

Three line drawings of different candlestick designs, each with a fluted bowl and a decorative stem. The first design on the left has a stem with a bulbous base and a tiered top. The middle design has a stem with a twisted, spiral section. The third design on the right has a stem with a bulbous base and a tiered top, similar to the first but with slightly different proportions.

A decorative column capital with a twisted shaft and a fluted base. The capital is octagonal with a flat top. The shaft is twisted and fluted. The base is fluted and has a small square pedestal at the bottom.

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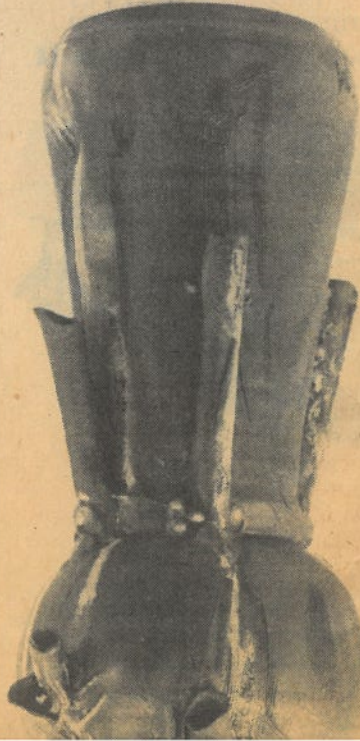
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Richard.  
**Porcelain and Stoneware exhibit,** Off Center Art gallery, 17 Alexander av., Belmont. Through April, Tuesday through Saturday, 11:30 a.m.-5 p.m., free. More than 100 pieces are exhibited by several artists and craftsmen.  
Presented in recognition of the International Academy of Ceramics.  
**Studio Potter exhibit and workshop,** Vermont State Craft Center at Frog Hollow, Middlebury, Vt., (802) 388-3177. Through May 5. Tomorrow through April 2, potter Cynthia Bringle teaches a three day workshop on form and decoration. Registration required, \$100, materials not included. Sponsored in part by the Vt. Council on the Arts Inc., and Cutter Ceramics.

**Ceramic exhibit,** Ten Arrow Gallery, 10 Arrow st., Cambridge, 876-1117. April 2 through 28. Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Thursdays until 9 p.m.; Sunday, 1-5 p.m. Artists' reception, April 8, 2-5 p.m. Ceramic pieces by six artists will be displayed.



GLOBE PHOTO BY JOSEPH DENNEHY

work. "My work is a function of jars, cylinders and containers to put things in," says Heller who teaches art at Bridgewater State College. "Each piece has a top that comes off, I like the linkage of society with clay in which the material has been used to carry water or food. Whether my pieces look like space-ships or E.T.'s little brother, they're still jars with lids. People can call them sculpture but that's their choice. I want my pieces to be used."

Quite honestly, though, who in their right mind is going to use a \$390 piece of art for cocktail parties? Is price the real indicator of whether a piece is considered art? "I price pieces according to how much time goes into them," says Heller, "not how much I feel I can get for each piece. People buy because they are attracted to the object. Because they want to live with it in their homes."

"There are three reasons why people buy this type of art. Function is not one of them," says Aronowitz. "There are three reasons why people buy this type of art. Function is not one of them," says Aronowitz. "There are three reasons why people buy this type of art. Function is not one of them," says Aronowitz.

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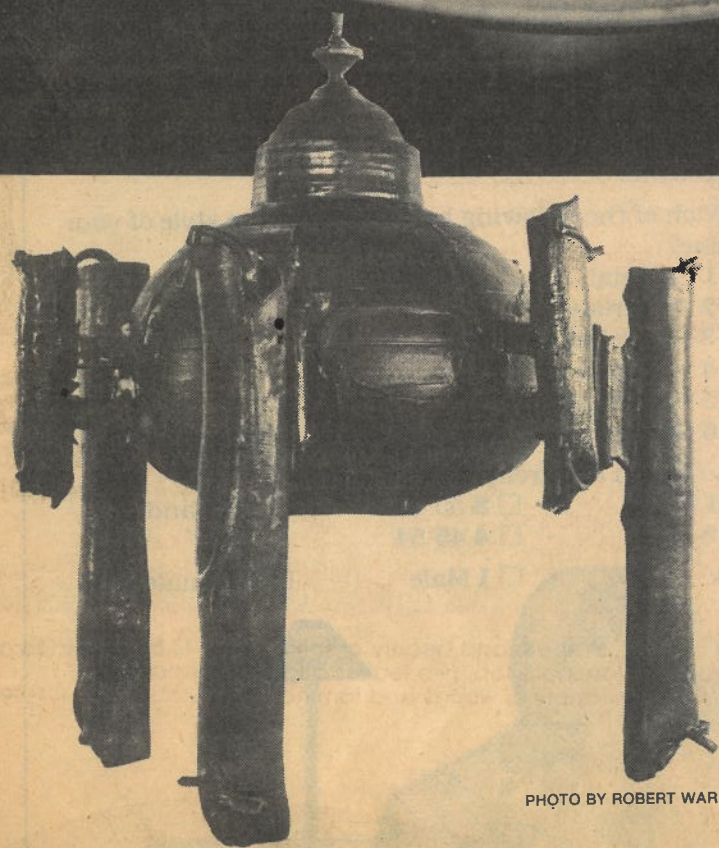


PHOTO BY ROBERT WARD

## ARTWORK IN CLAY ON EXHIBIT

The 18th Annual Conference of the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts will be held in Boston April 9 through April 12. The purpose of the council is to stimulate, promote and improve education in the ceramic arts. In conjunction with this conference,

more than 20 clay exhibits will be held at museums, schools and galleries throughout New England and are expected to attract visitors from all over the world. The following is a partial list of these exhibits:

**Massachusetts Clay exhibit.** Signature gallery, 1 Dock Square, North st., Boston, 227-4885. Through April 15, free. The works

of six contemporary Massachusetts ceramic artists will be showcased.

**"Clay 84" Ceramics exhibit.** Society of Arts and Crafts, 175 Newbury st., 266-1810. March 29 through April 28, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Saturdays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., free. The exhibit features airbrushed white earthenware by Shellie Zimmerman Brooks, porcelain utensils by Marek Cecula, low-fired clay by

One of Judy Motzkin's bowls, above, with the characteristic hand-woven clay grid is done in porcelain clay. Left, the legs on this pot by John Heller give it an ambulatory quality. Below, another of Heller's pieces built around a basic jar with lid. Above right, the hands of potter Judy Motzkin manipulate the clay.

# Pottery for form not function

By Ron Gasbarro  
Special to The Globe

Say "clay" to people and they think of Play-Doh, mud pies and the first misshapen ashtray they made in ceramics class. Ask for an example of "pottery" and you'll be handed the nearest coffee mug or casserole dish.

Pottery has for millenia worn a very utilitarian hat. Pots were and still are things in which to store food and water. If not for pottery, we'd have to throw our cigarettes on the carpet and drink coffee from styrofoam cups.

The pottery today is flawlessly machine made and mass produced. Kitchen shops offer crock pots and pitchers and bowls which seem to have been cloned from a single clay gene.

Where have all the potters gone?

Working with clay is not a lost art shoved aside by automation, but a living, breathing medium of expression of which many contemporary artisans are taking advantage. As a result pottery has escaped from the kitchen cupboard. It has become adornment for the home. A bona fide art form.

Harriet Goodwin's hand-formed terra cotta vase is striking. It has the power to take hostage any room in which it's placed. The strength and design, from the jagged, sharp edges to the lightning-quick surface patterns firmly suggest a role loftier than receptacle for carnations. The piece is one of a kind.

"My form and decoration are personal expressions," says Goodwin of Amherst. "The function of each piece is to enhance the viewer's life, and has the same art value as a painting you might hang on your living room wall." This particular vase has implied function. It implies that you put flowers in it, but actually any flower would detract greatly from the surface design.

"No one needs a potter anymore to make practical objects," she



PHOTO BY LINDA HAAS

says. "It doesn't matter whether what I'm making is functional because the medium, the clay itself, is so expressive."

Startlingly enough, she is influenced by the methodically painted ancient Greek pots as well as by pottery from the more primitive, pre-Columbian period, both of which centered around the use of terra cotta clay.

"Red clay has an historical resonance that appeals to me instinctively," Goodwin says. "My thrust is to make something exciting that triggers those historical associations that are inherent in red clay."

"The great Greek cups and vases with their exquisite paintings were used only to mix wine and water on a ceremonial basis," Goodwin says. "They were the royalware of the aristocracy. The same is true of what I and other contemporary potters do; we make things that are beautiful to look at."

Another potter, John Heller, originally worked in metals but agrees with Goodwin that clay as a medium has no limits.

Insomuch as Goodwin's dares to be used, the function of Heller's work is left up to the imagination. He starts each piece with the basic "pot" that has been thrown on the wheel. He then hand builds extensions or legs to give the finished piece an ambulatory quality, a sense of upward mobility from the mother mud.

It is not the type of piece you would set next to your oil portrait of Uncle Harry. It commands attention and tends to dominate its surroundings. But if you think it resembles a pot in which to serve pre-

thur Grohe Jr., who owns Signature Galleries of Boston and Hyannis with his sister, Gretchen Keyworth. "People buy them as gifts, as appointments for their homes and to include in their personal art collection."

"The items we sell are made by people as opposed to machines," Grohe says. "So whether it costs \$400 or \$10, if the piece is handmade you're getting an actual piece of that artist. The artist usually fixes the price. And price is a pretty good indicator of how an artist feels about that piece."

To collect art does not necessarily mean that one has to know a great deal about art, whether it's pottery or any other form.

"Many times people will come in with something very definite in mind," says Grohe, "a size or color requirement, for example. The buyer may like the artist's basic style but will commission the artist to do a piece that is closer to what the buyer wants. This is not buying art the wrong way. Even the Greeks and Romans would commission the master artisans of their day to do a piece that evoked a certain feeling."

Judy Motzkin of Cambridgeport started out as a potter who custom-made functional dinner ware for her clients. But she was literally forced out of the market by an inundation of "conveyor belt china."

"I came from the tradition of making dinner ware, mugs and planters," says Motzkin, who does her work at Clay Dragon, a Cambridge artists cooperative. "But they were always decorative. More and more however, I found that I couldn't make a living crafting functional items. Factories were making it much better and cheaper than I could. So I became more expressionistic in my work."

In the case of her bowls, Motzkin, like Heller, throws porcelain clay, a sensitive, subtly expressive material, on the wheel to attain the basic shape. The center or bottom of the bowl, however, is replaced by a handwoven clay grid giving the overall piece an exotic Oriental flavor.

To arrive at the unexpected, cosmic patterns of color on the surface, Motzkin polishes the piece and then beds it in specially treated straw and the sawdust from various woods. The effect is unpredictable and often unrepeatable.

"Sometimes I can't reproduce