

FALL 2010

John Britt Workshop



"Glaze", the elementary definition: That thick liquid stored in the buckets at the back of the studio that you dip your piece into before the 2nd firing that, once fired, colors the piece.

"Glaze", the advanced definition: Thick ground-glass liquid that you apply to bisque pieces that, once fired, will create the

finish of your piece in a color you hope will look remotely like the test tile by the same name that hangs on the wall near the bucket; most often applied by dipping or pouring the liquid over the piece; can be used in varying layers and patterns to create different arrangements of color on a single piece.

"Glaze" as defined after spending the weekend at a John Britt workshop: A complex but versatile experiment of mixing some *silica* (to form glass), with *metal oxides* (such as sodium, potassium and calcium, which act as a flux and lower the melting point of the silica), *alumina* (a refractory to allow the glaze to stick to vertical surfaces), and *colorants* that are able to withstand high temperatures without burning off, (such as metallic oxides; iron oxide, copper carbonate or cobalt carbonate), but which can also affect melt point therefore sometimes causing a need to also add opacifiers (such as tin oxide or zirconium oxide) to your experiment!

Yes, attending the John Britt workshop was a lesson in chemicals and experiments! Our weekend began with the statement: "remember, this is all an experiment to see what we'll get using these glazes in a cone 6 reduction firing... there are

no guarantees; it's all going to be a surprise." Based on this, it only took about an hour for 30 attendees to glaze all of the 6-8 bisque-fired pieces we'd brought with us! Not much planning on

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which piece should be what color, etc. Fastest glaze session I've ever attended! After glazing, and while our pieces dried, John gave a short lecture on the basic components of glazes. It was at this point that I began to realize how accurate it is when John says he is a "glaze geek". After the lecture, we gathered all the pieces and loaded the kiln. Dick White provided a short explanation and description about the type of gas kiln (and the kiln shelves) we'd be using. Everyone pitched in and the kiln was loaded. Dick started the kiln the next morning and it fired throughout the day on Saturday.

On Day 2, John's lecture provided a very intense and detailed explanation of glaze materials and chemistry. He was very thorough (for those of us who had not had a chemistry lesson in 20+ years!) and talked in terms that could easily be understood, while making it all very interesting. The discussion examined not only the basic components of glazes and firing, but also how changes in the actual chemistry of glazes can change and alter the outcome once fired. John shared slides of some of his favorite pieces as examples of the altered results. Discussions ensued and everyone shared their ideas and experiences about their personal glaze experiences.



Sunday was kiln opening day. Dick White had already been at the studio for hours inching the kiln door open little by little so that it would cool. (I think he also really wanted the first views of our pieces!) By the time most folks had arrived, we were able to unload the entire kiln—assembly line style with everyone pitching in—in about 20 minutes! Everyone was excited to see their pieces! And indeed all the pieces were surprises, both in color and in the variations of colors we'd expected based on the sample tiles. The remaining hours of the workshop were spent finalizing our glaze chemistry education and discussing the fired results on our pieces. Overall, it was an exciting and fun-filled weekend. For me, the word "glaze" now also means "a chemical experiment of color"!

By Ginger M. Higgins

Understanding the Magic of Glazes and Firing was held at Northern Virginia Community College on October 1-3, 2010.

John Britt has been a potter and teacher for over 25 years and lives in western North Carolina. John is primarily a self-taught potter who has worked and taught at universities, colleges and craft centers across the country, including the Penland School of Crafts where he served as the Clay Coordinator and then, as the Studio's Manager. He is the author of *The Complete Guide to High-Fire Glaze: Glazing & Firing at Cone 10*, which was published by Lark Books in 2004. He was also the juror for the book *500 Bowls* and Technical Editor for the book *The Art and Craft of Ceramics*. John has written numerous articles for ceramics publications including: *Ceramics Monthly*, *Ceramic Review*, *Studio Potter*, *Clay Times*, *Ceramic Technical* and *The Log Book*. He is currently a studio potter in Bakersville, North Carolina and teaches glaze chemistry, throwing, glazing and firing workshops. See: <http://johnbrittpottery.com/>



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Calendar of Upcoming Events

❖ **Saturday, October 16, 2010 ~ ~ Using Technology to Promote Your Business in Art: Strategies to Increase Your Network, with Jayne Shatz ~ ~ 2 to 4pm**

Learn to promote your business using Facebook, YouTube, Etsy, Blogs, your Website and Email Group Lists. Use technology to present your work on a global scale and not pay costly commissions to traditional galleries and shops.

Jayne will give us an abridged version of her popular workshop about creating online networks to market your work.

RSVP: Dana Lehrer Danze at danaclay8@msn.com. Questions? Call Dana at 703-525-9692

Location: Lee Arts Center. Arlington, Virginia.
Free to Clay Connection members, \$5 for non-members.

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Website Changes

Aside from the usual housekeeping, the Clay Connection **website** has had a number of major and minor additions. The "About US" section has been completely rewritten and re-organized into six areas:

1. History
2. Organization
3. Organizational Memberships
4. Volunteer Opportunities
5. Contact Us
6. Disclaimers

Under "History" we retell the story of the organization's founding by Jane Cullum, George Brown, and Linda Bowman in 1991 and our reason for existing. "Organization" describes how The Clay Connection is organized and the roles each of our committees, officers, and groups plays in bringing you the events and programs that have made us well know. The Clay Connection holds organizational memberships in Artisans United and The Arts Council of Fairfax County, each of which is described under "Organizational Memberships." Since the Clay Connection is staffed and run by its members' efforts, we have added listings of all of the positions, committees, and other volunteer opportunities on its own page. The one totally new page is "Disclaimers." Because we're living in an increasingly litigious society where people aren't even responsible when they spill their own coffee on their lap, we've put in notices regarding our copyright, disclaimers of endorsement and liability, and an explanation of Good Faith Fair Use of copyrighted materials of others. Some of you, no doubt, are now muttering "CYA", well ... you are absolutely right!

In the past, some of you may have tried to print out one of the web pages to take to a friend or use the directions to get to an event. The results were probably less than optimal

as your browser struggled with backgrounds, menu systems, logos, and so forth. These are important to a web page, but become a distraction when you just want to print the content. That day is gone! We've fixed it so that when you hit the browser's print button you will now get (*automagically*, of course!) a more attractive printout containing a Clay Connection script logo at the top followed by the page content (yes, including the pretty pictures). Depending on the browser you use you may get some header and/or footer information included. I tested it with Firefox and got our organizational name and the URL for the page as a header and the page number (1 of 2) and date as a footer. Testing with Chrome produced no headers or footers at all. Testing with Safari is more of a mess. It insists on printing the navigation menu before the content along with the logos for the screen, print page, and handheld page (more about that to come). (Everyone write a nasty-gram to Steve Jobs.)

At some point in the future our website will be handheld friendly. Reproducing our entire site to have separate pages for handhelds and another set for PCs and laptops would be impossible to manage and cause me to go screaming out the door and roll in the prickly pear cactus. There is a very simple method, according to Internet standards, however, Apple and Android don't think the standards apply to them so they don't follow them. It will take a while longer to overcome the hurdles, but we will get there.

by Jim Dunning

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In the News...

Letter to the Editor: Mention potters here in Washington

As a local potter, I was delighted to see that your article on **home decorating** included "**Artisan wares**." And as an Etsy seller, I plunged excitedly into that section when I saw that it began by mentioning Etsy. Imagine my disappointment when I realized that the point of those few paragraphs was to highlight the alternatives (to Etsy sellers) being offered by major retailers. The article went on to mention Pottery Barn and, to my dismay, low-priced clay vases produced in Indonesia being sold by West Elm.

I am not unsympathetic to the importance of micro-enterprises in developing countries and the need to support women entrepreneurs throughout the world. (Before retiring and devoting my energies to my passion for clay, I was an economist working in the field of international development.) However, it seems to me that The Post missed a golden opportunity to highlight local artisans, including potters. Your readers might be interested in knowing about all the artisans working in the area.

In the particular case of potters, they might be interested in the fact that the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria is not the only place where they can find quality wares. We have several strong area potters organizations, including the Clay Connection, the Kiln Club and Montgomery Potters, that provide educational and sales opportunities for their members and are very involved with local charities such as Empty Bowls suppers.

*Graciela Testa Lynt,
Alexandria*

Published in The Washington Post on Thursday, September 2, 2010

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October is Membership Renewal Month!

The Clay Connection's membership year runs from October to October, so it's time to re-new your membership! There's a membership form attached at the end of this newsletter, please send your renewal in promptly to continue to take advantage of our workshops, sales and other opportunities.

A group like ours cannot exist without volunteers, as you fill out your renewal form, please review the volunteer opportunities listed below and help out!

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Facebook

If you haven't already, please become a fan of the **Clay Connection's Facebook page**. About half of our members are now fans of the Facebook page. Unfortunately, there's very little activity.

The Facebook page offers a forum where anyone can start a conversation, ask a question, and post information about their work (including photos and links to their events). If you have a question about a technique or a glaze, post it on the Facebook page... someone may have an answer or a good idea for you. If you have comments about a show that you did... post them on the Facebook page and pass along that information to the rest of us.

An organization like ours can only be successful if its members participate. If you are unable to volunteer to fill some of the positions that are open, please consider participating by sending information for this newsletter or posting information on our Facebook page.

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Volunteer Opportunities

Vice President for Membership ~ ~ The Vice President for Membership maintains the membership roster, sends out welcome letters and reminders. This is a Board position.

Secretary ~ ~ The Secretary takes the minutes of the Board meetings and distributes them to the Board members.

PR/Marketing ~ ~ The Clay Connection needs volunteers to assist with marketing and publicizing our sales and events. This involves maintaining the media contacts mailing list, writing and sending out press releases, contacting media representatives to ensure that our events are properly publicized, making and posting signs, etc.

Hospitality ~ ~ Volunteers purchase and set up refreshments for events (programs, sales, etc.) and act as hosts.

Sales ~ ~ Volunteers are needed for a standing committee to organize two sales events per year: the Mother's Day Spring Sale in Annandale and the Fall Holiday Sale in Vienna. One PR/Marketing volunteer and one hospitality volunteer would also participate in the Sales Committee.

High School Competition ~ ~ Volunteers are needed for a standing committee to organize this important annual event. One PR/Marketing volunteer and one hospitality volunteer would also participate in the Sales Committee.

Empty Bowls Liaison ~ ~ Volunteers are needed to serve as liaison with the Giving Circle of Hope. Responsibilities include organizing bowl-a-thons, obtaining commitments from members willing to donate bowls, establishing drop-off points for the bowls, etc.

*****NOTE***** We have easy-to-use guidelines for all of these volunteer jobs so you will not have to spend a lot of time figuring out how to carry out your duties. We are hoping to have 2 or 3 volunteers for each position so that the work does not all fall on one person. "Partial volunteers" are also welcome. That is, if you are interested in volunteering for the sales, say, but you feel that you could help organize one but not two sales a year, we can still use your help.

If you can help in any of these areas, please contact Ann Granger, Clay Connection Volunteer Coordinator, at AnnThePotter@gmail.com or 703-470-3038.

*****We Need Your Help!!!*****

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Are You Thinking About Accepting Credit Cards?

In this day and age, it's important to offer your customers the ability to pay using a credit card. Have you been toying with the idea of accepting credit cards but are not yet sure if it would be worthwhile? The Clay Connection will now allow its members to piggy-back on the organization's ability to accept credit cards on a one-time-only basis. This way you can use our system for one show and decide whether or not it is something you may want to embark on. If interested, please contact Marianne Cordyack at marianne@cordyack.com

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Member News and Achievements

Send your news and other information to Grace Lynt at graciela@glyntpottery.com. Information must be submitted by the 15th of each month that the newsletter is published; that is, March, June, September, and December.

- ❖ Dana Lehrer Danze got juried into the **Baltimore Clayworks** 100 Teapots show.
- ❖ **Marianne** Cordyack will be one of the featured artists during the month of November (November 1 - December 5) at the **Artists' Undertaking Gallery** in Occoquan, Va. The gallery is located at 309 Mill Street in Historic Occoquan. A reception will be held Saturday, November 13 from 5-8PM.
- ❖ Graciela Testa Lynt is the featured artist **at Manassas Clay** during the month of October. Drop by to see her work in the window. Manassas Clay is in Old Town Manassas at 9122 Center Street, between Battle and West.
- ❖ Laurie Erdman's work is now available at **Oerth Gallery**, 420 Washington Street in Alexandria and at **Terasol Artisans**, 5010 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D.C.

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Did you know that...

- ❖ **The Lee Art Center provides a slide service to all area artists interested in having photographic images made of their work.** Greg Staley, a professional photographer, is available once a month, usually the third Wednesday of each month, to take slides of your work. Two- and three-dimensional works are eligible.

The cost is \$15 per shot for 3 digital files one (1) tiff file, a 72 dpi jpeg (suitable for e-mail or web) and a 300 dpi jpeg (suitable for print) file on a CD. For an additional fee, three (3) slides will be provided upon request. Work must be dropped off between 9:30 and 10 am on the day of the shoot and picked up between 4 and 5 pm on the same day. Artists must fill out the sign up form and provide a check made out to Greg Staley for the full amount.

Please contact Steve Munoz at 703-228-0560 or smunoz@arlingtonva.us for more information. Or visit <http://www.arlingtonarts.org/venues/lee-arts-center.aspx> and fill out the Slide Services Form.

Upcoming dates: Wednesdays, October 20, November 17, December 15, 2010

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Studio Tips and Shortcuts

Have you tried any studio tips that have appeared in The Cracked Pot? Did it work for you? Are you using the new technique all the time? Or maybe you tried a studio tip and it didn't work out so well. Please let us know so we can share this feedback with other potters.

- ❖ **Easy way to recycle clay.** Put all your scraps (dry, wet, moist, whatever) in a closed bucket. Keep the clay pushed down and compacted with the end of a board (the end of a 2x4 works great, but don't leave the board in the bucket). Sprinkle a LITTLE water on top each time you add scraps, just enough to slick the top. If you add dry scraps, sprinkle a little more water on top and beat them down with the board. Keep the clay level. Keep the lid closed. It evens out and will be ready when you need it, if you like soft clay.

*~ ~ I tried this technique and it works quite well. Of course, you still need to wedge < *sigh* >. Grace Lynt*

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## Workshop Reviews

We invite all readers to send in their reviews of workshops and/or classes that they have attended. You can also send the basic information about the workshop together with your impressions and recommendations, and let the newsletter editor develop the write-up for the newsletter. So, don't let "I can't write" stop you from sharing your experiences with us!

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Upcoming Workshops & Events

Also, please check our website for lists of classes and workshops in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. We encourage members who attend these workshops to share their experiences with us.

❖ **Crystalline Glazes at Northern Virginia Community College (Alexandria, VA)**

Bill Schran will be teaching a crystalline glazes seminar on Saturdays during the Spring Semester. If interested, make sure to register at NoVA and keep an eye out for this class, which fills up very quickly.

❖ **Nan Rothwell Workshops (Faber, VA)**

For information, contact Nan Rothwell at 434-263-4023 or www.nanrothwellpottery.com

❖ **Lee Arts Center (Arlington, VA)**

For information, check:
<http://www.arlingtonarts.org/venues/lee-arts-center.aspx>

❖ **Creative Clay Studios (Alexandria, VA)**

For information, please visit <http://www.creativeclaypottery.com/> or contact Ed Bull at 703.750.9480 or by email at oneibull@msn.com.

❖ **The Art League (Alexandria, VA)**

For information: <http://www.theartleague.org/>

❖ **Jayne Shatz Workshops (Arnold, MD)**

Jayne offers private sessions and workshops in her home studio year round. Check her website for information: <http://www.jayneshatzpottery.com/>

The Clay Connection

P.O. Box 3214
Merrifield, VA 22116-3214

<http://www.theclayconnection.org>

email: potter@theclayconnection.org

The Clay Connection is a nonprofit organization of potters mainly from the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. Members range from beginners to hobbyists to full time professionals who work in a broad range of styles. The organization offers programs designed to provide its members educational and networking opportunities.

Board Members

President

Marianne Cordyack

Vice President for Programs

Dana Lehrer Danze

Vice President for Membership

Barbara Oksanen

Recording Secretary

Aileen Redding

Treasurer

Curtis Haymore

Conference Planning Team Leader

Marianne Cordyack

Volunteer Coordinator

Ann Granger

Past President

Roberta Couver

Hospitality

Vacant

Internet Resources

Jim Dunning

Lending Library

Ed Bull

Bruce Ciske

Newsletter

Graciela Testa Lynt
(graciela@glyntpottery.com)

❖ **Manassas Clay (Manassas, VA)**

The next session of classes is October 17 to December 11, 2010. For information, contact: 703-330-1040 or <http://www.manassasclay.com>

❖ **Baltimore Clayworks (Baltimore, MD)**

Contact: <http://www.baltimoreclayworks.org/index.html>

❖ **Workhouse Art Center (Lorton, VA)**

For information contact: Dale Marhanka 703-584-2982, dalemarhanka@lortonarts.org

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Classified Ads

This is a new item in our newsletter! If you have pottery equipment, tools or supplies that you wish to buy or sell, please send your information to the editor (graciela@glyntpottery.com) before print dates: March 21, June 21, September 23 and December 21.

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From the President

Hello Everyone!

Those of you who could not attend the John Britt Workshop missed a fun, informative event! John was lots of fun and helped us to better understand the complexities of glazes and various firing methods. Our "experimental" firing at Cone 6 Reduction was very successful. We got lovely copper reds, shinos, and celadons! Many, many thanks to Bill Schran, and Dick White from Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale, for hosting our event and providing their efficient kiln for our firing!

The membership year begins this month and we encourage you to renew your membership to continue to receive news of our events and programs. We upgraded our information distribution method several months ago through the use of a Constant Contact account. This presents information to you in a more organized and easy-to-read format.

I want to give many thanks to Barb Oksanen, who is stepping down as Vice President of Membership, although she will continue to be a part of the Conference 2011 Planning Committee. Also many thanks to Aileen Redding, who is stepping down as Secretary after serving in that capacity for 4 years! Both positions need new people to take over. Please let me hear from you! marianne@cordyack.com

The Board of Directors meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month starting at 10AM. We usually meet at the Packard Center right off the Beltway in Annandale, but we are meeting in member's homes for a couple of months while the Packard Center is being renovated. We welcome anyone who would like to attend!

This is usually a very busy time for artists as we all prepare for gift-making and upcoming sales of our work. The Clay Connection will sponsor a Holiday sale on Saturday, December 4th at the Vienna Community Center. We hope many of you will plan to participate!

Enjoy this upcoming crazy, busy time of year—and here's to many happy firings!

~ ~ *Marianne Cordyack*

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM

October 2010 to September 2011

The Clay Connection welcomes your membership. Complete this form and send it with a check or money order for annual dues of **\$35** payable to The Clay Connection to:

THE CLAY CONNECTION
c/o Membership Director
Post Office Box 3214
Merrifield, VA 22116-3214

The membership year begins in October and ends the following September. Individuals can become members at any time during the year; however, all memberships expire on 30 September. The membership fee is not prorated.

Mr. Ms. Mrs. Dr. New Member Renewing Member

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone Number(s): _____

Email Address: _____

Areas of interest: _____

Local Pottery Affiliation: _____

May we publish your contact information in the membership directory? Yes No

The Clay Connection has no paid staff and relies on active membership participation to ensure continued success.

Please select up to 3 of the following activities and check the appropriate boxes to indicate the activities suitable for your involvement.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biennial Clay Conference | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop Setup | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity (external) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Empty Bowls, Bowl Collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity (internal) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High School Show | <input type="checkbox"/> Shows & Sales |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality & Holiday Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Coordination |

Please call me on an as-needed basis

You will be contacted when volunteers are needed for your chosen activities.

Do you have any suggestions for future educational programs and events; we would love to hear about them. _____
