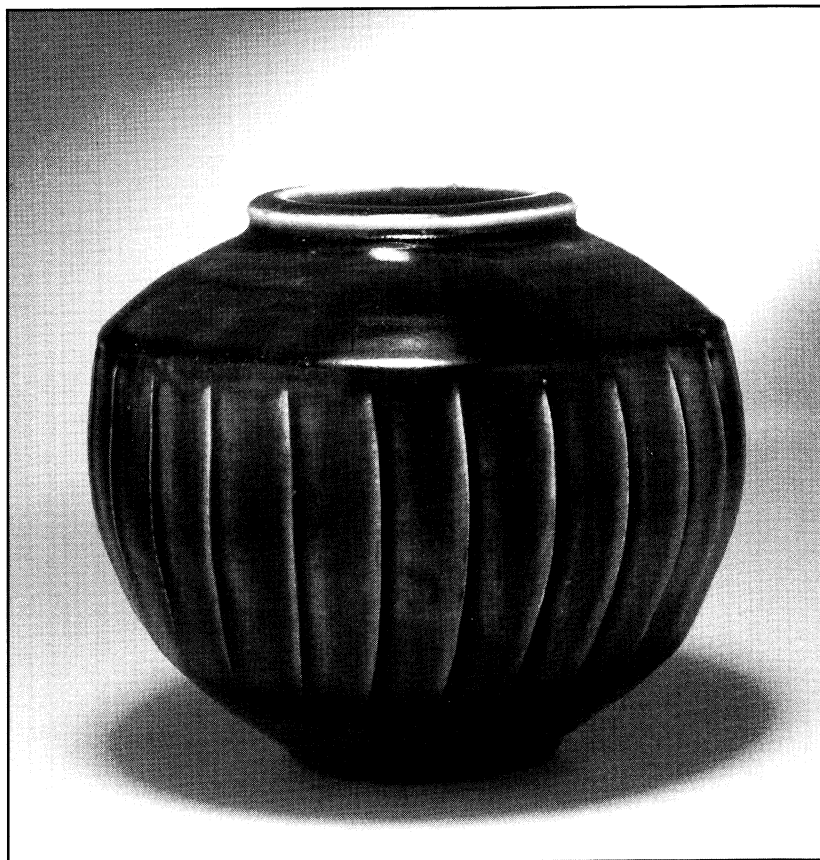


C E R A M I C

S E R I E S ●



david leach



ABERYSTWYTH ARTS CENTRE

March 1996
number 76

This small but representative exhibition of my recent work covers examples in both reduction fired stoneware and porcelain. It is the result of the past two or three months of work, frustrated by illness which is the reason for my inability to run the intended workshop at Aberystwyth Arts Centre this Easter.

All the work on show is thrown and mostly turned on the wheel. Although many pieces can hardly be described as functional in the generally accepted meaning of the word, they stem mostly from functional sources of inspiration but the intention is primarily to make objects that are aesthetically pleasing.

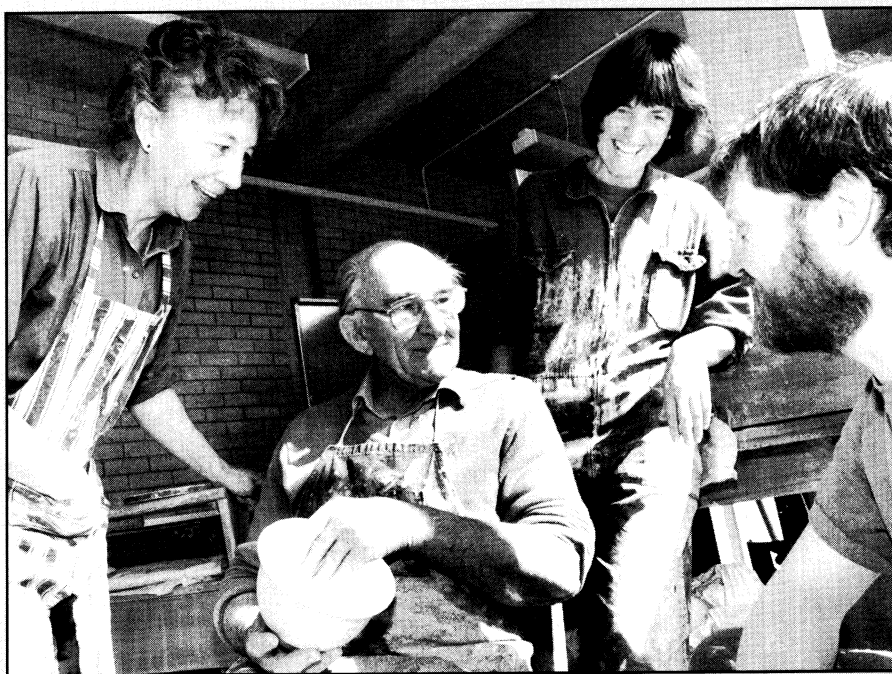
My attitude is simple and objective: seeking form, texture in a variety of glaze qualities and decorative techniques using brush painting, sgraffito through coloured slips, fluting particularly in porcelain and some allied engraving.

My pleasure and continuing inspiration comes from seeing pots emerge from the kiln with an integrity or wholeness where concept and execution blend. I find this search and excitement quite endless always with room for improvement.

Form and decorative ideas chiefly spring from observation of nature and assimilated derivation from the legacy of the past.

Of course I always wish I had my father's facility and expertise in fluent expressionist drawing, of which I have but little ability - one of the prices one pays for not having had a formal art school training in drawing .

Instead my own training began at the age of nineteen in 1930 on leaving school when I joined my father at the Leach Pottery as an apprentice, graduating over the years to join him after the war as partner in 1946. The partnership lasted for ten years until 1956 and, I believe, was the period of greatest growth for the pottery and its sound establishment; and, I believe, for myself as well. In 1956 Janet Darnell married my father, taking my place as partner. I left to start my own pottery here at Bovey Tracey, where I have been ever since



with my own three potting sons together with a succession of students.

For the first five years, until my two chambered stoneware kiln was built in 1961, I made electric fired oxidised slipware of which I had had a lot of experience during my first six years at St Ives.

In 1961 I stopped making slipware and switched completely to reduction fired stoneware and porcelain.

My method and techniques have hardly changed since, but in 1981 I ceased taking student apprentices and gave up using my 70 cubic foot two chambered oil fired kiln and made myself a small 7 cubic foot propane fired kiln which was just big enough to take my biggest pieces yet small enough to enable me to fire with much greater frequency and control, averaging a firing once a week instead of once in two months.

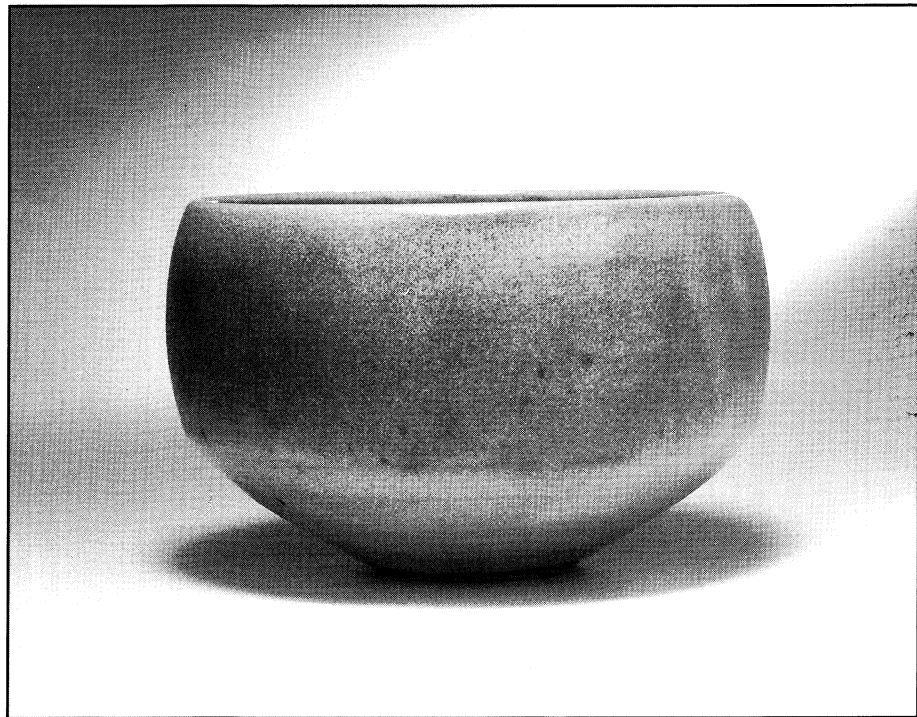
I have been fortunate in always being able to find outlets for my work, greatly helped by the experience built up in market research in my 25 years at St Ives. Approximately 30% / - 40% is sold in my own showroom at the pottery, another 30% - /40% at shops, stores and increasingly in exhibitions at galleries. The remainder goes in commissions and overseas exhibitions.

I firmly believe it is still possible to make an adequate living as a potter if one sets about it intelligently, starting with a good grounding, some of it in a good art school and the rest as a student for a year or so to a good master potter.

It is undoubtedly a hard and concentrated life but immensely rewarding.

After 66 years at it I have not stopped yet and have no regrets.

David Leach February 1996

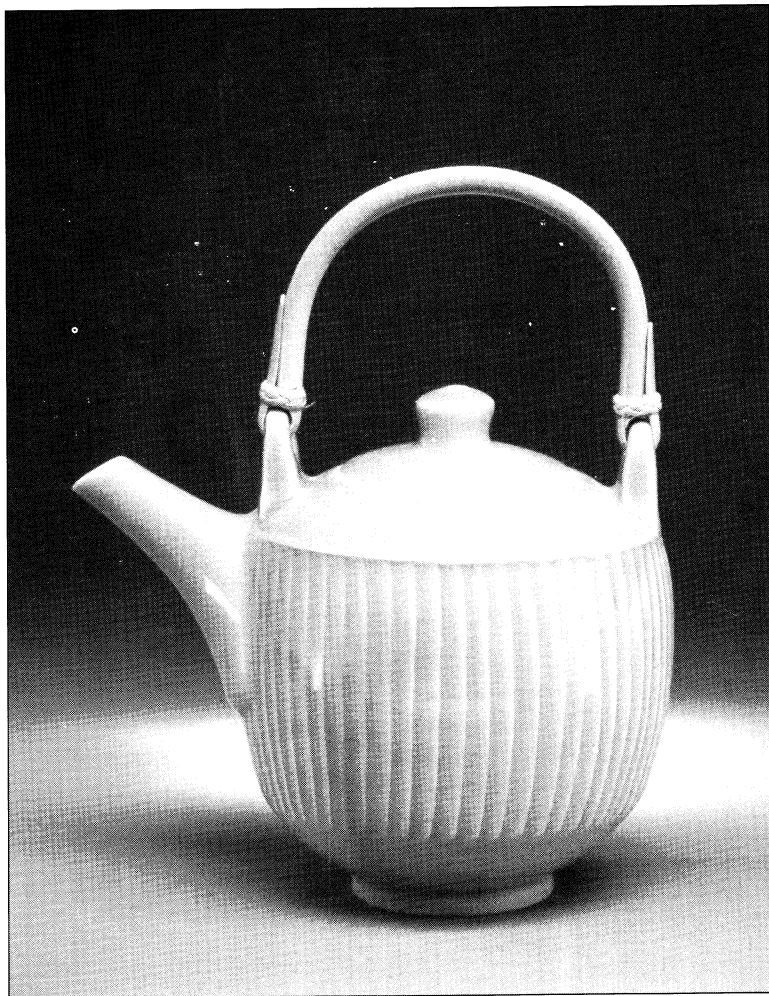


Supported by the Craft Department, Arts Council of Wales

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C Y F R E S ●

G E R A M E G



david leach



CANOLFAN Y CELFYDDYDAU ABERYSTWYTH

Mawrth 1996
rhif 76

Mae'r arddangosfa fechan, ond cynrychioladol hon o'm gwaith diweddaraf, yn cynnwys enghreifftiau o grochenwaith caled tanio-gostyngedig a phorslen.

Y gwaith dros y ddau neu dri mis diwethaf, a rwystrwyd gan salwch, sy'n gyfrifol am fy anallu i gynnal y gweithdy arfaethedig yng Nghanolfan y Celfyddydau, Aberystwyth dros y Pasg. Mae rhan fwyaf y gwaith sydd i'w weld wedi'i daflu a'i droi ar y droell.

Er go brin y gellir disgrifio llawer iawn o'r darnau fel rhai swyddogaethol yn ystyr gyffredinol y gair, mae'r rhan fwyaf ohonynt wedi'u hysbrydoli gan ffynonellau swyddogaethol, ond y buriad yn y bôn yw gwneud gwrthrychau'n sy'n plesio'n esthetidd.

Agwedd syml, wrthrychol sydd gen i: chwilio am ffurf, gweadau mewn amrywiaeth yn ansawdd y gwydreddau a thechnegau addurno sy'n cynnwys peintio hefo brws, sgraffito drwy slipiau lliw, ffliwtwaith yn arbennig mewn porslen ynghyd ag ychydig engrafu.

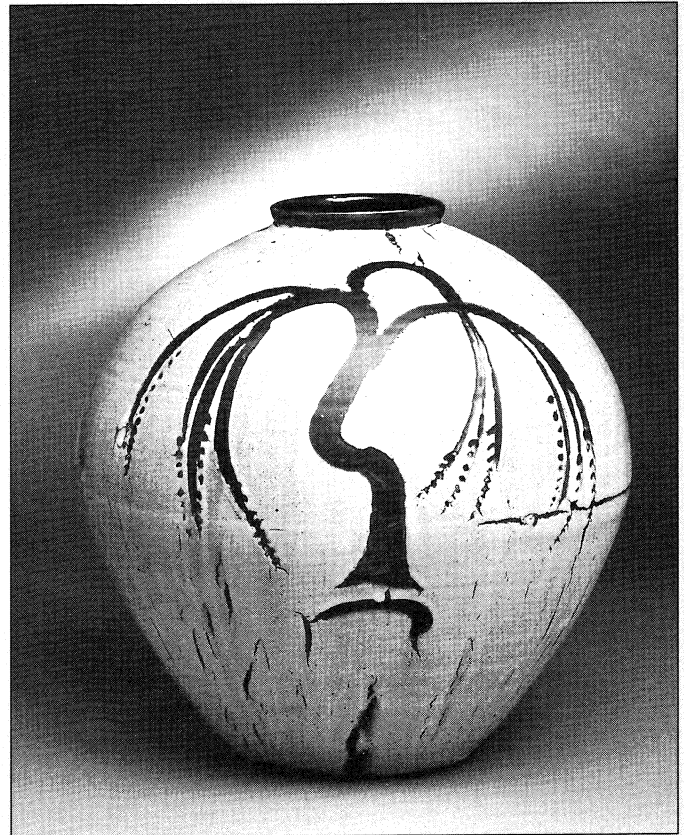
Daw fy mhleser a'm hysbrydoliaeth o hyd o weld y potiau'n dod o'r odyr lle mae'r cyfanwaith yn amlygu ymdoddiad rhwng y syniad a'r dull gweithredu. Mi fydda i'n cael y chwilio am y cyffro yma'n broses ddiddiwedd lle y ceir bob amser le i wella.

Daw ffurf a syniadau addurnol yn bennaf o sylwi ar natur a tharddiad cymhathedig cynhyrsgaeth y gorffennol.

Wrth gurs, byddai'n dda gen i pe bai gen i ddawn ac arbenigedd fy nhad mewn lluniadu llyfn, mynegiadol lle nad oes gen i sawr o glem - rhan o'r pris i'w dalu am beidio â chael hyfforddiant lluniadu ffurfiol mewn ysgol gelf.

Yn lle hynny, dechreuodd fy hyfforddiant pan oeddwn yn bedair ar bymtheg oed ym 1930 wrth adael yr ysgol, pan ymunodd â'm tad yn Nghrochendy Leach, gan furw fy mhrentisiaeth dros y blynyddoedd cyn ymuno ag ef fel partner ar ôl y rhyfel ym 1946.

Parhaodd y bartneriaeth am dros ddeng mlynedd hyd at 1956, ac, yn fy marn i, hwn oedd y cyfnod mwyaf tyngedfennol i'r crochendy o ran twf wrth iddo ymsefydlu ar seiliau cadarn. Bu hwn hefyd yn gyfnod allweddol imi'n bersonol yn yr un modd.



Ym 1956, priododd fy nhad â Janet Darnell a gymerodd fy lle fel partner. Gadewais er mwyn dechrau fy nghrochendy fy hun yn Bovey Tracey, lle y bûm i ers hynny gyda'r tri crochenydd o feibion sy gen i ynghyd â tho ar ôl to o fyfyrwyr. Am y pum mlynedd cyntaf, nes i'r odyd caled ddwy-siambwr gael ei chodi ym 1961, byddwn yn gwneud crochenwaith slip tanio-trydan wedi'i ocsidio. Roeddwn wedi cael cryn dipyn o brofiad hefo'r math yma o grochenwaith yn ystod fy chwe blynedd gyntaf yn St Ives.

Ym 1961, rhois i'r gorau i wneud crochenwaith slip gan newid yn gyfan gwbl i grochenwaith caled tanio-gostyngedig a phorslen. Nid yw fy nulliau na'm techneg wedi newid fawr ddim ers hynny, ond ym 1981, mi wnes i roi'r gorau i dderbyn myfyrwyr fel prentisiaid a hefyd i ddefnyddio yr odyd ddwy-siambwr, olew 70 troedfedd giwbwig, gan godi yn ei lle odyd fechan brofên 7 troedfedd giwbwig, a oedd yn ddigon mawr i gymryd fy narnau mwyaf, ac eto'n ddigon fechan i'm galluogi i danio llawer iawn yn amlach a chyda llawer mwy o reolaeth, gan danio unwaith yr wythnos ar gyfartaledd yn lle unwaith bob deufis.

Dwi wedi bod yn ffodus gan na chefais erioed broblem wrth werthu fy ngwaith, ac yn hynny o beth, bu'r pum mlynedd ar hugain o brofiad a gefais yn St Ives o gymorth mawr.

Gwerthir tua 30%-40% yn fy ystafell arddangos yn y crochendy, a 30%-40% ar ben hyn mewn siopau ac, yn fwyfwy, mewn arddangosfeydd ac orielau. Bydd y gweddill yn mynd mewn comisiynau ac arddangosfeydd tramor.

Rwyf yn gadarn o'r farn, ei bod yn dal i fod yn bosibl i wneud bywoliaeth ddigonol fel crochenydd, os bydd rhywun yn mynd ati'n ddeallus, gan ddechrau gyda phrentisiaeth drylwyr, peth ohoni mewn ysgol gelf dda a'r gweddill fel myfyrwr am flwyddyn neu ddwy gyda phen-crochenydd cydnabyddedig.

Heb os, bywyd caled, dwys ydi o, ond gall fod yn werth chweil iawn. Ar ôl bod wrthi am 66 o flynyddoedd, dwi heb roi ffidl yn y to eto, a dwi ddim yn difaru dim.

David Leach, Chwefror 1996

