

THE CRAFT FACTOR

Vol. 24.2 Spring/Summer 2000
THE MAGAZINE OF THE SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL
\$6.00

Awarded
Magazine of the Year - Saskatchewan
Western Magazine Awards Foundation 1999



Saskatchewan Craft Gallery

Open 1 - 5 pm daily

IN THE GALLERY

REFLECTIONS OF A NEEDLE

Bridge City NeedleArts Guild
&

ADDITIONS

Saskatoon Potters' Guild
March 3 - April 23, 2000

Gallery closed

April 24 - May 4, 2000
for

DIMENSIONS 2000
jurying

FIRST NATIONS TEXTILES:

FROM WEAVING TRADITIONS TO CONTEMPORARY VOGUE

Organized by the
Saskatchewan Craft Council, TRIBE and Organization of Saskatchewan Arts Councils
Curated by Audrey Driever
May 5 - June 11, 2000

COVER(N)

Textile installation by Susan Andrews Grace
June 16 - July 23, 2000

LITTLE BOWL SHOW

Organized by the Emma Lake Biennial Wood Conference Woodworkers
July 28 - August 13, 2000



SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL

813 Broadway Avenue, Saskatoon, SK S7N 1B5 (306) 653-3616, fax (306) 244-2711
saskcraftcouncil@home.com www.saskcraftcouncil.org



From the Editor

Nine months have passed since I wrote my first Letter from the Editor, it being a concluding task before submitting *The Craft Factor* to the printer. It was nearing summer solstice at the time.

As the earth now moves into spring equinox, I am finalizing this—the subsequent issue of *The Craft Factor*. And I am writing the 'letter' again. Completion of one issue and the beginning of another is a pattern I've grown accustomed to over the past several years. It is a rhythm, a constant cycle of maturation of ideas planted in the span of time between issues.

Birth and rebirth, milestones and transitions. The stuff of life. That we are now living the year 2000—so anticipated, dramatic, even dreaded a few short months ago—adds punch to the power of events to occur in this year. For the Saskatchewan Craft Council, the significance of 2000 is in the celebration of its 25th anniversary. It is the beginning of a new era and the turning of a page in its history.

I, too, am turning a page in my own life. As the calendar flipped from days to weeks to months since working on last summer's issue, events propelled me forward to prepare for a big move, both literally and figuratively, to Vancouver. And so, this is not only my second Letter from the Editor—but my last.

I will miss the Saskatchewan Craft Council and so many of you, the members, whom I've come to know. I am grateful for having had the opportunity to work on your hallmark publication, *The Craft Factor*. Producing this magazine has been a challenge and a thrill. Highlighting your work in the magazine has exposed me to objects of beauty, grace and intrigue. It has appealed to my artistic sensibilities and stimulated me to do my best to present your best within its pages.

I wish you good fortune in this year, 2000, and in all those yet to come. Farewell.

Leslie Millikin

Congratulations
Saskatchewan Craft Council
for 25 years of fostering craft
in our Province



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 Craft Federation.

SCC Board of Directors:

Chair - Gale Steck
Vice chairs - Emma Radfelder / Bob Whittaker
Treasurer - Lynne Bowland
Secretary (Acting) - Phyllis Baker
Marketing - Arthur Perlett / Bill Schmidt
Standards & Jurving - Phyllis Baker
Exhibitions - Bob Whittaker
Communications - Lynne Bowland / Jeffrey Taylor
Membership - Jeffrey Taylor / Lynne Bowland
Fundraising - Cec Cote
Education - Emma Radfelder
Personnel - Gale Steck / Bob Whittaker / Lynne Bowland

Sandra Grismer, Director of Operations

The Craft Factor is published twice yearly by the Saskatchewan Craft Council, 813 Broadway Avenue, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7N 1B5 (306) 653-3616, fax (306) 244-2711
saskcraftcouncil@home.com
www.saskcraftcouncil.org

Subscription costs \$15 per year (includes postage and handling) from the above address.

Comment and opinion are welcome but will be subject to editing for space and clarity. Only signed letters and submissions will be printed. The views expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of the SCC. Advertising is accepted. Articles published in *The Craft Factor* are the property of *The Craft Factor* and may not be reprinted in whole or in part without permission. Please contact the editor before submitting a completed article.

Editor/Designer/Desktop Publisher:
Leslie Millikin

Photography: Grant Kernan, AK Photos,
Saskatoon (unless otherwise credited)

Printing: Apex Graphics, Saskatoon

ISSN 0228-7498

This organization is funded by



The

Craft Factor

SPRING/SUMMER 2000 VOLUME 24.2

CONTENTS

4 Patrons of Craft

LESLIE MILLIKIN of *The Craft Factor* interviews Ruth Horlick from Saskatoon and Richard Spafford from Regina to learn about their 'craft habits' and collections.

9 Profiles of Production

CALVIN DANIELS profiles five craftspeople who have been Saskatchewan Craft Council members for more than a decade and who frequently participate in its markets.

12 Eagle Woman Takes Off

SHEILA ROBERTSON introduces Eva Lizotte, a Saskatoon craftswoman and fashion designer.

15 En Route - An Installation

EVELINE BOUDREAU relays her experience and explains her project in Louisiana where she presented an installation of porcelain-cast feet in homage to her Acadian roots.

16 2-D Meets 3

JACK ANDERSON reviews "Scratching the Surface," an exhibition of bas-relief wood carved and painted panels by Amanda Immelman. ♦McIntyre Street Gallery, Regina, SK.

17 Space without Limit

GRANT MCCONNELL reviews "Contained Space" an exhibition of clay works by Sandra Ledingham, Charley Ferrero and Cecile Miller, and "Identity/Identité" by the Metal Arts Guild of Ontario with the Conseil des Métiers d'Art du Québec. ♦Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon, SK.

19 A Crafty Population

PAT DOIG reviews "Ruddell Goes to Town: Branching Out & Forging Ahead" an exhibition of wood, fibre, clay and metal by Geordie Smith, Teresa Gagne, Linda Mushka, Robert Jackson and Ken Wilkinson. ♦Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon, SK.

21 Prairie Scenes ...In Fibre

SHEILA ROBERTSON reviews "In Context: The Saskatchewan Landscape" an exhibition of fibre works by Martha Cole and Myrna Harris. ♦Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon, SK.

23 Commissions

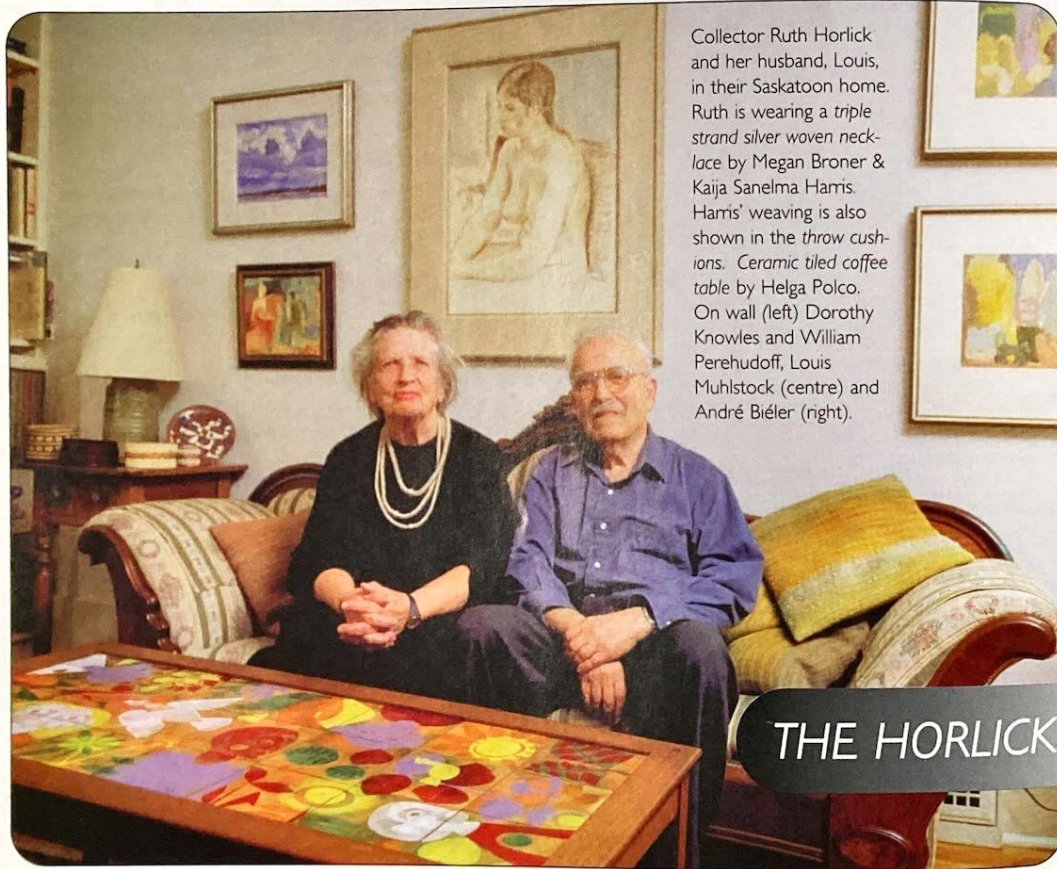
THE CRAFT FACTOR presents the commissioned work of glass artist, Lee Brady.

FRONT & BACK COVER:

Gallery view of the exhibition, "Ruddell Goes to Town: Branching Out & Forging Ahead," May 7 - June 13, 1999, Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon, SK. COVER FROM RIGHT: *Meduma* 1999, mask, hand built, earthenware, glaze; 18.5 x 17.5 x 7 cm; by Teresa Gagne. *Fantastic # 1* 1999, pit-fired bottle with fan top by Ken Wilkinson (birch stopper by Geordie Smith). *My Coat of Many Colors* 1998, cotton, polyester lining (tailored by Debbie Morris); 160 x 93 x 2 cm; by Linda Mushka. (In the collection of the artist.) BACK COVER *Under A Stormy Sky* 1999, wall plate: hand built, earthenware, glaze, underglaze, engobe; 32 x 33 x 8 cm; & *Urth* 1999, wall plate: hand built, earthenware, glaze, underglaze; 29.5 x 28.5 x 6 cm; both by Teresa Gagne. *Fork Lift* 1999, chair: birch, pitchforks and felt by Geordie Smith (felt by Linda Mushka). Photo by AK Photos, Saskatoon, SK.

Patrons of the Arts

The Craft Factor Interviews Collectors of Saskatchewan Craft



Collector Ruth Horlick and her husband, Louis, in their Saskatoon home. Ruth is wearing a triple strand silver woven necklace by Megan Broner & Kaija Sanelma Harris. Harris' weaving is also shown in the throw cushions. Ceramic tiled coffee table by Helga Polco. On wall (left) Dorothy Knowles and William Pehudoff, Louis Muhlstoc (centre) and André Biéler (right).

THE HORLICKS

THE CRAFT FACTOR (TCF) You've been referred to as a patron of the arts. Do you see yourself as such and why?

RUTH HORLICK Not in the sense of the Esterhazys or elitist. But both my husband and I appreciate beautiful things and the skill and craftsmanship on which they are based. If people produce lovely articles and no one buys them—what then?

TCF What then, indeed. How long have you been collecting?

HORLICK I guess it was in the '50's when we first moved here.

TCF Whose work and what mediums do you have for craft in your collection? Would you consider your collection extensive?

HORLICK Our collection is eclectic but not extensive. We have pottery, glasswork, woodwork, weavings—purchased because we liked them and often could use them. And we were supporting local artists like Megan Broner, Kaija Harris, Michael Hosaluk and

Bonnie Houston—now of Calgary.

TCF The necklace you're wearing is incredible. Is it hand-crafted?

HORLICK Yes it is. It was a collaboration between Megan Broner and Kaija Harris. It's woven, you see. Kaija did that part, while Megan did the silver work.

TCF Where and/or how do you prefer to buy craft?

HORLICK Mostly from gallery shops or stores specializing in crafts, or craft fairs like Artisan.

TCF Is future value significant to you as a purchaser?

HORLICK We have bought thinking of the "now," not of the future or the appreciation of the value of the article.

TCF Do you have a methodology in collecting?

PATRONS OF THE ARTS

PHOTO RIGHT:
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
Clay plate by Marilyn Levine.
Rectangular clay wall piece by Helen Cooke.
Clay Plate by Rusty Kurenda.
Clay bowl by Hansen-Ross.
Wooden duck by Cam Markle.
Wooden salad utensils (& table) by Michael Hosaluk.
Linen napkins & placemat (and Blue & green woven throw) by Susan Risk.
Clay mug by Bob Sperry.
Embroidered tree by Margot Lindsay.
Patchwork quilt & Ukrainian patterned chair top by E. Seminuk.



A peek into the home of the Horlicks

PHOTO LEFT:
COUNTERCLOCKWISE ON TABLE
Raku sheep & apple by Mel Malkin.
Happy glass blown glass tumbler (& IN CENTRE Glass Sphere paperweight) by Bonnie Houston.
Geometrically-patterned glass plate by Lynne Bowland.
Green enameled plate by Klaus Walch.
Coral necklace & earrings by Megan Broner.
Porcelain tree plate by Anita Rocamora.
Silk scarf by Myrna Gent.
Wooden platter (& Table) by Michael Hosaluk.
Silver pendant by Winston Quan.
ON WALL
Painting by Otto Rogers.
Sculptural metal wall piece by Jill Sargent.

HORLICK No. We buy what we like, what we feel we can afford... sometimes on an installment plan with the cooperation of the artist.

TCF What role do you think the Internet plays in purchasing craft? Have you, or can you see yourself, ordering craft over the Internet?

HORLICK I do not use the Internet though my husband does. But I think it is important to see, to feel, even smell in some instances—which you can't do on the Internet as yet, at least.

TCF What would you like to tell craftspeople if there were one thing you could share with them regarding making and selling their product?

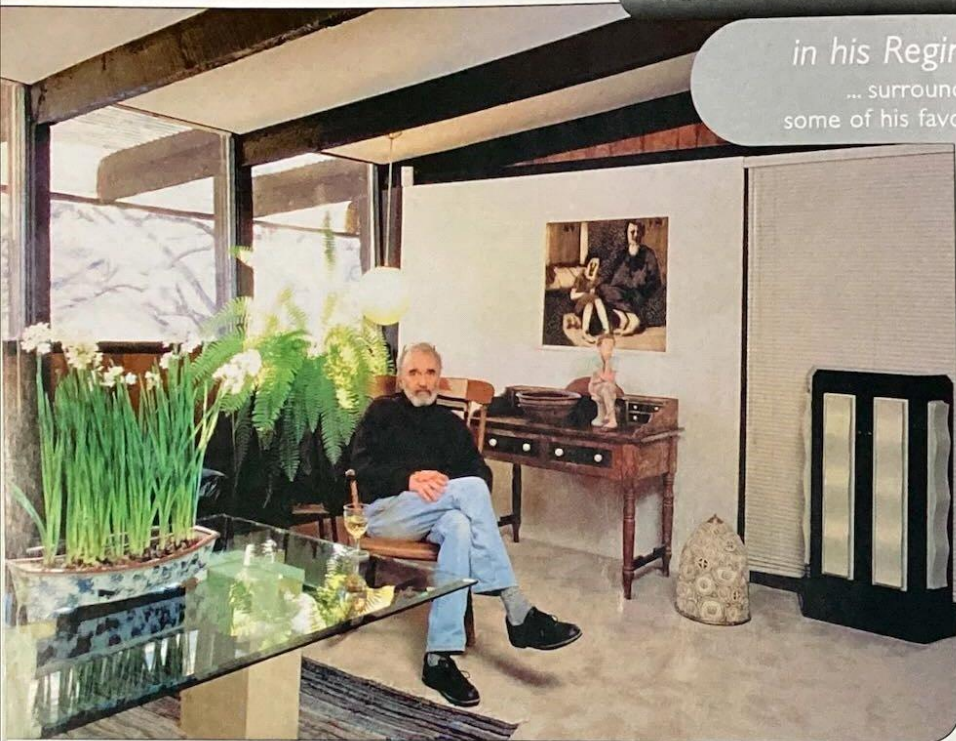
HORLICK To keep on doing their best, and not be afraid to ask for help with marketing their work.

TCF Sounds like good advice. Do you have any other comments to make?

HORLICK I think we are remarkably lucky in Saskatchewan to have so many people producing high calibre work, which can stand comparison with works from anywhere else. I am appalled, however, at how little these artists make—sometimes just about minimum wage. I admire their courage in continuing doing what they must love to do, and I am grateful when I am able to buy it.

RICHARD SPAFFORD

in his Regina home
... surrounded by
some of his favourite pieces



COUNTER-CLOCKWISE
FROM BOTTOM RIGHT
Wooden cabinet by
Brian Gladwell.
Ceramic sculpture by
Lorne Beug.
CENTRE WALL Print by
Jane Turnbull Evans.
ON DESK
Sculpture of Jane by
Joe Fafard.
Ceramic bowl by
Peter Rupchan.
FAR LEFT
Shallow vase with
Paper Whites by
Donovan Chester.
Desk & rocking chair
are early 20th
Century,
Saskatchewan-made.

THE CRAFT FACTOR (TCF) You've been referred to as a patron of the arts. Do you see yourself as such?

RICHARD SPAFFORD I see myself as a buyer and a seller who keeps a lot of things for myself. I have so many pieces, many of them are still in boxes.

TCF In boxes?

SPAFFORD In my warehouse on Broad Street. I'm in the business of buying and selling rare books, primarily. But I also deal in antiques and buy a lot of art. Some of it is stored in the warehouse.

TCF I see. And I notice there's no shortage of art, or craft, here in your home. What I can see seems to be a good representation of SCC members' work.

SPAFFORD I don't know specifically who belongs to the Craft Council, but it doesn't surprise me.

TCF Is it mostly Saskatchewan artists' work you collect then?

SPAFFORD Yes. I know a lot of Saskatchewan artists' work in the context of my background. That is, I have watched many craftspeople's work evolve over the years. It was Bruce Ferguson and I who opened The Indefinite Article in Saskatoon known as McGowan's Old Wares and Antiques. It was the first contemporary craft and art gallery there. That was in the mid-60's.

We could see so many talented artists and artisans around with nowhere to showcase. So we gave them a venue for their work. At that time, it was mostly artisans from Regina and painters from Saskatoon that we showed. Painters from the graduate program on campus there. We were one of the first dealers for Marilyn Levine who is now a big name in California. Even now, she sends me announcements of her shows. She says she is grateful for the help we gave her in getting started.

TCF I guess she hasn't forgotten her early days. How long did you operate The Indefinite Article?

SPAFFORD For a couple years. It was a financially-pathetic pursuit, but I could see that we advanced people's careers. I learned then that dealers and collectors are part of the process, but the part which is usually neglected. So, to this day, if someone has a dealer, I tend to buy through him (or her).

TCF So that's the story of how you came to have so much craft in your collection.

SPAFFORD It's not the whole story. I would be remiss not to mention that my late wife, Jane Turnbull Evans, was Keeper of Collections for the Saskatchewan Arts Board. Not only was she an active purchaser for the Arts Board, but for herself. Together, we were exposed to some of the best work in the Province.

TCF My condolences to you about Jane. She was an asset to the art community in Saskatchewan. That sculpture on your desk—is that of her?

SPAFFORD Yes. It was made by Joe Fafard.

TCF Who else's work do you collect?

SPAFFORD I go in phases of whose work I like. Last week I bought an Anita Rocamora piece—I'm very interested in her work these days.

TCF Would you consider your collection extensive?

SPAFFORD I have hundreds of pieces. I suppose you could call that extensive. I have 30 to 40 Hansen/Ross pieces, alone, in my warehouse.

TCF On Broad Street... Is it mostly clay that you collect?

SPAFFORD Well, I have more clay than any other craft medium, but I also have glass, weavings and wood.

TCF What is your preferred approach to buying craft?

SPAFFORD I try to go to all your larger craft shows in the Province. I watch a lot of artisans work and buy when something appeals to me.

TCF I've heard that some collectors follow a methodology. Do you?



CABINET FROM UPPER RIGHT

Wooden vase by Frank Sudol.

Clay pot by Franklyn Heisler.

Ceramic crocuses by Emma Radfelder.

Pitcher & vase by Hansen/Ross Pottery.

Teapot by Judy Tryon.

Set of porcelain dishes

c. 1920 by Laura Shannon-Lamont.

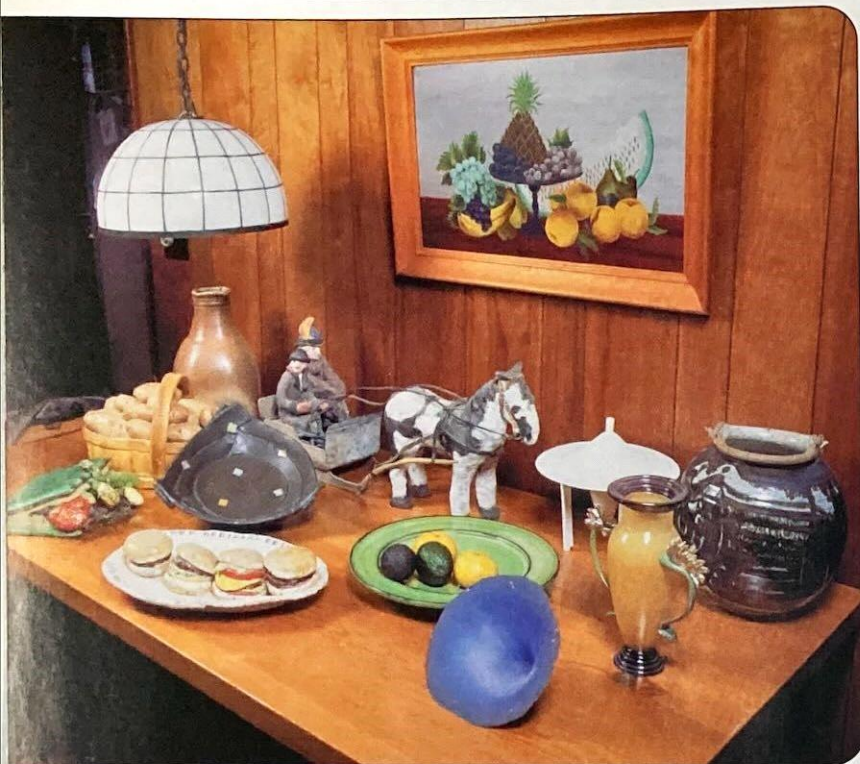
ON WALL Weaving by Pat Adams.

ON TABLE Blue clay vessel by Gukki Moller.

ON FLOOR Ceramic vase by Randy Woolsey.

Ukrainian cabinet & Doukhor table

both c.1920 and Saskatchewan made.



FROM LEFT
 Tall ceramic vase by Mel Bolen.
 Ceramic compost basket & basket
 with potatoes by Victor Cicansky.
 Clay hamburgers by David
 Thauberger.
 Grey plate by Joan McNeil.
 Horse & cutter by Russell Yuristy.
 White sculptural piece
 by Lindsay Anderson.
 Green ceramic platter
 by Don Chester.
 Blue porcelain sculpture
 by Anita Rocamora.
 Blown glass vessel by Susan Rankin.
 Black clay vessel
 by Marilyn Levine.
 Folk art painting by unknown
 Regina artist c. 1920.

SPAFFORD I tend to buy in spurts, according to my current interests and finances.

TCF Is future value significant to you as a purchaser?

SPAFFORD Only occasionally.

TCF Have you, or can you see yourself, ordering craft over the Internet?

SPAFFORD No. And probably not.

TCF What's important to you as a purchaser?

SPAFFORD Primarily, the quality of the work. I hope to buy what I believe is among the artisan's best work. I might keep an eye on what a person is doing for a few years before I actually buy anything. I also buy items that fill perceived holes in my collection that may not be the person's best work.

TCF What would you like to tell craftspeople if there were one thing you could share with them regarding making and selling their product?

SPAFFORD I'd tell them to get a dealer to represent them. Good dealers will find appropriate prices and markets and leave you room to create. Leave the marketing to someone who knows how, and use that time to do what you do best. Finding an active and enthusiastic dealer, though, can be a problem; but it's worth it in the end.

Ruth Horlick and Richard Spafford were each visited, interviewed, and photographed by Leslie Millikin, Editor of *The Craft Factor*, and Grant Kernan of AK Photos, Saskatoon.

13 years experience
 with artists portfolios

- Slides for grant proposals
- Transparencies for reproduction
- Location & studio photography
- Restoration of old photographs
- Slide duplicates and prints from slides

GRANT KERNAN
 813 - 29TH STREET W.
 SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN
 CANADA S7L 0N2
 (306) 653-5999

Profiles of Production

- A Look into the Life & Work
 of Saskatchewan Craft Council Members
 Across the Province

BY CALVIN DANIELS



Evelyn Becker

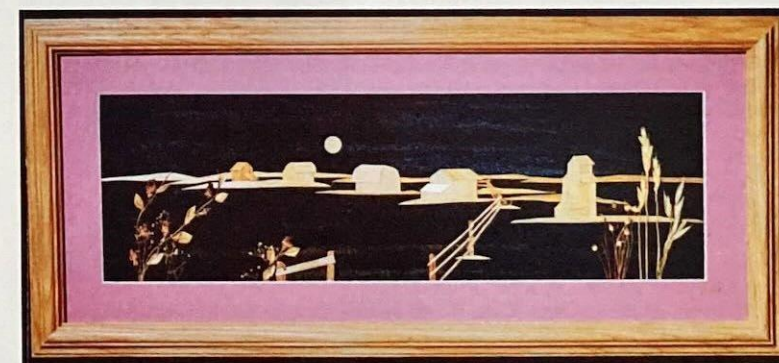
While generally recognized as a wheatweaver, Evelyn Becker has taken her craft to another level. Becker now creates wheat art utilizing the marquetry technique. "The straw is flattened and is made into mats," she said trying to explain the form. The mats are then cut into shapes and used to design art works such as the sun and clouds above a familiar grain elevator, with a set of farm buildings in the background. "I use various kinds of straw which I gather and the Abilities Council has helped with ironing," she said. Using wheat straw and creating scenes which are reflective of the Prairies have made Becker's works a popular gift.

"They've gone throughout Canada. I'm always getting calls from B.C. and Ontario," said Becker, who added that dignitaries from China and Lt. Gov. Sylvia Fedoruk have been presented pieces of her work as gifts.

Becker's interest in wheat straw art began with a Community College class in 1983 at McLean, Saskatchewan, but has grown "beyond a hobby these days," she said. "I was probably one of the first marketing this as an art. I always sign and date my work."

ABOVE Evelyn Becker working in her studio.

BELOW Wood frame, matted, material textured with pastel; straw, roses, flax, wheat and Baby's Breath in foreground; adhesives used in construction; 20 x 50 cm; by Evelyn Becker. Photo by Bob Long. Waterhen Film Productions.



Medium

Marquetry straw art

Studio Location

On farm east of Balgonie, separate building from home

Markets

Most sales through gift shops across western Canada, Sundog Handcraft Faire, Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival

SCC Member

For over a decade

Russ Baldwin

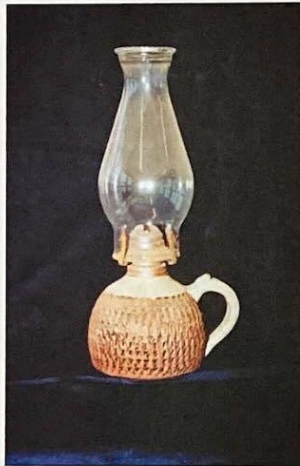
Enfin Pottery has become popular for its distinctive style which resembles the rich brown bark of a tree. Craftsman, Russ Baldwin, said it was a technique picked up during a course in Calgary years ago. It was part of an evolution for Baldwin from a career as a teacher to that of full time potter.

In that respect Baldwin, who turned to pottery in 1975, has always concentrated his efforts as though it were a job with a time clock. Baldwin recalled reading where Barnett Newman, an avant garde painter in New York in the 1950s, related he approached his art as an eight hour, five-day-a-week project.

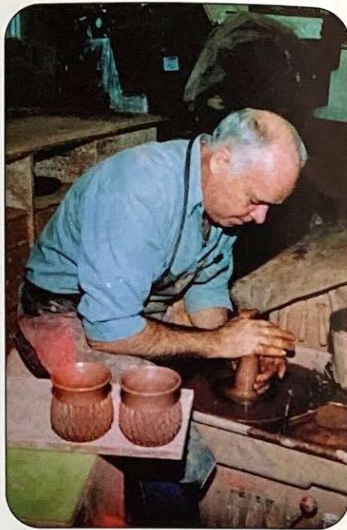
"It was a job and as such had to be worked as a job," said Baldwin, who still heads to his studio in a converted schoolhouse on a daily basis to turn out cups mugs, bowls and lamps.

Baldwin said the move to potter was a big step, but it turned out fine.

"I had read where it took three years for a business to prove itself viable. At the end of one year I had no doubt we could make it both financially and psychologically," he said in an article on his business done more than a decade ago.



ABOVE RIGHT Baldwin at work.
RIGHT Clay-based Lamp by Russ Baldwin
Photos by Calvin Daniels



Medium

Mostly kitchen use pottery

Studio Location

Six kilometres south of Yorkton

Markets

Wintergreen,
Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival,
non-SCC shows & retail
outlets in four western provinces

SCC Member

Since the mid 1970s

Agatha Dyck

Agatha Dyck focuses her fibre art on designs she has created herself. "I do my own designing," she said, adding that those designs include quilt-style work in the form of table clothes, runners, place mats, Christmas tree skirts and stockings. In addition she does bed ensembles, but only on order so they fit the decor and tastes of those who purchase them.

"Since I started designing there's lots of stuff scratched on paper waiting to be done," said the 70-year-old artisan with a laugh.

Dyck said she takes her art quite seriously. "I try to design and create quality goods, I like to think I'm creating future family heirlooms," she said.

It should not be surprising Dyck focuses on fibre arts, having at one time operated a successful fabric store in Swift Current. In helping others at the time Dyck admitted "designing has always sort of been a yen of mine."

When her husband became ill and she sat up long hours caring for him, it was natural to begin doing fibre art as a diversion to help the hours pass. It was the start of a hobby that is now not only a passion, but a business.

Medium

Quilted goods

Studio Location

A room in her home in Swift Current

Markets

Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival,

Wintergreen

Occasionally shows in Alberta

SCC Member

For 15 years

Doug Redl

Medium

Jewellery in copper, brass,
titanium, niobium and nickel

Studio Location

Acreage south of Tisdale

Markets

Saskatchewan Handcraft

Festival, Wintergreen

SCC member

For 15 years

Doug Redl, a former football player in the Canadian Football League, has been making jewellery for more than 15 years, although his production has declined in the last four years as he turned away from the craft following the death of his father. "It was difficult during that period to maintain a high level of productivity and creativity," he said.

Redl said that for years he was producing 5,000 to 20,000 pieces of jewellery and that proved a drain on creativity in a major way. "There had to be changes, even if they were subtle ones using the different metals. I sort of lost the impetus to do that," he said. "But for years I had been very successful at sort of surprising women year to year."

However, a chance to become vice principal of a Saskatoon Tribal Council School has helped rekindle Redl's interest in the art form. For the last couple of years he has demonstrated metal arts at the Circle of the Earth Festival in Saskatoon, a STC organized event he called "a celebration of the arts."

"I've been introduced to native culture and am beginning to understand some of their symbolism. I think some interesting jewellery can come out of that," said Redl.

"So I'm sort of itching to get back at it (producing jewellery). I've got the urge to get back."

Joanne Craig

From her studio located 10 kilometres north of Preeceville, in east central Saskatchewan, Joanne Craig produces stained glass works ranging from traditional window hangings to lampshades, business card holders, jewellery boxes and numerous other creations.

Craig said she learned her craft from David Johnston in 1983 when she helped him with a restoration project on a set of church windows. The project entailed re-leading and reglazing the windows and the experience while a lot of work, convinced Craig that her interest in the medium of stained glass was real. "I sought David out to see if I could get some on-the-job training," said Craig. The decision was based on a love of stained glass that developed early for Craig.

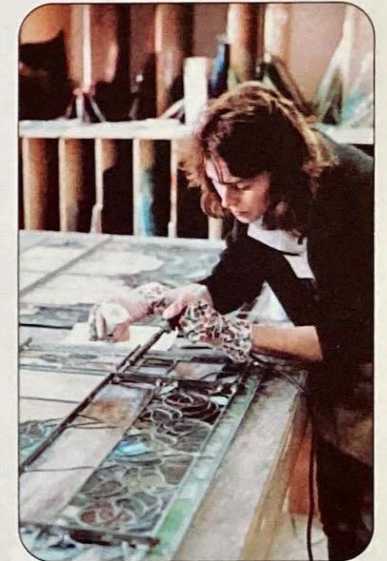
"When I was a kid I had a Kaleidoscope. Just the way the light comes through the glass with its play of colors reminds me of then. It's just beautiful," she said. "It's endlessly fascinating."

Over time, Craig's technique has evolved from that taught by Johnston, to where she now mainly works in copper foil. "It allows a little more detail," she said. That factor is important in the smaller gift items she has been producing in recent years. Giftware has become her specialization.



RIGHT Joanne Craig at work.

LEFT A sample of Craig's Kaleido Glass Craft. Photos courtesy of Craig



Medium

Stained glass giftware

Studio Location

North of Preeceville

Markets

Saskatchewan Handcraft Festival,

Wintergreen, Waterfront

SCC Member

For about 10 years

The preceding profiles were written by Calvin Daniels, a freelance writer from Yorkton, Saskatchewan.

Eagle Woman's Fashions Take Off

BY SHEILA ROBERTSON

Designer Eva Lizotte's first sewing project was a dress for a high school dance in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. "It was royal blue lace," she recalls.

"I didn't know there was a right side and a wrong side to fabric, and I ended up with the front shiny and the back dull. It was a mess."

Cinderella did not go to the ball. "My heart was just broken over that," says Lizotte, "but you learn from your mistakes."

Years later, when she was living in Toronto, it was the desire to take part in another dance that led Lizotte to take up sewing again. She and her sister, Theresa, were attending

RIGHT European-style wedding dress in satin, featuring Aboriginal beadwork on neckline and headband.

FAR RIGHT Business suit with appliquéd feathers.

OPPOSITE PAGE

Wraparound buckskin dress.

Designs by Eva Lizotte presented during "Opportunities Workshop '99" fashion show, December, 1999, Radisson Hotel, Saskatoon.

a powwow dance. She was wishing she could join in, but she had no dance outfit. Inspired, she bought yards and yards of blue leather and made a complete costume—dress, leggings and a shawl—before the next night.

"My hands were pretty sore," Lizotte says. "I used a leather punch and sewed it all together with leather laces. I had no pattern or anything. When she saw the outfit, my sister said, 'This is what you've got to do; this is your calling!'"

Equally impressed, other dancers were soon coming to her for help with their costumes. Lizotte got a second-hand sewing machine and found herself selling

Introducing Saskatchewan Aboriginal Fashion Designer Eva Lizotte

It is fitting that she often turns to the eagle for inspiration, given that her Cree name, Kihiw Iskwew, means Eagle

Woman. "The eagle comes all our prayers to the Creator," she says.

Alongside Made in Saskatchewan tags, her garments are labelled Kihiw

Crafts. Feather appliqué and intricate patchwork

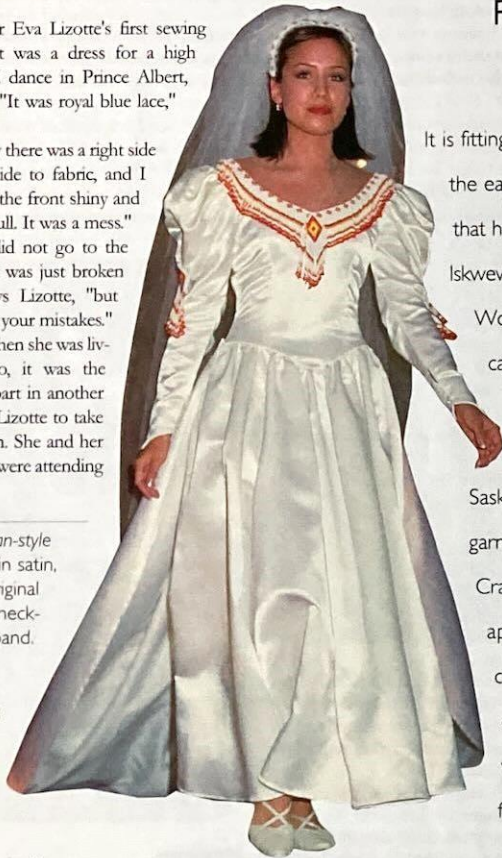
details are Lizotte's signatures. The jacket of a woman's dark blue business suit, for example, features a brace of white appliquéd feathers

punctuated by large blue buttons.

her beadwork, bone chokers, dreamcatchers and clothing at powwows across North America.

Since returning to Saskatoon seven years ago, she has concentrated on this market. "I have a strong aboriginal client base," she says. "I sell a lot through word of mouth."

Lizotte, now 44, has outfitted numerous wedding parties. She also designed and produced the shirts and vests worn by employees of the Bear Claw Casino at White Bear First Nation. Staff members at Saskatoon's Wanuskewin Heritage Park wear her star shirts.



The people who buy her fashions identify with her passion for clothes that express her identity, she says. "I found I could never go into stores and find something that said, 'Hey, I'm aboriginal, and proud to be aboriginal.'"

When people think of Native-inspired fashions, she adds, "They think of leather vests, buckskin jackets and moccasins." She does make such items, and they're included in her new, 24-page colour catalogue. "But there's so much more," she stresses.

Recently, Lizotte organized a showing of her fashions at a women's business workshop sponsored by the Saskatoon Tribal Council. The 200 delegates previewed Lizotte's recent creations, as well as those by four other aboriginal designers of Saskatchewan.

A long, wraparound dress, made of fawn-colored fringed suede, was a standout. The svelte design of Lizotte's suede dress characterizes her ability to blend classic aboriginal elements with clean, flowing lines worthy of the runways in Milan or Paris.

Lizotte was also showing an unusual and dramatic pair of wedding gowns. One salutes the past, while the other is more contemporary. The first resembles a traditional European wedding dress. Of white satin, it has puffy, gathered sleeves, a fitted bodice, long flowing skirt and a veil. It also features a heavily beaded and fringed neckline and a beaded headband.

When people think of Native-inspired fashions, she adds, "They think of leather vests, buckskin jackets and moccasins ...But there's so much more."

In all, there are 40,000 beads in this dress. The beadwork is studded with God's eye symbols, representative of the divine in many cultures.

Red, white and yellow predominate in the beadwork and the appliquéd images on the matching satin cape. The cape depicts two red eagles, representing the bride and groom, flying to join one another. As Lizotte notes, "When eagles mate, they mate for life."

At the centre of the cape is a bright coloured medicine wheel, signifying the four directions and the four medicines: sage, cedar, sweetgrass and tobacco.

The sleekly contemporary white wedding dress has an empire waist

and narrow shoulder straps. The bodice is studded with silvery sequins. A matching jacket tapers to points at the back and the front, suggesting a bird's tailfeathers. The sequined patterns at the neckline and along the arms also evoke wings.

Lizotte has consulted with aboriginal elders in creating meaningful symbols and images for her garments. "My client base covers every nation, so I want the designs to mean something to any aboriginal person."

It is fitting that she often turns to the eagle for inspiration, given that her Cree name, Kihiw Iskwew, means Eagle Woman. "The eagle carries all our prayers to the Creator,"

She has been on trade

missions with other aboriginal

business people to Europe

and to Indonesia, where her

paisley-patterned shirts were a

great hit. With representatives

selling her work in Paris and

the United States, Lizotte

anticipates a growing

export market.

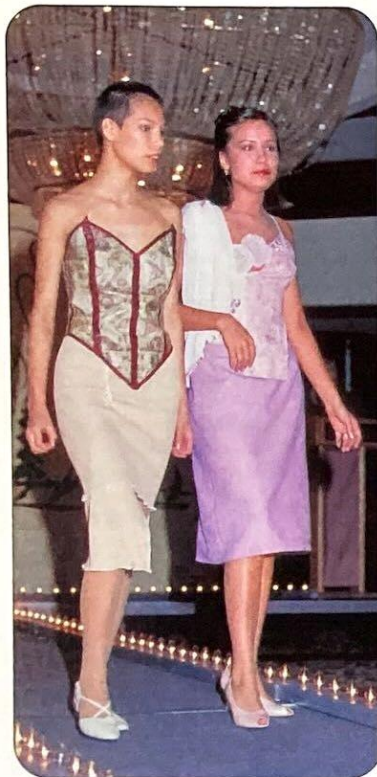
she says. Alongside Made in Saskatchewan tags, her garments are labelled Kihiw Crafts. Feather appliqué and intricate patchwork details are Lizotte's signatures. The jacket of a woman's dark blue business suit, for example, features a brace of white, appliquéd feathers punctuated by large blue buttons. The decoration softens the rather severe lines of the suit.

A red and white shirt, paired with a red skirt, has a bold eagle design, suggesting two birds embracing the wearer. This outfit is among several Lizotte was displayed throughout December, 1999, in the gallery at Wanuskewin Heritage Park.

It's not the first time her creations have been shown in a gallery setting. Six of her colorful patchwork shirts and shawls were displayed for a year at the Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec. They're now showing in Scotland.

The starburst is a key element of her patchwork. She interprets this traditional design, based on aboriginal star blankets, in vivid





ABOVE Women's evening wear by Colleen Charlette, Stylehouse Clothing Designs.

RIGHT Traditional jingle dress featuring 365 jingles by Margaret Reynold.



The 200 delegates previewed Lizotte's recent creations, as well as those by

four other aboriginal designers of Saskatchewan. Included

with Lizotte's presentations were

traditionally inspired, yet contemporary

fashions by

Margaret Reynold.

Tracey George,

Colleen Charlette

and Jeff Chief.

your front door anymore." She connects with some clients via the Internet.

Lizotte has been invited to show her designs at the White House next year, and she'll also hold a fashion show at the Indigenous Winter Games in Saskatoon next April.

"My business has gone through a lot of growing stages," Lizotte says. She makes good use of the accounting and bookkeeping classes she took after high-school, and her years as an office worker.

She also credits a traditional source of strength and knowledge: her grandmothers. She believes their spirits continue to guide and encourage her. If her work honours her grandmothers and other elders, Lizotte says, she is satisfied.

Saskatoon writer and editor, Sheila Robertson, focuses on the visual arts.



EN ROUTE

An Installation

BY EVELINE BOUDREAU

I presented *EN ROUTE* in St. Martinville, Louisiana, USA, August 2-15, 1999, at the Congrès Mondial Acadien - Louisiane '99, the second world congress of Acadians. An outdoor installation, it was composed of 27 pairs of life-size porcelain feet displayed on grass sods held up on pedestals. Each pair was cast from a different person, Acadians who live in Saskatchewan, Québec, New Brunswick and Louisiana.



ABOVE View of *EN ROUTE*, installation presented in St. Martinville, Louisiana, at Evangeline Oak Park, on the Bayou Teche, during the Congrès Mondial Acadien - Louisiane '99, August 2-15, 1999. ABOVE LEFT Detail from *EN ROUTE*, showing pedestal with porcelain cast feet and identity tag of Acadian Nicole Boudreau-Légère of Bathurst, New Brunswick.

The Feet - Collectively

EN ROUTE symbolized the history and survival of the Acadians and their culture. Descendants of French settlers, these people had lived long enough in their *Acadie* (over 100 years in what is now Nova Scotia) to have developed an identity and a nation of their own. Conflicts in Europe led, in 1755 and subsequent years, to the utter destruction of *Acadie*. The British forcefully deported the Acadians from their homeland and dispersed them to the New England colonies and elsewhere. This was followed by years of migrations by the Acadians to various places. Many returned to Canada, but they were not allowed back to their original lands in *Acadie*. *EN ROUTE*, an installation of feet, was located beside the Bayou Teche in Louisiana, which clearly related to the migrations of the Acadians, both on foot and by waterways.

The feet - Individually

By presenting each individually-cast pair of feet on a pedestal, I paid homage to the models as survivors. A close look at each pair of feet and its identity tag related the viewer to the model—a living, real person. Each pair of feet, planted firmly in the living grass of the sod, evoked the physical environment of the Acadians, their attachment to the land. The installation also included a few pairs of feet which were left unfired, disintegrating to the elements. Made from anonymous models, they represented the many Acadians lost during the deportation and the migrations. Normally, the mold technique is used to make multiple casts from one mold. However, only one pair of feet was cast from each mold to emphasize the individuality, the uniqueness of each model and hence, the Acadian people in general.

Collaborators

After having conceived the project, I became fully committed to it: that is, my time, sweat and finances. However, I feel thankful to the people who assisted me in putting up this installation. In helping with the logistics and other tasks, they volunteered their time, physical support, and mental energy. Some of them, the Acadian models, are integral to this project. Like me, they are descendants of the Acadians deported from their homeland over 250 years ago. They became involved on a personal level, and together we told our own story.

The general public

I was pleased and rewarded to see Acadians identifying with and responding to this installation. Further, the immediacy and individuality of the detailed feet reached the most personal and touching emotions of viewers in general. They recognized the universal elements of culture, history and war, as exemplified by the Acadian experience. Some viewers had a cathartic experience, remembering injustices of the past as well as those that continue today, such as "ethnic cleansing" in the former country of Yugoslavia. I believe that these issues gave power and credibility to the work.

Eveline Boudreau is a Saskatoon practicing artist and an occasional contributor to *The Craft Factor*. Samples of her work can be seen on the web: <<http://www.ceramicstudio.com/EvelineBoudreau/index.phtml>>



2-D Meets 3

Scratching the Surface

Amanda Immelman
McIntyre Street Gallery, Regina, SK
September 17 - October 9, 1999

BY JACK ANDERSON

Working in polychromed (painted) bas-relief wood carving (carving such that the forms are slightly raised above the background but are nonetheless still attached to it), Amanda Immelman creates images that simultaneously have the appearance of sculpture and the appearance of painting. Brightly colored objective images of domestic interiors, exotic foreign locations and rural Saskatchewan landscapes, they speak two formal languages at once: simultaneously, they are 2-D and 3-D, painting and sculpture, illusionistic and substantial. This visual and tangible push/pull between the illusion of depth and real depth itself leads us to ask formal questions about where painting stops and where sculpture begins.

Bas-relief is a medium that has long been out of mainstream practice. Usually associated with friezes found on early Greek temples or with the doors of mediaeval Christian churches, Immelman's interest in it could almost be considered anomalous. While taking printmaking, painting and sculpture classes at the University of Saskatchewan, she found that she wanted to enhance the illusion of depth in her 2-D work. The solution to the limiting flat plane of canvas and paper was found in the thick basswood panels and the reductive techniques of woodblock printmaking through which she could more emphatically create the illusion of space by actually chiseling it away.

Referring to photographs she herself has taken, Immelman carves out her images in a very logical manner: shallow in the foreground and more deeply in the background. Each of the residual chisel marks (most evident in her swirling Van Gogh-like skies) seems almost to stand for a painter's brushmark. Indeed, after she has carved the image, Immelman emphasizes the painterly qualities of this work over the sculp-

i n R E V i E W

TOP *The Set* 1999; bas-relief wood carving; acrylic paint; 4.5 x 4.5 in.; by Amanda Immelman.
SECOND FROM TOP *Road to Tugoske* 1999; bas-relief wood carving; acrylic paint; 7.5 x 19 in.; by Amanda Immelman.

tural by poly-chroming these panels with acrylic paints, often in luminous Impressionistic tints. She covers the whole surface with black paint (which gets trapped into the finest of her incised lines) and then applies colors to both rough and smooth areas, blending them in painterly style as image demands. The finished product appears to be both linear and chunky, both antique and modern, both considered and direct.

Although this is always an intriguing show technically, it is in Immelman's prairie landscapes where subject and technique correspond most successfully. In her simple interior images, she seems far more concerned with the formal compositional interplay of flat shapes within the picture plane than with notions of depth. Moreover, compared to deep space landscape images, the wall found behind all objects in her domestic scenes inhibits our ability to move back into space: our journey into the landscape has been circumscribed. However, deep space is more convincing in Immelman's landscape images where an illusory distant horizon line draws our eye back into infinity. This illusion is compounded and emphasized by her literal movement further back into the body of the wood. More than figurative journeys, these are literal forays into space itself.

Immelman's approach here seems to enhance the abstractionist prairie landscape painting model she admires, exemplified by the work of well-known Saskatchewan painter Dorothy Knowles. What Knowles captures on canvas, though, Immelman captures literally and figuratively in wood. In her subtle, serene and light-suffused scenes, the distinction between sculpture and painting becomes blurred: soft images become hard facts and tangible forms become seductive illusions.

Jack Anderson is a practicing artist and art critic from Regina, Saskatchewan.

Space Without Limit

Contained Space

Cecile Miller, Sandra Ledingham, Charley Farrero
Identity/Identité
Metal Arts Guild of Ontario / the Conseil des métiers
d'art du Québec
Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon, SK
September 10 - October 16, 1999

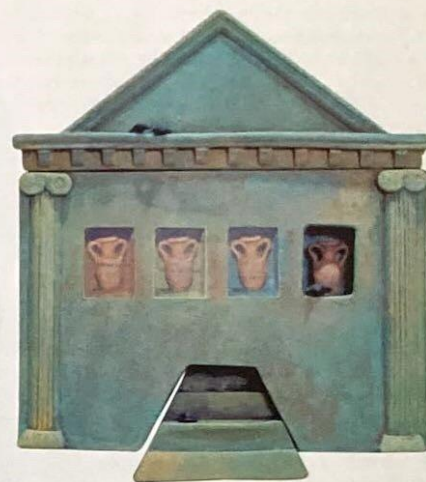
BY GRANT MCCONNELL

The shoe-box setting of the Craft Council Gallery is filled with many playthings that could have fallen from Lewis Carroll's literary workbench. This is not meant to compromise the seriousness of the makers' achievement, but to emphasize their success in opening the channels to wonderment and sensual pleasure. You can lift the material presence of these 'spaces' with two hands, ...hold them to the light and let their reflected light delight you. There is a headiness of feeling after spending time with the exhibition, as though some of these misbehaving inventions just parachuted to earth.

All three of the artists in this exhibition are mature in their own right, but seem to have taken a clubhouse pledge to nudge outward their own limits on formal inquiry and conceptual possibility. This is what a truly collaborative group exhibition should do. The artists play fast and loose with the concept of space. Works range from the cartoon relief of Farrero's pond community pieces through the refined elegance of Ledingham's wall sculpture and the perceptual playgrounds of Miller's clay constructs. Bless their souls, in no instance do they drop into ponderous mind-games or cheap visual tricks. A very free association under-pins each potential interpretation, and an easy engagement with the works presented here is the pay-off.

While there is no Magritte required in appreciating Cecile Miller's work, a number of her earthenware and mixed media pieces are re-workings of the famous Surrealist painters' celebrated canvases of the 1920's and '30's. These are very accessible, though, with their free handling of high colour and their sumptuous surface texture.

In *Space Is Relative (Never Enough Space)*, 1998, Miller layers meaning in an agglomeration of household paraphernalia crammed into a gabled domestic interior. Chairs, ladders and vessels vie for



TOP
Reality Check 1998;
earthenware & mixed
media, 46x52x7cm;
by Cecile Miller.

SECOND FROM TOP
Boats are Womb-like
Primal Spaces 1998;
fishskin, cardboard;
60.0 x 22.8 x 17.8 cm;
by Sandra Ledingham.

LEFT
Faberge Envy 1998;
stoneware, slipcast,
porcelain;
46 x 28 x 12 cm;
by Charley Farrero.

precious square footage with grandfather clock and birdcage. This tussle for territory is made all the more desperate in intensity as it unfolds in a shallow relief. Clothes hangers are pressed into the clay framing element and colour saturation rises in intensity as the eye moves upward through the piece. The result is a playing out of some Victorian neurosis brought on by living in a materially over-ripe setting. A mark of the success of this and other works is that we can laugh with the work as we recognize the familiarity of these circumstances in our own lives.

This free play of subjective elements should venture no further down the road to conceptual wankery that has carried off many of her contemporaries. Our delight would surely disappear. In *Cyberspace ..Too Much Information* the associations may be too dense, the pleasure in reading lost.

Of the three artists in the exhibition, Sandra Ledingham exercises the most formal restraint, achieving a graceful simplicity along the way. Her work also presents a greater continuity of design as colour, texture and contour often merge, one to the next. This is a finery in execution in which you can easily imagine the artist's fingers pulling the material into shape. Maritime vessels double to imply landscape reference or undulating human organ. Yoni stands in for proud human presence. The colour is lush, and the texture invites the touch.

Fish skin and cardboard are an unlikely pairing in a very compelling work, *Boats are Womb-like Primal Spaces*, 1998. Conceived almost as an archaic boat-form which floats freely within its rectangular framing device, the shape becomes womb/ becomes horn-of-plenty, and on and on. There is a strong sense of recognition here, even though the 'thing' or 'place' recognized remains something of a question mark. The stretched fish skin draws us beautifully into these free associations of human experience as it reflects back the sensitive tissue of the fingertip.

In much of Post-modern installation work there is an attempt to hammer home some sense of weighty importance by occupying large amounts of gallery space with duplicated forms. The result is most often a sense of diffusion and redundancy. As individual pieces, the black-flocked clay *Dreamboats*, 1999 make no such claim to greater consequence, but as installed their appeal seems dissipated and their reason for being united in one composition is vague.

Charley Farrero's work cuts a fairly wide path where both form and content are concerned. His experience and abilities as an artist, though, leave us with a high degree of confidence in comfortable readings of strong stoneware and slipcast porcelain compositions. Here we find a playful vigor and rich variety of narrative treatment, rather than the schizophrenic lack of resolve that we might have found with a lesser artist.

The rational mind goes dancing Alice in Wonderland-like down Farrero's garden paths, as these contained relief spaces enable a starting point for all manner of fantasy and free flight. Fruits and vegetables sprout limbs and appear to have a will all their own, in works such as *Siesta Tropical*, 1998 and *Decouverte*, 1998. Polymorphous orgies might break out in the gallery after the lights go down. Elsewhere, a suggestively smiling porcelain figure is flanked by moralizing sage and priest as she looks back at us in *Le Secret Cache de Marie Antoinette*, 1997

In the strangest juxtaposition in the show we start with *Children of War*, 1998 with its stylized cut-outs of children in muted camouflage colour set against the lost innocence of a brightly stenciled flower ground. Right next door we find the shallow, glaring palette of *Faberge Enty*, 1998. The associations here are a bit disturbing, as you might find in viewing a Milan fashion show mounted to raise funds for a landmine moratorium. The works speak beyond themselves individually.

Farrero is notoriously curmudgeonly where talking content is concerned. This is easily discernable in his mildly infuriating artist's statement, "...my work is my statement, my statement is my work, my work is my statement, ...". With an adventurous form and intriguing subject matter, this non-statement of intent has to be forgiven.

A Word on Identity/Identité

Space limitations prevent a lengthier treatment of the other gallery installation, "Identity/Identité," a traveling juried exhibition presented by the Metal Arts Guild of Ontario and the Conseil des métier d'art du Québec. These wonderfully shiny works of jewellery and palm-sized sculpture stretch beyond their diminutive size as they spark senses and imagination.

Glenda Rowley's music box *Rocky II*, is a hilarious little chorus line tableau of moose appearing on what appears to be a Parks Canada amphitheatre stage. I can't imagine that an intersection of the Algonquin Park experience and hinterland stand-ins for Sylvester Stallone are accidental. Ann McLaughlin's wired silver phallus of *Sex, Drugs and Rock'N'Roll* startles the viewer with its finely crafted crude bronze castings of onions and vine-ripening tomatoes appeal through their simplicity of form and sensitive technical refinement as they embody the human hand and mind interpreting material and spiritual sustenance in the garden's harvest.

These are two fine exhibitions, each going their own way yet comfortably occupying the same space. Serious pleasure in viewing and roaming is available from each.

Grant McConnell is an artist and educator who lives in Saskatoon. His interest in Canadian history informs a varied studio practice. Recent solo exhibitions include 'Home and Animal' at the Art Gallery of Swift Current and Bugera\Kmet Galleries in Edmonton, and Recent Works at Artplacement in Saskatoon.

RIGHT
Mesa Verde Remembers
11 1998; clay, glazes,
plastic;
152.4 x 20.3 x 9.5 cm;
by Sandra Ledingham.



WALL RIGHT *Sir Trowel Candlehand* 1999, mild steel and trowel by Geordie Smith.

ON SHELF *Red Man Vase # 1* 1999, pit-fired stoneware, red slip & Vase 1999, altered stoneware, salted; by Ken Wilkinson.

Feed Me Well 1999, stoneware, glazed plates; (Collection of Judy Ternier and Tom Burns) by Teresa Gagne.

Set of Five Bowls 1999, salt glazed stoneware; by Robert Jackson.



ON PEDESTALS *Big Orange Bottle* 1999, pit-fired bottle with orange terra sigillata by Ken Wilkinson.

Containment 1999 & *Vase* 1999, salt-glazed stoneware by Robert Jackson.
Buried Gnome Box 1998, maple burl and iron by Geordie Smith.



A Crafty Population

**Ruddell Goes To Town:
Branching Out and Forging Ahead**
Ruddell Artists Group Exhibition
Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon, SK
May 7 - June 13, 1999

BY PAT DOIG

According to the mayor, there are thirteen kilns in the town of Ruddell, six anvils and five or six forges. Since the town only has a population of twenty-five, it begs the question—What the heck are those Ruddell people up to?

I didn't have to leave Saskatoon to find out. Ruddell or a good portion of its citizens it seems, brought the town to the Saskatchewan Craft Gallery for a group exhibit by local artists.

Potters Ken Wilkinson, Teresa Gagne, and Robert Jackson; fibre-artist Linda Mushka and woodworker/blacksmith, Geordie Smith participated...that would be one-fifth of the whole town!

The theme of the exhibit "Branching Out and Forging Ahead" was indicative of the artists' desire to "do something different". Ken Wilkinson, a well-known production potter who moved to Ruddell in the mid-seventies, felt a renewed excitement in having a

chance to stretch his creativity as opposed to making "mug after mug". Linda Mushka, who describes her weaving as her "therapy and her meditation", began to move from "the functional to the just interesting to look at"—a concept she admits she had to work at branching into. Geordie Smith, having taken some blacksmithing in college, welcomed the chance to literally forge ahead and work with a different medium, one he describes as "very forgiving". Having worked with wood repetitively for so long, he finds the blacksmithing medium "almost therapeutic" as a different use of the hands is involved. Teresa Gagne, the "new Ruddellite" was interested in working with different clay surfaces. Robert Jackson, a self-described "off and on", long-time potter (not to mention the mayor) was re-energized with a little prodding from the others to participate in this exhibition.

I found Robert Jackson's salt-glazed, stoneware pieces evoked the need to caress them. Their pitted, soft, orange-peel texture beckoned. I particularly found this to be true in Jackson's *Set of Five Bowls* in their various subtle browns, creams and greens. They were elegant in their simplicity. Perhaps it was this ancient technique that contributed to the sense of antiquity.

Jackson's own favourite was a small, cream-coloured saki cup with a blue interior. He thought it had "good pitting". Perhaps that element of unpredictability in salt-glazing that produces the pitted texture makes this method all the more exciting for the artist to behold the end product.

Teresa Gagne's work had an air of the primitive about it and I

EXHIBITIONS



WALL PIECE LEFT
Sail Away
1998,
hand-dyed,
hand-felted,
wool, beads,
wood; by
Linda Mushka.

CAPE RIGHT
Blue Cocoon
1997,
hand woven,
cotton, acrylic,
wool; by
Linda Mushka.

HIGH PEDESTAL RIGHT *Bowl for Oriol*
1998, stoneware, glaze; by Teresa Gagne.
(Collection of Oriol Dancer.)

LOW PEDESTAL RIGHT *Log Box* 1996, birch
and mild steel; by Geordie Smith.

mean that in a good sense. She is an ideas-person and is not afraid to explore them. I have the feeling that Gagne's work will become better and better. Her eye-catching, earthenware *Walk In The Woods* was perhaps one of the first to capture the attention after entering the gallery. This hand-built, primitive, rusted-looking vessel appeared to have been dug up from some ancient dynasty. The mustard-coloured, mottled glaze was reminiscent of lichen found in Saskatchewan forests. A sand-like texture completed the effect. Four spiral feet for the base matched the two coiled handles. I also liked her less primitive, hand-built *Green Bowl* approximately one foot in diameter. A smooth, satiny sea-green interior was edged along the top with an added textured ledge resembling snakeskin. The mottled exterior was the same colour as the snakeskin edging along the top and matched the interior in its fine quality.

Ken Wilkinson, the most experienced potter of the group did not disappoint in his quest at branching out. In fact, many of his pieces have a stellar dimension to them. *Galaxy* is one such example. This pit-fired hanging plate has a black-hole effect that mesmerizes—pulls you in toward the centre with its swirling effect of blacks and whites and browns. I also particularly liked Wilkinson's stunningly-beautiful, pit-fired, stoneware *Copper And Salt Vase*. Colours of subdued black, blue, white, cranberry and grey brought to mind a spewing volcano that met with and angered the heavens. Like interpreting clouds, I could swear I saw a horse and rider galloping across the clouds.

The range of work by Geordie Smith dating from 1973 to the present was testimony to the variety of mediums that Smith has obviously become proficient in, whether it be soapstone, wood or metal. Perhaps the title "Branching Out and Forging Ahead" was all the more literally relevant in *Iron And Wood*, Smith's somewhat primitive, birch and forged-steel chair. Hidden screws were used in

the traditional joints, while the iron gave the chair its strength. One fragile twig protruded from the top, bound with metal wire, a small metal leaf bridging the gap between the forest tree and the finished chair product. Woven round metal formed the seat of the chair, each end disappearing down into holes drilled along the seat edges. Comfort may be questionable. Metal side pieces, ending in hammered leaves, bridged the legs, giving added strength and charm. The back of the chair consisted of curving metal rungs, hammered flat in the centre. Black metal complimented creamy birch. I would be interested in seeing Smith experiment with different types of joinery and perhaps keep functional comfort more in mind.

I have to admit I have a thing for willow and all things twiggy. So I was drawn to Linda Mushka's *Haven*. This was one of the many collaborative pieces in the show, many of which were conceived in the infamous "brainstorming coffee hour". Mushka wanted to branch out from her traditional weaving of the functional to "art as opposed to craft", if indeed there is such a distinction. *Haven* was the result of weaving willow branches with linen on the loom. They stand semi-circle in a similar stump base by Geordie Smith. Petrified willow flowers still attached to branches reach for the sky. All is subtle beauty until your eye is drawn sharply to the red-dyed, felted-wool nest suspended uncannily in the centre. There's something bothersome about it being so obvious, even intrusive. Or, is it because it's empty?

In the future I look forward to further exploration from this group of artists who are to be commended for their continuing Ruddell workshops and their encouragement of Saskatchewan crafts.

Pat Doig currently lives in the townsite of Shields at Blackstrap Lake, outside of Saskatoon. She has worked with recycled metals since the mid-80s and is a periodic contributor to *The Craft Factor*.



ABOVE *Where The Sky Is Bigger Than Anywhere Else* 1999; pre-dyed felted merino wool, recycled sweaters, yarns, acrylic paint; by Myrna Harris.

Prairie Scenes ... in Fibre

In Context: The Saskatchewan Landscape

Martha Cole & Myrna Harris
Saskatchewan Craft Gallery, Saskatoon, SK
March 5 - April 25, 1999

BY SHEILA ROBERTSON

It should have been no surprise that the fibre works of Martha Cole and Myrna Harris—featured in the spring of 1999 at the Saskatchewan Craft Gallery—are highly complementary. The two have worked together before. In fact, Harris acknowledges Cole as her mentor.

In addition to their expertise with paint, dyes and fabric, they share a passion for the Prairie. Their intimate observations of skies and fields, sloughs and trees were reflected in Cole's quilted wallworks and Harris's felted wool landscapes. In their artists' statement, they emphasized Saskatchewan's physical environment dominates the lives of residents. "It has a very real presence with which we must constantly interact."

In this show, they celebrated the changing of the seasons. The works reminded us how fortunate we are to have the land delight

us by donning different gowns at different times of the year.

Harris, who as a child enjoyed picnics at the sloughs surrounding their farm, often uses these sites as a focus in her compositions, small oases interrupting a stretch of vividly flowering canola or rugged, post-harvest stubble. She told me once that it was the colors of the landscape that led her into artwork, first as a painter and photographer, then a potter and a weaver and finally as a creator of landscapes assembled from tufts of felted wool.

The former nurse, who lives on a farm near Landis, Saskatchewan, has been represented in the Saskatchewan Craft Council's annual juried exhibition by work in three media: clay, weaving and felted wool. It was a felted piece that won her the top award, the Premier's Prize, in 1995.

The splendorous tones in the fields and grasses enlivened what would otherwise have been a "boring" childhood, Harris recalled. What she pondered was "how could a person get those colors?"

She found her answer in powdered acid dyes, which she uses to transform bats of raw merino wool. Her tools are simple, domestic ones: a trough once used for watering cattle for the dye baths and an old Maytag washing machine for matting the wool. One of Harris' standouts in this exhibition was *Where The Sky is Bigger Than Anywhere Else*. Her dramatic sky churns with oranges and golds and deep, purplish-blue clouds. Amidst the undulations of the darker land below, embroidered pale swaths stand out starkly.

Harris likes attention to detail and merely assembling her compositions on an easel is not enough for her. She enhanced this work with strips cut from old sweaters, novelty yarns and acrylic

EXHIBITIONS



LEFT *Aspen Grove: Summer 1999*, cotton, fabric paint, coloured pencils, assorted threads, polyester quilt batting, other fabrics for appliqué; by Martha Cole.

paint. Elsewhere, she has even used beads for a touch of glitter.

Harris framed this series, but she is contemplating ways to liberate her works from the formal boundaries of the frame without their hanging limply on the wall. It will be interesting to see what she devises.

Cole, who was raised in Regina, also came to fibre from another career and other media. She taught art at a Toronto high school before settling in a church at tiny Disley, Saskatchewan, in 1978,—ostensibly to work on her fibreglass sculpture. She began making wallhangings, though, and never stopped. The self-described "born-again quilter" hangs her large pieces unframed, like tapestries or quilts. They are the product of diverse processes, including painting, sewing, quilting and appliqué.

Her series of four tall, narrow works traced the changes in the sanctuary of an aspen grove through the seasons. Cole's recent works have been characterized by extravagant borders, some of which are fashioned by other artisans to her specifications. This quartet had a splashy, black and white checked "frame" separating the imagery from the outer border. Initially, I wasn't sure I liked the effect, but I came to appreciate the dissonant, sporty note. Without it, the works might have been too saccharine, too pretty.

Perhaps Cole had the same ambivalence. At a talk the artists gave, she described painting the border on wet fabric, gritting her teeth as the colors ran a bit, and accepting this as an accent, rather than a flaw.

Both artists are captivated by surface texture and color. They make every stitch and brushstroke count. Cole uses whatever is necessary to get the effect she's after: fabric paint, colored pencils, embroidery. Increasingly, she's mottling surfaces with paint rather than using pre-dyed commercial fabrics.

In Cole's *Aspen Grove: Summer*, the trunks of the quilted trees have painterly charcoal-colored shadings. Paint and small bits of applied fabric contribute depth to the foliage. Pale petal shapes on a green and yellow ground illuminate the outer border. It is as if the mauve flowers at the bases of the trees exploded, showering petal fragments.

Clearly, Cole and Harris are process oriented. The contemplative steps they follow in completing a work are so absorbing for them that the resulting creations are almost a bonus. Whether they decide to pick up needles or paintbrushes, Cole and Harris have much to say about their surroundings.

Sheila Robertson writes about visual arts in Saskatoon. She is a frequent contributor to *The Craft Factor*.

COMMISSIONS

Loons, by Lee Brady

Glass Eye Studio, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Painted, sandblasted, leaded stained glass; each 33.5" X 57.25." The panels were designed for installation in the recently-built 'Land of the Loon' Resort and Conference Centre located at Anglin Lake, Saskatchewan. Anglin Lake is known for having the largest loon breeding areas in Canada. The stained glass panels are situated in the east facing windows of the 'Snails Pace' dining room on the main floor of the conference centre. The panels were commissioned by Debbie Greening and were installed in July, 1998.



Craftspeople are invited to submit professional quality photographs illustrating their commissions for private and public use or installation. Include identification: title, dimensions, materials/techniques; client, date completed or 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 Editor, *The Craft Factor*, SCC, 813 Broadway Avenue, Saskatoon, SK (306) 653-3616; fax 244-2711; <saskcraftcouncil.editor.tcf@home.com>.



CALL FOR ENTRY

14th ANNUAL

ART MARKET

NOVEMBER 16-19, 2000

Telus Convention Centre
Calgary, Alberta
240 High Quality Artisans

ART MARKET
PRODUCTIONS
P.O. Box 219, Suite 5119
Banff, Alberta T0L 0C0
Message Telephone:
(403) 762-2345

SUBSCRIBE TO:

THE
CRAFT FACTOR
MAGAZINE OF THE SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL

Awarded
Magazine of the Year - Saskatchewan

by the

Western Magazine Awards Foundation 1999

Please send me a one year subscription to *The Craft Factor*.
One year subscription, 2 issues is \$15 (U.S. & overseas, payable in U.S. funds)

Make cheques payable to: Saskatchewan Craft Council at:
813 Broadway Avenue
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 1B5
CANADA

name _____
address _____
city _____ province/state _____
country _____ postal/zip code _____



Return Postage Guaranteed
Saskatchewan Craft Council
813 Broadway Avenue
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 1B5
Canadian Publications Mail Agreement: #478601