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Patricia K. Swyler

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CERAMIC TEA SERVICE

Patricia K. Swyler

Candidate for the Master of Fine Arts in the College of Fine and Applied Arts of the Rochester Institute of Technology

July 22, 1970

Professor Hobart Cowles, Advisor
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
In his book *Ceramics*, Glenn Nelson states, "The tea set is one of the more interesting projects for the potter both in design and in technique. Within the limits dictated by function, an infinite variety of form is possible."1 This unlimited variety of possible forms within a group of related pieces was a factor that suggested a project of challenge and long term interest to me. When deciding to "explore the functional and aesthetic possibilities of the tea service," however, I became excited by the idea that tea pots might personify living creatures and the many pieces in a tea set the members of the tea pot's family. Although functional problems of tea sets were, of necessity, a major area of concern, my intention has always been to suggest a family group of pieces that might, in the user's absence, hold conversations among themselves and walk about. In order to do this a free, lively treatment of the clay is necessary. One of my major objectives has been to find building methods that will create this humorous impression but allow the pieces to perform their functions successfully.

Spherical tea pot forms seemed to suggest best the fat funny kinds of creatures that might rule over the dwarfish families I wished to form. In his book *Stoneware and Porcelain*,

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Daniel Rhodes writes that some of the most exciting pottery forms look as if they were "puffed out like a balloon."\(^2\) This is the look I wanted to achieve; but throwing, which Rhodes advises, did not allow me to create the rich intricate surface textures I felt were necessary adornment for the tea families—especially since some of them were meant to be royalty. Much of my early work revolved around a search for a method that would enable me to form full-blown rounded shapes that were richly textured.

After numerous experiments with form and technique I successfully produced a few complete families of tea creatures. Several entire sets failed because of glaze problems. In my later work I have become more interested in tea pots in particular and have concentrated on groups of them which are of royal lineage. Some of these hold very high titles and travel only with trusted servants or advisors which have been provided.

\(^2\)Rhodes, Daniel, Stoneware and Porcelain (Phila., 1959, p. 172.)
CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT OF THE THESIS PROJECT
Functional forms have been my main area of interest since my first summer at the School For American Craftsmen. Focusing emphasis on increasing my throwing skill during the summers of 1967 and 1968 gave me an opportunity to make many utilitarian objects that I could use daily. Through constant use of these pieces functional imperfections became more apparent, but I also found it much more enjoyable to serve from or display pieces that possessed humorous qualities. Such a piece was a small one cup tea pot I threw during the summer of 1967. Almost totally unsuccessful functionally (the lid falls off, the spout drips, it has just one opening inside the spout instead of a strainer), it seemed to have a life of its own. This piece, as well as some later experiments, stirred my interest in the area of tea.

Attending evening college during the fall and spring of 1967-68, allowed me to explore some possibilities for constructing animated utilitarian forms. I attached thrown bases to hand built pieces made from textured slabs. These were stamped with bisque stamps or pressed onto interesting surfaces (plate 1). The thrown bases afforded a foot or leg-like attachment that often made the section resting on the base suggestive of a torso. Alternately this combination might suggest a head and neck (plate 2). Goblet forms were constructed in this manner, the cup section being made from
Plate 1

Weed pot with impressed texture (back view)
Plate 2

Weed pot with open mouth and extended tongue
Plate 2

Weed pot with open mouth and extended tongue
a slab rolled over a coiled pattern (plate 3). This technique was successful on goblet forms since the coil pattern became more evident as the slab was manipulated to form the cup.

During the summer of 1968, I constructed a hand built tea set in an attempt to combine some of the ideas I had been working with during the year. Placing slabs over a balloon enabled me to form a puffed out shape onto which I pressed coils. These did not show up as effectively as the coils on the goblet shapes since they needed to be paddled in order to join onto the body of the pot. The paddling caused some coils to disappear completely. Cups and saucers were made by paddling slabs over clay forms. Functionally, the cups were the most successful pieces of this first tea service. (Cream and sugar containers were not constructed with this group). The tea pot lid slipped out when pouring because it had been cut from the body of the pot with a beveled edge (figure 1).

![cross section of tea pot](figure 1)

The pot could not be completely filled because the spout was placed too low. Also, because the spout was not quite sharp enough it dribbled slightly, but did pour a thin even stream.
Plate 3

Slab goblet with thrown base
In spite of its practical shortcomings this short narrow spout shape resembled a whistling mouth giving the pot an animated quality. Consequently, I continued to use this spout form, or one very close to it, on other tea pots (plate 4). The tea pot in this group was rather flaccid in appearance because I had not found a satisfactory method for constructing and attaching a base that would raise the pot sufficiently to create an animated form. Further, the pot was set upright on its foot before the body was leather hard; thus, the foot (made from a coil) sank into the pot enough to give it a collapsed appearance. This first experience in constructing tea sets sparked my interest in forming pieces that would evoke images of living creatures and still be functional.

Further experiments with tea pot shapes were carried out in raku toward the end of the 1968 summer. These were also constructed over balloons but much more freely than the previous pot. For these raku tea pots a larger roll of clay was used as a foot and this seemed to raise the body of the pot sufficiently. Textured surfaces were not used on these pots since I had not developed a successful technique for preserving the coil shapes I wanted while obtaining a round form. The texture of raku clay—very groggy—caused me to treat the material with more abandon than before and I liked the results. Successful work in
Plate 4

Thrown tea pot with slab spout
this area led me to continue raku experiments in the fall of 1968. I tried pressing coils inside wine glasses to form goblets (plate 5). This technique worked well for small forms and I decided to try constructing tea pot shapes in this manner.

Plaster of Paris was poured over a balloon to form the negative of a hemisphere. Coils of clay were pressed inside this hemisphere as in the wine glass. My initial experiment with this mold proved that the coil patterns I desired could be preserved if the clay were carefully joined only on the inside. But removing the clay hemisphere from the mold was difficult. Further experiments with this procedure showed that best results for joining coils, retaining textures on the outsides of the hemispheres, and removing shapes intact were obtained when the clay was very soft and had no grog.

Many problems were encountered in the process of trying to join the two hemispheres. If the clay were too soft, the rounded shape could not be preserved when handling the joined pieces. If too hard, the seam between the hemispheres would not join well. It was finally determined that if both hemispheres were allowed to dry to the leather hard state they could be handled without danger of changing their shape. To increase the opportunity for the seam to join properly a coil of plastic clay was added to the edge of each leather hard hemisphere. The two pieces were pressed
Plate 5

Raku goblet made from pressed coils
together firmly and the seam area was joined with a fettling knife and then beaten with a fiat stick to perfect the shape of the sphere. The opening for the lid was cut after allowing time in the damp room for moisture content to even. Through the lid opening the inside seam was joined with an "egote" (figure 2).

"egote"
figure 2

Once I arrived at the method mentioned above I began to cast plaster molds to be used for the other pieces of the tea service. Cup and saucer shapes were thrown on the wheel. The foot on the cup forms was trimmed to fit into the recession in the saucer form. These soft clay forms were then coated with plaster. Small balloons were used as the positive forms for casting the hemispheres to be used for cream pitcher and sugar bowl molds (plate 6).

The Tea Pot

A teapot is about the most difficult article a potter is called upon to make. In comparison with a vase of equal size it requires in addition, a lid, a handle, a spout, and perforations to retain the tea leaves. Each one of these parts may take as long to make as the pot itself, and to assemble them successfully requires considerable foresight.3


Of all the pieces in the tea service, the tea pot presented the greatest number of functional problems. During the summer of 1969 I concentrated on solving these.
Plate 6

The plaster molds
I believed that the tea pot was the dominant member of the family groups to be constructed and that solving its problems would facilitate construction of the other tea group members.

**Lids**

The snug fit of lids is a matter which deserves special attention, for it gives a particular satisfaction to the user and is an evidence of competent workmanship.4

During the summer of 1969, I was interested in keeping the tea pot form as close to a sphere as was possible, so I cut the lids from the round bodies of the pots and added slab flanges to them. Even with very long flanges, however, I experienced difficulty in keeping lids in place while pouring. This difficulty stemmed from the beveled angle at which I was cutting into the pots as mentioned earlier. To solve this problem I cut vertically into the clay to form the lid, added a ledge below this vertical cut on which the lid could rest, and then attached the flange, forming it to fit snugly inside the ledge (figure 3).

This method worked well for fit and allowed me to keep

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4Ibid., p. 91.
the roundness of form I desired. Lids in my later work were made from separate slabs which overlapped part of the body of the pot (figure 4). These stayed in place as long as the flange fit properly into the opening which had been cut in the top of the tea pot.

**Spouts**

To gauge the size of a spout, to cut and mould it to a teapot so that it will both pour well and balance the handle satisfactorily, requires much practice and good sense of form. 5

Many slight variations were tried with tea pot spouts. Length, width, and angle at which the spout was terminated were areas of exploration. All of the spouts I hand built and threw were similar, however, in that they had very narrow openings. I believed a small opening projected the image of a whistling or puckered mouth. Spouts made from slabs were constructed by cutting a semi-circle of clay and folding it to create a funnel shape. Once the seam of the funnel was joined, its widest part was stretched outward slightly. After joining the spout to the body of the pot (in which strainer holes had been drilled with a fettling knife), the lip of the spout was trimmed horizontally and

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5Ibid., p. 87.
the edge sharpened. This edge was left unglazed to keep it sharp as insurance against dribbling.

The spout was joined to the pot in a position that allowed its lip to be even with the top of the tea pot or slightly higher in order that the pot might be filled to the brim. After firing some tea pots with thrown spouts it became obvious that they unwound a few degrees in the kiln. To remedy this, terminal points of spouts were cut slightly off the horizontal so they would be straight after the glaze firing.

Many unsuccessful attempts were made to construct spouts from coils so they might relate better to the bodies of the pots. All seemed to fail because of the difficulty in handling these small shapes. Finally, designs were carved into leather hard spouts after they had been joined to the bodies of the pots. Carving deeply then rubbing the clay to round off the edges of carved lines produced a surface similar to the body of the pot. This method was much too time consuming to use for an entire pot and also not quite as agreeable in appearance as the pressed coils; but it did, after glazing, help produce the appearance of an entirely coiled shape (plate 7).

The Foot

A small foot for grace, a broad one for stability.  

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6Ibid., p. 24.
Plate 7

Tea pot constructed from pressed coils (carved spout)
The thing I believed could contribute most to creating an animated set of tea creatures was the design of the foot. A small high foot raised each creature into the air and suggested legs but did not give enough stability. To overcome this, four small wads of clay were joined onto the bottom of the tea pot forms being constructed. These were widest at the point where they joined the pot. When the leather hard pot was set gently on these soft wads of clay they bulged slightly at the point of contact. On some pots feet were curled upward before setting. These wads of clay truly suggested feet of animals or, when curled, goblins. To increase the look of stability, Professor Cowies suggested that five feet be used so that at least three would be seen from any view possible when the tea pot was placed at eye level. This improved the appearance of the pots and their actual stability (plate 8).

The treatment of the foot mentioned above was eventually used on tea pots, cream pitchers, sugar jars and saucers. The cups were pressed into a mold that had been cast from a wheel turned foot. This was done in order that they might fit the saucers more securely. Also, I felt that putting "legs" on every form in a tea service would be overpowering. (The user might get the feeling that one of these creatures could run away before he'd drunk his tea; ideally, this should only occur in his absence).
Plate 8

"The Goblin"

sugar bowl with curled feet
Slab and pulled treatments of the foot were developed to fit the character of new forms. These will be discussed in conjunction with the development of the forms.

**Handles**

Handles, spouts and knobs are all tell-tale adjuncts of pots...  

In planning the handles for tea pots and cream pitchers I was interested in creating variety through the use of a material other than clay. Reed was used in all my tea groups except those completed during my last summer. Experiments with varied points of attachment were made. Of these, the most functionally successful were produced when handles were attached at four points (plate 15) or at either side of the pot with a finial for lifting at back.

Round and flat reeds of varying thickness were used for constructing handles. These were soaked in warm water for ten to twenty minutes to soften. When pliable, a round reed was woven between the staples. Sometimes it was necessary to use more than one, especially for the pots that had three or four staples. If points of attachment were located at front and back of the pot enough round reed was used to completely fill all the clay loops. This was done so the handle could not wiggle when completed. On pots whose attachment points were on the sides enough space

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7Ibid., p. 231.
was left in each staple so the handle might slip easily when the back of the pot was raised for pouring. After completing the work with round reed a piece of masking tape was wound around the center of the handle skeleton to keep it in place. Next, a flat reed was wrapped tightly around the outside of the round reed core (figure 5).

End pieces of flat reed at all attachment points were tucked into the wound section of the handle and pulled tightly. Extra length was then clipped.

A free technique based on the above procedure was used to construct handles for raku pots (plate 9). Here very heavy round reed was used to form the handle skeleton. Several widths of flat reed were wound around this skeleton simultaneously. End pieces on these handles were looped and unclipped.

Handles for "Queen Victoria" and "The Princess" were constructed from yarns, reeds and costume jewelry (plate 10). These handles were made detachable so the pots could be submerged for cleaning.
Plate 9

Raku tea pots
Plate 10

"Queen Victoria, The Princess and Handmaidens"
Other Treatments of Form and Surface

Pressing coiled forms inside a mold gives an exciting surface but also consumes much time. After constructing many pieces with this method, I began searching for something that would yield an interesting surface more quickly. Some of my early experiments with slabs pressed onto carved surfaces (plate 1) proved to be useful. Immediately after casting a new hemisphere in plaster I carved a design into its surface. Working with this mold was quicker and produced a raised texture which I found pleasant. Cup, cream pitcher, and sugar jar molds were also carved with a similar pattern. Saucer molds were allowed to remain untextured for contrast. With this mold I was able to produce some of my most interesting surfaces (plate 11).

This method of working also led me to develop a new tea pot form. On a flat slab of plaster I carved a new design. Onto this surface I pressed circular slabs of clay. Using these flat circular pieces to construct parts of a tea pot presented an interesting problem. My first tea pot constructed in this manner resembled a short cylinder turned on its side (plate 12). While the impressed slabs were still very plastic they were pushed out with a rib to give the pot a more lively appearance. After doing this it seemed unfortunate that I had not carved the design on a concave form. This problem of using a flat impressed slab was
Plate 11

"Head Hedgehog"

tea pot with impressed texture
Plate 12

Slab tea pot
challenging and continued experiments brought more successful aesthetic and functional results (plate 10). All of the forms I constructed this way had puffed sides since I wasn't able to find a shape with flat sides that looked lively enough.

A different kind of foot seemed necessary for this new pot shape and at this point I turned to slab forms. Slabs about two inches in length and approximately the same width as the pot were curled at the ends and then attached to front and back of the pot. The same method was used for constructing a handle for the lid. It worked well for all the finials except the foot. These slabs became quite distorted when the pot was set upright. After successive trials, this problem was solved by waiting until just before the foot slabs became leather hard to set the pot right side up.

I thought this new method of constructing finials would be an improved variation on my rounded forms. I returned to them and developed a technique of combining pressed slabs and coils (plate 13). Professor Mc Endarfer suggested that these forms might be improved by emphasizing the division between the two joined hemispheres. This was done by pressing in on the soft seam immediately after joining the two sections. This shape worked successfully with the slab method of constructing two curled feet, since they also emphasized the two sections of the form (plate 14). A disadvantage of this foot treatment was its instability which could only be corrected by turning on the grinding wheel after the glaze firing.
Plate 13

Tea pot and sugar bowl
pressed slabs and coils
Plate 14

Tea pot with indented seam

(foot constructed from curled slabs)
By the end of the summer of 1969, I had constructed several tea services using the methods discussed. These I believed were successful in form and would perform well functionally. I needed only to finish firing them as soon as the opportunity presented itself. Thus, I felt ready to try a new approach to the tea service.

The Mad Hatter of Lewis Carol's *Alice in Wonderland* poured tea into several cups at once. The practical problems involved in this task intrigued me. As an exercise to solve this problem, during the fall of 1969, I very carefully threw closed forms on the wheel and attached two and three spouts to these after trimming the forms and turning them on their sides. Openings for lids were cut in what now became tops of the pots. These were measured after the lids had been thrown and trimmed. The slab method mentioned above was used for some of the finials on the "Tea For Two" service (plate 15). Very narrow cup forms and tiny saucers were thrown in order that they might sit close enough together for the tea to be directed properly from the spouts. A cream pitcher and sugar bowl were also made from thrown spheres to be used with the "Tea For Two" service. A semicircular slab was attached as a spout for the cream pitcher. I imagined numerous problems that could occur when I would finally get a chance to pour from these curious pots; but, to my amazement, they poured perfectly. Attachments were made to hold corks for spouts if only one cup of tea was desired (plate 16). When I discovered
Plate 15

"Tea For Two"
Plate 16

"Tea For Three"
that pouring several cups of tea at once was possible, I felt sure I would want to return to this project later to develop a freer building approach.

Evening college classes were encouraged to work with raku clay during the fall of 1969. Continuing with the method of throwing spheres I had used to construct the multiple spout sets, I began to form thicker more irregular shapes. I also emphasized the areas where two pieces of clay had been joined together such as the seam between the spout and the body of a tea pot. This was done by adding wads of clay and allowing heavy finger marks to show. Lids were constructed from slabs of clay that were pinched and beaten to resemble hats or crown-like forms. Several narrow coils of clay were joined to the leather hard bodies of the pots for legs. These were curled and wiggled while very soft. The pots were set upright on these coils immediately which caused them to wiggle even more. Many related tea pots, cream pitchers, sugar bowls and cups were constructed (plate 17). These forms were quite lively and their construction helped me to treat thrown forms with more abandon.

After seeing a set of porcelain goblets by Ruth Duckworth in the show "Objects U. S. A." (plate 18), I became very excited about creating irregular thrown forms. Using stoneware again I threw many related tea pieces with very soft clay. I made the walls of these pieces quite thin so minor distortions might become more apparent as they were
Plate 17

Series of raku tea pieces
bisque ware
Plate 18

"Four Goblets"
by
Ruth Duckworth
handled when wet and also in the firing. When the pieces were almost leather hard I scraped off excess clay from their foot sections with a textured knife and added a long roll of clay to each of the small pieces. This roll of clay was pulled like a handle and then coiled. The coiled piece of clay raised the cups high into the air, and I decided at this point not to use the saucers I had thrown since the cups had an almost goblet-like appearance. The tea pots were too symmetric to echo the distortions in the cups so I pressed down on the outside sections of their lids and made slits in their sides which I pushed open from the inside (plate 19). Although functionally successful, these pieces did not possess the animated qualities of some of my earlier work. The cups were the most life-like of all these tea pieces since they, because of size, were constructed with more narrow raised foot sections than the tea pots. The problem of altering thrown forms held my interest and led me to experiment further in this area during the summer of 1970.

I find it natural for my previous areas of work to help me develop new forms. During my last summer at the School For American Craftsmen I have combined work with carved molds, throwing, and a technique new to me—paddling soft coils of clay to edges and joints of forms. This new way of working has been useful in forming more complex animated tea pieces. In these related pieces I've attempted to
Plate 19

Thrown tea service
suggest families of royalty and their servants and advisors. A group of forms in which I believe this attempt has succeeded is shown in plate 10, which pictures "Queen Victoria," "The Princess," and their "Handmaidens." The sides of these tea pots were made from slabs pressed onto a carved bat. These were attached to a thrown center section. "Queen Victoria's" ornate appearance developed from the addition of patted coils at seam areas.

During this last summer I also completed projects begun the summer before and during the year (plate 20). Raku pottery and thrown stoneware formed during the winter was glazed. A cream pitcher, sugar bowl and new saucers for the "Hedge Hog Family" were completed (plate 21). The first set of saucers had warped centers which caused the cups to wiggle. This resulted from distortion occurring when the slabs were pulled from the saucer mold. To correct this problem the centers were scraped with a flat, sharp tool when the clay was bone dry. Happily, after the glaze firing the additional pieces for this set matched the original group well enough to form a complete service for four.

Disappointments

Since the fired teapot must also match the rest of the set in colour as well as shape, it will be readily understood that tea sets involve the studio potter in troublesome and unremunerative work.8

8Ibid., p. 87.
Plate 20

"Fat Tea Service"

constructed from pressed slabs and coils
Plate 21

"Hedgehog Family"

constructed from slabs
pressed into carved hemispheres
Many successfully formed tea services never survived the glaze firings. This was especially disappointing since it resulted in a high mortality rate among formerly lively tea creatures. Because there were some periods when kilns were not available to me, many glaze firings had to be delayed until a time when I was no longer working in the manner of the sets to be fired; thus, it was unlikely that new creatures of the same style would ever replace those lost in the kiln. The majority of my losses (four complete tea services) occurred because of an unusual mishap. I suspect, after many tests, that one of the glaze ingredient bins may have been refilled incorrectly. Only a few pieces of these tea services survived: a sugar jar (plate 8) and the tea pot, creamer and sugar groups shown in plate 22 and plate 23. These all perform their functions well but are unpleasantly heavy because they were thickly reglazed.
Plate 22

"Snobbish Tea Group"

pressed coils
Plate 23

"The Survivors Tea Group"
pressed coils and slabs
CHAPTER III

CLAY BODIES AND GLAZES
S. A. C. Stoneware was used for the major part of the thesis work:

- Kentucky "Special" Ball Clay.....100 lbs.
- "X X" Sagger Clay..................100 lbs.
- Cedar Heights Redart Clay..... 50 lbs.
- Bentonite.......................... 2.5 lbs.

Iron was omitted from this recipe so the surface would be slightly lighter in reduction. This omission also gave more contrast between the clay body and the turquoise glaze used at cone nine in oxidation (plate 10):

- MC 532A Turquoise - Cone 8 to 10 oxidation
  - Barium carbonate.............60 grams
  - Nepheline syenite............130 grams
  - Kaolin..........................14 grams
  - Flint............................16 grams
  - Lithium Carbonate............4 grams
  - Copper Carbonate.............10 grams

The above glaze was the cause of the disasters mentioned earlier. For an unknown reason, after much successful use it began to pit severely and become quite dry. As a correction, Professor Cowles suggested a series of tests which resulted in the addition of two parts kaolin, six parts flint and one part lithium carbonate. These additions improved the surface and changed the color only slightly (thin areas became a bit more green). When a new batch of the original formula was mixed at a different time of year it performed successfully again. This led us to believe a glaze bin had been incorrectly filled. Nevertheless,

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Professor Cowles' suggested additions were kept in the recipe for a more pleasant surface in thin areas. The revised batch recipe follows:

Barium Carbonate............60 grams
Nepheline Syenite...........130 grams
Kaolin........................16 grams
Flint..........................22 grams
Lithium Carbonate..........5 grams
Copper Carbonate...........10 grams

One attractive quality of this glaze is its tendency to turn the clay orange or red-orange at the edges of glazed portions. This quality led me to use it on textured pots that would have much unglazed area. These surfaces were first dipped in glaze which was then scrubbed from the high spots with a sponge. All raised areas were orange or red-orange after the firing in contrast to a turquoise or blackish color which remained in the deep spots where glaze collected. Application must be thick to obtain a bright turquoise color.

Glaze techniques for the majority of the thesis work were geared to emphasizing the surface textures of pots. Often oxides mixed with water were brushed onto the textured surfaces and scrubbed off the high spots with a sponge. Over these areas a thin coat of one of the following glaze bases was poured:

JO - Cone 7 to 9 reduction

Kaolin.........................16 grams
Whiting.......................15 grams
Clinchfield Feldspar........41 grams
Talc............................8 grams
Bone Ash......................10 grams
Dolomite.....................10 grams
Flint...........................9 grams
Nepheline Syenite..........8 grams
With six per cent iron this glaze becomes dark brown with red flecks or, in heavy reduction, red with green flecks. The surface is a pleasant waxy matt.

G-23 - Cone 5 to 9 oxidation or reduction

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frit G-23</td>
<td>27.2 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolomite</td>
<td>18.2 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepheline Syenite</td>
<td>18.2 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaolin</td>
<td>18.2 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flint</td>
<td>18.2 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tin</td>
<td>7.3 grams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With two per cent iron this glaze is closely flecked with dark brown and red spots. An addition of four per cent iron and one and one half per cent cobalt to the base glaze causes it to become metallic blue-brown. Although it has a long and varied firing range, G-23 produces its most pleasant matt surface at cone seven or eight reduction. In oxidation it is very bright and can be unpleasant except over black slip where it ranges from dark brown to blue-green where thick.

S. A. C. Black Slip

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Heights Redart Clay</td>
<td>80 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Copper Oxide</td>
<td>5 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Iron Oxide</td>
<td>5 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manganese Dioxide</td>
<td>5 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobalt Oxide</td>
<td>2.5 grams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Usually finials were glazed to contrast with the bodies of pots. These were dipped in one of the above glazes with colorants added after the oxides had been scrubbed from textured areas. When dry the finials were coated with wax resist before the base glaze was poured over the remaining surface area.
For raku pots the following glazes were applied by pouring or dipping:

**R-3B - Cone 08 Raku - White Crackle**

- Soda Ash: 44.2 grams
- Colemanite: 30.9 grams
- Boric Acid: 18.6 grams
- Kaolin: 24.0 grams
- Flint: 65.0 grams
- Tin Oxide: 6.0 grams

**R-5 - Cone 08 Raku - Transparent**

- Soda Ash: 74 grams
- Colemanite: 31.0 grams
- Kaolin: 38 grams
- Flint: 144 grams

With an addition of four per cent red copper oxide this glaze becomes a beautiful metallic red where reduced. Unhappily, I've discovered this red reoxidizes a few days after the firing becoming yellow-green with reddish spots.

**1-B - Cone 010 Raku - Gold**

- Soda Ash: 44.2 grams
- Gerstley Borate: 30.9 grams
- Kaolin: 24.0 grams
- Flint: 65.0 grams
- Bismuth: 1.6 grams
- Silver Nitrate or Silver Carbonate: 1.6 grams

If fired too high this glaze loses its metallic quality but retains a pleasant yellow-orange color.

The above glazes were used over the following raku clay body:

- Cedar Heights Redart Clay: 50 lbs.
- Kentucky "Special" Ball Clay: 50 lbs.
- Grog: 50 lbs.
- Talc: 20 lbs.
CHAPTER IV

INSPIRATIONS AND INFLUENCES
Books, visits to art galleries, suggestions made by my instructors, and a film I saw many years ago have all influenced my work. Some of these sources have left their mark clearly on particular pieces; others have impressed me strongly yet only subtle evidence of their impression remains on my final products. In this chapter I will trace the sources that caused my work to take particular directions.

Several years before entering graduate school I saw the "22nd Ceramic National" show when it was in New York City. This show left me with an absorbing interest in surface textures which I began to pursue early in my work. Three small bottles by Robert and Paula Winokur (plate 24) were the source to which I turned when beginning to carve plaster surfaces for pressing slabs. The wheel-like shapes used on these bottles appear on the weed pot in plate 1. Similar shapes also appear on the tea pot in plate 11, but my own variations are apparent. These tiny bottles—the tallest only about five inches—gave me the conviction that small forms could be just as expressive as those of gigantic proportions. In addition, small shapes might possess a whimsical quality not possible in larger forms.

Reinforcement of my size preference came from many sources. One of these was a visit to the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. On display was a collection of Japanese ceramics in which a

1v22nd Ceramic National Catalogue, p. 23.
Plate 24

"Three Stoneware Bottles"
Robert and Paula Winokur
stoneware tea jar very similar to the one in plate 25\textsuperscript{11} was shown. This jar was only about six inches in height. It was very freely thrown and glazed—a lively piece. Similar shapes, some of them much larger, which I've seen in Daniel Rhodes' book, *Tamba Pottery* (plate 26)\textsuperscript{12} have been contributing factors toward my recent interest in quickly thrown forms. These pots emphasize distortions occurring in handling and firing. This interest was, however, originally inspired by a visit to the show "Objects: U. S. A." Here I saw distorted thrown goblets by Ruth Duckworth (plate 18) that caused me to change my method of working. Also displayed at this show were several textured pieces I found very exciting. I noticed similarities in my treatment of pressed coils with the surfaces of "Tatooed Baby Dolls" (plate 27) and "Storage Jar" (plate 28). These pieces have not yet directly influenced any of my work.

My treatment of surfaces has, however, gone through a transition because of a suggestion by Professor Cowles. After seeing some of my carved plaster bats he pointed out their similarity to the work of the Art Nouveau period. This led me to investigate the drawings of Aubrey Beardsley (plate 29).\textsuperscript{13} The carved bat used for "Queen Victoria, the Princess and Handmaidens" is done in the manner of Beardsley.

\textsuperscript{13}*The Early Work of Aubrey Beardsley* (New York, 1967) plate 10.
Plate 25

Japanese stoneware tea-jar
Plate 26

Japanese storage jar

Kamakura period
Plate 27

"Two Tattooed Baby Dolls"

by

Michele Doner
Plate 28

"Storage Jar"

by

Wayne Higby
Plate 29

Design for cover of "At The Relton Arms"

by

Aubrey Beardsley
Oriental ceramics have strengthened my preference for certain forms. The Chinese covered bowl shown in plate 30\textsuperscript{14} is my source of reference for rounded forms on raised bases. This bowl also is of modest size—less than seven inches—yet it has "a sense of scale and monumentality."\textsuperscript{15} I do not, however, feel that my work has much resemblance to that of the Oriental tea masters. They "...cultivated an appreciation of extremely unpretentious and severely simple ware...usually undecorated and bearing a single-colour glaze."\textsuperscript{16} Much of my ware is very ornate particularly in surface treatment. The tea service in plate 19 exemplifies the simplest treatment of form with which I have worked.

When pulling handles for the above tea service I attempted to get the fluid quality that Patricia Kazi has in her cup handles (plate 31).\textsuperscript{17} In the process I came to the conclusion that these multiple handles did not work functionally or aesthetically with the forms I had thrown. Nevertheless, after seeing this photo my ideas about shaping handles changed. I was more alert for accidental nuances that might add to the liveliness of my forms.

\textsuperscript{14}Rhodes, Daniel, Stoneware and Porcelain (Phila., 1959) p. 113.

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid.


Plate 30

Stoneware covered bowl
Chinese
Tz'u Chou ware, Sung dynasty
Plate 31

Stoneware cup

by

Patricia Kazi
Working with raku clay and firing techniques has also had a liberating effect on all my work. The immediacy of results and the texture of the clay caused me to work more spontaneously. Some of this spontaneity remained in my work when I returned to stoneware. Seeing the pottery of Nancy Jurs at the "Rochester Finger Lakes" show (plate 32) and her show at Shop I has directly influenced my technique of glazing raku tea ware. Similarities can be seen in plate 33. Here, as in Jurs' forms, a band of unglazed clay has been left as contrast to the freely poured areas of the pot.

The strongest influence on my thesis work has come from a film I saw when I was a child. Walt Disney’s version of Alice in Wonderland pictured the Mad Hatter serving tea to Alice from pots that functioned queerly. These animated creatures could pour several cups of tea at once and move about the table under their own power--exactly the things I wanted my tea sets to do. I have been able to form tea pots that will serve "Tea For Two" or "Tea For Three;" for moving about I’ve had to rely on the qualities suggestive of animation in my forms.
Plate 32

Hinged containers

by

Nancy Jurs
Plate 33

Raku tea pot with unglazed area
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION
Early in my thesis work I set the goal of creating animated forms that would function well. Realizing this goal has been difficult because precise thrown forms seemed to function best while irregular hand built forms most often provided the liveliness I wanted. As a complete tea service the "Hedgehog Family" (plate 21) meets both requirements successfully. It is fortunate for this group that the glaze fire imparted the most impressive surface to the tea pot, "The Head Hedgehog." The functional limitations of this set are natural to hand built forms--lids fit only one way and saucers do not stack as tightly as they would if thrown. These limitations are very slight as compared to the enormous pleasure derived from using the set.

Although the raku process encouraged me to think in new directions, the lively tea services formed with this clay have too many functional limitations for everyday use (plate 34). The porosity of the clay will eventually cause the glazed surfaces to change color. The walls of these pots are heavy which makes pouring a bit awkward. It would be best to save these pieces for special occasions.

With "Queen Victoria, The Princess and Handmaidens" (plate 10) I've come closest to realizing my goal of forms that suggest lively creatures. These pieces function well, however, the handles must be removed for cleaning--a decided inconvenience.
These last pieces suggest new directions my work might take in the area of tea; for after two years of working almost exclusively with tea pieces this challenging project still holds my interest completely.
Plate 34

"The Royal Rakus"
CHAPTER VI

BIBLIOGRAPHY


