

Fred's Friends

Exhibition opens April 12th and continues until May 24th

Artist's reception 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. April 12th

Armstrong's Gallery, 150 East 3rd Street, Pomona, California 91766

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www.armstronggallery.net

The home and studio complex of Fred Olsen, master potter, author, artist, kiln designer and builder, is a gathering place for ceramic artists who love to explore the beauty of wood fire ceramics. "Fred's Friends" showcases the work of a number of the artists and potters who participate in group firings of Olsen's kilns, benefiting from Fred's knowledge, generosity and worldwide contacts. For this exhibit each artist is presenting several pieces—including at least one from firings in Fred's kiln and others representing their current body of work. Exhibitors include Patricia Ferber, Philip Cornelius, Conrad Calimpong, Richie White, Don Ryan, Jon Pacini, Carol Ann Klimek, Nina Hole and Julia Nema.

Diverse style and focus marks this group of merry stokers. Patricia Ferber presents planar forms, substantial in physical presence, balanced with Philip Cornelius' whisper light, charcoal fired, porcelain thin ware. Extremes of surface are exemplified by the subtle wood fire surfaces of chunky jars by Conrad Calimpong and exotic crystalline glazes on graceful vase forms by Jon Pacini. The personal isolation of Richie White's figurative sculpture installations opposes the cerebral nature of Don Ryan's sculptural vessel series. Denmark artist Nina Hole's solid house forms elicit thoughts of cross cultural human behavior while the ephemeral, thrown, translucent porcelain forms of Hungarian artist Julia Nema seem to float like the music of the harp strings.



"Chupu" by Don Ryan fired ceramic 'vessel' 28" long by 9" wide by 18"

The resounding unity of this grouping is the clarity of each visual voice. Each individual artist has courageously followed his or her creative inertia toward a target defined by internal priorities fueled by independent inquiry. In a field characterized by acquisition and facility, these

adventurers are very interesting friends. Jon Pacini studied with Susan Peterson and is currently the production manager at Laguna Clay Company, overseeing the production of over 18,000 tons of clay per year, yet still finds time to pursue his crystalline glaze development. Conrad Calimpong wood fires at conferences around the world while selling his own work full time. Don Ryan and Richie White both teach at Saddleback College, and often assist Fred Olsen with his own fired in place sculptural works. Patricia Ferber has created installations of faux rocks in Japan, France and the U.S. Nina Hole's monumental, fired in place, sculptures have been central to art events around the globe. Julia Nema teaches at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, in Budapest, designs architectural ceramic installations (my favorite is a heated tile bench) and creates paper thin porcelain art pieces.

"Fred's Friends" is an aesthetic snap shot of a dialog between friends, which captures an ephemeral moment of convergence on paths commonly seen as solitary. It is a reminder of our need for real contact with our fellows and is an example of what fine results can be obtained in the simple act of sharing what you have with those whom you think would benefit. It is also a reminder that influence and knowledge are shared to great benefit outside the institutions for post secondary education.



Crystalline bottle by Jon Pacini

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