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*Mrs. Irene Drittler, 7800 Freda, Dearborn, Mich.
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MESTROVIC ONE OF BEST

Gentlemen:
I . . . discovered to my delight and surprise Kay Harrison's fine article on Mestrovic [August issue]. I studied with him for four years and was his assistant for one year, and for the reason that I was able to know him so well, I felt that the article was one of the most I had read out of the many that have emerged since his arrival in 1947. I liked her quiet direct manner, but most of all her description of the man and his works . . .

Lee Burnham Studios
Palatka, Fla.

NO COVER LOVER!

Gentlemen:
We think CM is the best magazine for the studio potter and pottery teacher, but we do wish for better covers! Photos of pottery or potters would be far better, we feel, than the recent "wastes of space"!

Gentlemen:

PALATKA, FLA.

We think CM is the best magazine for the pottery and pottery teacher, but we do wish for better covers! Photos of pottery or potters would be far better, we feel, than the recent "wastes of space"!

Lee Burnham Studios
Palatka, Fla.

NEED SIC?

Gentlemen:
For the benefit of those who have tried in vain to find silicon carbide (FFF grade) for local reduction glazes: I finally found it at a chemical house, King and Malcolm, 215 Water St., New York City, after a whole day spent tracking it down! I hope the information will save my fellow potters much time and energy. It was the only place in the whole city.

RUTH L. TAYLOR

Pomona, N.Y.

PRACTICE POTS

Gentlemen:
Receipt of the "Monthly" usually means something meaty in the way of pottery reading. Nothing, however, as good and thorough as Mr. Atherton's previous two articles [July and April] was anticipated [in November].

I do have a bone to pick with Mr. Sellers' last, "Carve Your Wheel-Thrown Pots." While there is nothing so sacred about a thrown pot, it seems to me to be the wrong way of teaching the skill to encourage beginners "—if it doesn't turn out too well, you can always make something else out of it." A practice pot is only that.

Ruth L. Taylor
State University of New York
Buffalo, New York

* We can appreciate reader Steinzer's comments; however, we believe he is thinking only of the serious pottery student. The serious student may be quite content to practice throwing for months or years, toss- ing all of his wheel attempts back in the clay bin, just as the serious music student is content for years to practice scales and techniques.

With the hobby potters, and there are many of them, the situation differs. They want to have something to show for their efforts rather quickly, just as the hobby music student wants to learn a tune as soon as possible.

If cutting practice pots into ashtrays helps sustain interest in the potter's art and prevents discouragement and a shift of in terest to other crafts and hobbies for more questionable pastimes, we feel it is a step in the right direction.—Ed.

SYRACUSE SHOW

We are thrilled with your December number and its wonderful coverage of the 18th Ceramic National: quite the best and most complete coverage we have ever had for any of our Ceramic shows!

It was splendid to have you add the article about Mrs. Robineau's famous "Scarab Vase," with the (photo); and what a fine idea it was to announce the prize-winners with portraits of each one! Something no one has ever thought of doing before. Also the comments by the final Jury added so much. But your magazine can be counted on for original ideas . . .

ANN A. W. OLMSTED
Director
Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts
Syracuse, N. Y.

Gentlemen:
. . . The idea of covering this show is excellent . . . I had intended suggesting you cover some of the other shows of merit around the country like the Los Angeles County Fair, Sacramento State Fair, etc. This will stimulate lots of interest for people who appreciate the stoneware and thrown-porcelain type of pottery.

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Specifically, Mr. Eidson has studied ways and means of producing the touch of beauty which most women crave—beauty not for itself but for the way it can enhance their personal charm. He has devised a number of mechanisms for making and glazing earrings and he knows many kiln tricks, all of which he is passing along to CM readers. Need we say more?

back again . . .
is Dorothy Perkins with another authoritative series and another “first.” CM old-timers will certainly remember Dorothy’s detailed series on “Free Form” (vintage 1953); now we have another brilliant series on the making of models and molds and plaster-working in general. And it starts next month! We know you’ll all say, “Welcome Back.”

more of the same . . .
will be there too: instructional and general interest articles will continue to greet you each month. The special series on Underglaze Decoration which begins in this issue (see Page 20) is to be a regular monthly feature. The decorator, especially, should find these articles to be of particular interest and benefit. Our regulars will be back of course—O’Hara, Holst, Kenny, Sellers, et al—and you can look forward to some “guest writers” in the throwing and enameling departments.

All of which seems to point (ceramically speaking) to an informative and generally

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WHERE TO GO

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INDIANA, Bloomington
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German Ceramics, 16 pieces by 10 leading artist-teachers. Fine Arts Department, University of Indiana.

KENTUCKY, Louisville
January 16-February 6
German Ceramics, a small collection of contemporary pieces by ten leading artist-teachers. Mostly glazed stoneware. At J. B. Speed Art Museum.

MARYLAND, Hagerstown
February 1-28
Chinese Porcelain as Mirrored in Europe, exhibition at Washington County Museum (AFA traveling show).

NEW HAMPSHIRE, Manchester
January 16-February 6
Dutch Arts and Crafts, contemporary and including ceramics. Circulated by Smithsonian Institution. At Currier Gallery of Art.

NEW YORK, Buffalo
January 3-28
Ceramic exhibition sponsored by Western New York Ceramic Dealers Association at Erie Savings Bank. Demonstrations daily.

OHIO, Youngstown
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PENNSYLVANIA, Pittsburgh
February 16-March 14
Design in Scandinavia. Over 700 mass-produced and handcrafted items selected by top Scandinavian designers. At Carnegie Institute.

TENNESSEE, Chattanooga
January 16-February 6
Italian Arts and Crafts, contemporary exhibition circulated by Smithsonian Institution. At George Thomas Hunter Gallery of Art.

VIRGINIA, Richmond
January 14-February 13
Designer-Craftsmen U.S.A., at Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, shows more than two hundred handcrafted objects by contemporary Americans. Represents all parts of the country.

WASHINGTON, D. C.
January 8-February 15
9th Annual Area Exhibition at Corcoran Gallery of Art includes ceramics.

(Continued on Page 9)
WHERE TO SHOW

* national competition

FLORIDA, Miami
April 24-May 8
★ Third Annual Ceramic Exhibition sponsored by Ceramic League of Miami opens at Lowe Gallery, University of Miami, and circulates later among eight southeastern galleries. Ceramists including enamelist eligible. Jury: awards. Fee: $3; blanks due April 1, entries April 6. For information, write Marceil Dunn, exh. sec'y., at 908 Paradiso Ave., Coral Gables, Fla.

INDIANA, South Bend
May 15-29
Third Annual Regional Ceramic Exhibition open to present and former residents of Indiana and Michigan within 100-mile radius of South Bend. Jury; prizes. Fee: $2. Entry cards due Apr. 25; work, May 1. For blanks write South Bend Art Assn., 620 W. Washington Ave.

KANSAS, Wichita
April 11-May 11

LOUISIANA, New Orleans
February 27-March 22

MASSACHUSETTS, Springfield
April 3-May 8
Massachusetts Crafts of Today, fourth annual, at George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum. Open to all craftsmen in state. Fee: members of Massachusetts Assoc. of Handicraft Groups, $1; non-members, $2. Entries due March 8-12. For details, write Robert W. Gray, 40 Highland St., Worcester.

NEW YORK, Buffalo
March 2-April 3

WASHINGTON, Seattle
March 6-April 6

WEST VIRGINIA, Huntington
February 6-27
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China Painting Designs
Designs for the overglaze decorator working on either china or glass have been created and compiled by Zena Holst—familiar to all CM readers. This design portfolio, compiled specifically as a manual for studio use, contains over 200 designs, most of which are Mrs. Holst's originals. In full size, ready for use, the design studies include naturalistic flowers, fruits, birds, etc., as well as conventional, semi-conventional, and modern.

The book sells for $5 and can be obtained by writing directly to Zena Holst, 1225 McClelland St., Salt Lake City, Utah.

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Mold Reconditioner
My leaf-plate mold was well worn after I had poured a hundred or more pieces from it; the veins in the leaf were barely noticeable. I found that the mold design could be given new life by carefully running a blunt orangewood stick along each vein, digging out just a little plaster.
— Ruth Haslam
Palmerton, Pa.

Clay Cutter
The pastry cutter with blunt stainless steel blades is an ideal tool for cutting off large or small chunks of clay from the supply bin. It is especially helpful for preparing easy-to-handle blocks when unloading a barrel of plastic clay.
— Kenneth Gogel
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Grog Made Easy
Instead of laboriously pounding on bisque ware to make grog, try this easy way.
Roll out a thin sheet of clay and allow it to dry thoroughly. When it is dry, roll over it again, crushing the clay sheet into small particles, screen, then fire. It is much easier to first crush the clay, then fire it, instead of vice versa. Incidentally, the resulting grog particles will be quite smooth and easy to handle because this procedure produces very few sharp edges.
— Virginia Patte
Asbury Park, N. J.

Red Glazes
Commercial red-firing glazes may give quite a bit of trouble in the kiln: many of them require more oxygen than do the other glazes. I find that I have much better results when I fire them near the peephole of the kiln or when I prop the kiln lid open slightly as the matur- ing temperature is reached.
— Vernon Seeley
Seeley's Ceramic Service
Oneonta, N. Y.

Texturing with Nature
One of my most unusual textured pieces of ceramics was done with a hedge-apple (Osage orange). Another excellent texturing tool is a pine cone.

By using the flat end of a small pine cone, you can get a flower-like appearance. Turning and rolling the pine cone on a clay slab will give a scale-like texture; crisscrossing gives still another unusual texture.

Best results will be had on very moist clay. You can smooth away the undesirable imperfections when the clay is dry.
— Leta Ross
Mud Roost Ceramic Studio
Emporia, Kans.

Garlic Press Clay
The kitchen is the heart of the home, but I'll wager the ceramic room sports as many kitchen tools as does the kitchen! And here's another addition—

The garlic press makes wonderful strings or threads of clay. This day hair is just what you need for that pink poodle or for those ruffles around the clown's neck and wrists.
— Dorothy Gutzmer
Hinsdale, Ill.

Market for Ideas
Send your bright ideas to Ceramics Monthly — with photos or sketches, if applicable. We pay $1 to $5 for suggestions used in this column. (Sorry, but we can't acknowledge or return unused items.)
ENAMELISTS—ATTENTION

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Mosaics from bits of colored tile

Mosaic work—it may be in the form of an impressive architectural panel used indoors or out, or the colorful collar on a sculptured cat, or even a simple decoration set in the wall of a clay pot. Whatever the form, mosaic can be used with startling effect in modern settings.

Mosaic is the ancient art of creating surface decoration by inlaying small pieces of colored glass or tile, called tesserae. We do not often see contemporary examples of it. But at the Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles, the old technique is used in new ways and carried to a high level of art. There, the students create ceramic mosaic panels which consistently win international recognition.

Making and using ceramic tesserae is not a difficult process in itself—as Sister Magdalen Mary, of the school’s art faculty, describes it. But first and last, she warns the novice that it is not technique but what you do with it that makes the difference. Design, as in any other art or craft, is the important factor in composing a mosaic.

For the ceramist who wants to try his hand at mosaic work, whether it be a wall panel, table top or decorative section on pottery, Sister Magdalen Mary describes below how to make ceramic tesserae from clay and how to fasten the small glazed pieces to a permanent background.

You begin with a slab of clay rolled out between guides to about the thickness of a school ruler. The slab can be glazed at once, or several days later provided it can be kept damp (slabs can be stored on top of each other with plain paper between to protect the surface to be glazed). Glaze is brushed on and should lie flat so the tesserae won’t have pillow-type tops which would reflect light distractingly. Glazing could be done by dipping after the pieces are cut but that is a slower process; spraying, however, is out of the question because the tiny tiles would be blown away.

It takes experience to tell when the glazed slab (or slabs) is ready for cutting into pieces. If the slab is too wet, it is hard to pick up the tesserae and they warp; if it is too dry, the pieces chip and the glaze falls off. (Even though gum is added to the glaze, some flaking is unavoidable.) If glazed as soon as it is rolled out, instead of stored, the clay should be solid enough to cut in from one or two hours. Avoid making a bevel because edges that slant cannot be fitted close to each other later. The shapes can be small and large, square and triangular, long and narrow—all add to the variety and help to solve the problem of leftover corners which invariably come up in the final composition.

The tesserae are placed in the kiln immediately after the slab is cut because, if allowed to dry before moving, they lose their glaze. Firing temperatures, of course, depend on the glaze and the color desired. In the one-fire process used here, some glazes will crawl but they can be used for texture or refired with a touch of different colored glaze on exposed spots. Cracked glazes also add variety.

As soon as you have sufficient shapes and colors, the tesserae are ready to be organized in a mosaic composition. They are fastened to a background with one or another commercial adhesive (we prefer Miracle Thin-Set Ceramic Tile Cement). The adhesive can be spread on each tessera as it is placed on the background; or it can be spread over a small area (quick drying has to be considered) and the tesserae fastened to it. This system is sometimes employed: the pieces are arranged on a permanent background without any binder, and the whole mosaic is covered with a mixture (Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company’s 3M Brand No. EC880); the mixture works its way under the International recognition of mosaics made by students at Immaculate Heart College is well-deserved reward for Sister Magdalen Mary, I. H. M., their teacher, as well as Chairman of Art. Her helpful comments on how the small tiles are made and organized in a mosaic are given here as aids to ceramists who want to use the colorful medium in their own work.

(Please turn to Page 36)
Learning to cut the foot rim on your thrown pots is as important an item as mastery of the throwing itself. A ragged, poorly designed foot can easily ruin an otherwise handsome shape. Properly made, the foot can give lift to a piece of pottery, producing a more delicate and graceful appearance in the pot and preventing it from seeming table-bound.

Functionally, the foot can prevent damage to the pot, since it is better able to absorb shock than a flat, broad surface. And it can protect the surface upon which the pot is placed, since the foot elevates the container, a delicate surface would not be marred if the pot contained a hot substance.

Cutting foot rims and tooling, or trimming, pots are not difficult things to learn, but don’t save pots for foot rim practice until you know your work is right. Cutting a foot will only be more difficult for the beginner if the work is not round or has an uneven lip. When you feel your work is satisfactory, lift your pot from the wheel and place it in a damp box (the refrigerator works nicely) for slow drying.

The pot is ready for foot rimming when it is leather-hard; that is, stiff enough to be handled without deforming yet not too dry. The length of time required to reach this condition depends on the method of drying and on atmospheric conditions. Usually it is one or two days after being thrown.

Proper hardness of the clay is very important for tooling. If the clay is too soft, it will drag and clog the cutting tool. If it is too hard, tooling will be difficult. In the latter case, dampen the pot all over with a wet sponge, repeating the process several times until the clay is in a more workable condition.

Good turning tools are extremely important. The cutting end should be firm; those that are flexible, such as wire-end tools, tend to chatter, giving an uneven surface. Thin steel cutting blades, sharp either on one edge or on both, are best. Handle lengths should be from six to ten inches for secure gripping and, consequently, better control. It is advisable to have a round-end tool for cutting and a flat-end tool for finishing. Don’t handicap your efforts with tools you can’t control!

The type of footing tooled in a pot varies with the individual potter as well as with the locale. Some potters, particularly the Orientals, merely cut their pots from the wheel and consider them finished. Some tool little more than a slightly concave bottom on the pot, and others do a more formal job.

The foot rim demonstrated here falls into the latter category: it is a rather formal, highly finished, foot rim. As you follow the photos and text, pay particular attention to the methods used for handling the tools and to the

Acknowledgement is made to the B & I Mfg. Co., Burlington, Wis., for the loan of their table-model potter’s wheel used in this demonstration.
procedure in general which is described in full detail.

1. Before attempting any tooling you must first determine how much clay was left in the bottom of the pot. With the pot on a flat surface, lay a stick or rigid tool across the top beyond the edges. Now, stand a stick upright on the outside and mark with a pencil where the horizontal piece crosses it. Repeat the process by placing the vertical stick inside the pot, being sure it stands on the lowest inside area, and again mark it where it is crossed by the horizontal. The distance between the two pencil marks on the vertical stick is the actual thickness of the bottom of the pot at its thinnest point, and is an indication of how much trimming is necessary and how deep a foot rim you can cut.

Another kind of measurement can be taken by feel: run the wall of the pot from the lip to the base between your thumb and forefinger. With a little experience you can tell where the wall begins to get thicker (toward the bottom), and you can make a mark to indicate how far down to tool in order to eliminate excess thickness, hence excessive weight.

2. The pot is inverted on the wheel head, centered and then fastened in place. The concentric circles which are inscribed on most wheel heads are a helpful guide to centering; you cannot, however, depend upon them exclusively. In most cases they are not accurate enough for precision work; moreover, your pot may be slightly off-center. Follow this procedure for accurate centering:

   With your arms and hands firmly braced, carefully move a pencil or pointed wooded tool toward the pot, as the wheel turns slowly, until it touches at the lowest point where tooling is desired. Move the pot very carefully and slightly away from the marked side, repeating the procedure until the pointer, held securely and not moved, touches the pot all the way around. When this occurs, your piece is centered.

Now take some fresh clay and roll two or three thick coils. Holding the pot firmly with one hand, press the coils down on the wheel against the pot, securing it firmly to the wheel head. Check the pot after it is secured to be sure you haven't thrown it off-center.

3. With the wheel turning counterclockwise at a slow speed, carefully and firmly bring a round-end tool down on the bottom of the pot, starting just slightly away from center. Slowly sweep the tool across the surface of the clay, taking off only a small amount. This is to obtain a smooth, flat, working area. Leave a small nub of clay intact in the center. This is your reference guide—it is a constant reminder of how much clay you have removed and consequently how much clay is left.

Support and control are just as important in foot rimming as in throwing. Some wheels are equipped with a variable-height crossbar or with hand supports. On wheels without these conveniences you can build up your own support by laying a board across books, boxes, brick, etc., (see illustration on page 35). Support your hands slightly above, and as close as possible to, the work. Use a proper foot rimming tool; and hold the tool firmly in both hands. Remember to move the clay—don't let it move you!

4. Now we really get to work—by tooling the outside. Starting at the top (it's the bottom of the pot!) move...
Carving from a solid block of clay is an exciting way to work. It is a method that offers magic and power in return for elbow grease and head work every step of the way. It cannot, literally, be taken lightly but once undertaken progress is rapid and surprising. Carving is the method I reserve for my serious sculpture.

The change which takes place, when a block of clay is transformed into finished sculpture, depends on a combination of factors: the artist's relationship through his work to the world about him, his technical and aesthetic perception, the physical labor involved, and the chemical reaction that takes place in the clay during the firing process. Often involved, too, I believe, is an almost mystical element comparable to the magic which nature performs in the metamorphosis of a crawling caterpillar into a breath-takingly graceful butterfly.

In the block is your idea waiting to be released. Resistance is there between you and the clay. Forms develop swiftly (I, personally, can work faster this way than any other way). Unlike other methods, there is no problem of the clay's staying in shape; but you must have a clear concept of the form you intend to impose on the block. It is exciting. It is creation.

Carving brings forth a simple yet powerful statement, devoid of the distractions of too much detail and the fitting of one form upon another as in modeling. Although modeled sculpture of more complicated nature and movement can have lasting power as work of art, you will find that it does not harbor profound content in form or idea. My own more significant works have seemed always to need to be carved.

Selecting the clay for the project, mixing it with grog and oxides to produce the right texture and color, wedging it and aging—all take a little time. Once the clay is wedged, slammed, paddled and worked into a block—perhaps as big a chunk as two hundred pounds—I let it stand, to firm up, until the following day at least. This is very important for the block should offer some resistance to carving, not like a rock, of course, but good and firm. Then I paddle it again!

Now I am ready to begin creative work, and to give you some idea of how I do it, I reconstruct the way in which I made the horse and rider sculpture called Homestretch (top right). It is sketched in my mind, although I may also make a paper sketch and a small clay sketch, too. I do not, however, try to follow any drawing or clay sketch after I am well begun. You and your idea have to grow and develop together as you work. The first time you carve, you are surprised to see how the thing grows and changes and takes shape. You sense and know what three-dimensional form really is. You understand the intactness of sculpture, and the necessity of graying-in forms so that they do not hop out at you but stay in place as a whole. (I have seen students, who previously had modeled and built by coil, do their first really sculptural form by carving; and only then seem to comprehend the power and wonder of sculpture.)

The first real step in carving is the initial drawing on all four sides of the block. I have already, of course, studied the block until I know it better than my own face. I draw on top of the block, too, and this is very important because action of the spine line, the direction in which the head and tail turn, and other movement will show up here. The drawing is brought out to the edges of the clay: carving is never done in the middle of the block but extends to the very outer edges on all sides. Standing in such a way that I can see what happens on both sides of the piece and working with both hands, one on either side, I slice off large chunks of clay that I do not need, using a nylon cord for the purpose. The operation is a fast one, taking about three minutes. Now I have a silhouette, and it has been very easy.

Every step of the way from now on, you seek to understand the projecting form. All the highest projections are Xed with a dull drawing pencil—the higher the projection, the bigger the X. Then I take a heavy, coarse modeling tool, and slowly and thoughtfully cut back each form—all over the con (Text continued on Page 30)
IN THE TEXT, the sculptor reconstructs the process which produced this piece. "Speed and a somber-mood quality were uppermost in my mind . . ."

**HOMESTRETCH** (22" W x 15" H), winner of awards, is owned by the Wichita Museum.

**Favorite Way of Working**

**FROM A BLOCK OF CLAY**

by EDRIS ECKHARDT

"Sly, strange illusion . . ." the sculptor says of this carved and engraved piece, **IN THE GLADE**. "It appears to be a dead tree seen from a distance; then you seem to bring it into sharp focus and it is the witch with a bird. The sensation is one of a deep wood where light and shade play tricks with form." Color and the texture of the color are important here—some very flat, some soft in tone; the glaze is thin and sparingly applied. The piece, 24" H, is owned by a private collector.

"One of my most significant pieces" (and perhaps best known) — **PAINTED MASK**. The eyes are cut through to further the mask-like poignancy of the clown. Unlike most Eckhardt carved sculpture, this one is brightly colored and fully glazed, giving impression of carnival gaiety. "Then the form beneath takes over, making you forget color, seeing only deep despair." Owned by Cleveland Museum of Art, the piece is 15" H.
Prepared underglazes have much to offer the ceramist. They handle very much like water colors or tempura, and lend themselves to a wide variety of decorating techniques: stencils, mishima, sgraffito, resist, brush, etc. Unlike slip, they give a range of translucency as well as opacity and they can be applied to either green ware or bisque.

As with any other medium, practice and experimentation will help you get the most out of the material; however, there is nothing inherently difficult about using prepared underglazes. Actually the only real precaution is being sure the colors are of proper consistency. If the underglaze is too thin, it will give poor coverage; if too thick, it will pile up and perhaps peel, flake, or crack off in the kiln. The underglaze should flow easily from the brush—a feel for the exact consistency will develop through practice and experience.

Regarding helpful suggestions—Always be sure the surface to be decorated is free from dust, grease, or other foreign matter: go over the surface carefully with a slightly dampened sponge immediately before decorating. Make sure you work with a full brush each time. It is good to form the habit of working from a small wide-mouthed container which will enable you to see between the banding wheel and towel, and the towel and plate, to hold nicely. As the wheel turns, a sponge or brush filled with underglaze is touched down at the center of the piece and pulled in a straight line to the outside edge.

Some of the colors to be used in the leaves are picked up in the background: medium yellow, lime-green, and dark green. Each color is swirled on in turn. The background is completed by putting a dark brown border around the edge of the plate with a sponge. The sponge is damp before the underglaze color is applied and, if excess is dabbed off on paper toweling or newspaper, a better textured pattern can be obtained.

3. Underglaze dries very quickly and does not smear easily. You will have no difficulty, therefore, in transferring the pattern you have prepared. You can trace it through graphite paper or simply make an impression through your pattern on the surface of the green ware, then go over the impressed lines with a soft pencil. The graphite or pencil mark will burn out without leaving any marks in the decoration or the surface of the glaze. Don't try to use ordinary typewriter carbon paper; you'll find it smudges and is generally messy to work with.

4. A Chinese brush capable of holding a good supply of color now comes into play. (You could use a #6 or 8 brush.) Here the medium yellow color is brushed on each sketched leaf using full strokes from the edge of the leaf inward. Two light coats are applied so that a degree of translucency will be retained allowing the swirl pattern to show through.

5. Shading is being put in with the brown and with the lime green and dark green. The large Chinese brush is still being used; the colors, however, have been thinned down a little on a glazed tile for even greater translucency. Short strokes are used around the edge of each leaf: nature’s own leaves are followed as color guides.

6. The colors are blended by rubbing briskly with the finger. Color is pulled in from the edges toward the center with short, straight strokes, not
and brush

circular. Underglaze powder will form on the surface and should be blown away.

7. A liner brush (00) is now used to outline each of the leaves (in dark green) and to sketch in the veins.

8. For accents or highlights, Mrs. Matney uses sgraffito around the outside edge of each leaf.

9. All dust from the sgraffito technique is carefully removed from the surface, and clear glaze is applied. Here the first coat is being brushed on. One or two additional coats, each going on in a different direction, will be given to assure complete coverage of the plate. (Of course, the piece could have been dipped or sprayed.) After firing — the finished piece is shown on the opposite page.

This is not a difficult type of decoration to accomplish. Of course, it involves more techniques and attention to details than does, for example, slip painting. In your attention to these details, be careful that you don't forget you are decorating pottery and that the shape is important. One way to avoid this pitfall is to develop the technique through practice so that you can concentrate on the decoration as a whole, rather than on individual self-conscious brush strokes. One handy way to practice brush strokes and coloring effects is to work on a piece of hard-fired bisque which you will find is easily washed off and dried, ready to be used again for additional practice.

In subsequent articles, various decorating and ornamenting techniques using prepared underglazes will be demonstrated.

JANUARY 1955
How to make **A PLATTER**

by JOHN KENNY

Part of a series outlining easy steps for making useful yet attractive objects from clay, by an author well-known to ceramists.—Ed.

You can produce a handsome rectangular platter like the one shown here by simply draping and shaping a layer of clay over a hump of clay. Step-by-step this is the way it is done.

1. Cut a pattern for the dish from a piece of paper, and trace the outline of it on a wooden drawing board.
2. Within the penciled outline, form a hump of clay—this is the shape the inside of the platter will take. In order to get just the height (or depth) you want, use strips of wood as guides; use another stick to scrape and smooth the surface.
3. Lay two layers of cloth over the hump.
4. Roll out a layer of clay and, using the same paper pattern, cut the shape for the platter, leaving it one-half inch wider than the pattern all the way around.
5. Press this layer of clay over the cloth-covered hump.
6. Lightly roll over the surface to help shape the platter.
7. While the piece is still on the hump, make a foot from a thin cylinder of clay and fasten it to the base.
8. Secure the foot by working the clay together with a modeling tool. Then leave the platter to dry over night. Next morning, you can easily lift it off the hump by lifting one layer of cloth with it.
9. While the platter is still leather hard, you can trim rough edges, and finish it with scrapers and sponge. Patience and care at this point will reward you with satisfying results.

Finished and glazed, the platter (top of page) is a piece of ceramic ware that combines beauty and utility.
WHAT ARE LITTLE ZEBRAS MADE OF?

by PHIL ALLEN

See the sturdy little zebra sporting stripes as zebras do. This compact and proper creature grew out of only a few rolls and small balls of clay; and Gary shows us how it happened.

1. The parts that go to make the animal: two rolls of clay curved like horseshoes to form the legs and body; a short, fat roll bent like a hook, and cut on a slant at one end, to be the neck and head; a thin roll to make the mane, a heavy nub for the tail, and two pellets for ears.

2. Gary assembles the creature on a bisque tile which can be moved around easily. He sets the two curved rolls side by side, and presses them gently together across the top to make a good strong back. A chunk of clay beneath keeps the span from collapsing while he works; a piece of paper separates the support from the clay above so it won't stick. With his left hand supporting the arched back, Gary pushes the neck firmly in place. Now he will add the mane which has been flattened somewhat, the tail and ears which have been shaped a little, and eyes which are merely two small buttons of clay.

You must be careful, Gary knows, about joining each section securely. (It's discouraging when your work falls apart while drying or firing!) If the clay is plastic, not too soft and not too hard, the joints can be worked together with fingers or a modeling tool. But if there is any question about the sticking quality of the clay, the areas to be joined should first be covered with thick slip made from the same clay (the slip acts like glue).

3. Everything is in place. The animal's back is arched, the legs are braced and the head is up. The mane curves over the head and down to the back. Gary smooths rough spots here and there with a wooden tool. He uses a banding wheel because it is easier to work when you can turn the piece around; moreover, it gives him a chance to see how his creation looks from all sides. When he feels it is finished, he sets it aside to dry thoroughly. Then he can decorate it.

4. Everyone knows that a zebra has stripes, but does everyone know how they go? A picture or a trip to the zoo, Gary says, gives you the idea. First, he covers the animal with a white engobe so the red clay will not show. Then he carefully paints the stripes on with underglaze. Finally, he covers the whole piece with transparent glaze, and it is ready to go into the kiln for firing.

Gary thinks that making animals out of clay is easy. All you have to do is take a good look at the creature you want to make, figure out what shapes and color markings will make it look like a zebra, say, instead of a lion—and go to work. When it comes to decorating, you can really let yourself go. Gary's zebra, for example, happens to be blue and white but it could have been green and yellow, Gary says.
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It may not be a matter of minutes but in a surprisingly short time you can acquire a colorful pair of enameled cuff links for your French-cuffed shirts. The process is simple, involving only two small copper shapes to be enameled back and front, and findings to be attached when the enameling is done.

1. First the backs of the copper shapes: clean them thoroughly with ordinary kitchen copper cleaner—you can't enamel on dirty metal! (And if you need to brush up on various phases of enameling, refer back to Jean O'Hara's series which has been running in CM since last June.)

2. Place a small square of paper on the center of each back so you will have bare metal for cementing the findings later; then spray the backs with gum solution, and counter enamel by the sift method.

3. Peel the little stencils off (carefully).

4. Firing: since only one side is enameled, just set the pieces on marinite and pop them into the kiln.

5. Use copper cleaner again to take off all fire-scale which formed on the bare metal during firing.

6. Now we are ready for the front, or important, side of the cuff links. Cover with gum solution and dust on enamel—a light color as background for the dark, stenciled design. (A cellulose sponge makes a fine working surface because you can easily reach under the metal shape to pick it up.)

7. Fire, and this time use a trivet—now that both sides of the metal are enameled, it must be suspended.

8. For the design on the cuff links, sketch a shape and cut a stencil from paper. Place it—either the positive or the negative—on the enameled pieces and sift a contrasting color overall. (A thin application gives the salt-and-pepper texture seen here.)

9. Peel off the stencil, fire, attach the findings with jewelry cement, and—

10. Voila! your French cuffs can sport accessories which are really different as well as attractive—Peter Rosti, Brooklyn, N.Y.

JANUARY 1955
Ceramic beads are easy to make—especially the rather rough but attractive shapes. Follow through on the instructions below, and you will see how simple the process is.

1. Pinch beads out of plastic clay and shape by hand. If you like the “dug-up” look,” (see piece below) work with rather dry clay. Before the clay is leather hard, drill the hole using a regular drill bit. Don’t forget to allow for shrinkage and give some thought at this point to how you are going to string your beads. You can use a leather thong, silver chain, nylon thread, etc.; and each requires a different sized hole.

2. When the beads are thoroughly dry, mount them on round, tapered wooden sticks. Holding the end of the stick, dip the bead into glaze—twice for vivid coloring—and then insert the stick in a wad of clay for drying.

3. A slightly larger drill bit is now used to remove glaze from the inside of the hole and also to bevel the glaze around the edge to keep the hole from being filled during firing.

4. For firing, I like to mount the beads on a tree which I made myself. The tree consists of a series of nichrome wires embedded in a clay post. The wires hold the beads and the post can act as a shelf support, saving space in the kiln. It is a good idea to make the post with a wider bottom so it will not topple when not used as a shelf post. A 16-to 20-gauge nichrome wire works fine; if a lighter wire is used, twist two strands together. A slight kink put in, or left in, the wire will help hold the beads in place. Be sure to put a generous amount of kiln wash on the wires as well as on the post before using.—Peg Townsend, Tucson, Ariz.

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CERAMICS MONTHLY
I was testing new glazes when the thought struck me that the finished samples looked like the large stones you see in costume rings. I made the samples smaller and added a little decoration; and the jewel effect pleased me. In other words, I found making a ceramic ring as easy as making a glaze sample. Follow me through the steps and I think you will agree.

From ¾-inch-thick slab of clay, cut a rectangle approximately 1 x ⅛-inch; and from a 1/12-inch-thick slab, cut another rectangle approximately ⅛ x ½-inch. Fasten the smaller piece on top of the thick one with slip.

The base can be left smooth or textured like hammered or etched metal. This is the part that may be overglazed with silver or gold to give the effect of a setting.

Make a slit in either side of the setting so that a metal ring band can be inserted, and remember that clay shrinks. Be sure the openings are large and deep enough for the band. When thoroughly dry, the ring is ready for firing and glazing in colors and textures of your choice.

The ring band may be silver or gold, depending on the glaze used. Sterling silver can be purchased from almost any arts and crafts supply dealer and he will cut it to the size desired. I would suggest a piece of 20-gauge, cut ½-inch wide and about 2 inches long depending on the size of your finger. If you want a gold band, look for a gold refining company (telephone directories list them under “Precious Metals”). The gauge would be the same as in silver. Since the band is detachable, you need only one for as many stones as you care to make.

Each ring can be an original. The directions here are for an oblong shape but the same basic steps would apply for round, square, octagonal and oval rings. Color possibilities are limitless, although transparent greens, black and opaque turquoise have a very jewel-like quality. The whole ring can be overglazed with gold or silver, lusters can be used effectively. These are only a few suggestions—you will have more.—Gen Ann Harris, Covington, Ky.
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CLAY: Plasticity & Shortness

by Edgar Huntfield

Plasticity is one of the most important characteristics of clays. Without it, it seems certain that primitive peoples would not have developed the art of pottery-making, for how could they have fashioned their ware? Plasticity is essential in all processes of forming, even in casting and dry-pressing, because hand-in-hand with it are found strength and shrinkage. Strength to resist handling before firing is desirable in any ceramic product and shrinkage is necessary for easy mold release.

Most ceramic workers take plasticity for granted because they have never had to struggle with a short clay (lacking sufficient plasticity for its intended use.) If used for throwing, a short clay will split when stretched and, if used for coil-building or slab-construction, its low plasticity will make for a poor bonding together of the various parts. The fact that a clay body is short does not necessarily eliminate it from consideration as a usable material. Shortness can be corrected but to do it you must have some concept of plasticity.

Many theories about plasticity exist. Some of them seem quite reasonable, and one or two of them sound as though they had been evolved by a medieval physicist. If we look over all the theories (which we will not do) and then do some observing and thinking of our own, we can come up with ideas as valid as the next person’s. So—after sifting through the ideas of others, as well as our own thoughts and observations, we discover two factors which seem of primary importance in affecting plasticity. These are grain size and colloidal content.

All highly plastic ceramic materials are very fine in grain-size or at least the greater part of their composition is fine-grained. Certainly we would be unable to find even a hint of plasticity in a bucketful of small wet pebbles. The same pebbles, crushed to fine sand and dampened, could be used for simple sand-sculpture, and could be described as showing a suggestion of plasticity. The sand could be pulverized to a fine powder and this, with the right water content, would show still greater tendency toward plasticity. If we could go on grinding we might reach a degree of fineness which would allow the mass to exhibit true plasticity.

The term “colloid” may refer either to matter in an extreme state of subdivision or to substances of a gelatin-like consistency. Continued grinding may produce some material of colloidal fineness but the greater part of the plasticity-producing colloidal content is of the jellylike type. These materials are usually organic in origin, being the residue of vegetable matter and bacterial growth. The gelatinous colloids give bodies great cohesiveness and, through their lubricating ability, impart the great mobility which is characteristic of highly plastic clay bodies. The mineral bentonite, however, is an example of a colloidal substance of non-organic origin. It is a weathered volcanic ash capable of absorbing great amounts of water. In doing so it swells into a gelatinous mass and has the power, when added in small percentages, to give marked increases in plasticity to ceramic mixtures. With care, powdered flint having an addition of five per cent bentonite can be thrown on the potter’s wheel. Some natural clays of the western United States owe their extreme plasticity to bentonite.

A moderately plastic clay may be fine-grained but relatively free of colloidal material, or it may be comparatively coarse but rich in its colloidal content. The most plastic clays will be fine-grained and also richly endowed with colloidal substances. Conversely, a short clay may be coarse-grained; it may be deficient in colloids; or it may have both faults. While it is possible and sometimes feasible to decrease particle-size by prolonged grinding, the studio potter will usually find it more practical to alter the clay content of a short body by the partial substitution of a very fine-grained clay such as a ball clay.

If a short body is known to be of fine particle-size, several weeks of aging in the plastic state may give it the needed workability. Aging affords opportunity for bacterial activity, the by-products of which induce increased plasticity. Some clays, however, will not support bacterial growth because of a lack of suitable food in the form of organic material. In lieu of aging, these clays can be treated by the addition of two or three per cent of bentonite. You should mix it thoroughly with the dry powdered clay before adding water.
9. I am having trouble with underglaze colors after having used them without difficulty for some time. Dark colors such as black and dark green show a yellow halo; colors seem rather dull now; certain colors (black, dark green and blue particularly) often develop a fuzzy edge. The orange color tends to repel the glaze (although not entirely) causing it to bunch up in milky gobs. All of these difficulties have occurred at once. Could the underglaze medium I am using have deteriorated with age and caused the trouble? I have had it for over a year.

A. Your question is quite typical of many we receive in that you give insufficient information. To give a helpful reply, we would need much more detail, such as the source of the underglaze color, method of application, whether applied to greenware or bisque, type of glaze used over the colors and method of application, firing temperature, type of body employed, and so forth. There are so many possible sources of difficulty, it is virtually impossible to solve a problem unless all of the facts in the case are given.

To venture a guess, if nothing else in your method of working is changed, it could very well be that the medium deteriorated with age or through contamination and is creating the difficulty. You should bring this question to the attention of your supplier. If you have changed the clear glaze which you use over the colors--that could be the source of your problem. The type of covering glaze is important as it can react unfavorably with the colors.

Q. What kind of brushes are best for the fluff-brush method Mrs. Holst described in her October CM article?

A. Mrs. Holst recommends that you use camel-hair brushes of large sizes--anywhere from No. 6 to No. 12.

Q. I made a plaster wedging board but find that the clay picks up bits of the plaster so that the surface is now quite pitted. Can you tell me why this happens and also whether the plaster will be harmful to the clay?

A. A good mix of plaster should not be so soft as to crumble under the impact of wedging. After continued use, the plaster surface can become soft and pieces will then break loose. Try a denser plaster/water mixture, such as two pounds of plaster to one quart of water, and be sure you are using pottery plaster. A better surface for wedging would be a medium-weight canvas stretched tightly across a firm base. The small pieces of plaster in the clay will certainly prove to be detrimental when the clay is fired. A piece the size of a pinhead or smaller can crack the ware or cause surface chipping.

Q. In recent issues of CM a "thick slip made from the same clay you are working with" has been recommended for holding together different parts of hand-built pottery and sculpture. What are the necessary ingredients for this slip and why is "same clay" so carefully specified?

A. The slip referred to is nothing more than a rather thick mixture of clay and water. No other ingredients are required. The "same clay" is specified so there will be no cracking at the joints; cracking could occur if different clays—having different shrinkage—were used.
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Eckhardt: Carving
(Begins on Page 18)

position, not just on one side—and not too deep the first time around. More clay can always be cut off but I never add clay. I draw all over again, stand back and study each side from a distance of five or six feet.

Lesser projections are now X-ed and cut back with the large modeling tool. Again I draw and study. Drawing is done to determine the planes, the big ones first, the smaller planes later. Standing back, I notice the color of my sculpture. Most carved sculpture does not need deep, black holes. In some of my work, I carve fairly deep cavens but these are planned—needed accents, balanced by other related darks.

In the finished carving of the horse and rider, you will notice little or no detail. This adds to the impression of speed. The last burst of speed on a circular track is suggested by the curve of the horse’s spine, as seen from the top, and by the outburst of horse and rider to counteract going around a curve at full speed. As you work, you have to feel this impression in every muscle you have in order for it to be a fast-running horse on a circular track. You have to feel what the rider feels, and how he balances; and you have also to put yourself in the position of the horse as well as of the beholder whose viewpoint you are portraying.

The eye of the horse is cut right through to the other side. It gives the spectral note needed so this will not be confused with just a simple race. The straining cavern of mouth and nostrils also add to the effect. The subject, you see, is death on horseback.

When the sculpture is about three-fourths done, and before the surfaces are textured or finished, I turn it over carefully onto a feather pillow and hold it out with a wire-loop tool. I make perhaps as many as two hundred small vent holes in the walls—these to aid drying and firing, and lighten weight.

When the piece is picked up again, it should weigh as much as your eye says it should. If heavier or lighter than your eye estimated, you have a sense of being cheated, as though something is wrong in the construction. This is the reason Homestretch could never be aesthetic if it were thin-cast. There is a subtle relationship between you and what you see, a balance-sense.

With the deep carving done, you are ready, after more careful study, to complete the details and texture the clay if necessary or desirable. Since speed was what I wanted in this sculpture, there was, of course, no engraving or sharp detail.

Much of the solid, or block, feel
(Please turn to Page 32)
The Overglaze Page
by ZENA S. HOLST

RAISED PASTE

Paste for raised gold is applied in high relief for ornate designs; after firing it is covered with gold. It is used mostly for scrolls and broken lines in the finishing of bands and motifs, and is especially appropriate when placed at the edges of solid gold bands and designs, although it is also used over colors and lusters. Small dots of paste are used to surround the colored jewels made of Chinese paste or enamels. This yellow colored paste is specifically prepared to be covered with gold, and for no other purpose; it is of a composition to receive only the unfluxed metals. The type of decoration for which it is appropriate is usually done on hard porcelain china such as wedding and cake plates and so the burnish unfluxed metal is used. The design is generally fancy, conventional or semi-conventional, and of the dainty Dresden type.

Other uses for relief paste work are in conjunction with enamels and Chinese pastes on decorative art objects. It is a good foundation for gold work on bisque, especially when doing Oriental designs that require much metal. The regular liquid gold will not stay bright over the paste. Be sure to use the unfluxed gold at all times.

The paste comes prepared in a jar and also in powdered form in a vial. The prepared must be stirred well from the bottom and thinned with pure spirits of turpentine to proper consistency for flowing on in relief. To apply the decoration, use a fine pointed sable brush; dip into the paste, allow it to drop off the brush and then pull it into a scroll or line. It takes practice to form graceful raised scrolls. For dots, the paste should be of heavy enough consistency to stand up to a peak when dropped, actually stringy. The powdered form must be mixed with medium specifically prepared for relief paste. It is dark colored and heavy. Use just enough to hold the powder together in a very thick mass. Grind well on a glass palette by turning the thick mass over and over with the palette knife, and at the same time breathe (not blow) on it with every turn. The warm moisture from the breath will cause the mass to become tacky. Continue mixing until it is so tacky it cannot be turned, then start thinning with turpentine until of good consistency for laying on the design.

Do not artificially dry your ware after applying raised paste; allow several hours before placing in the kiln. It should dry dull. If too much medium has been added, the raised paste will flatten in the firing. This paste is sensitive like opaque enamels and will crackle or chip if not properly prepared. If the first application is not high enough in relief, it can be built up before firing. Let the first layer dry, but not too much to hold the second layer. Relief paste can withstand as many as three firings, but it is best to try to complete the metal coverage in the second fire. If the painted decoration requires several firings, it is best to have it finished before applying paste.

THE HOLST NOTEBOOK

✦ I make a mess of gold work and some purple spots always show after firing. How can I avoid this?

You evidently try to remove irregularities and do not clean off the gold thoroughly. Liquid metals are very strong and the best medium for removing them is saliva. Moisten a bit of cotton wrapped around a toothpick, and change the cotton often. Paste metals may be removed, cleaned or straightened out with denatured alcohol and a stiff, pointed brush, a sable being good for the purpose. Again, you may use saliva and cotton if you wish: there is nothing to equal it.

✦ It is impossible for me to get an even edge of metal on dishes. How do you do it?

Metals are applied to edges of dishes with the finger, not with a brush. Dip cushion tip of forefinger into prepared metal (paste or liquid) and apply to edge by rubbing in around and around. Do not pick up too much metal at one time and finish each small section as continued around. If metal is smooth on the finger, it will go on smoothly and with very even lines inside and outside the edge. This is impossible to accomplish with a brush. Use this same method when doing colored edges with mineral colors.

January 1955

31
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Eckhardt: Carving
(Continued from Page 30)

must be left in your carving — something of the elemental, something of the resisting strength of the leather-hard clay block. It should have dignity, simplicity and a sense of bigness. If it has these, the carving is finished and can stand, lightly covered, until it is almost but not quite dry.

During the color planning for the Homestretch, the suggestion of speed, of running from light into darkness, and a somber-mood quality were uppermost in my mind. I knew at once that I would use engobes, stepped up with glazes, on the high-lighted surfaces only. The glaze would be spatter-sprayed because a splayed effect would suggest speed. There would be two colors — light with dark overtones — in addition to the red of the clay.

I sprayed from all sides, lightly here, heavily there, with the gun adjusted so I could be sure of a rather long spatter. I sprayed from the top in such a way that plenty of red and putty color would show through producing a double effect — of speed and of the horse running out of light into dark.

Then the firing. Firing carved sculpture that is large and heavy, with walls of uneven thickness, is quite different from firing pottery. You have something you must treat as a solid which undergoes far greater stress and strain than a thin-walled pot. I take large sculpture through long, slow firing, raising the temperature very, very gradually in the beginning.

When, finally, the kiln door is opened, I feel that heart-thumping excitement that twenty-two years of firing ceramics has not dulled. I remember the block of clay. I remember my part in freeing the form from the block, the oxides I used to bring color, and the fire which caused a chemical structure-change in the clay. I think of metamorphosis, meaning "change in form, structure or substance, transformation by magic or witchcraft," and I decide that metamorphosis has truly taken place.

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32
Enameling on Metal
by JEAN O’HARA

EFFECTS & DEFECTS

EFFECT: Luster Accents

Liquid metallic lusters are frequently used for the final accents on an enameled piece (as well as for numbering test samples, adding your signature, etc.). Those most commonly used are gold, platinum and palladium. They come already prepared in liquid form, and you need only shake the bottle well before applying. But these lusters are tricky materials to handle and fire. It would be well to learn their habits by experimenting on some samples before attempting to use them on finished pieces.

The fired enamel on which the luster is to be applied should first be cleaned with carbon tetrachloride (lighter fluid) or a similar solution. Then the liquid luster is applied with a brush or, in the case of very fine lines, with a croquille pen. The application should be thin yet heavy enough to appear dark and opaque before firing; if it is light and weak, it will not show at all when it comes from the kiln.

Before it is fired, luster must be thoroughly dry: set it on top of a warm kiln for at least several hours, preferably overnight. You fire at lower-than-normal temperature until the luster becomes bright and fixed to the surface. Both the temperature and the firing time will vary according to the base enamel on the piece; but, in general, about 1200°F., for two or three minutes is about right. With luster, there is more chance of overfiring than of underfiring. You can tell whether it is properly fired down by lightly scratching it with a pointed tool: if a mark is left, the luster is not fired enough. After the firing, luster can be brightened by rubbing it with a moistened scouring powder.

Rich materials lose their effect by overuse so try to reserve the lusters for special accents in your enameling.

DEFECT: Firescale

Good housekeeping is a must in enameling. If you want to spare yourself disappointments, you can’t be too fussy about keeping all materials, work areas and firing equipment clean. Foreign matter in enamels has the embarrassing habit of turning up as black specks embedded in the fired piece (or as bubbles, pits or cloudy color).

Firescale is one of the chief offenders. Be sure to keep firescale off all your equipment so it won’t get into your enamel colors or onto the next piece to be fired. When you take a piece from the kiln don’t set it next to one that is about to go in because firescale can pop right off the edge of the cooling, fired piece onto the unfired one. You can tell whether it is properly fired down by lightly scratching it with a pointed tool: if a mark is left, the luster is not fired enough. After the firing, luster can be brightened by rubbing it with a moistened scouring powder.

Rich materials lose their effect by overuse so try to reserve the lusters for special accents in your enameling.

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Closing a thousand-year gap in ceramic
know-how was the assignment Mary Kring
Risley (below, left) undertook when she went
to the Philippines three years ago to take
part in a program to establish modern
industry in the islands.

For countless centuries, as a sideline to
farming, women in the villages had made
porous jugs for cooling water and soft cook-
ing pots for steaming rice. The pots were
beaten out by hand, roughly shaped by
paddling on the outside against a round
stone on the inside; Glazes were unknown.
Firing was a community affair with pots stack-
ed together in the open, covered with rice
straw or pine needles. (See photos at right.)

Mary's job was to teach modern tech-
niques of pottery making. Over a two-year
period she worked with enthusiastic Filipinos
showing them how to make clay bodies,
glazes and kilns; throw on the wheel, iigger
and slip cast; fire a big kiln. The first Phi-
lpine glazes emerged; Improved plans for
community kilns evolved. And, the key to the
program, students returned home to the vil-
lages to spread the knowledge of hitherto
unheard-of ways of pursuing an ancient craft.

FILMS, we said a year ago (and we say it
again), are just what you need to spark that
club meeting or class at school. The occasion
was the release of CM's descriptive report on
twenty-five motion pictures about ceramics
(January 1954). We've received many re-
quests to bring the film list up-to-date and
republish. As far as we have been able to
determine, there have been no substantial
changes and the list is just as accurate today
as it was when published. But we will meet
you halfway. We have run off a quantity of
reprints: if your list has strayed (or frayed)
send us a stamped, addressed envelope, and
we'll forward a copy to you.

ONCE-OVER BY EXPERTS: Chicago Potters
Guild members, at a recent meeting, offered
up their own creations for evaluation by a
panel of experts which included K. L. Boynt-
ton (CM writer on Scandinavian ceramics).
Scheduled for the next get together: a guest
demonstration of throwing on the wheel.

STRICTLY AMATEUR is the way Delaware's
newly formed hobby club, Blue Clay Chicks,
is billed. Purpose: to exchange ideas and
promote activities. Interested? Notify Mrs. Betty
Heiser, 1108 Prospect Ave., Bellefonte, Del...
SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS—
Don't keep it to yourself. Let CM readers
know what's going on in your ceramic baili-
wick whether it's a world-shaking event or just
plain good news about people (especially
welcome). Ceramists all over the country
are doing things—organizing, electing; learn-
ing; teaching; competing; judging; adventur-
ing, discovering. So take your pen and
give us the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE.

34
Cutting Foot Rims
(Begins on Page 16)

the rigidly held tool slowly down the
outside wall as the wheel turns at slow
speed, cutting the excess clay as far
down as the mark you made when
centering. Don't attempt to remove too
much clay at one time because a mis-
step can easily create a gouge which

will ruin the pot. Take off a small
amount of clay each time, repeating
the operation several times until the
excess clay has been removed.

5. We will cut a visible foot on
this particular bowl; the shaping of the
outside is to be completed at this point.
Proceed carefully in order not to re-
move too much rim. The thickness of
the bottom will determine the height to
which the rim can be cut; aesthetics
and proportions, however, also play an
important role. Bend down until you
are at eye level with the pot and check
the diameter of the foot rim to see
if it is in good proportion to the pot
as a whole; also check the height of
the rim, making sure it is in good pro-
portion to its diameter and the profile
of the pot.

6. Excess clay on the inside of
the rim is now removed. Note that the
small nub of clay is still left in the
exact center to indicate the amount of
clay remaining in the bottom. Not until
the foot rim is complete is the center
nub tooled off.

7. Sponge the bottom area lightly,
while the wheel revolves slowly, to give
the pot a smooth finish and to remove
any burrs left by the cutting tools.
If throwing ridges have been left
by your fingers on the outside of
the pot, you may want to approximate
these at the bottom of the pot after the
excess clay has been cut off. You can
do this with your cutting tools. Try to
make the transition between the throw-
ning marks left by your fingers and the
tooled area as smooth as possible; for a
better blending of the two areas gently
sponge the whole outside surface.

The pot is now removed from the
wheel and set aside for drying. A few
basic types of foot rims are shown in
the sketch on page 17. Whether you
choose a visible or any invisible type
of foot, a good rule to remember is
that the bottom should be tooled until
it is as thin as the top rim of the
pot or thinner. A thick wall in the
bottom makes the pot heavier than it
looks, and this is undesirable.
Mosaics

(Begins on Page 15)

pieces and binds them, the surface later cleaned with methyl ethel ketone.

—In the case of mosaic panels, tesserae may be fastened to masonite or to a wooden board, or directly to a wall. If masonite is used, bracing is advisable because the tiles are heavy and

masonite tends to warp and bend. Angle iron is used for bracing and framing; and it must be added before the tesserae are laid in place.

—It is not absolutely necessary, but a mosaic may be, and often is, grouted which means filling the tiny crevices between the tesserae with tile cement. The cement may be colored (powdered pigment added before mixing with water) to bring out or subdue certain portions of the mosaic. White grout, for example, is attractive with black tesserae; but if the black area is busy, it can be quieted with a darkened grout.

With these suggestions on technique Sister Magdalen Mary comes back to the all-important matter of design.

—A mosaic is not a painting—allow the tesserae to suggest the lines and shapes. If a drawing is made it should be in the nature of a diagram which tells where to put head and hands, etc., but not what the shapes shall be.

—The mosaic should be enjoyable for itself alone regardless of subject. If its value lies only in its store-telling ability, the mosaic has failed.

—Last but not least, forget all art rules. An inventor is one who did not know it could not be done. Forget the well-meant criticisms of family and friends. Above all, forget yourself.
SHOW TIME

WISCONSIN DESIGNER-CRAFTSMEN

Culminating a trend noticeable in recent years, ceramics took the lead in the 34th Annual Wisconsin Designer-Craftsmen at Milwaukee Art Institute, both in awards and number of entries. Five of sixteen awards made, including the two top honors, went to potters. Toshiko Takaezu, Madison, took the highest award for a group of stoneware pots, a two-necked, free-form bottle (top) among them. The other top winner was Harvey K. Littleton, Verona (Wisc.), for his large, slip-decorated bowl (right; the bottle is also his). Of nearly three hundred pieces of craft work accepted by the jury, about half were ceramics.

CONNECTICUT CRAFTS

Patio Birds captured first prize in ceramics for Aile Irene Hale of Hampton at the small and beautifully displayed Connecticut Crafts 1954 show last fall. The sculpture (wheel-thrown stoneware with white matte glaze mottled decoration) can be mounted on poles outdoors. The prize: $25 from B. F. Drakenfeld & Co. Also a winner, Ben Abadie of Wilton, with a small vase decorated in the sgraffito technique—second in ceramics. One of many activities of the Society of Connecticut Craftsmen, the show was co-sponsored by the Silvermine Guild of Artists at Norwalk.

FLORIDA CRAFTSMAN

Miska Petersham of St. Petersburg almost monopolized prizes at the Fourth Annual Florida Craftsman show, taking first and third in ceramics and second in sculpture (animal far right). Memphis Wood of Jacksonville, however, won first in sculpture with Fecundity, a terra cotta, textured figure (right). All three awards in enamels went to Charles Brown of Mandarin. The exhibition is a project of the Florida Federation of Art in conjunction with Jacksonville Art Museum where it is held.
DESIGN FOR ARTISTS AND CRAFTSMEN
Louis Wolchonok
One of the best books on design, it will prove invaluable to pottery and sculpture enthusiasts as well as decorators. Covered in careful detail are geometric form, flower and plant form, bird and animal form, human form, and man-made form. The 1200 illustrations include about 400 flower and animal motifs readily adaptable to pottery. 207 pages, oversize format, cloth bound. $4.95

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