

From the
Mountain

MALCOLM DAVIS AND THE ART OF SHINO

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This catalogue was published on the occasion of the exhibition, *From the Mountain: Malcolm Davis and the Art of Shino*, curated by Robert Bridges, in the McGee Gallery at the Art Museum of West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia, January 22 to May 15, 2022. The publication of this catalogue was made possible through the generosity of Judith F. Davis and of the Colonel Eugene E. Myers Foundation to the School of Art and Design at West Virginia University.

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Cover image: Malcolm Davis, Plate (detail), porcelain with Malcolm Davis Shino glaze, Adriane Fugh-Berman Collection



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1 MALCOLM DAVIS **DEDICATION**

Dedication

In September 1959, Malcolm Herbert Davis, Jr. entered Union Theological Seminary in New York City. We had not met, but observing him from afar, I felt a strong awareness that I would know this person for a long time. This exhibition is dedicated to his story, his mentors, and to how he lived his life.

It sometimes seems everyone has heard the tale of Malcolm's journey from mathematician, ordained campus minister, political activist to potter and renowned self-described "Shino Warrior." His discovery of and leap into clay in midlife gave encouragement to hundreds of students and workshop participants, and his development of a stunning glaze made his name famous among potters who knew it only from a glaze bucket (at an address at the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts conference in 2010, he told of meeting someone who said he had no idea Malcolm Davis was a person). In 2003, Malcolm was interviewed for *Studio Potter* recounting his early activism, his life as a potter, and his hilarious carriage ride with the Queen of England.

If Malcolm was in the room, you knew it. His stories were famous, and his laughter heard over the most raucous din. Ascending trios of "Omygod, Omigod, Omigod!" might be heard in response to a chocolate dessert, fine bourbon, or a spectacular kiln disaster—and all Malcolm's kiln disasters were spectacular, at least in the retelling.

While he could be silly and infectious, he was a serious man, a passionate artist, and a generous mentor to young potters. His commitment to social justice was deep and lifelong, and he continued

to practice his ministry when the occasion arose—whether it be officiating at marriages and memorials or making pots as a way to celebrate the mundane rituals of daily life and to make them holy.¹

Above all, he was a profound listener. Upon hearing of Malcolm's death, a church choir director commented, "It sounds as if his life gave new meaning to the old hymn 'Have Thine Own Way, Lord.'" Raised in the Southern Methodist Church, to become a Methodist-minded Missionary, I agree that he listened seriously to "the potter:"

Have Thine own way Lord

Have Thine own way

Thou art the potter I am the clay

Mold me and make me after Thy will

*While I am waiting yielded and still*²

Finally, Malcolm understood our survival depends on the active participation in a community of makers: Shoji Satake and Jack Troy (for their vision), Todd J. Tubutis, Keith Jackson, David Leach, Cynthia Bringle, Robert Turner, Karen Karnes, Mikhail Zakin, Deborah Bedwell, Mary Nyberg, Matt Hyleck, Angelina Fina, Jeff Oestreich, Robin Hopper, Vivika and Otto Heino, Gerry and Julie Williams, the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts, Malcolm's Porcelain Dolls (Jennifer Adamson, Jacque Finnicum, Deboran Rosenbloom, Sharon Warrington), Rose and Floyd Cutright, Bonnie and John Carr, collectors and friends who came to 43 home shows and sales, buying pots for everyday use. Malcolm and I dedicate this exhibition to you.

"Malcolm's vitality, generosity and joie de vivre is forever missed."³

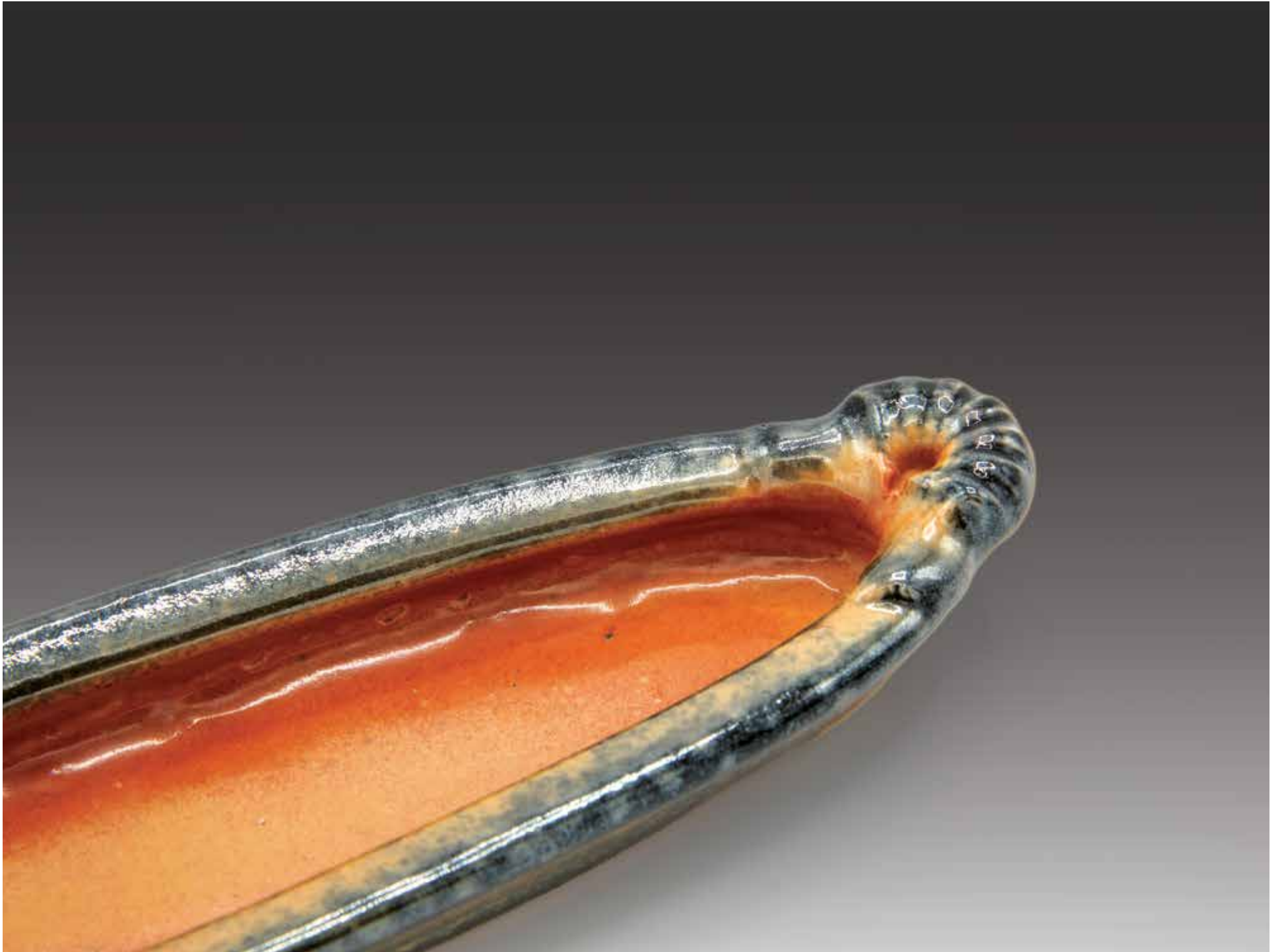
Judith F. Davis

Notes

¹Malcolm Davis, "Artist Statement," reprinted in Cindy Bracker, "Malcolm Davis 1937-2011," Bracker's Good Earth Clays, Inc. (Dec. 13, 2011), <https://www.brackers.com/malcolm-davis/>.

²Adelaide A. Pollard, "Have Thine Own Way, Lord!" Hope Publishing Company, 1907, <https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw4604.aspx>.

³Mary Barringer, "Remembering Malcolm Davis," *Studio Potter* 40, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2012): 95.



Acknowledgment

The College of Creative Arts is thrilled to present *From the Mountain: Malcolm Davis and the Art of Shino*. This exhibition of work by the ceramic artist Malcolm Davis (1937–2011) captures the spirit, soul, and vision that makes our college and the Art Museum of WVU so unique. It foregrounds our place in Appalachia, a deep knowledge of historical practices, and an informed global perspective. The result is a collection of intimate and fascinating works that speak to us on so many levels.

This labor of love would not have been possible if not for Judith F. Davis. She had a vision and realization that the legacy of Malcolm’s work must be shared. In addition to the exhibition, she has created the Malcolm Davis Living Legacy Ceramic Fund supporting graduate ceramics students who have been cataloging the artist’s work and glazes and contributed research for this catalogue. She also has donated her husband’s papers, glaze recipes, and many other items to the University’s West Virginia & Regional History Center. This will increase access for future generations of students and scholars. Her guidance, wisdom and persistence throughout a global pandemic has been the driving force to make this exhibition a reality. To her we owe our appreciation, gratitude, and love.

Lastly, an exhibition like this requires dedication, expertise, and good fortune. We are especially grateful to Director of Development, Jennifer Jordan, for her guidance. The nexus of a cutting-edge academic museum and a comprehensive School of Art and Design with a world-renowned ceramics program is rare. At WVU we are fortunate to have Shoji Satake, a visionary professor who has continued our ceramics program’s reputation and connection to Malcolm’s legacy.

Please enjoy this retrospective on the work of Malcolm Davis.

H. Keith Jackson

Philip J. Faini and Falbo Family Dean
College of Creative Arts
West Virginia University



Foreword

“In a matter of weeks, I was transformed. It was as if there was that potter in me all my life just waiting to get out and just never had the opportunity.”

—*Malcolm Davis*

Objects made by acclaimed potter Malcolm Davis are beautiful in form and function—and also in their imperfections. Though he was nearly 40 when he made his first ceramic vessel, Davis moved quickly from novice to master potter. He became widely known for his “Malcolm Davis Shino,” a variation of a glaze valued for its unpredictable nature and unlimited variations. Working with Shino became his lifelong quest; Davis sought not to produce the perfect pot but to gracefully explore the endless possibilities inherent in this art form.

Born in Virginia, Malcolm Davis earned a science degree from the College of William & Mary in 1959 followed by a Master of Divinity degree in 1964 from Union Theological Seminary in New York City. As an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, Davis served as Ecumenical Campus Chaplain at George Washington University from 1967 to 1984 where he became a leader

in the peace and civil rights movements of the era. He organized bus caravans and sit-ins, led voter registration drives, and in 1968 helped organize the Poor People’s Campaign and its accompanying Resurrection City in Washington, D.C. But it wasn’t until Davis discovered his affinity for creating ceramic vessels that he felt he found his calling, which included traveling across the U.S., Canada, and Europe, teaching workshops and sharing his unique glaze with fellow artists. In 1985, Davis established a mountaintop studio near Tallmansville, West Virginia in Upshur County where he created his finest work.

As a unit of the College of Creative Arts, the Art Museum is honored to present *From the Mountain: Malcolm Davis and the Art of Shino* as part of an ongoing exhibition program in the McGee Gallery supported by the Henry Luce Foundation. The installation includes more than 70 works selected from the artist’s and other private collections chosen in collaboration with Judith F. Davis, his wife and partner of 48 years—many of which comprise a generous promised gift from her to the Art Museum’s extensive collection of contemporary ceramics.

Robert Bridges

Curator

Todd J. Tubutis

Director

Art Museum of West Virginia University

Photo (page 5): Installation view of *From the Mountain: Malcolm Davis and the Art of Shino* at the Art Museum of West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV, January 22 to May 15, 2022.







Biographical Narrative

Judith F. Davis

“I first touched clay at age 40 and knew immediately that I had been a potter all along. I love to make pots! For me, the joy and the challenge comes from making things that will become an intimate part of the daily lives of others – pots that will be held, eaten from, poured from, sipped from and perhaps even licked from. For me the making of pots is a way to celebrate the mundane rituals of daily life and to make them holy.”

—Malcolm Davis

Malcolm Davis was a full-time studio potter since 1984 when he left his previous life as campus minister. He took his first ceramics class in 1972 and maintained his mountaintop studio in Upshur County, West Virginia, until his death on December 11, 2011. He is internationally recognized for his work with Shino-type glazes, specifically for the creation of a unique Shino-type formula with a high concentration of soluble soda ash, which encourages the trapping of carbon in the early stages of the firing.

He was the recipient of numerous awards, including four grants from the District of Columbia Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and was a finalist in the 1995 Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation/NEA Visual Artists Fellowships. Other awards include the Purchase Award at the *Ceramics Monthly* International Competition (1999). He received first place in the 1996 *Strictly Functional Pottery Show*, *Feats of Clay* XIII and XIV Merit Awards, Orton Purchase Awards, *Crosscurrents* All Media Award at the Stifel Fine Arts Center in Wheeling, *West Virginia Juried Exhibition* Merit Award, and Awards for *Clay Cup* IV and VII.

He exhibited at the Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show, the Smithsonian Craft Show and the American Craft Council Shows. He was an artist-in-residence at Artpark in Lewiston, New York; Baltimore Clayworks; Greenwich House Pottery, New York City; The Clay Studio in Philadelphia; Red Star Studios in Kansas City; Northern Clay Center in Minneapolis; Waubensee Community College in Illinois, and the Lee Arts Center in Virginia.

Malcolm’s work is included in collections at the Yixing Museum, China; American Crafts Museum; The Schein-Joseph International Museum of Ceramic Art, Alfred, New York; the Everson Museum, Syracuse; Mobach Collection, Utrecht, Holland; Orton Permanent Collection; Arthur and Lillian Weiss Collection; Bailey Ceramics; Old Church Cultural Center in Demarest, New Jersey; Highwater Clay Permanent Collection; AMACO Collection, Indianapolis; The Twentieth Century Collection, Sarah Lawrence College; and the American Museum of Ceramic Art in Pomona, California.

He is featured in over 30 books and publications, and published articles in *American Shino* by Lester Richter and *Stayin’ Alive* by Robin Hopper; and curated an issue of *Studio Potter* magazine on carbon trapping. The December 2003 issue of *Studio Potter* featured an extensive interview: “Malcolm Davis, Shino Warrior.” His work with carbontrap Shinos was recently featured in *Ceramica* (Spain); *Ceramic Review* (England); and *Contemporary Ceramics* by Emmanuel Cooper (Thames & Hudson).

Malcolm taught and lectured widely throughout the United States and abroad. He was a regular participant for over 30 years in the Pottery Invitational at the Old Church Cultural Center in Demarest, New Jersey (curated by Karen Karnes) and recent exhibitions include AKAR, Iowa City; 18 Hands Gallery, Houston; American Pottery Festival, Northern Clay Center, Minneapolis; and Greenwich House Pottery, New York.

Malcolm curated three international invitational exhibitions of work with Shino-type glazes, *Endless Variations: Shino Review 2005*, featured at the 2005 NCECA Conference and *Shino Redux 2010* at The Clay Art Center in Port Chester, New York. He juried the 15th annual *Strictly Functional Pottery National* and was a presenter at the 20th annual NC Potters’ Conference in Seagrove. He taught for five years at La Meridiana in Tuscany and was to be a presenter at the 2012 Functional Ceramics in Wooster, Ohio when he died. His fourth and final curated international Shino exhibition, *Endless Variations II: A Shino Extravaganza* was presented posthumously at the NCECA conference in Houston, Texas, in 2013.



My Life With Shino

Malcolm Davis

Not unlike falling in love, it began with enchantment and fascination, turned into obsession, and gradually moved on to commitment, peppered with the requisite disappointments and struggles—there were even threats of separation, followed by reconciliation. Such is my life with Shino. It has never been easy.

For me, Shino was one of those unexpected accidents that change one's life forever. I certainly didn't intend to be a Shino potter, but it has been sixteen years since I first put a Shino test on one of my pots and my life has never been the same. In fact, I didn't intend to be a potter at all. I was almost forty when I first

touched clay. Up to that time, I had been a mathematician, an actuary, a seminarian, a university chaplain, and a social activist. But the moment when I first touched clay, I not only knew that I was going to be a potter but knew that I had been one my entire life and just didn't know it. I had to actually touch clay to discover that I was a potter. That was pretty exciting, but I actually didn't know how to make a pot nor what to do with one once it was made. If only I had known then what I know now! I was well into my forties when the same thing happened with porcelain. I knew immediately that I was a porcelain potter, and never touched stoneware again. It was not until I was almost fifty that I happened upon Shino.

This is how it happened. In 1988 I was working at Baltimore Clayworks as a resident artist with the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation. At the time I was wholesaling a fairly successful line of

tableware—all porcelain, wet-faceted, and slip-trailed, with a simple Shaner clear glaze. I made lots of pots: teapots, casseroles, tureens, mugs, planters; pots with feet and pots without feet; pots with handles and pots without handles—lots and lots of pots—and they were all white! Kiln-load after kiln-load of white pots. I thought I would go mad. I sold them all, but was quickly learning to hate white, though continuing to love porcelain. What a dilemma! From the get-go, my life with clay was topsy-turvy, and I was rapidly approaching another one of those “turves.” (My spell-checker says they don’t exist, but they do! “Turves” – watch out for them; they are dangerous.)

At the time, another porcelain potter at Clayworks had tested some Shino glazes and had the dried remains of the samples in small dixie cups—some labeled, some not. She had formulas for some but not all. I figured I had nothing to lose and decided to test them. But when I added water, there wasn’t enough to dip even a small test tile. So I mixed them altogether into one bucket and was able to coat a small pot and stick it in the next firing. Bingo!

It was a miracle. When that little pot came out of the kiln, all cream and salmon and peach and orange with gobs of teeny little carbon crystals floating all around it, I knew I was in love. It was just like that the very first time I touched porcelain back in 1978. I knew immediately that I was a porcelain potter and never touched stoneware again.

And here was another rite of passage, another discovery—not only was I a porcelain potter, but I was also a Shino potter. It was, I now know many years later, both a blessing and a curse. But ignorance is indeed bliss, and away I went on my love affair with Shino.

Everyone said that you can’t sell Shino, and they were right, but I didn’t pay any attention to them. I was crazed and in love. But another dilemma. What was that Shino recipe anyway? My god, there was no Shino recipe—just a collection of tests from assorted sources, mostly untraceable. Now what to do?

I did what any idiot would do. I collected all the Shino formulas from all the potters at Baltimore Clayworks and mixed them up individually, then mixed them altogether in a single bucket (nev-

er bothering to test the individual samples first). I was certain this would give me my glaze. But alas! Nix! Nada! Nothing! I persisted, knowing nothing but trying everything I could think of. After all, I was in love.

Mix, test, mix, test, on and on, for months on end, but nothing began to approach the surface and texture of that first accidental pot. Finally, I came upon a formula, but it was far short of that first dazzler. It was a variation of the standard Wirt Shino, first developed by Virginia Wirt at the University of Minnesota in the mid-seventies. I used this glaze for some time, until I ran out in the middle of glazing and had to mix a fresh batch. There was no more spodumene.² I was beside myself and had no idea what to do. Certainly, there was not time to get more, so I had to do something. I simply added more soda ash to fill the spodumene requirement. Knowing nothing about the soluble nature of soda ash, I had unknowingly increased it from 4% to over 17%. Voila! There they were—those black carbon spots for which I had been lusting! Love had returned.

That was fifteen years ago, and I have never been bored by Shino—often disappointed, depressed, hysterical, and enraged—but never bored. I have had many more disasters and losses than any self-supporting potter should ever allow (or admit). I have had entire kiln loads that oxidized (my beige linen series) and others in which all the pots were a dead, flat, dry orange. And then there were all those over-reduced, pitch-black pots, and lots with Pete Pinnell’s favorite hippopotamus nasal infection. After such disastrous firings, I often threatened to leave Shino altogether and switch to Celadon or Tenmoku or Copper Red, for heaven’s sake. But the next test was always another delight, and the Shino affair flamed hot once again.

Notes

¹This edited excerpt is from an essay written by Malcolm Davis for the exhibition catalogue by Lester Richter, *American Shino: The Glaze of a Thousand Faces* (New York, NY: Babcock Galleries, 2001).

²Spodumene is a lithium aluminosilicate used in high-fire ceramic glazes.

Photo (page 11): Malcolm Davis studio, Tallmansville, WV.

Malcolm Davis: A Life

Janet DeBoos

Introduction:

When a figure in the ceramic world like Malcolm Davis leaves us, he leaves “a great jagged hole” as one of his colleagues described it. That’s true—he does leave that space that was filled with an energetic, talented, lively person, but there is much that remains—and not only his much-loved Shino glaze and his much-collected porcelain pottery.¹

Having delved into Malcolm’s life, one becomes very familiar with the man despite never having actually met.² Much about his and his lifelong partner and wife Judy Davis’s early life together in Washington, D.C., was so familiar, as I was also at university in the sixties (in Sydney, Australia), and lived in share houses that were drop-in centres for “strays” of all colours. There were Maoists, Trotskyites, Marxist-Leninists, Libertarians and Trade Unionists—as well as doctors and journalists and hippies. Although not as connected to the heart of direct action as their household was, we were still politically active and were protesting against conscription of our peers and brothers to fight an immoral war that was not even ours.

It is this kind of environment that Malcolm naturally gravitated to—an environment where he could do tangible good—in much the same way that he later discovered the joy of making tangible good(s) in clay. A man of great energy, humour, and passion, he was the perfect catalyst for others that he came in contact with. A consistent comment from colleagues of those politically active years in Washington, when Malcolm and Judy both graduated to Nixon’s “FBI roll of dishonour” as enemies of the state, was the manner in which Malcolm mentored and guided and taught them. He transferred responsibility for learning and decision making to them—never telling them what they should do—but discussing options of “could do,” then leaving them in charge. (Sometimes literally as he vacated the office for another urgent meeting, so requiring them to step up and run the joint!)

This is a rare and generous approach to teaching—but as Malcolm would later say that he had “always been a potter,” it is also obvious that he had always been a natural teacher, and leader from the rear too.

When you are writing about a “big personality,” who has had a “big life,” you suddenly find you have a book—not an article. So, in the spirit of other stories with big themes, will write here SOME chapters of Malcolm’s life. I could not possibly do justice to the whole of his life, so I will adopt his *modus operandi*.





You, and others who knew him, will add your own chapters—you will make the decisions about what goes into YOUR story of Malcolm Davis—whether it be the beautiful work in the current exhibition, a workshop you attended which changed your life, or the sweet *yunomi*, dressed in THAT glaze, that you use each evening.

CHAPTER 1: Where to after Phi Beta Kappa from the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia?

Despite wanting to attend Duke University, family finances dictated that the academically gifted student attend a local state college. His record was impeccable—except for the one “easy option” he chose one semester: an art class. He not only did poorly (he failed) he determined never to have anything to do with art again. It would “just screw up my life!” (Luckily, he excelled in all the other subjects!)

After graduating brilliantly from the College of William & Mary in maths (despite not being entranced or particularly challenged by his broader field of study), a brief encounter with the world of capitalism dashed Malcolm’s hopes of being able to do something just “...for the money.” This came about when he accepted the offer of an extremely high paying job as an insurance actuary, entertaining youthful visions of a plush office and a lifestyle as an insurance magnate in Hartford, Connecticut. The reality fell

sadly short of this vision, and he left almost immediately. So “Life Plan 1- Insurance Magnate” was ditched, and “Life Plan 2- Seminary” was created. “Why not? After all, the life of a bishop would be almost as good—and there are costumes and rings...all these little perks... it made sense.”

His time at William & Mary also provided Malcolm with material with which to create—as he so frequently did—a wonderful story for later telling about his ride in the royal carriage with HM Queen Elizabeth II. HRH had come on a state visit for Jamestown’s 350th anniversary, and Malcolm was one of two student body representatives who rode in her carriage along with the college president. When a woman grabbed his arm during the procession, he laughed explosively (as he was wont to do) and then turned to explain to the Queen (against all protocols of not speaking until spoken to), that the woman “probably thought he was her [the Queen’s] illegitimate son.” HRH paused and held her handkerchief over her mouth—and giggled. The President of the College did not. But it was Malcolm who got the invitation to Buckingham Palace Garden Party, where Queen Elizabeth greeted him, introducing him to her family as “that young man from Williamsburg.” It was a story that in some respects captures an essential quality of the man: self-deprecating humour and the capacity to charm.

These stories keep resurfacing in the many accounts and remembrances of Malcolm's life, stories that are funny, touching, edifying. And so, on to the Union Theological Seminary in New York City where he immediately joined the Social Action Committee. Rather than helping to facilitate meeting women (as he jokingly said he hoped it did), the Committee organised protests in Harlem against segregation and other social justice issues such as voter registration drives in the South. Before he knew it, Davis had become a radical, and "radicals don't become bishops." Another Life Plan was called for... Graduation, marriage to his seminary sweetheart Judy, and ordination into the United Church of Christ allowed Malcolm to become Ecumenical Campus Minister at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., in 1965.

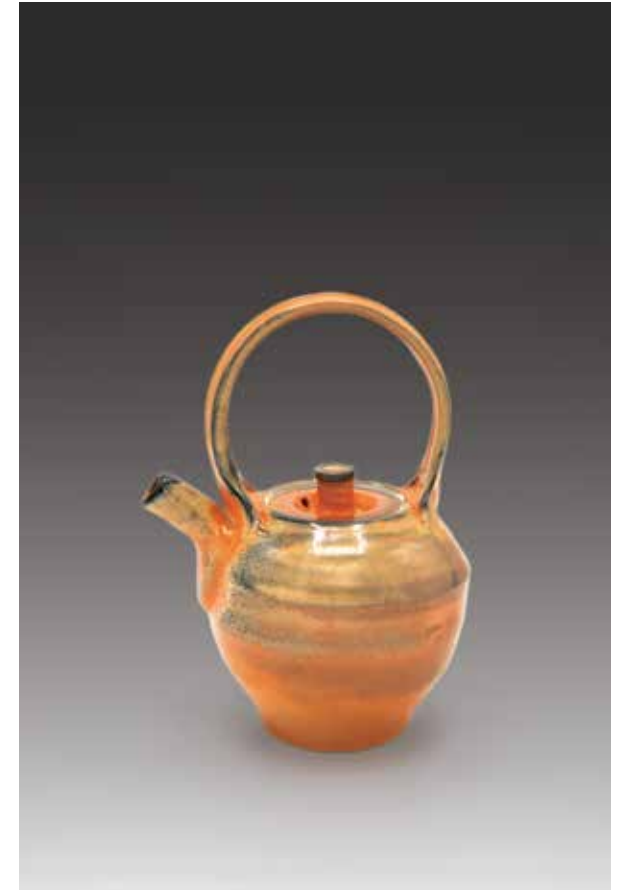
CHAPTER 2: *The radical years*

"The sixties were exciting, turbulent, transformative years...a heady time—full of hope" during which Malcolm became increasingly involved in campus politics. His office was very much at the geographic centre of things, as political protest against the draft escalated, and women, and people of colour, organised. He joined the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and became one of the first white volunteers to work with Martin Luther King Jr. on the 1968 Poor People's Campaign to March on Washington. But in April 1968, King was

assassinated, and the streets filled with troops and tanks. Still the March on Washington continued, and thousands upon thousands of people arrived, setting up a shanty town called "Resurrection City" on the National Mall. There were people from all walks of life—black, Hispanic and white—demanding to be heard. These were heady—and dangerous—days and the Davises were at the heart of it.

In the reminiscences of friends and associates from that time, Malcolm is described as strongly supporting women in making choices for themselves in the establishment of abortion clinics, safe houses, and collectives. The Davis house became something of a "drop-in centre" where draft resisters were counselled, and people could talk safely of their problems. A friend from those times says: "Mal and Judy knew what everyone was doing, but they NEVER bad-mouthed anyone..." and another mentions, "That crazy, infectious laugh..."

Malcolm was working hard, but in June that year, Bobby Kennedy was killed, and Malcolm said, "it seemed that all hope was extinguished..." People turned to more radical causes and action, joined with other movements like the Black Panthers. Food co-ops and free health co-ops were started. "We wanted to remake the world..." but that was not to be—the old bosses were not on board for change. The protests became more violent, Davis' office became one of the bases for the National Mobilization Com-





mittee to End the War in Vietnam (Jane Fonda, Abbie Hoffman, Tom Hayden, et al.), and was bombed. Helicopters were flying overhead at all times of night and day and an FBI agent was stationed outside the front of the office in the school basement opposite. And that year, Malcolm made it onto President Nixon's "dangerous" list as one of the five "Davises" so honoured with a mention.

CHAPTER 3: The Epiphany—“and then there was clay...”

It is a much-told story, by Malcolm and by others, of how he came to clay. One evening—with too many meetings to attend, and too much burnout—he accepted the invitation of a neighbour to go to an adult education class in pottery. Expecting it to be a lecture, or at most a talk, Malcolm was horrified to find that it was a participatory class and everyone was issued a pack of clay and expected to make things. He avoided the clay and went and sat down, watching in disdain as grown people engaged in what he saw as “counter-revolutionary” behaviour: the making of pots whilst there was an unjust war being waged against another country in Southeast Asia.

However, despite being appalled at seeing all the counter-revolutionaries standing round pinching and slabbing and coiling, he was intrigued. They were, seemingly, creating “something” out of “nothing.” He asked for his bag of clay and started rolling a kind of coil, wrap-

ping it “around and around” over a small bowl. Soon he had a little three-footed bowl: “It was concrete. It was tangible. It was real. It was immediate. It was nothing like saving souls or overthrowing capitalism. I could hardly wait ‘til the next class...”

Malcolm went back for that next session and brought home not just the small glazed and fired soap dish that he and Judy continued to use daily but also the knowledge—the realisation—that he was a potter. Indeed, that he may have been a potter the whole time, it was just not given a chance to “come out.” This sense of finally “coming home” for first-time potters, of feeling “complete” is not an unusual occurrence. Perhaps it has to do with the very nature of the material—of all the craft media it is the most immediate—the most connected to our hands, our domestic lives, our actions, the history of the human race.

That summer he went to every pottery class he could, and the next year studied with Jack Troy at Haystack Mountain School, and again the year after. He was hungry for experience and wanted to try everything. The next few years were filled with hugely varied workshops as Malcolm moved from Haystack in 1973, to Corcoran, to Penland, and Alfred University. This exposed him to the skills of master potters like Cynthia Bingle, Bob Turner, Don Pilcher, Bill Brouillard, and Tim Mather, amongst many others. In 1978, when he took a class run by porce-

lain potter David Keator, at Penland, he was working as a cook whilst one of the “core students.” It was the first time he’d used the material. The studio had been cleaned out—all the stoneware clay was removed—and Malcolm experienced another transformational epiphany: he became a porcelain potter and never used stoneware again.

He knew he wanted to make pots, even whilst knowing so little about the craft. He knew nothing about kilns, glazes, running a studio business—but he knew he HAD to follow this siren call and he had to do it seriously. Finally, in 1982, Malcolm (now 45 and with one life already lived) started anew. He resigned his ministry at George Washington University, rented a house and basement studio in Penland, North Carolina, bought five hundred pounds of porcelain and started making pots in earnest. These were to be HIS pots. Meanwhile, Judy stayed behind in Washington, working and supporting them for three years whilst Malcolm made his pots. It is hard to imagine what might have happened, where he may have ended up without such a loving and supportive partner at this particularly critical time.

With just five hundred pounds of porcelain, Malcolm worked and reworked it: making pots, destroying pots, kneading the clay up and starting again. He fired relatively few pots and estimated that he only did maybe one bisque firing in that first year. However, the ghosts of

his teachers’ influence still hung over his output when what he wanted to do was to make “Malcolm Davis pots.” So, he decided to make just one form for a month in an attempt to exorcise the ghosts. He would make *yunomi*—Japanese tea bowls—and nothing else.

At first, he was excited by the project—all the different variations—but soon he was bored. Not even two weeks had passed. But there was another twenty days to go, so he got stuck into it—not letting his mind play with ideas—but just getting on with it and making.

Something that seemed quite miraculous happened. He stopped feeling bored, and just made pots. What Malcolm Davis had experienced was something that many other creative people have discovered: that being “bored” is not necessarily a bad thing. He had allowed himself to be “bored,” but the work was anything but boring. John Cage famously said about boredom and repetition: it becomes more interesting the more the act is repeated. “If something is boring after two minutes, try it for four. If still boring, then eight. Then sixteen. Then thirty-two. Eventually one discovers that it is not boring at all.”³

CHAPTER 4: Being a potter... the production line, white pots, and a new glaze...

Very quickly, Malcolm found that he was making more pots, better pots, and keeping and firing those pots. At this





time, he met David Leach while at the Baltimore Clayworks and his influence was enormous. During a tour of the U.S. in 1986, David commented that he thought Malcolm's porcelain work was the finest he'd seen across the whole country. Their important friendship and mentorship is apparent in their extensive correspondence from 1986-1997.

So now Malcolm was ready to think about selling these pots.... That would seem to have been relatively easy as he found a ready market for his pottery through craft shows and direct sales. At this time, he was making domestic ware that was decorated with faceting and body slip trailing. It was monochrome white and found a ready market, as he soon discovered. Taking part in a trade show in Springfield, Massachusetts, he came home with \$40,000 worth of orders! His immediate thought was that Judy could stop working and he would be able to support them by making pots! But the road is full of trip hazards, and Malcolm's pottery career was just as susceptible as any other life path. His landlady refused him permission to make at such volume in the house, and it seemed that all was lost. But luck, good fortune and friends saved the day.

Deborah Bedwell, the founding Director of Baltimore Clayworks managed to secure grant money (Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation AND National Endowment for the Arts) for Malcolm to work at the Clayworks on a residency where he was

able to fill the \$40,000 order. But filling the order whilst pleasing in its confirmation of the demand for his work, didn't sit well with his sense of a freely creative life. Making pots to others' orders quickly lost its shine.

A decision was made that what was needed was a new surface, an interesting glaze.

The story is well known. Another resident had been testing different Shino glazes and had left the dried remnants of a number of tests in the bin. Malcolm, knowing nothing about glazes or glaze testing, took these dried glaze tests mixed them all together and added water—getting just enough to glaze one pot. The Malcolm Davis Shino—a glaze that would confound him at first—was born.

Shortly afterwards, Malcolm and Judy started looking for a permanent home and studio, and after about a year found a mountaintop farm in West Virginia at the end of a steep dirt road. Despite a fire in 1995 that burned down his first studio on the property—Janet Leach (David's mother and wife of Bernard Leach, the father of British studio pottery) later noted that "every potter needs to burn down their studio at least once and that Bernard burned his down twice"—that was where Malcolm's maturing as a potter took place. Learning to really "look" at what came out of the kilns, trying to get rid of preconceptions and assumptions about the pots.

CHAPTER 5: “That” glaze

Much has been written about this traditional Japanese glaze—not just the Davis version—but many other types including those that are more faithful to the original 16th century Momoyama period type, developed in the kilns at Mino. It was a glaze favoured by tea masters as it was “flawed” and as such could contribute to the Zen beauty of imperfection so prized in Japanese tea ceremony ware.

As a student of ceramics, with more than a passing interest in glaze, I can clearly remember searching for the “perfect Shino.” But in Australia, the Shino adhered more closely to the original. Some time after my student years there started to be seen a type of surface that we called “American Shino.” These latter glazes usually had large amounts of a soluble sodium compound that promoted a much redder response where the glaze was applied thinly, and the ability to “carbon trap”—creating black and grey patches and spots—as opposed to our versions of the glaze which exhibited crawling, pinholing and a decidedly more matte and whiter surface. The American Shino glaze type grew in popularity in the 1980s and ‘90s, and unquestionably the most desirable was the “Malcolm Davis Shino.” This glaze became synonymous with Malcolm’s ceramics and is ubiquitous in clay studios across North America and around the world. (Malcolm joked about one attendee at an NCECA conference he was presenting at shrieking, “You’re a real person- not just a glaze!!!”)

The first Shino glaze that he fired at the West Virginia studio was “far beyond what I wanted.” It was on a tea bowl and was crazed and pitted and crawled. He threw it away. Some days later he saw it in the trash can and retrieved it. That act enabled him to start to see all the magic that Shino glazes offer... it was not a quick fix, but a gradual unfolding of the beauty of imperfection, and it all resided in a pot—a tea bowl—that had been abandoned by Malcolm a week earlier.

CHAPTER 6: The Legacy

So, what is the legacy of this man? Potter, chaplain, political activist, crusader for social change, lover and husband, developer of the most famous glaze in North America and possessor of a robust sense of humour as well as an “explosive laugh.”

Malcolm Davis has seemed a natural teacher—whether in the ministry, being a political activist or a mentor. The memories that people who knew him have of him demonstrate a man who touched many peoples’ lives, and who really cared about alleviating social inequality. John Hanrahan said in interviews he conducted for the *Lessons of the Sixties* that “Mal Davis was one of the most influential and inspirational social justice organizers of that time.”⁴ Although this political activity had a major impact, it is a mistake to think that Malcolm’s pottery did not have the same effect—albeit in a less turbulent arena, but certainly not any less turbulent times.

A glance at his extensive resumé reveals an almost punishing schedule of exhibitions and workshops: hundreds of them from coast to coast in the U.S. as well as Canada and Italy. In these workshops he was frequently teaching about Shino glazes—and particularly Malcolm Davis Shino, the intellectual property of which was made freely available to all—along with copious notes on adjustments, firing techniques, and application. This generosity of spirit resides in all his work—both social and ceramic—but it is in this exhibition that we can encounter the tangible evidence, that concrete, real, and immediate experience that made Malcolm Davis a potter.

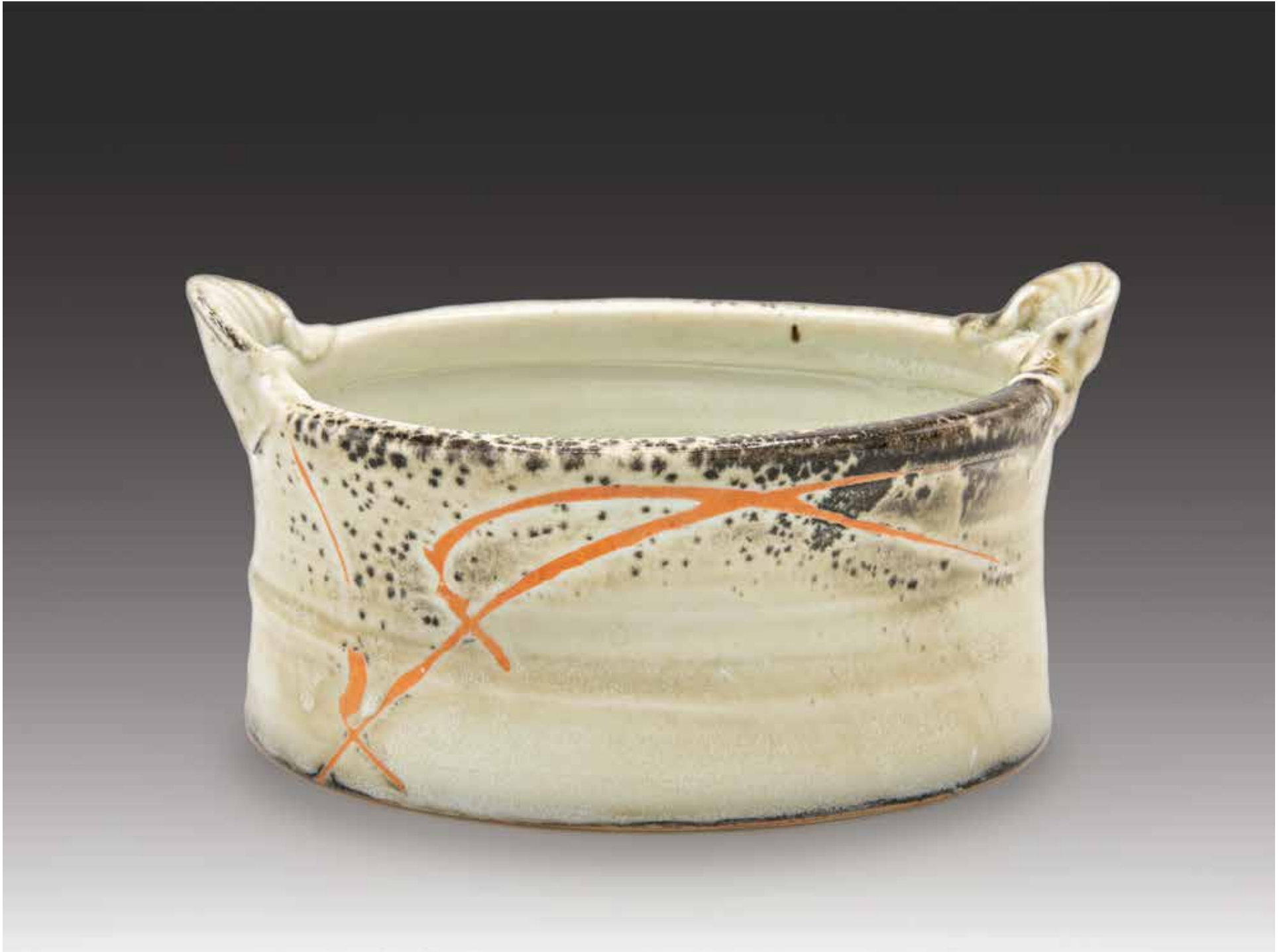
Notes

¹Janet DeBoos is Vice President of the Board of the Canberra Potters Society and an Honorary Senior Lecturer at the School of Art & Design, College of Arts & Social Sciences, Australian National University. She was the Australasian and African representative (2012-2020) on the Council of the International Academy of Ceramics, Geneva, and is an Honorary Life member of the Australian Ceramic Association.

²Research for this essay and quotations from Malcolm Davis come through materials generously supplied by Judy Davis and gleaned from conversations with other potters, as well as online archives talking about the early days of his ecumenical ministry, to more recent reminiscences after his death.

³John Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1966), 93.

⁴John Hanrahan, “Malcolm Davis Remembered: Interview 10-10-2013-Final,” *Lessons of the Sixties: A History of Local Washington, DC Activism for Peace and Justice from 1960-1975*, YouTube video, 1:31:19 August 20, 2019, <https://youtu.be/ijynfxTTZhU>.











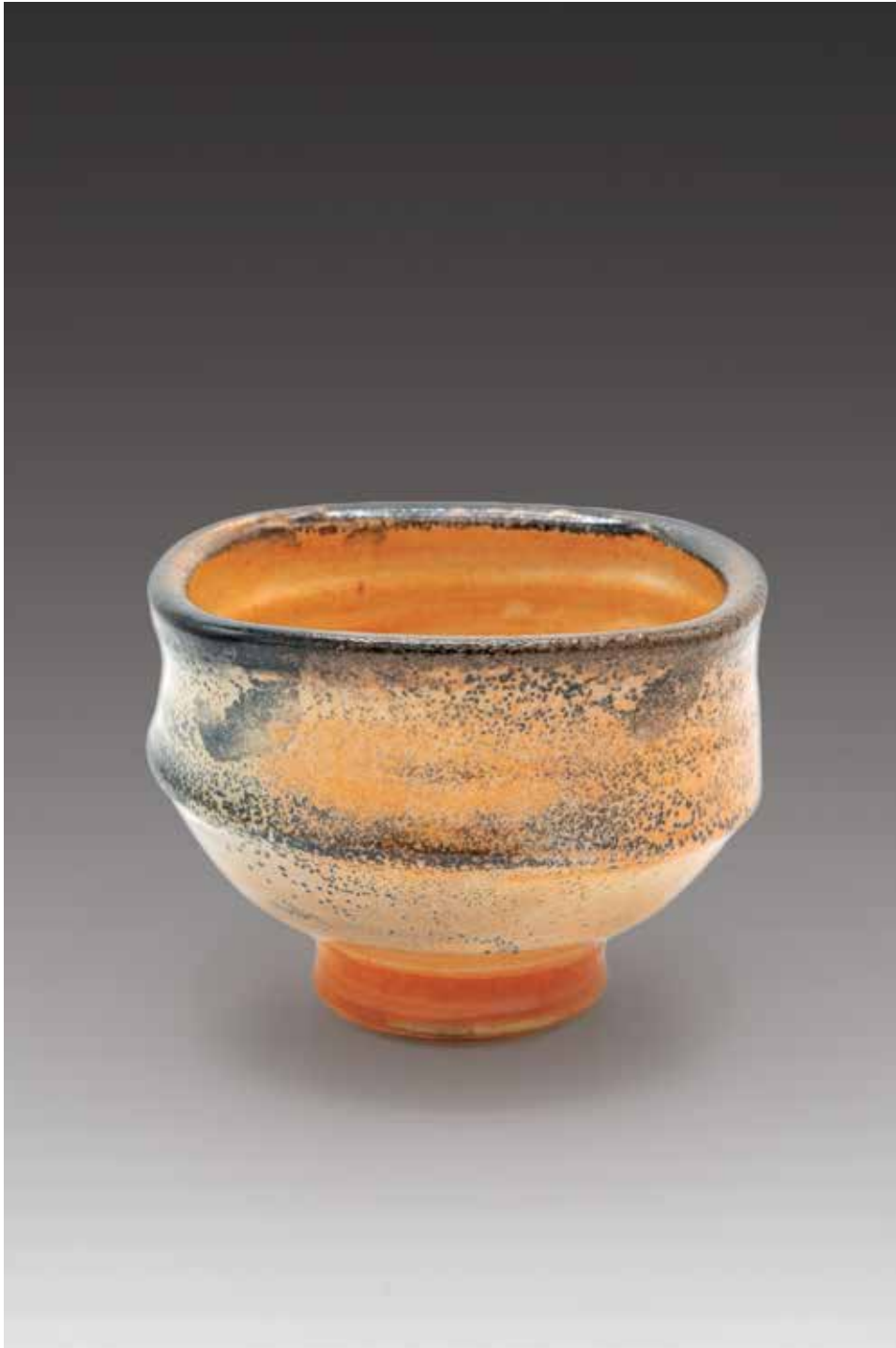


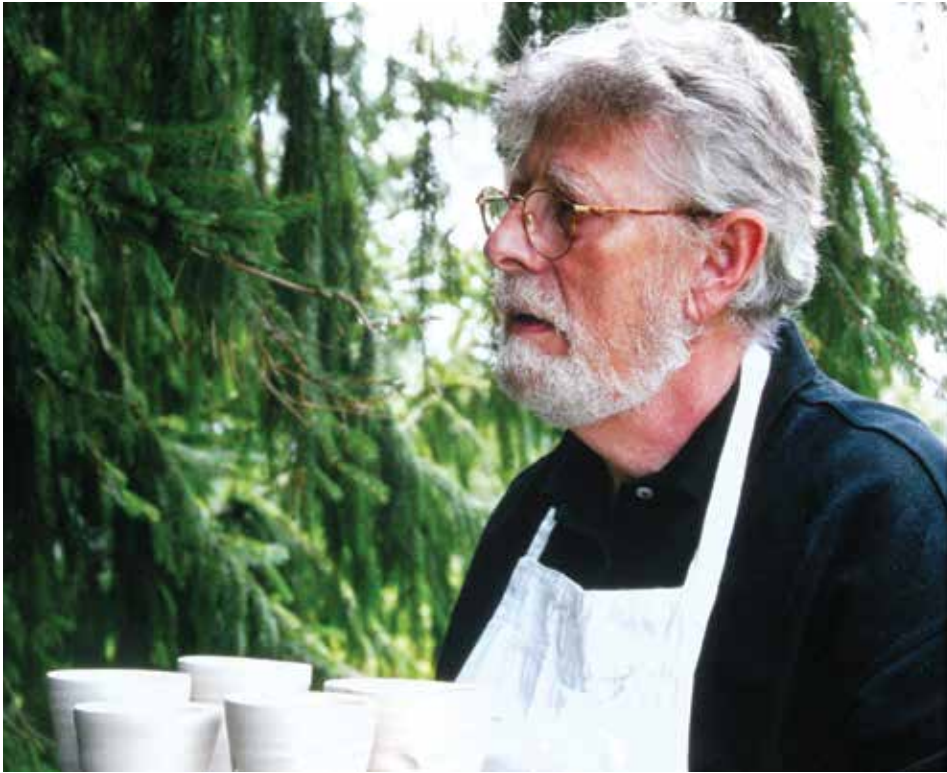












Malcolm: Becoming Memory

Jack Troy

Several years ago, during one of the Old Church Cultural Center's pottery sales in Demarest, New Jersey, my partner, Carolanne Currier, took a break to wander around and meet some other potters. She knew about the legendary Shino master and introduced herself to him at his booth. "Oh, are you an exhibitor?" he asked. "No, I'm helping Jack Troy," she replied. "Oh, are you his apprentice?" "No, I'm his sweetie," she said. The Shino master put his hand on her shoulder, and, looking directly



at her, very solemnly said, "Oh. I'm so sorry!" It was a reminder that even those of us who'd known him a little bit would soon run out of adjectives trying to describe him to others who hadn't been so fortunate.¹

Malcolm seemed to be everybody in one person— as brooding an existential doubter as Camus or Sartre; idealistic Berrigan-like social reformer; Merlin, contriving with soda ash; Liberace, forgoing a candelabra for a triple-beam balance; Jonathan Winters, effusing: "This has to be the end-of-the-world best/worst firing I've ever had!" Before he became a potter he led a professional life of his choosing, but after that first ceramics class, the potter's life chose him.

Malcolm, who was Phi Beta Kappa when he majored in math, spoke for those of us who suspect that no amount of computa-

tional analysis can completely banish the catalyst of magic from the angelic devilry of firing, yet somehow the odds seemed to be in his favor. He could easily have said, “My goodness! I’ve come up with a glaze that makes people reach for their wallets. That’s market-share, baby!” He had a perfect right to sew his Shino secrets into the lining of his vestments; instead, he clued everyone in on what he knew and didn’t know about the diva of all glazes. No hoarder of knowledge, he delighted to, “gladly learn and gladly teach,” implying the fetid, cloistered, relationship between keeping technical secrets and insecurity. E. E. Cummings put it this way:

... wishing is having and having is giving- but keeping is doting and nothing and nonsense...

... having is giving and giving is living-but keeping is darkness and winter and cringing...²

His glaze formulas were not holy grails— “Suffer the Shino-deprived to come unto me and sip from this cup”— they were more like songs we sang discordantly together, or sourdough starter we passed along, knowing our water, materials, and astrological sign would factor into the results. He showed us that if we can predict how things come out of the kiln, why make them according to an industrial formula for boredom, portending burn-out. He knew the definitive answer to any question about ceramic processes begins with either three or four words: “Well, it depends...” or, “Well, it kinda depends....” He could pick up a beginner’s pot and with mock outrage exclaim, “You used my glaze? Why can’t I get it to come out that gorgeous?”

Someone with a booth near his at a craft show said that in one 20-minute period Malcolm expressed every possible human emotion at full fortissimo— something easy to imagine, having heard his operatic falsetto even once. His best pots seem charmed into being— not just made— reflecting the sometimes-chaotic emotional energy invested in them: spooky Halloween oranges and blacks; intriguing, nameless colors and visual textures somewhere between electron microscopy and Hubbell snapshots— a necromancer’s palette. Whenever we reach for a piece of work

in the kiln that completely clobbers our expectation of what it was “supposed” to be, we inhabit Malcolm’s metaphorical landscape, where the prevailing weather patterns are wonderment, discovery, and calamity. It is easy to imagine him clapping his hand to his forehead, going ashen, and exclaiming, “My God, you’re right!” when reminded that part of his everlasting, worldwide legacy will be dozens of dozens of plastic glaze buckets bearing his name.

Flaubert said, “Be orderly and disciplined in daily life, like a good bourgeois, so that you might be wild and violent in your art,” but Malcolm spun that advice: his pottery forms were both orderly and disciplined, while aspects of his daily life were wildly non-violent. When luck boogied with knowledge, his namesake glazes became playgrounds for impish, radicalized beauty. He was the first to admit, rolling his eyes, and throwing his hands in the air: “Don’t ask **me** why it does that!”

Malcolm comes to mind when we read this observation by E. B. White: “If the world were merely seductive, that would be easy. If it were merely challenging, that would be no problem. But I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day.”³

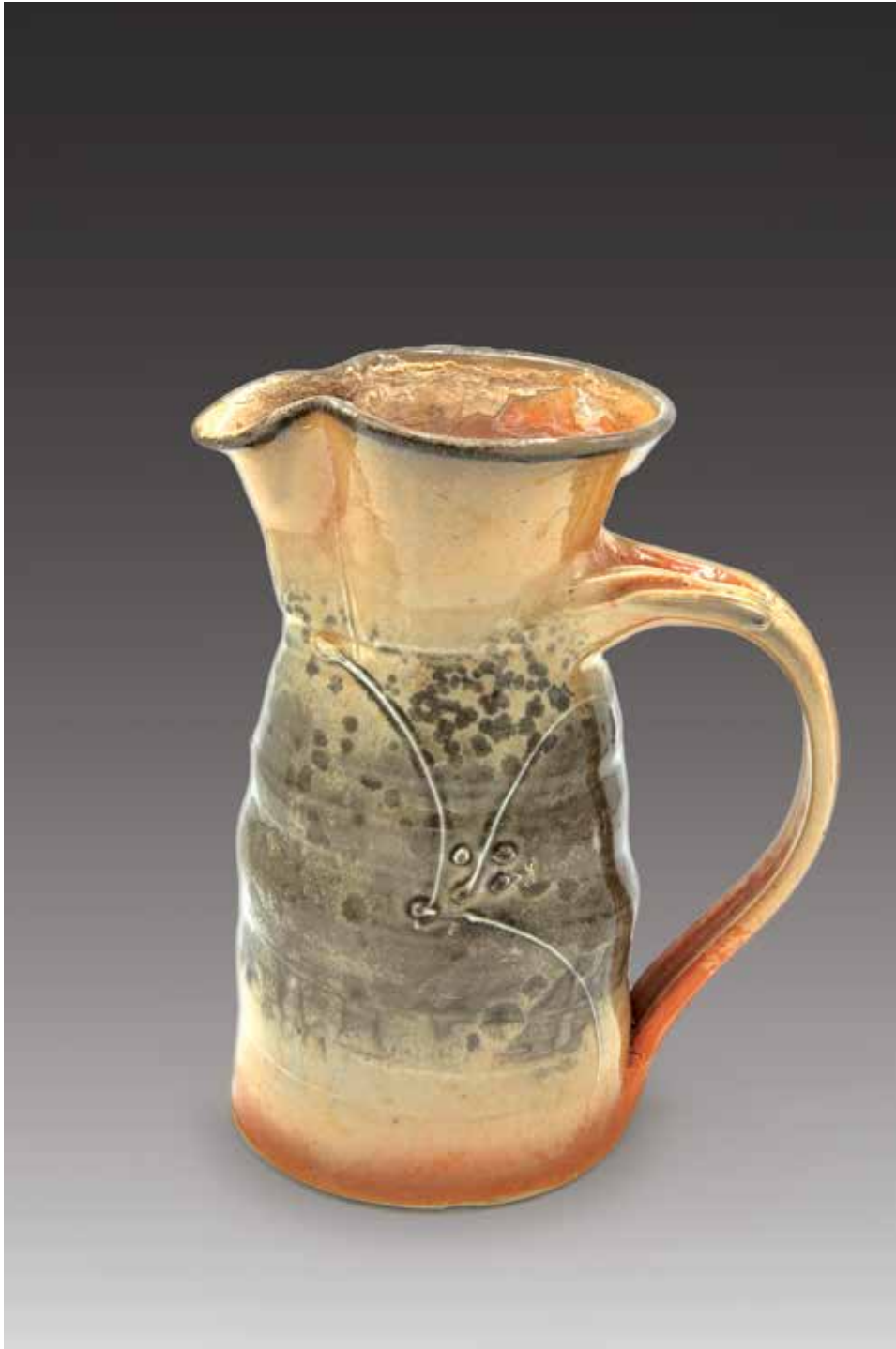
Notes

¹This remembrance was written by teacher, potter, writer, and friend of Malcolm Davis, Jack Troy, and originally presented at the annual National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) conference, 2013, in Houston, Texas. We are grateful to both the author and NCECA for permission to reprint it here.

²e.e. cummings, “when faces called flowers float out of the ground,” *E. E. Cummings Poems, 1923-1954* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1954), 465.

³Israel Shenker, “E. B. White: Notes and Comment by Author,” *The New York Times* (11 July 1969).







Shino Glaze History

Shoji Satake

“Shino is the glaze that breaks all of the rules, no other glaze varies so much depending on how it is applied, dried, and fired. Shino’s are elusive and ephemeral, it is all about the alchemy.”

—*Malcolm Davis*

Long before I got to know Malcolm, I knew Malcolm. I knew him as Davis Shino Revised #11 glaze, Davis Carbon Trap Shino glaze, Malcolm Davis Shino #3 glaze, and as test tiles on wall after wall in ceramics studios around the world.¹

Malcolm used to joke that his name was on a piece of duct tape, stuck to a five-gallon bucket, more than any other person in the ceramics community. I’ve been fortunate in my career to travel extensively and bear witness to this phenomenon. I can verify that there are buckets with his name on them in all corners of the globe, in ceramics studios near and far.

Art is very much a human-only endeavor, no other creature on this planet makes something for the sake of beauty. I think most artists are compelled to make beautiful work, but it is the special ones who inspire others to create beauty in their own lives. The Malcolm I knew and remember was that person. His generosity of sharing was part of his larger-than-life personality that endeared him to anyone who had the fortune of meeting him. His love of pottery and his interpretation of the Shino glaze is a legacy that lives on today.

Shino originally dates from the 16th century as Japan's first white glaze which was made with the local quartz (feldspar). When fired in a kiln, it resulted in a subtle soft white glaze with depth. Even though there are several theories as to the origin of the name "Shino," it is generally believed that the name is rooted in the Japanese word "shiro" for white. This beautiful, soft glaze traces its roots from the ancient kiln sites of the Mino and Seto regions of central Japan.

Often considered to be one of the greatest ceramics achievements of the Momoyama period (1573-1600), Shino has the distinctive characteristic of small pinholes called *suana* (nest holes), which tea masters favor, and the texture of *yuzu hada*, or citron skin. The Momoyama period was marked by a time of artistic, cultural, and political advancement. During this era, the tea ceremony was refined into a truly Japanese cultural tradition. Its popularity created demand for domestic pottery as a significant role in the artistic ritualization valued by the tea masters. Many of these masters revered Shino *chawans* (tea bowls) for the ceremony.

Initially, Japanese Shinos were typically thick, white glazes. As research on this glaze advanced, potters were able to change the results to achieve a variety of colors including orange, brown, black, gray, and red. The resulting color depends on several factors: thickness of the glaze, how soon it was fired after application, how it was dried, where it sat in the kiln, the type of kiln, the type of clay body, and so on. For example, in Japan, there are said to be sixteen variables, including the type of water used to mix the glaze, that could affect the result of Shino.

In the west, Warren MacKenzie (American, 1924-2018) is often credited with the research/revival of the Shino glaze. In 1974, he challenged his graduate students to recreate a traditional Shino glaze using materials that were available in the United States. This was the advent of American Shinos that facilitated an onslaught of experimentation with the glaze and renewed artistic interest. One of Warren's students, Virginia Wirt, created a recipe which included soda ash and spodumene. Her new recipe induced carbon trapping, which added depth to the new Shinos. Carbon trapping involves smoke or other organic materials from

the clay body or kiln fuel being "trapped" in the glaze as it is melting. The resulting elusive effects can include mottling, shading, or lines that form in the glaze.² In the early 1980s, Malcolm Davis, advanced Shino glazes by adding redart clay and increased amounts of soda ash. He once told me that his path to creating his versions of Shino began when mixing a new batch of glaze one day, he discovered he was out of spodumene, so he doubled up on soda ash.

Shino is a glaze that is loved in community ceramic studios. It is a very stable glaze; one that does not melt and run off the vertical walls of vessels when fired. However, it is also a very temperamental glaze with desired but unpredictable effects like "carbon trapping," "flashing," and "crawling." These wabi-sabi aesthetics are less consistent and often highly sought after for that reason. To those who love Shino this romance is real. It is a lot like Icarus chasing the sun.

Since Malcolm's untimely passing, we have been working with his partner, Judith F. Davis, to preserve his important legacy. Fittingly, for one of the state's preeminent potters, West Virginia University has become the repository of Malcolm's research. In addition, with Judith's generous support, the Malcolm Davis Living Legacy Ceramic Fund has supported a graduate assistantship that began in 2019 and continues today. Malcolm's pottery will be added to the collection of the Art Museum of WVU and his papers and research have been archived at WVU's West Virginia & Regional History Center to be accessed by future scholars and the public. Finally, we are testing glaze recipes and advancing research begun by Malcolm and we will make these beloved glazes such as Davis Shino Revised #11 glaze, Davis Carbon Trap Shino glaze, Malcolm Davis Shino #3 glaze available so that they continue to help ceramic enthusiasts create beautiful pottery.

Notes

¹ Shoji Satake is the J. Bernard Schultz Endowed Professor of Art, Ceramics Area Coordinator, School of Art and Design, West Virginia University.

² Juanita Canzoneri, "A Brief History of Shino Glazes, Their Use, and Contribution to Contemporary Potters," *Commonwheel.com*, September 15, 2015, <https://www.commonwheel.com/blog/category/mugs>.

Malcolm Davis Glaze Recipes



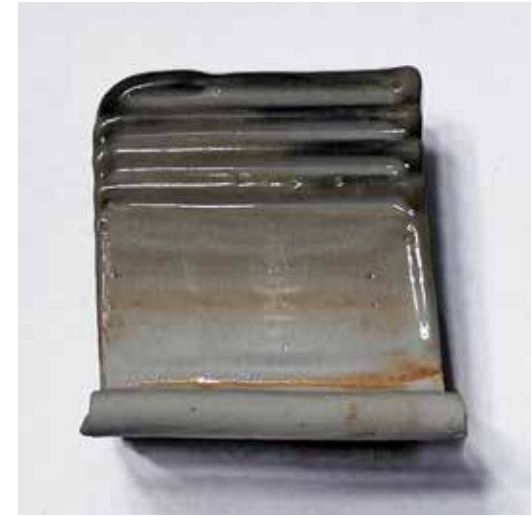
MHD #2

Nepheline Syenite	38.6
Soda Ash	16.3
EPK	17
OM-4 Kentucky Ball Clay	13
Kona F4 Soda Feldspar	9.3



Malcolm Davis Shino

Nepheline Syenite	40.91
EPK	18.18
Soda Ash	17.27
OM-4 Kentucky Ball Clay	13.82
Kona F4 Soda Feldspar	9.82



Saul Shino

Minspar 200	45
Spodumene	20
Nepheline Syenite	10
EPK	10
OM-4 Kentucky Ball Clay	10
Soda Ash	5



Malcolm Davis Orange Shino

Nepheline Syenite	40
Ball Clay	15
Soda Spar	13
Soda Ash	12
Spodumene	9
EPK	8
Redart	3

Davis Orange Carbon Trap

Nepheline Syenite	40
OM-4 Kentucky Ball Clay	15
Kona F4 Soda Feldspar	16
Soda Ash	12
Spodumene	8
EPK	7
Redart	2





Chronology

1937

Born October 17, Newport News, VA

1959

Graduated College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA B.S. in Mathematics, Phi Beta Kappa

1962-63

University of Basel Switzerland, International Rotary Fellow. Certificate in Theological Studies with Karl Barth

1963

Married Judith Joan Friedenstein, Washington, DC

1964

Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY. M.Div.

1964-67

Minister in Higher Education, Vermont Conference UCC, Burlington, VT

1967-80

Ecumenical Campus Minister, UCCM, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

1972

First ceramic class, D.C. Department of Recreation, Washington, D.C.

1973

Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Deer Isle, ME, study with Jack Troy

1974

Corcoran School of Art, Washington, D.C., study with Bob Epstein

1975

Three-week trip to People's Republic of China, US China Peoples Friendship Association for US academic professionals
Glen Echo Pottery, study with Jeff Kirk

1976

Penland School of Craft, Penland, NC, study with Cynthia Bringle

1977

Penland School of Craft, study with Bob Turner, David Keator, Tim Mather, Norm Schulman

1978

Became Porcelain Potter

1979

Study with Vally Passony, Annandale, VA

1980

Wood kiln building with Karen Karnes

1981

Form workshop with Karen Karnes

1982

Resigned Ecumenical Campus Ministry at George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

1984

Established own studio in Tallmansville, Upshur County, West Virginia

1984-2009

Annual Pottery Invitational, Old Church Cultural Center, Demarest, NJ, Karen Karnes, Curator

1986-97

David Leach mentorship

1988

"Discovery" of Malcolm Davis Shino glaze

Became Porcelain Shino Potter

1994, 1999

Exhibitor, Smithsonian Craft Show, Washington, D.C.

1995

Exhibitor, Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show, Philadelphia, PA

Fire destroys first studio at West Virginia property

2001

American Shino: The Glaze of a Thousand Faces, Babcock Galleries, New York City, Lester Richter, Curator

2004-07

St. Croix Valley Annual Tour, St. Croix, MN, Jeff Oestreich host

2005

Curator, *Endless Variation: Shino Review*, National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA), Baltimore, MD

2005

Teapot Exhibition of the International Academy of Ceramics, Yixing Ceramics Museum, Yixing, China

2007

Juror, 15th *Strictly Functional* Competition

2007-10

Summer Shino Workshops, La Meridiana International School of Ceramics, Certaldo, Tuscany, Italy

2010

Curator, *Shino Redux*, Clay Art Center, Port Chester, NY

2010

Closing Address Speaker, NCECA Conference, Philadelphia, PA

2011

Died December 11, Washington, D.C.

2013

Curator (posthumous), *Endless Variations II: A Shino Extravaganza*, NCECA, Houston, TX

Achievements

Exhibitions

Freehand Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

Craftsmanship Gallery, Baltimore, MD

Craftsmarket Gallery, Northampton, MA

Scope Gallery, Torpedo Factory,
Alexandria, VA

Tea Pot Invitational, The Clay House,
Santa Monica, CA

Tea Pot Invitational Show, Pinch Pottery
Gallery, Northampton, MA

Where Have All the Potters Gone?,
Glen Echo Gallery, Glen Echo, MD

New Names/New Works, Baltimore
Clayworks Gallery, Baltimore, MD

Gallery III, Wilson Arts Center, Wilson,
NC, 1985

Our Cup of Tea, Renwick Gallery Mu-
seum Shop, Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D.C., 1985

Soup to Nuts, Renwick Gallery Museum
Shop, Smithsonian Institution, Washing-
ton, D.C., 1986

Clay Basket Invitational, The Clay
House, Santa Monica, CA

Pottery About Pottery, Pinch Pottery
Gallery, Northampton, MA

Form and Function: Tea Pots, Craft
Alliance Gallery, St. Louis, MO

Three-Person Show, Montgomery
College, Takoma Park, MD

International Tea Party, Baltimore Clay-
works, Baltimore MD

Eubie Blake Cultural Center, Gallery 400,
Baltimore, MD

The Crafts Collection, Swarthmore Hall,
Rockville, MD

Jackie Chalkley Galleries, Washington,
D.C., 1987

Boxes, Baskets and Containers, Elizabeth
Fortner Gallery, Santa Barbara, CA, 1988

*Spot O' Tea: Fourth Annual Invitational
Tea Pot Exhibition*, Clay House, Santa
Monica, CA, 1988

Mountain State Art and Craft Fair, Rip-
ley, WV, 1988

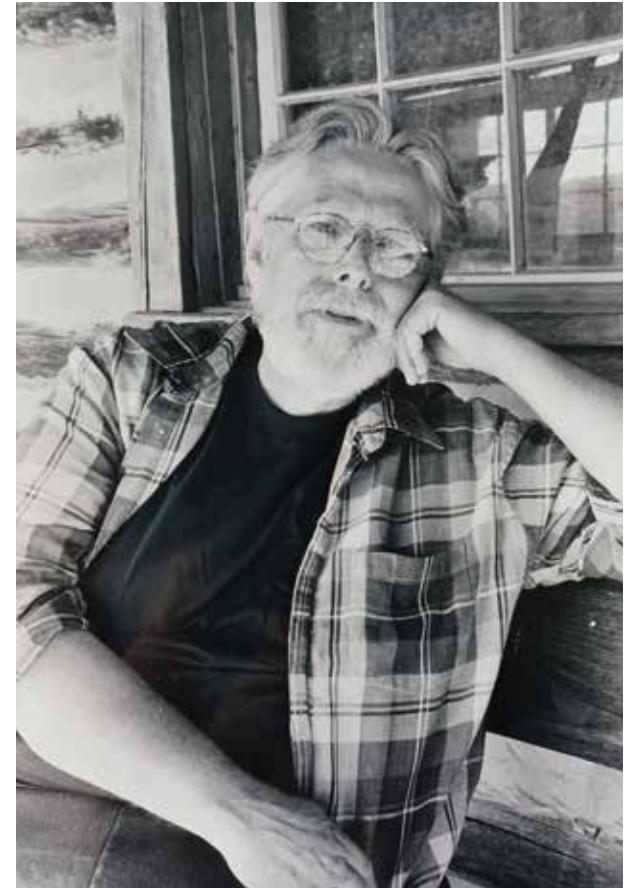
Annual Holiday Exhibition, Pewabic
Pottery, Detroit, MI

Second Annual Tea Pot Exhibition, Lee
Sclar Gallery, Morristown, NJ, 1988

*The Unique, the Unusual, the Utilitarian:
Functional Clay*, Craft Alliance Gallery,
St. Louis, MO, 1989

*Spotlight '89: Juried Exhibition of
Southeast Crafts*, ACC Southeast
Region & University Gallery College of
Fine Arts, University of Florida, Gaines-
ville, FL, 1989

Art for Gifts, Staunton Fine Arts Associ-
ation, Staunton, VA





Victorian Holiday Festival: A Gift to the City, Springfield Art Association, Springfield, IL

WBAI Craft Fair, New York, NY

Twelfth National Clay Exhibition, Sykes Gallery, Millersville University, Millersville, PA

Winter Market: ACC Craft Fair, Baltimore, MD, 1990

Boston Griswold Gallery, Richmond, VA, 1991

Greenwich House-Nancy Hartsock Gallery, New York, NY, 1991

The Eighties, Piedmont Craftsmen Gallery, Winston-Salem, NC

Shades of Shino, National Invitational Group Show, Shircliff Gallery, Vincennes University, Vincennes, IN

Green Meadow Invitational, Spring Valley, NY

Clay U.S.A.: Nationally Juried Traveling Exhibition, Flossie Martin Gallery, Radford, VA

The Hand Workshop, Richmond, VA

ACC Craft Fair, West Springfield, MA

Alumni Show, Baltimore Clayworks, Baltimore, MD

Boston Mills Artfest, Cleveland, OH

Morristown Craft Market, Morristown, NJ

Piedmont Craft Fair, Winston-Salem, NC

21st Celebration of American Crafts, Juried Exhibition, Creative Arts Workshop, New Haven, CT

Winter Market: ACC Fair, Baltimore, MD, 1991

American Craft Classics, The Craftsman's Gallery, Scarsdale, NY, 1991

Solo Show, Burton Griswold Gallery, Richmond, VA, 1991

High Tea, American House Gallery of Contemporary Crafts, Piermont-on-Hudson, NY; Galleries, Boston, MA

Pearls and Porcelain: The White Show, Ferrin Gallery, Northampton, MA, 1991

Studio Days '91 - 8th Annual Exhibition of Fine Contemporary Crafts, Chester Springs Studio, PA, 1991

Fourth Annual Teapot Exhibition & Sale, Ariana Gallery, Birmingham, MI, 1991

Dual Function: Art for the Table, National Exhibition, Eight Artists curated by Michael Padgett, Northern Clay Center, St. Paul, MN, 1991

Art for Sale, Annual Exhibition, Fort Wayne Museum of Art, Ft. Wayne, IN

Works in Clay VII, Wichita Falls Museum and Art Center, Wichita Falls, TX, curated by Mary Roehm, 1991

The Covered Vessel, National Invitational, PlaceSetters, Florham Park, NJ, 1991

Artful Living: Invitation Art for the Table, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, Pittsburgh, PA

Functional Crafts for Holiday Giving,
Wheeler Seidel Gallery, New York, NY

Celebration of American Crafts: Creative Arts,
New Haven, CT

Clay In Motion, The Clay Studio,
Philadelphia, PA, 1992

Clay Cup IV, Juried Competition & Exhibition,
University Museum of Southern Illinois University,
Carbondale, IL, 1992

National Teapot Invitational, Clark Hall
Gallery, Southeastern Louisiana University,
Hammond, LA, 1992

Year of the American Craft, Traveling
Show, 1993

Clay, Wood, Fire, Salt, National Invitational,
Contemporary Artifacts Gallery,
Berea, KY

Teabowl, Community Ceramic Studio,
Greenbelt, MD

Feet, Handles and Other Extremities,
Lee Arts Center, Arlington, VA

Blue Spiral 1, Asheville, NC

Blue Heron Gallery, Deer Isle, ME

Group Invitational, Santa Fe Clay, NM

Soot and Smoke: Carbontrap Shino Work,
Akar Gallery, Iowa City, IA

American Shino: The Glaze of a Thousand Faces,
curated by Lester Richter,
Babcock Galleries, New York, NY, 2001

21st Century Ceramics in the US and Canada,
Columbus College of Art and Design,
Columbus, OH, 2003

Pottery Invitational, Old Church Cultural
Center, Demarest, NJ

The Big Show, 4 Star Gallery, Indianapolis,
IN, 2004

The Loving Cup, Baltimore Clayworks,
Baltimore, MD, 2004

Teapots-A-Go-Go2, MudFire Pottery
Center, Atlanta, GA, 2004

American Masters in Clay: Invitational,
Westmont College, Santa Barbara, CA

Our Cups Runneth Over, Invitational,
Society of Arts & Crafts, Boston, MA

Five Plus Five, invitational, Earth and
Fire Gallery, Vienna, VA

Mid-Atlantic Potters, Regional Invitational,
Whitehall Gallery, Annapolis, MD, 2005

La Mesa, National Invitational Dinnerware
Exhibition, Santa Fe Clay, Santa Fe, NM

The Teapot Show, Cosmopolitan Club,
Philadelphia PA

Fete '05, Visionary Museum, Baltimore,
MD, 2005

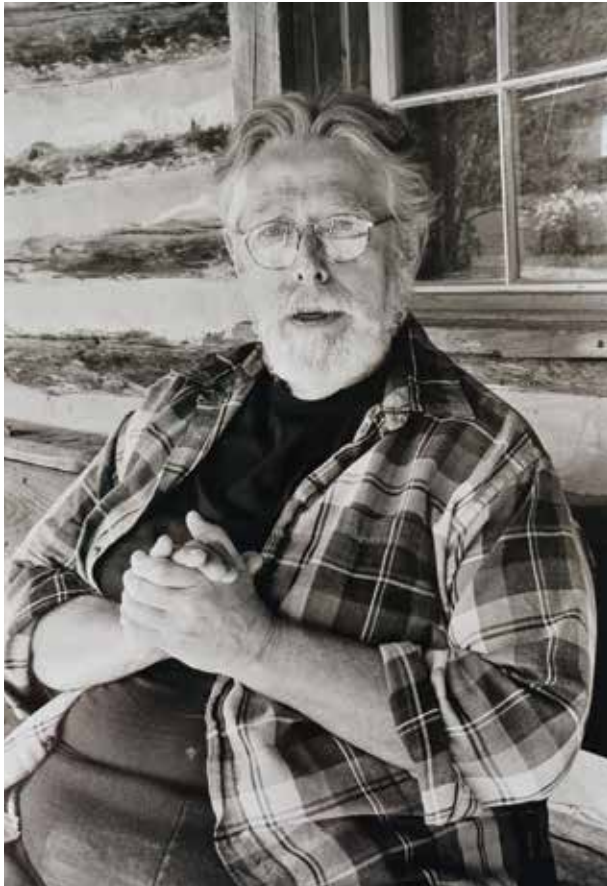
The Teapot Exhibition of the International
Academy of Ceramics, Yixing Ceramics
Museum, Yixing, China, 2005

National Teapot Invitational VI, Cedar
Creek Gallery, Creedmoor, NC

Masters of the Art, Celadon Gallery, Water
Mill, NY, 2005

Solo Exhibition, Blue Spiral I, Asheville, NC





The Simple Cup, KOBO Shop & Gallery at Higo, Seattle, WA

30 x 5, AKAR Gallery, Iowa City, IA

La Mesa, Santa Fe Clay Tabletop Invitational, NCECA, Portland, OR, 2006

Tea Time: The Art of the Teapot, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo, MI, 2006

Inspired Utility: Exceptional Ceramic Vessels, Main Line Art Center, Haverford, PA, 2006

The Art of Serving, Celadon Gallery, Water Mill, NY, 2006

A China Response, Santa Fe Clay, Santa Fe, NM, 2006

Clay Invitational, The Washington Street Gallery, Lewisburg, WV

American Pottery Festival, Northern Clay Center, Minneapolis, MN

Artists of Baltimore Clayworks, MTB Gallery, Surf City, NJ

Strictly Functional Pottery Invitational, Market House Craft Center, Lancaster, PA

Yunomi Show, AKAR Gallery, Iowa City, IA

Cups Coming Together, Clay Arts Center 50th Celebration, Port Chester, NY, 2007

Exhibition, North Carolina Potters Conference, Asheboro, NC

37th Annual Ceramics Exhibition, Crossman Gallery, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Whitewater, WI, 2007

From the Earth, Place Setting Exhibition, University of Kentucky Museum of Art, Lexington, KY

La Mesa Table Top, Santa Fe Clay, NCECA, Louisville, KY, 2007

Flower Power: Vessels of Containment, National Invitational, The Clay Studio, Philadelphia, PA, 2007

Faculty Exhibition, Catskill Mountain Foundation Gallery, Hunter, NY

Table Tops, Ceramic Invitational, Long Beach Island Foundation of the Arts & Sciences, Loveladies, NJ, 2007

The Cup Show, Dow Studio, Deer Isle, ME

50th Anniversary Exhibition, Ventura Potters Guild, Beatrice Wood Studios, Ojai, CA

90 Teapots That Pour, Invitational, Xen Gallery, St. Louis, MO, 2007

300 Years of Clay, Invitational, Charlie Cummings Clay Studio, curated by John Click, Fort Wayne, IN

PotPOURri: Pots that Pour, National Invitational, Clay Art Center, Port Chester, NY, 2008

Table of Elements, Invitational NCECA Exhibition, Manchester Craftsmen's Guild, Pittsburgh, PA, 2008

La Mesa, National Invitational NCECA, Santa Fe Clay, 2008

Muchachos, National Invitational NCECA, Standard Ceramic Supply Company, Carnegie, PA, 2008

Rising Stars – 10 Years, National Invitational celebrating Red Star Studio's 10-year Anniversary, Kansas City, MO

American Masters 2008, National Invitational, MudFire Gallery, Decatur, GA

Shinos in the Fire, Shino Workshop, Shakerag Workshops, St. Andre's-Sewanee School, Sewanee, TN

National Teapot Show VII, Cedar Creek Gallery, Creedmoor, NC, 2008

Shino Workshop, Castle Hill, Truro Center for the Arts, Truro, MA

Awards, Grants, and Prizes

Art Award-Studio Days, Chester Springs Studio, PA

Merit & Purchase Award-*Feats of Clay XIII & XIV*, Lincoln Arts, CA

Merit Award-*West Virginia Juried Exhibition*, WV Division of Culture and History, Cultural Center, Charleston, WV

Purchase Award-*Ceramics Monthly*, International Competition, Columbus, OH

First Prize-Washington Kiln Club, Washington, D.C., Norm Schulman, juror, 1978

First Prize-Washington Kiln Club, Washington, D.C., Robert Turner, juror, 1980

Honorable Mention-Biennial Creative Craft Council Exhibition, Washington, D.C., 1981

Best in Porcelain Award-The American Hand, Washington, D.C., 1985

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)/Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, Regional Visual Artist Fellowship, Baltimore Clayworks, 1988

All Media Art Award-*Crosscurrents*, Stifel Fine Arts Center, Oglebay Institute, Wheeling, WV, Helen Drutt English, juror, 1990

Individual Artist Grant-D.C. Commission on Arts & Humanities, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1996

Orton Purchase Award-International Cone Box Show & Exhibition, Baker

University, Baldwin City, KA, 1994, 1996, 1998

Award-American Art Clay Co., *Clay Cup VII & IV*, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL, 1994 & 1999

Finalist-(NEA)/Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, Regional Visual Artist Fellowship, 1995

Dale & Diane Snyder Award-Chester Springs Studio Days, Chester Springs, PA, 1998

First Place-*4th Annual Strictly Functional*, Phyllis Blair Clark juror, 1998

Merit Award-National Ceramic Competition, Kennedy-Douglass Center for the Arts, Ruth Butler juror, 1999

Orton Award-Strictly Functional National, 2000





Workshops and Lectures

Baltimore Clayworks, Baltimore, MD
Bethesda Potters Guild, Bethesda, MD
Junior College of Albany, Albany, NY
Maryland Institute College of Art,
Baltimore, MD
Towson State University, Baltimore, MD
Washington Kiln Club, Washington, D.C.
West Virginia Wesleyan University,
Buckhannon, WV
3-Day Tea Pot Workshop, Vermont Crafts
Center, Frog Hollow, Middlebury, VT
“Off-Round Pots & Lidded Forms,” Old
Church Cultural Center, Demarest, NJ
Tea Pot Workshop, Super Mud, New
York, NY
Tea Pot Workshop, Lee Arts Center,
Arlington, VA
Hinckley Pottery, Washington, D.C.
Claymakers Studio, Durham, NC
Nottingham Center for the Arts, San
Marcos, CA
“Stayin’ Alive,” NCECA Annual Confer-
ence, San Diego, CA
Laloba Ranch Clay Center, Steamboat
Springs, CO
Interlaken Center, Stockbridge, MA
“Porcelain: Magic & Mystery,” Touchstone
Center for the Arts, Farmington, PA

Fall Concentration, Penland School of
Crafts, Penland, NC

The Art League, Alexandria, VA

John Bryan Community Pottery, Yellow
Springs, OH

Michigan Ceramic Art Association &
Ann Arbor Arts Center, Ann Arbor, MI

“Shino Magic: The Search for Soot,”
Guilford Handcraft Center, Guilford, CT

“Malcolm Davis: Shino,” Arapahoe Com-
munity College Art and Design Center,
Littleton, CO

“Functional Form for Daily Life,” Laloba
Ranch Art Center, Steamboat Springs, CO

“In Search of Shino,” Sierra Nevada
College, Lake Tahoe, NV

“Shino Glaze, Mystery Explored,” Boul-
der Mountain Clayworks, Ketchum, ID

Queensboro Potters, New York, NY

“Handles, Feet & Other Appendages,”
Creative Clay Studios, Alexandria, VA

“Firing Workshop,” Lee Arts Center,
Arlington, VA

“Shino Workshop,” Wesleyan Potters,
Middletown, CT

Workshop, Carbondale Clay Center,
Carbondale, CO

Shino Firing, Metchosin International
Summer School of the Arts, Victoria,
British Columbia, Canada

“Mastering the Materials,” Clay Art Guild of the Hamptons, Water Mill, NY

“Shino Firing Workshop,” Clay Art Guild of the Hamptons, Water Mill, NY

“Shino Workshop,” Shelburne Craft School, Shelburne, VT

“Shino Workshop,” ADapolis Art Center, Indianapolis, IN

“Workshop & Solo Exhibition,” Terra Incognito, Oak Park, IL

“Shino Workshop,” Odyssey Center for the Arts, Asheville, NC

“Shino Workshop,” Appalachian Center for the Crafts, Smithville, TN

“Master Workshop,” Baltimore Potters Guild, Baltimore, MD

“Master Workshop,” San Jacinto College Central, Pasadena, TX

Lecture & Workshop, Strictly Functional Pottery National, Lancaster, PA

“Shinos & Wines, Reds & Whites: Carbontrapping in Tuscany,” La Meridiana, Certaldo, Italy

“Potters’ Pots: Teabowls and Teapots,” Master Workshop, Sugar Maples, Hunter, NY

“A Day at the Wheel with Malcolm Davis,” Workshop & Demonstration, Civic Arts, Walnut Creek, CA

Lecture, Ventura County Potters Guild, Ventura, CA

Workshop & Demonstration, Ventura County Potters Guild, Firehouse Pottery, Ojai, CA

Workshop, Anoka Ramsey Community College, Coon Rapids, MN

Cornell University Art Gallery & Ceramic Studio, Ithaca, NY

Artist-in-Residence

Art Park, Lewiston, NY

Baltimore Clayworks, Baltimore MD

The Clay Studio, Philadelphia, PA

Greenwich House Pottery, NYC

Lee Arts Center, Arlington VA

Northern Clay Center, Minneapolis, MN

Penland School of Craft, Penland, NC

Red Star Studios, Kansas City, MO

Select Collections

Adriane Fugh-Berman Collection

American Art Clay Collection, Indianapolis, IN

American Museum of Ceramic Art (AMOCA), Claremont CA

Arthur & Lillian Weiss Collection

Bailey Ceramics Collection, Kingston, NY

Everson Museum of Art (Rosenfield Collection), Syracuse, NY

Highwater Permanent Collection, Asheville, NC





Mobach Collection, Utrecht, Holland
Museum of Arts and Design, New York, NY (formerly American Craft Museum), New York City
Nevica Project, Chicago and Kansas City
Old Church Gallery, Old Church Cultural Center, Demarest, NJ
Orton Permanent Collection, Arlington, VA
Sarah Lawrence College, Twentieth Century Ceramic Collection, Bronxville, NY
Schein-Joseph International Museum of Ceramic Art, Alfred University, Alfred, NY
Adam Myers & Susan Mulrone Collection
Yixing Permanent Ceramics Collection, Yixing, China

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Brierley, Ben. "Carbon Footprints." *Ceramic Review* no. 220 (July/August, 2006).

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Fina, Angela and Jonathan Fairbanks. *The Best of Pottery*. Rockport, MA: Rockport Publishers, 1996.

"Four Functional Potters." *Ceramics Monthly* 43, no.4 (April 1995): 54.

"Fourth Annual Strictly Functional." *Ceramics Monthly* 44, no. 10 (December 1996): 57.

Hall, Sherman. "Clay Culture: Malcolm Davis." *Ceramics Monthly* 60, no. 2 (February 2012): 28.

Hemachandra, Ray. *500 Vases: Contemporary Explorations of a Timeless Form*. Asheville, NC: Lark Books, 2010.

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Hong, Ya. *International Ceramic Art Exhibition: Xixing, China 2005*. Shanghai, China: Di 1 ban, 2006.

Hopper, Robin. *Functional Pottery: Form and Aesthetic in Pots of Purpose*. 2nd ed. Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 2008.

Hopper, Robin. *Making Marks: Discovering the Ceramic Surface*. Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 2004.

Hopper, Robin. *Stayin' Alive: Survival Tactics for the Visual Artist*. Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 2003.

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Jacobson, Mel. "Black Shino: A Shino Analysis." *Ceramics Monthly* 48, no. 10 (December 2000): 44.

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Mau, Linda. "ACCA 50th Anniversary Show." *Ceramics Monthly* 45, no. 10 (December 1997): 43.

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Credits

Exhibition

The Art Museum of West Virginia University is grateful to the following individuals for their generosity in lending works by Malcolm Davis from their collections to this exhibition:

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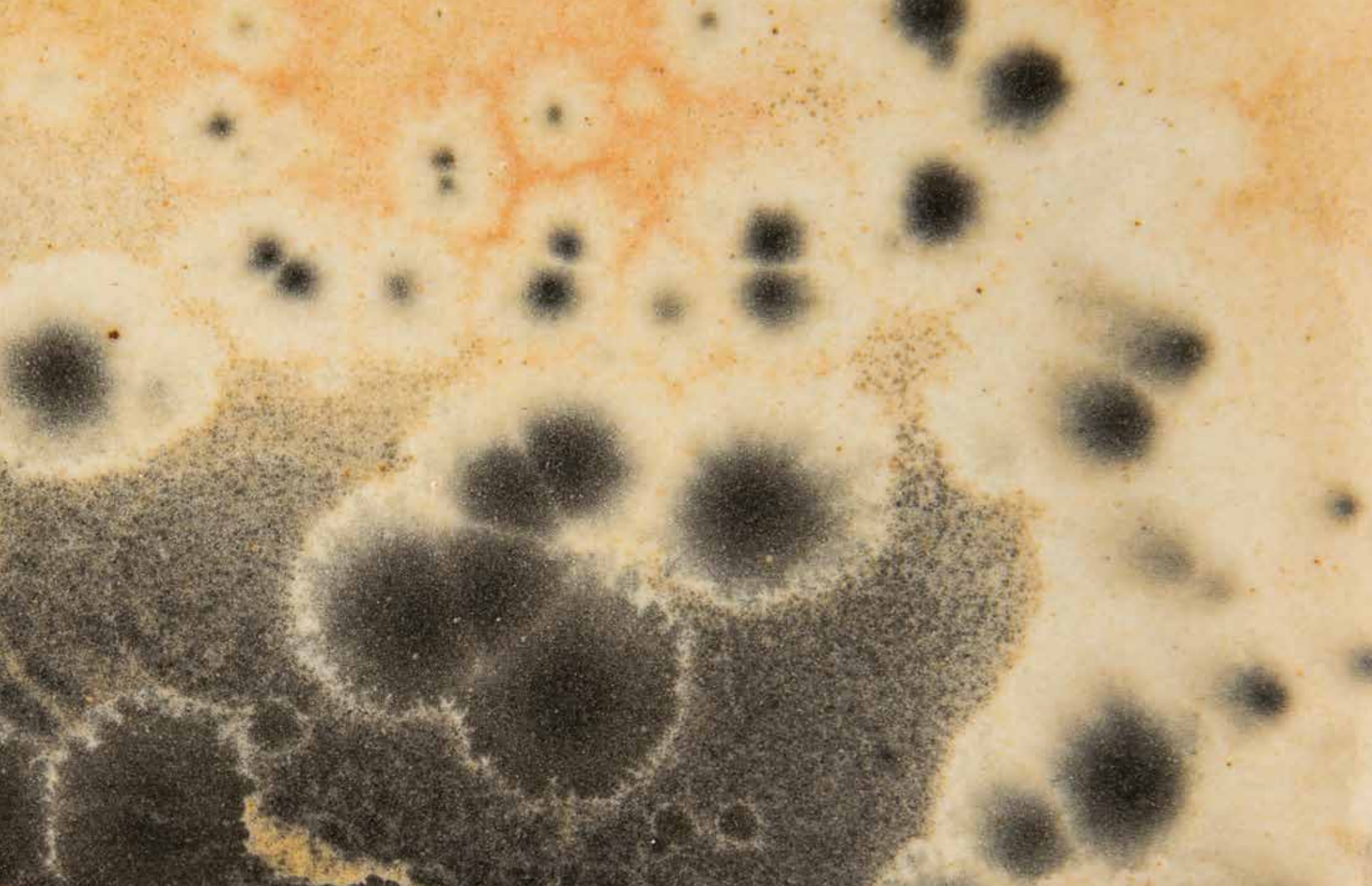
Catalogue

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“What are the things that attract me to Shino and so often frustrate? It is wildly variable, undependable, uncontrollable, unrepeatable, difficult, and unforgiving. That’s enough right there to keep anyone interested. But it is also warm, friendly, enchanting, seductive, and so very dramatic. In the end, I guess it’s just love.”

–Malcolm Davis

