thored *The Potter's Eye: Art and Tradition in North Carolina Pottery* with Nancy Sweezy in conjunction with an exhibition of the same name at the North Carolina Museum of Art, which was on view October 2005–March 2006.

While Hewitt uses color sparingly in his work, David Gurney’s ceramic bowls, trees of life and menorahs explode with pigment. Gurney, a Southern California native, borrows freely from the traditions of Mexican pottery. Each red-and-white earthenware piece is handmade separately without molds. For his trees, trunks and feet are thrown while branches are made from coils of clay. Gurney’s work is meant to be whimsical. It comes alive through the extravagant use of color and detail. However, it’s that same whimsical quality that might cause some viewers to judge the work less seriously based on the rainbow of green, yellow, lavender, maroon, sienna brown, black and light blue that the artist uses. Beyond the color, small 3-D shapes sprout like flower buds from the body of a Gurney piece. Grasshoppers, birds, male and female figures, acorns, leaves, flower blossoms, stars and ears of corn are just some of the images that dance on the edges of his work. His dishes are glazed in detailed brushwork with a story packed into each piece.

Sauvion assembled this year’s exhibition to cater to a wide variety of tastes. By mixing up styles, she said, “I’m able to present work I love and what people love.” While the work in the show didn’t produce any surprises, the artists shown handle their craft with confidence and demonstrate work that’s rich in spirit and meaning.

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Home: Wood-Fire Interpretations

by Dorothy Joiner

Curated by Simon Levin (www.woodfire.com), who includes his own work, together with that of Bede Clarke and Liz Lurie, “Home: Wood-Fire Interpretations,” on view recently at Atlanta’s Signature Shop and Gallery (www.thesignatureshop.com) offered the viewer first a frisson of perceptual delights. But in the face of such understated refinement of contour and subtlety of coloration, the visual pleasure soon led to ruminations on the rich archetypal associations of the hearth, fire and containers.

Favoring pitchers because, as he says, they are “active and look like a working form—as though they’re ready to do something,” Bede Clarke presented several stunning examples. One—tall, altered from a wheel-thrown round into an ellipse—sported a handle that echoes the oval body. A decidedly angular spout raised above the lip offset the curving shape. Assigning the pitcher distinct sides—as opposed to a sphere, which “always moves away from you”—the elliptical form renders a three-dimensional object virtually two-dimensional. Clarke also makes other “working forms.” An agreeably plump teapot, for example, repeated his predilection for altering a round into an oval.
began to assemble them in clusters. Sharing only a peaked “roofline,” the tiny structures were dissimilar in almost every other aspect. Each had a distinctive, curving “contour,” a different color—from lavender to gray to brown to amber—and an atypical surface: attractively grainy, covered with bold, slightly curving striations, or smoother with only variations in hue. Undersized squares in non-uniform numbers stood for windows, and slit-like rectangles imitated doors. Evocative both visually and symbolically, the shadowed indentations suggested unseen interiors, the inside that defines a home rather than merely a house. It is there that one imagines the hearth around which the family gathers, generating love and community.

Not only did the exhibition showcase superb craftsmanship; it also gave visual expression to the interlocking archetypes of hearth, fire and dwellings. “A solar center,” according to Jean Chevalier, the hearth is honored in most cultures, giving off light and heat, it draws people to itself. As the site of food preparation, it is the epicenter of existence, nurturing and enhancing life. Analogous to the hearth, the
upfront

wood-fired kiln employs fire to make containers designed to cook and consume food. These record that mysterious interchange between chance and intention that constitutes human life.

NCECA Clay National

The NCECA 2007 Clay National Biennial Exhibition will be on display March 13–June 23 at the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft (www.kentuckyarts.org) in Louisville, Kentucky. This year’s jurors were Syd Carpenter, Nick Kripal and Silvie Granatelli.

It was a great pleasure to view the vast array of objects presented for the 2007 Clay National Exhibition this year,” said Granatelli. “Out of the hundreds of images we viewed, we locked down on 83 pieces for the show. It is a varied show, covering many points of view, many styles and techniques. The quality of work is high. I felt there was so much great work that it humbled me to have been in the position to have to choose. It was also a pleasure to award the purchase and merit awards for this show and to know that these awards will honor the recipients and hopefully make a difference in their lives.”

“I agreed to be one of the juror’s for this show because I thought it would be a great opportunity to view and assess the state of the art in contemporary ceramics,” commented Kripal. “I don’t spend much time perusing the various ceramic publications and felt that acting as a juror would be a quick, albeit intense, exposure to the current work of established practitioners and young emerging artists. I was unprepared for the intensity of the experience. It was two full days of viewing/reviewing, analyzing/reanalyzing, discussion, selecting/rejecting, discussion, reselecting/reconsidering, and more discussion. I believe that the final pieces selected for this show were the best in terms of content/form, vision/tradition, and craft/studio practice.”

“A short list of issues including Religion, Science, Race, Politics, Sexuality and Aesthetics are all given voice in this latest edition of the NCECA National,” said Carpenter. “The disparate views are many beginning with the sexually precocious objects of Jason Briggs and Scott Bennett…. In contrast, ash settling on the austere works of Bede Clarke, Jill Franke, Judith Duff, Jennifer Holt, Gail Nichols and Kenneth Pincus show reverence for tradition…. Many more works in the exhibition are equally if not more evocative. Repeat viewings recommended.”

Domesticizing: Interior/Exterior Relations

“Domesticizing: Interior/Exterior Relations,” an exhibition featuring the works of Toronto, Canada, artist Wendy Walgate and