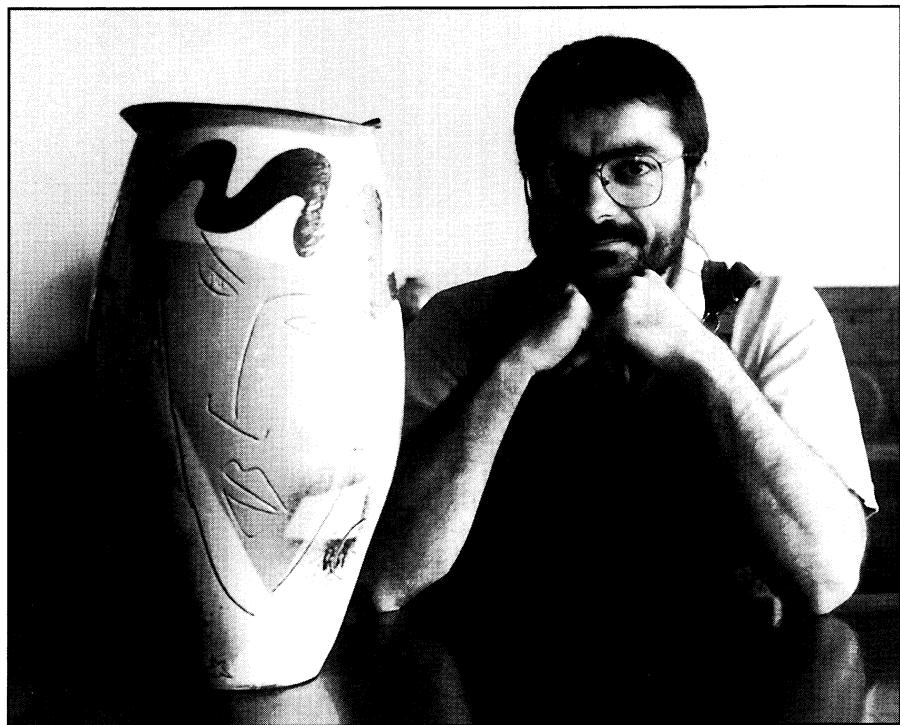


C E R A M I C  
S E R I E S •



jean-paul landreau

potters from wales



ABERYSTWYTH ARTS CENTRE

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Potters tend to be wary of colour, many seeing it as either a distraction from the primacy of form, or as a move away from the austere quiet aesthetic which has tended to dominate twentieth century studio ceramics.

Fortunately, the French-born potter Jean-Paul Landreau suffers from no such inhibitions. His bright, colourful slip decorated and painted earthenware is suffused with reds, yellows and blues and inscribed with figurative designs, which rather than offering reserve or an opportunity for contemplation, are celebratory and life-affirming - objects to use and enjoy both for their decorative and practical qualities.

Like many potters, Landreau came to work with clay after a career in other areas. Though interested at school in exploring the possibilities of a career within the visual arts, Landreau was persuaded to train as a dental technician, and for several years was only able to study sculpture, although later he studied the modelling of portrait heads at evening classes. The decision to move to Britain opened up new possibilities. Having settled in London he attended pottery evening classes while working in a hotel. Keen to work with clay he saw and applied for a job at Fulham pottery, though suspecting he was not really qualified. They thought otherwise and he was taken on. The pottery was still at its original site in Fulham, with many of the buildings little changed for hundreds of years.

Under the management of David Birch, the Fulham Pottery, in addition to selling potters' materials, had started producing a range of terra cotta storage jars, with transfer decoration, made by jiggering and jolleying. For Landreau, it was a perfect learning opportunity, for he not only had the experience of working in a small production pottery, but was introduced to a wide range of making methods.

Determined to have a period of study, Jean-Paul Landreau was accepted on the two year studio pottery course at Harrow School of Art, then under the enlightened leadership of Jerome Abbo. Again, it was a highly enjoyable period, with input from such inspirational ceramicists as Richard Slee and Mo Jupp. Although Landreau had to self finance his study, having just missed a highly competitive French vocational scholarship, he had to work as a cleaner in the ceramics department, making it an intense but rewarding two years. The ideal holiday job came along when in the summer of 1984 Douglas Woolf of the Fulham Pottery suggested that Jean-Paul Landreau might work with the artist John Piper to make pots which the artist would decorate. This was the first of many collaborations Landreau established with artists. Piper would discuss shapes with him, and he would then make them by the most appropriate means. Landreau also advised Piper on the use of suitable oxides and underglaze colours for his painted decoration, producing pots which resulted in a sell-out exhibition at Dan Klein's London Gallery.

After Harrow came two years as technician at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London, which brought further practical experience as he learnt to work with plaster, to make moulds and slip cast shapes. Afterwards came an offer from Douglas Woolf for Jean-Paul Landreau to establish his own modest studio at Fulham Pottery where he was given the use of the kilns. There was also the possibility of a collaboration with the inventive avant garde artist Bruce McLean, who responded to clay and its qualities as much as a sculptor as a painter. Unlike John Piper, McLean did not want to paint on clay, but was more inspired by the use of coloured slips and direct graffiti into the clay surface. Shapes included tall jars and plates, all made in red earthenware. One vast shape, built in the yard, involved Landreau climbing inside it, an occasion McLean found enormously stimulating, though the finished piece was too large to fire. "I liked the performance aspect of Bruce's work, which never failed to inspire me."

Following working with McLean came a collaboration with Philip Sutton working on tin-glazed earthenware, and developing ideas for Laura Ashley. But Landreau's studio was small, and during a holiday tour in the Cambrian Mountains in Wales he came across a small cottage in the village of Tregaron which was reasonably priced. The hilly landscape reminded him of his home territory of the Auvergne, and he decided to buy it though with no intention of moving into it permanently. However, within a few months he and his partner responded positively to the location, and decided to move there. Landreau established a pottery studio in the shed, building a kiln fired by gas with reclaimed bricks. Later this set up was replaced by a larger purpose built studio - which he built himself -

and an electric kiln.

In Wales, Jean-Paul Landreau had to establish his studio, decide on the direction in which he wanted his work to develop, and find a market for the pots. Responding as much to the influence of painters such as Matisse, Leger, Juan Gris and Patrick Heron, and the sculptural forms of Jean Arp as the work of other potters, Landreau continued to explore forms which were loose and free, carving and cutting shapes, as well as extending his range of colours. "I like continual change, trying out different methods and new shapes. I also want to experiment with different colours, tailing and pouring slip. People like the blues, but more recently I have been trying black backgrounds to bring out the designs in a different way". Exhibitions, most notably at Tim Boon's Amalgam Gallery in Barnes, ensured his work has been brought before the public eye, while recent orders from the Guggenheim Museum in New York, have begun to establish him on a international market. Currently Landreau combines potting with teaching children on Saturdays, and carrying out a mosaic commission for a hospital in Aberystwyth with a design based on an ancient Celtic motif.

Landreau has developed a style which is eclectic and inventive in its making and visually rich in a range of decorative motifs and bright colours. Making methods include a variety of hand-building and semi-industrial processes. Many pots are thrown on the potter's wheel, and these may either be turned and left, such as in a range of lively small narrow necked bottles, or in the case of bowls, given a turned foot and then carved to give three or four sides. Bigger shapes may be built by the coil and throw method which allows time for contemplation and allows more control of the final shape.

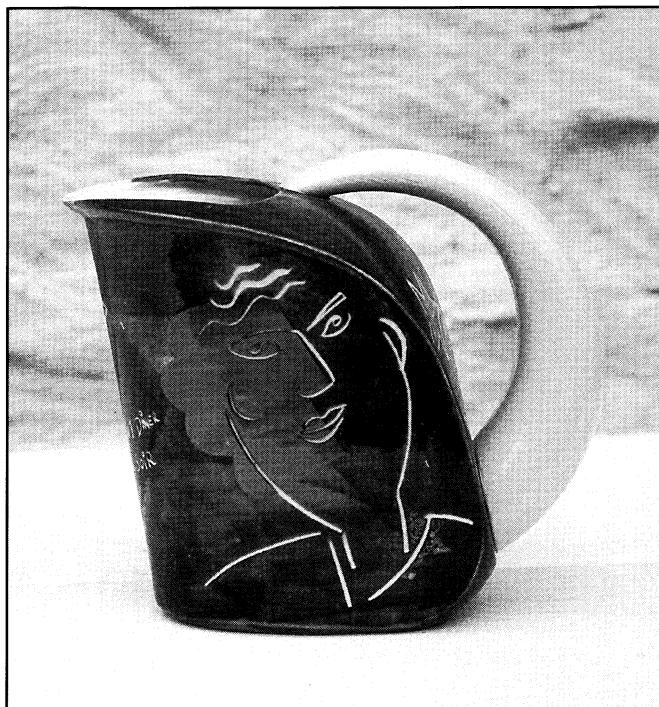
Perhaps most intriguing of Landreau's recent work are what he calls his pelican jugs, which are made by slip-casting in white clay. In these pieces the body and handle have sculptural qualities as the carved handle and the asymmetrical body take on a flowing unity quite unlike a thrown form. Motifs range from cartoon like portraits of friends and acquaintances to cats, floral patterns and more abstract designs. All have a confidence and exuberance which is fresh, bright and clear.

Landreau's work brings together a diverse range of influences. The pots sit easily in the twentieth century tradition of studio ceramics, but call on the less familiar painted and decorated earthenware forms associated with the Mediterranean. But his use of red rather than white clay for most of his work, has an attractive sobering effect, adding depth and resonance. "I like my pots to be well made and good fun" - both qualities Jean-Paul Landreau achieves with deceptive ease.

**Emmanuel Cooper**  
**20 April - 25th May 1996**

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C Y F R E S O  
G E R A M E G



jean-paul landreau

crochenyddion o gymru

ABERYSTWYTH CANOLFAN Y CELFYDDYDAU  
  
ARTS Cymru

ABERYSTWYTH CANOLFAN Y CELFYDDYDAU ABERYSTWYTH

Ebrill 1996  
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**T**uedda crochenyddion fod yn ddigon amheus o liw. Bydd llawer iawn ohonynt yn ei weld fel rhywbeth sy'n tynnu oddi wrth y brif ffurf, neu oddi wrth yr estheteg foel, dawel a fu'n nodweddu cerameg stiwdio yn ystod yr ugeinfed ganrif. Yn ffodus, does dim o'r fath swildod yn nodweddu gwaith y crochenydd Jean-Paul Landreau, a aned yn Ffrainc, ac sy'n creu llestri pridd wedi'u paentio'n goch, melyn a glas ac sydd wedi'u harysgrifo gyda chynlluniau bach ffigurol. Yn lle cynnig cyfle i synfyrio, mae'r gwaith yma'n ddathliad ac yn llawn bywyd; dyma wrthrychau i'w defnyddio ac i'w mwynhau oherwydd eu priodweddau addurniadol ac ymarferol.

Yn yr un modd, llawer iawn o grochenyddion, daeth Landreau i weithio , chlai ar ôl gyrfa mewn meysydd eraill. Er bod ganddo ddiddordeb yn yr ysgol mewn gyrfa gyda'r celfyddydau gweledol, perswadiwyd Landreau i hyfforddi fel technegydd deintyddol, ac am sawl blwyddyn, cerflunio oedd yr unig beth y gallai ei astudio, er, yn ddiweddar, astudiodd fodelu pennau patread mewn dosbarthiadau nos. Agorodd ei benderfyniad i symud i wledydd Prydain bosisiliadau newydd iddo. Ar ôl ymsefydlu yn Llundain, mynchydd ddosbarthiadau crochenwaith gyda'r nos, tra'n gweithio mewn gwesty yn ystod y dydd. Yn awyddus i weithio gyda chlai, ymgeisiodd am swydd yng Nghrochendy Fulham, er ei fod yn amau nad oedd, mewn gwirionedd, yn gymwys ar gyfer y gwaith. Nid oedd y Crochendy o'r un farn, a chafodd ei gyflogi. Roedd y Crochendy yn dal i fod ar ei safle gwreiddiol yn Fulham gyda llawer iawn o'r adeiladau heb newid fawr ddim ers cannoedd o flynyddoedd.

O dan reolaeth David Birch, roedd Crochendy Fulham, yn ogystal , gwerthu deunyddiau crochenwaith, hefyd wedi dechrau cynhyrchu amrediad o jariau cadw terra cotta gydag addurniadau trosglwyddynnau, a wnaed drwy jigero a jolio. Dyma gyfle dysgu perffaith i Landreau, oherwydd, nid yn unig iddo gael y profiad o weithio mewn crochendy bach masnachol ond hefyd fe'i cyflwynwyd i amrediad eang o ddulliau creu.

Yn benderfynol o gael cyfnod i astudio, derbynwyd Jean-Paul Landreau i'r cwrs crochenwaith dwy flynedd yn Ysgol Gelf Harrow, a oedd, yr adeg honno, o dan arweinyddiaeth oleuedig Jerome Abbo. Unwaith eto, dyma gyfnod difyr a diddorol iddo, gyda chyfraniad gan geramyddion ysbrydoledig fel Richard Slee a Mo Jupp. Bu'n rhaid i Landreau dalu am astudio o'i boched ei hun, ac yntau wedi colli o drwch blewyn ysgoloriaeth alwediachol Ffrengig hynod gystadleuol. Bu'n rhaid iddo weithio fel glanhawr yn yr adran gerameg - dwy flynedd galed ond hynod werth chweil. Cafodd waith delfrydol dros y gwyliau, pan awgrymodd Douglas Woolf, Crochendy Fulham, yn haf 1984, y dylai Landreau weithio gyda'r arlunydd John Piper i wneud potiau y byddai'r arlunydd yn fodlon eu haddurno. Dyma'r cyntaf o lawer iawn o gyweithiau a sefydlodd Landreau gydag arlunwyr. Byddai Piper yn trafod siapiau hefo fo, ac yna, byddai'n eu gwneud gan ddefnyddio'r dulliau mwyaf addas. Byddai Landreau hefyd yn cynghori Piper ar ddefnyddio ocsidau addas a lliwiau tanwydro ar gyfer ei addurniadau peintiedig, gan gynhyrchu potiau a arweiniodd at arddangosfa boblogaidd tu hwnt yn oriel Dan Klein yn Llundain.

Ar ôl Harrow, treuliodd ddwy flynedd fel technegydd yn Ysgol Ganolog Gelf a Chrefft yn Llundain a arweiniodd at brofiad ymarferol pellach wrth iddo ddysgu gweithio gyda phlastr, i wneud mowldiau a siapiau slip-cast. Yn sgil hyn, cafodd gynnig gan Douglas Woolf iddo sefydlu'i stiwdio fach ei hun yng Nghrochendy Fulham lle y cafodd ddefnyddio'r odynnau. Roedd hefyd gyfle iddo gydweithio , 'r arlunydd blaengar, dyfeisgar Bruce McLean, a ymatebai i glai a'i briodweddau yn yr un modd, cherflunydd rhagor nag arlunydd. Yn wahanol i John Piper, nid oedd McLean am beintio ar glai, ond fe'i hysbrydolwyd yn fwy gan ddefnydd o slipiau lliwgar a graffito uniongyrchol i mewn i wyneb y clai. Ymhilith y siapiau oedd jariau tal a phlatiau, pob un ohonynt wedi'u gwneud o lestri pridd coch. Yn achos un si,p anferthol a godwyd yn yr iard, bu'n rhaid i Landreau ddringo i mewn iddi, digwyddiad cynhyrfus iawn i Bruce McLean, er bod y darn gorffenedig yn rhy fawr i'w danio. "Roeddwn i'n hoffi'r agwedd berfformio yng ngwaith Bruce, a oedd yn ysbrydoliaeth imi bob amser."

Yn dilyn ei waith hefo McLean, bu'n cydweithio , Philip Sutton, gan weithio ar lestri pridd wedi'u gwydro , thun, gan ddatblygu syniadau i Laura Ashley. Ond un fechan oedd stiwdio Landreau, ac yn ystod ymwelliad , Chymru yn ystod y gwyliau, cafodd hyd i fwthyn bach yn Nhregaron a oedd ar werth am bris rhesymol. Roedd y bryniau'n ei atgoffa o gynefin ei gartref yn Auvergne, ac felly penderfynodd ei brynu er nad oedd ganddo fwriad yr adeg honno i symud

yno'n barhaol. Fodd bynnag, o fewn ychydig fisoeedd, penderfynodd Landreau a'i bartner eu bod yn hoffi'r ardal a dyna nhw'n codi pac i Geredigion. Sefydlodd Landreau stiwdio crochenwaith yn y sied, gan godi odyn nwy gyda phriddfeini wedi'u hailgylchynu. Yn nes ymlaen, codwyd stiwdio newydd sbon yn ei lle gan Landreau ei hun. Odyn drydan sydd gan y stiwdio newydd.

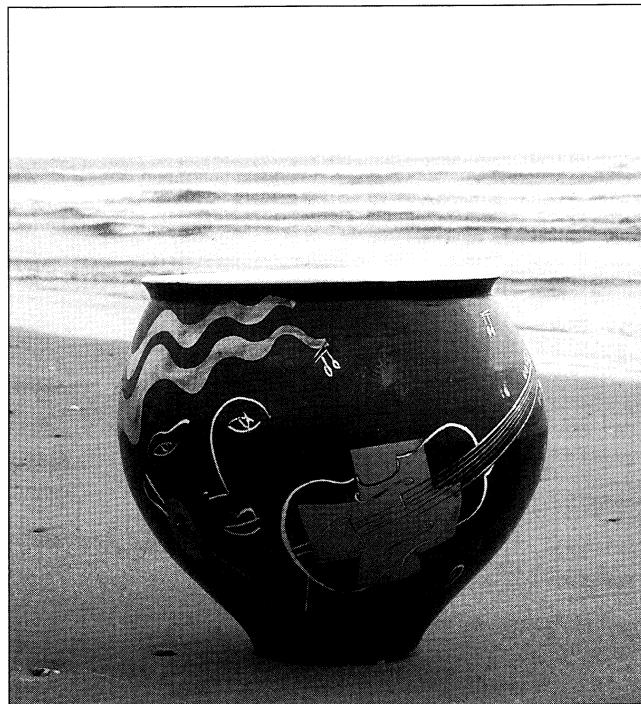
Wedi cyrraedd Cymru, bu'n rhaid i Jean-Paul Landreau sefydlu'i stiwdio, penderfynu ar gyfeiriad y gwaith roedd am ei ddatblygu, a chael hyd i farchnad am y potiau. Gan ymateb llawn cymaint i ddatblygu fel Matisse, Leger, Juan Gris a Patrick Heron ynghyd, ffurfiau cerfluniol Jean Arp, ag y byddai i waith ei gyd-grochenyddion, daliodd Landreau ati i archwilio ffurfiau a oedd yn llac ac yn rhydd, gan gerfio a thorri siapiau yn ogystal ag ymestyn amrediad ei liwiau. "Dwi'n hoffi newid parhaus, a rhoi cynnig ar wahanol ddulliau a siapiau newydd. Dwi hefyd eisiau rhoi cynnig ar wahanol liwiau, ynghyd, llwybro- a thywallt-slip. Mae pobol yn hoffi'r gleision, ond, yn fwy diweddar, dwi wedi bod yn arbrofi gyda chefnfiroedd duon i amlygu'r dylunwaith mewn ffordd wahanol." Mae arddangosfeydd, yn fwyaf arbennig yn Oriel Amalgam Tim Boon yn Barnes, wedi sicrhau bod i waith wedi cyrraedd sylw'r cyhoedd. Yn y cyfamser, mae archebion gan Amgueddfa Guggenheim yn Efrog Newydd wedi'i roi ar ben ffordd yn y farchnad ryngwladol. Ar hyn o bryd, mae Landreau yn cyfuno potio, dysgu plant ar ddydd Sadwrn, ynghyd, chyflawni comisiwn mosaig ar gyfer ysbyty yn Aberystwyth gan ddefnyddio cynllun wedi'i seilio ar hen batrwm Celtaidd.

Mae Landreau wedi datblygu arddull sy'n eclectig ac yn ddyfeisgar o ran dulliau creu, ac yn gyfoethog yn weledol o ran amrediad y motifau addurniadol a'r lliwiau llachar. Bydd llawer iawn o'i botiau'n cael eu taflu ar droelli crochenyddion, a bydd y rhain naill ai'n cael eu troi a'u gadael, megis yn y poteli-gwddf-cul sionc, neu, yn achos y powleni, rhoddir iddynt droed sydd wedi'i throi ac yna'i chrafu i roi tair neu bedair ochr iddi. Gellir gwneud siapiau mwy drwy'r dulliau torchi neu daflu sy'n rhoi amser i gyfansoddi a mwy o reolaeth dros y si,p derfynol.

Efallai mai'r si,p fwyaf diddorol a geir yng ngwaith diweddar Landreau yw'r hyn a elwir ganddo yn siwgiau pelican, a wneir drwy slip-castio mewn clai gwyn. Yn y darnau hyn, mae priodweddau cerfluniol i'r corff a'r ddolen gyda'r ddolen gerfiedig a'r corff anghyfesur yn cymryd arnynt ryw undod hylifol sy'n holol annhebyg i ffurf sydd wedi'i thaflu. Ymhlieth y motifau, ceir portreadau cartwnaidd o ffrindiau a chyd nabod, cathod, patrymau blodeuog a chynlluniau mwy haniaethol.

Mae hyder a bywiogrwydd yn perthyn iddynt i gyd.

Mae gwaith Landreau yn dwyn at ei gilydd amrediad eang o ddatblywadau. Bydd y potiau'n cymryd eu lle'n hawdd yn nhraiddodiad cerameg stiwdio'r ugeinfed ganrif, ond byddant yn galw ar y ffurfiau llestri pridd peintiedig ac addurnedig llai cyfarwydd sy'n gysylltiedig, Môr y Canoldir. Ond effaith sobreiddiol, ddeniadol sydd i'r clai coch y bydd yn ei ddefnyddio, o'i gymharu, chlai gwyn, ar gyfer y rhan fwyaf o'i waith, sy'n ychwanegu rhyw ddyfnder iddo. "Dwi'n leicio bod fy mhotiau wedi'u gwneud yn dda, ac yn dipyn o hwyl." Dyma ddwy nodwedd y mae Jean-Paul Landreau'n feistr arnynt, a hynny yn ymddangosiadol ddiymdreich.



**Emmanuel Cooper**  
**20 Ebrill - 25 Mai 1996**