Every potter has certain common forms in their repertoire—think bowls and mugs. But the kitchen is home to various less-commonly made but often used pots—from muffin pans and juicers, to batter bowls and salt shakers—that are great fun for the potter to investigate. Part of the Ceramic Arts Select Series, this book showcases pots used for prepping, cooking, and presenting food. Each edition of the Ceramic Arts Select Series focuses on a group of related forms and presents some of the best examples of how contemporary artists are exploring, innovating, and celebrating those forms.

In *Kitchen Pots, Bakers, and Serving Vessels*, you'll find nineteen easy-to-follow, step-by-step projects. The artists share not only the process but also the functional considerations taken in the planning stages. You'll discover how to make a baking dish just the right size to fit lasagna noodles, and how to match the curves on a mortar and pestle for maximum crushing surface. It is these details that separate the pots people want to use from the pots that sit in the cupboard. You'll also learn how to design pots that enhance the dining experience by presenting food beautifully. A nice mingling of the "how to" and the "why to" for some of pottery's less common forms, this book is a welcome addition to any ceramic library.
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During the many years I’ve worked as a potter, my customers have always given me suggestions on what pots to make. Many years ago, someone asked me to make a rectangular open casserole suitable for baking lasagna, brownies, etc. The design I came up with is made with two thrown sections and is large enough in the wet stage (10–15% larger than the finished piece, depending on your clay body) so that when it comes out of the glaze firing, it is the right size to fit a lasagna noodle. The bottom slab is usually thrown the night before the top section is made so it can stiffen up. I try to time the drying process so that both pieces are the same consistency when attached together. The following technique can be used to make all kinds of differently shaped pots.

**Caution:** Some clay bodies are not suitable for use as ovenware. For more information on clay bodies that can withstand thermal shock from heating and cooling in the kitchen, as well as information on how to use handmade ovenware, check with your clay supplier.

**Throwing the Sections**

Using a bat rather than the bare wheel head, throw a flat slab for the bottom of the casserole. I use 5¼ pounds of clay to create a 16-inch-diameter slab (1). Remove the bat from the wheel head and set the slab aside to dry.
1. Throw a slab for the bottom of the casserole.

2. Throw a low wide cylinder and cut out the bottom.

3. Pull on opposite sides of the cylinder to create a square or rectangle.

4. To square up the walls, use yardsticks or boards to push in on opposite sides of the form.

Center 4¾ pounds of clay on another bat and throw the top section as a low wide cylinder 14½ inches wide by 2¾ inches high. I like to have a thick, round rim at the top, which helps protect the finished pot from cracking and chipping. After the top is thrown, cut the bottom out using a wooden rib to shave away the excess clay, leaving a ½ inch lip (approximate) around the whole inside (2). This bottom inside lip makes it possible to attach the top and bottom sections without using a coil.

**Altering the Shape**

After the top piece has stiffened a bit, wire underneath it and shape it into a rectangle. The clay should be slightly "tacky" at this point but firm enough so it doesn't slump when shaped. Hold your hands about nine inches apart, grasp the rim at the top with your fingertips and pull your hands gently away from each other (3). Repeat the same on the opposite side. Next, pull the corners away from each other on the sides that haven't been shaped. Continue the pulling and shaping process until you have a basic rectangle.

While the top is still flexible, hold two rulers or cut yardsticks on opposite sides of the form and push all the sides in slightly (4).

**Putting It All Together**

When the top is leather hard, pick it up and place it on the bottom slab. Trace the inside (5) and then cut around the outside with a fettling knife. Remove the cut pieces from the bat (6). Lift the top from the bottom slab. Us-
5. Trace the inside of the top section onto the base.

6. Cut away the excess clay from the thrown slab base.

7. Score then apply slip to the slab.

8. Align the top onto the slab and attach.

9. Use a rubber rib to press the bottom lip of the top section onto the slab.

10. Create stitch lines, then blend the top and base together to create a good bond.
ing a fork, score and slip the area where the top was sitting and apply slip (7).

Place the top back on the bottom and align the two sections (8). Press the bottom lip of the top section onto the bottom slab. Smooth with a sponge and flexible rubber rib until they are seamlessly joined together (9).

Pull the tines of a fork upward along the outside from the bottom slab into the top piece. The resulting lines will look like stitches all around the bottom seam. With your fingers, smooth the marks out and meld the two pieces together (10). Keep the pot on the bat to stiffen up a bit.

**Finishing Touches**

Place a bat over the top and flip the pot so its bottom is facing up. First with a metal then a stiff rubber rib, smooth out the roughness where the two sections were attached (11). Run a vegetable peeler around the bottom edge to bevel it (12). Smooth the beveled edges with a damp sponge, then flip the pot back over and add handles.

Whatever your final handle or lug design looks like, make sure they will not extend far from the profile of the finished piece, otherwise they will be prone to cracking due to heating and cooling more quickly than the rest of the piece. Wet the handle sides that face the pot and press them firmly on (13). Push the handle ends flat and pinch off the excess. Decorate with your fingertips or stamps (14).

Move the pot onto a fresh, dry bat so that the bottom dries evenly with the top. Allow it to dry slowly before bisque firing and glaze firing.
Every potter has certain common forms in their repertoire—think bowls and mugs. But the kitchen is home to various less-commonly made but often used pots—from muffin pans and juicers, to batter bowls and salt shakers—that are great fun for the potter to investigate. Part of the Ceramic Arts Select Series, this book showcases pots used for prepping, cooking, and presenting food. Each edition of the Ceramic Arts Select Series focuses on a group of related forms and presents some of the best examples of how contemporary artists are exploring, innovating, and celebrating those forms.

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