

# NPA News



Northern Potters Association  
[www.northern-potters.co.uk](http://www.northern-potters.co.uk)

December 2022 to January 2023  
£2, free to members



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## Next issue

The copy date for the next issue of NPA News is 23 January 2023.

Articles should be between 200 and 1000 words saved as text files or written in an email.

Images need to be high quality for printing, saved as .jpg files. 1MB is a suitable sized file.

Please send text and images as separate email attachments – do not embed images in documents.

Send them to [npanews@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:npanews@northern-potters.co.uk)  
Email or phone the editor if you have any queries or need help.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent those of the editor or the Northern Potters Association.

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Front Cover: Souadou Coly opening her kiln  
See page 10.

Photo: Trevor Pollard

Back Cover: Hanne Westergaard, sculpture  
<http://www.hannewestergaard.co.uk/>

Photo: Hanne Westergaard

## From the Chair

Hello and welcome to our December/ January edition of the newsletter.

In September we have held our annual AGM in Sheffield at the Only Clay exhibition at Kelham Island. It was lovely to meet face to face again and special thanks to all of you who attended. For those of you interested to learn more, the minutes of the meeting can be found in the document section of our website. At this point, I would also like to say a big thank you so Steve Booton for allowing us to use the room. Following the AGM, I had a look around the exhibition and I thought it was great. Lots of NPA members exhibited, the work was exquisite and I really enjoyed chatting with you all.



In other news, I am really excited to introduce you to our new Secretary Pat Morgan. Pat has now taken over from Lyn Grant, who has helped us tremendously over the past few months. Thank you Lyn! I am equally thrilled to introduce you to Becky Norris, who is joining the committee and will take over the NPA Instagram account from me. It is wonderful to have both on board.

On a more personal note, I have been doing a lot of glaze experimenting recently, with energy prices skyrocketing, I am keen to bring my cone 10 glazes down to a less expensive cone 6/7 level. Having done my chemistry studies in German back at school, I felt this is by no means an easy task, navigating not just the science but also the language hurdle. Dianne our events coordinator kindly lend me a book (Glazes cone 6 by Michael Bailey) to get me started and I can safely say that I have spent endless hours reading it and doing research on glazy.org. In addition, I also found that Calcium Borat frit is no longer available, which is one ingredient in my original recipe. Double Whammy. That said, my last tests were promising and I think I might be getting closer to a solution. Happy Days. So I just wanted to take this opportunity to remind you of our lovely NPA community and if you are facing a similar problem, please do reach out to other members around you via our private Facebook page, Instagram account or via your regional coordinator. There are plenty of events happening across the NPA area and I am sure there is one for you. 😊

Not long now and 2022 will draw to a close and I would like to wish you all a wonderful time over the holidays and all the best for 2023.

Nadine

## Your Committee

Chair	Nadine Blakemore chair@northern-potters.co.uk Ilkley
Vice Chair	Lynne Rose vice-chair@northern-potters.co.uk
Secretary	Pat Morgan secretary@northern-potters.co.uk
Treasurer	Michelle Park treasurer@northern-potters.co.uk Low Bentham, Lancs
Membership	Jen Donkin Gourley membership@northern-potters.co.uk St Ives, Cornwall
Social Media	Rebecca Norris Scarborough, North Yorkshire
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Website Coordinator	John Cook website@northern-potters.co.uk 01282 695886 Burnley, Lancs
Website events/courses	Dianne Cross publicity@northern-potters.co.uk
Gerry Grant	York
Lynn Grant	York
Carol Newmarch	Middlesbrough
Bev Seth	Sheffield
Kathryn Stevens	Barrow in Furness
Nina Wright	Otley

# Diary

To add your events to the diary and website, email Dianne Cross [publicity@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:publicity@northern-potters.co.uk)

26 Nov - 7 Jan 2023	<b><i>We Called Yesterday Today</i></b> Cupola Contemporary Art, Sheffield NPA members will be showing.
Nov and Dec (Fri-Sun)	<b><i>Christmas Exhibition</i></b> Nunnington Hall - National Trust Pamela Thorby will show work
3 - 4, 10 - 11 Dec	<b><i>Christmas Open Studio</i></b> Saltburn Pottery, Unit 2, Princes Road Business Centre Saltburn-by-the-Sea TS12 1JJ
18 March, 2023 10am - 4pm	<b><i>Toasted</i></b> The Art Rooms, Lime Grove, Long Eaton, Nottingham, NG10 4LD SE Region Event
31 March - 2 April, 2023	<b><i>Ceramic Art London</i></b> Central Saint Martins, London, UK
27 - 29 May 2023	<b><i>NPASW Annual Exhibition</i></b> The Parsonage, Didsbury, Manchester, M20 2RQ SW Region Event
May 2023	<b><i>NPANW Exhibition and Raku firing</i></b> Hare Hill Barn, Cartmel Fell NW Region Event

## ***Toasted***

Ceramics Fair, Saturday the 18th of March 2023.  
10.00am - 4.00pm, Free entry.

At The Art Rooms, Lime Grove, Long Eaton, Nottingham, NG10 4LD

20+ potters and ceramic artists showing and selling at this lovely community arts venue. This is a new location for us and it is hoped to become a regular event.

For more details please contact Nog and Wendy at [senpacoordinator@outlook.com](mailto:senpacoordinator@outlook.com)

## **Stay Connected**



@northernpottersassociation



Northern Potters Association



### **News:**

**Pamela Thorby is currently a featured ceramicist at Found Gallery in Brecon, Wales and has her work in the York, Jigsaw store and Nunnington Hall Christmas Exhibition until December.**



## New Artists to the Website



Bev Seth



Martin Upton



Hanne Westergaard

## NPA Website – Artists Pages

As an NPA member you can have a page on the NPA website to display and promote your work. You will need to provide up to four photos of your work, an artist's statement of 100 words, email address, phone number, plus any website, Facebook and Instagram links. Email John Cook with the details and updates [website@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:website@northern-potters.co.uk)



## Simply Slipware – Josie Walter



Russell Kingston

### Simply Slipware Exhibition and Demo Day

Earlier this year I was delighted to be commissioned by *gallerytop* in Derbyshire to curate an exhibition of slipware to run through September. *gallerytop* was formed in 2004 by artists Gill Wilson and Keith Logan. Their aim is to promote work which has quality and integrity and is grounded in a fundamental respect for materials, processes and techniques. The gallery curates six exhibitions a year ranging from themed mixed exhibitions to focused solo shows, frequently inviting guest curators to bring a depth of focus and understanding to exhibitions. In *Simply Slipware*, eleven potters joined me in showing their work, Patia Davis, Ben Fosker, Jennifer Hall, Sheila Herring, John Higgins, Nigel Lambert, Michelle Lowe, Russell Kingston, Rosalind Smith and Katherine Winfrey, each chosen for their delight in slip, and their innovative approach to slipware.

Historically, earthenware was very much at the utilitarian end of the pottery spectrum and potteries generally catered for customers within perhaps a 20 mile radius. However, in the second half of the C17 a market system developed, and merchants began to carry their pots further afield. Potteries then found that they were in direct competition with each other. What happened next was that those potteries with particularly good clay and other raw materials, a good fuel supply, access to roads, canals, rivers and eventually railways, had an enormous advantage. Potters began to develop regional styles, make pots all the year round and develop new lines to tempt their customers, including toys for children such as whistles and money boxes. In the late C18 increasing industrialisation meant people started to move away from the countryside into towns. Here there was less demand for pots for home brewing, preserving and baking bread although when interest in the countryside grew there was a renewed demand for plant pots for homes and gardens, which revitalised the industry. Academics also began to take an interest in these old potteries and published books, for example Solon's 'The Art of the Old English Potter' (1886). However, this tide of fortune was arrested by the two world wars as pottery workers joined the forces, there was a shortage of materials and the blackout meant no kiln firing at night, as a result, several of the potteries closed. In the 1920s Michael Cardew revived many of the old C17 earthenware techniques, digging local clay and firing in a traditional bottle kiln to produce useful and affordable pots at Greet Pottery in Winchcombe, Gloucestershire. Cardew's experimentation echoed throughout the C20 and C21 inspiring potters educated in art schools to continue to find creative possibilities in the slipware tradition. *Simply Slipware* was put together to showcase some of the potters currently working more experimentally with slip, rather than those following more traditional techniques and aesthetics.



Nigel Lambert

As a finale to the *Simply Slipware* show we decided to organise a demonstration day on the last weekend, not the royal we here, but a great team with Toby Bennett, a potter in Bolehill, Wirksworth and Sue Mulroy a potter from the Peak District. We approached the Eco Centre in Wirksworth where Sue runs her pottery groups and Toby has run a step dance and music weekend so we knew there would be appropriate facilities plus good rapport with the staff. It all went very smoothly. The Eco Centre was booked, Nigel Lambert and Russell Kingston agreed to do the demo and *gallerytop* agreed to deal with booking. Taking all the costs into consideration we saw that we would need to sell 25 tickets at £40 to break even. We crossed our fingers, got busy on Facebook and Instagram and hoped for the best. We needn't have worried, twenty-eight people booked in the first week, almost as good as Glastonbury, but not so expensive and without the late nights!

The Eco Centre is a great space with all the things you need for a good demo day, space, chairs, working tech equipment and extension cables, good parking and we provided refreshments (Toby's cake and Sue's flapjack didn't last long). We organised the main room so that Nigel was set up at one end and Russell at the other. The potters did an hour at a time and



Nigel Lambert

in between demos we all stood up and rotated our chairs. This meant that if you were at the front for one demo you were at the back for the next (although there was plenty of space to walk around if you wanted a better view). In the morning we had demos from Nigel and Russell followed by an illustrated talk by Nigel. After lunch we had a talk from Russell, followed by a second demo from each potter. Both potters were very well organised, and we were treated to a wealth of tips about making, slips and glazes, kilns and firing as well as the fascinating story of their personal development. Feedback from attendees was very positive, the only difficulty for some was caused by the large space, which was a bit echoey, something to keep in mind when we hold another event.

This was the first time a pottery demo day has been organised at this venue. Given that there is also a good outside space around the Eco Centre with possibilities for raku, kiln building and other activities, I have a feeling there will be many more. Watch out for events in 2023!

*gallerytop* is in Rowsley, Derbyshire [https:// gallerytop.co.uk/](https://gallerytop.co.uk/)

Derbyshire Eco Centre is in Middleton by Wirksworth, Derbyshire (<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/adult-education/centres/derbyshire-eco-centre/derbyshire-eco-centre.aspx>).

Josie Walter [www.josiewalter.co.uk](http://www.josiewalter.co.uk) @josies51



Russel Kingston

## Profile – Lynne Rose

Vice Chair of the Northern Potters Association! How did that happen? I'm a humble amateur potter with a few years practice – but still loads to learn – playing with clay in my tiny garden studio. I am hoping you will all be very kind and gentle with me as I grow into this role supporting Nadine. My son wonders if that makes me a chair leg (...give it time...)!

The first time I got my hands into clay, apart from that gloopy stuff in my childhood play area, was aged six when I made a badger at school. I was really proud of Lindsay Badger, although she was not much more than a lump of clay painted black and white. I kept her for many years until she crumbled to dust, never having been fired.

I fell victim to the charms of clay in 2009 when I signed up for a course in Rotherham. It was during a difficult time of my life and I needed a release from the stress I was feeling. I had escaped from life as a teacher, and health issues had left me unable to work. Tutored by the lovely, talented Caroline Lee, I learned



Lynne Rose - NPA Vice Chair

about the characteristics of clay and techniques of hand-building.

My first kiln was a dinosaur bought on eBay for £40. Hiring a van and getting it installed at home was interesting, but that ancient thing worked for years, albeit not always with great results, and I was amazed when someone at last came to collect it for a fiver. I wonder how the young man got on with his pottery making; was it you?

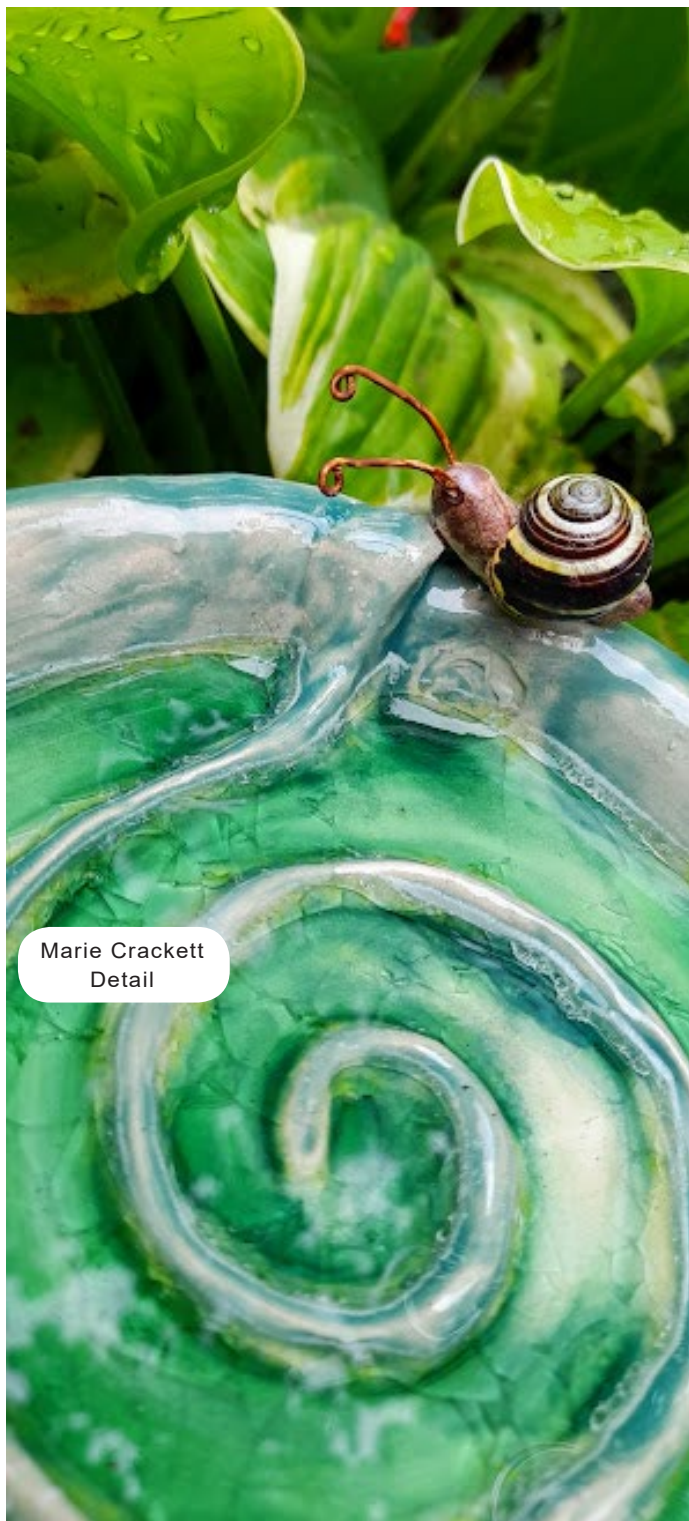
A couple of years ago I felt 'good enough' to purchase a new top loading kiln. This year I have had a studio built and kitted out, so I really feel like a proper potter now!

After experimenting with many styles and techniques I returned to my first love and now create pieces for the garden – bird baths and feeder plates, green girls and planters. Much of my inspiration comes from nature, the plants and creatures around me every day. I don't plan much on paper, preferring to build on an idea and see how it develops. Sometimes it works, sometimes it needs several cups of Earl Grey and a rethink.

I love a challenge and the opportunity it creates for me to learn and develop new skills and ways of thinking. Aside from pottery, I've been learning Greek. Right from the start I decided I didn't want to



simply memorise the rote holiday phrases, I wanted to be able to read, write, speak and understand this complicated language. Now after 1053 consecutive days (and counting) of lessons and practice I can just about get by with my tutor in Athens (what an excellent platform Zoom is). I've yet to test it in a



Marie Crackett  
Detail

real context, that will come when I return to beautiful Kefalonia in September, where I'll enjoy snorkelling around the coast too. Bliss. I'd love to stay and set up a ceramics studio there!



I need to remember to pace myself; to relax and not be busy, busy. My garden has become my solace and if I'm not potting in my studio, I will be pottering around the garden. I also love to find a sunny spot for an hour of embroidery. I work 'free-style' without a set pattern or design. It's wonderful to see what develops when I'm not restrained by convention. Now that is something I can bring to the position of Vice Chair.

Lynne Rose.

# Souadou Coly – Trevor Pollard



Souadou Coly - Senegalese Potter

## Introduction

The Casamance region is in the south of Senegal and is cut off from the north and the capital city of Dakar by the Gambia which extends 295 miles inland from the coast along the Gambia River.

I have been visiting Senegal for over 10 years where I have a small house in the bush, outside of the village of Kafountine.

I first met Souadou around five years ago when I visited her home in Diannah a few miles outside of Kafountine. She is a potter using traditional working methods to make domestic ceramic ware used for such things as cooking and the storage of water. She lives with her extended family in a compound at the end of a sandy lane which is noted for a magnificent stand of Cachou (cashew) trees. It is in the shade of these trees that she makes her pots using the simplest of tools.

When I first met her, she was having great difficulty keeping up her business as her mud brick kiln had been destroyed during the previous rainy season. In addition, due to regional deforestation to supply the local fish smoking operations, it was difficult and expensive to amass the large quantity of wood required to fire her kiln.

Pottery is traditionally undertaken by women and the skills are handed down through the generations. However, the difficulties encountered by Souadou in

managing her business had resulted in a reluctance of her daughter to continue with the family tradition.

## Making

The process of making pots involves the whole family.

Once Souadou has identified a source of clay in the local rice fields, it is the job of the children to collect the raw clay and bring it to the compound. The clay contains a lot of vegetable matter and once it is dampened, previously fired crushed and powdered clay is added to increase the strength of the material. The final process of mixing the clay is achieved by walking on the mixture in a circular rhythmic motion to ensure an even consistency prior to being formed into balls.



Souadou starts by forming a small thumb pot and this is rested onto a wide bowl so that she can begin to



add the coils of clay. She forms the coil from a lump of clay and attaches it in one fluent movement. She pauses occasionally to smooth out the clay using a stone. Once she has built the pot to the required size, she uses a leaf to help smooth out the surface and it is set aside to dry. In the meantime, she might add some basic decoration with the use of coloured slip or incisions made with the help of a sea shell.



### Firing

The kiln is formed by a hollow in the ground surrounded by a low wall of around 2 metres high which has a small hole to one side at ground level. This is to allow the heat from the burning wood to enter. Inside the hollow there are a few large pieces of metal (including old car parts) to provide the ventilation space for the heat to permeate the pots which are piled inside the kiln walls.

As firing is an expensive and time consuming process, she can only achieve this once enough wood for the continuous burning of over 12 hours is collected.

The dried pots are piled into the kiln from above with smaller pots stacked inside of the larger ones and once the kiln is full and ready to be fired, she undertakes a short ceremony to bless the kiln and the fire is lit. Once the fire is well underway and the kiln is drawing in the heat from the flames, she covers the top with pieces of corrugated iron. The fire is then fed with fresh wood continually for the next 12 hours before being left to cool.

The next day, the corrugated iron is removed and the fired pots exposed. It is only then when she can test

the success of the firing. The heating of the kiln is not uniform throughout and the strength of the fired pots can be variable.

### Support

I was able to witness an earlier firing before her kiln collapsed and it was clear that Souadou needed help in order to continue with her business.



We discussed what she would need and critically, how to enthuse her daughter into considering the real and commercial possibilities in continuing the family tradition.

What emerged was the need for support in two fundamental aspects of her work. In Senegal, the rainy season (July to October) can be very destructive and Souadou wanted a building in which she could store her clay along with her finished pots and also a place to keep her collected wood dry. The other requirement was a better and more robust kiln with a good quality metal grid to place the unfired pots onto and this needed to be sited on slightly higher ground to escape the standing water in the rainy season.

In order to help Souadou and her family, as well as a couple of other local initiatives, a group of friends and visitors to our compound - the Kora Workshop, in Kafountine - decided to start up a formal charity. This became the Kora Trust and with donations managed through this, we were able to realise Souadou's requests and in 2020, a new building was erected and a kiln constructed. The Trust paid for the materials and Souadou's family did the necessary building.

I visited her again in February 2022 and saw the new building and kiln.

I made a short film about Souadou in 2019 which can be viewed on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NdQ5yhnhSe>

Or simply search for Souadou Coly Senegalese Potter.

This film was made prior to the support to improve Souadou's facilities. Some of the photographs here show a later firing in the new kiln and the new storehouse.

# Selling Online – Tom Humphries

## Would you like to start selling your pottery online? Why sell online?

Making pottery can get out of hand. There are only so many cupboards you can fill with your beautiful work before it becomes necessary to start selling some of it.



For me online selling came fairly naturally as I've previous experience with ecommerce websites. For the last three years I've exclusively sold pottery online which provides a full time income. Hopefully this article will break some barriers to online sales for you.

The main advantage of selling online has to be the flexibility. There's no need to stand under a gazebo all weekend at a craft fair - as I previously worked as a chef I really value my weekends off with family. You also don't have to liaise with gift shops or galleries and pay them a hefty commission.

### Different types of online selling

If you do fancy giving it a go there are two main ways to sell online. Firstly there are marketplaces like Etsy, Folksy or Not On The High Street. These sites aggregate sellers of various crafts and put them before a large audience.

Secondly you could set up your own website - usually with an ecommerce platform. This means you use your own website address with a backend ( how you add items and change the look of the site ) provided by something like Shopify, WooCommerce or BigCartel. Having your own website means much lower fees but you do have to attract visitors there yourself.

### Pros and cons of marketplaces

Etsy accounts for around two thirds of my income and is the only marketplace I have much experience with. Most marketplaces are cheap to list items and don't

have large upfront costs. The fees do add up though, I calculated the total fees for my average item is around 12%.

On top of this Etsy now forces me to pay for off site adverts - my items will pop up in google search results and other places on the web. This only happens when your account makes over \$10,000 in a 356 day period. While the ads do bring in more sales it adds even more fees to each sale.

While I do have my reservations about Etsy I don't think I'd have been able to go full time as a potter without it. I now only ship to the UK but previously sold a lot of pottery to the US, Australia and Europe. It's great to be able to reach such a massive audience by only spending a few pence on a listing fee.



### Ready for your own website?

Having your own website has the main advantage of lower fees. I use Shopify which costs a flat fee of \$29 per month and a fee of 2% + £0.25 per online card transaction. With sales of around £300 per month I start to pay less fees overall with Shopify than Etsy.

You're also able to connect with your customers more closely than a marketplace. By offering a bonus code or other incentive you can ask people to join your mailing list which can help bring back previous customers. I'm able to tell more of my story on my website and I feel customers have a more personal connection with me.

If this all sounds a bit overwhelming it really isn't! Selling online has become so much easier than when I had to write HTML code fifteen years ago. They have templates to easily change the look of your site just by clicking on the style that suits your work. The platform can take care of registering and hosting your domain name or even transfer an existing web domain to their service. Most of the ecommerce platforms

have free trials so you can see if they suit you before committing. All you really need is some great images and well written descriptions.

### Keys to success

Around ten years ago I started selling on Etsy and it wasn't an instant success. Considering my pottery back then it's amazing I sold anything at all. At that stage it was just a hobby but it gradually grew into a business.

The first step is to write engaging search friendly descriptions of your pots. You can get ideas for keywords by searching Etsy and looking at what search terms pop up in the search bar. For example, search for 'handmade mug' and a list will pop up below with variations on this term, these might apply to your mug and could be included in the title and description text.

Etsy tends to reward committed sellers by monitoring things like responding to customer messages quickly, shipping on time and getting good feedback ratings. Keeping customers happy seems to keep items high up in the search listings.

Great photos tell a thousand words and the more detail the better for long distance selling. I bought a very cheap old Canon DSLR and flash gun with an umbrella which I use to take photos. Phone cameras have lots of pixels but their tiny lenses distort close up images. This alters the shape of pottery and doesn't compare to a proper camera lens.



If you decide to set up your own site the biggest challenge is getting visitors. Social media, mailing lists and writing a blog have been my weapons of choice to spread the word. While these are essentially free tools they do take time to write and take pictures for.

It's also possible to run your own ads from Google, Facebook or other sources to bring visitors to your website. This is something I've tried but failed to get working cost effectively.



### Ready to make your first sale?

Hopefully I've sparked your interest in selling online. I'd encourage anyone to give it a go, it's a great feeling when those first sales ping in. I write a blog on my website which covers some other aspects of running a pottery business. Please contact me directly if I can help with any follow up questions.

### Contact Details:

Tom Humphries

The Little Pot Company

<https://thelittlepotcompany.co.uk/>

[tom@thelittlepotcompany.co.uk](mailto:tom@thelittlepotcompany.co.uk)



# Members' Gallery

All NPA members are invited to send images of their work to the editor for inclusion in the gallery.



David Howson



Lara Clahane, stoneware - Shown at *Shared Stories*, The Storey, Lancaster



Martine Becquet - Shown at Potfest Pens in October



Martine Becquet - in collaboration with Rachael Singleton, textile artist - Shown at Potfest Pens in October



Galea Belinscaia, Where's Attenbrough

Galea Belinscaia will be showing this clay sculpture in Cupola Contemporary Art's Christmas Show *We Called Yesterday Today*.

Exhibition dates are 26 November 2022 - 7 January 2023.



Viv Rumbold, Oystercatcher family tiled coffee table - made with red earthenware, slips and underglazes.



Viv Rumbold, Oystercatcher family tiled coffee table - Detail

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When sending images for the Gallery, please provide a print quality jpg file of about 1MB or more, sent as an email attachment.

It is helpful to readers to give short **details about the piece including its title, size, material and key firing information**. Email to [npanews@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:npanews@northern-potters.co.uk)

# Brier Hey Pottery reopens – Sue Turner



Brier Hey Pottery, busy studio opening

Six years have passed since the final closure of David Constantine White's humble wooden built pottery in the little town of Mytholmroyd in the Upper Calder Valley. Set up in 1981, it was to be the centre of his life for thirty years until his untimely death in 2011, producing some of the most arresting domestic, sculptural and figurative ceramics of the period. David was widely respected in the world of studio ceramics and regarded as a master of the majolica technique.

From his base at Brier Hey, David sold and exhibited across Europe, trained in Japan and was a regular contributor to shows across the UK. Fiercely proud of his Yorkshire roots, the young David was also a friend of Isaac Button, often visiting and helping out at the now famous Soil Hill Pottery.

Following David's death, at his request, friend and fellow Northern Potter Sue Turner brought together 5 makers to keep the pottery open as a community facility for a further 5 years until it was finally closed in 2016, by the landlord, due to its poor state of repair. Since 2016 Brier Hey potters have looked for alternative, affordable accommodation in an



David Constantine



David Constantine, bottle form with majolica decoration

increasingly costly property market. Finally, in April 2022, we were offered an opportunity to share the home of Dovetail Joinery, less than a quarter of a mile from David's original site.

The new Brier Hey Pottery was developed by Sue and Barry Turner, building upon their involvement in the establishment of the nearby Northlight Art School in Hebden Bridge. It will provide specialist communal facilities for around 15 established and emerging makers and received generous financial support from the David C White Will Trust.

The Pottery was formerly opened, to a packed audience, by Jim Robison on November 19th 2022. The event was attended by many local and Northern Potters, receiving best wishes from further afield including letters from Clive Bowen, Mike Dodd, Stephen Parry, Ruthanne Tudball and Meri Wells. Our thanks to Geoff and Chris Cox for their enthusiastic support and the gift of pieces of David's work. Jim spoke of David's significance, skill and breadth of knowledge, expressing his delight in the new facilities

which offer a real testament to his life, friendships and the many potters he mentored along the way. The new Brier Hey will house a permanent display of David's work, available to view by appointment, and is keen to receive donations of David's work to expand the collection.

So, here's to the future! Sixteen makers currently share the Pottery which will be run on a not-for-profit basis. Facilities include 700 sq. ft of communal studio space plus a library, small display area and separate kiln, glaze and store rooms.

Following the launch in November, the Pottery will also be open on the 3rd and 4th of December as part of the Christmas Hebden Bridge Open Studios Event.



Work on display in the studio



Jim Robison

# Book Review – Wild Clay

## Creating ceramics and glazes from natural and found resources

Matt Levy, Takuro Shibata and Hitomi Shibata

Published by Herbert Press - RRP £30

This is a lavishly illustrated book by three authors with first hand experience of using found materials in their work. It covers the use of “wild clay” in bodies for sculpture, throwing and hand building, and as an ingredient for making slips and glazes. It also suggests making natural pigment pastels and chalks out of dug clay.

The First Chapter – **A personal journey through wild clay**, puts forward the arguments for prospecting for and using found clay in an artist’s practice. “We, as authors, only ask that you respect the landscape and communities around you.” In other words, don’t take stuff that does not belong to you. It then gives some information on the three authors via the historical clay culture of their backgrounds. This gives a context to their approaches to making.

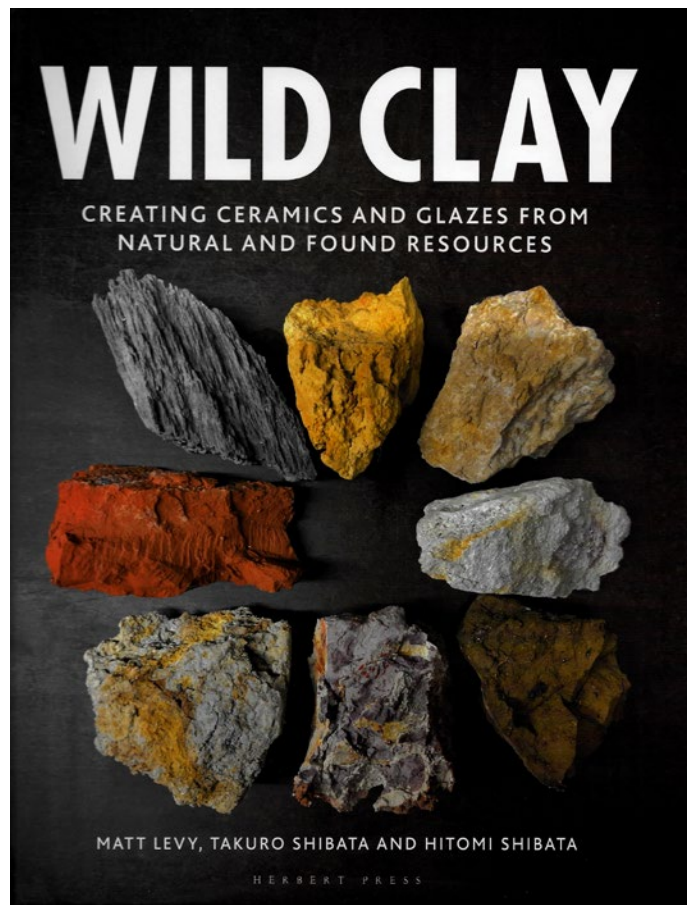
Chapter Two is about **Soil Ecology and Geology** and it is informative about the types of clay you may find and where they are likely to occur. The characteristics of these clays are well described along with their possible uses.

Chapter Three, by Matt Levy, **Finding Clay** describes how to go about finding clay and some of the legal implications of digging it up and taking it away.

Chapters Four and Five, by Takuro Shibata, **Processing and Testing Wild Clay and Making Clay Bodies** get down to the business of assessing what you have got and working out how best to use it. This is a very thorough and practical section which gives useful information. It is the meat of the book and shows off the author’s undoubted practical expertise.

Chapter Six, by Matt Levy, **Glazes, Slips and Alternative Practices** is about finding ways to use clays which are not suitable for clay bodies. The alternative practices are ways of using found clays which do not involve firing, like making crayons and pastels with earth hues and art installations about place and materials.

Chapter Seven, **Artist Spotlights**, features the work of ceramists and potters using found clay, mostly based in the USA. There are a few Australian, European and Japanese makers thrown in. The work is diverse and there are short pieces of text written by each of the makers on their work, inspirations and methods, which are enlightening.



Who will benefit from reading this book? It is well presented and art directed with beautiful photographs to illustrate the text. Do potters need to be told where clay comes from and that you can catch it in the wild, like some rare Pokémon? It feels as though this is a specialised and practical book, with the Artist Spotlights section grafted on to broaden its appeal. It will look good on a coffee table but its real place is on the work bench. The chapters by Takuro Shibata hold their own with any reference books on finding and processing clay bodies and Matt Levy’s practical chapters on prospecting and making slips and glazes are very good. A reading of the bibliography confirms that this book would place itself among practical manuals and handbooks.

Chris Barnes

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Order your copy of *Wild Clay: Creating Ceramics and Glazes from Natural and Found Resources* at [www.bloomsbury.com](http://www.bloomsbury.com) and receive 20% off across all formats of *Wild Clay* by entering the discount code **NPA20** at checkout.

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### A message from Potclays regarding your discounts

We're receiving regular queries regarding how to apply Northern Potters Association member discounts. Here is a clarification of the procedure:

Members should in the first instance send an email to [sales@potclays.co.uk](mailto:sales@potclays.co.uk) with their membership number and expiry/renewal date.

Our team will check the details provided against the member lists supplied by the association, and once verified, apply the discount to their account with expiry date.

Discounts become inactive upon reaching the expiry/renewal date, but members can email us with their updated details to re-apply.

Discounted prices can be viewed when the member is logged into their online account using the email address connected with their discounts. Once the discount has been applied on our system, it usually takes up to 24 hours to take effect on the online account.

We hope this clarifies the process. If any of your members have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

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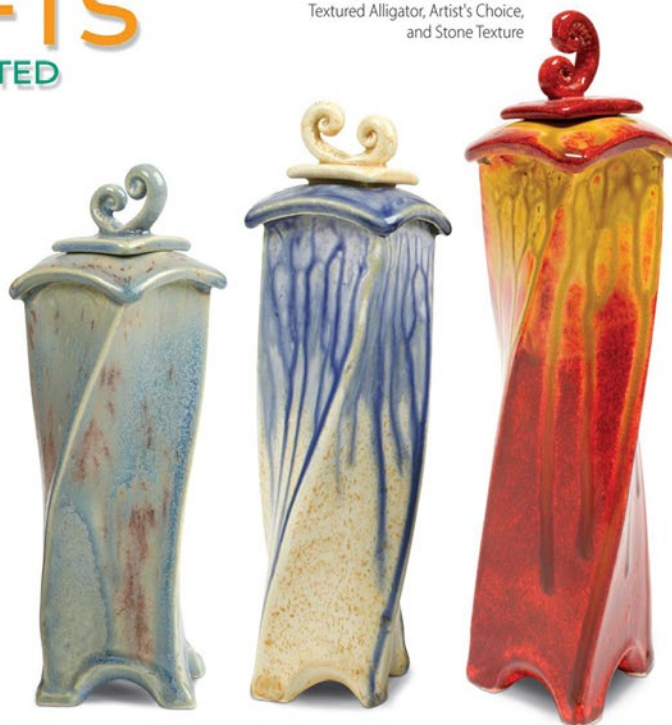
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# Welcome to new members

A warm welcome is extended to all our new members.

We look forward to seeing you at events and images of your work in our gallery.

Paul Adam	S. Yorks
John Bullivant	S. Yorks
Sarah Coleman	S. Yorks
Sarah Cook	Derbyshire
Wendy Dawson-Young	County Durham
Matthew Hamblin	S. Yorks
Sharon Hart	Lancashire
Anna Hayward	Co. Durham
Alan Hill	Lincolnshire
Kevin Hobson	N. Yorks
Stephen Laughton	Lincolnshire
Jacky Lloyd	Lincolnshire
Hannah Monks	Cheshire
Cassandra Newby	Lincolnshire
Rebecca Norris	N. Yorks
Ian Patrick Palmer	Derbyshire
Chris Parkes	Co. Durham
Ivan Carl Payne	Cumbria
Tina Perry	Staffordshire
Sylvia Schroer	N. Yorks
Penny Smith	Cumbria
Joseph Travis	Lancashire
Helen Wheelwright & David Wheelwright	W. Yorks
Stacy White	Greater Manchester
Susan Dawes & Ed Dawes	Lancashire

**Jen Donkin Gourley**  
**Membership Secretary**

Visit <https://www.northern-potters.co.uk/> for membership forms and subscription rates.



## NPA Bursary Scheme

The NPA is offering bursaries to members needing support to develop their work by attending courses, workshops or otherwise exploring new directions. The maximum award is £250, from a fund of £1000 for 2020/21.

All you need to do is get an application form from [treasurer@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@northern-potters.co.uk) and complete it, outlining how and when the money will be used to benefit your practice. The committee will consider your application and let you know if you have been successful. Applicants must have been NPA members for at least one a year.

The final step is to write a short, illustrated article about your experience for NPA News.

## Equality & Diversity

The NPA is an inclusive, not-for-profit organisation run by volunteers which welcomes and values diversity (of age, ethnicity, race, religion, disability, belief or non-belief, sex or sexual orientation) within its membership. Our aim is to ensure that all our members are treated with dignity and respect.

## Small ads

**Small ads are free to members!**

Reach over 700 people with an interest in, or obsession with clay, glazes, firing etc.

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Size 176Wx106H 86Wx106H 86Wx53H

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# From the Membership Secretary

## Digital Newsletter now available

You can now choose to receive your NPA Newsletter as a PDF by email instead of the paper edition in the post. If you would like to give it a try, send an email to [membership@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:membership@northern-potters.co.uk) requesting this. Send it from the email address you want to receive the PDF at, and please make the subject PDF Newsletter. You will be able to change your choice back to a postal copy at any time. No action is required by members wishing to continue receiving a printed copy by post.

## Other reminders:

Don't forget to let [membership@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:membership@northern-potters.co.uk) know if you have changed any of your contact details so that you don't miss out on any events and/or information.

Also, please remember that we don't send out membership renewal reminders - you're in charge of your membership.

If you have any queries don't hesitate to contact me at [membership@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:membership@northern-potters.co.uk)

Jen Donkin Gourley

# Ceramics competitions & festivals 2023

A list of national and international contemporary ceramic competitions and ceramic art fairs that will take place in 2023. Links are to application pages or event information.

## International Ceramics Triennial UNICUM 2023

Competition: May 15 – September 30, 2023  
Applications are due December 1, 2022  
Ljubljana, SLOVENIA  
[http://www.unicum.si/index\\_eng123.htm](http://www.unicum.si/index_eng123.htm)

## Claybash 2023

US Triennial exhibition  
May 21 – September 3, 2023  
Applications are due February 1, 2023  
Hunterdon Art Museum, Clinton, US  
<https://www.hunterdonartmuseum.org/exhibitions/claybash/>

## Ceramic Market Andenne 2023

Ceramics Fair: May 28-29, 2023  
Applications are due December 4, 2022  
Andenne, BELGIUM  
<http://en.ceramicartandenne.be/>

## Dießener Töpfermarkt 2023

Ceramics Fair: May 18 - 21, 2023  
Dießen, GERMANY  
<https://www.diessen.de/kunst-kultur/diessener-toepfermarkt/toepfer-information-bewerbungteilnahme/>

## Premio Faenza International Competition

Competition: July 1 – October 30, 2023  
Applications are due December 12, 2022  
Faenza, ITALY  
<https://iscrizione.premiofaenza.it/en/>

## Terralha 2023 – European Ceramic Festival

Competition: July 14-16, 2022  
Applications are due January 15, 2023  
Saint-Quentin-la-Poterie, FRANCE  
<https://capitale-ceramique.com/fr/terralha-festival-ceramique/>

## Young European Ceramics Competition 2023

Competition: July 14 – August 15, 2023  
Applications are due January 15, 2023  
Saint-Quentin-la-Poterie, FRANCE  
<https://capitale-ceramique.com/fr/concours-jeune-ceramique/>

## International Ceramics Fair Oldenburg

Ceramics Fair: August 5-6, 2023  
Oldenburg, GERMANY  
<https://en.keramiktage.com/>

## Art in Clay Windsor

Ceramics Fair: August 18-20, 2023  
Windsor Racecourse, UK  
<https://www.artinclay.co.uk/>

## British Ceramics Biennial 2023

UK Competition: September 2023  
Stoke-on-Trent, UK  
<https://www.britishceramicsbiennial.com/about/>

## The International Ceramics Festival

Festival: June 30 – July 2, 2023  
Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Wales, UK  
<https://www.internationalceramicsfestival.org/>

## International Biennial of Artistic Ceramics of Aveiro

Competition: Applications will open January 2, 2023  
October 28, 2023 – January 28, 2024  
Aveiro, PORTUGAL  
<https://www.cm-aveiro.pt/visitantes/bienal-internacional-de-ceramica-artistica-de-aveiro>



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# Regional News

Regional groups were set up to help members communicate with others local to them and arrange events in their area.



Hello to members of NPANW region. Since the last newsletter some of our members, along with members from NPAW and Cumbria Sculptors, have been busy preparing for *Shared Stories*, an exhibition at The Storey in Lancaster. As I write this they are busy setting it all up but it will be all over by the time this goes to press - so I hope it has gone very well.

As the year seems to accelerate to its close, we would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and New Year.



NW

NW Regional co-ordinators: Kathryn Stevens, Deborah Robinson, Chris Barnes  
northernpottersnw@gmail.com  NPAnorthwest  @northernpottersassociationNW

Hi Everyone – what a busy few weeks and months it's been! We're currently joining up with NPA NW and Cumbria Sculptors to exhibit work at The Storey Gallery Lancaster – Shared Stories. It's such a fantastic space, we'll post photos in the next edition of NPA News.

It's clear from other NPA regions that things work best when more people are involved to take on specific roles so I'm asking again if anyone would like to take on the responsibility for arranging meetings please? These can be by zoom or in person. I simply haven't

got time to do this but I'm aware that some people would like to meet up.

During the run up to our exhibition we had quite a few enquiries about insurance. Mostly we directed people to [www.a-n.co.uk](http://www.a-n.co.uk) The Artists Information Company. Joining fee is £38 per year which includes insurance cover for public, products and professional liability.

Happy potting! Kim and Helen.



W

Kim Graham [west@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:west@northern-potters.co.uk)  NPAwest  @northernpottersassociationWest (TBC)

Hello to all our regional members. Our 'Ask Philip' evening at Cheshire Clay Studio was fantastic. Liz Anspoks demonstrated making a glaze from scratch and Philip Plant was at hand to answer questions on anything clay related while we drank tea and kept toasty by the wood burning fire. Thank you Lisa and Liz Pritchard for organizing the evening so well. We also raised £155 for Water Aid through ticket sales which wasn't bad at all.

Our regions Pop Up shop at Merseyway Shopping Centre, Stockport was a great week in October. Six of us took part and our teamwork created a fantastic success in a location that we anticipated could have been 'a hard gig'. Spending time together talking and sharing techniques and ideas was wonderful. Welcoming the people of Stockport into our shop and explaining who and what we did was fun with a lot of interest in folk either joining NPA or finding pottery classes in

the near future. We had some real laughs and some really beautiful moments. And yes we sold a whole bunch of pots; everyone went home with a lighter car which was fabulous.

On the 28th November at 8pm we have the chance to get together for a ZOOM Quiz to test our pottery knowledge and have some fun. Our coordinator Ceri will be hosting. Pour the wine, put the kettle on, grab a pen and paper and let's enjoy each others virtual company. It will be lovely to see your faces again and a way that those who can't travel can easily join us.

Also for your diary, The Parsonage, Didsbury, Manchester, has been booked for our annual exhibition; Saturday 27th May – Monday 29th May 2023, with set up being on the Friday.

Wishing you all the best, Juliet Myers and Ceri Jones



SW

Juliet Myers [email@sw-npa.co.uk](mailto:email@sw-npa.co.uk)  NPAsouthwest  @northernpottersassociationSW

Any member can ask to be included in any regional mailing list. You must have given your consent to receive NPA emails.

## Regional News

A group of NPA Members took stands in Ceramics in the Stables at The Festival of Thrift this Autumn - it was a successful weekend and we look forward to having a similar presence at next year's festival which will be held in Billingham. Unfortunately, due to unanticipated circumstances, our proposed winter exhibition has had to be rescheduled, there will be more information soon.



NE

To give NE Members a chance to meet, we

NE Regional Co-ordinators Group: Carol Newmarch, Wendy Turner, Diane Nicholson, Helen Pickard, Jaime Westwood, Robert Campbell, Chris Walker, John Scott, Claude Frere-Smith  
[north-east@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:north-east@northern-potters.co.uk)  [NorthernPottersAssociationNorthEast](https://www.facebook.com/NorthernPottersAssociationNorthEast)  [@northernpottersassociationNE](https://www.instagram.com/northernpottersassociationNE)

We have a number of NPA East members involved in exhibitions around the region and around the country. Pamela Thorby has an exhibition in Brecon and work on show in York, Galea Belinscea has sculptures on show at the Cupola Gallery in Sheffield until January 2023 and Ros Walker and Helen Niven are at the Wayward Gallery in Kirkham Abbey (19 and 20 November). Hive in Bradford had a very exciting visit from Keith Brymer-Jones en route for the Ilkley Literature Festival (report from Jane Hurford). He was very impressed (as so he should be) and informed his Instagram followers that there should be places



E

Lyn Clarke [east@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:east@northern-potters.co.uk)  [NPAEast](https://www.facebook.com/NPAEast)  [@northernpottersassociationEast](https://www.instagram.com/northernpottersassociationEast)

A very Merry Christmas and a joyous new year to all SENPA members and all other potters everywhere. 2022 has certainly been a busy year and many thanks to everyone who has helped organise, participate and attended our events this year either in person or on-line.



SE

Next year looks likely to be a busy one as well, hopefully there will be a bit of something for everyone to join in with. We will post around event details as and when we firm up the details.

Since the last newsletter we have had a sculpture day, on a theme of heads, at Susanna Gorst's studios at Oxcombe Pottery near Horncastle. There were 12 participants and there were some

Graham Northing & Wendy Wall [senpacoordinator@outlook.com](mailto:senpacoordinator@outlook.com)  [NPAsoutheast](https://www.facebook.com/NPAsoutheast)  [@northernpottersassociationSE](https://www.instagram.com/northernpottersassociationSE)

plan to hold an NPA members event at MIMA soon, to coincide with the fantastic Lucie Rie exhibition there, which runs until late February.

CFS Ceramics - Saltburn Pottery are having their Christmas Open Studio Sale on the weekends of 3 - 4, & 10 - 11 December at Unit 2, Princes Road Business Centre, Saltburn-by-the-Sea TS12 1JJ

like Hive around the country. The email account has now moved to [east@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:east@northern-potters.co.uk) and hopefully I have sorted out the distribution list. Any inaccuracies please let me know and if you are not getting email please check your junk folder, there are still a number that are routinely returned.

STOP PRESS: **Potters in Ilkley** - We are setting up a meeting every first Friday of the month at 2pm at Friends of Ham in Ilkley on Wells Road. All potters welcome. Email Nadine at [chair@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:chair@northern-potters.co.uk) to be included in the Whats-App group or just come along. Our next meeting will be Friday, 6th January 2023.

pretty dramatic items made. A grand day and one we will put on the calendar again for next year. Also, at the end of October we had a group meeting at The Art House in Sheffield. It was lovely to see it so well attended and with some great ideas and feedback on events.

By the time this goes out we will have had our Christmas get-together. Thanks to the very kind offer from member Ravi Ivaturi this year's do will not have been held in a freezing cafe awning but in the comfort of his new house and studio. There is 'secret Santa' pot-swap as well as nibbles.

All the very best for the festive season, and a prosperous New Year to all. Wendy and Nog.

## Back Page: Loaded Art – Graham Hough

Some of you may know my work of grotesque characters. Mostly these 'Heads' are generally shapes that interest me and sometimes they have specific themes such as lawyers, munition factory workers, nurses, soldiers, and clergy men. More recently I looked for a character that allowed me to 'dress them up' in bizarre clothing and so were born my series on Bishops. Next, staying with the religious theme, came Lucifer's Angels. Looking for a female religious icon I discovered the Virgin Mary Mother of God.

Up to now my attitude towards my 'Heads', apart from an occasional spat at lawyers, has been amusement and love. On looking deeper at the Catholic Church, through its Mother of God, I became increasingly angry about its hypocrisy and cruelty and exploitation of vulnerable people. To be fair, in Ireland for example, the abuse of unmarried mothers was also perpetrated by the Salvation Army and Protestants.

So my series of 'Madonnas' was born, each representing a gross sin by the Catholic Church. Killing of babies in Mother and Baby homes, the selling of babies to rich couples, the gross accumulation of wealth, the selling of indulgences, the pimping of unmarried mothers to men, the suppression of reports of sexually abuse by priests using NDO's and bribes, the Madelaine Laundries.

I used my stall at the Potfest in the Pens, Penrith this October to display my Madonnas and my anger at the Catholic Church. I also made a 'Comments Book' available for visitors to express their observations.

Sadly I made history by having a visitor making an official complaint about my stall but the overwhelming comments were supportive of my display.

Here are a few of these remarks:

"Disgusting, disturbing & absolutely brilliant"

"What an amazing powerful comment on the acts carried out in the name of religion."

"A fantastic way to bring to our attention the cruelty and criminality of these individuals and institutions. Fantastically well done – if deeply troubling."

"Outstanding work – not what I expected to find at a pottery festival! Brilliant."

"I was already aware of this horrible practice in Ireland and Spain – this is a very brave exhibition – deeply troubling."



There are three pages of A4 of similar comments and I had many disturbing conversations with victims and professionals helping victims of abuse. One shocking conversation was with a senior safeguarding officer appointed to inspect Ampleforth College, the 'Catholic Eaton'.

So should we use our skills to make a testament?

I say yes, it does not have to be overtly controversial as mine but can be similar to buying a pot because it evokes an emotion of a previous event or person; it is always rewarding to receive a reaction to our work.

I finish with other comments made by visitors:

"This is deeply disturbing and very powerful. It says way more than words could ever say. Actually fantastic, thought provoking and shocking. Bravo."  
"The power of Art."

Graham Hough November 2022

Direct submissions of your news is invited, from members who have anything they would like to share. Notable ceramic experiences of all sorts, as well as potters' tips, gallery or workshop visits, or full blown articles are most welcome. Please send them to: [npanews@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:npanews@northern-potters.co.uk)



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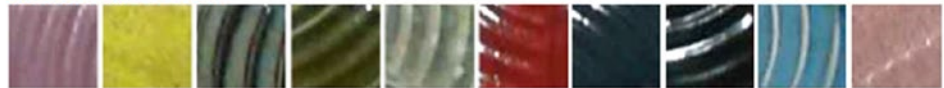
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