

Empty Bowls 2003

By: Robin E. McGregor

This year's New Hampshire Potters Guild Empty Bowls Event was held on Sunday, September 28, 2003 at Brookside Congregational Church in Manchester, NH. We had a beautiful day, and tons of bowls! Guild Members who stopped by to help and show support for this worth-while event included: Sue Babine, Karen Orsillo, Kurt Heinzman, Andy Hampton, Jeff Brown, Craig McNeil, Leah Chulak, Stephen Murphy and myself.

When the church service ended at 11:20 am, all the parishioners joined us. We had oodles of beautiful bowls, thanks to many Members!! We also had 5 raffle items this year, 3 pieces from Jean Silverman, a teapot and two teabowls...guess who won the teabowls?! Me! We had a lovely bowl from Andy Hampton and I contributed a set of stacking bowls. Kurt Heinzman's son won Jean's teapot. A sincere THANK YOU to the potters who donated items for the raffle!

This year's Empty Bowls Event raised just over \$4,200. The Reverend Bill Donahue, pastor of Brookside Congregational, graciously agreed to store the remaining bowls for next year's event. Don't think that gets the NHPG out of donating more bowls, as there is a new committee being formed called the Interfaith something-or-other which will oversee all future events. Next year's Empty Bowls could easily raise \$10,000...with just a little tweaking. The Empty Bowls Committee Members will continue to collect your bowls.

A BIG thanks to the NHIA, especially Maureen Mills and Al Jaeger. Maureen did a tremendous amount of work behind the scenes, bisqueting and then glazing pots that didn't get glazed in time for the empty bowls load, then firing ALL the bowls! And finally, Thanks to everyone who either donated bowls and/or participated during this event. Without your generosity, New Horizons for NH would have \$4200 less in their coffers, to help them do their thing!!



Next Meeting of the NHPG October 19, 2003

Our next meeting will be at the home of Yildiz Grotowski, 14 Jana Road, Salem, NH, (603)898-9353, e-mail: moonwaterpottery@comcast.net

From the North (Manchester Area)

Rte. 93S to Exit 3 (Windham) Off ramp turn right, stay on 111 until intersection w/28, stay between US Gas and Honda Dealer (Lake St.) Drive 1.5 mi. Cross Milville St. (Lake St. becomes School St.) Jana Rd. is 1/2 mi. on left.

From the South (Boston Area)

Rte. 93N to Exit 1 (Salem, NH.) Go straight 1 mi. (cross 28 at lights), left onto Geremonty Dr. Cross lights at 97, bear left. Go straight until School St. Take a right, then an immediate left onto Jana Rd. Last house on Cul-de-sac.

From the West

Take Rte. 111E and follow above from intersection w/28.

From East (Portsmouth Area)

Rte. 495S to Exit 50 (Salem, NH) go straight about 5 mi. At second set of lights (Red Barn Store) turn right onto School St. Jana Rd. is on right (0.8 mi.)



Oct. 28-Dec. 28 - "Studio Pottery Invitational 2003", Ferrin Gallery in Lenox, MA.

Oct. 17-19 - "Functional Stoneware/Single Firing Workshop" with Steven Hill, Lakeside Pottery in Stamford, CT. Contact Morty Bacher at 203-323-2222 or visit www.lakesidepottery.com for more information.

Portland Pottery One-Day Workshops

Oct. 11 - "Sculptural Concerns" with Tacha Vosburgh

Oct. 18 - "Designing Extruder Dies" with Jennifer Everett

Nov. 1 - "Soft Slabs and Molds" with Cally Dow

Nov. 9 - "Glaze Chemistry and Calculation" with Maureen Mills

Nov. 15 - "Constructing Large Stoneware Vessels" with Genevieve Grosbeck

For more information call Portland Pottery at (800) 539-4301, or visit www.portlandpottery.com

The Cast Vessel continued from cover



Steve uses his hands to scoop plaster onto his model while it begins to thicken.

really sit well, but we were not deterred! It was obvious to us that plaster has a life of its own, and understanding its cycle would take a lot of practice.

For his demo on two-part molds, Steve used the same template shape for the opening of his bowl model and added to it sides which swelled out subtly from the template. The addition of sides required that this mold be made in two parts, split lengthwise through the form so that the mold would release from side to side. Using small metal shims to create a parting line through the length of his model, Steve divided his form, built a short clay wall around the piece and started pouring his plaster. While he worked on this two-part model, Steve was very careful applying the plaster to only one side of the model. Removing the shims, he cleaned the edges and put keys in along the edge to help the second part of the mold line up exactly with the first for slip casting. The tricky part of keeping the other side of the model free of plaster chips while cleaning edges of the first half of the mold was achieved by covering it with plastic. The plastic also protected the clay model from getting mold soap on it while he coated the edge of the first mold part with an even layer of soap release. He repeated the plastering process to create the second half of the mold. This time, he used a little "trick" which helps when casting very large forms. Steve placed a small piece of 1 inch plastic piping into what would be the bottom of the bowl. While adding plaster to the model, the pipe becomes imbedded in the plaster wall and can be plugged with a cork during slip-casting. By using this trick, the slip can then be drained from a mold by simply pulling the cork and pouring the slip back into a bucket. This technique preserves the poured edge of the cast, which is generally thin and tapered.

The final day of the workshop was spent finishing our templates and molds, and sharing slides of our own work with the rest of the class, discussing our intentions and inspirations with each other. Steve's comments and/or critiques were insightful, thought-provoking and even challenging. His questions were non-judgmental but direct, forcing each of us to articulate our thoughts, defend our choices and consider new options. Not knowing when you begin a workshop like this what level of experience the other participants will have, I

was impressed by the commitment to the medium that each workshop participant exhibited and how thoughtful and pertinent our interactions were with each other. I think it's safe to say that everyone left this workshop feeling inspired, challenged and exhausted!

During the course of the weekend I worked on three molds, two of which I can actually use! They are forms for oval dishes which, rather than slip-casting, I am planning on press molding. I envision various handles and feet on these forms

and without an un-deflocculated clay body of the same formulation as the deflocculated casting slip, adding these parts will be more effective if form and additions are done in my own clay body. I started with a simple oval template for one model and the other was also oval but with scallops along the edge to help guide the making of the clay model. *I had already imagined a goal for the winter for myself---to work on molded forms---and now I feel like I am ahead of the game, for once!*



Mills pours plaster over a one-part mold during "The Cast Vessel" workshop at Peter's Valley Craft Center in Layton, NJ.

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