



# argilos

Summer 2011

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Dear Members

Welcome to Argilos 2011!

We have weathered the storm of our first year, 2010, and have a busy schedule ready for you to embark on in 2011.

Starting with a free workshop at our AGM on 12th February at NMMU, there will be exhibitions throughout the year, culminating in a bumper festive market at Walmer Town Hall in November.

Ceramics are taking their place as part of the Art Community once more and its all happening for YOU.

Take part in as many of the activities as you possibly can, wallow in the creative juices that will flow around you and enjoy!

Apart from the premier award at our recent Regional, NMMU will be giving CSA-EC a financial boost this year. This is a vote of confidence which I trust we will prove to be well placed. Our sincerest thanks extend to Mr Pieter Swart, representing NMMU.

Another great opportunity for CSA-EC is that we have been given the Lighthouse venue on the Donkin for the Madiba Bay's "Art's Journey" during the National Arts Festival time. An Art Walk/Route is being planned and we have been included as one of the exhibitions running along with other exciting events.

Details of this and all other planned events can be found in the Calendar on page....?

The Argilos continues to grow with new columns this issue.

These are meant to be interactive spaces for the sharing of all things related to ceramics, so lets hear of your latest amazing discovery, who fixes your wheel or your favourite ceramic website etc.

See you on the 12th Feb!

*Margie*

PS : Due to the lack of use of our Post Box, it will not be renewed for 2011.



# Calendar of events

## February

Free workshop about **Photo lithography on clay** + AGM  
Saturday 12th February from 9am @ the NMMU Ceramic  
Department. See the [online link](#) below:

<http://ceramicartsdaily.org/ceramic-supplies/ceramic-colorants-ceramic-supplies-2/photo-lithography-on-clay-a-surprisingly-simple-way-to-print-images-on-clay/>

## March

Who's your mug? show @ Tin House, Cuyler street  
1st > 19th March @ Tin House - opening on Tuesday 1st March.  
Exhibition of functional and sculptural mugs.

## May

Ceramics Southern Africa - Eastern Cape  
Regional Ceramic Exhibition  
@ EPSAC 16th - 27th May  
Opens Tuesday 17th May  
Selected group exhibition

## August

"Pattern" Ceramic and textile selected exhibition.  
6th - 26th August @ [Alliance Francaise of PE](#)  
Opens Saturday 6th of August.

## November

Ceramic fair/market 2011 @ the Walmer Town Hall  
on Sat 5th and Sun 6th: Indoor ceramic market,  
demonstrations, workshops, café corner.

# twen tyel even



*Manga Ormolu Brendan Lee Satich Tang*



## Ceramics South Africa Eastern Cape Regional Exhibition Review.



*'Untitled by Donve' Branch - Merit Award*



*'Conque' by Delphine Niez - Highly Commended Award*



*'Janet' by Lisa Walker - Ceramic Art Award*



*'Man Vase' by Lee Hensburg - Highly Commended Award*



*'Untitled by Charmaine Haines Functional Ceramic award*

The showcase of the resurrected CSA Eastern Cape regional exhibition took place at the New Creations Gallery in Port Elizabeth opening on the 24th November and closing on the 16th December 2010. The exhibition allowed for “expression or art” pieces and “functional” pieces that were then judged according to their category. The guests at the opening were treated to an inspiring opening speech by the Chairperson of Ceramics Southern Africa, Jerice Doeg, founder of the Eastern Cape branch in 1970, who reiterated the importance of our

branch and its significance within the Ceramics community in South Africa. The Eastern Cape region has a wealth of talent and expertise that should not go unnoticed. Pieces on the exhibition ranged from pure, thrown functional forms by Richard Pullen which were fired to stoneware and finished with a subtle sgraffito of leaves that were glazed to earthenware paperclay pieces by Lee Hensburg that were exquisitely decorated with an incredible eye for colour and line work. Her piece “Man Vase” received a Highly Commended Award.

Nicholas Hauser's Afrobot drape plates are a mix of drawing and ceramics where the intricate sgraffito lines contrast well with the rudimentary clay forms. Functional pieces such as delicately coiled pots by Linda Jones, beautifully glazed thrown and altered pots by Michele Laubscher, colourful impressed and stretched slabs of clay formed into cylindrical shapes by Bianca Whitehead and a tall white earthenware vase delicately coloured with wisps of muted tones by Jane James were on display. Expertly

thrown porcelain bowls by Lynnley Watson were finished with incised botanical patterns in copper oxide enhancing the metallic glazes used in contrast to the neutral clay body. Lynnley received the premier Award for Excellence which was awarded by Mr Pieter Swart (Head of Corporate Affairs at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University). Where form and function merge, or to be more precise, object of beauty is the function, where the “pot” disappears to reveal the artwork could be said of Donvé Branch's and



*Plate by Lynnley Watson*



*New Creations Gallery*



*NMMU's Pieter Swart awards excellence to Lynnley Watson.*

Charmaine Haines' work. Although treated very differently in fabrication and finish it can be said that the vessel is merely the canvas. Donvé's horse hair raku pots are thrown, elegantly turned off and burnished with an expert hand and managed to capture a dancing pattern in the burnished surface of her pots. Donvé received a Merit Award for her work, sponsored by East Cape Clay and Plaster. Charmaine's forms were slab built in paper clay allowing the surface to best set off the surface of incisions highlighted with copper oxide, strong blues and greens. Her thrown and altered forms in white earthenware are merely a background to her distinctive figurative drawing and textures in the clay surface. Charmaine Haines' series of functional pieces received the Ceramic Function Award sponsored by Rodney C. Goodwin Jewellers.

As ceramics is still being debated over

constantly in terms of its significance as "art" it was with great delight to see works that are not functional as was evident in the works of Delphine Niez who received the Highly Commended Award for her work entitled 'Conque' which was created with impressions of organic shapes that from a delicate surface creating an architectural form. Her wall pieces, delicately constructed in tubular shapes from porcelain paper clay, and boxed, have a certain luminescence to them which speaks of ancient coral. Bianca Whitehead's wall pieces, shaped like small cushions were playful and designed for an exquisite interior. It was unfortunate not to see more ceramics take to the walls. Janice Rautenbach's work of delicate porcelain bowls decorated with transfers follows the blue and white tradition although if you look closer things may not appear to be as innocent as they seem. Her series of porcelain shapes

displayed on a weathered and tempered wooden board speak of contrasts and subtleties in her work. Lisa Walker's piece entitled "Janet" was a playful representation of womanhood, her bold colours are sumptuous and the combination of textures in the sprig moulded decoration delightful and was awarded the Ceramic Art Award sponsored by Prêt-a Pot. Other non-functional work on exhibition was submitted by Mary Ann Kella, small intricate shell like forms that seem to hint at a skeleton of an unknown life form captured in clay. Madeleine Murray's bottle forms captured the raw nature of clay in terms of pressing textures into the wet surface making up the form in a patchwork of clay highlighted in manganese dioxide. Ayanda Mji's tall red earthenware pinched and coiled vessels reminiscent of mythical bird like creatures wrapped around the form creating decoration that would inspire

the imagination.

Guest exhibitor Jerice Doeg's elegantly thrown marbled porcelain bowls were testament to an experienced hand with the swirls of colour embedded in the paper thin clay body. Hopefully with a consolidated body of artists committed to growing the branch, we can expect to see more participation in the 2011 exhibition. It would have been wonderful to see the full force of what the Eastern Cape has to offer which I know to be substantial. Notwithstanding the bevy of events and exhibitions leading up to this one, the exhibition was a good start to the furthering and growing of the interest and prestige involved with ceramics in the Eastern Cape.

To the curators and the organisers amidst obstacles set in their path, I must congratulate them on putting on a fantastic exhibition.

**Julia Keevy**

*Janice Rautenbach navigates her way - without GPS - to find Lisa Walker, award-winning potter and ceramic restorer.*

I love the way creative people give directions - visually descriptive, allowing for one to 'enter a picture' and travel via notable scenes to find the destination. Lisa Walker's directions to her house were no different and as 'X' marks the spot, the handmade ceramic number and picture on the outside wall of her home/studio clearly let me know I had arrived at the home of a ceramist. Argilos decided to focus attention on Ms Walker as she was one of the prize winners from the Eastern Cape Regional Ceramic Exhibition. Walker, who received the 'Award for Ceramic Art', also works in the field of ceramic restoration and I had eagerly set up an appointment to discover more about her and her love for the world of ceramics.

## “X” marks the (s)pot.

Upon entering an orderly garden, I ventured up a path lined with neatly cut topiary lemon trees, immediately reminding me of Lisa's ceramics with their vibrant colours, interesting forms and the use of repetition and pattern.

Lisa Walker's journey towards becoming a ceramist took an interesting and indirect route. After school she studied and worked as a medical technologist in Cape Town. However, after two years of a job which was far too tedious for her, she changed the course of her life and started exploring new options back in her home town, Port Elizabeth. I asked her a couple of questions to discover more:

### **Why clay as a means of expression?**

*I went to classes with Donvé Branch and fell in love with clay, such an amazing material, sometimes forgiving but mostly not! I think all potters love that moment when you open the kiln and hope for a pleasant surprise.*



**Where and what did you study?** I completed the Higher National Diploma in Ceramic Design at the PE Technikon. (Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University) For the practical I made a series of tea sets inspired by flowering plants of the Eastern Cape. I then used these tea sets to make different types of moulds, making the reproduction of them easier. I still have most of these moulds. They are very heavy and look like strange blobs, but they worked.

A childhood memory of your love for art... My mother was a very creative woman, always making or building stuff around the house. She went to pottery classes at Russell Road College and that was my first introduction to clay.

**What's your favourite colour?**

I choose to work with earthenware clays, because of the wonderful colours. I love reds, greens and purples. I rely on the use of textures and pattern making to 'decorate' my work.

**Are there any particular ceramic styles that inspire and influence your work?**

Generally, I am inspired by other artists and I love finding things on my walks and making moulds from them.

**A momentous work in your artistic career?**

I don't have any particular one that stands out. However, I have a few pieces that I rather like and tend to repeat them, trying to take the idea a little further. Proud moments in your artistic career... I won the

Syfre's Bursary in my 4th year which was such a surprise and came at a much needed time. The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum has some of my work in their collection. I have taken part in lots of exhibitions and they have all been great. In 2005, I was invited to take part in a travelling exhibition through Holland. The exhibition was called: 'Dig This- Potters from Madiba Bay'.

**What current project are you at work on?**

At the moment I'm on holiday. This means cleaning the studio and recycling clay.

During my visit to Lisa's studio I also discovered a little about ceramic restoration - another interesting facet of Lisa's creative career. My knowledge thereof is limited, thus it was fascinating to learn a bit about the lengthy and intricate process. Through seeing a few examples of restoration projects in her workshop, I was reminded that ceramic works are highly treasured and valued by some- a fact worth contemplating.

Writing *Argilos* profile articles has afforded me the opportunity to visit Lynnley Watson and Lisa Walker in their creative spaces, which besides being inspirational has led me to thinking about the similarities between ceramist's gardens and their artwork. I feel a hypothesis brewing! I wonder *and* look forward to what the *Argilos* autumn edition profile has in store for us.



## Packaging ceramics: Getting it all wrapped up.

Grabbing an old box lying around the studio, using whatever is lying around as a filler and writing 'FRAGILE' on the outside and expecting that this will help your work get safely to its destination may not be the wisest option!

The need to package ceramics carefully is logical. However, I for one, confess that I have travelled with work on my backseat and having had to slam on brakes - Yes, the pot went flying forward and smashed into pieces: hours lost! Thus, when I was given an article entitled '*The Proof is in the Packing*' by Marilyn Yung to glean information about shipping for the Argilos readers, I willingly accepted the challenge! Here follows a summary of her tremendous insight.

### Boxing

1. A sturdy shipping box is needed- free of tears, punctures and soft spots. Certain boxes have standardized industry seal stamped on the bottom of the box to show the bursting strength.
2. Double-boxing your work is the single best way to protect ceramics from harsh handling. If something breaks, one has a better chance of claiming from the courier if your ceramics are double-boxed.
3. The inside box can be of a lower quality if necessary - like a convenient grocery shop freebie.

### Packing Instructions

Enclosing packing instructions in the box is advisable. These function as an explanation as to how to then repack the contents. It also subtly conveys the importance and value of your work. If receivers are aware of the time you spent preparing a shipment, they'll be likely to spend more time repacking.

### Packing Slip

Enclosing a list of the contents will tell the unpacker what to expect when opening the box. If more than one item is in the box the list ensures that the unpacker accounts for everything. If one includes the price of each piece on the list this may also serve as a way to encourage careful handling.

### Cushioning your work

To cushion one's work inside the box, use a suitable and effective material like bubble wrap. Allow 5cm of padding between items, then group them in the centre of the box and surround with enough sturdy filling material so nothing moves.

### Suggestions to decrease the packing cost:

1. Many upholstery shops and bulk fabric stores regularly have leftover foam rubber scraps.
2. For people who do many ship-and-return shows, it would be worth investing in long-lasting wooden crates.



3. Most cardboard boxes would not necessarily survive shipping more than once. Therefore when the box is no longer strong enough for the outer box, by all means re-use it as the inner box of a subsequent load.
4. For a biodegradable fill, recycle egg cartons. Another option is obviously newsprint, however, ensure you pack tightly and wrap initially with clean paper to protect the ware from ink smudges.
5. Another option is polystyrene peanuts although they do not degrade. Compared to paper products though, polystyrene peanuts can be reused more times because they retain their bulk. They also consume less energy and fewer raw materials during their manufacture. They are good for placing between the inner and outer box. Note though; that if more than one piece is packaged with peanuts in the same inner box and not packed very tightly, the work may shift and break.

#### **What to do if the package never arrives or arrives broken**

1. Contact the shipper so loss or damage investigation can begin.
2. If the shipper accepts liability, you will be required to submit a bill with a copy of an original invoice.  
For artists this is problematic, when the work is on its way to a gallery or exhibition.

*Right : Image by the one and only guru of graff, BANKSY.*

3. To provide an invoice for a one-of-a-kind unsold work, the best suggestion is to have a receipt of a similar work of equal value. You could also provide a statement itemizing your time and cost of materials. It is important to have as much documentation, including photographs to prove the value of the work. To avoid hassles- file receipts conscientiously!
4. A damaged pot is more than just an inventory loss- it can even be potentially harmful to the professional relationship with your recipient and it obviously a lot of wastes money.  
So, pack wisely and pack well.

*Edited by Janice Rautenbach from Marilyn Yung's original article submitted by Lee Hensberg.*



## www.ceramicartsdaily.org Comprehensive, not pretty.

*Ceramics Monthly* is one of the legendary ceramic magazines. Published in the United States, it's been around since 1953. [www.ceramicsdaily.org](http://www.ceramicsdaily.org) is essentially its online incarnation. Each issue includes articles on potters and ceramics artists from every region of the globe, exhibitions, and production processes, as well as critical commentary, book and video reviews, clay and glaze recipes, kiln designs and firing techniques, advice from experts in the field, and ads for available materials and equipment. While principally covering contemporary work, the magazine also looks back at influential artists and events from the past.

The site isn't too pretty to look at, but it's highly functional. Browsers are encouraged (fairly aggressively) to sign up for the regular emails they'll send you. The content of the site is absolutely comprehensive and encyclopaedic in scope: If it's done with clay, there'll be some reference to it here. It is also quintessentially American in tone, with all the verve, energetic enthusiasm and embedded knowledge born from a people and a crafts category who like to do things the right way. My earliest memories of CM begin at the Michaelis Art Library in Pritchard street, Johannesburg, around 1978. It was creative manna then, and it seems to have lost none of its taste.

*Johnny Mahala*



*Top left: Wansin Zhang figure Top right: & below: Manga Ormolu 2008 and Manga Ormolu Ver. 4, 2010 by Brendan Lee SatichTang*



*Above: Three plates by the fantastic Rusan Hoffman.*

## Showroom and facebook: Eastern Cape ceramics go digital.

Argilos extends an open invitation to all potters, artist-potters, ceramists (or whatever you like to call yourselves) to send in photographs of your work.

The idea is to build up an archive of ceramic art for publication either in the magazine or online or both.

Don't be shy, if you believe you have a piece that makes the grade, take a picture and email it to [delphinenez@hotmail.com](mailto:delphinenez@hotmail.com)

Argilos will print a selection of pieces in every new edition on our Showroom pages.

### Photographic specifications

Photos need to be saved as jpegs or tiffs and be a minimum of 150dpi (dots per inch) **not** exceeding 7 megabytes and not less than 3 megabytes.

This will ensure that we can publish a crisp, decent reproduction of your pot, vase, jug, plate, bowl cup and saucer, sculpture, figurine or abstract piece.

Try to take the picture in good light, not direct sunlight. Not on the mantelpiece or against a busy background. Hang a black or white piece of fabric or sheet of paper to serve as a backdrop. It's quick and easy to do. Use pegs or masking tape to fix the backdrop up and you'll be in business.

### Potters and facebook

Potters might well have been the original social network. Or perhaps it was hunters first? Whatever. **Ceramics SA** has a facebook page as have many other clayheads like **Afrobot**. Please visit CSA Eastern Cape's page too (see address below). By all means post comments and make the pages come alive.

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Ceramics-SA-Eastern-Cape/175776309113588>

## The changing face of **ceramics in sculpture.**

*Argilos recently made the acquaintance of East Londoner George Kockott, a multi-skilled craftsman turned sculptor. He embraces ceramics as a part of his practice as he explains here below.*

This is the sculpture I was commissioned to design and make for the new East London Industrial Development Zone Head Office north entrance, over a water feature. It has a rather small ceramic element, which adds a splash of colour to a relatively monochrome piece. In fact it is the only splash of colour in the whole context of its local built environment and as such constitutes a significant focus.

I would have bought the beads if I could have sourced them, as I had not made anything similar before and they were really time-consuming. Because of the scale of the whole stainless steel & stone sculpture (four metres wide and nearly three metres high) I wanted the beads to be relatively large ( $\pm$  70mm). I took the risk of making them solid using Jeremy Dubber's F4 sculpture clay and fired

them on little custom-made ceramic scones coated in kiln wash.

The colours I wanted were red, orange, yellow and black for which I went through a rather steep learning curve. It was all a bit of a hit and miss affair which ended up with some interesting effects due to contamination and varying coat thickness. I am a raku enthusiast and was happy to achieve a sort of effect without a raku firing. In the end I was happy, so on they went.

One of the joys of being an artist, as one the foremen on the building site pointed out, was that you could not be wrong, as long as you were happy. Hummmm, straight out of the Tao.

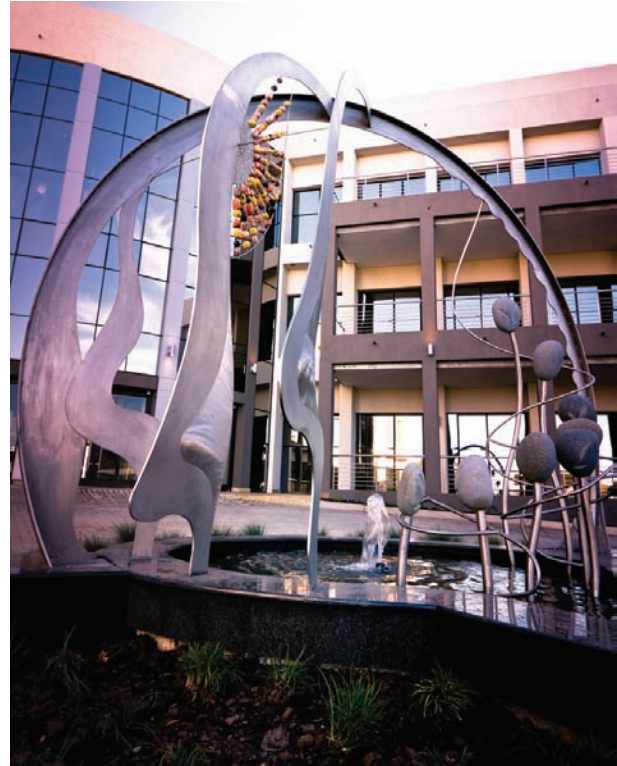
The two murals that I made for the atrium area have no ceramic elements but in the making I was inspired for future similar pieces which will include ceramics.

**George Kockott**

Tel: 043 7374431

Fax: 086 685 7643

[www.driftwoodstudios.co.za](http://www.driftwoodstudios.co.za)



*Above : Sculpture with ceramic beads. Photo: Edward Peinke. Below: Foyer entrance mixed media mural with tiles.*



## Maiolica Arcaica.

The genius and charm of 15th and 16th century Italian ceramic workshops and their wares.

Have you ever wondered what the famous names of the Italian Renaissance ate from? The Popes, patrons, legates, bankers, dukes and nobles. The monks, soldiers and serfs? Their clothing, taste in furniture, the architectural, military and religious activities and innovations of the period are well documented. But what of the humble plate, vase, ewer and medicine bottle?

Such fragile breakables are now and again visible in the frescoes and paintings, but how intimate do we get with the objects themselves? This space is hardly enough in which to elaborate on the undeniable charm and decorative genius of the many ceramic workshops that proliferated in Urbino, Orvieto, Montelupo, Florence and Sienna. My purpose here is only to whet your appetite for the superb miniature painted in underglazes and enamels on the tin white glazes of these Maiolica arcaica wares. Over two centuries, the subjects encompassed portraits of patrons and saints to Moorish influenced pseudo Kufic texts and patterns, rampants wolves and hares to Instruments of the Passion.

Visit the website of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge to see and read more about these underrated domestic wares. Many still survive in pristine form, humble yet sublime relics of our craft.



1. Hare rampant jar
2. Montelupo plate c.1560
3. Chemist's jar c.1520
4. Emilia Romagna plate (top)
5. Emilia Romagna plate (bottom)
6. Dish originally from the collection of Signor Avvocato Marcioni and Cavaliere Capitano Lucatelli of Orvieto.

Photos courtesy of the Fitzwilliam Museum.



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.

Introducing a space where you can chat, advertise, criticise & say your say any way.

: post it

#### Kiln Repairs

Antony Vlok repairs kilns and wheels expertly and economically. Antony has years of experience in a world-class ceramic factory where he built and repaired kilns, throwing wheels plus did all the computer programming for the kilns.

Call **083 676 7455** or **041 374 8326**

**Wolfgang Gerstle** is looking for someone to make him a "Sauerkraut Pot." If you can oblige please contact him on **041 379 5829** or **083 2299 004**

#### Looking for Cilla

Does anyone know of the whereabouts of ceramist **Cilla Williams**? Please contact Cynthia McAlpine [ceramicssa@icon.co.za](mailto:ceramicssa@icon.co.za) if you do.

*Right: The capable and extremely well-manicured hands of master potter Jeff Oestreich who gave workshops in Port Elizabeth last year and judged the CSA 2010 National Ceramic exhibition held in Cape Town.*





**CERAMICS SOUTHERN AFRICA - EASTERN CAPE**

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