

NPA Magazine



Tell-tale Pots & Potters' Yarns - *Ceramic* Stories



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

Quarterly
May 2026



In this issue

- 3 From the Chair
- 4 Diary
- 6 Places To Go
- 8 Gallery: People to Know
- 9 Round-up: Around the Regions
- 12 Mike Scown: Potter's Chronicle
- 13 From the Editor: Storytelling
- 14 Evelyn Albrow: Time Travelling Tales
- 15 Krithika Ram: Nature Notes
- 16 Becca Brown: Folksy Tales & Mini-dramas
- 17 Kim Stuttard: Table Talk
- 18 Helen Birnbaum: Fishy Tales
- 19 Mo Schofield: Finding My Inner Voice
- 20 Potters Camp News: Fired & Inspired Pottery Festival
- 22 Membership Matters: NPA Facebook Changes & Membership Update
- 23 Books

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Front cover: Kim Stuttard

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From the Chair

npachair@northern-potters.co.uk

As spring finally arrives it feels like the right time to reflect on the past few years since I joined the NPA and I took over from John Cook, our previous chair, in January 2022.



Back then, I wrote a little wishlist of things I hoped to achieve as chair - it ran to three pages. 😊

I remember one of my first tasks after joining the committee in 2019 was to compile the mailing list for the magazine and send it to the printers. It makes me shudder now, thinking of how unsafe this was. So a key part of my tenure was our move away from scattered Excel spreadsheets to the LoveAdmin platform. I know some of you have had problems with it but it certainly has made the life of our volunteers a lot easier. It's secure, GDPR compliant, and it means our volunteers no longer have to juggle endless versions of documents back and forth via email. It's allowed us to communicate with you regularly, send newsletters and event updates at the click of a button, and run bookings smoothly. Wendy, our membership secretary is doing a fantastic job, setting up lots of events ready for you to book – please keep an eye on your emails and our website as well as the app. Equally, it has enabled us to set up Potters Circle, our regular members' Zoom which is accessible to all members.

With more than 800 members, your NPA is in a very strong position and I feel it is the right moment for me to step down as chair at this year's AGM at the Potters Camp in Yarm. Basically, I would like to free up a bit of time to make more pots – I hope you can understand. I don't yet have anyone to hand over to, so if you're able to offer some time and energy, please do get in touch. It sounds scarier than it is.

I'm not disappearing, though. I'll stay on the committee and will continue running Potters Circle. This year we have a few more great sessions lined up for you:

1. **Getting Found in 2026: Websites, AI, Google & The New Rules of Visibility** – Jonny Ross, 4 June, 19:30
2. **Costing and Pricing Your Work** – Carol Sinclair, two part workshop on 10 & 24 September, 19:30
3. I am happy to run a little **Christmas Quiz** as well, if you are interested?

Finally, a quick reminder: if you're planning a raku firing or any other pottery related event and would like some support, please get in touch with the team at events@northern-potters.co.uk. We want members to know that the NPA is happy to help – including funding events that can then be offered exclusively to our members.

Nadine

Your Committee

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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.

Places to Go...

Click on an entry below for more information.

Event Date	Event & Location	Appl'n Open	Appl'n Close
Now	CoCA Shop , York Art Gallery currently featuring work by NPA members	n/a	n/a
Until 4 May	Playing with Fire – Edmund de Waal and Axel Salto , Exhibition, Hepworth, Wakefield	n/a	n/a
Until 28 June	Fired Legacies: The Ceramic World of Rich Miller , Watts Contemporary Gallery, London	n/a	n/a
8-10 May	Ceramic Art London , (CPA) Kensington Olympia West, London	x	CPA closed
16-17 May	Pocklington Area Open Studios	x	closed
10 May	Ceramics in Charnwood , Market Place, Loughborough	x	closed
14-21 May	Future Icons Selects , London	x	6 Oct 2025
16-17 May	MUDFest , Ford Park, Ulverston	x	closed
4 June	*Getting Found in 2026: Websites, AI, Google & The New Rules of Visibility , Jonny Ross, NPA Potters Circle, ZOOM, 7.30pm	tbc	4 Jun 2026
5-7 June	Potfest in the Pens , Penrith	x	10 Jan 2026
6-7 & 13-14 June	North Yorkshire Open Studios	x	Sept 2025
7 June	*Brendan Hesmondhalgh - Animal Sculpture Day (Beginners) , Sculpture Lounge. Holmfirth	x	SOLD OUT
12-14 June	Potfest Scotland , Scone Palace, Perth	x	closed
13 June	*Rebecca Appleby – Surface Decoration Workshop , Longside Studios, West Bretton, Wakefield	x	SOLD OUT
13-14 June	Shipley Hive Community Potters, Shipley Open Gardens , Shipley, West Yorks.	n/a	n/a
13-14 June	Ceramic Wales , Bodrhyddan Hall, Dyserth Road, Rhyl, Wales	x	1 Jan 2026

Event Date	Event & Location	Appl'n Open	Appl'n Close
18-21 June	Great Northern Contemporary Craft Fair , Newcastle	5 Jan 2026	8 Feb 2026
19-21 June	Potfest by the Lake , Compton Verney	x	closed
20-21 June	Dovecot Mid-Summer Ceramics Fair , Dovecot Gallery, Poplars Farm, Styrrup, Doncaster	x	18 Jan 2026
4-5 July	KILN Ceramics Fair , Masson Mills, Matlock Bath	x	15 Nov 2025
5-11 July	Holmfirth Art Week	1 April 2026	tbc
10-12 July	Celebrating Ceramics , Waterperry Gardens, Oxford	x	28 Nov 2025
18-19 July	Thoresby Ceramics Fair , Thoresby Park, Newark	x	5 Jan 2026
18-19 July	Clay College Graduate Showcase , Clay College, Stoke on Trent	n/a	n/a
24-26 July	Potfest in the Park , Hutton in the Forest, Cumbria	x	closed
31 July-2 August	Clay College Graduate Showcase , The Department Store, Brixton, London SW9	n/a	n/a
2 August	*Cromford Mills Ceramics Summer Fair , Matlock, Derbys.	now	31 May 2026
23 August	*David William Sampson-Glazing Workshop , Long Eaton Courtyard, Nottingham	now	n/a
30 August	Ceramics in Southwell , Market Square, Southwell, Notts.	6 Feb 2026	27 Feb 2026
15-16 August	Art in the Pen , Skipton Auction Mart	x	31 Mar 2026
5-6 Sept	Art in the Gardens , Botanical Gardens, Sheffield (Independent exhibitors)	x	closed
5-6 Sept	*Art in the Gardens , Botanical Gardens, Sheffield (NPA tent)	x	closed
10 Sept	*Costing & Pricing Workshops (Pt. 1) , Carol Sinclair NPA Potters Circle, Zoom, time tbc	tbc	10 Sept 2026

Event Date	Event & Location	Appl'n Open	Appl'n Close
12-13 Sept	Pots for Food Festival , Three Stags Heads, Mires Lane, Wardlow, Derbys.	x	closed
19-20 Sept	Art at the House , Cliffe House, Shepley, West Yorks. (Independent exhibitors)	end Jan 2026	27 April 2026
19-20 Sept tbc	*Art at the House , Cliffe House, Shepley, W.Yorks. (NPA tent)	tbc	tbc
26-27 Sept	*Fired and Inspired Pottery Festival, INCORPORATING NPA POTTERS CAMP (27 SEPT ONLY) Holdenfields Farm, Yarm on Tees, North Yorks. ATTENDEES TICKETS FOR WORKSHOPS TO BE RELEASED IN JUNE	x	31 Jan 2026
10-11 Oct	Only Clay , Kelham Island, Sheffield	tbc	tbc
15-18 Oct	Great Northern Contemporary Craft Fair , Victoria Baths, Manchester	x	closed
Nov	Hepworth Festive Market , Wakefield	tbc	tbc
Nov/Dec tbc	Christmas Contemporary Makers Market , The Hub, Sleaford	tbc	July tbc
21-22 Nov	Crafts in the Pen , Skipton Auction Mart	now	30 June 2026
4-5 Dec tbc	Thoresby Winter Ceramics Fair , Thoresby Park, Newark	July enquire now	tbc
5 Dec	*TOASTED Ceramic Fair , Long Eaton Art Room, Nottingham	Jul 2026	July 2026
5 Dec tbc	*York Potters Fair , Southlands Methodist Church, York	1 Sept	tbc
Dec tbc	Stockport Ceramics Fair	tbc	tbc

The listing shows dates of events to both take part in and visit. It also shows exhibitor application opening and closing dates where these are known.

Closing dates in bold are those which may still be open for applications.

Whilst every care has been taken to publish accurate information, members are advised to consult the website or social media for the event they are interested in for definitive information.

*** Denotes NPA event or event supported by NPA**

Promote
your
event...

magazine@northern-potters.co.uk

publicity@northern-potters.co.uk

e-newsletter@northern-potters.co.uk

Once you have told us about your event don't forget to update us with any changes of date, location etc.

NEW CONTEMPORARY CRAFT GALLERY IN SHEFFIELD

A new independent contemporary craft gallery, **Steama & Co**, will open in Sheffield in May, specialising in ceramics, sculpture and handmade objects by both established and emerging makers.

Steama & Co is a curated gallery space dedicated to contemporary craft, with a particular focus on ceramics alongside textiles, metal, jewellery and woodwork. The gallery aims to showcase skilled handmade work in a carefully designed space where objects are displayed more like small works of art than shop items.

The interior has been designed with a rich, cabinet-of-curiosities atmosphere, featuring dramatic lighting, Victorian-style lamps and curated displays that create a unique environment for viewing contemporary craft. The gallery will host changing displays of work and aims to become a destination for people interested

in collecting and discovering handmade objects and ceramics in Sheffield.

The gallery will officially launch with an opening evening on Friday 8 May, where visitors will be able to view and purchase work from a selection of invited makers and ceramicists.

Steama & Co hopes to support makers and bring high-quality contemporary craft to a wider audience, while contributing to Sheffield's strong independent arts and maker community.

Opening Event: Friday 8 May 2026, 6–9pm

**Steama & Co, Steama Studios,
Sheaf Plate Works, Sheffield**

@steama_studios

Work by Barbara Wood at the
CoCA Shop, York Art Gallery



The CoCA shop at York Art Gallery often features work by NPA members. Currently on sale are works by:

Jack Hardie
Darrell Milnes
Charlotte Morrison
Jim Robison
Mike Scown
Beverley Sommerville
Josie Walter
Hanne Westergaard
Penny Withers
Barbara Wood
Alison Wren
Chiu-i Wu

Places to Go
& People
to Know...

CLAY COLLEGE GRADUATE SHOWCASE

CLAY COLLEGE STOKE will be exhibiting the work of their 14 full-time Diploma students in their Graduate Showcase.

The exhibition marks the culmination of two years of technical study and creative exploration in clay and will be exhibited for sale in both Stoke-on-Trent and at The Department Store, Brixton!

Don't miss your chance to view, discuss and buy from these emerging makers at the forefront of the next wave of studio pottery.

OPENING WEEKEND: 18-19 July 2026

Clay College, Stoke-on-Trent
Port Street, ST6 3PE
Saturday 18th July 11am-4pm
Sunday 19th July 11am-4pm

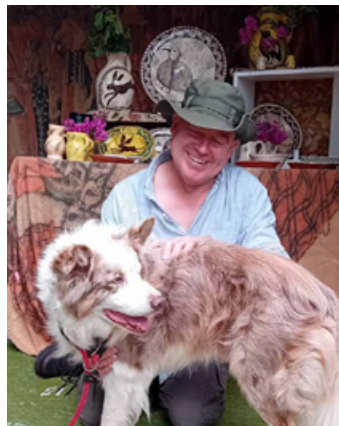
BRIXTON SHOW: 31 July-2 August 2026

The Department Store
248 Ferndale Road
London, SW9 8FR
Friday, Saturday 10am-5pm
Sunday 10am - 4pm

@claycollegestoke

Dovecot Mid-Summer Ceramics Fair, Dovecot Gallery, Poplars Farm, Styrrup.

It's eight-o'clock and I'm sitting eating toast and honey. The honey is from the bees at Poplar Farm, home to Dovecot Gallery. It's that time of year again and our fourth annual Mid-Summer Ceramics Festival will be held over the weekend of the 20 and 21st of June.



The photo is of Shaun Clarke (man and dog) who won the 'Best Stall and Display' voted by the public at last year's event. If you look closely you can see his hand painted Tudor covers and drapes. They are brilliant, as are his watercolour sketch books and, of course, his slip decorated pots. He will be there again this year.

I had better mention the rest of the gang - a complement of thirty five or more potters and ceramicists, old faces and new, scattered about the gardens, who will be showing an amazing selection of sculptural work and domestic ware, some traditional, some quirky. The variety is endless and their enthusiasm for making is palpable. All contributing to a guaranteed great day out. And again there will be an opportunity to have a go on a potter's wheel or watch a demonstration or two. You never know, it could be the start of something new, a change of direction or even a new career. One of our organisers, who has spent years sculpting in metal, has bought himself a wheel and kiln. Well done Mike. And finally I must mention the cakes, home-made and delicious, served with tea, coffee or soft drinks. All organised and run by the Doncaster Ukrainian Centre. We hope to see you there.

Cheers, Ken Taylor

ShIPLEY Open Gardens Charity Event 13-14 June

During this weekend members of ShIPLEY Hive Community Arts Centre have the opportunity to showcase and sell their pottery in a beautiful outdoor setting. All profits go to charity.

The 17 gardens are all in the Nab Wood area of ShIPLEY. Entry fee £4 per adult, children go free. This entitles you to entry into all of the gardens over both days.

Some gardens offer refreshments ranging from tea and cake to a full lunch menu. Opening times are 1pm to 5pm.

We hope to welcome fellow NPA potters to this event.

Gwenda Van Damme



KILN CERAMIC FAIR 4TH & 5TH JULY 2026



Coming to Masson Mills in Derbyshire this Summer - 55 of the very best ceramicists and potters under one fabulous roof!
10-4.30pm - 4th & 5th July

Entrance £2 per person - under 16's free
41 Derby Road, Matlock Bath,

Derbyshire, DE4 3PY

www.kilnceramicfair.co.uk

Upcoming Zoom Meetings (NPA members only)



4 June - Getting Found in 2026: Websites, AI, Google & The New Rules of Visibility, with Jonny Ross, NPA Potters Circle, ZOOM, 7.30pm

10 September - Costing & Pricing Workshops (Pt.1) with Carol Sinclair, NPA Potters Circle, ZOOM, time tbc.

To attend and/or access the recording you must register your interest by signing up via the NPA website before the event:

NPA Events Sign Up

Everyone pre-registered will be sent the recording whether or not they attended.

Gallery

People to Know...

Six members recently added a new Artist's Page or updated an existing one, on the NPA website.

To find out how to add or update your own page go to the documents tab on the NPA website.



[Click to find Artists' Pages on the NPA website.](#)

Clockwise from top right:

Rebecca Storey

Dee Goodwill

Liz Lambert

Adam Conway Cowdrill

Gill Wicks

On Page 17:

Kim Stuttard





Seen at...

Round-up

Heart Ceramics Fair, Headingley Arts Centre, Leeds

Congratulations to NPA member Alison Young for organising this inaugural ceramics event in Leeds on 14 March. On what was a fabulously sunny spring Saturday, Headingley was all a-buzz with students, families, residents and visitors at the cafés, shops and Farmers' Market. That meant a constant footfall at this central community and arts centre

with it's popular cafe. More than 25 ceramicists (mostly NPA members) exhibited their work with many successful sales.

It's possibly too early to ask Alison if she would do it all again but there is certainly space in the calendar for another Leeds event.

Chrissie Hunter



Top: Tina Wagner. Above, left-right: Alison Young; Krithika Ram; Tony Ovenell and customers

Other NPA Members showing at HEART, Leeds:

Helen Delaney
Sarah Dunton
Jo Fox
Lizzie Fry
David Gammage
Laura Hooper
Peter Lowles

Fiona Newby
Jon Pedlar
John Player
Will Rea
Mo Schofield
Amy Stringer

Three community pottery studios were grouped together in one room at HEART Ceramic Fair: The Hive (Shipley), Wharfedale Clay Club (Burley in Wharfedale) and Swarthmore Pottery (Leeds). This proximity gave us plenty of opportunity to talk about the classes we all offer. We had plenty of people visiting our stalls and sold a variety of ceramics. Huge thanks to Alison for organising this fair - what a wonderful day and a great celebration of ceramics it was.

Gwenda Van Damme

Leader Keeley Smith (second left) with members of Wharfedale Clay Club



Gwenda Van Damme (right), with members of Shipley Hive



Seen at... Hepworth Ceramic Fair, Wakefield

Taking place in the Mill Building at The Hepworth this spring ceramic fair is hugely popular with exhibitors and visitors alike. It's a great setup in a lofty historic building with plenty of space to circulate. Footfall was lively - boosted by the great spring weather - and trade was brisk. It was great to talk to NPA members.

The ceramics event weekend meant that entry fees for the museum itself were half-price and allowed entry to all the main galleries including the Edmund de Waal/Axel Salto, Kira Freije and Elizabeth Fritsch exhibitions and, of

course, the Barabara Hepworth exhibits. Lovely food at the gallery cafe and a whole day's parking for just a fiver made this an all round satisfying and inspiring away-day.

I have it on good authority that the Hepworth Festive Market later in the year is just as popular and even more atmospheric so make a note in your diary!

Chrissie Hunter



Charlotte Berry



Jo Everitt

Other NPA Members showing at Hepworth Ceramic Fair:

Alison Brayshaw

Becca Brown

Nigel Cunis

Robert Hunter

Tony Laverick

Rochelle Malia

Zivarna Murphy

Patricia Qua - several of Patricia's pieces were selected by Edmund de Waal to feature in a Ceramics Showcase at the Fair and made available in the Museum Shop.

hepworthwakefield.org

NPA Museum Visit to the Hepworth Wakefield, 7 February 2026

Thirteen of us assembled for a guided tour of the key-note exhibition "Playing with Fire" curated by Edmund de Waal. It is the first major exhibition of the work of Axel Salto - one of the greatest masters of 20th century ceramic art - on this, its last stop after touring Denmark and Norway. It says much about the standing of the Hepworth that it has had a showing here.

De Waal's fascination and high regard for Salto's work, is surprising due to the huge contrast between Salto's style of heavily glazed, richly decorative organic forms compared to de Waal's pared back delicate porcelain vessels some of which are also part of the exhibition.

We learned of de Waal's own connection to Wakefield through his relationship with the collector Bill Ismay who used to buy de Waal's pots when the latter was an apprentice. Also on display is work de Waal has created directly in response to Salto's work. We were all amazed and impressed at the scale of these and the contrast to his usual style.

The collection of Salto's rich organic, expressive forms - described by Salto himself as either budding or sprouting, got us all talking about how they must have influenced so many artists. In addition to Salto's ceramics were examples of his printmaking, woodcuts and fabrics, which were a blaze of colour in contrast to the previous room, showing Salto's fascination with the recurring theme of metamorphosis.

After the guided tour we convened in the cafe for a cuppa and reflection on the exhibition before heading back to take a further look around the galleries at our own pace, including Elizabeth Fritsch's "Other Worldly Vessels". All in all, an inspiring visit and a lovely opportunity to put names to faces, connect with other NPA members and share information with like-minded people.

Many thanks to East Region Coordinators Sylvia Schroer and Caroline Turner for organising the visit.

Beverley Porter

blandscliff gallery and studio

9 Blands Cliff Scarborough YO11 1NR

1940 - 2024
Retrospective
in 2026



John Egerton

*A special year to
commemorate
John, our
Yorkshire
Potter, who
sadly, died
of potter's
lung in
2024.*

*It has
been a
privilege
having his
wonderful
pieces in the
gallery for 25 years.*

*John
mixed
his glazes
and oxides,
etched and
drew on the
clay surface,
creating his
own Magic.
A traditional
potter, par
excellence!*



*John studied
at Hornsea
Art College.
In 1965 he
set up his
workshop in
an old pig sty
at his family
home near Whitby.*



*This Year
we have
over
90
pieces
of
John's
work for sale.*

www.Blandscliffgallery.com



Mike Scown

Still only in his thirties, Mike Scown already has a wealth of technical experience under his belt. After graduating with a degree in Fine Art a little more than a decade ago and wondering where life would take him, he was working in a restaurant when he picked up a small bowl which happened to be made by Ray Gridley just down the road at Baslow Pottery.



In an instant I went from having precisely zero interest in pottery to needing to know how this thing was made. Every step of the process.

I knew from the outset that I wanted ceramics to be more than a hobby. With clay I knew instantly that I had found a material that offers infinite possibilities for creativity alongside bottomless scope for technical development. Something to spend a lifetime exploring and hopefully earning with too.

I introduced myself at Baslow Pottery, who were incredibly supportive, and over the next few months I undertook what was essentially a very informal apprenticeship, helping to mix glazes and fire Ray's wood kiln.

After a few months I built my first kiln, made from scrap house bricks salvaged from skips, insulated with mud, and fired with palette wood. It wasn't pretty, but it was free. Working with raku techniques, I fired that first kiln about a dozen times over the following few months.

Potter's Chronicle



Eventually I decided it was time to invest a bit of money into some insulating bricks and a burner system to make life easier. This second kiln was a small white cube that could reach temperature in 30 minutes with minimal physical effort.

A major step up in 2014 was acceptance onto Yorkshire Artspace's Starter Studio Programme for Ceramics (now Clay Space), a two-year programme that included access to a fully equipped ceramics studio. My work properly began to take shape, helped by the ceramics community. My throwing gradually developed, I began producing functional ware in stoneware and porcelain, and spent huge amounts of time researching and testing glaze chemistry. I still record everything in notebooks - every firing, how the materials behave and what the outcomes are. I have always been a maker - taking apart and putting back together. I have a need to understand how things work or are the way they are.

From Clay Space I joined a Sheffield arts organisation for a two-year residency teaching several classes a week whilst continuing to develop my own work from a small studio space tucked away on the top floor. Here I progressed to Manager via posts as Technician and Coordinator until after Covid, when I accepted a project building two gas kilns, 15 and 60 cubic feet, for the development of Yorkshire Artspace's Kiln Yard.

Being back at YAS gave me the impetus to become freelance moving into my own studio there at Persistence Works.

A huge benefit of my time now being my own is being able to say yes to things that I previously wouldn't have had the time for. Being part of the ceramics community has led to unexpected opportunities such as becoming part of a large team of ceramicists working on Yinka Shonibare's Monument to the Restitution of the Mind and Soul, displayed at the 60th Venice Biennale in 2024.

During my degree I experimented with a wide range of media: drawing, painting, sculpture, stop-frame animation, video, performance. I had dabbled in lots of different media and not really got to grips with any of them in a really involved way. It was refreshing when, towards the end of my degree, I

Storytelling

From the Editor

All articles in NPA Magazine tell stories of some sort - whether about a personal experience, a step-by-step Masterclass or a report of an event or visit. In this issue I wanted to bring that storytelling through ceramics into focus. I am pleased to feature three young ceramicists working at Yorkshire Artspace two of whom, Evelyn Albrow and Becca Brown, tell quite visual stories in the decoration of their narrative pots and platters. Mike Scown, who is a consistent recorder and chronicler of his daily ceramic making and doing, was able to give me a brilliant potted account of his ceramic journey to date which he has abridged here. Also featured are Helen Birnbaum, Krithica Ram and Kim Stuttard who all create narrative pieces in their own unique styles. Finally, Mo Schofield gives her account of how several coincidences from her past led to a very thought-provoking commission.

Many thanks to Anne Haworth, Sarah Hall and Nick Mellor for their invaluable help in proof-reading this issue.

Chrissie



Evolving ceramics (left)

Opposite page: human sized degree show pot

Centre & bottom: recent work

Evolving kiln builds (right)

Top: first kiln of brick and mud

Centre: second white cube kiln

Bottom: kilns at Yorkshire Artspace's Kiln Yard



discovered that that there was a huge wealth of technical and artistic skill and knowledge that would be needed to successfully work with clay, from the raw forming, through slips and glazes, and firing, and all the infinite variations between them.

My journey with clay has been the result of hard work and determination, good luck and being in the right place at the right time. I owe a huge debt of thanks to everyone who has helped me, and my biggest hope is that I can spend the rest of my life contributing to the world of ceramics.

Looking forward, I'm excited to continue exploring the endless possibilities that clay has to offer, though I'm not complacent - one aspect of my career I intend to pay attention to in the near future is increasing my visibility by planning more shows and developing my website.

Mike

msc-ceramics.com

Evelyn Albrow

Evelyn Albrow uses her drawing skills and an interest in mythology and history to weave intensely detailed stories on her rustic ceramic pieces.

I am a self-taught ceramicist from Sheffield with a background in Illustration and Art History. I graduated from Bristol University with a degree in History of Art in 2009 and then spent ten years working in a London gallery.

During this time I self-funded a part-time MA in Illustration at Camberwell College of Arts (I didn't touch any clay at Camberwell!). I have always loved drawing and storytelling so thought this might help me find what I wanted to do.

Eventually I went down to working part-time in the gallery and shared a tiny studio in Walthamstow with some ceramicist friends who encouraged me to have a go at drawing on some of their pots and I loved it.

I came back to Sheffield in 2018 taking a studio at Yorkshire Artspace where I've continued to develop my love of world-building through clay. Initially, I could only get to the studio a couple of days a week as I was balancing several other part-time jobs. Since having my son in 2022, I've focused on my ceramics full-time and now on making larger work and experimenting more.

I've experimented with various clays - porcelain, white stoneware and black crack but I've found Scarva Earthstone Crank to be best for the large hand-building I do. I like the colour and texture too, it's rustic and earthy and has an aged quality like parchment and vellum.

Construction is mainly by slabbing but larger vessels are coiled allowing the shapes to evolve with no pre-planning. The forms are organic and unpredictable in contrast to the densely detailed drawings on the surface.

I use various means of decoration on leather-hard clay - slips, stains, oxides, underglaze, sgraffito and wax-resist to create surface colour and texture and, of course, drawing which I do in much detail.

I always use my sketchbooks to help me construct the stories I draw on my pots. I sketch from life, including people I know, museum objects, plants, creatures, etc. I love drawing from art-historical references too, and pop culture.

I like the idea of time travelling through my pots - intertwining ancient stories, from Greek myth to local folklore, mixed with current affairs to create escapist narratives. My recent collection of works for Collect are a mixture of large stoneware chargers and vessels exploring ideas around community, solidarity, and feminism. Monsters, matrons, saints and goddesses all inhabit the surfaces, creating alternative communities and matriarchal utopias.

I normally have a theme in my mind when I start building my work and then more detailed stories and imagery come to me. For the larger works I will do a pre-planned drawing to help me work it all out and I will use my sketch books for details.

I often form a collection based around themes and stories like my recent work for Collect 2026, sometimes continuing a story across more than one piece.

I recently developed these large chargers (right). I wanted to see how big I could go with my clay within the limitations of my top loader kiln. The current charger diameter is 54cm which makes for plenty of flat space to draw on. This charger is like a large test tile - I wasn't just testing the size but I was trialling some wet on wet techniques which reference my watercolour and ink drawings from my sketch books.

Time travelling tales



Evelyn

@evelyna86



Evelyn Albrow - The Cailleach and the Pleasure Convent

Stoneware vessel, 66cm h x 30cm w

In this piece my voyagers seek sanctuary, turning to the Cailleach, Red Sprites, and other female mythical monsters. Coracles light the way, guiding them safely to the utopian matriarchal commune on the hill. Nyx, the primordial Goddess of night, and Eos, Goddess of Dawn, both create a cosmic scene at the top of the vessel, pulling the sun up and the moon down above a giantess, whose open legs release a lightning storm of Red Sprites onto a battleship.

Inspiration came from Konrad von Megenberg's 15th Century woodcuts. The name is a nod to The Convent of Pleasure, a 17th century play by Margaret Cavendish. Other inspiration came from Flemish tapestries of swan boats, Celtic axe votives, the Silkstead head, French 15th century illuminated manuscripts of Noah's ark and the flood, and an ancient Greek vase 'Lekythos with Helios, Nyx, Eos and Herakles' 500 B.C. attributed to the Sappho Painter.

For larger image see back cover.



Krithika Ram makes visual stories from clay. Her compositions contain minute details – some of which are articulated by suspending from tiny wires so they tremble with the slightest vibration.

Flowers play a significant part of worship. In "One With Nature" (right) they add an element of fragility to the sculpture.

Roses and other imaginary flowers, adorn the Gods and Goddess of the forest. Their colours are vivid and signify the celebration of life. The leaves are placed in a circular manner, depicting the sun, or can be considered as the circle of life where we are all connected.

The watchful eyes of the Gods protect everything around us. The birds chirp happily as they feel protected and can move freely with their companions.

The water, fish and corals signify that all life on earth is worthy of protection. I see this sculpture as a symbol of abundance.

I use all these elements in making jewellery and sculptural pieces.

Krithika

@clayperology

Nature Notes

Krithika Ram





Folksy Tales & Mini-dramas

Becca Brown studied Textiles at Gray's School of Art in Aberdeen followed by a Masters in Illustration at Edinburgh College of Art. She now works from her studio at Yorkshire Artspace, Sheffield, making ceramic revealing narratives which often go unsaid.

I started working in ceramics whilst in my last year at Gray's and continued handbuilding while at ECA, alongside taking short courses in ceramics. The thing that hugely influenced the illustrated pieces I make now was spending time with Chris Donnelly and Fiona Thompson at Cyan Clayworks in Edinburgh. Chris and Fiona introduced me to a range of surface decoration techniques including the monoprinting technique that I use to transfer my drawings onto my handbuilt porcelain pots.

I make my work through pinching and coiling porcelain, sometimes using a press mould to form the base or rolling a slab to make a platter, and then bisque firing the pieces ready to decorate.

Using a mix of cobalt oxide, china clay and linseed I make up batches of a thick, almost-black, ink.

I roll the ink thinly onto small sheets of newspaper which are laid over the porcelain surface ink side down, using needles, pins or etching tools to draw freehand onto the back of the paper, transferring ink to the pot as a mono-print.

I'm nosey and like people-watching, which has developed into a general love of drawing people interacting with each other and sometimes with animals. My first illustrated pots were inspired by folk tales and superstitions and I really enjoyed looking into these stories. One superstition which still resonates with me was that fishermen's wives would not wash their hair while their husbands were at sea

in case they washed their men away. Hair has such cultural significance and this is something I want to explore further – I'd love to spend time doing some observational drawings in a hair salon.

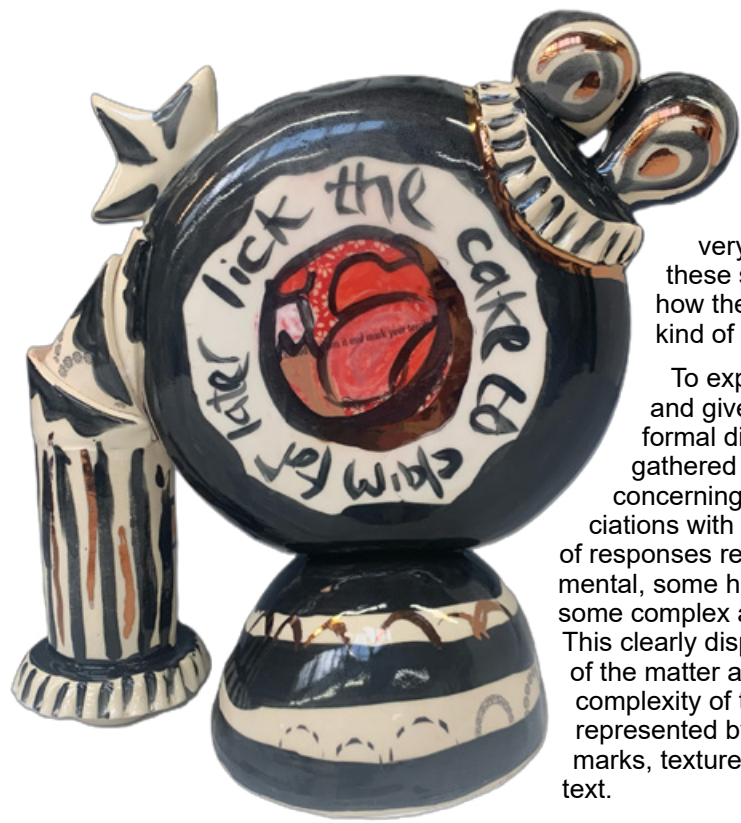
Nowadays the imagery from these stories continues to influence my work but more in terms of the domestic setting and the minutiae of everyday life. I try to make drawings focusing on quiet moments and seemingly minor details so that people can make up their own stories about what is happening. People who see my work often tell me about a memory, prompted by the stories on my pots, and I love hearing these. I love being able to tell the story behind the drawing and think it adds a bit of magic.

Whilst every piece is different, I do have a (sort of) cast of "characters" which means I can reproduce various versions of particular stories without having to conjure up new personas for each piece. For larger work I often sketch out more complex stories onto paper first, cutting, pasting and collaging an idea into being.

My illustrations may seem minimal, sketchy and simplistic at first but I like to cover much of the surface with small details and layers of meaning. When I am happy with the result I high fire, usually without glazing, which transforms the almost-black lines and smudges into shades of cobalt blue, highlighted with some barely-there touches of paint or pastel.

Becca

@beccabrwn



formal dining rituals and realising I had very little knowledge of these social systems and how they seemed to signify a kind of posh tribalism.

To expand this research and give a voice to less formal dining traditions, I gathered personal anecdotes concerning individuals' associations with 'teatime'. An array of responses returned, some sentimental, some humorous, some cosy, some complex and some distressing. This clearly displayed the complexity of the matter and in turn inspired the complexity of the pieces, visually represented by layers of symbols, marks, textures, illustrations and text.

Kim Stuttard

behaviour and sense of belonging through shared traditions.

Focusing on the interrelation between surface and form, an ethos of experimentation has remained one of my main motivating forces, as it keeps the process both creatively and intellectually engaging for me as a practitioner.

Anchored in a general notion of tableware but resisting any practical function, a sculptural language is my main reference point. I've used this in the development of a quirky and playful visual language that exalts the everyday, a motivational force for this body of my work from the onset.

Kim

kimstuttardceramics.com

An interest in the democratic credentials of clay and its unique cultural positioning to house our stories be they royal, revolutionary or every day, cemented much of the work that evolved throughout Kim Stuttard's MA at Ulan.

The stories I tell surround domesticity, etiquette and modes of behaviour in relation to dining. I was inspired by this subject after initially researching

Table Talk

The illustrations are more concerned with symbolism, a kind of hieroglyphic, than some grand pictorial representation. The forms resist function whilst referring to it, inspired by traditional tableware and the willow pattern. The willow pattern was a firm favourite in my childhood home so in incorporating this, the work is also personalised, which further anchors it within the theme of domesticity and the space that incubates our



Helen Birnbaum

Fishy Tales

Helen Birnbaum creates large-scale installations consisting of many handbuilt ceramic and metal pieces. "Shed Salty Tears" is her third such installation.

The starting point of much of my work is society's relationship with world-changing events such as climate change, new technologies and pandemic. My aim has always been to communicate these ideas in the most accessible, and even humorous, way.



I always hand build in the same way, starting off by wrapping thin sheets of clay around formers. Once the clay is leather hard, I attach different pieces as needed to create the forms and often decorate the sculptures with found metal objects which add a quirkiness and character to the pieces that clay alone could not do. I finish my work in a variety of ceramic stains and glazes sometimes applying them before bisque firing. The layers of glaze and stain give a richness and depth to the surface texture which complements the distinctive forms of all the sculptures I create.

I took my inspiration for Shed Salty Tears from the Blackpool shoreline and the news about the amount of rubbish that was being deposited on the golden sands, and as I was then resident ceramic artist in Blackpool School of Arts, felt I was in exactly the right place at the right time to complete this artwork.

Warming ocean temperatures lead to coral bleaching (the sudden die-off of large parts of coral reefs) which causes fish and other sea creatures to seek cooler waters by shifting their habitats to seas in the north. This can have a huge impact on human communities that rely on fish for food.



Shed Salty Tears is a triptych with each section having its own particular emphasis, but at the centre of this work is a woman who is the voice of the planet, calling to us to notice the state of the environment degraded by industrialisation and our wasteful use of precious resources.

Part One: Shed Salty Tears (above) depicts a woman crying about the perilous state of the seas.

Part Two: Broadcast News (left) suggests that if you put a shell to your ear you can hear the sound of the sea, but instead, this ceramic shell is broadcasting news about the perilous state of our oceans.

Part Three: Jellyfish Escapes (below) shows terrified ceramic creatures escaping from a metal cage.

The individual sculptures sit on curved pieces of blue fabric representing the sea. Each of these central sculptures is surrounded by white and blue shells, corals and other sea life in different pale colours to suggest the bleaching of the ocean. In sharp contrast, ceramic sculptures of crushed cans, rusty metal forms and discarded plastic cluster around the central pieces, suggesting how waste persists in our ecosystems. The reclaimed materials I use have become useless until being repurposed in the installation and challenge the viewer to think about what they consume, and how it is disposed of. The discarded manufactured objects floating in this seascape surround the ocean life dominating their space. Corals, fading from dark green to orange, appear as if their colour has been bleached by the effects of pollution.

helenbirnbaumceramics.com

Helen



It was in last year's May edition of NPA Magazine that Mo Schofield saw an invitation for ceramists to respond to the Methodist Modern Art Collection's (MMAC) forthcoming exhibition, "Everything is Connected" which explored themes of faith, hope and peril in today's world, exhibiting in and around Bradford as part of the Bradford Year of Culture 2025.

"Everything is Connected" really rang true for me. There were several connections: I had been involved with Methodist Youth Clubs (MAYC); my father had attended Woodhouse Grove school, which was one of the locations for the exhibition; I had worked at the East End Methodist Mission in Stepney, London and then with Lambeth and Vauxhall Mission in South London in the 1980s, working with homeless people. But it was the MMAC's painting of Jyoti Sahi's 'The Dalit Madonna' that was to be exhibited in Bradford Cathedral that drew me in. Partly as I'd been to stay at Jyoti and Jane Sahi's Ashram in Silvepura, near Bengalura, exactly 40 years ago in 1985. I had even given my son the middle name 'Jyoti' after the man himself.

In the Dalit Madonna painting, I was struck by the beautiful Madonna hands and the depiction of Jesus as a grinding stone. The Dalit Madonna is from the untouchable caste – what a strong and challenging statement.

In May '25, my grandson Max was born and so, bound up in the beauty of birth, I wanted to challenge the concept of a baby being born from the stone rubble of Gaza. With huge numbers of Palestinians buried under rubble I wanted to depict a sign of hope and the hands, so beautifully depicted in Jyoti Sahi's painting, to be anonymous and left for the viewer to bear witness.

Finding my Inner Voice

While a small maquette of my sculpture was exhibited in September at Ben Rhydding Methodist Church, Ilkley, where a substantial number of the selected MMAC works went on display, the Dalit Madonna painting was exhibited in Bradford Cathedral. The full version of my sculpture followed on at the Cathedral from October – November.

Mo Schofield

"From Rubble Reborn" depicted a hope for the future. It felt so sacred seeing it there, it sparked a change in me too. I felt I had found my inner voice. It renewed my confidence to give birth again to another sculpture.

My subsequent piece "Memorial to Gaza" was to honour the lives of Palestinian people and their stories.

I chose just a few: little Hind Rajab, baby Yousaf Al Safadi, an unknown child, the boy Amir, Journalist Anas Al Sharif, and Dr Hussam Abu Safiya.

Sculpture has always been a way of telling stories, depicting history and sharing ideas.

Mo

@inner_mo_ceramics

Editor's note:

Mo's maquette will feature at the Social History Curators Group Conference at The People's History Museum in Manchester in July where the theme is "The Long March – Strikes, Protests, and Riots Through History". Verity Smith, Methodist Faith & Arts Development Lead and Manager of the "Everything is Connected" project for Bradford 2025, will use the piece to illustrate not only the reality of the Gaza-Israeli conflict, with its potential reactions and controversial responses, but the wider context it represents as part of protesting against the killing of children in wars.



"From Rubble Reborn" on display in Bradford Cathedral October 2025
NPA Magazine May 2026



Jyoti Sahi/The Dalit Madonna, from the Methodist Modern Art Collection © TCMP used with permission



"Memorial to Gaza"



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Membership Matters

Social Media Update

From Dawn Phillips, Publicity Lead

As some of you will already know, we have set up a new private Facebook group exclusively for Northern Potters members, replacing the old Facebook group.

The reason for this is two-fold; firstly, the person who originally set the old group up has since, sadly, died and we no longer have the account password making certain changes difficult. Secondly there were so many members in the group who weren't (or were no longer) NPA members. As it was felt that this should be a members' only resource, the easiest way forward was to set up a completely new group with members being admitted on approval of their membership status. It hasn't been going long but there is already a healthy membership. The old group is still available to view and none of the content has been removed, but posting is no longer possible.

If you haven't yet joined and wish to do so, it's really easy - just search on Facebook for Northern Potters Association Member Group. Once you have answered some simple questions we'll check your membership status before approving your request to join.

The Facebook account is also linked to our Instagram account.

Once your request has been approved and you can access the group, what can you expect?

Well, as before, you can post directly anything you wish to comment on, or any questions you may have. There's bound to be someone within the group who can help you. If you have anything to sell or you are on the lookout for something, you are welcome to post that too.

publicity@northern-potters.co.uk

As always, please post pictures of your pots as we all like seeing what everyone else has made. I am planning to set up a Gallery to which I will add your photos so they will all be in one place and you won't need to keep trawling back to find things. I hope the Gallery will be a good source of inspiration for us all.

The Facebook account is also a great place to arrange meet-ups with fellow potters in your area, studio visits, socials, ceramic fairs, festivals etc.

This brings me on to one of the biggest changes in the new group which is our new Facebook Diary which you can find under the Events tab. This is handy with everything being listed chronologically in one place. It will now be really easy for you to check any up-and-coming events across the Regions. If you have an event that you would like to include in the Diary, then please email me.

A further major change to our Facebook set up is that the Regional Facebook accounts (with the exception of Southeast Region) have now been archived. This will hopefully keep things centralised and help us build one single social community.

Finally, if you have any questions at all, I will be more than happy to answer them.

Stay connected!

Dawn



[northernpottersassociationmembergroup](https://www.facebook.com/northernpottersassociationmembergroup)



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Membership Update

From Wendy Wall, Membership Secretary

The end of March was a bit of a membership milestone as it finally marked the end of members paying with standing orders. Throughout the year I have been emailing members who were about to lapse the following month and asking them to sign up to pay by direct debit on our online member's portal. Happily, most of them have wanted to stay with us and now all of our members are signed up with a JoinIn account. We have approximately 850 members and our numbers are growing steadily with between twenty and thirty new members joining us every month. If you have any questions about your membership please email me.

Changes to the NPA Regions

As you are aware the NPA membership covers a huge area from the Scottish and Welsh borders to the East coast and down as far as the South Midlands. Regional Coordinators have been increasingly hard to find and your committee recently decided that we will try a change of direction. Going forward there will be no separate regions so you won't have to sign up to a region when you join. Events will be run by an events sub committee and will be open to all members for booking. We are going to try a new approach to running and organising events which we hope will result in

more events in more areas. If you are interested in running an event whether it is a workshop, an exhibition, a social meet up or a market we are always eager to hear from you. There is support available in the form of advice or funds so please do get in touch with any ideas you might have. The events sub committee can be contacted at:

events@northern-potters.co.uk

Wendy

membership@northern-potters.co.uk

Throwing Clay: The Art of Making Pottery on the Wheel

by Rebecca Proctor

**The New Ceramics Series,
Herbert Press, 2026,
isbn 9781789943535**

Throwing Clay: the art of making pottery on the wheel, by Rebecca Proctor, describes itself as being 'the ultimate guide for complete beginners and advanced ceramicists alike.' Quite a broad audience, then, and one that should accommodate me easily. My own throwing skills have never been particularly strong, and I have sometimes wondered whether I should spend a little time on improving them, so when I was given the chance to review this book, I saw it as an ideal opportunity to do so.

An initial flick through gave me a good impression. Beautiful pictures, a clean layout, interviews with other potters, and a few straightforward projects. The style is clear - perhaps what we have come to expect in the age of social media and brand marketing. It certainly keeps things simple and easy to follow, and to an extent this is useful for cutting out noise and distractions and staying focused on the task at hand. It's a little less helpful when looking for inspiration outside of the few suggested forms, but in an era of visual bombardment, that might not be something you're looking for.

There is a tough balance to be struck between simplicity and overload. Books like Nelson's Ceramics – A Potter's Handbook, or Peterson's The Craft And Art Of Clay, are comprehensive and contain multiple examples of different forms and styles, but can be overwhelming. They offer the reader historical and contemporary context, as well as inspiration, a variety of techniques for building, glazing, and firing. In contrast, Proctor's book is easier to follow and offers a simple programme to improve your throwing.

Although the book claims to be suitable for complete beginners, attempting to learn from a book alone would be ill-advised - an experienced tutor is needed for that job! This book is ideal for someone who has just completed a throwing course, especially for someone who has just completed a course with the author, as the writing style is conversational and would be a comforting echo to a student reflecting on their lessons. It is full of anecdotes and metaphors, which probably work well in a classroom setting but will not translate for everyone.

If you've got a bit of experience with throwing but need a lot of practice, this book is for you. It's simple and clear. Proctor's reasoning for doing things in the order that she suggests seems sound, and there are helpful practical tips on throwing techniques and general studio practice. If you're an experienced

thrower and you're looking for more inspiration and guidance to reach the next level, this book probably isn't for you. What this book lacks in ambition or new ideas, it makes up for with structure and simplicity. Sometimes that's just what we need.

Corinne Price



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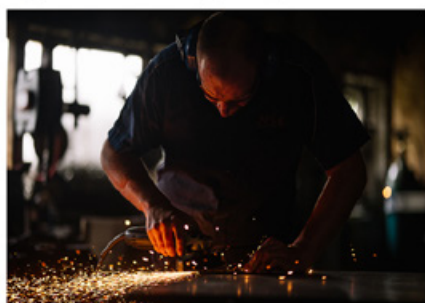


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Evelyn Albrow (Image: Peter Martin)