



CHINESE CLAYART NEWSLETTER

March 2000, Vol. 8

NCECA, Pottery Capital Yixing

CHINESE CLAYART

Chinese Clayart is a newsletter emailed monthly to professional ceramic artists who want to know about ceramic art in China and things related. This newsletter will be a bridge between China and Western countries for the ceramic arts. Comments and suggestions are very welcome.

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<http://www.silverhawk.com/crafts/zhou/welcome.html>

FEATURES

The Pottery Capital City-Yixing.

Being known as the Pottery Capital, Yixing shares the same reputation with Jingdezhen, the Porcelain Capital of China. American Yixing expert Richard Notkin called Yixing as "The sculptural Center of the World".

Yixing, Jiangsu province, located western side of Lake Tai and in between Zhejiang and Anhui provinces, about four hours driving distance from Shanghai. The population of Yixing is 1,084,000. The area so called "Fish and Rice Countryside," (a kind of rich in China.) Yixing also attracted tourists by its' fame of bamboo, tea, purple sand and caves (over eighty caves in the mountain area).

Zisha - Purple Sand. A major purplish-brown clay, which deposits around the Yixing area. The local ceramists make teapots or other sculptures out of the clay. Most of the purple sand teapots are palm-size, high fired unglazed stoneware. Yixing ceramists are very good at carve detail and sculptural techniques. Usually, they do perfect round form teapots by slab pounded construction instead of wheel thrown.

Yixing Ceramics Museum: The type of Chinese palace building with green roof tiles, Yixing Ceramics Museum is one of the largest ceramic museums in China. It has over ten thousands ceramic piece collection. Most famous Yixing ceramics can be divided into five categories, also called Five Golden Flowers: Zisha, celadon, Jing-Tao (white dinner ware), Jun-Tao (some of the ceramic pieces with attached relief dragon or other kind of Chinese traditional images. Most of the products are fish jars, tables and stools.) and Cai-Tao (colored ceramic sculptures). The purple sand teapots of Yixing might be the most well-known tea ware in the world.

Purple Sand Village (please see the picture at www.chineseclayart.com) - The village has forty eight buildings in total with combination of eastern and western styles. All of them are owned by clay artists families. In there, about 90% of the resident's job are ceramics related. Usually, the first floor is clay studios and show rooms, the second floor is dinning room and bed rooms. Most of them are open to the public.

TRAVEL

Mainland China, Hong-Kong and Taiwan, Ceramic Trip 2000.

The Program during starting in Taiwan: On the first day (June 8) in Taiwan, we'll meet some ceramic artists from the Taiwan Ceramics Art Association at the Yingko Ceramics Art Museum, which is the only museum dedicated to the ceramics art in Taiwan. This newly established ceramics museum is located in the historical ceramics village-Yingko, which is about 30 miles south of Taipei city. There will be an introduction slide talk by the Museum Director, Mr. Jing-Fon Wu during the meeting. Afterwards, we'll visit a couple of ceramic factories in Yingko area.

The National Palace Museum in Taipei is regarded as having some of the most exquisite Chinese Arts in its collections, spanning China's 5000-year history. The imperial holdings of the Ch'ien-Lung emperor (reigned 1736-95) form the core of the museum's collection. As was the tradition in dynastic China, the emperor inherited prized artistic masterworks of the previous ages. Treasures from the ancient imperial collection include jade, porcelain, paintings, bronzes, and more. Participants will have the opportunity to study Chinese art and ceramic work at the Museum during the 2nd day (June 9) of our trip in Taiwan.

We'll visit the National Museum of History in Taipei on June 10. The museum, in a corner of the beautiful Botanical Garden, has a collection of priceless relics which almost rivals that of the National Palace Museum.

Traditional Taiwanese pottery making can be found in several historical kiln sites in Taiwan. We'll visit a couple of those wood-firing kiln sites including Hua-tau kiln site, in San Yi area and Shue-Li snake kiln site, which gains its reputation with a long wood-firing snake kiln.

The large ceramic container (gang) played an important roll in Taiwan in early days for its utilitarian function. However, it has been mostly replaced by the cold and cheap plastic products nowadays. Many traditional pottery-making techniques have slowly disappeared over the last few decades due to industrialization. There are only a few potters who continue to practice the traditional pottery techniques in Taiwan today. During our Shue-Li kiln site visit, participants will learn this unique traditional Taiwanese coiling-paddling ceramic forming techniques of constructing large ceramic containers through a demonstration.

Other activities we'll do in Taiwan: Visiting several ceramic artists' studios in Taiwan, including Mr. Zon-Yo Chai (a senior potter and the former President of the Taiwan Ceramics Art Association), Mr. Chou Suen, well-known for his crystalline glazed porcelain, Mr. Tonien Shen and, etc.

Visiting a traditional Chinese Paper-making factory and a lacquer-ware making factory in Pu-li area. We will also visit Long-Shan Temple and the well-known Hua-Xie street in one evening to experience the night life/market of Taipei city.

Besides, we'll have an opportunity to visit Yanmingshan National Park and the north-west corner of Taipei county to enjoy its natural beauty.

If you have any further question regarding the tour in Taiwan, please feel free to contact me.

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Last Call for 25 days Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan Ceramic Trip. The Deadline is April 10, but it is on the first come first serve bases. Total fee \$4,650, or Optional 1. China and Hong Kong, 20 days, \$3,850; Optional 2. Hong Kong and Taiwan, 8 days, \$2,250. Please contact our newsletter editor Guangzhen "Po" Zhou.[Email](#)

ACTIVITIES

NCECA, Denver 2000.

Thursday, March 23, 7:00pm. Reception of the Chinese Contemporary Ceramic Art Exhibition in Indigos Gallery, Denver. The catalogs are available at Indigos Gallery.

Friday March 24, 1:30-3:00pm. Slides Lecture. Chinese Contemporary Ceramic Art - Guangzhen "Po" Zhou and I-Chi Hsu

Friday March 24, 3:30-5:00pm. Topical Discussion. Group Leader, Yih-Wen Kuo, Associate Professor, North Illinois University, "Experience and Tips for Traveling and Exploring Ceramics in China, Hong-Kong and Taiwan" ----- What to visit? When and how? What things do you need to know before you travel? Every one is welcome.

EXHIBITIONS

Juror's Statement of the Chinese Contemporary Ceramic Art Exhibition, Denver, 2000:

I am very excited about the work I have seen in China by current and previous generation clay artists. We are fortunate that some of it is coming to the USA for this NCECA conference.

[Susan Peterson](#). -- She is one of America's most accomplished and well-known potters and pottery educators. Susan Peterson has published six books about the clay art. She and Guangzhen Zhou, together with California Delegates Ruth and Alan Barnett, Florence and Harry Nakamoto, Jeannine Hiehaus and some other American clay artists went to China last summer.

The Catalogs of Chinese Contemporary Ceramic Art Exhibition - Denver 2000 are available at Indigos Gallery, Denver. If you would like to take a mail order for the catalogs, please contact Guangzhen "Po" Zhou, Email_pozhou@email.msn.com, PO Box 64392, Sunnyvale, CA 94088-4392, Tel. 408-777-8319, Fax. 408-777-8321.

OPPORTUNITIES

Questions and Answers about American Clay Art Works in Shanghai Art Fair 2000.

Question: Most of the galleries take about 50% commissions, why do you take 65%?

Answer: Import art works need to pay 32% for any pieces sold in China (35% for artist, 33% for host and 32% for Chinese custom tax. Hopefully, the Chinese custom tax will be reduced after China became the member of WTO). The Art Fair booth fee is \$3,500, and we have to pay international shipping fees (two ways for the pieces not be sold there).

Question: Is the Shanghai Art Fair for ethnic Chinese ceramic artists only?

Answer: No. This is open to any one. We are seeking diverse examples of American contemporary clay works.

American Clay Art Works in Shanghai Art Fair 2000

Entry Form

Name,

Tel.

Fax.

Email.

Address.

Work 1. Title

Size. H. W. D.

Build techniques.

Temperature.
Price. \$
Completed.

Work 2. Title
Size. H. W. D.
Build techniques.
Temperature.
Price. \$
Completed.

Signature

Date.

For more information about the Shanghai Art Fair, please check out our newsletter February issue at www.chineseclayart.com. Please send the entry form with slides and self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

The Chinese Ceramic Art Council, USA. PO Box 64392, Sunnyvale, CA 94088, U.S.A.

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LETTERS

"Report from China: A Potter's View" Article by Dennis Parks.

Dennis Parks went the People's Republic of China in 1977 and he will visit China again with us in May and June 2000. We would like choice some paragraphs from the article to share with our readers.

We toured the People's Republic of China for eighteen days in November of 1977. My wife, Julie and I were, by luck, included in the first delegation of American Artists and Craftsmen to be admitted. Ours was a mixed group: art dealers, photographers, actors, jewelers, painters, a sculptor, a fiber artist and three potters.

At the Shiwan Factory we were greeted by Mr. Wang, the vice-chairman of the Revolutionary Committee (Everything had to put the label of "Revolutionary" at that time). The format of welcoming us was familiar by then. The ceremony had been much the same earlier at the Arts & Crafts Factory, the Ivory Carving Factory and at schools and communes - always gracious and hospitable.

"On the wall at the far end of the room were framed color reproductions of Chairman Mao and Chairman Hua. Drinking tea and looking at them had become almost comforting.

"Last year only 50,000 foreigners visited a country of 800,000,000 (the population is 1,200,000,000 now). When more hotels are built and more translators trained, certainly the Chinese will become more flexible. They may also develop more understanding of this Western impatience with schedules, disdain for organization, distrust of repetition and our guileless ignorance of the East."

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