

THE CRAFT FACTOR

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL



Saskatchewan Craft Gallery

Schedule
Open 1 - 5 pm daily

IN THE GALLERY

"FUNKY STUFF"

Barb Goretzky - Handbuilt Clay
(1/2 show)

&

"DANCE ON A CLOUD:"

-EXPLORING OUR FASCINATION WITH BIRDS"

Wendy Black-Kostuk - Fibre
(1/2 show)

January 16 to March 1, 1998

"FOLLY GARDEN"

Lorne Beug

Mixed media works in the
form of architectural models

March 6 to April 19, 1998

Public Reception: March 6, 7 to 9 pm

Artist's Talk: March 7, 2 pm

"DIMENSIONS '98" JURYING

Gallery closed

April 20 to 30, 1998

"CRAFT ON STREAM"

Crafted objects pertinent to
outdoor activities

curated by Leslie Potter and Tom Evans

May 1 - June 14, 1998

TOURING EXHIBITIONS

(Partial Listings)

"DIMENSIONS '97"

SCC's Annual Open Juried
Exhibition of Saskatchewan Craft
Jurors: Michael Grace & Marigold Cribb

BARR Colony Heritage Centre
Lloydminster

January 14 - March 1, 1998

"JUST FOR LAUGHS"

A Mixed Media Exhibition
of comedy, satire, sarcasm, parody

Estevan Arts Council
Estevan National Exhibition Centre
February 1 - 23, 1998

Moose Jaw Art Museum

March 5 - May 10, 1998

TOURING EXHIBITIONS

(Partial Listings)

"EARLY SASKATCHEWAN WOODWORKERS"

Curated by Leslie Potter of the
Saskatchewan Craft Gallery &
Dan Ring of the Mendel Art Gallery

Biggar Museum & Art Gallery

January 26 to February 28, 1998

"COLLEAGUES IN CRAFT"

- A Mentor-Student Project
Mixed Media

Moose Jaw Art Museum
January 1 - February 28, 1998

Weyburn Arts Council

Signal Hill Arts Centre

March 1 - 23, 1998

Shaunavon Arts Council

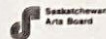
Grand Coteau Centre

April 1 - 23, 1998



SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL

813 Broadway Avenue, Saskatoon, SK S7N 1B5 (306) 653-3616



The Saskatchewan Craft Council (SCC) 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 SCC including gallery and touring craft exhibitions, craft markets, workshops, conferences, and publications. The SCC is an affiliated member of the Canadian Crafts Council.

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The Craft Factor

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THE CRAFT FACTOR presents the commissioned works of several Saskatchewan craftspeople who worked with floral designer, Debra Barlow, to represent Canada at the FTD Interflora World Cup, Amsterdam, 1997.
Also presented is a diorama of a Winter Camp Scene by Doug Taylor, recently commissioned by the Government of Yukon for the Beringia Centre in Whitehorse.
- FRONT COVER Steaming Pitcher and 4 Espresso 1997
Earthenware, handbuilt, slab, underglaze, oxide and glaze;
18 x 15 cm; by Madeleine Arkell, Regina. From the exhibition
"Clay Uncovered."
- BACK COVER Stretch Marks #4 1997
Stoneware, glaze, slip, wheel thrown, altered, salt vapour glazed;
54 x 34 cm; Mel Bolen, Humboldt.
From the exhibition "Clay Uncovered."

Michelle Harris: A Quilter Who Pots

BY PUCK JANES

The moon is never so lovely as when partially hidden by clouds." This is the underlying spirit of a

Japanese concept based on the *wabi* which is an appreciation of the natural, incomplete, and suggestive in preference to the defined and perfect. The Amish quilters embraced their own version of this. Their quilts inevitably have a pattern sewn in upside down or backwards, thus leaving "the perfect" for God. Michelle Harris is a Saskatchewan potter whose thrown and carved work intimates pieces tightly under control, but on closer inspection she too leaves the mark of the maker. Michelle will carve a border of leaves and instead of accurately measuring her space so that each leaf will be the same, when her space runs out she just adds an X, something unplanned, her *wabi*.

Michelle Harris started Heorot Pottery in 1993. Heorot (hare-rot) was the great hall from the epic tale of Beowulf—a fitting name considering there were already two Harris potters when Michelle was considering a name. And her husband, Richard Harris, is a professor of medieval language and history, so she is familiar with old English heroic poems the way others know Seinfeld.

The first pottery class Michelle took was in 1991 while a teacher in Prince Rupert, B.C. It was her way to relax with a friend after teaching grade four's and five's all day. She paid a fee for after-hours access and became serious about becoming a potter. In the fall of 1993, after completing her teaching contract, she returned to Saskatchewan and settled into a new home and marriage outside of Waldheim. Immediately, she started in on converting



part of the garage into a pottery shop.

"School hours with no staff meetings" is Michelle's motto now that she's no longer teaching. She tries to work six hours a day, eight months of the year throwing tea cup sets, pitchers, vases, candle sticks and large and small bowls. "Always bowls, I love bowls," she said on a recent tour of her pottery shop. Her shop is 430 square feet and already she has plans to move out parts of her production to make more room. Her rejects and failures, still beautiful to any observer, are stacked outside where they fill with water and become mouse catchers."

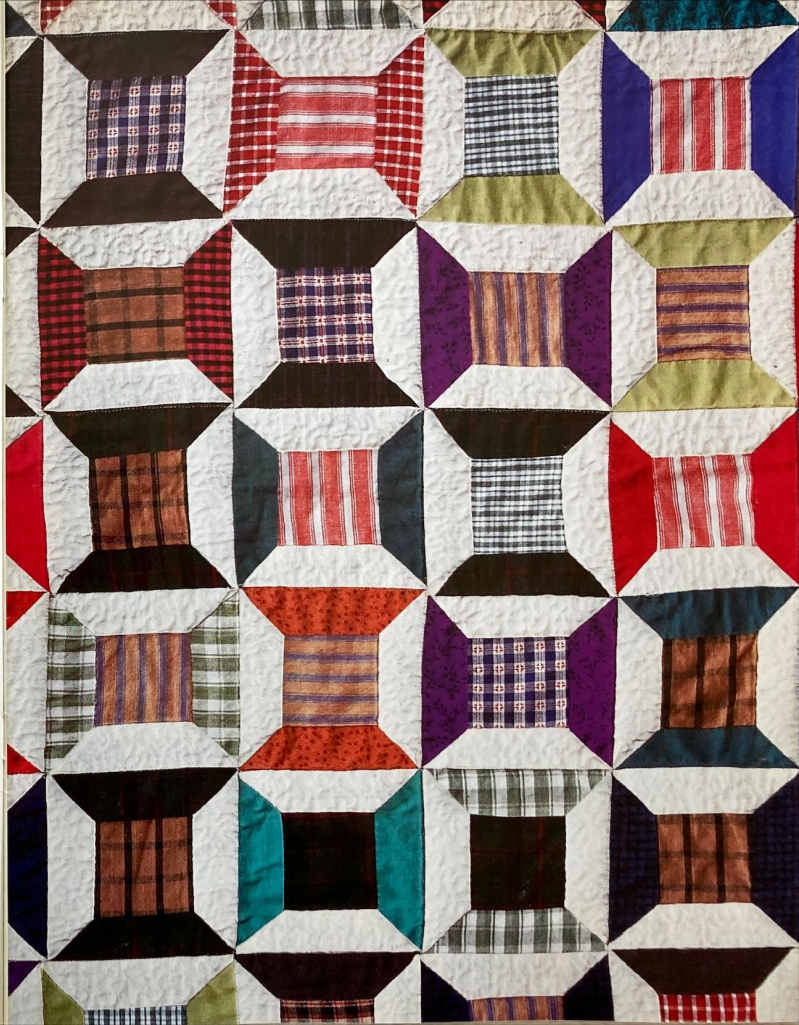
ABOVE

Michelle Harris

at work in her shop carving slip on unfired clay

OPPOSITE PAGE Spools 1995 (detail); hand pieced, machine quilted, stipple quilted; 100% cotton with wool batt. Traditional spool pattern; 40 x 54 inches by Michelle Harris.

On top of a hill overlooking miles of the North Saskatchewan river, sits the Harris home—filled with quilts of countless designs, old and new, and in various stages of completion. This breath-taking and inspiring spot is also home to a flock of sheep which graze peacefully outside Heorot Pottery's corner windows while Michelle works at her wheel throwing tea cup sets, pitchers, vases, candle sticks and bowls.



Her wheel faces corner windows which overlook her flock of sheep. Bright, clean, ordered and phoneless, her shop is a peaceful place to work. The Harris home, where her quilting is done, is about one city block from the shop and sits on top of a hill overlooking miles of the North Saskatchewan River. This breath-taking view completes the inspiration Michelle needs for her work.

Joining the Saskatoon Quilters' Guild and taking part-time ceramics classes became part of her strategy to keep semi-social. In January of 1994, with her brand-new shop waiting, Michelle enrolled in the Ceramics program at SIAST's Woodland Campus, driving one day a week to Prince Albert.

One and a half years in the program gave Michelle the needed exposure to different people working in a wide variety of pottery applications, not to mention hours of wheel time. "Throwing was the only thing that interested me," she says about this time. "I loved the shapes and forms I was able to create on the wheel." Her shapes are very graceful, somewhat traditional and most have terrific "lift" as opposed to wide-based, table-bound forms. "The key is in seeing," she states, "your hands cannot do what your eye does not see."

When Michelle started throwing, she was only interested in the form, with glaze being merely a "fast covering." Meacham potter, Charley Farrero, who is also a part-time ceramics instructor at SIAST, encouraged Michelle to do more with surface decoration. After hundreds of glaze tests, the development of ideas based on her quilter's background in colour and repetition, and consistent analysis of her work, Michelle was able to unite form and surface. Now she says, "It's like a pendulum. I concentrate on one and then the other. Form is more important for use, and surface for sales."

Michelle tries to have one fun project on the go at all times. She claims, "these I don't usually sell because they never work out." However, her last fun project, *Jelly Bean Tea Set*, won a Saskatchewan Craft Council Merit Award at "Dimensions '97," the only annual, open, juried exhibition of craft in the Province. This was an incised piece—incising being a technique at which she excels. Michelle keeps track of the time involved to make all her pieces and incised

ware takes a lot of it.

As a production potter, Michelle has developed two distinct lines, both in the mid-temperature range. Her newest line is navy blue and white sgraffitoed porcelain

Borders are an important part of both Michelle's quilting and her pottery. "I have 15 or more border designs for my blue and white porcelain pieces," she explained. "What ties my design work in quilting and pottery together is the development of a simple, repeated pattern and variation on a theme."

with gold overglaze accents. In the bone dry, unfired stage she re-centres her wares on a slow-turning wheel and quickly applies a thick layer of a dark blue slip. To sgraffito, she chooses one of her border designs and free hand carves through the damp slip to reveal the white porcelain underneath. She is not a "high volume" thrower and—like many potters—suffers from numbness and pain in her arms and wrists when she pushes herself too far.

Borders are an important part of both Michelle's quilting and her pottery. "I have 15 or more border designs for my blue and white porcelain pieces," she explained. "What ties my design work in quilting and pottery together is the development of a simple, repeated pattern and variation on a theme." Her patterns and borders are based on the timeless designs found

throughout human history: the flower and bird motifs of traditional Japan, the chevrons, crosses, arches and wheels of American Native peoples, and the ancient motifs of the Syrians and Greeks.

Her more established line is a buttermilk glazed white stoneware painted with pink and green ceramic stains in a "botanical" design. It is a very delicate look.

Michelle's house and work room is filled with quilts of countless designs, old and new, and in various stages of completion. She began quilting as a 15-year old high school student who had to take home economics but did not want to sew clothes. When she started out quilting, the choice of fabric was limited and not very inspiring. Traditionally, quilts are made with 100% cotton fabric which currently provides a choice that seems unlimited.

During our interview, Michelle pulled out just-finished quilts needing a final wash. She had quilt blocks in pieces on the floor, quilts she will machine sew with swirls and spirals, and others that will be hand quilted. She estimated she could piece together a quilt in a couple of weekends, but her stretches at the sewing machine do not last for more than two hours. She has averaged about three to four quilts a year for 20 years. Like many quilters, Michelle does not sell her one-of-a-kind works. Unless a market develops that accurately reflects the value of this historically female art, quilts will probably remain with the makers and their families.

Michelle has been a member of the Saskatoon Quilters' Guild for four years and sits on its programming committee. The Guild's most recent show at the Western Development Museum in October, 1997, displayed 275 quilts created by its 85 members. Michelle had five quilts in the show, an eclectic grouping with no one theme. Some fellow quilters were surprised at her lack of a "trademark."

The *Victoria Quilt* was made entirely from fabric bought during a Victoria holiday, the *Frog Quilt* is a design -in-progress with the fabric pieces chosen and arranged into quilting blocks by her 11-year old son, Leif. Her hand-sewn quilts are inevitably made at "the lake," where the noise of a sewing machine would ruin the reason for being there.

Michelle quilts in silence. She has not had a TV for 10 years (she suffered with-

drawal for the first two) and seldom listens to the radio while working. She likes the quilting and pottery because it is active, but you can think at the same time. It provides a break from "forming sentences and having word thoughts." She has not abandoned electronics, however, as she is connected to ceramic web sites and surfs the net.

The bulk of Michelle Harris' income is made at four yearly craft sales: Wintergreen and Bazaar in Regina;

Sundog in Saskatoon; and the Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival in Battleford. She sells her production lines through Traditions in Regina and Prairie Pottery in Saskatoon, as well as taking on commission work. Customers will be able to appreciate Michelle's *wabi* the next time they stop by her table.

Puck Jones is a recent graduate from the Ceramics program at SIAST Woodland Campus in Prince Albert.

BELOW A selection of recent (1997) pottery by Michelle Harris. All pieces were made from mid-fired (cone 6) porcelain, carved with a navy slip decoration, and a clear glaze and gold lustre accent added.

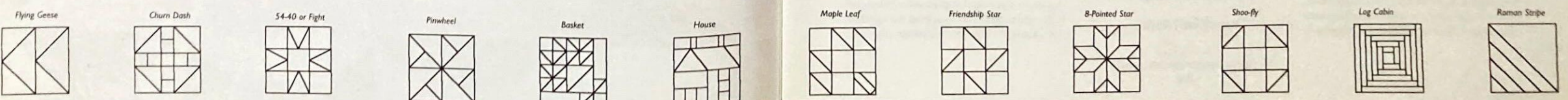
BOTTOM OF THESE TWO PAGES Quilt patterns taken from Quilters Design Studio, QuiltSoft: 1993 (computer programme), Michael Simpson, Box 19946, San Diego, CA



CULTURE COUNTS
123456789

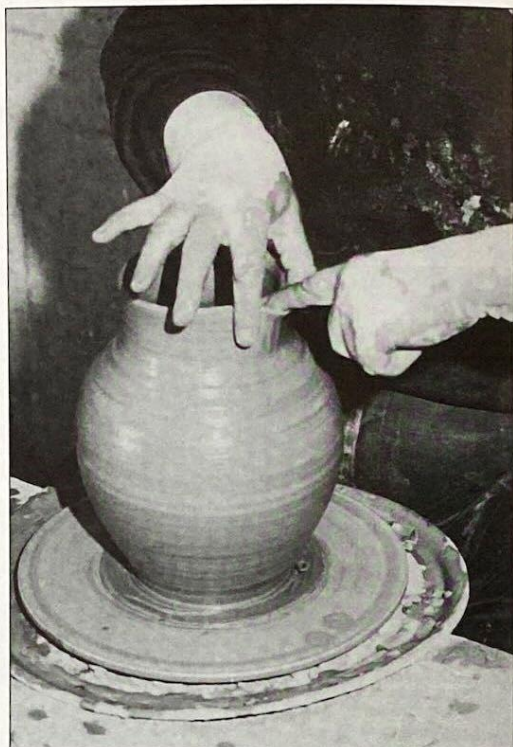
Culture helps create employment in complementary sectors such as tourism, hospitality, transportation and promotion. While the total provincial labour force increased by 0.8% between 1986 and 1991, the arts and culture sector rose by 3.0%.

(Source: Statistics Canada)



Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

BY CATHRYN MILLER



ABOVE Hand movements familiar to all potters. Photos are of Saskatoon potter, Gale Steck, and was used in a workshop setting to illustrate the steps in throwing a pot. Photo by Dennis Harley.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (C.T.S.) is caused by constriction in the carpal channel of the wrist. This puts pressure on the median nerve which transmits feeling from the palmar surfaces of the thumb, index finger, middle finger, and adjacent half of the ring finger. It also controls the movement of these parts. Compression of this nerve can cause pain, tingling, burning, numbness, and stiffness or weakness in the parts of the hand that it serves. It can also cause pain to travel back up the median nerve to the elbow or even the shoulder. Typically, the onset of symp-

I was unable to find any definite statistics on the frequency of C.T.S. in the various crafts. Anecdotally, it does seem to occur more frequently in potters and woodworkers.

oms is gradual, with the sufferer first complaining of being awakened at night by one or more problems in one or both of their hands. If untreated, the symptoms increase and can progress to wasting of thumb muscles, leading to loss of hand function.

Although C.T.S. is often associated with particular occupations, work-related hand use is not primarily responsible. The causes of the thickening of the tendon sheath in the carpal tunnel have yet to be fully understood. It has been recognized that it occurs significantly more often in

women (especially between the ages of forty and sixty) than in men, and can be associated with a number of medical conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, thyroid diseases, tendonitis, or injury to the wrist. It can also arise due to hormonal changes such as those caused by pregnancy or taking birth control pills.

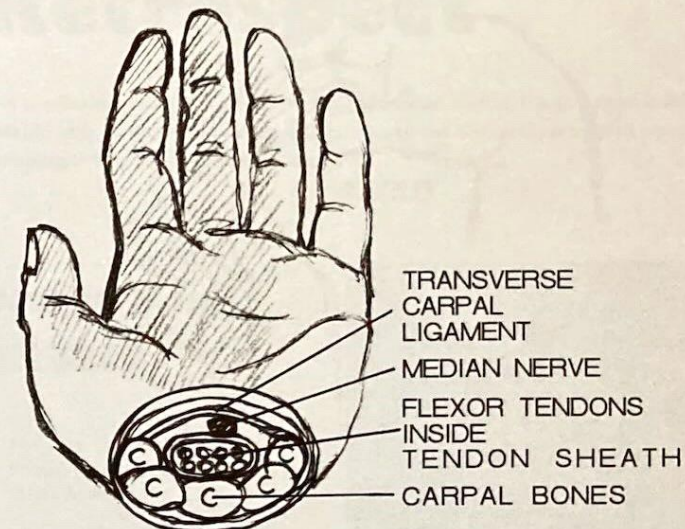
Although work-related hand use is not believed to be the root cause of C.T.S., it is certainly one of the factors for a large number of individuals. A wide range of occupations and hobbies seem to be contributory to the condition: typists, cashiers, fish and meat packers, hairdressers, carpenters, loggers, potters, weavers, knitters... The list could go on, but obviously would include any job or activity that involves repetitive use of the hand.

An information sheet provided to patients by the Occupational Therapy Department at Royal University Hospital provides a list of activities to be avoided if you have C.T.S. (Or presumably if you wish to reduce the chances of getting it):

1. gripping or pinching objects while your wrist is in flexion
2. gripping objects with your wrist bent towards your little finger
3. repetitive wrist flexion and extension activities
4. activities with wrist in prolonged flexion
5. working with vibrating tools

That just about covers every craft that I can think of.

If you are wondering if you might have C.T.S., there's a simple and apparently highly accurate test that you can try in the privacy of your own home. It's called Phalen's test (named after the doctor who developed it) and is often used by physicians in making a diagnosis. Put your hands in front of you, bend the wrists to the point of maximum flexion and press the backs of your hands together. Hold this position for sixty seconds. If you get sensory disturbance (numbness, tingling, pain, etcetera) in the area served by the median nerve, there's a pretty good chance you've got C.T.S. The more advanced the condition, the more likely it is that you will be unable to maintain this position for the full minute. Another thing the doctor might do would be to look for Tine's sign. This would involve her gently tapping the inside of your wrist over the transverse carpal ligament. Again, changes in sensation in the relevant part of the hand are diagnostic. The doctor may also want to send you for an EMG or electromyogram. This tests the rate at which signals are

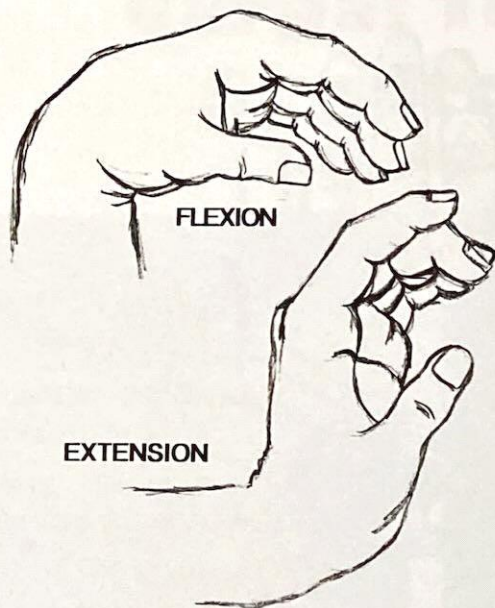


ABOVE Cross-section of wrist and carpal tunnel. Shading indicates the approximate palmar of area affected by C.T.S. Illustration by Cathryn Miller.

being moved along the median nerve, producing a printout in graph form from a muscular contraction produced by electrical stimulation.

Put your hands in front of you, bend the wrists to the point of maximum flexion and press the backs of your hands together. Hold this position for sixty seconds. If you get sensory disturbance (numbness, tingling, pain, etcetera) in the area served by the median nerve, there's a pretty good chance you've got C.T.S.

Once you have a confirmed diagnosis, there are several options for treatment. The first choice for many people is to go the non-invasive route and try occupational therapy. The therapist may fit you with a rigid "resting" splint intended to keep your wrist in a neutral or slightly extended position. The splint should be worn continuously for four to six weeks. You only take it off to exercise and bathe. The therapist who fits your splint will give you an exercise regimen, and may also have suggestions about ways to modify your activities to reduce the stress on your wrist. The disadvantage of this treatment is that wearing a splint (or worse, two) for that length of time can be extremely tedious, and may prevent you from working at all. You may want to have two different splints: the resting splint for night-time, and a lighter cloth and aluminum splint for day use. Good commercial splints of the second type are available in drugstores, and permit some use of the hand while maintaining the wrist at the proper angle. The aluminum bar that goes inside the splint will need to be adjusted to fit you. A second disadvantage of this treatment is that after



ABOVE Two extremes of wrist position. Illustration by Cathryn Miller.

You may be able to reduce your risk of developing C.T.S. by making some alterations in the way you work. Whenever possible, try to limit the amount of time you spend at any particular task: don't pull mug handles all day, don't save all your finishing work and then spend a week tying fringes. Try to vary your activities throughout the day, and remember to stop and rest your hands frequently. You also may be able to modify the working positions you use, or modify tools so that using them puts less stress on your wrists. It is now widely recommended that people working all day at a keyboard use a wrist rest. You may be able to come up with something similar that will work for you. Keep in mind the list of things to avoid. If you're not sure what you can change in the way you work, you might want to talk to an occupational therapist. If you want to consult a private practice occupational therapist (O.T.) on a fee-for-service basis, you no longer need a doctor's referral. Referral requirements vary for occupational therapists employed by the provincial health districts. The minimum wait in both cases will probably be two weeks, though it may take weeks to see a hospital-based O.T. If you do develop symptoms that you suspect are Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, do not ignore them. Untreated C.T.S. can cause permanent damage to your hand. Judging by the experiences of Ron Kurenda and Ed Schille, even if you do have to have surgery, it can be a fairly minor procedure which rapidly solves the problem and leaves you soon able to continue working.

Cathryn Miller has been a weaver for over twenty years and has written articles for *The Craft Factor* on a variety of topics.

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Non Operative Management of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, (handout). Occupational Therapy Department, Royal University Hospital, Saskatoon.

putting up with fairly major physical inconvenience for weeks, you may not be cured.

Your doctor may also suggest other slightly more invasive, but still non-surgical, treatments. She may prescribe medications such as anti-inflammatories or diuretics to reduce the swelling in your wrist, or offer a steroid such as cortisone for injection into the affected area. These might be offered as separate treatments, or in conjunction with splinting, or in a compromise which could reduce the use of resting splints to night-time only.

If you opt for surgery, you will probably be sent automatically for an EMG, and then to an orthopaedic surgeon. I gather that there can be quite a wait for the test, but that surgery is usually scheduled soon after that. The operation is quite simple and is now done on an "ambulatory care" basis. Walk in, walk out. You are given a local anaesthetic and the doctor makes a small incision on the inside of your wrist. Through this she cuts the transverse carpal ligament, thereby releasing the pressure on the median nerve. If both wrists are affected, the surgeon may recommend doing them separately, since wearing two bulky compression bandages and having the full use of neither hand can be awkward.

Active exercises can be started after three or four days with splint protection, while resting the wrist until seven days after surgery.

Both Ron Kurenda (potter) and Ed Schille (woodworker) have had Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. Both had classic symptoms, which Kurenda admits to just trying to ignore for a long time. Both opted for surgical intervention as their first choice, which Schille refers to as "going straight to the knife." (He also mentioned that several members of his family have had corrective surgery for C.T.S. This might indicate that there could be a genetic predisposition to develop this condition.) Schille and Kurenda are pleased with the results and highly recommend the procedure. Kurenda was only off work for two weeks, and is still working fifteen years after surgery.

I've also had C.T.S., though in my case it was more likely a side effect of rheumatoid arthritis than of weaving. A combination of anti-inflammatory medication and wearing a resting splint at night seem to have done the trick for me.

I was unable to find any definite statistics on the frequency of C.T.S. in the various crafts. Anecdotally, it does seem to occur more frequently in potters and woodworkers.

In Retrospect

In 1997, two long-standing members of the Saskatchewan Craft Council passed away. Below, the lives and work of Margaret Kerr and Klaus Walch—related only by their contribution of talents to the Saskatchewan craft community—are highlighted by fellow craftspeople who knew and loved them.

Margaret Olwyn Kerr

BY ANNABEL TAYLOR

The arts in Prince Albert, and in Saskatchewan, lost a very special person when Peggy Kerr passed away on March 10th of this year. Peggy was a vital part of our art's community, bringing a special creativity and unique approach to enrich the activities of the many organizations to which she belonged. The list of her memberships does not adequately convey a sense of her contributions to them, nor of her influence on those people whose lives she touched.

Peggy was born in the Village of Box, Wiltshire England and came to Canada in 1959. She was deeply religious, a devout member of St. Alban's Anglican Cathedral where she was president of the chancel guild. She loved the beauty of the services and contributed to them with exquisite arrangements of flowers, many of which she grew in her own remarkable garden. She initiated an annual flower festival at St. Alban's which concluded with an evening of music and poetry.

The Weaver's Guild and the Embroiders Guild were enriched by Peggy's involvement. She was curator for the Saskatchewan Embroiderers' Guild and initiated and coordinated the annual exhibition of the Sharp Needles Embroiderers' Guild. Her needlework was delightful, ranging from precise samplers to work which moved freely beyond the bounds of tradition.

It was a special treat to have a Guild Christmas meeting at Kerr's where handmade decorations and Peggy's collection of treasures bedecked the house. Offerings from her kitchen reflected both her heritage and her creativity. A guild favourite at potluck suppers was her English trifle, liberally laced with sherry. A love of nature

RIGHT
Margaret "Peggy" Olwyn Kerr
Photo courtesy of the YWCA of Prince Albert.

BELOW
The Garden 1996; wool, cotton, silk, rayon, metal threads; various embroidery stitches; 34 x 42 x 3 cm; by Margaret Kerr. From "Dimensions '96," the annual, touring exhibition of the Saskatchewan Craft Council.



translated itself into every aspect of her art, into her wonderful garden and led to delights such as her rose hip wine.

Peggy's ability to enjoy the fun of childhood found expression in a family Christmas celebration at the Arts Centre with food and entertainment, and games that she still delighted in, such as charades and Run Sheep Run.

The Little Gallery in the Prince Albert Arts Centre honoured Peggy this October with a retrospective exhibition of her work which included paintings and embroidery, handmade dolls and teddy bears and other small pieces which she had created over the years. Peggy participated in many of George Glenn's painting classes and in summer sessions at Emma Lake, delighting in the beautiful landscape and interpreting it freely with what George describes as "the lyrical attitude that Peggy brought to painting."

Anabel Taylor is a fibre artist and instructor for the Weaving Program at Woodland Campus, SIAS, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

**Memberships
Achievements
Awards**

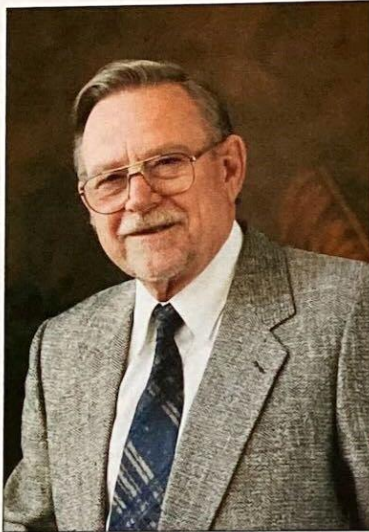
- Margaret Olwyn Kerr

Peggy, an active member of the Prince Albert Council for the Arts, Little Gallery committee, Prince Albert Weavers' Guild, Sharp Needles Embroiderers' Guild and the Saskatchewan Craft Council, also shared her creative talents with the University Women's Club, Caledonian Society, Round Lake Outing Club, Round Lake Artists Group and Historical Society. She was the custess for St. Mary's Anglican Heritage Church at Christopher Lake.

The formidable list of Peggy Kerr's achievements and involvement includes being named a YWCA Woman of Distinction in 1991, given a North Central Regional Recreation Association Volunteer Award in Culture, and being made a Life Member of the Saskatchewan Horticultural Society.

Dr. Klaus Walch

BY MARION KELCH



LEFT
Dr. Klaus Walch
Photo by Dick Braver.

His early works included enameled bowls and large plates. He cleverly acquired unique surface textures by combining with the enamels anything from copper scouring pads, pieces of aluminum pie plates to silver wires or gold foil. "I love to experiment to achieve surface structures other than those achieved by traditionalists." he said.

Masterful at handling raku and burn out techniques, he also constructed large collages (48"x28") using kiln and torch firing methods. For a time he worked in sculptural forms creating vessels with heavy lids cast in bronze by Bill Epp in his Saskatoon foundry. However, his most engaging and highly acclaimed works were vibrant, bold enameled plates. These pieces, approximately 11"x11", often had stunning tactile surfaces. Some pieces gave the impression of a scene such as a misty prairie morning. Others, more non-objective, could be enjoyed purely for their subtle colors and texture.

Possibly best exemplifying his maverick approach is one of the last pieces he created. A friend had given him an amorphous fragment of melted aluminum which came from the radiator of an incinerated truck.

Brilliantly, he incorporated the form into a transcending work entitled "And God created the Heavens." It was one of three pieces chosen by an international jury to be exhibited in Japan. It demonstrated his talent and ability to take disparate shapes and ideas and formulate them into something powerfully beautiful.

Dr. Walch was a prolific enamelist and during his artistic career he produced over 300 major works of which many were purchased by admirers or are now in the collection of friends and professional acquaintances.

Quietly working in a small town in western Saskatchewan, Dr. Walch was recognized in 1995 by the very best enamelists in the world. He received,

for one of his enameled plates on display in Japan, an International Award of Excellence.

His remarkable achievement remains a testament to his creative, kindly, and generous spirit

Dr Klaus Walch passed away on April 19, 1997, after a lengthy battle with cancer.

Marion Kelch, (M.Ed.), is an art instructor at Wainwright High School, Wainwright, Alberta. Ms. Kelch specializes in the teaching of art history, interior design, and enameling.

**Exhibitions Index
- Dr. Klaus Walch**

- September, 1997
 - Participant in "International Enamel Art Show '97"
 - Tokyo, Japan Enamel Artists Association
- October, 1997
 - Participant in "Traditions and Transformation, International Enamels '97,"
 - Gatlinburg, TN,
 - Greenville, NC,
 - Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery, Waterloo, ON
- July-August, 1997
 - Chapel Gallery, "North Battleford Regional Art Exhibit"
- January, 1997
 - "Glass on Metal"
 - One man show, Traditions Handcraft Gallery, Regina
- September, 1995
 - International Award of Excellence, "International Enamel Art" Juried Show
 - Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo, Japan Enamel Artist Society
- September-November, 1995
 - Participant in "Enamel Art Exhibit"
 - Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo, ON
- August, 1995
 - Participant in the "5th Enamelist Society's Juried International Exhibition"
 - Charles Taylor Arts Center, Hampton, Virginia, USA

BELOW *Prairie Sun* 1995; copper, sifted enamel, fused tooling foil copper, gold and silver foil, sterling silver wire; 21 x 23 cm (unframed); by Klaus Walch. Received Award for Excellence in the 1995 International Enamel Art Exhibition in Japan.



1993
Chapel Gallery, North Battleford, "Regional Art Exhibit" Gold Award

1989
One man show, "Enamel Art" Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon, SK.

July-August, 1991
Participant in the 3rd Enamelist Society's Juried International Exhibition, Carnegie Arts Center, Cincinnati/Covington, USA

1978-89
Participant in numerous Saskatchewan Craft Council and Artisan's Craft Sales.

Exhibitions

Simplicity, Magic and Humour

BY LESLIE POTTER

"Clay Uncovered"

Sask Terra Inc.
Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon, SK
October 3 - November 30, 1997

There is a myriad of concerns to consider when reviewing an exhibition, particularly when one is confronted with the high quality of transformed "mud" represented in this show. Before I get into "reviewing", however, let's find out how these pieces came together.

My hat's off to Jack Sures who acted as juror, and also to the newly formed Sask. Terra Inc., the instigator of "Clay Uncovered". As a requisite, both parties agreed that every member of the Sask. Terra group who submitted pieces would be represented, and the result is a collection of works as good as any I have seen. As a point of interest, at least half of this gaggle were represented in the exhibition, "Clay In Canada - North by Northwest", set up in Minneapolis in 1995 for NCECA. "Clay Uncovered" would have stood up well in that locale.

Now, let's go back to the review concerns. Among friends and acquaintances, the first question we usually ask each other is, "Which piece is your favourite?". While it may appear to be a rather subjective approach, I contend that this is an apt question, because it cuts to the quick. Selecting a favourite presses one to make a decision and defend it, and if it is done with discretion and circumspection it does not have to be an arbitrary process. I say this, even though there will be as many favourites in this exhibition as there are pieces (depending on the viewer) given the quality of this eclectic collection.

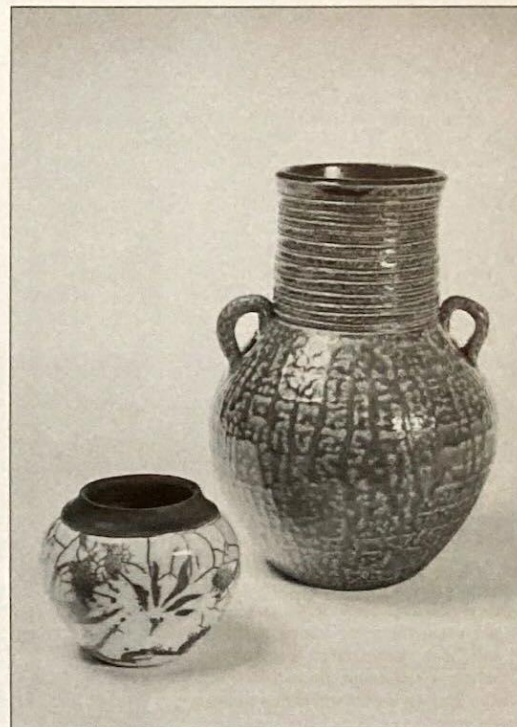
My favourite piece became just that as soon as I saw it being unwrapped—even before all of the other pieces were in sight. Simplicity at its finest, and I believe there has to be clarity or directness of expression for a piece to shine, makes *Bottle*, by Lorraine Sutter, truly elegant. It has a most pleasing form and a surface filled with such rich content that you can spend rewarding time looking at it again and again.

Simplicity can fool us sometimes, because the process can look easy and at first we may decide to glance over it. One has to keep in mind that simplicity does not necessarily have to be simple—it often comes out of a process of intense chaos, searching for resolution—Jackson Pollock and Jimmy Hendrix come to mind.



LEFT *Blossoms* 1996; Handbuilt, porcelain, oxides; 8 cm x 11 cm; by Anita Rocamora

RIGHT *Bottle* 1996; Medium fired clay and coloured clay slip, slab built, extended pinch shoulder and neck, sponge applied slip; 44 cm x 9 cm; by Lorraine Sutter.



ABOVE LEFT *Fractal Crackle* 1997, Porcelain; wheel thrown, paddled, tape resist, raku fired; 10 x 11 x 9 cm; by Paula Cooley.

ABOVE RIGHT *Untitled* 1997; Stoneware, iron slip, black glaze, salt glazed, cone; 10 x 28 x 17cm; by Charley Farrero.

Another piece that grabbed me quickly, because of its simplicity, was Charley Farrero's untitled pot. You don't see many Farrero pots in exhibitions these days, he usually presents us with high relief wall pieces like *French Bred*, which is also in this show. Maybe that's why the pot stood out at first, because of this newness. Be that as it may, I left Farrero's pot on the back burner when other pieces started to exert their influence on me. But then, after two weeks passed by it started "gnawing" on me again. "Don't be afraid to change your mind, one is not a servant of one's mind", I muttered to myself. "You'll never go wrong if you choose simplicity" —I don't know who said that, or indeed if it's even a "quote", but my money's on it. This pot has a particular toughness and richness that makes you rivet your attention on it. Its

quiet simplicity and presence, for me, push it neck and neck with the top contenders.

Of course, review concerns ebb and flow in a constant, internal dialogue. For example, my only negative criticism of this exhibition is that there are some accomplished craftspeople not showing and, if they were, I may have selected them as contenders. But they're not, so let's forge on.

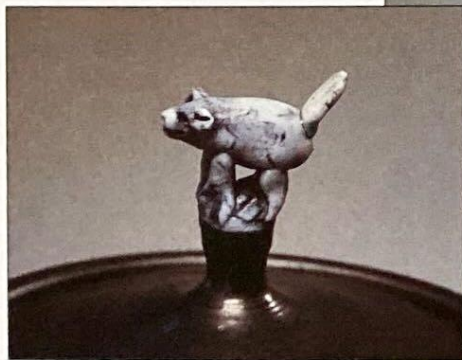
Mel Bolen showed two exceptional pieces: *Stretch Marks #4*, a powerful form, full of energy and *Graceland*, a piece that reminds me of a turned, wood burl—solid and precise. Both these pieces are definitely contenders, created by a master who imparted them with magic and longevity. The techniques used in *Stretch Marks #4* (see back cover) is definitely breaking some boundaries, as the vessel was wood fired creating an amazing glaze from the wizardry of the kiln.

Speaking of magic, it was evident from the start that, with the exception of a couple of pieces, the works in this exhibition could be roughly divided into two categories: magic and humour; which appear as key ingredients that bind the pieces together into a whole.

For a good dose of magic look at Emma Radfelder's, *Springing From Clay*. The snow glaze used here is wild stuff and the crocus and pussy willows literally spring out at you with delicacy and precision. Other magical pieces include: Paula Cooley's, *Fractal Crackle*, one of the finest raku pieces I have seen—fresh and clean; Sandra Ledingham's, *Sanctum, Sanctorum*, probably the most "off the wall" piece in the show, even though it is mounted on the wall. It is at the same time contemplative and mysterious, containing three small doors designed to be opened with a decorative nail resting in a clay cone beside the piece proper.

Anita Rocamora's, *Seven Secret Things* is sculptural magic while her two flower/vessel forms entitled *Blossoms* exude magic, magic, magic. These two pieces appear to defy gravity and float, while the colour and surface absolutely compliment the thinness of the petals. *Blossoms* for me would be another contender.

Other pieces also affected me with their

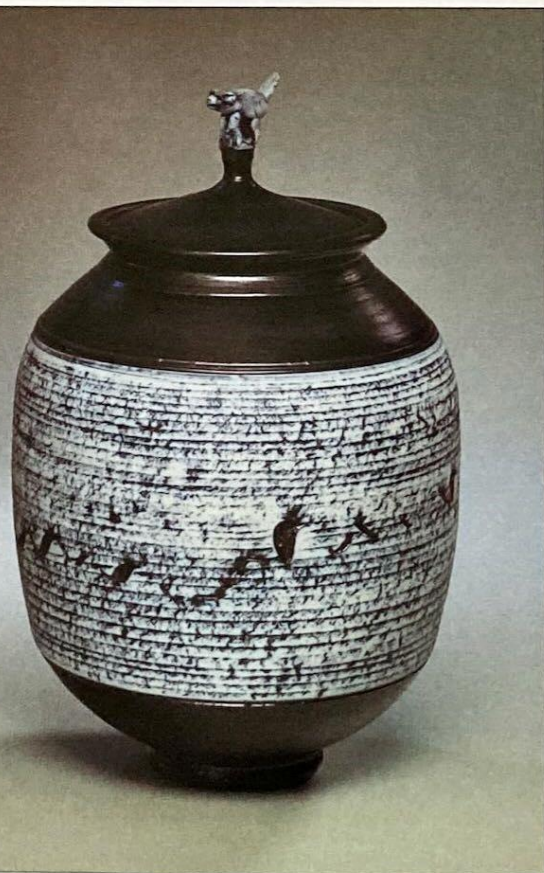


RIGHT *Beaver Covered Jar* 1997; porcelain; thrown; 22 x 25 x 16 cm; by Jack Sures.
ABOVE Detail of *Beaver Covered Jar*.

magic: Mel Malkin's two decorative plates, abstract and full of colour change before your eyes like a prism as you walk around them; *Images*, a teapot, creamer and sugar container by Judy Tryon present us with unfamiliar surfaces that vibrate like images in slightly disturbed water—the result of a technique called agateware which involves stacking layers of clay and blending them while forming the object. *Nocturnal Haze* by Sandy Kuntz is fine art contained in a perfect shape. Another piece by the same artist, *Exposure*, which has a smoky texture from raku-firing on a pleasingly, tight form produces yet another perfect shape.

Alice Hyland's coil pot portrays a quality of a magic because its shape pushes the limits of this technique, almost defying gravity, resulting in a fresh and uncluttered work. Cara Driscoll's vessel, *Peep Hole* (also coil) creates intrigue and mystery because of the peep hole, but also because of a "message" written on the inside bottom.

Contrasting and playing with the magic was a good dose of humour, which became evident as soon as you walked into the SCC Gallery. You were immediately arrested by Susan Robertson's cat, *Sue*, in *Shades* (what a self-portrait!), along with Wendy Parson's dog (what a personality!). On the wall, just above the dog and cat, Farrero's *French Bred*, filled with gutsy humour and all puns intended, drew you in. Up close you could see that



it was a loaf of French bread filled with tiny frogs—good thing you hail from France, Charley!

In a different vein, Madeleine Arkell's *Steaming Pitcher and 4 Espresso* (see front cover), while not imparting humour per se, was fun; as was Ledingham's, *It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing*, a tinted, sculptural, porcelain vessel. To top off the humour component was *The Neighbour* by Barbara Goretzky. This piece depicted a big nose thrust through the window of a "bird house" cottage.

I feel that it is quite appropriate for the juror to be included in an exhibition such as this, because it provides the viewer and indeed the participants with a visual benchmark to assess the selections. Jack Sure's *Beaver Covered Jar* with his trademark sculptural handle on the lid portrays his special type of humour, magic and simplicity (only this is a beaver instead of the proverbial bandicoot) and serves to punctuate this collection of pieces created by a mature group of clay artists.

Leslie Potter is a Saskatoon-based sculptor and SCC Gallery/Exhibitions Coordinator.

Culture through a Camera

BY GREG BEATTY

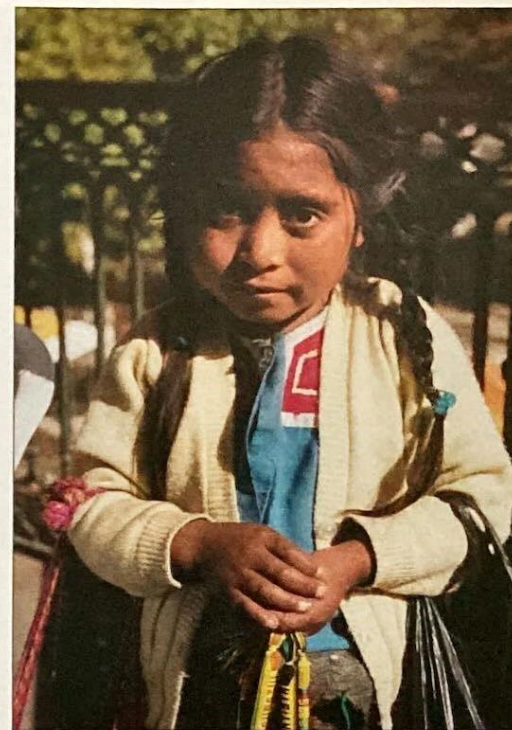
Gary Robins

"Chiapas/Oaxaca"

Traditions Handcraft Gallery, Regina, SK
September 11- October 15, 1997

Unlike its predecessor, the 1988 Free Trade Agreement with the United States, NAFTA has not yet had a significant impact on Canada. True, some Canadian companies have made major investments in Mexico, and prairie politicians meet periodically with their American and Mexican counterparts to discuss the creation of a trade corridor linking the three countries. But for most Canadians, Mexico remains a cipher, best known as a blissfully warm winter vacation site.

It was just such a circumstance that led to this exhibition of prints by Regina photographer, Gary Robins. Vacationing with his wife last January, Robins visited Mexico's two most southern provinces: Oaxaca and Chiapas. Initially, he had no intention of producing an exhibition documenting his travels. But as his affinity for this ancient land grew, he realized what a tremendous



ABOVE *Niña con Plumas* 1997; chromogenic dye coupler print; 23.5 x 35 cm; by Gary Robins.

opportunity this was to offer his fellow Canadians an insight into its history, culture and people.

Readers will recognize the latter province, Chiapas, as the site of a recent insurrection by the Zapatista National Liberation Army. Named after the leader of a 1914 Mexican peasant revolt, Emiliano Zapata, the Zapatistas are engaged in an armed struggle to improve the impoverished living conditions of the indigenous Maya population. "We knew going in that it was fairly stable," Robins says. "A peace accord between the rebels and government had been signed, so there wasn't a lot of fighting. But there's still tension. There are approximately 1000 Zapatistas and 3000 campesinos (peasant farmers) holed up in a remote rain forest. They're surrounded by 10-15,000 Mexican soldiers."

For the past twenty years, Robins has worked as a commercial photographer specializing in landscape images. While landscape, in the form of nature and the built environment of villages in Chiapas and Oaxaca certainly plays a major role in this exhibition, the focal point is the Maya people themselves. In today's cultural climate, Robins' photographic project is somewhat problematic. As wielded by Euro-North American photographers, the camera has functioned largely as an instrument of colonization and oppression against indigenous people. In documenting this supposedly dying race, photographers were not above using painted backdrops, inauthentic props and contrived poses. Thus, the portrait they presented of indigenous people was extremely mislead-

ing. Running concurrent with Robins' exhibition in Regina was the Native Indian/Inuit Photographers' Association organized "See Through Our Eyes: Native Perspective" which addressed this vexing legacy. On display in three instalments at the Regina Public Library's Albert Branch, the exhibition celebrated the work of aboriginal photographers from across North America. Through their practice, aboriginal people are afforded the opportunity to control the representation of their culture.

To Robins' credit, he was aware of this issue. While in Mexico, he made a conscious effort to inform himself on the Maya's unique history and culture: travelling by bus, which is the most common form of public transportation, speaking Spanish and employing local residents as guides. During our interview, he described one such arrangement with Mercedes Hernandez. "Mercedes was known for her bright red parasol," he recalls. "She was very strong willed and independent. She'd been to university in Mexico City, and worked as a teacher. She took us to her home village. We weren't sure what we were in for. She sat us down on a hill outside the village and told us about its history, the role of the church, its patron saints, the power structure of the local government and the role of women. Later, she talked about the more pagan aspects of Maya spirituality. She did all this before we entered the village."

Robins' sensitivity to the issue of cultural exploitation is further exemplified by his decision not to photograph people in their homes. Instead, he confined his camera work to public places. Particularly prominent as photographic subjects are street vendors, almost exclusively women and children, selling homemade crafts such as beaded necklaces and clay bird planters. He also made a point of asking people for their permission before photographing them, and reports that he and his wife were well received. Indeed, in many instances people invited Robins to take their picture. He reciprocated by occasionally letting them take his picture, and permitting children to look at distant vistas through his telephoto lens. Of course, due to the remote southern location of Oaxaca and Chiapas, tourists are still relatively rare. Were their number to grow, it's likely local residents would become much less tolerant of their presence.

Given my own distance (geographic, linguistic, cultural, spiritual) from the people and land depicted in the photographs, I am reluctant to read too much into them. At best, all I can offer are a few general observations based on my conversation with Robins, and my own modest knowledge of Maya culture. The dominant theme that emerges is of a land in transition. Unlike northern Mexico, where NAFTA and other agents of American imperialism, such as pop culture, have wrought tremendous political and socio-economic change, Chiapas and Oaxaca are still relatively pristine. That they are under siege, however, there can be no doubt.

In *Maya Ruins at Palenque*, Robins dramatizes this intrusion, offering a sweeping hillside view of an ancient Maya settlement nestled in a verdant rain forest. As a tribute to the former grandeur of the Maya Empire, which at one point encompassed most of Central America, the stone temples and tombs are impressive.



ABOVE *Old Convent at Cuilapan 1997*; Cibachrome print; 23.5 x 35 cm; by Gary Robins.
OPPOSITE PAGE *Weaver, San Juan, Chamula 1997*; Chromogenic dye coupler print; 23.5 x 35 cm; by Gary Robins.

Unfortunately, the tranquillity we feel in looking at them is marred somewhat by several Western tourists clambering up the stone steps. Desecration is too strong a word to describe their actions. But were commercial exploitation to follow, such a site would inevitably acquire the type of carnival atmosphere associated with Egypt's Valley of the Kings and other notorious tourist traps/attractions.

In *Weaver, San Juan, Chamula, Chiapas*, Robins depicts a weaver selling her wares in a village square. In addition to being functional garments, these weavings serve as powerful statements of Maya identity (for more information on this fascinating textile practice see "The Weavings of My Life/Los Tejidos de Mi Vida" in the Spring 1996 issue of *The Craft Factor* pp. 4-6). The weaver sits alone in the square. Behind her, a new car with several people gathered around it is visible. The irony is both exquisite and heart-rending, as the villagers appear to be turning their backs on their traditional culture and embracing that most ubiquitous, and environmentally damaging, Western status symbol: the automobile. A product that, by dramatically heightening the mobility of those able to afford it, will irrevocably change a millenia old way of life by exacerbating the problem of rural outmigration.

Perhaps the most poignant photograph in the exhibition is *Young Woman With Zapitista Dolls*. It depicts a Maya girl in traditional dress clutching three homemade Zapitista dolls. Spurring the rebellion in Chiapas is the displacement of subsistence peasant farmers from the land in favour of transnational corporations intent on growing crops for export. Dressed in their trademark black masks, the dolls are armed with sticks fashioned to resemble guns—an apt metaphor for the imbalance in military power that exists between the rebels and Mexican army. The comfort the girl derives from the dolls as surrogate defenders of her people is undercut by the ominous presence of an American transcorp logo, that of Coco-Cola, on a plastic chair behind her.

Robins' message isn't entirely negative, however. While the poverty depicted is jarring, one also detects a strong sense of community pride. Without exception, streets and buildings are well-maintained. There's also evidence of a vibrant street life in the var-



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ious villages, where lack of electronic media preclude people from cocooning as more prosperous North Americans tend to do. Instead, people gather in the zocalo (town square) to chat, listen to music and enjoy each other's company.

In studying the built environment, one finds further proof of the resiliency of Maya culture. When the Spanish landed in Mexico, they used stone blocks from Maya temples to build Christian cathedrals. In *La Iglesia de Santo Domingo, San Christobal*, Robins presents one such structure containing elaborate stone and tile friezes depicting famous Biblical figures and narratives. Set against an azure sky, and bathed in sunlight, the friezes glow with a flaxen hue that reminds us it was Spain's lust for gold that drove it to colonize Mexico. While this photograph serves as a monument to the imperial glory of Spain, another image depicts a convent in Nabalom that has been converted into a Maya cultural centre. In this way, the Maya have been able to resist assimilationist pressure. Indeed, in terms of liberation theology, the Catholic Church is now an important ally of the Zapitistas.

In his artist statement, Robins notes that this exhibition takes him back to his roots as a photojournalist. If that was his intention, the journalistic component is somewhat lacking. Given the culturally sensitive nature of his project, brief information panels contextualizing the photographs would have been welcome.

Greg Beatty is a Regina visual arts critic and columnist (Eclectica Etcetera) for the *Regina Leader Post*. He is a frequent contributor to *The Craft Factor*.



Contemporary Truths

Recent works of
Tass Mavrogordato & Ann Newdigate

BY RUTH SCHEUING

"Truth or Consequences"

Tass Mavrogordato & Ann Newdigate
OR Gallery, Vancouver, BC
July 4 to August 2, 1997

In the exhibition "Truth or Consequences," Ann Newdigate and Tass Mavrogordato have both taken the Bayeux Tapestry as their starting point. The three works shown are composed of individual panels or fragments arranged in a narrative sequence, reminiscent of the Bayeux Tapestry. This exhibition was curated by Anthony Kiendl for AKA Gallery in Saskatoon, to travel in various formats to the Dunlop Gallery in Regina and the OR Gallery in Vancouver BC.

Mavrogordato's piece, *Dying for It*, uses two different approaches to imagery and tapestry weaving. Three square centre panels represent parts of women's bodies (torso, mouth, vagina) taken from medical text books and these realistic depictions appear to be invaded by what looks like red blood cells. Each of these panels is flanked on both sides by stylized medieval-looking figures, carrying symbols of their professions, i.e. a scepter, a cross, two intertwined snakes, a skull, a recycling triangle, etc. The square panels are woven in a complex range of black and white shading, reminiscent of drawings, photographs or prints. The surrounding stylized figures consist of bold, coloured shaped tapestries, mounted directly on the wall.

Newdigate's *Ciphers from the Muniments Room: Arrival* is a series of panels, each about 11 x 14 inches, mounted and recessed in imposing looking black frames, to form a solid panel. Each panel tells a self-contained story through images and texts. Some of the texts in the panels overlap and some highlight certain elements as if the reader was pausing while reading a text. As we approach the works to decipher the texts, a sound track, activated by motion detectors, begins to play. A female voice with a French Canadian accent speaks about Bayeux as a contemporary tourist setting. A male voice speaks about Bayeux during W.W.II and the sound of waves alternates with a popular song from the 1950's entitled 'Silver Dollars', played in a Big Band version. The words

ABOVE

Ciphers from the Muniments Room: Arrival; mixed media with audio component; 19 feet x 26 inches by 5 inches; by Ann Newdigate. Photo courtesy of the artist.

OPPOSITE PAGE

Ciphers from the Muniments Room: Arrival; (partial view).

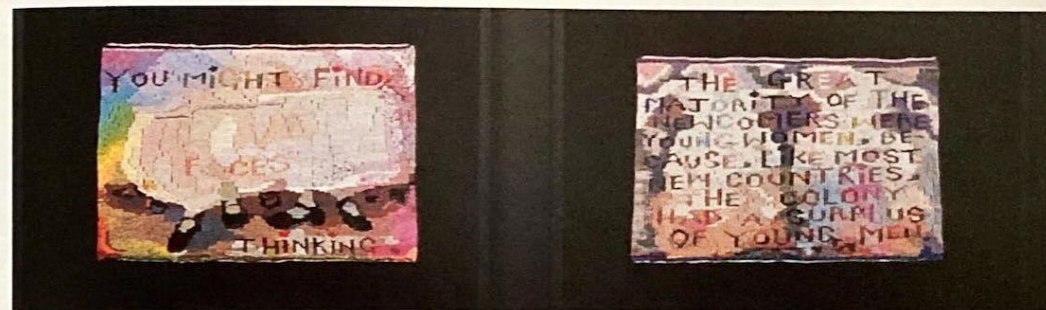
of the song talk about woman's happiness depending on her finding 'her man'. Newdigate builds up her imagery spontaneously with subtle shaded colours, in quite a 'painterly' manner. The texts are layered onto images and some of the words are highlighted in contrasting colours, while others blend into the images to be deciphered only with difficulty.

Newdigate's second work, *Ciphers from the Muniments Room: Letter*, uses a series of texts in a strange and vaguely exotic looking language, written in Pitman's shorthand, as I discovered later, which Newdigate was trained in as part of her first career as a stenographer. The individual panels look like pages from a writing pad. They are computer manipulated copies of woven panels, printed on unstretched canvas with ink jet outputting and hung on the wall like a banner. The copies appear to be slightly larger than their originals and somehow distorted and blurred. The meaning of the words remains hidden to most of us, because the texts are not translated.

The Bayeux Tapestry is attributed to Queen Mathilda, but represents more likely the effort of a group of women under her supervision. The central band represents scenes of the Battle of Hastings and various stages and important events of this war. The borders, above and below, show a series of domestic, intimate and erotic situations, as well as dead soldiers, echoing the heroic main narrative from a common person's perspective. The whole depicts news coverage in a society that could not read. It also is a heroic testimonial for the winners and a historical document.

Mavrogordato uses the formatting into 'main frame' and 'marginal' to talk about another war. In the original Bayeux tapestry, women show up mainly in the borders—while the men are in charge of the main events. In Mavrogordato's work, women have become the central subjects, while the men who play subordinate and largely cartoon-like formalized roles, are placed into the margins. The emphasis is on individual stories rather than one generalized history. Individual women's bodies are the subjects in this contemporary depiction of war against disease and death and the various medical, political and social ramifications of diseases such as cancer and AIDS.

Newdigate uses the Bayeux format to talk about a women's history that does not show up in history text books. She uses the marginalized stories of women's experiences as her only narrative content. *Ciphers from the Muniments Room: Arrival* questions the truth of a 'grand narrative' of established history of North America



and instead focuses on the untold histories of women, who came here. Many women were brought to the new world as brides. Her source is a Grade 4 history textbook entitled *The Romance of Canada*. One of the panel reads:

"the great majority of the newcomers were young women, because like most young countries the colony had a surplus of young men."

Another panel reads:

"At first there were complaints that the immigrants included city girls, who did not make good farmers' wives, but the *mistake* was soon corrected." (my emphasis)

This sounds more like mail-order catalogue shopping than either a story of romance or the heroic birth of a nation. Some panels in Newdigate's narrative take individual words from other panels in order to emphasize a certain meaning.

Through the use of shorthand, her work *In Ciphers from the Muniments Room: Letter* speaks to and about a very specific class and age of working women. To most of us, the meaning of the message will remain hidden unless we consult with an 'expert' and trust their interpretation. In this way the marginal becomes the only content and we are no longer the main audience, but the outsider.

The title of the exhibition, "Truth or Consequences," makes us look at assumptions of any truths. The works clearly question historical truths and assumptions of what or who is important in terms of subject matter and as art, and both artists refer to specific periods, historical facts and ways of thinking. Also when we examine the word 'tapestry' it usually refers to textiles that are 'constructed through the weaving process of discontinuous wefts that cover the warp with pictorial weaving', although in some periods and countries, tapestries can refer to any pictorial textile works. Mavrogordato's tapestry weaving clearly mimics an embroidery process, it is really a contemporary construct with the look of traditional 'truth'. The Bayeux Tapestry is not a true tapestry, particularly in comparison with medieval tapestries.

As we approach the end of the second millennium, Mavrogordato uses contemporary social issues and fears in a sim-

ilar manner that medieval society represented versions of the end of the world around the first millennium in their tapestries. Similar imagery is found at the turn of the last century in works by Kandinsky, which show biblical interpretations of the Apocalypse. Mavrogordato blends medieval symbolism and contemporary imagery through a most meticulous attention to detail. The works seem to belong to a different century or millennium, but speak about topical issues.

Mavrogordato has used this combination of a traditional looking process with contemporary imagery in much of her other recent works. They speak of graffiti, AIDS and contemporary punks in London, as well as comic book heroines in a most refined and archaic language of medieval formal tapestry weaving. It is not always clear which part is tragic and which is parody in her approach.

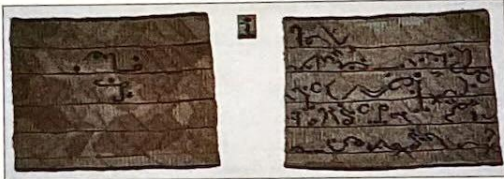
Newdigate refers more directly to the narrative approach and how pictures become the conveyors of historical truths. She overlays different forms of language, visual, textual and oral, each giving different information, all representing an aspect of truth. She speaks about dominant and dominated languages. Shorthand as a language captures statements by men, of a certain class, period and formal office correspondence; but in most cases it will be understood only by women. Women thus propagate a language that they were not able to influence.

Newdigate has used language as a strong element in much of her other recent work. These physical woven words are often taken in unchanged form from news stories about Apartheid in South Africa during the 80's and 90's. They make us stop and pay attention to the daily flood of information which we receive, without acknowledging their content.

Both artists have pursued their interests and ideas over an extended period and their processes are integrated conceptually in their art practice. Thus, they express some strongly felt concerns through the language of tapestry weaving, which has an old and complex history of its own and which provides its own historical context to the interpretation of contemporary truths.



ABOVE *Dying for It*; by Tass Mavrogordato. Photo by Reid Shier.
LEFT *Ciphers from the Muniments Room: Letter* (partial view); digital printout on canvas; 22 feet x 26 inches; by Ann Newdigate. Photo courtesy of the artist.



Ruth Scheuing is an artist who works in textiles. She has exhibited her work across Canada and internationally. She teaches in the Textile Arts Program at Capilano College in North Vancouver, BC., and also writes occasionally and was published most recently 'Not a Fairy Tale' for *Inversions*, *Mentoring Artists for Women's Art (MAWA)* in 1996. She received the Chalmers Award in Crafts in 1996.

A catalogue will be published by Anthony Kiendl with financial support from the Canada Council. It will be available after March 1998 at AKA, Dunlop and Or Gallery, and will contain essays by Lani Maestro (Canada) and Richard Dyer(U.K.).

Glitter

BY SHEILA ROBERTSON

"Celebration"
Metal Arts Guild 50th Anniversary
Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon, SK
July 11 to August 10, 1997

Although I don't wear much jewelry, I love to look at it. Thus, scrutinizing "Celebration," a recent touring show of metal work at the Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, I felt a bit like a kid in a candy store.

My eyes darted from a jingly, silver and patinated brass necklace, to an elegant tourmaline and palladium ring.

The show, organized by the Metal Arts Guild of Ontario, wasn't all wearables. It included flatware, bowls, a chalice, cutlery, a teapot and even an elaborate photo frame.

The show had great appeal for general viewers. Uppermost in our minds were questions like, "Could I wear that?" or "Wow! How much would that cost?"

The answer to the latter question was, "Plenty." Donald Stuart's luxurious set of triangular gold cufflinks and tie tacks, inlaid with lapis lazuli and set with diamonds, was valued at \$6,500. Mary Heller's wide, colorful bracelet, of fabricated/cast/cloisonné silver, enamel and semi-precious stones, was worth \$3,000.

While the public oohed and ahed over the glitter, these inventive and intricate works held an extra fascination for other artisans. They were eager to study the award-winning designs by some of their contemporaries. In their minds, the key question was more like "Could I make something like that?" or "How would I improve on it?"

Organized in 1996, the exhibition marked the 50th anniversary of the Metal Arts Guild. The guild has members across Canada and the United States, but most of those represented in this show were from Ontario and Quebec.

This exhibition was a special version of the Guild's biennial, juried exhibition. It featured 50 new works on a celebratory

theme. There was also a retrospective component, with works by founding members and award-winning pieces from the past.

This made for a rather complicated premise, particularly since the three jurors also contributed works to the show. It is unlikely, for instance, that casual observers grasped the significance of such designations as the Steel Trophy, Student Award and Award of Excellence, but it was clear that it was an honor simply to be included in this prestigious exhibition.

The multiple criteria for the exhibition guaranteed diversity, and in every case, the workmanship was impressive. Among the 76 works in the show were old pieces and new ones, some that were functional and some that were frivolous.

A few older pieces drew attention to social, cultural or economic shifts. I toured the show with Saskatoon metal artist, Doug Frey, and he pointed out the lavish, almost ostentatious use of gold in pieces made in 1968 and 1971. "Gold prices were low, then," he explained.

Frey was impressed to see so many different materials and techniques. "This is craft at its best, not jewelry-store types of things," he said, noting that many of the exhibitors are instructors in metal arts. "People were pushing the limits."

The emphasis was on handmade and small production techniques, he added. "If people are using casting, it's for effect."

As if to emphasize this preference for the hand-wrought, many of the metal artists incorporated images of the hand. Sandra Noble Goss's *Brooch*, of multi-metal lamination, formed a tiny sampler, featuring the symbols of hand and heart, and the words, "Hand heart create art."

In Barbara Stutman's ring, *New Star Rising*, a hand, covered in gold leaf, reached up from a bow fashioned from crocheted

strands of silver and gold. This was the decoration at the top; the ring itself was a circle of spool knit silver wire.

A brass hand adorned with a moonstone was a feature of a pendant by Enid Kaplan. The lightning bolt threaded through the fingers suggested the spark of creativity, a tribute to all artisans.

Frey found Eric Leyland's fabricated/forged vase outstanding. "It's very straightforward," he said. "I like it because of its simplicity." Yet it also had some interesting details. The triangular, sterling silver vessel was set with three amethysts, and suspended in a three-legged cradle of gold and brass.

"Look at the way he has done the ends (of the legs,)" Frey said. "He's filed the edges so they have an angle; that finishes everything off."

He drew attention, too, to the holloware *Ice Cream Cone*, a charming display case for four small photos, by Lois Etherington Betteridge. She used sterling silver and gold plating, hammered with small tools to create rippling effects known as *répoussé*. "It's very time-consuming, and technically difficult," Frey explained. "They really go the extra mile with these pieces."

The oversize nature of much of the jewelry wouldn't work for production ware. "It's for effect," Frey said, pointing to a dramatic brooch by David McAleese and Alison Wiggins. The work, which won the Design Award in the 1988 exhibition, featured a long gold arc skewering a colorful array of turquoise stones, crimson vitrolite and jet. "The metal part is fabricated, and there is this nice juxtaposition with the middle section, which has the feel of

BELOW *Confetti and Streamers* bracelet; constructed sterling silver; 18 cm long; by Van McKenzie, Ontario; winner of Williams Gold/Links Production Prize.



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LEFT *Ice Cream Cone* 1983 Holloware; sterling silver, gold plating, photographs; 10 cm high; by Lois Etherington Betteridge, Ontario.

found objects," he said.

Many of the jewelry pieces were convertible. Calgarian Jackie Anderson's *Facade*, from 1988, was a tiny sculpture resembling a clock tower. The brooch part in the centre was separable from the stand. The work combined silver, acrylic, nickel and ebony. There was a pleasing contrast between the stark lines of the stand and the articulated, arrow-shaped metallic pin.

Anderson's 1996 entry, *Kensington*, is a funky tiara incorporating nickels dated 1946, the year the guild was created, and silver beavers, their tails set with onyx. Again, an ornate middle section can be removed to be worn as a brooch.

A square, spartan silver neckpiece by Heike Raschl-Labrecque was another versatile piece. The crisscrossed sections at the bottom of the collarpiece can be removed and worn as a brooch.

Two works designed as functional pieces are now practically curiosities. One was a 1957 sterling silver cocktail pitcher, by Douglas Boyd. (Does anyone drink cocktails now?) The other, equally anachronistic, is a silver cigarette box made in 1973 by Beth Alber.

For the contemporary section of the show, jurors Claudette Hardy-Pilon, Boris Bally and Wendy Shingler selected works to underscore the celebration theme. These included *Confetti Thrower*, Britta Klingenstierna's ring with a tiny figure forever poised to hurl confetti from a drum beneath his feet.

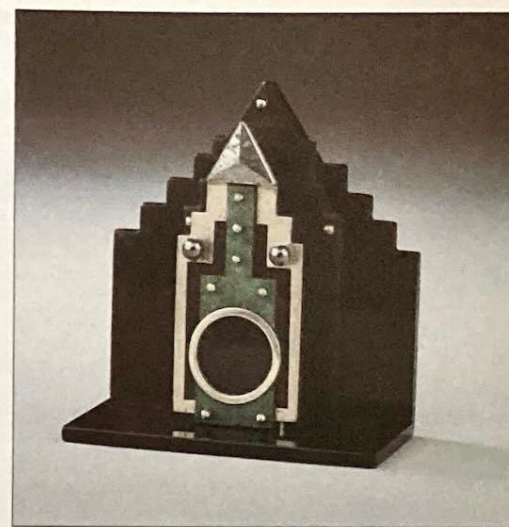
Equally festive was the dazzling *Confetti and Streamers* bracelet, by Van McKenzie. This gestural work, evoking fireworks, was fashioned from sterling silver discs and spirals.

The bracelet won the Production Prize "meaning it's feasible for production work, unlike most of these which are one-of-a-



ABOVE *Bracelet # 2*; fabricated/cast/cloisonné; sterling & fine silver, vitreous enamel, moonstone, carnelian; 2.5 x 7.5 cm; by Mary Heller, Ontario.

RIGHT *Facade #1* 1988, brooch and stand; sterling silver, hematite, nickel ore, nickel silver, acrylic, ebony; 3 x 6.1 x 6.6 cm; by Jackie Anderson, Alberta. Award of Excellence 1988 Steel Trophy Winner.



Letter to the Editor

November 23, 1997

I feel compelled to speak out about the review by Greg Beatty in the fall issue of *The Craft Factor*, called "Glass and Clay." This article was a review of the show at the Susan Whitney Gallery, Regina, of Cindy Chwelos and myself, Jacqueline Berting.

Mr. Beatty wrote the article as though it had been an interview with me. This, it was not, and while I encourage people to take a different and unique experience home with them, I do not want to take credit for Beatty's experience. He speaks of the symbolism of family and the resilience in overcoming adversity, child and spousal abuse, and my lifting the veil of secrecy to this matter offering hope to victims of abuse who dare to speak out. I commend Beatty for this.

[However] The glass house is meant to inspire.

The images in this traditional style House of Glass include a running sequence of recognizable scenery and objects, in and amongst all this imagery are hidden objects and intriguing detail so that every time it is viewed your eyes see something new, an experience that can be shared by all ages. A tree with fruits and vegetable hanging from the branches and hidden in the bark. The tree itself built of many things, drift wood, loaf of bread, two by four, and striped logs and bark, (in the bark appears a metamorphoses), all combined to form a vibrant glowing glass 'tree of life.' Leaves falling from the tree are gems, coins, and wings to name a few. A mysterious spider web, glistening, a picket fence, five people breaking boldly out of the house through a window and brick wall, an inspiring life force jetting out in the peak above, surrounded by angels, birds fluttering throughout the house among a waterfall above the geological site, beside flowers and prehistoric cave art, an area for children of all ages, in and amongst all of this are more hidden objects, root people, more metamorphosis, visions and moving images. And much more. A sculpture packed full of intrigue.

The House of Perception is meant to stimulate all the senses. To wake the human spirit, intrigue and overwhelm us. To help us see that our dreams or ideas can be realized. It is meant to give us something to think about... What if we all lived in glass houses? How would our lives be different?

Each person will take a different and unique experience away with them... hopefully a happy one.

Jacqueline Berting

kind pieces," Frey noted. "The circles have been cut out with a disc cutter and attached with jump rings. I think for the long, streamer pieces he has wrapped strips of metal around rods to curl them. It's low-tech, but it's very effective."

Obviously, it was impossible for gallery visitors to try on the jewelry items: so works sat pristinely in their locked cases. In a way, that's a shame. While Beth Alber's trap-like silver bracelets are more conceptual art than body adornment, Joy Pennick's delightful starburst rattle-rings, the bottom portion of which rests in the wearer's palm, can't be appreciated under glass.

"Jewelry always looks different on, because it's meant to be worn," Frey agreed. "To get a real feel for it, you have to put it on."

A Saskatoon freelancer, Sheila Robertson focuses on writing about the arts.

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COMMISSIONS

BELOW *Canadian display as seen at the FTD Interflora World Cup, Amsterdam, 1997.* Saskatchewan floral designer, Debra Barlow (Corey Parke Flowers and Greenhouses, Saskatoon), represented Canada, placing 16th (out of 22) in this competition. Her participation in the Interflora World Cup was a result of winning the Maple Leaf Cup (May, 1996) and placing 3rd in the America Cup (August, 1996). Photo courtesy of Debra Barlow.

The project—from initial design to the creating of the individual components to the physical transportation—was an ambitious one. Barlow called upon the skills and expertise of a number of Saskatchewan artists and craftspeople* to help her pull it all together. Several SCC members were commissioned to create pieces to be used as props for each of the four floral arrangements shown below.

THESE PIECES AND THEIR MAKERS ARE (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT):

Swan Bridal Piece Holder

Cherry wood swan by **JAMIE RUSSELL**, metal floral holder by **WINSTON QUAN**; 120 cm in height by 36 cm in diameter.

Romantic Dinner for Two (Arched Table)

Arch made of bronze with *Aspidistra* leaves dipped in wax and cast in bronze; 174 cm in height (table with arch).
Cherry and walnut table; 120 x 100 x 74 cm.

Bronze work by **HANS HOLTkamp**, wood work by **JAMIE RUSSELL**.

Floral Arrangement Pedestal

Hand-tied bouquet presented in a vase - vase inserted into a spiralling pedestal stand; 90 cm in height by 45 cm on base spiral.
Wood work by **MICHAEL HOSALUK**, metal framework for hand-tied bouquet by **WINSTON QUAN**.

The Future belongs to the Children (Revolving Tree with revolving motor inside base)

Metal, wood, and fibre glass; 210 cm in height by 80 cm in diameter; by **MICHAEL HOSALUK** with assistance from **AL BAKKE** for metal work, **GRANT KERNAN** for painting, **ROSS ROOKE** for mechanics.

Other artists involved in this project were **DON KONDRA** who did finishing work, and **BRYAN LANE** and **DOUG HUNTER** who helped with crating.

* Apologies to anyone whose name may be missing from this list of credits.



COMMISSIONS



ABOVE

Diorama of *Winter Camp Scene* - Depiction of Beringia (circa 15,000 years before present); by **DOUG TAYLOR**.

Museum Exhibit, 1997, Beringia Centre, Whitehorse, Yukon.

Mixed media including polymer clays, animal skins, styrofoam, acrylic mediums;

1/5 scale: 2.7 metres wide x 1.7 metres deep x 1.5 metres high

Contracted by the Government of Yukon

Agent: Blair Fraser Exhibits, Abbotsford, BC.

Craftspeople are invited to submit professional quality photographs (8" x 10" glossy prints - black & white or coloured) illustrating their commissions for private and public installation. Include identification: title; dimensions; materials/techniques; client; date installed; exact location on site; gallery, agent, interior designer or architect involved. Those works chosen for publication will be featured on the Commissions Page in upcoming issues of *The Craft Factor*. For more information, contact: Leslie Millikin, Editor, *The Craft Factor*, SCC, 813 Broadway Ave., Saskatoon, SK S7N 1B5, (306) 653-3616; fax 244-2711.



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