

NPA News



Northern Potters Association
www.northern-potters.co.uk

October to November 2023
£2, free to members



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Front Cover: *Getting Ready for Kuprily Day*
Verena Morris-Davis

Photo: Brigitte Soltau

Back Cover: Digging a pit in the garden

Photo: Liz Hewett

Next issue

The copy date for the next issue of NPA News is 20 November 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
Email or phone the editor if you have any queries or need help.

From the Chair

Hello and welcome to the NPA Autumn newsletter. I hope you all had a lovely Summer?

Personally, I took August off to go “back home” to Germany. This year my children and I took to the trains and we travelled from the Baltic coast south via Berlin to Saxony, where I was born. Berlin is a fascinating place and as someone who has witnessed the silent revolution in 1989, I can only say that I had to hold back tears not just once when seeing the remains of the wall and other memorials.

Another inspiring place in Germany is Dresden and nearby Meissen. This is the place where the “White Gold” as we call porcelain in German was discovered around 1710. Both places are full of wonderful sculptures, ceramics and other works of art. Well worth seeing. And if you do get a chance to go, there is a little pottery shop at the banks of the river Elbe at the back of Schloss Pillnitz, east of the city. It’s an absolute treasure trove, and of course, the castle is worth seeing too.

Have you been inspired this summer? Here in England or abroad? Please share your stories with us. We are always interested in articles for the newsletter and of course for our social media channels. Which brings me back to the here and now, as we are still looking for someone to help us with our social media. If you know your way around Facebook and Instagram, and have a couple of hours spare per month, please get in touch with us, your help is much appreciated.

The next big thing for your NPA is our annual general meeting. This year we are going to be at St Olave’s Hall in York on 8th October 2023 starting at 12:30. The church is very close to the station and local bus stops and there is time for a bit of chatting and networking and of course a cup of tea or coffee (and a biscuit) too. Please see more details later in this newsletter and on our social media channels.

During the AGM we will turn back time on this last year and talk about our projects and for this year only, it will be Kate Malone who is zooming in to start us off. I do hope to see you there, and if you cannot come in person, watch out for the Zoom link which we will send out in due course.

And last but not least, there is news of our new membership system, as work has progressed well during the summer and we are now getting ready to go live. There is more on this topic in a separate article later in this magazine.

Happy reading!

Nadine



Your Committee

Chair	Nadine Blakemore NPAchair@northern-potters.co.uk Ilkley
Vice Chair	Lynne Rose vice-chair@northern-potters.co.uk
Secretary	Pat Morgan secretary@northern-potters.co.uk
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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 John Cook publicity@northern-potters.co.uk

23 Sept - 5 Nov	British Ceramics Biennial Stoke on Trent
27 Sept - 12 Nov	Shared Stories at Upfront Up Front Gallery, Penrith NPANW Exhibition
8 Oct	NPA Annual General Meeting 12.15 to 4.00pm St Olave's Church Hall, Marygate Lane, York YO30 7BJ
8 Oct	Cromford Ceramics Fair Cromford Mills, Matlock NPA members will be showing
23 - 30 Oct	Macclesfield Pop-Up event Organised by NPASW - see Regional News
27 Oct - 18th Nov	NPANE Selling Exhibition Python Gallery PV Friday 27 October
3 -28 April 2024	Glorious Clay Chorley 2024 Coach House Gallery, Astley Hall, Chorley, Lancs Application forms and information to follow.
19 May 2024	MUD Fest Ford Park in Ulverston NPANW ceramics festival - further details to follow

The Clayrooms announce the opening of their second venue, which builds on the success of their Ashbourne branch. The Clayrooms Macclesfield will be run by Matt Whiting, a recent first class honours graduate in ceramics from Staffs University.

To find out more about The Clayrooms, visit www.theclayrooms.co.uk, find them on Facebook [@theclayrooms](https://www.facebook.com/theclayrooms).

Advertising in NPA News

Per issue prices

Small ads (30 words)	Free to members		
Boxed adverts			
colour	1/2 pp £30	1/4 pp £18	1/8 pp £10
B&W	1/2 pp £20	1/4 pp £15	1/8 pp £8
Size	176Wx106H	86Wx106H	86Wx53H



The Northern Potters Association invites members to the

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, 8th October from 12:15 to 4pm
ST OLAVE'S CHURCH HALL, MARYGATE LANE, YORK YO30 7BJ and via Zoom

Come and join us to:

- chat over tea & coffee
- hear Kate Malone talk about the charity project FiredUp4
- and all the exciting work your NPA has been doing this last year



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 £5000 for 2022/23/24. See documentation here <https://www.northern-potters.co.uk/documents/>

All you need to do is get an application form from 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.

New Artists to the Website



Ceri Jones



Andy Lees



John Cook



Kim Stuttard

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



Further adventures of the Indian Anagama gang – Liz Hewett



So hopefully you are all up to speed with the first part of the adventure of our trip to India to fire the anagama kiln. But what happened next you ask? Quite a lot.

We had been intrigued by the large scale terracotta horses from the beginning of the planning of the trip to India. So when we got there, though the large ones (3m plus) were not to be had, we were treated to a visit by Palami Sami, master horse builder, who made, before our very eyes, a smaller version about one metre high. hhh Easy job! All he did was make the legs, build the body on it, squeeze out a mane and a tail and stick on some reins. So easy he made another. We gathered the chairs up close and watched his technique and made careful notes of what happened. And the plan grew that we were to attempt our very





own terracotta horse when we were back in the green and pleasant English countryside and this trip just a warm and fuzzy memory.

August comes. Lots of discussion later our plans are somewhat reduced. Our application for a bursary for sufficient clay didn't seem to be approved and the logistics of a 3metre horse firing got slightly too Heath Robinson. So we had to make do with smaller horses and a pit firing.

Mary Sewell, Bev Seth, Kate Stride, Wendy Wall, Graham (Nog) Northing and I all assembled in Kate's excellent dining room and spent a day making our horses (although two of them turned out to be elephants instead). After a bisque firing they were returned ready for their own Guy Fawkes day.

We didn't really know what we were doing. Some questions had been asked and Mr Google brought in to advise but it was to be a pit firing adventure. We dug a very big hole in Kate's garden and loaded it up with whatever we thought was a good idea – a base layer of sawdust, cowpats and guinea pig pooh, with a mid layer of hardwood turning waste, holly branches, fence panels and the spectacular top pyramid of proper bonfire style wood. Just above the guinea pig pooh we buried four horses and two elephants and their accompanying artefacts, each one bound up in its own bundle of whatever we thought might make a good colour. What kind of things? Mr Google was a bit vague on the subject so we began with standards like

oxides, copper wire, banana skins (Wendy had had hers drying on the washing line all week), and then went a bit rogue with tea bags, horsehair, seaweed (from Mablethorpe), salt, pan scourers, nutmeg, cinnamon, baking powder and a large packet of Bombay Mix. All wrapped up in newspaper or tin foil.

The necessary poojah was performed to invoke the appropriate gods and off went the bonfire like a rocket. We had to take the nearby gazebo down very quickly indeed. Then after a celebratory lunch everything had burnt back to ground level, so we covered it up with corrugated iron and went home.

Two days later back we came – very excited indeed. The pit was still very warm and it was not easy to find everything we had put in (top tip - count them in and count them out!). Success!! Nothing broken or damaged and a bit of colour here and there which we will buff up with baby oil back at base. The cooked tin foil came out best with some amazing colours.

So all in all a great experience and one to be recommended if you have a large enough garden and pleasant enough neighbours. However, we still have the itch of the large horse to settle. Maybe next year...



Glorious Chorley People – Graham Hough



In a previous article, Loaded Art 2, I wrote that I am planning a series of works based on the magnificent Tudor/Elizabethan wood carvings and plaster work in Astley Hall, Chorley.

Since then my ideas have progressed and, following constructive and supportive discussions with the Chorley Arts and Leisure officers, we have agreed an approach for exhibiting my work and expressing my strong opinions on our world.

The Glorious Chorley People Exhibition is planned to be in two parts.

The first will be a series of works that are a direct interpretation of the carvings and plaster work to be displayed in the Hall. As well as a display of my work their main function will be to stimulate visitors



to make their own speculations about the Hall's artefacts encouraging them to look closer and discover other images to inspire them. The meaning of many of the carvings and plaster work is lost and it gives us all an opportunity to make our own stories and legends.



The idea is that these observations by visitors will generate their own drawings, written or verbal stories.

The second part of my exhibition, 'Glorious Chorley People: Dark', will be in the Coach House Gallery and feature my interpretation of these works and how they reflect the misogyny, abuse and despicable attitudes wanted in the 15th/16th Centuries. Visitors will be warned that my work may be 'triggering'. The work will still be based on the carvings and plaster work but will question

why the 'Bannister boys' and cherubs are naked and, amongst other comments, why the women portrayed are bare breasted. It will also an opportunity to display my preliminary sketches and research done by me and others on the significance of the iconography.

This exhibition will take place in 2025.



OMG moment – Tina Perry

Way back in Jan I decided a late New Year's resolution was to push myself a little. So after a glass of Pinot I entered the David Shepard wildlife artist of the year ..

The months went by presuming I'd not been accepted but pleased with myself for entering.. then OMG. I received an e.mail congratulating me for becoming a finalist !!!

Life became a bit of a blur with OMG slipping into most conversations ..with more encouragement from the amazing tutors at the Sculpture Lounge (Brendan & Tim) .. I got Cheetah ready for his trip to London! Dress bought, accommodation booked plus one invited..



Symbiosis - Oliver Bertrand

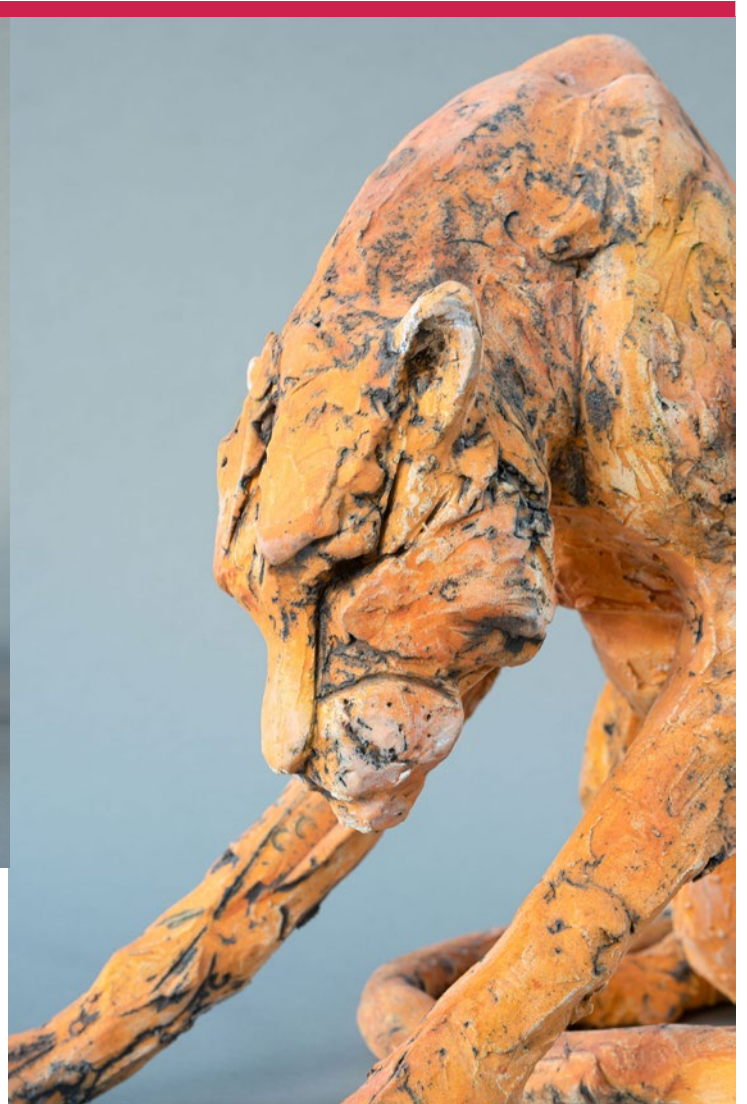


Orang Outan - Pongo Pygmaeus



I was totally blown away by the amazing works on show .what a privilege to have been part of this competition..well worth getting lost trying to find the venue! (Navigation not one of my strongest points) I'll stop babbling and show you a little ...

I hope this may encourage my fellow sculptors out there to consider giving it a go ...



The David Shepherd foundation do amazing work in the conservation of wildlife .I was very honoured to be part of it .



21 Questions for potters Featuring Alan Ball

– Michelle Webb

Alan Ball is a ceramicist from Washington, near Durham, who isn't retiring anytime soon even at 88, he's still knocking out exquisite naked raku pots in his back garden with the smoothness of a whirlpool pebble and decorated with stunning smoke fired designs. Alan's studio is in his garage, as you walk in there's shelves of finished pots, a feast for the eyes to see! His studio consists of a large pottery wheel (Wenger super 70) and a small top loading electric kiln in the corner. A workbench where he draws his designs with Indian ink and then scratches through the glaze with a toothpick. There's a corner with just guitars leaning against the wall, Alan likes to play J J Kale and Bob Dylan songs when the moment grabs him.

my own electric kiln and a kick wheel. I was a design engineer; I'd have a go at making anything. I got a pyrometer from the brick works in Blyth. I was all set to make my own pottery. I made pottery on an evening after work for about 6 or 7 years then decided to leave the engineering work and try and make a living from pottery. I went to teacher training college at Neville's cross in Durham. I was an art teacher at Highfield Comprehensive school in Felling for about a year, then applied to be a pottery tutor at the newly formed Biddick Arts Centre and got the job.

3. What was your very first pot like, and do you still have it?

It was probably a bowl and I would've probably given it away.



1. How many years have you been potting?

55 years! I was a time served apprentice design engineer for a sweet wrapping company called Forgrove. Then worked for Timex making machines to make watches.

2. What got you started?

I was always interested in art so did some pottery night classes at the Industrial Arts College in Newcastle in my 30s (1960s). Mike White was the tutor then. I knew straight away I loved throwing clay, I was hooked. I used to look at the articles in Ceramic Review on how to build a kiln and a wheel and made

4. Who were your influences?

Bernard Leach, I bought his potters book to learn the techniques, David Roberts naked raku pots & Mike White the man who taught me.

5. What cone do you fire to?

I mostly do naked raku now, but I electric fire my bisque to cone 06. Sometimes I make 04 earthenware bowls for charity.

6. What clay do you like using?

Ashraf Hannah for my naked raku pots. I used to buy stoneware clay a lot in the past for the Arts Centre,



but not now. I like making slips from found local clay.

7. What firing techniques do you do?

Mostly naked raku. But I did make a 30 cubic feet Catenary Arch gas fired kiln at the Arts Centre, another how-to article I read in Ceramic Review!

8. Do you make your own glazes?

Yes, I make all my own glazes. I used to make all of Bernard Leach's recipes for the Arts Centre too. I still like making my own slips for terra sigillata

9. What are your favourite colours?

Black and white.

10. How long does it take to make your work?

That depends on the detail of the decoration. I can make pots quickly now. I always try and make a better pot than I did the last time. I always consider the shape, spend time on the form, make sure that's right. There's 3 things you should consider, 1. The form quality, 2. The surface quality i.e. the glaze, and 3. The surface design detail. You get them right, you'll have a good pot.

11. How many shows a year do you do?

Not so much now, I used to do loads, but I do still sell in galleries.

12. Throwing or handbuilding?

Throwing, love throwing.

I used to make 100 cups in a day, finished with handles on!

13. What infuriates you the most in the process?

When the sacrificial glaze is not thick enough and too much area gets blackened by the smoke. You lose the decoration detail. But I make less mistakes now.

14. What are your 3 most important tools?

My raku tongs! They're old coal grabbers, love those. My stainless steel rib, you get a nice smooth surface with it.

Paddle for knocking pots out of shape.

15. What piece of equipment do you wish you had?
Small rapid fire gas kiln, to do porcelain reduction firings. So if anyone out there has one going?

16. Is there any pottery technique you would still want to try?

Reduction chun's and celadon's

17. Are you a tidy potter?

Yes, I like to have all my things organized so I know where they are.

18. Where do you find inspiration for your work?

I'm inspired by African Art, and African fabrics, they influence my design on my pots.

19. Who do you admire now?

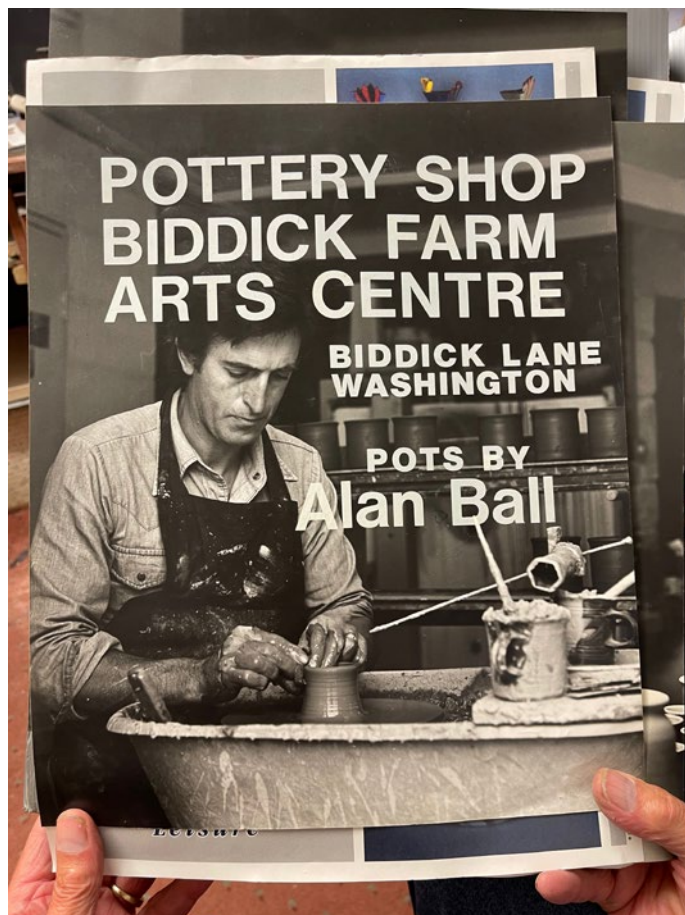
David Roberts and Daphne Corregan, Liz Frisch and John Ward.

20. What has been the highlight of your career so far?

I don't think I've ever had a highlight! Oh wait, actually, I made a smoke fired pot when I first started pottery that was displayed at the Aberdeen Museum of Modern Ceramics. That was a highlight for me.

21. Have you collaborated with other artists?

My daughter Laura Hancock, she makes lovely smoke fired pots.



Out of this Earth (Part 1) - Brigitte Soltau



The old school building Studio and Gallery

With travelling once again possible, if not very ethical, and another grandchild on the other side of the world, we once again found ourselves on a long-haul flight last winter. Australia for the helpful (hopefully) grandparenting, then New Zealand to relax. Each offered a memorable and enriching ceramics experience.

Potters of the Red Centre

From our base in Adelaide, we embarked on a short trip north to Alice Springs, respite from the city and suburbs. In Alice, we found a colourful creative town bursting with life and wall to wall art. Nationally there are many arts centres developing and promoting the work of First Nation artists, each region producing its own distinctive style. Major galleries in Australia now hold the work of First Nation potters in their collections, and I'd seen the instantly recognisable pots from Hermannsburg on previous visits. Once I realised that Hermannsburg was just a two-hour drive away from Alice Springs I enquired about a visit. Although officially closed to visitors at the time, they kindly invited me to go.



Hermannsburg (Ntaria), 125km west of Alice Springs, began as a Lutheran Mission in 1877 and today is home to a small population of around 600. The Western Arrarnta people were introduced to making pottery in the 70s, using clay from the region and making small sculptures and figurines to sell to tourists. But the Pottery as it currently exists began in 1990, when ceramics tutor Naomi Sharp was employed to offer training courses to the area's outstations. 1

The training programme was extended and an old school building provided. In 1992 the Hermannsburg Potters Aboriginal Corporation was established, a collective predominantly, but not exclusively, of women. Their fame and exposure grew, first exhibiting in Melbourne, then all over Australia and overseas.

As Heidi McKenzie writes: "I think it's fair to generalize that most Westerners have a preconceived idea that all Aboriginal Australian art is about the Dreaming or creation myth stories, and for the most part are comprised of dot paintings. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Hermannsburg potters categorically resist this type-casting." 2



Bush Turkey Colin Malbunka

Hermannsburg pots are distinctly and uniquely theirs – colourfully painted lidded jars, from tiny to huge, depicting scenes of contemporary life. On the lid of each jar sits a modelled figure – a character or creature taken from the main narrative of the pot. They are coiled using earthenware clay, burnished and painted with underglazes and slips, mostly unglazed. They are full of life, humour, culture and comment.

Senior Artist and Director Judith Inkamala traces their early inspiration to the water colour artist Albert Namatjira – Hermannsburg’s most famous son, whose legacy continues through generations of skilled water colour painters. The potters developed beyond landscapes in their depictions of life around them, to include people, animals, birds – “to tell the story on the landscape, our way”. 3



Ramia Goanna Dawn Wheeler

The Pottery has thrived for over thirty years, with some founding members still involved today. A serious commitment, a way of life. They are also looking to the future, ensuring the work is carried forward: “We teach the young people, they are coming up, they are keeping our pottery strong”.4

Driving in the early morning light alongside the spectacular West MacDonnell Ranges on the day of my visit, I realised I was nervous. These are famous potters! I had far too many questions. I knew I wanted to record the visit – but writing notes would be a distraction. Better to be open, to listen, observe and

engage. I’d have to rely on memory and any photos I was allowed to take. I told myself to relax and enjoy this very lucky opportunity.

My three-hour visit flew by and it was a joy. I was met by acting manager Ness Sim and Holly MacDonald, a student teacher/ technician on placement, who set me up to watch a video about the Pottery’s history and then introduced me to the potters present that day.

As we sat with clay in our hands – most of the women at various stages

of coiling and shaping, some modelling the lid figures, me attempting to make a goanna – most of my planned questions went out of the window. Instead we chatted - about clay, tools, methods, firing. About where our inspirations come from – some advice for me: ‘work (make pots) from what you know’. About how making work together creates a community and the importance of passing on skills to the next generation. We examined some tests they were doing using locally dug clay, as one woman remembered her grandfather doing. There was excitement and laughter and a camaraderie familiar from my years of adult teaching.

All too soon it was lunchtime, a quick cuppa in the blazing sun, and then time for me to leave the potters to their work. I hardly noticed the drive back to Alice, feeling giddy with the knowledge of what a unique privilege this visit had been.

References:

1. Inkamala, Judith. My Art, My Story. The Journal of Australian Ceramics. Vol 61 No 2 July 22
2. McKenzie, Heidi. The Art of Everyday Storytelling: Hermannsburg Pottery. Ceramics Monthly. Nov 2018
3. As 1
4. As 1

Frill Neck Lizard Abel Pareroutlja



New Membership System Update – Nadine Blakemore

As promised, I just want to give you a little bit more information on the new memberships system we are about to implement. The actual system was recommended to me by one of our members and after comparing a few systems, your committee has found this one to be the one.

The team have worked hard over the summer months and everything is now set up, and ready to go live on our website in the next couple of weeks. This means that from the day we go live, new members will be subscribed instantly without our membership secretary having to send out emails and manually check if the subscription was paid. New members will pay securely by direct debit via the new system.

For all of you, our members, you will be set up automatically and you do not need to do anything.

That said, you will receive an email with everything you need to know and an invitation to set up a password on the system. This means, that you can then login and check that all your details are correct. And please rest assured, all your data is safe and secure during the migration process and afterwards.

I would like to add, that although I haven't seen the final look of the system, I am very impressed by what I have seen so far and the customer service we have received. This new system is a massive step for our NPA and I am looking forward to using it in the near future.

Nadine
Chair

Brenda Wright 1942 - 2023

Brenda was born in Leeds where she gained a degree in Fine Art, and later became an art teacher in Lancashire. Then a move to Cheshire brought her passion for pottery to the fore. She attended Alsager College for A Level Pottery and later Harrogate College studying BTEC Ceramics where she learned her craft, and stopped full-time teaching to dedicate her time to establishing her own studio.

A member of Northern Potters Association for many years she exhibited over much of the north of England, including Pot Fest and York Open Studios. From her studio in York she continued to refine and develop her sea-themed often organic designs in their distinctive blue glazes, until her death in July this year.



A new Ceramics Event in York – Sylvia Schroer



Southlands Methodist Church

Sylvia Schroer and Katie Jane Hill are two founding members of Back Lane Pottery – a group of York neighbours and friends who get together to develop ceramics skills and have a good time doing it. They are setting up what is hoped will become a twice-yearly pottery fair in Southlands Methodist Church, York. Southlands Methodist Church is an established centre for the arts, housing 20 artists in South Bank Studios. It is a venue for both York and North Yorkshire Open Studios and for a busy Winter Art Fair in November each year.

The first ceramics event will be a Xmas Fair on 9th December 2023. Northern Potters member Sylvia will take the lead on organising this event as Katie is completing her PhD. Her vision is an inclusive ceramics fair that supports the pottery community - showcasing talented and skilled established potters and encouraging & supporting new makers. Sylvia says “I have had all sorts of idea for this Xmas fair. I fell in love with clay nearly two years ago at an evening class and it is such a grounding thing to do, so good for mental health and wellbeing - but it can be expensive too and selling and exhibiting work builds confidence as well as helping fund my

progress. I was so encouraged when a sculpture I made was accepted for this year’s Ferens Open, and I love going to ceramics fairs. I am trying to put together something welcoming and supportive that is great fun for both visitors and potters. I have had so much enthusiasm for the idea I am a bit blown away – and very keen to hear from anyone who wants to be involved or to support me to help make this inaugural event a big success – and next summer’s fair can follow on from it. Do get in touch if you are a York/Yorkshire based potter.

yorkpottersfair@gmail.com

Tel 07779799110



Sylvia Schroer

A wonderful day of skill – Graham Northing



Mark Smith and Rachel Wood talk and demonstrate to SENPA

What a day this was. We had two of the best ceramicists, a lovely setting in the Eco Centre workshop, and an audience ready to be wowed. And we were not disappointed.

multiple layers to give the amazing feeling of depth in her surface decoration. It all sounded so simple, and looked so 'free form' but I suspect that is far from the truth. I think skill and a great artistic eye has a lot to do with it. She then gave a demonstration of how she starts her pots on the wheel. Certainly, much to my



The day was arranged into 4 parts, so that Rachel and Mark did a talk and demonstration both morning and afternoon. One on one side of the room and the other on the opposite side. To see the next demonstration just turn your chair around, simple but effective.

We started with Rachel giving a talk about what has, and still does, inspire her work. About her travelling in Australia and how her work has slowly transformed over the years into the large forms she now enjoys making. Also, how she uses combinations of slip and glazes in





surprise, she threw the bottom of what was to become a large coil pot upside down. This she said was to save trimming the bottom of the pot, a process she did not enjoy.

Next (chairs turned), Mark gave a slide-show run-down of his journey through his pottery development. From starting as a stone sculptor and slowly moving into clay as a medium. About how his style evolved. He then gave us a masterclass (no other word for it) in building one of his very recognisable horse sculptures. The support frame he used was inspired, and the speed and ease of building the piece was just astounding. One minute it was an armature of welding rods, bubble wrap and paper tape. The next there was a horse. Not finished or refined, but no doubt about it, a horse. Brilliant.

We then broke up for an hour or so for lunch and a chance to chat.

The afternoon commenced with Rachel completing her very large bowl. The base had had a chance to firm up somewhat and she showed us how she worked up the coiled upper section and got some texture into the body, and 'look' into the rim. Whereas most of us are concerned about the rim of a bowl Rachel was very relaxed. Her bowls are so thin and light that the top sometimes tears or warps. These are features that she embraces and makes into a unique part of the piece. Her confidence with the clay was fantastic. All of this making was accompanied by tales of her pottery life and answering lots of questions.

Then back to Mark. This time he constructed a standing/walking figure. Again the frame was used (I know of three copies now), and again this arrangement provided an excellent support structure to start with. He explained, and demonstrated, how with a slight twist of movement the whole aspect of the figure could be changed. Too short, stretch it. So simple and obvious, yet so clever to be able to see what needed to be done.

At the end, to much encouragement from the audience the support rods were removed one by one and, after a brief resistance, slowly gave in to gravity.

That was the last act of a very, very good day.

Many thanks to Josie Walters and Toby Bennett for suggesting the venue. And to the Eco Centre team for hosting us. And especially to Rachel and Mark for being just great!

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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.

Adam Rush	Warrington	Cheshire
Alison Richardson	ROTHERHAM	S. Yorks
Amanda Ovington	Hepworth	W. Yorks
Anne Jones	Warrington	Cheshire
Brooke Kirsch Pinfold	Holmfirth	W. Yorks
Carol Jordan	Thirsk	N. Yorks
Chris Timms	Belper	Derbyshire
Christopher Phillips	Manchester	Lancashire
Claire Thornley	Ramsbottom	Lancashire
David Stark	Oldham	Lancashire
Dawn Phillips	Neston	Cheshire
Debbie Michaels	Hathersage	Derbyshire
Frazer Letman	Sowerby Bridge	W. Yorks
Gale Edwards	Sheffield	S. Yorks
Gemma Lancaster	Macclesfield	Cheshire
Helen Almond and Lowri	Almond	Isle of Man
Hilary Calverley	Huddersfield	W. Yorks
Ian Smith	Barnsley	S. Yorks
Iona Stock	York	N. Yorks
Jade Smith	Sheffield	S. Yorks
Jane Wratten	Sheffield	S. Yorks.
Jo-Anne Mellor	Manchester	Gr. Man
Jonathan Porter		Lancashire
Julia Bruno	Hartlepool	Co Durham
Karen Needs	Lincoln	Lincolnshire
Kim Stuttard	Blackburn	Lancashire
Lesley Robson and Holly Crowther-Lobley	Singleton	Lancashire
Liliana Rodriguez	Sheffield	S. Yorks
Mark Gittins	Retford	Notts
Neill Richardson	Derby	Derbyshire
Olivia Smith	Derby	Derbyshire
Peter Bosanquet and DebbieBosanquet	Sheffield	S Yorks
Pierre Jameson	Lancaster	Lancashire
Rebecca Ridley	Stocksfield	Northum
Richard Lynn	Carlisle	Cumbria
Ruth Sherrington and Sarah Howes	Chesterfield	Derbyshire
Sally Champion	Tarporley	Cheshire
Sarah Weyell	Middlesbrough	N. Yorks
Stuart Hillston	Bedale	N. Yorks
Susan White	Northwich	Cheshire
Tracy Dryden-Jones	Ilkley	Yorkshire
Trish Scullin	Leicester	Leics

Jen Donkin Gourley
Membership Secretary

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



From the Membership Secretary

Some reminders:

Don't forget to let 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

Jen Donkin Gourley

Small ads

Small ads are free to members!

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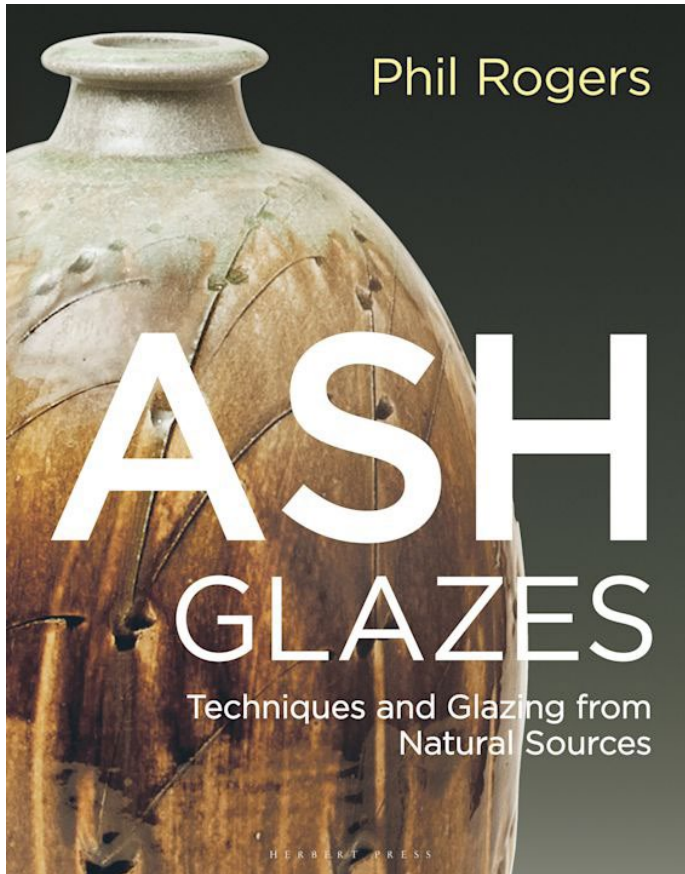
Kiln- Electric T80 Kilns and Furnaces. Interior size- 38.5cm w x 46h x 47d £500 ono
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2 Ratcliffe electric wheels- R43F, R43A models £500 each ono.
3 banding wheels- 20-30cm diameter £50 each ono.
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Contact Albert Wright on 01904 449198

68 copies of NPA newsletters from Feb/March 2004 to Oct/Nov 2022, **free** to good home. Collect Holmfirth HD9, or going to recycling!!

sue@hand-built-pottery.co.uk

Book Review – Sarah Vanic



Ash Glazes by Phil Rogers
Techniques and Glazes from Natural Sources
3rd Edition
Published by Herbert Press

I am fascinated by the process of reviewing books especially when I know nothing about the topic. Ash glazes are out of my depth but Phil Roger's book has opened up a door for me, to think wider than my own experience.

My first question about a revised book, is why? Is it a chance to grab a new audience? Update new techniques? Or Create a financial opportunity? It may be all of these things but it's possible that a revised edition of a popular book is here to remind us why the book was published in the first place. So this edition sits alongside the first two in respect that it isn't one you read from cover to cover or put away on the shelf to collect clay dust. It is a manual, reference, guidebook & bible of sorts.

30 years on from the first edition this book provides us with new ash glaze recipes, advice to support glaze explorations, a dedicated section of potters' profiles, plus numerous photos to illustrate ash glazes. The

chapter I found most exciting referred to plantology, The Growing Plant..

Now that I have given you a reason to buy this book, Don't stop reading the review because more importantly what this edition includes is the unfolding subject of clay making and mortality.

Pay special attention to the preface, foreword and introduction of a book because it can sometimes offer the reader something intimate and rich to ponder.

Ash Glazes is introduced by the Reverend Richard Coles stating bluntly that Phil is gone and one must speak of him in the past tense, and even though Phil wanted to participate in this book, C'est la vie. This statement hangs around in my head, reminding me of many potters in my own community who have died recently. Their absences felt and their unique language in clay over, but is it?.

What helps the mortal potter live on?

The reverend's understanding of the sacredness of pots and how they embrace our daily living and spiritual life leads the way. He describes using Phil Roger's bowls to dispense the holy eucharist in sacrament as well as feed his trusty little hairy companion. (different bowl for that) You can picture it, how we hold the makers touch and the firing process in our hands and therein they are held in the pot. Does this make sense to you. It does to me.

If you want to get even more esoteric, move on to Mike Todd's foreword urging us to contemplate T.S.Eliot's essay on 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'. This is useful stuff. We are not alone; in a vacuum. We all have egos and struggle to feel unique in the pottery world. How do we stay in the past and present at the same time? Good questions to ponder and I very much like that this book is about ash, as when our language of making stops too, we can join those potters who have come before us.

Visit www.bloomsbury.com/uk/ash-glazes-9781789940947 and pre-order your copy today and get 20% off by entering the code **AshGlazes20** at checkout.



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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.

September 25th was the last NW group get together, held at The Chalet Cafe in Keswick. The main group topic was sharing our photography tips to show and promote your ceramics. As I write this is in the future, so I hope it went well.

The **Shared Stories at Upfront** exhibition is also shaping up as I write and runs from 27 September until 12 November - catch it if you can!

Kathryn has been industrious with event organisation and several new opportunities for members in our region, and possibly further afield, are now on the horizon. Ford Park in Ulverston is the location for our ceramic festival **MUD Fest** planned for next year. We received a lot of interest from members to take part, so please put Sunday 19th May 2024

in your diaries, planning has already begun!

The Dock Museum in Barrow has been reluctant to host a dedicated 3D exhibition, however they have recently appointed a new curator who is more favourable to the idea. If you are interested in exhibiting in this stunning space please let Kathryn know, it's likely going to be in 2025.

We have also secured Farfield Mills for an exhibition April - July 2026. Both the Dock and the Mills will be selected exhibitions, based on the photos submitted by NPANW members.



NW

NW Regional co-ordinators: Kathryn Stevens, Deborah Robinson, Chris Barnes

northernpottersnw@gmail.com



[NPAnorthwest](#)



[@northernpottersassociationNW](#)

We have good news! **Glorious Clay Chorley** will be going ahead again next year 1st – 30th April at The Coach House Gallery, Astley Hall. Thanks to Graham for organising this. As part of the exhibition, we're planning to celebrate the life and work of Leonora Carrington who was born in Clayton Green, Chorley.

UCLan ClayLab returned this week after summer break. If you're interested in applying for a place there'll be opportunity next March. Contact Cath for details ccriscenti@uclan.ac.uk

British Ceramics Biennial opened 23rd September to 5th November so plenty of inspiring ceramics to

see across Stoke on Trent and at The Brampton in Newcastle under Lyme.

In Preston we held our first Art on the Plots, which provided an opportunity to display ceramics. The Weatherbeads put in an appearance. (please see attached!)

As ever, if anyone would like to take on the role of NPA West coordinator or is willing to help then please let us know.

Happy potting – Kim and Helen



W

Kim Graham & Helen Pemberton west@northern-potters.co.uk



[NPAwest](#)



[@northernpottersassociationWest \(TBC\)](#)

We hope that you all had a wonderful Summer either making, selling or getting inspiration from the spent away. Hopefully all three.

Our Stretford Mall, Manchester selling event in August, organized by Stacy White, was a quiet affair but the potters who attended got time to get to know one another and share ideas making it a social event.

The Macclesfield Pop-Up event being organized by Pat Amies and Hazel Highman quickly had all its places filled and now has a waiting list. It is to be held for a full week commencing 23rd October 2023. It will be coinciding with the Treacle Market on the Saturday so even if you aren't taking part please do support our potters with a visit.

Sue Clarke is looking into an event for us at Ellen Road Steam Museum, Rochdale. They often hold markets and craft events on 'steam days' It would be a new location that

we can welcome some of our more northern area potters to, which will be great. We have no dates at the moment but if you are interested please get in touch.

Our annual regional AGM will be on Saturday 10th February 2024 at Lemon Studio, Dunham Massey, Altrincham. This is definitely one for the diary. I know it's very advance notice but at this meeting Juliet and Ceri will be stepping down as coordinators for the region. Juliet has held the role since the beginning of 2018. The term should only be 3 years so it's time for others to have the opportunity of benefiting from the position. If you would like to know more about the duties and the benefits of being a regional coordinator then please do get in touch.

Wishing you all well, Juliet and Ceri



SW

Juliet Myers

south-west@northern-potters.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



NE

In September a group of NPA NE members enjoyed an afternoon at MIMA, learning about the permanent ceramics collection. Five hundred ceramic works representing potters and ceramicists of all disciplines, are now housed in an Open Access room. Using the collection for inspiration, we worked in The Studio to draw and paint responses to the ceramics.

The NE winter selling show will be at the Python Gallery from 27th October to 18th November. Contact Carol Newmarch if you are not on the NE mailing list. There will be a PV Friday 27th, all welcome.

NE Regional Co-ordinators Group: Carol Newmarch, Wendy Turner, Helen Pickard, Jaime Westwood, etc.
north-east@northern-potters.co.uk  [NorthernPottersAssociationNorthEast](https://www.facebook.com/NorthernPottersAssociationNorthEast)  [@northernpottersassociationNE](https://www.instagram.com/northernpottersassociationNE)

This year's East region summer BBQ was held at the beginning of September in glorious weather at Fangfoss Pottery. Many thanks to our generous hosts, Lyn and Gerry Grant, for all their hard work preparing for it, for the organisation and especially the rocky road. There was a good turnout and it was lovely to see new members there and to catch up on news, swap ideas and gain advice over lunch. We all went away with pots and some even managed some Obvara firings. These events are a great way to network and



E

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

August 20th saw us at our 4th **PopUp2Pottery** ceramics market at Fox Valley in Stocksbridge. Our timing wasn't great as we coincided with the women's world cup final and football was greatly reduced as a result. However, the sun shone, sales were made and potters had fun reconnecting and making new friends. The following weekend we held a really fun raku day at Clifton Park in Rotherham. The rain held off and 20 members, some of whom had never taken part in a NPA event, spent the day glazing and raku firing. Many thanks to Caroline and Andy Lee for facilitating the event, they ensured that the day was a great success.



SE

September started busy with **Art in the Gardens** at the beautiful Botanical Gardens in Sheffield. We have had a group marquee there since 2018 and it's always a fabulous show. 12 members showed their work this year and our 'inclusive table' was crowded with pieces from the wider group. We were delighted

as a result of our lunchtime chats a year long rolling exhibition was arranged at a local gallery on a theme of 'the seasons'. The details of this event have been circulated by email, if you are not on the circulation list and want details please get in touch. Good luck to all the potters involved with the **Staithe Festival** this year.

to be awarded a Gold certificate for the presentation of the marquee which was decorated with seasonal foliage and looked wonderful.

By the time you read this we will have taken part in **Art at the House**, Shepley (23rd-24th September). This will be the 3rd year for us at this event and it's always a lot of fun. It will also be the venue for our next south-east group meeting.

We are looking forward to our final event of the year, for now, **Cromford Ceramics Fair**, at Cromford Mills, Matlock (8th October). 35 potters and ceramic artists will be showing at this new ceramics fair at this fantastic historic site.

The South East is very active on social media and we would love you to tag us **#northernpottersassociationse** for a follow and repost. It can be really hard to find you if you don't let us know what your social media accounts are called.

all the best
Nog and Wendy

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

Bonus Book Review – Graham Hough

CONFRONTATIONAL CERAMICS - The Artist as Social Critic

by Judith S Schwartz

I am grateful to a potter in North East Derbyshire responding to my article in the NPA Journal about my controversial work who told me about this book by Judith S Schwartz, Associate Professor in the Department of Art and Art Professions at New York University

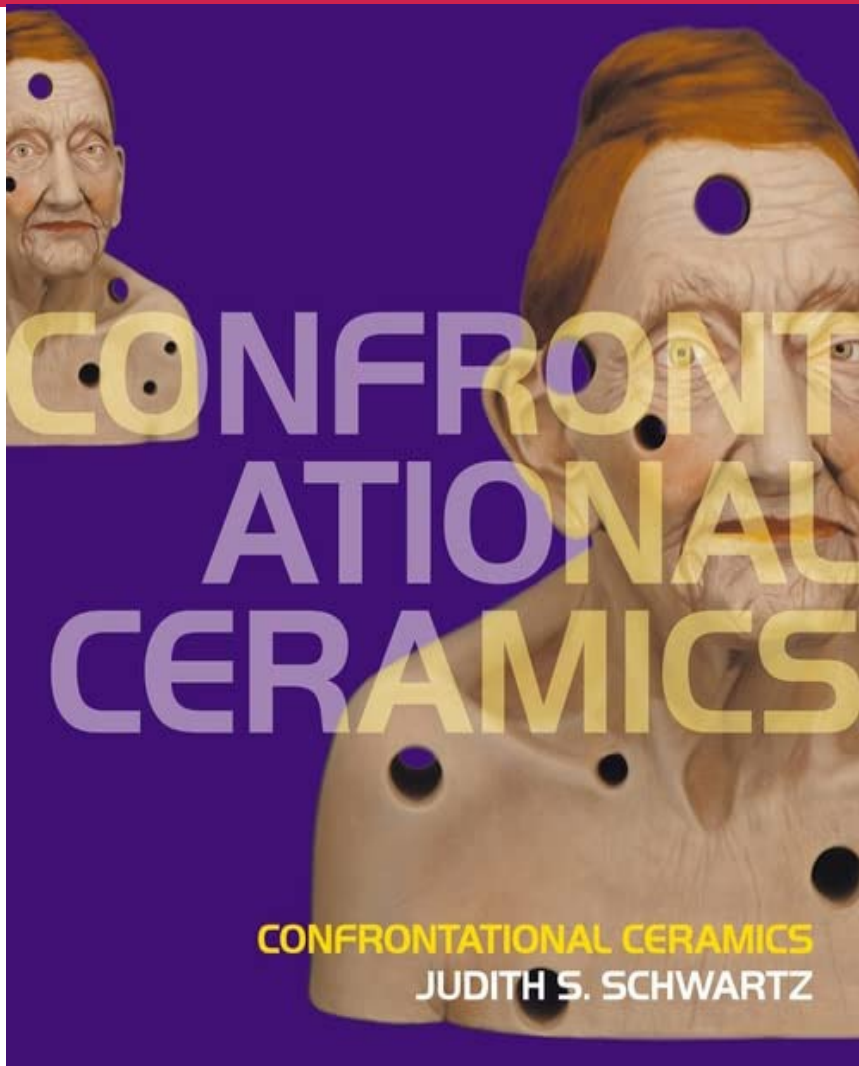
Those who associate ceramics with functional vessels or charming kick-knacks are in for a shock. Clay may start out soft, but in the right hands it can deliver a hard blow.

This ground-breaking book looks at the use of ceramic art as a confrontational tool, where artist's work comments on social issues. It is essentially a massive overview of the ceramic scene from this perspective, showcasing typical pieces of work by ceramic artists alongside their statements explaining their approach. Essentially an art book, this is very much about how work is used to confront people with the truth and comment on social issues, and is divided up into relevant chapters: War and Politics, the Environment, Social and Human Condition, Gender Issues and Popular Culture. Artists include very well known established makers such as Grayson Perry, Robert Arneson, Richard Notkin, Howard Kottler etc. as well as introducing lesser known artists. This glamorous and cutting-edge book displays the work of 228 contemporary artists from 30 different countries, including the UK, USA, Greece, Hungary, France, Israel, Canada, Norway, Italy, The Netherlands, Japan, China, Palestine and Estonia amongst others, making it truly international.

Graham Hough

In case you would like to track this book down, here is a link to the book's Amazon page:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Confrontational-Ceramics-Judith-S-Schwartz/dp/0713676558>



Available on Amazon: £118.29

4 Used from £115.52

Publisher: A&C Black Visual Arts; 1st edition (25 July 2008)

Hardcover: 256 pages

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