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Additional Images and information about the artists available upon request.

Exquisite Pots: Six Degrees of Collaboration

March 7 – April 27, 2008

Gallery M

Opening Reception: 6-8 pm, Friday, March 7, 2008

Guest co-curators: Maren Kloppmann and Andrew Martin



Image 1:
Sam Chung, teapot, **Andrew Martin**, glaze and firing
2007, porcelain, 7" x 8" x 4".
Photo by Peter Lee.



Image 2:
Andrew Martin, teapot, **Maren Kloppmann**, glaze and firing
2007 porcelain, 10" x 12" x 4.5".
Photo by Peter Lee.



Image 3:
Margaret Bohls, mug, **Deb Schwartzkopf**, glaze and firing
2007, porcelain, 4" x 5" x 4".
Photo by Peter Lee.

In the 1920's, the Surrealists invented a technique for adding to and completing compositions—in words, drawings, and collages—in which each successive collaborator built on the preceding work without fully knowing what had come before. The process, based on an old game, celebrated unpredictable, chancy, and occasionally startling results. It expanded the idea of collaboration from its usual consciously cooperative mode to an unconscious, accidental level.

For the past eight months, six artists who work in porcelain have been shipping bisque ware to one another, forms that are distinctive and representative of their individual work. Their collaborators have then glazed and fired the bisqued work in their particular glaze palettes. While the potters in this exhibition were able to see the forms which they were finishing, the instruction to complete the pots in their own styles has resulted in a combination of forms and finishes that is occasionally as startling as a surrealist collage.

The resulting pots prompt us to think more carefully about the relationship between form and finish, and about the idea of collaboration—and finally about the aesthetic “ownership” of a piece: Is it a Sam Chung teapot because of its distinctive form or has it become an Andrew Martin teapot because of the equally distinctive glazing?

Maren Kloppmann, co-curator and participant, describes the inception and evolution of this exhibition:

“The concept to create an exhibition around the premise of potters glazing each other’s bisque ware was first introduced to me by Andrew Martin during the 1996 NCECA conference in Portland. While a show based on this idea can be done in any clay and firing range, compatibility is a significant factor and as Andrew and I both work in porcelain, we decided to start there.

“Our correspondence about a list of potential artists was based on pairing potters whose work is recognizable through distinctive form as well as surface. The list we ultimately decided upon was also heavily dependent on artists’ availability and their willingness to commit to this rather involved project. Being in the dual role of curator and participant my objective was to not necessarily pick artists whose work I could artistically relate to, but to devise pairings of work that would be challenging to all potters involved.

“The process of receiving and handling other artists’ unfinished work, to become aware of all the different sensibilities of form and to do justice to someone else’s esthetic was personally the most exciting aspect. There was also an awareness and question of ‘what will these other artists do with my pots? How will they receive them? What will their solutions be?’ I see this show as an opportunity to interpret, to transform and ultimately to complete another artist’s original idea. Each potter in this group has created extensions of an original design, a new realization for completion.”

Participants in addition to Kloppmann and Martin, include Margaret Bohls (Minneapolis), Andy Brayman (Kansas City, Missouri), Sam Chung (Tempe, Arizona), Andrew Martin (Los Angeles) and Deb Schwartzkopf (Athens, Ohio).

The Clay Center will publish a monograph catalogue of the exhibition, with an essay by Kelly Connole, Associate Professor of Art at Carleton College.

This exhibition and catalogue were made possible with the support of several generous donors to Northern Clay Center’s exhibition program. These include Continental Clay Company, George Reid and his late wife Frances, and the Windgate Foundation.

In addition, this activity is made possible in part by a grant provided by the Minnesota State Arts Board through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature, a grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation Minnesota, and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Participating Artist Biographies

Margaret Bohls is a studio potter and educator who lives and works in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She has been teaching ceramics for many years, currently at the University of Minnesota. She is an alumna of Louisiana State University (M.F.A.) and Rhode Island School of Design (B.F.A.) She spent two years as an artist in residence at the Archie Bray Foundation in the early 90’s. Bohls shows and sells her work nationally. She approaches her hand-built porcelain pots as functional forms, and sculptural and decorative objects, intended for use. She strives for forms that are both “familiar and comfortable while still engaging the user and creating visual interest.”

Andy Brayman holds a B.A. in sociology and a B.F.A. in ceramics from the University of Kansas (1996) and an M.F.A. in ceramics from Alfred University (1998). His work is a combination of traditional craft, industrial processes, and contemporary art strategies. His pots demonstrate an object’s potential to be both beautiful and cerebral. In 2005, Brayman founded The Matter Factory in Kansas City. It is part artist studio, part laboratory, and part factory. In addition to producing objects of his design, the company contains a collaborative element. Guest designers and artists are invited to develop objects for production, which might otherwise have trouble finding an eager manufacturer.

Sam Chung received his M.F.A. from Arizona State University and his B.A. degree from St. Olaf College. He has participated in residencies at Anderson Ranch Arts Center and Guldagergaard (Denmark). Chung has exhibited, lectured, and presented workshops both nationally and internationally. His works are included in the collections of the Everson Museum, Guldagergaard, and Icheon World Ceramic Center (Korea). He is an assistant professor of ceramics at Arizona State University. His web site is <http://samchungceramics.com/>

Maren Kloppmann was born and raised in Germany. She received her Journeyman Diploma from the Keramik Handwerkskammer in 1984, attended the Kansas City Art Institute to earn a B.F.A. Ceramics degree in 1993 and graduated from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis with her M.F.A. in 1996. Kloppmann has received numerous grants including two McKnight Fellowships for Ceramic Artists, the Artist Fellowship and the Career Opportunity Grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Jerome Artist Project Grant. She exhibits her work nationally and maintains a full time studio in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Her web site is <http://www.marenkloppmann.com/>

Andrew Martin earned his B.F.A. from the Kansas City Art Institute and his M.F.A. from Alfred University. He has been a resident Artist twice at the Archie Bray Foundation, and a resident in the Arts-Industry Program at the Kohler Company. He also has received two Artist Fellowship Grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. Martin has taught over seventy workshops across the U.S. and Canada, exhibited nationally and internationally, written essays and articles for *American Ceramics* and *Ceramics Monthly*, and been a moderator and demonstrator at the annual conference of the National Council on Education in the Ceramic Arts (NCECA). His book, The Essential Guide to Mold Making and Slip Casting, has become the standard text on the subject. The revised and expanded edition of this book, published by Lark Books, was released in March 2007.

Deb Schwartzkopf received her B.A. in Ceramics from the University of Alaska in 2002. Since then, she studied independently at San Diego State University, California, and went on to receive her M.F.A. from Pennsylvania State University in 2005. In 2005, Schwaratzkopf received the Lilian Fellowship to be a resident artist at the Archie Bray Foundation in Helena, Montana. For the 2006-2007 academic year, she is a Visiting Assistant Professor at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. Her web site is <http://www.debspottery.com/>



ABOUT NORTHERN CLAY CENTER

Northern Clay Center's mission is the advancement of the ceramic arts. Ongoing programs include exhibitions of sculpture and pottery by regional, national, and international artists; classes and workshops for children and adults; studio space and grants for artists; and a sales gallery representing many top ceramic artists from the region and elsewhere. Guided tours, hands-on events and artist demos are available. The facility is handicapped-accessible.

The Center is located at 2424 Franklin Avenue East, Minneapolis, MN 55406. It is one block south of Interstate 94, between 24th and 25th Avenues, just off the Riverside/25th exit. Gallery hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 10 am to 6 pm; Thursday 10 am to 7pm; Sunday noon to 4 pm; closed Monday.

