Queens Library Gallery

Forms & Trans-Formations: Current Expressions in Ceramics, From Art to Industry

October 22 - December 31, 1997

Featuring the Works of:

Toby Buonagurio
Kathy Butterly
Marek Cecula
Paul Chaleff
Pascal Chmelar
Dong-Hun Chung
John DeFazio
Kim Dickey
Gary DiPasquale
Raymon Elozua
Tom Folino
Beth Katleman
Shida Kuo
Marc Leuthold
Steven Montgomery
Sana Musasama
Matt Nolen
Gregory Roberts
Mary Roehm
Jeff Shapiro
Melissa Stern
Lee Stoliar
Irv Tepper
Neil Tetkowski
Susan Tunick
Jon Waldo
Bruce Winn

Library Director Gary E. Strong
and the Board of Trustees of the
Queens Borough Public Library
invite you to attend a
reception and private viewing
at the **Queens Library Gallery.**

Forms & Trans-Formations: Current Expressions in Ceramics, From Art to Industry

Tuesday, October 21, 1997
6:30-8:30 p.m.

6:30 p.m.- Reception in the North Hall Rotunda

Gary E. Strong will introduce
Curator Judith Schwartz, Ph.D.

Queens Borough Public Library
89-11 Merrick Boulevard
Jamaica, New York 11432

RSVP by October 17. Phone: 718/990-8665

Exhibition will be on view through December 31, 1997.
Admission is free.

Hope you get a chance to see it!
Thanks,
Judith Schwartz

Forms & TransFormations: Current Expressions in Ceramics, from Art to Industry, explores the cross influence the industrial environment and artist's studio share with one another, while also examining the role ceramics plays as a medium in both these areas. Art, industry, research and manufacturing come together to form and transform ordinary clay into objects of great beauty, function and necessity. The interactions between designers, engineers and artists, on view in this exhibition, have transformed this timeless material into a truly amazing display of virtuosity.

Ceramics have a great influence on our lives— as everyday objects for domestic use and as the medium of choice for artists and engineers. The technical advances made in ceramic engineering have produced a range of objects that are diversely functional and without precedent, from sports equipment to space rockets.

Clay woven into inch-thick cloth insulates furnaces so efficiently that it remains cool to the touch on one side, even when the other side is exposed to 3000 degrees. Pens with clay tips resist wear better than metal tips. Ceramic fibers make stronger skis and dampen vibration. Clay cast as honeycomb filters (0.2 micron) are used to block the passage of disease-bearing micro-organisms. Knives made of clay are sharp, and do not corrode or stain.

Clay buttons are strong and resist the chemical effects of commercial laundering. Hip-joint replacements and dental prostheses made with clay are durable and more easily assimilated into the human body. Microchip wafers and capacitors are easy to manufacture and inexpensive. Tennis rackets, bowling balls, and golf clubs reinforced with ceramics are durable, mechanically strong and have a hard surface. And, of course, clay tiles are used on the early re-entry capsules of NASA's space rockets.

Art meets technology in the second half of *Forms and TransFormations.* The 27 contemporary artists on view in the exhibition have been selected to show the diversity of expression in the medium, from traditional ceramic craft and the use of ancient wood kilns, to the incorporation of industrial methods and the most avant-garde firing techniques.

Artists commonly known as potters, or vessel makers, use different fabrication methods to convey highly personal and unique expressions. Artists Butterly, Roehm and Chmelar employ a wheel-thrown technique; ceramists such as Nolen and Chaleff use a coil method.

Others, including Shapiro, Dickey and DiPasquale, use pinch and slab techniques, while artists Winn, Waldo and Tepper employ a cast method in their artwork.

In contrast to the potters, artists Montgomery and Cecula use clay as a sculptural tool to express sociological ideas; Chung and Musasama make political statements; while Folino, Stern and Stoliar interpret psychological concepts. These individuals make personal statements about our outer and inner worlds which convey themes of conflict, tolerance and the desire for change.

Buonagurio, de Fazio and Katleman utilize industrial methods, most notably casting and glaze decals, to create slick objects with arresting surface decorations that manipulate kitsch imagery in individual ways. These express social criticism beneath a humorous and satirical surface.

Many of the exhibited artists reveal a preoccupation with experimentation. From carving porcelain honey-comb filters found in chemical laboratories (Roberts) to combining metal with clay (Elozua and Tetkowski) and firing them together, these artists truly push the boundaries of ceramic's technical and artistic qualities. Still other artists investigate the relationship between nature and technology. For example, Kuo's method of using wood with ceramics and gluing them together reveals the organic qualities of each medium.

The architectural ceramists, such as Tunick, combine mosaics and antique tiles to produce decoratively patterned murals for wall installations. Others, like Leuthold, use glazes on tiles to create dramatic illusion and surface mystery.

The variations ceramic artists have made in their works is a result of many influences, including the post-modernist era in which we live. In trying to produce a more efficient and less costly product, engineers have also found innovative uses for clay. Although artists and engineers produce different end results, they share an understanding of clay and an ambition to utilize its resources. These two facets of ceramics, the technical and the artistic, demonstrate the diversity of ceramics in our lives, a diversity that is only expanding as our understanding of the medium grows.

Judith S. Schwartz, Ph.D.
Curator