor Daintars Mezulis. Taught sculpture at Sir Sandford Fleming College 1981 and at South East Community College, Saskatchewan. 1980 Ontario Craft Council's Design Award; 1984 Battlefords Allied Arts Council Purchase Award, SCC Dimensions 84; exhibited at Dimensions 88, and won the People's Choice Award, Dimensions 90. Has created Presentation pieces for Molson, Chrysler, General Motors Canada, SEDCO, SARM, SPMC and other corporations; in 1989 a sculpture was presented to Premier Grant Devine. Work is in private collections in Europe, Great Britain, United States and Canada. Sells work through Bazaar, Wintergreen and Parkart. For more information contact the artist at Box 404, Avonlea, Sask S0H 0C0. (306) 868-2209.



# THE SPIRIT OF THE PLACE

by Sam Carter



Bill Koochin *Lt. Governor's Dragon Boat Paddle* Carved yew, B.C. jade inset (North Star) 1990

The world of advertising refers to the virtues of "no surprises" when you arrive at Holiday Inns. Fortunately, there are still surprises and variety in the works of a great number of Canadian craftspeople. But, variety and diversity may be threatened by the wide range of packaged materials and attitudes that limit exploration of unique, original and indigenous expression. It is important for craftspeople and critics to consider international aesthetic standards and the notion of a universal visual language of form, colour, pattern and images. At the same time unique and original expressions must be encouraged.

How does the maker of craft ensure surprises, uniqueness and originality? The Spanish architect Antonio Gaudi said that "originality is to return to the origin". What is the origin? The earliest crafts were formed from local materials. Objects made of clay, stone, wood, and other natural materials thus mirrored the region from which they came, and the "spirit of the place". Perhaps Gaudi thought that originality required a fresh start, and that creativity and originality involved a fundamental relationship between a maker and his or her surroundings.

The so-called "back to the earth" movements of the 1960s feared ecological disasters and encouraged ecological and balanced lifestyles that considered the ramifications of the use of earth's limited resources. A return to the "simple", the "roots", the "origins" was proposed by individuals and groups advocating a recycling of the world's resources. Fine craft, particularly handmade objects, were part of the new lifestyle. Ceramics, textiles, jewelry and other crafts provided an income for many who established cottage industries in order to escape urban centres and live closer to nature.

The philosophies of William Morris and others associated with the Arts and Crafts Movement during the later half of the eighteenth century expressed fear of the industrial revolution and the advent of mass production with the consequent loss of the unique and the original. They proposed the development of guilds to encourage craftspeople and society to recognize the value of handmade craft and individual expression.

The earliest trade routes had provided access to exotic wares and materials. Ceramics, textiles and other craft and materials from the Orient inspired new production in Europe. Cultural diffusion of images, forms and materials resulted in many creative and unique works, but not

always. Victorian society was impressed by exotic crafts, gathered from all parts of the Empire and exhibited in the Crystal Palace during the first World's Fair, London, in 1850. Victorian parlours burst with exotic materials, images, patterns and ornamentation. Fearing a loss of identity and meaning in British art, in light of the Victorian fascination for the exotic and the mechanized, Oscar Wilde and other noted British writers, artists and craftspeople organised the Aesthetic Movement. Wilde would lecture on a variety of "aesthetic" topics ranging from the dress of the day to "the appropriateness of certain, naturally perfect models of design; the lily and the sunflower." The Aesthetic Movement advocated the use of natural forms from the English countryside as motifs for craft, and a stronger understanding and appreciation of "things indigenous".

Over the past years, first year students at the Emily Carr College of Art and Design here in Vancouver have experimented in "capturing the spirit of the place" in their workshop projects. One such project occurred during the Fall season when nature "sheds its skin" and the variety of natural forms is abundant. Students were requested to gather as many varied natural forms as possible and to create an entrance screen for a large tent. The tent housed an exhibition and theatre for students to learn about ecology and nature during an Ecology Fair sponsored by the Greater Vancouver Regional District. The project inspired students to consider and utilize local materials in art and craft. The aroma, textures and colours of these materials resulted in an artistic and material "pot pourri" of the region.

A series of drawing exercises encouraged students to gather images depicting aspects of British Columbia's environment and spirit. These images were used as inspiration for the creation of circular mandalas. Here in British Columbia as in other parts of Canada the Asian-Pacific cultures are converging. In order to understand and illustrate this convergence students created *Pacific Spirit Mandalas*. The contrasts and similarities of the *Pacific Spirit* and *British Columbia Spirit* mandalas provide interesting insights into the present and developing future culture of the region. The Pacific Rim theme was also interpreted by Bill Koochin in the *Lt. Governor's Dragon Boat Festival Paddle*. The paddle, carved from three hundred year-old yew from Vancouver Island, features mythological Dragons from the North, South, East and West. This contemporary work interprets a traditional West Coast artistic format; the canoe paddle. (The ceremonial paddle is used each year to open the dragon boat races involving over twenty five teams from around the world.)

During the jurying of last summer's Saskatchewan Craft Council's Dimensions 90 Exhibition there was considerable discussion about the relationship of craft, ecology and the region. As a jury member I was inspired by the use of indigenous and local materials both new and recycled. I was impressed that there was an Environmental Awareness Award "for the article best representing the theme of a peaceful and environmentally sustainable society, and using environmentally appropriate techniques and materials". This award provided by Battlefords

Environmental Awareness Movement represents an aspect of craft production becoming even more important: craft, ecology and environment.

In an exhibition for the Canadian Craft Museum (formerly the Cartwright Gallery), twenty five artists were selected for their varied expertise and interest in functional form. The Council of Forest Industries, sponsor of the exhibition "Out of the Shade", arranged for visits to forests and mills, and provided workshops to familiarize artists with the proportions, grading and significance of hemlock. The curatorial process of this exhibition involved bringing together artists with representatives of the forest industry to explore the use of a resource considered "scrap" for many years. The objects created for the exhibition represent a positive resource; Pacific Coast Hemlock. There is probably no regional wood that Ron David, a noted Canadian craftsman, has not experimented with in his work. His containers and objects represent expressive use of regional resources, as does the work of René Theubeau. René's adage "Lots of freedom — the outdoors. Mother Nature's way of saying 'go for it'" describes the character of his work and his creative process.

The recent information of the [West Coast] Protozoan Group reflects a positive trend for artists and craftspeople to work together in order to share the costs of workspace and tools, and to synergize and market their creative efforts. Their work explores regional imagery and materials in provocative, ironic forms that play with notions of function, myth and fantasy. Certain works juxtapose indigenous and exotic materials, driftwood, local stone and other regional materials with plastic laminates and hi-tech hardware. Exhibitions of their work in California and British Columbia have reflected a sensitivity to abundant regional resources.

The Imagination Market in Vancouver has developed over the years to recycle "off cuts", remnants and "garbage" from industry. This unique and self-supporting organization produces hands-on workshops, lectures, and exhibitions that encourage children to use recycled materials in their art and craft. Noted professional jewelry makers juried a competition for young makers of jewelry. An amazing variety of forms, connectors and materials were used in the jewelry selected for a month long exhibition. Young and old enjoyed this celebration of creative recycling and the production of beautiful craft.

Concern for the environment and a regional perspective continues to be a part of the craft making tradition in Canada. By locating and using local resources, whether they be clay, wood or other recycled natural or man made materials, craft becomes more of a true reflection of the region. Art, design and craft educators may assist this process by encouraging the exploration and use of regional materials and images. Hopefully, craftspeople will continue the tradition of using regional materials, both new and recycled to ensure the surprise and originality in craft that reflects the "spirit of the place".

Sam Carter, an artist, educator and faculty member of Emily Carr College of Art and Design in Vancouver, was one of the jurors for Dimensions 90.



# SOMETHING FISHY

The Handwave, Meacham November 1990

by Gale Steck



Shirley Taylor *Mermaid and Friends* Fabric mermaid 33 in., fish 16x24, 14x20, 18x18, 11x13 in.

I was delighted to visit June Jacob's little gallery at the Handwave, Meacham as I had not been there for a couple of years. Going out into the country always inspires me, it seems to lengthen my visual focus so that when I look at man-made things I see more colour and more detail.

A first glance around the tiny, well lit gallery drew my attention to a whimsical and very confident fabric sculpture *Mermaid and Friends* by Saskatoon artist Shirley Taylor. A set of colourful fabric fish swinging gaily on fishline from the ceiling surrounded the mermaid.



above: Garnet Hall *Orca Whale* Mississippi maple, black walnut 10x18 in.

left: Charley Farrero *Small Mouthed Vass* Stoneware 10x11 1/2 in.



Amongst a number of pots responding to the fishy theme, is a school of earthenware fish mugs, majolica glazed and hand-painted by Anne McLellan. The mugs, distorted to emphasis the painted fish shapes on the surface, appear slightly lumpy but the painting was delicate and pleasant. Charley Farrero's standing fish *Poisson D'Avril*, a stoneware, shino glazed piece first seen at Dimensions 90, still exerts a presence. His *Small Mouthed Vass* is truly a wonderful and eye-catching piece, lustrous stoneware glazes stripe a slab formed shape to make a large flat-sided fish, stable and fishily eyeing the world. Jim Sather's *Saskatchewan Pseudo Fish*, a collection of small goldfish-sized porcelain fish painted with low fire glazes in bright hues, would make any tropical aquarium keeper happy. Sold one at a time or as a collection they are a delight. Anita Rocamora exhibited a spooky, memorable octagonal plate salt glazed in subtle greys and browns.

A fish quilt by Val Minter provided a great backdrop of deep blue for one wall. Yellow fish swam fat-cheeked along in regular order, yellow and cheery. This hand-quilted piece seems proof that a simple idea well executed can make a very effective show piece. A koi fishskin belt by Sherry Wesnoski contrasted the segmented tanned and dyed fishskin belt with a fused glass belt buckle and earrings in dark greens and blues. Cathryn Miller showed *One Fish, Two Fish* a machine-knitted sweater bearing brown and rust fish appearing as two separate fish back and front but becoming only one fish when viewed all around.

The central pedestal was topped by *So Where's the Fish?* a very quirky bird with iridescent pink wings and very large feet made of blown and worked hot glass surfaced with cold paint. Susan Rankin and Paula Tjiang must have had some fun putting this one together. Fish are provided, surrounding the centre piece are funky, painted paperboard brooches by Sue Bod, painted leather earrings and a brooch by Cecile Miller and subtle sterling silver earrings by Loretta Knutson.

*Two Fish Bowl*, a fused glass bowl by D. Lynne Bowland, employed an impressive array of techniques including layering, fusing and sandblasting. I found it interesting but visually confusing. On one wall was an Orca Whale (not truly a fish) of Mississippi Maple and Black Walnut by Garnet Hall. Caught in motion, breaching, this finely crafted piece is just what it seems — a beautifully finished combination of fine materials put together skillfully to illustrate a single clear idea.

New ideas and fresh approaches are all around the gallery. *I Found a Fish in my Apple* by Fiona Anderson and Pat Kutryk has a smooth-as-silk apple shaped box, penetrated by a fish which forms the handle of the lid. This piece is so smooth and sensual that I could not resist touching it.

It amazed me that all this, and more, was in less than ten square feet of gallery space — such a small space to contain so much energy. Each piece seemed a very personal interpretation of the theme. Congratulations go to June Jacobs on her ability to spark the imagination and wit of the craftspeople who responded to the theme, and on her ability to display the work well giving great enjoyment to the viewer.

Gale Steck is a functional potter and a member of Handmade House, Saskatoon.

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# PORTFOLIOS

by Susan Robertson, Marketing Co-ordinator

There are many reasons for having a portfolio; as a collection of visual information it can show your development, it can be a reference source of ideas, or it can document a project or process. In this article the kind of portfolio we are talking about is that used to obtain gallery exhibitions, grants, commissions and sales. These portfolios are often used by curators to select individuals for exhibitions. Writers portfolios to research articles, organizations use them for publicity. Gallery and shop owners use them to select work to sell. Architects, designers and private collectors often choose from portfolios craftspeople to execute commissions. Government, corporate bodies and private individuals use them to select and purchase presentation gifts. The portfolio collection at the SCC office has been used for all these purposes.

Providing access to craftspeople and their work through a central portfolio system enables many users to find easily the information that they need. A major initiative of the Saskatchewan Craft Council in 1991 is to upgrade and expand the current collection into a well-developed central portfolio system. It is proposed to promote these portfolios to potential users through press-releases, letters, promotional material and evenings, personal visits and booths at user group conferences. Programs such as Corporate Gift Consulting, a Craft Catalogue and Individual Client Purchases are being investigated. Participation in these programs will be through the portfolio system. A basic portfolio contains an up-to-date resumé, ten good slides and an artist's statement.

## The Resumé

A one or two page resumé is used to give the reader sufficient background information about you, the crafts-person. It must contain your name, business name, home and studio addresses, and telephone numbers. The easiest and most accessible way to present your information is under a series of headings: Education, Exhibitions, Awards and Scholarships, Publications, Teaching and so on. List your most recent achievements first and work backwards. It is a good idea to develop a format which can be used throughout. In listing your craft education include the college or university, courses studied and qualifications gained. If you are self-taught put that down. Include any workshops, courses or lectures you have taken giving the school, teacher and year. In listing your craft experience be brief. List only those experiences that are relevant and for those of you with many accomplishments, list only those of major significance. You may also wish to include the locations where your work can be viewed, any curatorial or consulting experience and craft association memberships.

## Slides

A minimum of ten slides will form the visual portion of your portfolio. When choosing your slides, you first have to decide if you wish to present a historical perspective, a

particular style on which you are presently concentrating, or a diversity of work grouped perhaps under 'commissions', 'production' and 'one-of-a-kind'. Your selection of slides also may be determined by whether your portfolio is being used to gain funding, a commission or retail sales.

Slides and photographs must be of professional quality. However good the work it will not get the attention it deserves if it is poorly photographed, especially where hundreds of slides have to be viewed. It is worth all the time, best pieces before they go out into the big wide world to get scratched, dented or taken to Timbuktu. You may want to include details of works to show, for example, weaving patterns, surface texture or complex and beautifully executed joints. When selecting your slides it is a good idea to view them on a large screen for sharpness, good colour and accurate representation of the work.

Ask among your fellow craftspeople about good craft photographers. Your local photographer may take splendid wedding photographs but may not have much experience of the intricacies of photographing a craft work. The Saskatchewan Craft Council, through its Portfolio Resources Program, provides opportunities for members to have professional quality slides taken at reasonable rates by SLAST student photographers, supervised by professional, on site at SCC sponsored markets (details are given in the Bulletin). When having slides taken get multiples of each, they are no more expensive than having copies made and are more accurate. Mark one set as a masterfile and do not let it out of your hands.

Slides should be put in slide sleeves. They not only protect slides from dust and mishandling, they enable users to remove them easily from the binder for viewing on a light table. Each slide should be marked with a dot in the bottom left hand corner on the front of the slide frame for viewing correctly through a projector. Your name and the slide number should be typed on a label fixed to the bottom front of the slide. Slides must be accompanied by a slide list which gives the slide number and the title, materials and techniques used, size, date of production, and may also include the price of each work.

## Artist's Statement

The final component of your basic portfolio is your artist's statement, which describes your work, the ideas which activate it and any technical information involved. It places your work in a context and helps those unfamiliar with your work to interpret and understand it. Artist's statements may be as short as one paragraph but normally do not exceed one or two pages.

## Etceteras

Extra information which can be included in your portfolio are photographs, exhibition notices, articles and recent reviews, business cards, catalogues and price lists. Each

addition should be looked at from a perspective of relevancy and purpose.

## Putting it all together

Good work will be lost by poor presentation so it is important that all the information be presented in a professional manner. The first step is to collect all the information, slides and so on, from which you select the best and most representative material.

The Saskatchewan Craft Council Portfolio System proposes to use an 8 1/2 x 11 inch, 3 ring binder with a maximum depth of 3 inches. The binder will have the crafts-person's name on the spine and front and will have no loose insertions; catalogues, brochures, copies of articles and reviews must all be placed in acetate sheets. Business cards will fit into standard slide sheets.

Once you have determined what you will include in your portfolio, you then have to decide how to present it. Use your design skills to plan your layout and graphics. Think about how each page will look individually, as well in relation to the overall layout. If your portfolio is visually pleasing and easy to read it will be remembered.

All information, resúmes and slide lists must be typed. Transfer types such as letaset can be used for titles and headings. Remember that you need skills to use these materials, so practice first. Make sure that mounted items are straight and aligned. Be consistent. It is worth spending some time research portfolios and graphic design — it may stimulate ideas beyond the construction of portfolios. Many good books are available through the library system. Available from the Saskatchewan Craft Council Resource Centre and through inter-library loans is a good basic book on portfolios "How to Prepare Your Portfolio" by Ed Marquand.

A well-presented professional portfolio in the Saskatchewan Craft Council will give you access to users and programs not previously available. It does take time and money to create a portfolio which reflects your individuality and creativeness but it is an investment which conveys your commitment to craft and to professionalism. January and February for most of us is the time to clean off our desks and catch up on paperwork. Why not make this year's project researching and preparing your portfolio or updating your current portfolio for the Saskatchewan Craft Council Portfolio System. As your career grows and changes so will your portfolio. While you are making a portfolio for the SCC, you should consider making a personal one as well. Replacing years of work lost through misplaced slides becomes easier when the originals never leave your possession.

Susan Robertson, SCC Marketing Coordinator, gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Ontario Crafts Council and Sandra Dunn, OCC Resource Centre Manager.

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# FIRST SIAS GRADUATES

Arts Centre, Prince Albert September 1990

Text and Photographs by Barbara Terfloth

The first three graduates from the Applied Arts Department at SIAS, Woodland Campus, Prince Albert, held their graduate shows during the month of September. Shown in the Foyer Gallery at the Arts Center in Prince Albert, Caroline Ohrn, Audrey Kyle and Betty Pepper covered a range of media, styles and techniques in the disciplines of weaving and ceramics.

Caroline Ohrn's ceramic show "Now I Will Tell A Story ..." centered on the depiction of North American Indian myths and legends: a matt-black raven alights on a smokey clam shell from which protrude little human feet and faces; a tile composition of the sun and moon joining to create the Micmacs; the sun caught in a pot created by Grandmother Spider so she could bring light "and besides that .. the art of pottery making" to the Cherokee. Employing terra sigillata slip and smoking, experimenting with white glue and acrylic paint on clay sculptural forms, Ohrn has illustrated her favorite stories. Using carving and throwing, handbuilding and slab manipulation, Ohrn's interpretations range from the symbolic to the realistic. "This being my Graduate Show, I feel that I must mention that this series is not a complete representation of my work." Ohrn is also a functional potter working out of her home studio in Saskatoon.



Caroline Ohrn *Grandmother Spider Steals the Sun* Porcelain 10x18in. 1990

On the softer side, with quiet, subtle colours and colour changes, Audrey Kyle's weaving display included warm blankets, garments and linens to lust for. Kyle has used a variety of natural fibers to demonstrate her skills in dyeing, spinning, weaving and sewing.

Immediately impressive is her deep purple ikat-dyed wool yardage. Then one discovers the exquisite silk scarf woven in a two block false damask, the large-size portfolio of hand-dyed linen and linen novelty yarns, and a double weave plaid blanket in soft greens and creams. Two jackets, one created from a felted wool yardage and the other from the Japanese Shifu technique of spun and woven paper (previously shown in the SCC Gallery), show that Kyle is not afraid to explore new and different techniques. Currently



Audrey Kyle  
*Ikat yardage* Wool  
90x360cm. 1990

Betty Pepper *Vases*  
Stoneware



enrolled in Yvonne Yuen's Design and Tailoring School in Saskatoon, Kyle intends to expand on her skills in dyeing, designing and weaving fine fabrics suitable for garments.

Set against Kyle's weaving was Betty Pepper's ceramic display of thrown bowls and coil-constructed vases. The two media worked well together, uniting (quite accidentally) the diverse elements of harmony and excitement. All of Pepper's work was made in stoneware and reduction fired with a wax resist glaze technique. From a trio of vases with blue glaze accents on natural clay and *Wasp's Nest* (previously shown in the SCC Gallery), a vase of similar style, to bowl forms with dramatic dark and light glaze patterns, Pepper shows us that functional pottery is where her interest lies. "I feel privileged to create objects with my heart and hands for others to use and enjoy".

Where to from here? In Kyle's view, their education has only just begun. The past two years, a good grounding, have only completed the basics. "Now I can get into doing and learning."

Barbara Terfloth, a past SCC Board member, is also a student in the SIAS Applied Arts Dept., at Prince Albert.



# WINTERGREEN 1990

by Susan Robertson, Marketing Co-ordinator

No two craft markets are ever alike. This year's more interesting challenges included a booth with a cement ceiling support blocking it and a display, which no matter how you set it up, just would not work. Fortunately, a last minute cancellation and musical chairs with craftspeople ended with satisfied marketers.

At past markets, the market preview has resulted in minimal sales. This year, the invited came not only to admire but to purchase. Many marketers were pleased to be the object of their attentions, and indicated that one third of their Friday's sales occurred during the market preview. Friday is usually our busiest day, this year we had fewer shoppers, purchases were carefully considered and tended to be higher priced works. On Saturday, we had the larger attendance normally experienced on Friday.

Sales were slower, with many just looking. Sunday was the busiest Sunday ever, probably the result of the Saskatchewan Rough Riders not participating in the Grey Cup, but certainly assisted by the newly instituted "Senior's Sunday" with half price admission.

Actual attendance was 9990, up 419 or 4% from last year; paid attendance was similar to last year, 6856, down 34. The estimated repeat visits were 2,135 or 21% (allowing 10% for children 12 and under who are admitted free), an increase in repeats of 24% over last year.

Overall sales were up this year. Seventy-five out of a possible 91 replies were received to the market survey. Total reported sales were \$199,207. Total reported orders were \$12,100. Total reported sales and orders were \$211,307. The average sale, \$2,817, times 16 (the number of

replies not received), added to the reported total sales and orders resulted in estimated total sales of \$256,386. Average sales were down \$190 or 6% from last year. The estimated total sales and orders were up \$24,810 or 11% from last year. A lower average sale was not unexpected this year, due to the increase in

the number of marketers from 77 to 91.

We seem to have benefited from the economic recession. With limited spending money available perhaps people are choosing quality, handmade items over run-of-the-mill commercial items. Is this a trend which will continue? I certainly hope so. ■

### Market sales by medium:

Medium	Total	Average	'89 Total	'89
Clay	\$ 56,510	\$ 2,691	\$ 51,178	\$ 3,198
Fibre	\$ 34,850	\$ 2,680	\$ 29,112	\$ 2,911
Glass	\$ 9,100	\$ 2,275	\$ 15,600	\$ 3,120
Jewellery	\$ 30,801	\$ 3,422	\$ 23,230	\$ 3,871
Wood	\$ 34,400	\$ 3,440	\$ 21,645	\$ 2,405
Leather	\$ 7,804	\$ 3,902	n/a	n/a
Other	\$ 37,842	n/a	\$ 21,639	n/a



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