

ceramics

M O N T H L Y



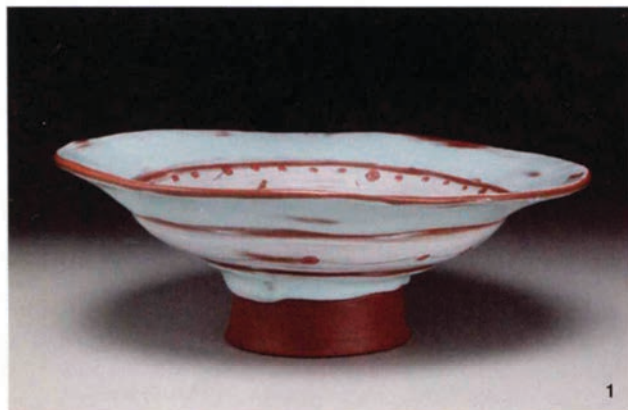
Cover: Bryan Hopkins' functional constructions

Spotlight: A Potter's Pots, by Suze Lindsay

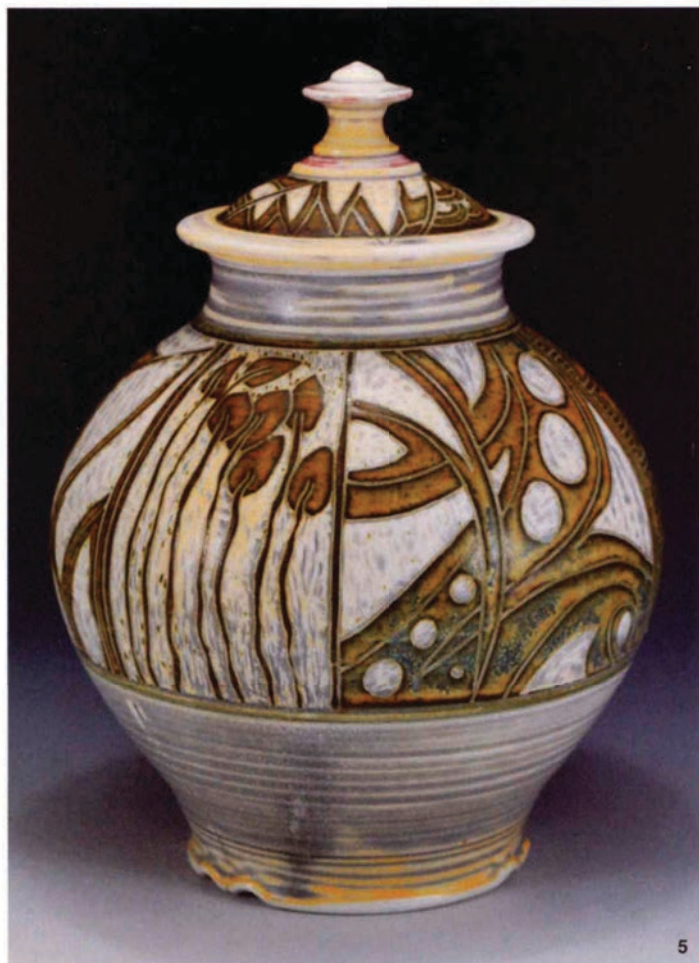
Clay Culture: An Exploration of Jun ceramics

Process: Lauren Karle's folded patterns

exposure



1 Shaunna Lyons' wide-rim serving bowl, 13 in. (33 cm) in diameter, earthenware, slip, stain, terra sigillata, sgraffito, and glaze fired to cone 05, 2010. *Photo: Tim Barnwell.* 2 Joy Tanner's flower basket, 8 in. (20 cm) in length, stoneware, amber celadon glaze, flashing slip, wood and soda-fired to cone 10, 2012. 3 Kent McLaughlin's large platter, 20 in. (50 cm) in diameter, stoneware, glaze, fired in reduction to cone 10, 2011. 4 Lisa Gluckin's *Serrated Canvas*, 11 in. (28 cm) in height, earthenware, terra sigillata, patina, fired to cone 04, 2011. 5 Claudia Dunaway's jar, 9½ in. (24 cm) in height, porcelain with carved black slip decoration, fired in reduction to cone 10, 2011. "Spruce Pine Potters Market," at Cross Street Commerce Building (www.sprucepinepottersmarket.com) in Spruce Pine, North Carolina, October 13–14.



a potter's pots

Suze Lindsay

The saying "nobody buys more pots than potters" is perhaps not strictly true, but even without doing the math, it appears to be plausible whenever you walk into a potter's kitchen—or dining room, or living room, or bathroom . . . We asked Suze Lindsay, who focuses her making *and* collecting on spouted vessels, how that came to be.



Suze Lindsay consults her "library" of spouted vessels on a daily basis, on her way to and from the studio, during mealtimes, and of course, while visiting with friends.



Ceramics Monthly: How did you come to collect a particular kind of form (spouted vessels), and how does it impact your studio practice in terms of study, influence, and your actual work?

Suze Lindsay: There are two potters living in our household, and we collect things that we love. One of our collections encompasses a range of pouring vessels. Initially, I acquired these forms because I used them in the brewing and sharing of beverages, inspired by the age-old tradition of creating social occasions around their use. We enjoy being in the company of others, sharing a pot of tea on a cold day in autumn, or using a pitcher to serve sangria at a special party.

For the 25 years I've been making pottery and going to shows and sales, I have seen

ceramics that I just *had to have*. Spouted forms have become objects I have gathered and anthologized. I consistently use them as a learning library for my studio practice, as they serve as teaching tools, for me and for my students. Dan Anderson calls his collection his "living museum," and I like to think of our pots in that way. I see them every day on the shelf, in a cabinet, on display, or in use, and may have an unconscious conversation with them, unaware that I'm acquiring a new visual language.

Not only do I enjoy living with these pots daily, they have become sources of information and inspiration, and challenge my ideas about form and function. By studying the choices their makers have made, I am able to inform and define my aesthetic standards. They are a hands-on way of teaching myself to see. My specific response to each and every pot that lives on our shelves may contain a memory, an identification of a technical or

conceptual approach, or a quirky innuendo, and once I realize where the inspiration is coming from, I can use it as a personal learning tool. I get to sit with a piece and decipher what draws me to the work, why I had to have it in my home, narrowing it down to specifics, and then naming that particular quality. It helps me to build my descriptive vocabulary about my own pots and gives me a jumping-off point for defining and making choices about my process, design, intention, and craftsmanship. These pots project a visual language that can be adopted and adapted. I study their profile, proportion, volume, surface, gesture, and their beginnings and endings. The nuances and details of pouring pots also make the forms more complicated and I must consider relationships between the spouts, lids, and handles. There is a balance between how it looks and how it pours. Is the handle in the right place? What does the negative space require? Am I able to lift and pour? Does it dribble? Is it easy to use, or does it make me slow down and pause? How does it make me feel?

Our collection includes both contemporary works and historical reproductions of teapots and pitchers. Learning the anatomy of shapes by both past and present-day potters is important. Our "historical" collection of Yixing teapots, are reproductions based on pots first created in the 17th century. These ingenious forms are meticulously crafted, culturally definitive, inventive in their interpretations of forms in everyday life, and intimate in scale. I get to observe and absorb these qualities, and carry them over into all other pouring forms that I make.

Making good pots is a life-long challenge. It is important that I continue to problem solve and refine how I see and interpret. I am grateful that I have all these wonderful pots to enrich my life and my work.

Suze Lindsay makes pots with her husband Kent McLaughlin at Fork Mountain Pottery in Bakersville, North Carolina. To see more of her work, go to www.forkmountainpottery.net.

Keep an eye out for Lindsay's upcoming DVD and downloadable video about her approach to, and techniques for, making spouted vessels at www.ceramicartsdaily.org/bookstore.