

NEWSLETTER FREE TO MEMBERS  
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# Summer 2020

SCOTTISH POTTERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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# Chair's letter

BY CHRISTINE FLYNN

I hope this finds you all healthy and potting away.

This will be my first letter in lockdown and hopefully the last. Here's hoping for some good news soon that we can all get out and about and meet up again without the threat of the virus. I know I certainly miss meeting friends and I'm extremely disappointed about the cancellation of Open Studios and our other events.

My sincere apologies for having to cancel, especially Tulliallan but on 20/20 hindsight it definitely was the right decision. From the feedback received, I was thankful that everyone agreed.

It, of course, meant that we were unable to hold our AGM, which we are now hoping to hold as an Extraordinary General Meeting at the Bield Exhibition in October. More information on the EGM will be circulated in due course. However you will find further information on all the planned exhibitions in an article in this issue. As a result, and in these unprecedented times, I find myself the Chair for a fourth year. Under the circumstances it was an easy decision to make in supporting our organisation through this difficult year.

On renewing your membership I hope you took the opportunity to explore our wonderful, new website. It's impressive! That leads me onto membership. I appreciate that we are in difficult times and rejoining for many may not be a priority. You are reading this newsletter as a member and I hope you can appreciate the benefits of remaining a member and the support that the organisation is providing. Although our actual physical exhibition at The Barony had to be postponed we have an online exhibition through our website in its place. The benefits for this are that all profits on sales remain with the member. Please see our website for full details on how to apply. You will also see details on the mug swap being organised by Caroline Gault, our Social Media Officer.

Potfest Scotland at Scone Palace has been postponed with the hope that it will go ahead on the weekend 25-27 September. If that is the case, I will be looking for helpers and demonstrators. It is uncertain what our world will be like at that point but hopefully we can start planning for the future soon.

Keeping with my optimism, I would like to share a photograph of the Egyptian Faience Bull and Sheep made by Zahed Taj-Eddin at Tulliallan in 2019. This was delivered to me for a Tulliallan raffle prize, so in the meantime I have the privilege of keeping it safe and on display at my home for the next few months. It's just one of the perks of being Chair (see below).



## Chair's letter continued

I would also like to make you aware of two fundraising events that SPA members are taking part in. Check out #throwforthenhs on Instagram. See @print.pottery for full details. It involves making a pot(s) on the first day of the month, then selling them online through Instagram, deducting expenses and donating the rest to the NHS charity. Please get involved if you can. The other event is the Indie Relief Raffle to raise funds for Grampian Women's Aid. Domestic violence is a raised concern especially during the lockdown. See [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/indie-relief-raffle1](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/indie-relief-raffle1) for details of the prizes donated by a wealth of Scottish makers, and buy a £2 ticket if you can. This ends on 27 May so please act quickly for this one.

With some sad news, I have been made aware of the passing of Norma Irvine of Cardross. She was a long standing member of the SPA and Helensburgh Art Club as a skillful potter and artist. Some members may recall Norma for her happy personality and playing her accordion at our annual weekend workshop. She will be remembered with great fondness and I express, on behalf of the SPA membership our sincere condolences to her family.

In conclusion, I hope you enjoy this digital newsletter, again superbly put together by Juliet Macleod. I appreciate some of you would wish to have a printed copy but for reasons around the lockdown we felt it was important to get our newsletter out to members by the safest method. We will resume having the newsletter printed whenever it becomes possible.

In the meantime catch up with what's going on in the world of SPA.

Keep safe and stay healthy.

Christine

The Scottish Potters Association (SPA) is a registered Scottish charity (SCIO No: SC048850).

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**Next newsletter deadline**  
**1 September 2020**

For planning purposes please contact the editor in advance of submitting articles.

# Salt jarðar/Salt of the earth

BY KEVIN ANDREW MORRIS AND KRISTINA ABURROW

'Ye are the salt of the earth,  
but if the salt may lose savour,  
in what shall it be salted?'



Salt jarðar / Salt of the earth brought together the distinct practices of Kevin Andrew Morris and Kristina Aburrow, in a collaborative exhibition as part of Projectroom 2020. Projectroom 2020 is an online gallery project devised to support artists and makers showing work during the public health crisis caused by 'Covid-19' funded, conceived, and coordinated by Art North Magazine.

In this exhibition, the artists discussed how their practices have been shaped by northern landscapes, exploring themes of identity and place. With particular reference to Iceland where Morris and Aburrow recently completed a joint residency with Sim (<https://www.sim-residency.info>). The artists focus on the narratives and rituals associated with living in northern places, how these actions preserve intimate and strong connections towards 'north' as a place itself.

Top: Fiskhausar – Fish Head, Stoneware, 2020, Morris.  
Bottom: Quaich 6, Aburrow. Newsletter front cover:  
Fisk Plata 4 – Fish Plate 4, Stoneware, 2020, Morris.



Together, Morris and Aburrow have fostered a collaborative relationship based on skill and story sharing. Their creative, open ended, exploratory process highlights the integrity between the past and present of the landscape they find themselves in. Participating in Sim Residency in Iceland over January the pair experienced and were often humbled by the Icelandic landscape and winter, which at times had them housebound at the Korpulfstaddir farm.

This was a unique opportunity for them to work in isolation. Creating work together as part of an individual pair and discovering ways to communicate the narrative of locations. These connections feel even more relevant in this time of social distancing and self-isolation. Artists are forced to consider new ways of working and maintaining connection, embracing the change and keeping the faith.

<https://projectroom2020.org/morris-and-aburrow>

Top row, left to right: Korpúlfsstaðir Diskur – Korpúlfsstaðir Plate, Jörðvegur – Earthen, Sítrónu Flaska – Lemon Bottle, all Stoneware, 2020, Morris.  
Bottom row, left to right: Quaich 1, Quaich 3, Quaich 10, Aburrow.



Kevin Andrew Morris  
Jörðvegur / Earthen

The landscape and environment I find myself in is crucial to my work and ongoing development. Opportunities to travel, research and make work abroad have been hugely influential to me. While on residency the opportunity to explore natural glazes (made from volcanic ash, basalt, pumice and animal bone) and continuing to explore northern fishing culture allowed me to reflect on materials and contemporary practice as well our collective connections to heritage and tradition.

The opportunity to also continue my research into atmospheric firing (specifically gas, wood and salt), greatly contributed to my understanding and maximizing of the nuances of atmospheric firing and its relationship to form and surface. Continuing the use of technology and tradition from ancient history into contemporary practice. By its very nature, atmospheric firing forges cohesiveness and symbolizes the intrinsically communal and collaborative aspects of ceramics. I was heartened to be able to share this experience with the other artists while on residency.

Kristina Aburrow  
Salt and Earth

A study of both, and their reactions to one another. Salt, an integral part of culture and livelihoods, I am intrigued by the link between Iceland and my home, Scotland. The crossovers, similarities within our folklore and superstitions, language and methodologies, regional contexts, but an international vernacular. Salt for me holds much symbolically, it cleans, it preserves, it is abundant. In this work, it is a token for the essence of a location, a purified sample of Iceland. The quaich is a ceremonial Scottish drinking vessel, portraying the idea of consuming, taking in the essence of Iceland whilst holding up the traditions of Scotland. All our ideas of culture and identity belong, in part, to other nations. Something borrowed and converted, to suit our tastes. However, the quaich is an unfired vessel, it will dissolve as it sits in the salt water of the installation. All that is left is salt and earth.

Initially undertaking Three Dimensional Design at Grays School of Art, Morris went on to graduate with BA (Hons) in Ceramic Design in 2010 from The Glasgow School of Art. Since, he has gone on to exhibit work nationally and internationally as well as work with a range of artists, institutions and work on various public projects. Currently based in Aberdeen, Morris is often referred to as a 'Nomadic Ceramicist', working across Scotland.

Graduating in 2019 from Grays School of Art, Aburrow is continually looking to develop and progress her practice. Based in the North East, she looks at the people in and around this part of Scotland, their lives and livelihoods.

# SPA bursary update

BY NATALIE J WOOD

Hi everyone! I'm so sad that due to the Covid-19 virus I was not able to see everyone again at Tulliallan. It's been quite a year and I wanted to share an update of how I got on with the SPA Bursary Award.



The award also came with a place on the Craft Scotland Compass Programme. The Compass Programme involved three workshop days in early spring focusing on different aspects of running a small business, a five-day residency at Hospitalfield in Arbroath and then a final catch up day back at Hospitalfield in late October. The whole experience of the Compass Programme was amazing – I learned so much about myself and my business, with the help of Jo Scott from Craft Scotland and Elaine Furnivall who was our resident business guru and psychologist. One of the best parts of the programme was meeting the cohort of makers. There were six other makers involved in the Compass Programme at this time, a mix of ceramicists, jewellers and a weaver. Together we worked on business models and shared our experiences. By the end, I really felt I had built a network of support that will last far beyond our time in the programme. I have already collaborated with one of the jewellers and I am looking to work with one of the other ceramicists who was on the programme.

After the spring workshops, I began my research into sledging. I dove straight in and made a simple profile from some acrylic I had lying around and a piece of wood. It was a disaster – I made too much plaster at once, my profile was too large and couldn't support itself, it was a huge mess. So I went back to the drawing board and found some people who knew what they were doing. I went to meet Ffion Blench of Chalk Plaster in her Cowdenbeath studio. The studio was an amazing sight of plaster work, tools and materials I had never heard of. I spent the afternoon with Ffion drinking tea and learning about plaster and all the things I was doing wrong. She introduced me to the father son team in the studio across from hers. They make traditional plaster cornicing, the studio



Top: Ffion Blench's studio, Chalk Plaster, Cowdenbeath.  
Bottom: Compass Cohort – Rebecca E Smith (Smith & Gibb), Jen Smith (Wild Gorse Pottery), Claire Henry, Jo Scott (Craft Scotland), Myself Natalie J Wood, Elaine Furnivall (Business psychologist), Beth Lamont, Sarah Paramor and Cecilia Stamp.



floor was caked in plaster and long lines of cornice lay against every wall. It was an unexpected treat to get to talk to three plaster experts. After that I got started again, smaller this time, making an inner profile in clay so it wasn't solid plaster and made smaller batches of plaster. I used the casting plaster that I had for mould making and it worked quite well with a bit of sanding and polish but not as precisely as I wanted. With the funding I took the opportunity to go to a two-day laser cutting workshop where I learned more about laser cutting and was able to make all the parts I needed. Back at my studio I put these new parts to use and made a new jig from which I created some plaster forms. I then took moulds of those forms for casting. I'm hoping to use these new forms to create a new piece of work inspired by the process of sledging and traditional plaster work. It's been amazing to have the time to research into a new field and create a new piece of work that is far removed from my usual functional ceramics. Sadly I don't have photos of the final pieces because of the lockdown closing my studio, hopefully I can add them to a future newsletter in a few months.

I want to say a big thanks to everyone on the SPA committee and at Craft Scotland for all their help and support.

More info on the Compass Programme can be found on Craft Scotland's website.



Top left: I Berturelli and Sons' studio.  
Top right: My first jig built after visiting chalk plaster.  
Bottom: Some sledged, coloured plaster pieces polished and finished.

# Clay in quarantine

BY CATHRINE HOLTET

On 16 March this year, after the government had announced the imminent lockdown, I sadly had to email my 16 pottery students and let them know my classes would be cancelled for the foreseeable future.



They were all expecting it to happen but were nonetheless upset, and a few told me how they were dreading being stuck at home, potentially for months, with nothing to focus on. A few of my students live alone, and for them the looming months of isolation seemed even more daunting.

This got me thinking. I decided to put together some packs of clay and basic tools for my students to use at home, and told them that anyone who wanted to participate in 'remote pottery classes' could collect a home pottery pack from my studio before the lockdown. Eleven students immediately signed up. I decided to take a photo of the pottery packs to post on my Cathrine Holtet Ceramics Facebook page. To my utter astonishment the post went viral, and within days it had been seen by over 10,000 people! Soon messages started coming in from people all over the UK, and from as far away as Brazil, asking how they could join my classes, and could I please open this up to other people?

I felt a bit overwhelmed. This was just meant to be for my own pottery students! But then I thought, hey, why not create an online group, too? So on 23 March, the same day as the lockdown in the UK started, I launched my Facebook group 'Clay in Quarantine'. The aim of the group is to provide a bit of inspiration and ideas for fun pottery projects anyone can do at home, without any specialist equipment.

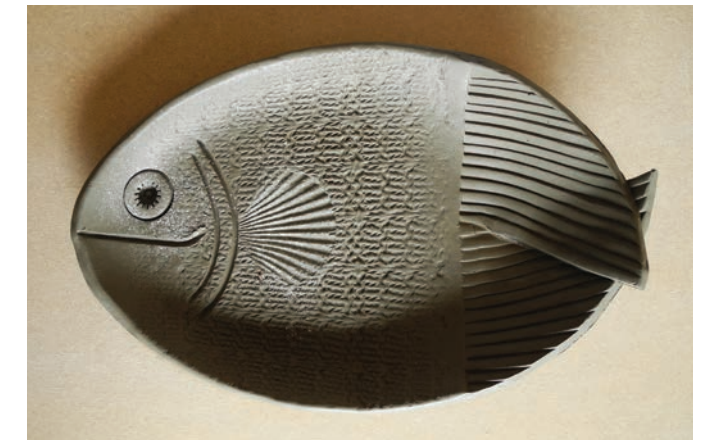
The project unfortunately had a bit of a rocky start, as on 21 March, the day after schools closed, my son developed covid-19 symptoms. Two days later it was my turn, shortly followed by my husband. Thankfully my son was hardly ill at all, and my husband didn't get seriously ill either. I, however, got hit a bit harder, and was really struggling for three



Top: Household textures (Cathrine Holtet).  
Bottom: Caroline Gault, 'Make a new best friend for 30 days to join you in quarantine'.



From left to right, top to bottom: Succulent pots by Howard Callow, Cathrine Holtet and Alexander Callow; Noughts and crosses; Fish dish textures; Fish dish.



weeks. Luckily our very own social media co-ordinator, Caroline Gault (Matchless Pots) has been completely awesome, She is one of the moderators on the group, and has been posting regular hand building project videos: from how to make a simple pinch pot, to how to sculpt a monkey! Another brilliant idea she has shared is 'Make 30 new best friends to join you in quarantine'.

I aim to post a new step-by-step project every week, and have covered how to make your own textured rolling pin, exploring textures you can find around your own house and garden, various slab dishes and other ideas. Other members have posted ideas on how to make/improvise your own pottery tools, and a wide variety of links to other potters' video tutorials, as well as links to other websites full of creative ideas.

Like a lot of you, I am now stuck at home with no access to my studio. However, with home schooling my 5½ year old, coming up with new step-by-step photo instructions for both my own pottery students and for the Facebook group, as well as all the attention my garden has been receiving, I am definitely managing to keep busy! If you are on Facebook, and like me you are stuck at home, in a bit of a creative rut and looking for some inspiration, why not look up 'Clay in Quarantine' and join us? At the moment of writing, the group has over 370 members, with new people joining every day. I have received some really heart-warming messages from complete strangers, thanking me for setting up this group, and helping them stay creative and focused, which is very touching.

# Pottery for a broken heart

BY MORVEN MULGREW

How clay can soothe at turbulent times.

Hello there. I am a new member of Scottish Potters, having joined just this November past, so far I have really enjoyed the magazine (especially the high quality if a little heavy paper stock!) and when there was a call out for articles for the magazine I thought I would write something about how I got into pottery and how perhaps it can be a salve for anxious minds at this unprecedented time.



I consider myself not just a new member of your association, but a new potter overall. Despite graduating with a degree in Sculpture nearly 16 years ago, I had not really ever picked up clay until the beginning of 2017. Really it was a desperate move. When I was 33 weeks pregnant the previous summer, my mother suddenly died of a heart attack. Having a brand new baby and being so grossly bereaved was a catastrophic collision for me, I suffered post natal depression and I was struggling in a way I had never experienced before. For me, I felt crushed between two large weights, and I felt completely lost in myself, as if I had lost my whole identity.

In order to carve out a small amount of space for me, my partner Joe booked me onto a pottery night class with Ricky Grimes, a fantastic Glaswegian potter based in north London, and off I was posted, in a cab, whilst Joe wrangled the baby. Two precious hours. My week was centred around this time and whilst I didn't consciously understand it at the time, the activity of working with the clay was giving my brain such relief from the pain I felt at the time. I am quite a dramatic person, and it sounds very dramatic to say this, but I honestly feel like the class saved my life. Or at least my mental health, which is the same thing really.

Perhaps strangely, the feeling I had within the class wasn't like a soothing hot bath or a relaxing 'play with clay' but in fact a huge enormous rush of energy, I felt as if I had to output so much that was in my head and I only had a short time with which to do that. The focus that gave me was intense



at points. I did (and continue to do) a lot of slab building, but I didn't have time to wait for things to harden, so I would slab build cylinders for pots round a form but whip it off whilst still very wet and join it to the base at that point. I would do my thing, but the clay would also do its thing, and I felt like the result – imperfect, damaged, energised and expressive – captured how I felt in a way I could not design. Which I guess is art eh?

I call this way of working The NO TIME Pottery, a grandiose title to try to express this feeling I had and still have of working fast. I like working this way because it seems to be able to talk about existential feelings of running out of time, as well as the practical restrictions I have being a mother of two small kids. I hope that this translates into my pots a bit.

Aside from my own artistic ego (!) if I write honestly, working with clay is something which I love. I love its potential for success and failure, I love the feeling of risk and freedom I get from working with it, I love that (for me anyway) the kiln is an equal creative partner in the work – transforming my actions into something wonderful or awful. It's quite awesome really to work with such astronomically high heat and dug up earth and stone. For some reason all of this is a balm.

I wrote this article because I believe in the healing power of clay, not in an abstract therapy text but in a dynamic way that it helped me survive one of the toughest times in my life. This time now is also very hard for many, and in fact for some reason this

lockdown has resurfaced some grief and anxiety I have within me, and I feel lucky to have some bags of clay at home, and the confidence to work with the material as we are isolate. I have a kiln which is not yet wired in, so you could say I basically have a shed full of shaped, dried mud, but I know that getting in some hours to potting has been so so helpful to me.

Anyway, this is my love letter to clay. Love from a new member of SPA.

Instagram @morvenmulgrew  
www.morvenmulgrew.co.uk



# Shelfies

FOR A CHANGE HERE IS SOME POTTER'S WORK OUR MEMBERS HAVE COLLECTED

## Clare Parsons

From left to right, back row: Coxwold Pottery; Margaret Gardiner; Carole Scott. Front row: Fran Tristram; Mini house, from Raquira Pottery village in Colombia; Annie Peaker; Takisuro(?), at Potfest in the Park; Paul Young.



Roos Eisma From left to right: Jo Gifford, Annelies van Dooren, Cathrine Holtet, me, Jo Walker, Michelle Lowe, Bob Emmett. Wall hanging also by Cathrine Holtet.



Karen James From left to right, top to bottom: Potfest mug swap (unknown), Steve Woodhead, John Christie, from NCECA (unknown), from Barcelona (unknown), Fergus Stewart. John Calver, 4 x Chris Cox, John Calver. Frank (Alvin F) Irving, Syl Macro, from NCECA (raffle), Potfest mug swap (Steve Booton?), Chris Cox, Joe Finch. Hilary Firth, John Calver, John Scott, John Calver, Northumbrian Potters.



Iain Campbell From left to right, back row: Kerstin Gren, Jill Houghton Slyte, Andrew Pentland, unknown Danish (?). Front row: unknown maker (my first purchase at an auction years ago, love it still), Lotte Glob, Kerstin Gren, Anna Lambert, Freda Wright (from 1970s), David Wright.



Juliet Macleod From left to right: Chiu-i Wu; Chris Keenan; Katie Braid; Akiko Hirai; James Hake; Patricia Shone; Moyra Stewart; Kyra Cane.



Elaine Roberts From left to right: Josie Walters; Unknown, from La Meridiana; Unknown, Potfest; Kerry Marr; Beth Bidwell; Rory Shearer; Paul Jenkins.

# Lockdown doodling

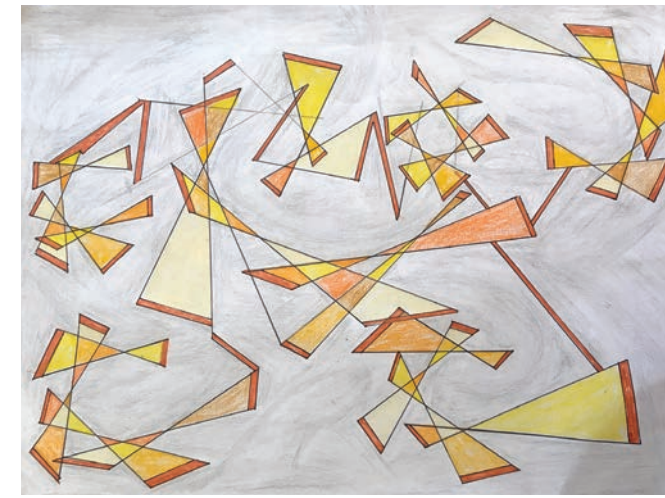
BY KATHLEEN MORISON



I have been enjoying lockdown life as this has allowed me to give the introverted part of my personality full rein. My arm is still repairing after the bad break in September and whilst I am still not able to do much in my pottery studio, my mind always dwells on pots!

A couple of weeks ago I joined an online course in Mindful Doodling, run by Molly Hahn of Buddhadoodles.com and I hoped I might learn new ideas for decorating pots. I have told myself for years that I don't draw, can't draw and am useless at drawing. I was well conditioned at school that drawing art was a waste of my time and the teacher's and I've never painted since! But this class was different, it was doodling! I thought that doodling would just be a ten to fifteen minute activity, making rapid squiggles and I have been proved totally wrong, in a good way.

After being encouraged to start with a meditation (it is Mindful Doodling after all), the first exercise was to take your pencil for a walk which was great fun and a bit challenging too. I sat with a pencil in my hand, feeling a bit scared of making a mark, then kept the pencil moving for the next seven minutes! It felt really weird! What, me drawing? Making shapes? Next we chose shapes to shade in, just using pencil, but I felt like adding a bit of colour and the result is shown above. A friend kindly said to me that it looked like a Joan Miro!!!



The next challenge was to find monsters, or creatures, in the shapes and I couldn't do this initially as I didn't know what monsters look like! I don't have children, never read monster books, haven't watched monster movies, so my imagination had atrophied but now I have set myself the task of liberating my inner monsters!

I found that three or four hours could be spent on one doodle, laying it down then returning to it. I loved making simple squares and rectangles which are subsequently shaded, outlined, then background colour added. The same friend asked me if we interpreted our drawings and I am sure an art therapist could have a field day on my psyche! My friend suggested 'something to do with the different elements of your life being discreet, boxed-in, existing in zones. Perhaps that you're looking for greater crossover (the boxes that cross colour block lines). Or of course that could be total nonsense! Hmmm! I wonder if he has seen something I haven't!

Next came doodle flowers and I loved the fact that they didn't have to be replicas of real flowers which I found therapeutically refreshing and far less daunting. Later in

the course we were introduced to the shape circus, created by drawing a line, intersecting the first line with a second line, intersecting the second with a third, and so on, creating a U shape or circle. Molly had demonstrated this adding circles, stars, hearts, other effects and her example was crammed with details, but I chose an uncluttered look. Having done some very brightly coloured, bold doodles, I decided to be minimalist and subtle. This exercise played to the perfectionist part of me so I let that part play! I used a ruler, took loads of time, deliberately used a palette of similar colours, a very fine black pen for the lines, and only used the shading to bring in curves. I loved the variety of triangular shapes that emerged as that suited the part of me that is spontaneous and likes organic and surprises. The same friend, my art critic, said this one reminded him of Kandinsky!

I loved this online class and it has given me confidence to create designs and have fun. Some aspects were not so enjoyable for me and I haven't mentioned them, but I would certainly recommend this to anyone wanting to break habits of a lifetime and dive into new forms of creativity. Watch this space to see how it translates to decorating pots!



# SPA exhibitions 2020-2021

BY FRAN MARQUIS

## LAND, SEA & FIRE ONLINE – AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY FOR BUYERS AND MAKERS

This exhibition was planned to be at the Barony Craft Centre in West Kilbride from Saturday, 30 May 2020. As this has now been cancelled, because of the lockdown, we are now planning an online exhibition on the SPA website.

From 30 May, ceramic work on the theme of 'Land, Sea & Fire' will be on display on the website.

Buyers will be able to contact makers directly, in order to make a purchase.

Members, please log in to the members area to find more details about how to enter your work for this online exhibition.

When you enter our [www.scottishpotters.org](http://www.scottishpotters.org) website members area, you will see the following:

Land, Sea & Fire Online – an exciting opportunity for buyers and makers.

What to do to take part in the online exhibition:

- Make some ceramic work on the theme of 'Land, Sea & Fire' and choose up to six of your best pieces.
- Arrange these pieces as a group and take a photograph which includes them all i.e. we are curating our own work into a mini exhibition to appeal to buyers.
- Photograph each individual piece and note details: title, size, cost to buyer and extra cost of post and packing.
- Submit this information to Fiona Robertson (lifibeagles@gmail.com) by 20 May, 2020.

We cannot sell through the SPA website but we can connect buyers to makers through this site.

The online exhibition is clearly not as good as exhibiting our work together with the tactile and visual information from the actual physical work. We also miss the fun of getting together for support and the exchange of ideas that an exhibition itself brings. But it has quite a few advantages:

- We will save money and time on travel and will not be due commission to a gallery.
- We can potentially reach a wider audience, internationally, through members posting links to the 'exhibition' on Instagram, Facebook and other social media platforms.
- It will keep us focussed on making the best work we can on this theme, and give us a chance to sell when other venues like galleries and festivals are currently closed or cancelled.
- We are learning about new ways to exhibit our work and connect with one another in this uncharted territory.

## OTHER EXHIBITIONS PLANNED

**WITHIN A SPACE** exhibition from 29 October – 20 November 2020, in the Barn Gallery at the Bield at Blackruthven, Perth.

Work needs to fit within a space of a 15cms cube, so 12cms is the maximum dimension of any piece. The shelf is 15x15x15cms and most shelves will be painted matt white although some will be left as natural wood. Makers can choose one or other finish depending on which would look best for their piece. Please submit ONE piece of ceramic work. We are hoping that, with the request to submit just one small piece of work, most members will feel able to do this, and it will give a clear overview of the ceramic makers in the SPA. At present, 100 shelves are being made but if there is more work, it will be accommodated in the Barn Gallery.

## Exhibitions continued

**CRAFT FAIR IN THE BARN GALLERY** at the Bield at Blackruthven from 30 October – 1 November 2020, to coincide with opening of 'Within a Space' Exhibition, as above.

Please consider taking part in this weekend whether you are an experienced exhibitor or have not done this before. The idea is that new exhibitors will learn from those with more experience. If we apply for Potfest or other ceramic fairs or festivals, we have to fit our work in a 6ft or 2m stand and sometimes show our display with our application so it is worth us learning how to do this well. We will be allocated a 2m space and can bring our own display or use a 2m table provided. We will advertise the craft fair and exhibition nationally and locally, and ask all participants to tell their customers, students, friends and relatives. It will also be advertised in Perth and on the Bield website as soon as we are sure that the lockdown is over.

**SEASONS CYCLE** at the Watermill Gallery in Aberfeldy. Selected Exhibition 27 March – 25 April 2021. This is a lovely gallery, and prestigious venue, but not huge, so please consider carefully what work you would like to submit within the broad title. More details to follow.



## Uig Pottery

BY PETER LORINCZ, HUNGARY



As a potter who loves his profession, I like to spend time on the internet visiting websites of other potters. Without leaving my home I can see styles of other cultures and admire their achievements in making their pottery. Though this new way of getting inspirations is prevalent today, it is far cry from personal experiences of being among the local potters personally.

Although I have already been to 22 countries in Europe, South-Eastern Asia and East-Africa, since my wife and I visited it the first time in 2014, Scotland has been the closest one to our heart. I have been a member of the Scottish Potters Association since September 2019.

When I visited the 'For sale and wanted' section of SPA's website I came across this ad of Uig Pottery: 'Looking for an assistant potter who can throw series on the wheel.' If they haven't found someone for the position, I thought, I might help them out until they managed to get a person to fill the vacancy. After a few emails and some arrangements of the travel, I alighted the City Link bus at Uig Pier on 4 February.

What I experienced during that short time I spent on the Isle of Skye among the local community and the lovely pottery staff were beyond all my expectations. Pottery has always been for centuries a great tool opening doors among different cultures. Masters, merchants and apprentices travelled to foreign countries contributing to the development of the local tradition.

I hope it was not only me who gained a lot from this short visit, but I also have been a blessing to my wonderful hosts in Uig. Arriving as a guest and leaving as a friend is the greatest success in such ventures.

# My space (or our space)

BY HILARY DUNCAN, HECKLEBURN, BLACKHALL, BANCHORY



It felt like fate when the place we'd called 'our ruin' for years came up for sale.



We lived in a building site for a couple of years, sleeping in a freezing cold loft with our hats on the first winter, then growing into the space as the builder opened up more rooms for us to inhabit. Choosing colours, decorating, making curtains, landscaping the garden, planting trees and creating a vegetable plot were all part of making this place our own. It's been the most amazing family home, with forest, river and hills on the doorstep for three energetic sons. The past 20 years have flown by.

Euan and I slosh around in the place now the boys are away, but there are always creative projects on the go. During lockdown Euan has been using up scrap from the barn – the trampoline is now a polytunnel, and some old pew-backs are kitchen shelves. Meanwhile I've been making five pots a day for an installation in a beautiful old glass-fronted key cabinet I was given.



As important to me as the space are the people who come and share this special place. My collaborations with artists Helen Jackson, Mel Shand and Sarah Pooley as the Heckleburn Quines have been inspirational. We have worked on some amazing community projects giving people of all ages the opportunity to make ceramics, to help build kilns in the garden and to fire their work. I also have the privilege of sharing my studio with the lovely people who come here for classes, and wish there was time to hold these more frequently.

In my own creative practice, home, garden and surroundings are my inspiration. I walk and cycle into the forest and down by the river nearly every day, observing the rhythms of the seasons, landscape and nature, bringing back palettes of colour and pattern to incorporate in my work. My pots are all hand-built, decorated with coloured slips, and



screen prints made from my drawings. I like to work with different coloured clays, all stoneware, and fire most of my work in an electric kiln in the garage. I do have a raku kiln which is great for community projects and classes, but I prefer firing to stoneware for my own pieces.

This last month of lockdown has been a time of reflection, and although our lives haven't changed that much, we feel so lucky to live in this wonderful place. It is as much part of us as we are part of it. We so look forward to enjoying the company of friends, family and visitors here again – fingers crossed it won't be too long.

# Spotlight on...

IAIN CAMPBELL, SPA SECRETARY



I was in my pottery class with Vera Bohlen in Findhorn one day in 2011, when she asked: does anyone want to learn to be a potter? (rather than simply play with clay as we'd been doing).



Slightly to my surprise, I found my hand rising up in the air. Since then ceramics has slowly taken over my life, swallowing time and space, so now I can't imagine life without it.

I still enjoy the buzz of learning in a group, so even though I have my own studio I still go to a weekly class with Kerstin Gren in Portsoy. I am missing the gang so much right now in my little isolation bubble.

My learning about ceramics brought me to the SPA and its annual demonstration weekends. On my second visit there in 2017 I figured that maybe the best way to find out more about pottery and potters in Scotland was to join the committee. I volunteered at the AGM as a general assistant, aiming to feel my way in slowly . . . . 10 minutes later there was a further shuffle of personnel and I left the meeting as the Secretary.

So what does the Secretary do? My primary job is to prepare the agendas for committee meetings and to write and circulate the minutes. I also do the same for AGMs. At

every stage I consult with our chair, the blessed Christine Flynn, to check the accuracy and tone of the minutes.

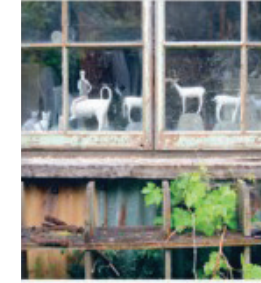
Since the SPA became a registered charity my job has changed slightly. So I keep an eye on making sure that we act in accordance with our constitution and with good practice. Also, this year, for the first time, the SPA was required to produce an Annual Report, which I took responsibility for collating. I have also been closely involved with setting up the SPA's bursary scheme.

The meetings themselves are always interesting and sometimes great fun. Part of my job is to support the chair to keep us all focused and on track. This isn't always as easy as it might sound. The phrase 'herding cats' often springs to mind. In a past life I briefly had a similar task with counsellors, which was more like herding porcupines, so herding these friendly and talented cats is just fine by me.



# Book review

BY ROGER BELL



Anna Noel  
The Language of Clay



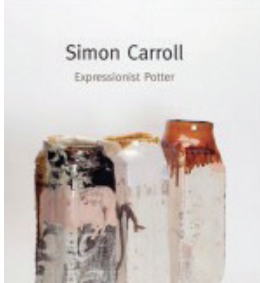
Micki Schloessing  
The Language of Clay



Anne Gibbs  
The Language of Clay



Angus Suttie



Simon Carroll  
Expressionist Potter

## Ruthin Artist Monographs

Ruthin Craft Centre  
from £4.50

Ruthin Craft Centre regularly produce artist monographs to accompany exhibitions. I have recently received a number of additions to their list. Two formats are normally used – A4 with 30+ pages and A5 with 32 pages. Prices are very reasonable at £10 & £4.50 respectively. To find published information on these artists usually necessitates searching through backnumbers of Ceramic Review or other publications. With these affordable booklets you have their work at your fingertips.

**Anna Noel (£4.50)**  
makes amusing animal figures, often precarious on hills. Maybe being ridden by a human or bird.  
Text is by Catherine Roche and by Ceri Jones in conversation with Anna.

**Micki Schloessing (£4.50)**  
produces domestic and other household pieces, fired in a wood fired kiln.  
Text is by Alex McErlain and Ceri Jones.

**Anna Gibbs (£4.50)**  
was new to me, making sculptural pieces. Sometimes incorporating other materials.  
Text is by Ceri Jones and David Whiting.

**Angus Suttie (£10)**  
made 'allusive, energetic, hand-built ceramics... postmodern art... playful edge. Text is by Alison Britton and others.

**Simon Carroll (£10)**  
made work that could bear the description above of Suttie's work, yet could never be confused with it.  
Text is by Philip Hughes, Alun Graves and Wally Keeler.

If these books do not appeal look at the Ruthin website for others – I have reviewed those on Wally Keeler and Gillean Lowndes previously. Ideally make a trip to Ruthin Craft Centre.

## NEW BOOKS

<b>Hidden Valuables – Early Meissen</b> Various	£78.00
<b>Enric Mestre</b> Whiting & Calle	£38.00
<b>Porcelain &amp; Bone China</b> Sasha Wardell	£19.99
<b>James Tower</b> Wilcox, Harrod	£28.00
<b>14th Westerwald Prize 2019</b> Various	£35.00

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