



Bucks Pottery and Sculpture Society

Newsletter, March 2023

Hi members.

I hope you've all managed to stay creative in the dismal weather lately. Hopefully the shelves are filling up for the summer shows, including our Spring exhibition at Oldham Hall in May, details inside.

Thanks again for everyone who has sent info for the newsletter, much appreciated. It's a pretty full newsletter considering we don't have a December meeting to report on.

We've had two inspiring demos and there is a possibility of a workshop coming up where we could make a simple plaster casting mould under Sophie Smith's guidance following her February demo. It seems there was a lot of interest in this during her chat to the members. So watch this space. Happy reading. Yvonne

27 January
DEMO

Gin Durham

Yvonne Cornes

Gin gave us a fascinating talk and slideshow followed by a demo showing us some of her methods for making a hare.

Gin's early career was as a commercial illustrative and design artist, working with Hasbro Toys. Her artistic development moved into more personal figurative work, painting animals, insects and doing portraiture. She then moved into mixed media creations, involving soldering metals onto canvas.

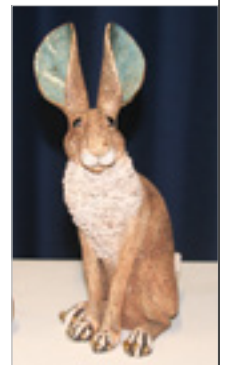
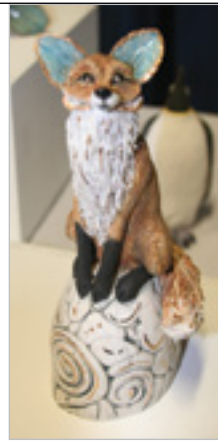
Gin gained a 1st class BA degree in 2011 at Bucks New University, specialising in Glass and Ceramics. This is where she discovered clay and learnt how to throw. Gin's work in the finals year depicted health issues. She fired ragdolls with slip over them, adding solder after firing.

Gin exhibited in Handmade in Chelsea and was approached by Liberty who started giving her commissions. After a while she found it too hard keeping up the demand so she went back to doing her own work. She moved into more animal work, doing hares and foxes with a bit of gilding.

Gin's demo started with making a hare's head. (See photo, middle row). For the head she uses a former which she makes from newspaper covered in foil. She removes the former at leatherhard stage. She began with joining ball shapes which miraculously turned into a face. The balls on the underneath of the feet are also very effective.

She then showed us some tips on creating texture onto a pre-prepared hare body at leatherhard stage eg the ruffle around the neck. She burnishes texture onto wet clay through a doily or lace. She also uses this method on the face. One day after making, she adds her own paperclay slurry to fill in some areas that need it. Her hare legs are solid clay. The former for the body is the same process as above and it comes out from the back at leatherhard stage.

To achieve her colours she uses oxides, including a lot of iron oxide. She uses a Copper Alkaline glaze for the insides of the hares' ears. She likes Contem One Coat Black underglaze for the eyes and also likes the Contem Red which stays red at high temperatures. Gin uses ES40 which she says has less shrinkage than ES5. She also works in porcelain and says she sells more porcelain in the United States than here.



In the first stage of the bisque firing she increases the heat at 60°C per hour up to 600°C. She often uses lustres after stoneware firing eg for the gilding. For the hare shape on the photo – bottom left, she works inside cardboard hoops from Hobbycraft with tissue over.

She costs her work out. Gin says turquoise is associated with happiness – subconsciously. A nice thought!

www.gindurhamart.co.uk

24 February
WORKSHOP

Sophie Smith

Jane Ostler



Sophie started by explaining how she came to ceramics from a design background. She is strongly influenced by medieval art and design and her motivation is to be creative and have fun. She began making and selling ceramics in 1995 and has been running her own studio in High Wycombe for the last 25 years. All her pieces are either slip cast or slab built.

Sophie uses single and double slip cast moulds which she makes herself. The benefit of casting slabs for tiles etc is that they do not warp. On the slip cast pieces she uses a white decorating slip recipe: 200g china clay/100g ball clay/20g potash feldspar/60g calcium borate frit. She mixes with water and sieves. For coloured slip she adds 10% powder underglaze with a little water and mix. Each piece is fired three times: bisque/earthenware glaze and a final lustre of gold, platinum and mother of pearl, or transfer firing up to 740 -750°C.

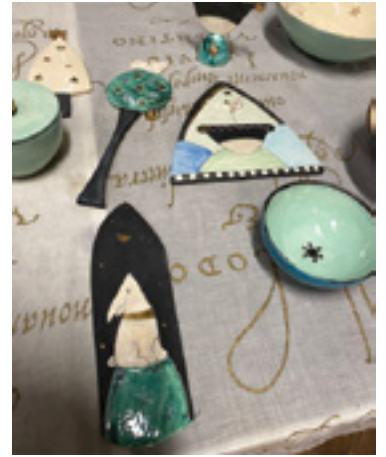
Her dishes and bowls are made using moulds, and her more recent pieces such as her Reliquary (a container for holy relics) are slab built. For these she uses a lightly grogged white earthenware clay from Potterycrafts.

All the decorative additions are fired separately and then glued together later. eg the hearts on the box lids.

Sophie uses gloss/semi opaque and matt brush on glazes to create the different effects, and fires the small pieces on bead racks so they can be glazed all over.

She has also branched out into decoupage and her most recent Reliquaries also have decoupage inside. Sophie's work is mainly decorative but the bowls are functional.

www.instagram.com/sophiesmithceramics



'Creatures Moving' - A Workshop with Jennifer Lowe

This workshop by BPSS member and animal sculpture expert – Jennifer Lowe will take place at Queens Park Art Centre, Aylesbury HP21 7RT.

It will be on **Saturday 27th May** from **10am to 4pm** at a cost of **£75**.

Participants will be helped to build an animal form on a ready made, wooden 'Paul Priest' type armature, with particular emphasis on posture and movement.

This technique enables the maker to have better control when creating difficult or fragile pieces. Removal of the armature prior to firing will also be demonstrated.

For more details contact Queens Park: **01296 424332**.



RUBY SHARP RIP

As you will have read from the email sent to our members recently, Ruby Sharp sadly passed away on 15th February.



Ruby was speaker for us at a Little Kingshill meeting back in February 2015. She gave us an inspirational insight into her life and her ceramics.

We were fascinated by Ruby's puzzle mugs. She first saw the 15th century Majolica bowls at the Wallace Collection and moved the design into her own style. The photo below was from her demo.

Ruby ran classes in her studio and also ran the 'have a go' tent at Art in Clay. She also managed the Pitstone Farm Museum pottery area. She will surely be missed.



Chris Inder and Dorothea Reid try to solve Ruby's puzzle mugs at the February 2015 meeting.

SOCIETY NEWS

MEMBERSHIP

Membership subscriptions are due now for 2023/4. All members have been sent an email reminder, but if you have not received it or have changed any of your contact details please let me know.

Subscriptions are the same as last year ie: £25 (single); £35 (family); or £10 if you are under 25 years old.

You need to have paid your subs in order to benefit from the following:

- Free entry to our monthly meetings;
- Exhibit at our spring or autumn exhibitions;
- Enrol in the raku day & other events;
- Continue to pick up this newsletter for free at the meetings, and/or receive it by email.

Happy potting/sculpting. *Jane Ostler*

SECRETARY ROLE

Some of you may already be aware that Pam is stepping back from the role of secretary, but not out of the BPSS committee, something we are glad of.

I'd like to express my personal appreciation of Pam's contribution as BPSS Secretary - recording our meetings which is not always an easy job, and being an active member of the Committee over several years. Her dedication and hard work is much appreciated by all of us on the Committee, and I am sure you will join me in thanking her for doing this.

Margaret Chung has recently joined the committee and has kindly stepped up to maintain records of the committee meetings. We welcome her and will try to support her where she needs us! She has already proved to be very efficient and helpful member of the committee.

NEWS FROM DUNCAN BULL

Following the sad death of Chris Bull, her husband Duncan has given us this lovely news regarding a donation in her memory: "Using the charity collection from Chris's service, we have provided a bursary for a student at the Clay College."

Thanks very much for letting us know, Duncan, much appreciated.



UP AND COMING BUCKS POTTERS MEETINGS

at Little Kingshill Village Hall, HP16 0DZ



Katherine Kingdon – 8pm, 28 April 2023 This is also the AGM.

Katherine makes figurative sculptures and illustrated vessels and is always looking for meaning in the random and irrelevant. In her current work she is having fun exploring character through pose, facial expression and sometimes text. She enjoys the suggestions of stories that develop and the dynamics within a group of figures.

WATCH THIS SPACE

TBC – 8pm, 26 May 2023

The speaker is yet to be confirmed. Members will be advised by email and details will also appear on the website once confirmed.



Mel Chambers – 8pm, 30 June 2023

Mel Chambers is a self-taught artist based on the beautiful Helford River near Falmouth in Cornwall. She brings back to life the ancient craft of inlay tiles. Each tile is individually carved freehand with inspiring poetry, quotes and images. She brings to life the beauty of poetry, inspiring quotes and images of all the magic that surrounds us.

MAY EXHIBITION

After the success of the last three exhibitions at Oldham Hall in Great Missenden, we're having another one there this coming May. So there are about six weeks to go for making!

The drop off will be on Friday 12th May between 3 & 4pm. The preview will be that evening from 7-9pm and the exhibition will be open to the public on Saturday 13th: 10am to 5pm and Sunday 14th: 10am to 4pm.

The address is: Oldham Hall, Great Missenden, Church Street, HP16 0BA. It is part of the St Peter & St Paul Parish Church.

Bucks Pottery & Sculpture Society
EXHIBITION
13th & 14th May
Sat: 10am - 5pm, Sun: 10am - 4pm
Oldham Hall, Great Missenden
Church Street, part of St Peter & St Paul Parish Church, HP16 0BA
FREE ADMISSION



2023 POTTERY AND SCULPTURE COMPETITION

The theme for this year's 'Peter Stocker Ceramic Award' is:

AFRICA

The members' vote and prize giving will take place at the last meeting of the year. The competition is open to all artists, not just members and must contain a ceramic element.

£75 PRIZE!



Potters' tip

‘if you use wooden blocks to impress on clay, spray them with WD40 so that they don't stick.’

Sophie Smith

Lucie Rie – ‘The Adventure of Pottery’

New Exhibition: Kettle’s Yard, Castle St, Cambridge, CB3 0AQ (runs until 25 June)

Discover Bucks Museum in Aylesbury were delighted to lend an early Lucie Rie pot to a stunning exhibition which has just opened in Kettle’s Yard, Cambridge (runs until 25th June). Lucie Rie – The Adventure of Pottery, celebrates one of the most significant potters of the 20th century and shows how her work developed over the decades. It features more than 100 works, including bowls, vases, tableware and ceramic buttons.

Born in Vienna, Rie was a successful potter before being forced to flee to England in 1938 to escape Nazi persecution. The work on display captures her energy and inventiveness – altering shapes, exploring sgraffito and inlay work as well as a host of glazes and textures. She always raw glazed her pots so they were only ever fired once. I learnt so much about her technique for throwing and glazing through this exhibition that I had not fully appreciated before.

Don’t miss the 1982 Omnibus documentary on show in the research room where David Attenborough interviews her in her studio. I love the bit where he holds on to her ankles so that she doesn’t fall into the kiln when she’s emptying it! Kettle’s Yard has free entry and you can also visit the associated cottage once owned by Tate Curator Jim Ede and see his collection of 20th century art – including a beautiful Hans Coper pot.



Oval pot with incised leaf design, 1950s, Lucie Rie.

*Article by Mel Czapski,
Curator of Art & Studio Ceramics,
Discover Bucks Museum, Aylesbury*

POTTERYCRAFTS

10% Discount for members

For those of you wishing to take advantage of the BPSS members’ 10% discount with PotteryCrafts, you can call them on: **01782 745000**.

A list of members (names only) has been sent to them, to make verification easier for them. You will need to set up a PotteryCrafts account to enable them to set up the discount for you.

BPSS website

MEMBERS GALLERY

Are you aware that we now have a Members Gallery on the new BPSS website?

You can add a short profile with a few images of your work in the gallery. It would be fantastic if we could have more of the membership represented there.



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About the society

The Society was formed in 1963 and welcomes all artists working in 3D. Individual membership costs £25; £35 for a family and £10 for full-time students. Membership provides access to monthly demonstrations, several hands-on workshops, and a quarterly newsletter. Members can add their profile and a few images of their work to the Members’ Gallery on our website www.buckspotter.com. Our facebook page is ‘Bucks pottery and sculpture society’ and we are on Instagram as ‘buckspotter’. It would be great to have a few more followers.  

The Committee

The Committee meets regularly to develop the programme, organise the Annual Exhibition and review costs. If you find a good speaker who could demonstrate to the Society, please tell us. Also, if you have ideas you would like to raise with us, please do so at the monthly meeting or email the society.

GDPR information

The information which you provide to us on your membership form will be used solely for the purpose of processing your membership and dealing with you as a member of BPSS. The data will not be shared with any third party for marketing or commercial purposes without obtaining your explicit consent. Our GDPR policy is available to read on the BPSS website.