

CRAFTSMANSHIP  
IS NOT ENOUGH

100 years of Ceramics  
at Central Saint Martins

Courtesy David Gill Gallery



**Fredrikson Stallard**

**Rock  
2016**

# Introduction

## By Anthony Quinn

Anthony Quinn is Course  
Leader of BA Ceramic  
Design and Subject Leader  
for Ceramics

In the 1950s, when Dora Billington proclaimed 'Craftsmanship alone is not enough', I wonder if she was aware her words would still resonate so strongly over 60 years later. By defining the approach that she fostered in the pottery studio of the Central School she identified, and eloquently named, a key philosophy that still drives the course today. Namely, to look beyond the material to its context, its challenges and its possibility for poetic intervention.

It's also testament to how active and absorbing ceramics at Central Saint Martins is that our centenary passed unnoticed (we are nearer 104 years old). But it's been a busy century demonstrated by a glance at our alumni list, a who's who of 20th century ceramics.

Ceramic Design at Central Saint Martins, as the Central School of Art and Design came to be, is in a constant state of purposeful experimentation recasting the traditional scope of the subject. This takes no small amount of energy from the course team and a huge belief from the students. But we are bound by a material curiosity, working with something so mercurial as clay, the embodiment of Billington's proclamation.

On the subject of clay camaraderie, prominent Course Leaders such as Gilbert Harding Green and Kathryn Hearn followed Billington's lead cementing the course at the heart of the subject. I am proud to follow in that line and to be entrusted with a course ambition to be an active custodian for the subject and a world-leading centre of excellence for ceramic education.

This book captures a fraction of the course's history, its development over a hundred years and its future trajectory.

We embark enthusiastically on our second century having navigated a complex educational context seeing many changes in the UK and beyond. The course is a thriving community of practice, our graduates are provocateurs and our institution continues to uphold the value of designing through making.

We continue to answer Billington's call to adventure!



有润国际  
YOURUN INTERNATIONAL



ISBN 978-0-9956001-1-9

This publication was created in association with the exhibition:

*Craftsmanship Alone is Not Enough*

Lethaby Gallery, Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London

17 January – 11 February, 2017

Mixing together work by alumni with current staff and students, *Craftsmanship Alone is Not Enough* celebrated the course's rich history and its continuing role as leader in material and design education.

With thanks to the following people for their generous support:

Rob Kessler, Nick Rhodes, Teleri Lloyd-Jones, Jo Ortmans, Andy Allum, Naomi Bailey, Simeon Featherstone, Madeleine Buckley, Craig Barnes, Sarah Campbell and Anna Buruma in the CSM Museum and Study Collection. Finally to all the exhibitors for their generosity in lending work for the exhibition.

This publication was generously supported by the Product, Ceramic, Industrial Design programme, Central Saint Martins.

# Contents

5	<b>Maham Anjum</b> Q&A
6	<b>Alison Britton</b> Central Ceramics
11	<b>Agalis Manessi</b> Q&A
18	<b>Robin Levien</b> Q&A
20	<b>Duncan Hooson</b> You know about this clay stuff, right?
22	<b>Christopher Headley</b> Q&A
28	<b>Sarah Christie</b> Q&A
29	<b>John Chipperfield</b> Q&A
30	<b>Rob Kessler</b> Beyond Billington
33	<b>Kathryn Hearn</b> Q&A
36	<b>James Evans</b> Q&A
38	<b>Andy Allum</b> Q&A
40	<b>Emma Lacey</b> Mastering ceramics
41	<b>Ian Stallard</b> Q&A
42	<b>Ta Duck</b>



## Q&A: MAHAM ANJUM

Maham Anjum is an award-winning designer, potter and researcher. She has developed products for Jamie Oliver, Habitat and Queensbury Hunt among many others.

### Why did you study at CSM?

I'd heard of the course and I met John Chipperfield (Chip) before I applied, he inspired me.

### What are your best memories of studying at CSM?

The bar on a Friday night. Tutors that are like family. Late nights working in workshops.

### What is your worst memory of studying at CSM?

Disaster in the kiln with an alkaline glaze. Disasters with plaster.

### How did the course shape and define your future career?

It taught me to break rules.

### What were the creative influences on you at the time?

Artisan potters making functional pottery in south Asia who I spent time researching while on the course. Designers – David Queensberry and Martin

Hunt. Lucio Fontana's work in porcelain. The work of painters Frank Auerbach and Howard Hodgkin.

### How do you perceive the value of ceramics?

It represents our culture, it's an important part of our lives. Things that we use every day in life have the most impact on us.

### What excites you about ceramics today?

The process, the failures that lead to ideas, the butterflies in the stomach before opening the kiln. Pushing boundaries through collaborating with chefs and artists.

### What do you see in the future for ceramics?

The hope that people will still design and make beautiful ceramics and use them in daily life. Explore and expand the material.

**Image: Cinnamon Club range, 2010. Larger shallow bowls handmade by the Biyagama Potters in Sri Lanka**

**Maham Anjum graduated in 2003**

## Central Ceramics:



Dora Billington (centre) and students, 1935

## Dora Billington and Gilbert Harding Green

By Alison Britton

'After a survey of the progress of the potter's craft throughout the ages one turns anxiously and critically to its position to-day to find that, while the mass production of pottery tends through its very efficiency to a more and more mechanical result, an entirely new type of 'Studio Potter' has arisen in our time, with aims and ideals that are primarily aesthetic. For many of these pottery is a medium which gives scope to combine painting and sculpture, form and colour, without necessarily having any utilitarian value whatever, being in fact a species of so-called fine art; it has even been described as one of the purest forms of art through having little or no representational value.'

In this way Dora Billington began the last chapter of her small but incisive and enlightening book *The Art of the Potter* published in 1937. She acknowledges the new idea of the sphere of meaning of pottery and echoes some comments of Herbert Read. I want to quote more of this passage because it sums up so accurately the breadth of the underlying philosophy of the pottery department at the Central School in the middle decades of the 20th century.

'Allowing for their different purposes when considering modern pottery, mass production and studio production must at present be viewed as two separate things which although not necessarily conflicting are doing no better than running parallel. The world has use for them both, but as co-operative forces. At no time has either art or industry profited by standing aloof from the other; and it must be recognised that an economic condition has now been reached when the two must work together for the advantage of themselves and in the service of the community.'

Miss Billington steered the pottery from being a sub-section of various generalised art and design schools, towards having an entity as a department, which ran both evening classes and a three year full-time day course called the Central Diploma Course. By the late 1940s under the new and reforming energies of the principal William Johnstone, the college was dominated by returning ex-servicemen and women taking the opportunity of an art education. In this ebullient

and expansive post-war period, pottery courses at the Central School came to represent the most progressive front of the art and craft of ceramics.

Miss Billington was in her middle years by this time. She was born in 1890 in Staffordshire, and for at least three generations her family had been involved in the pottery industry of Stoke-on-Trent. She was very familiar with all aspects of industrial production. This is clear from the beautifully concise way in which she can describe processes in the earlier technical chapters of *The Art of the Potter*. As a child she was surrounded by the discussion of production and by the pots themselves 'and at a very early age I saw that they were not all they should be'. A crusading spirit took her to the local Hanley School of Art and she recalled 'getting hold of some Japanese prints and handing them over to one of my father's gilders, hoping that they might prove to be a good influence.'<sup>1</sup> For a couple of years after art school she worked in the small studio pottery of Bernard Moore, famous for his glazes, and gained decorating experience, and then in 1912 she got a scholarship to the Royal College of Art in London, where they put her in the Design School. But in London she also met Bernard Leach, Michael Cardew and William Staite Murray, and began to realise that the potential for the individual production of the 'artist-potter', and the craft of throwing in particular, was of great importance.

During her time as a student at the RCA she also became a teacher there – the wealth of her practical experience in Stoke enabling her in 1915 to take on the running of the pottery, for the few students who worked with clay, when Richard Lunn died. She continued to teach there until 1924 when the more elevated job of Instructor in Pottery at the RCA was offered to William Staite Murray, a post he won in competition with Leach, in 1925. Dora Billington went to work at the Central School.

When she left the RCA it appears that specific knowledge of the nuts and bolts of ceramics left with her. Oliver Watson says of the new Staite Murray ethos 'while the atmosphere he created was certainly an artistic stimulus, most of his students had to resort to Dora Billington's evening classes at the Central School of Art to learn the technical basis of their subject.'

In 1937 ceramics were part of the 'School of Painted and Sculptured Architectural Decoration.'

It is not clear which department of Central the pottery belonged to in 1925, but the Pottery Gazette for August of that year notes that 'The record of the Pottery Section at the Central School is distinguished, and its equipment has recently been increased by the installation of high temperature kilns which make possible the production of stoneware. Very interesting results have already been obtained. It is inevitable, perhaps, that the younger generation should be influenced by the work of Mr Bernard Leach and Mr W Staite Murray, but there is little evidence of indolent plagiarism.'

Whereas in the early years of the century 'pottery' had been only a china painting class taught by the famous Stoke decorator Alfred Powell, by 1937, when Miss Billington was publishing her book, pottery was part of the 'School of Painted and Sculptured Architectural Decoration.' A range of





Modelling workshop,  
1936

forming, decorating and glazing processes were taught, including mould-making, casting, and the jigger and jolly machine, which were industrial rather than craft processes, and ceramic chemistry lessons. Other classes in the department were in studies from the figure, draped and nude, composition, lettering, casting in plaster and metal, and carving in wood, stone and ivory. There was also a mosaic and mural decoration class.

By 1940 Miss Billington had been joined by Gilbert Harding Green as an assistant teacher. London-born in 1906, as a very young man he lived abroad for some years, in Brazil and Italy. He came back to England to study, attending painting classes at

Chelsea, and modelling classes at Central with Frank Dobson and John Skeaping, (who appears with Dora Billington on the staff listing for the Architectural Decoration department in 1937). Harding Green presumably found his way into Miss Billington's class for clay modelling, and thereby embarked on a long and close collaboration with her, and an engagement with the continuing evolution of the ceramics course which was to preoccupy him for the rest of his career. He exhibited quite frequently before the war 'decorated pottery and modelled heads which owed nothing to the oriental traditions of Leach, the work of Staite Murray or the English traditions of Stoke on Trent'. But by about 1950 Gilbert Harding Green, or HG as he was known, devoted himself to teaching, taking over the leadership of the department in 1956 when Miss Billington suffered a stroke and retired. Her second book, *The Technique of Pottery* was written after the stroke. She died in 1968.

It is interesting to note, from changes apparent in successive prospectuses, that however the philosophy of the pottery department itself was crystallizing, its status in the college as a whole was less clear.

The college was evacuated to Nottingham during the war and part of the London building destroyed. The prospectus for 1940 reveals that the depart- ➤



## Q&A: AGALIS MANESSI

Agalis Manessi draws inspiration from ceramic folk traditions, updating centuries-old Malollica for the contemporary world.

### Why did you choose ceramics?

I was inspired to experiment with clay by one of my tutors at Hammersmith College who was a member of the Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band and I loved the stuff.

### What are your best memories of studying at Central?

Monday mornings with Gordon Baldwin, Thursdays drawing with Geoffrey Rodgers, exposure to many other creative disciplines.

### What is your worst memory of studying at Central?

Terrifying drawing crits.

### How did the course shape and define your future career?

It inspired me to make it my life's work.

### What are the main differences in education between then and now?

I worked part-time in further education for nearly

forty years and watched the resources and interest expand and then sadly in the last decade everything became squeezed to the point where very few courses were left and yet the demand for access to ceramics has been increasing.

### Why have you continued to work in ceramics?

I continue to work with clay, after 40 years I feel I am just about getting somewhere, too late to stop now!

### How do you perceive the value of ceramics?

It allows opportunity for limitless personal expression across a range of abilities.

### What do you see in the future for ceramics?

Lots of scope for public engagement that hopefully might alert the powers that be to the value for expanding more opportunities to work with clay.

**Image: Sleeping dog for Franz Marc, 2016**  
Agalis Manessi graduated in 1976.

ment responsible for the pottery had shifted its scope more towards what would we would call fine art, and is called the 'School of Drawing, Modelling, and Allied Subjects'. The Central also has a new School of Painting and absorbed courses from the Westminster and Chelsea Schools of Art.

In 1945 the pottery was included in a new category, the School of Furniture and Interior Decoration. Applicants are told that they can specialise in either furniture or interior design, and it would seem that the broad range of experiential, practical, technical, theoretical, and aesthetic understanding of the ceramic medium that HG and Miss Billington were offering was tangential to these main aims.

However in 1947 the school is re-titled 'Furniture, Interior Decoration, Pottery and Stained Glass'. The prospectus notes that pottery students are now taught to pack and fire the kilns for high and low temperature firings; and in addition to the lectures given by Miss Billington on simple Pottery Chemistry, there will be lectures on the appreciation of pottery 'from time to time'.

Her aptitude for this is clearly shown in *The Art of the Potter* where she gives a comprehensive history of the medium, starting with primitive hand-built pottery, and proceeds, largely through a straightforward discussion of methods, to illustrate the key achievements in ceramic history. The chapter on 'Glazed and Painted Pottery' culminates in the story of tin-glazed wares and the way in which that important, painterly technique travelled with the conquering Moors from the Islamic Empire into Spain and thence the rest of Europe, inspiring Italian Majolica, and Dutch and later English Delft.

Her account of the history of pottery is significant for the times in that she gives a very rounded world view, with no trace of an orientalist bias. This compares interestingly with Bernard Leach's *A Potter's Book*, in which his quintessential chapter 'Towards a Standard' emphatically locates Chinese pots from the Tang and Sung dynasties as the supreme models. A sentence on the world's best pottery does however include 'early Persian, Syrian, Hispano-Moresque, German Bellarmine, some Delft and English slipware'.

Picasso had inspired them all, as well as ideas that came from their own >



Courtesy © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Alison Britton

Outpour, 2012

fluent skills. The Arts Council exhibition of 1950, 'Picasso in Provence' which included his ceramics was seminal. To give an idea of the essential qualities of throwing that made it form the core of their work and their teaching, here is Newland, writing much later, but his vision was consistent.

'Throwing is concerned with inner force – dynamic growth from the wheel, like a triangle on its apex or a crocus from its stem striking its way upwards... All good thrown pots must express joie de vivre, uplift and umph – this is the 'tom-tom' taste for form which has been given down through the ages. There are no saggy pots in the British Museum.'

In the post-war years there was a lot of flexibility and reciprocal access between the London art schools, and free interchange between the various fine art and design disciplines. William Johnstone encouraged fine artists to teach across the whole curriculum, and all Central students had a Basic Design element to their course. William Turnbull taught this, and Eduardo Paolozzi, who also worked in the textiles department. These classes had a profound impact on Gordon Baldwin, who was a student from 1951–54. Gordon recalls that William Johnstone took great interest in every department, and expected his staff to have frequent exhibitions. He was generally awe-inspiring but made the whole place feel important. Baldwin was offered the job of technician in the pottery, a device often employed by Billington and HG to foster the promising students and keep them in a creative orbit. And the creative orbit moved in an excitingly experimental direction, which began to sideline the wheel in the pursuit of more surprising forms.

'The Central represented a modern movement in ceramics. By the late fifties there was a shift to a more monumental style in undecorated stoneware. With the encouragement of Gilbert Harding Green... Dan Arbeid began to make fresh, daring, slab-built, folded and coiled stoneware. On his return from Baghdad in 1957 Ian Auld started making fine slab-built bottles. By the end of the fifties the Central was associated with the extraordinary sculptural work of Gordon Baldwin, Ruth Duckworth, and Gillian Lowndes.'<sup>ii</sup>

It is worth noting that both Arbeid and Auld were technicians first rather than students, and both had a subsequent substantial teaching role at Central. Auld had first done ceramics with Newland at the Institute, and went on to lead the department at Camberwell in an ideally progressive phase. Duckworth and Lowndes were students who became part-time teachers in the department.

Baldwin was taken on to the teaching staff in 1956 and had a part time job there for three decades. His was the hand-building day – encouraging

generations of first years, including me, into looking with more intelligent eyes at form and space.

Alongside the diploma students of the 1940s and 1950s were other evening and part-time students. Alan Caiger-Smith was an evening student in 1954–5 who wanted to learn to throw and paint on pots. He managed discreetly to extend his hours, and the Central experience changed the course of his life. He became a leading practitioner and expert on tin glaze and lustre decoration. (In previous decades some evening students, such as Katharine Pleydell-Bouverie in the early 1920s had become very significant.)

In the early 1960s Harding Green endorsed the change of the department's name from 'Pottery' to 'Ceramics', and later the three-year full-time course was assessed and achieved the new 'Diploma in Art and Design' status, following the Coldstream report. There were no longer any evening or part-time students. HG now had a full-time post. Although in theory the Dip AD did not foster the crafts at first, well-structured courses like this one flourished. For one thing, liberal studies and the history of art had always been encouraged by HG anyway, and were now formally on the syllabus. The monthly drawing crit is something he is remembered for by ex-students, some of whom continued the tradition when planning their own courses. Second-year students were introduced to some industrial techniques, first by a week of visiting factories in Stoke-on-Trent, followed by studio work on the lathe, and plaster model and mould making for slip casting. This was taught by Dan Arbeid, though he was a hand-builder at heart. Many more materials were in use in the department by the 1960s, a wider range of clays, pigments, and enamel colours for on-glaze decorating. Silk-screen transfer printing was set up in an extra studio. In the mid sixties the bulk of the department moved into the new building.

In 1966 the Craftsman Potters Association was the venue for a historic evening meeting to discuss the proper training for a potter. Lines were harshly



Gilbert Harding Green with Roger Turrell, working on the 'jigger' and 'jolly' machine in the early 1960s



Kiln unpacking,  
1935

drawn between potters and educators. Harding Green and Henry Hammond, from Farnham, both represented successful broadminded Dip AD courses in ceramics, which were derided by potters such as David Leach for whom there was no truly professional path other than apprenticeship – ‘the slower, radical, disciplined drill of the workshop.’<sup>iii</sup>

This was the course I joined in 1967. One of my abiding memories is of the ceramic history slide lectures given informally in the darkened studio by John Colbeck and Bonnie van de Wetering, using their own collection of slides. They seemed to have been everywhere, to all the museums in Europe with ceramics collections, in the Land Rover. It felt like education in the real sense, an enlightened, connected, impassioned, unpompous, drawing out of our interest. It has underpinned my feeling for ceramics ever since.

These two were, I think, the guardians of Harding Green’s liberal approach that nurtured imagination as well as skill. They had overlapped as students and Bonnie began teaching part-time in 1961, becoming Senior Lecturer in 1965. John took over William Newland’s throwing day in 1962, and left to run the department in Corsham in 1970.

Richard Slee and Andrew Lord were students when I was, which suggests perhaps that the dominant tendency was towards the artier end of the

spectrum. (But the walking teaset, jokey and enormously mass-produced, was also a by-product of the department in the early 1970s.) Robin Levien, who went on to join the Queensberry Hunt design partnership, and Rob Kessler, were both enrolled in 1970. Kessler’s own work is in fine art but he teaches currently on Central Saint Martins’ design-oriented ceramics course. The sculptor Edward Allington was in the last intake of ceramics students that HG interviewed.

Harding Green retired in 1971 and his leaving present from staff and students was a parrot. His retirement years were filled with the beautifying of several gardens and houses, and he died in Wiltshire in 1982. Bonnie van de Wetering left in 1972 shortly after his retirement.

Dora Billington would, I think, have approved of this continuing evidence of change and the renewed attempt to embrace both art and industry. Writing in 1956 about a new exhibition of the work of Newland, Hine and Vergette she comments:

‘But won’t this amusing contemporary pottery very quickly date? Of course it will, just as quickly as a pastiche of seventeenth century slipware, or thirteenth century Sung wares; all aspects of twentieth century studio pottery; to be judged, a hundred, or even fifty years hence, by standards probably very different to ours. The standards of good workmanship which we recognise in all good pots of any period, and to which we cling, passionately and a little dogmatically, need to be restated and interpreted afresh by each generation; and each making its own imaginative contribution. Why are we in this country so afraid of imaginative experiment? Even a little breaking of the rules would be a tonic occasionally. Every pottery studio in this country might well have inscribed on its walls, “Craftsmanship is not enough.”’

This essay first appeared in *Making Their Mark: Art, Craft and Design at the Central School 1896 – 1966*, edited by Sylvia Backemeyer, Herbert Press, London, 2000.

<sup>i</sup> John Farleigh, *The Creative Craftsman*, G. Bell and Sons, 1950, Chapter 12, p.189

<sup>ii</sup> Tanya Harrod, “From A Potter’s Book to *The Maker’s Eye: British Studio Ceramics 1940 – 1982*”, *The Harrow Connection*, Northern Centre for Contemporary Art, 1989, p.20.

<sup>iii</sup> Tanya Harrod, *The Crafts in Britain in the 20th Century*, Yale, 1999, p.240. From ‘*Training the Potter*’ in *The Craftsmen Potters Association Yearbook*, 1966, p.29.



## Q&A: ROBIN LEVIEN

Robin Levien is one of the country's most successful product designers (his Rosenthal Thomas tableware has been a bestseller for over two decades) and was awarded the honour of Royal Designer for Industry in 1995.

### Why did you choose ceramics?

In a way ceramics chose me. I was a 14 year old schoolboy whose favourite subject was art. A new art teacher arrived and brought a kiln and clay to the school. He told us to draw what we wanted to make. I found a book on Chinese art and drew a seated Buddha. At the class the following week my teacher said 'isn't that a bit ambitious Levien but go ahead if you must'. He explained the basics of ceramics and I started coiling. A couple of weeks later the kiln door was opened and my 30cm tall Buddha sat resplendent in the

ruins of the other students pots. They hadn't let their pieces dry out enough. I got a pat on the back and that was it, I was hooked. I have worked with ceramics almost every day since, that's 50 years.

### What is your worst memory of studying at Central?

I made a piggy bank for a girlfriend. It was in the kiln room waiting to be biscuit fired when I found it in pieces. There was a suggestion that our Gilbert Harding Green had given it a sharp tap with his walking cane. I am sure if he did that his judgement of its aesthetic merit was correct but his way of letting me know felt a bit harsh.

### How did the course shape and define your future career?

I learnt to design through making at Central and have applied this methodology ever since. Even now with the amazing techniques available in our digital world, a model is handmade of every design that I am involved in developing at Studio Levien. All five of the designers at Studio Levien are ceramics graduates.

### Why have you continued to work in ceramics?

I got hooked on ceramics as a teenager and have loved working with it since. I have been designing ceramics nearly every day for the past 40 years. I work in both the bathroom and tableware industries, as a friend kindly pointed out: 'so Robin you design

products for both ends of the alimentary canal'.

### What excites you about ceramics today?

It is the endless diversity of ceramics that excites me. From a perfectly flat floor tile the size of a door to a hand thrown bowl in a Tenmoku glaze, one the antithesis of the other, both beautiful, both ceramic.

### What do you see in the future for ceramics?

The durability, the cleanliness, the coldness, the warmth, the beauty of ceramics guarantees its future benefits. Imagine a day without it.

**Image (left): Jelly Mould Tea Set, 1973**  
**Image (right): Thomas Trend Porcelain, 1983**  
**Robin Levien graduated in 1973**

# You know about this clay stuff, right?

## Materials & Temperatures

By Duncan Hooson

Duncan Hooson is Head of the Ceramics Department at Morley College and Stage One Leader for BA Ceramic Design at CSM. He creates work for private commission and in the public realm.

Stuff is the word people use these days. I've always liked it. It's extreme shorthand to describe the science, materials, techniques, processes, knowledge and understanding for a subject. It also simply labels the objects that help and enrich our daily lives.

For those involved in ceramics all this stuff really matters. Clay is one of the world's most abundant materials. It's the stuff of life. Leave that ceramic buried long enough and it'll be clay again. The clay 30 metres below London Bridge was laid down and untouched for 54 million years until now. Funny to think Transport for London estimate 54 million journeys a year going through the station. Facts about clay surface all the time.

As designers, potters, makers, and artists, we use manufactured, processed material taken from a plastic bag or container. But as we use it, we need to get to know it. It's a living thing. Making the marvellous from mud. It's fabulously simple but extraordinarily complex too and the results are often hard won from this useful and life enhancing stuff.

It's without doubt a key ingredient in the material world we live in. It is formed by the weathering, washing, wearing, erosion and movement of rocks, mainly granite. It has a mother, the mineral group called Feldspars. These are altered by hydrolysis, which forms other minerals such as Kaolinites and Smectites and Montmorillonite. Great names eh? When we simply use Clay to describe it all?

Clayheads have been getting to grips with this for years and years and... well, the Venus of Dolni Vestonice, from the Czech Republic, shows we've been making in clay since 26,000 BCE.

We have primary clays that haven't moved much from where they were formed and secondary clays that have. It's underfoot in most places we go. Life on Mars? Clay may hold the key – really! It's why the Rover Curiosity is on Mars exactly where it is, as Javier Cuadros, from the Natural History Museum, is now analysing a presence similar to that of Earth's Smectite clay minerals.

All types of clay, about 30 in all, have a sheet-like structure comprising tetrahedral arranged silicate and octahedral arranged aluminate groups should you wish or need to know. Does this matter? Geotechnical engineers thankfully think so.

They also understand Quick or Marine clay and the terrifying property of liquefaction. Ask them about earthquakes where it is spewed up and sets like concrete. It destroys buildings and entire areas when the world shakes.

Clays slide due to their microscopic flat platelets – we know this plasticity when getting our hands dirty enjoying the stuff. We think, reflect and iterate while we design for it. We then move, slide, squash, stick, pour, slurp, drip, and dry. We can pinch, coil, slab, throw, extrude, turn, trim, pour, cast, CNC, 3D print, jigger and jolly as we, sometimes with machines' help, make forms with it.

We can rehydrate during this, wrap and care for it. Then it's brittle, leather-hard, greenware, bone dry, heated, and shrinks.

We fire, we bisque, we optionally glaze, we fire again and again and maybe again and again. On and on as often as you like.

# Q&A: CHRISTOPHER HEADLEY



Christopher Headley is a Melbourne-based ceramic artist who exhibits and undertakes residencies internationally (Thailand, Spain, USA, Taiwan, Japan).

## Why did you choose ceramics?

I simply enjoyed working with clay.

## What are your best memories of studying at Central?

The whole experience felt like I had been given a key to open a door into the wide world of ceramics. I have used that key to journey to South America to search for pre-Colombian pots, work on ceramic archaeological sites in Thailand, reside in a ceramic museum in Taiwan and have just returned from a three-month residency in Japan which also gave me an opportunity to visit Jingdezhen in China.

## How did the course shape and define your future career?

I felt that I had, at my fingertips, so many processes that I could free up my thoughts, develop the skills and produce whatever my imagination could come up with. I still feel the same now some 40 years on. It certainly got me into the tertiary education system over here in Australia, both as a teacher and a postgraduate student.

## What were the creative influences on you at the time?

I remember seeing a show by Gwyn Hanssen Pigott at the British Craft Centre that just blew me away. All the pieces were wood fired bowls, every single one! Meanwhile we, the students at the Central, were all trying to outdo each other with the most weird and wonderful, conceptually driven ceramic creations. I was so taken aback by the idea that a gallery full of similarly shaped bowls could be so awe-inspiring.

## Why have you continued to work in ceramics?

I had a major solo show here in Melbourne, Australia recently titled, 'War Spoils'. It took the form of an installation and was an anti-war statement. I am planning on returning to Japan in 2017 to make and install a work in one of the buildings, a former bank, that survived the atomic bomb in Hiroshima. Maintaining a belief that art, ceramics in particular, can somehow influence or change the way we live and relate to the world we live in may sound like a hopeless cause, but someone has to do it!

Image: War Spoils, 2015  
Christopher Headley graduated in 1973

Its classification becomes Earthenware and Stoneware depending on the temperature. Typically up to 1,300°C and beyond in some cases before it finally melts and shrinks again!

It's messy, temperamental and wonderful.

We line reservoirs and canals with it.

Bake, cook, drink and eat from it.

Defecate, piss, vomit, wash and bathe in it.

We create conceptual, decorative, visceral, lyrical art with it.

We make big architectural brick and tiled buildings.

Just look at the reflective crocodile tiled roof of the Sydney Opera House.

We make very small micro silica chip things.

Functional, useful, provocative, place-making and site-specific things.

We, mould, speak, and communicate, have conversations outside and inside the community of practice about it.

We leave it for future generations to ponder and try to understand us, enabling archaeologists to find, analyse, explore and theorise the it of it. It'll be here long after we are gone. Walk on the Thames foreshore and put your own thumb in the thumb indent of a sherd from stuff made by a medieval potter or child and be transported.

How much do we understand it?

We have to learn to know and love it.

We make things with this stuff that sticks to our souls.

It's the muddy mud on our boots!

We put it in our mouths daily as toothpaste, cake our face in it to create masks to make us more presentable, bearable and likeable, ease our stomachs, swallow medicines, clarify wine, grow grapes, soften leather with it.

Earth's atmosphere won't harm on re-entry from space because of it.

Ceramic ball bearings keep us moving.

Filtration systems keep us hydrated.

Insulators stop us being electrocuted.

Carburettors keep the air cleaner.

Old and new terracotta systems keep foods longer.

It's super tough stuff.

Anti-stab Kevlar will protect.  
 It protects the cutting bit while deep earth drilling and stabilises the holes during it.  
 It has geotechnical and environmental applications and is used in foundry work for casting metals.  
 The oil industry uses it for filtering and refining petroleum.  
 It's used in water treatment and wastewater management. Doulton's partnership with Balzagette knew the value of it – they moved sewage under and out of London through salt glazed pipes, a smooth ride.  
 It's used in the production of rubber and plastics.  
 It's in this paper you're holding right now.  
 Oh and another thing. Silica compounds are in your mobiles and computers.

We take apprenticeships, degrees, create narratives and graduate with it.  
 Simply touching clay stimulates the senses as fingertip channels of information flood the brain.  
 We can then start to understand and control it.  
 How much understanding does this take?  
 Years and years depending on the level of fascination with it.  
 Deeper knowledge just takes time.  
 It's not a discipline for the impatient.

First timers can gain initial successful results, old timers know it's about doing it again and again and...!

Figured out the making then?  
 All this before the perceived difficult bit of it...  
 the alchemical material science surface of it.  
 It's the bit of ever expanding possibilities of what it should wear.  
 Materials that start to trip off the tongue – nepheline syenite, dolomite, bi-silicates, barium, strontium, talc, lithium among many others combine to produce matt, satin, glossy, crater, crawl and crazy crazed surfaces.

Chrome, copper and cobalt, irons of reds, black, yellow and crocus martis, vanadium and iron spangles sparkles all providing their hidden colours – then salt and soda can be added to it and then it's heated again.  
 We stack in electric, gas or wood kilns, where once coal was used to fire it; saggars were used to protect it. >



Courtesy Hales Gallery

Richard Slee

Dozen Pink Roses  
2016

**It's messy,  
temperamental  
and wonderful.  
We line reservoirs  
and canals with it.  
Bake, cook, drink  
and eat from it.  
Defecate, piss, vomit,  
wash and bathe in it.  
We create conceptual,  
decorative, visceral,  
lyrical art with it.**

We make things with  
this stuff that sticks  
to our souls.

The kilns oxidise and reduce, whether its Anagama, Noborigama, to melt it or simply bonfire it. The transformative power of heat.

Focus, skills, knowledge, perseverance and time are words that spring to mind.

We've built industries, trade, import and export creating household names like Wedgwood, Spode and Doulton with it.

Clocked in and out of a day's work.

Check-out the backstamps to bear witness to the makers of it.

Industry named the many jobs it once did, now not so many, the Jigger and Jollier (a classic double act), while Fettleers, while Fettleers, Dottlers, Dust Dampers, Flinters, Bank Odd Men, Blunger Operators, Clay Treaders, Disintergrater Attendants, Glost Putter Uppers, Muffin Ware Pressers, Pimlico Makers, Saggar Maker's Bottom Knockers were at it daily.

Amateurs, professionals, academics, hobbyists, students, researchers, pupils – lots of labels still. Thinking hands? Making with clay makes people feel good, feel well, feel better. Helps children understand a process and problem solve. Some bring back memories from the past through making. It's truly international and cross-generational, crossing geographical boundaries and cultural divides.

It's all the stuff that we're enthusiastic, opportunistic and end up becoming specialists about. We know what 573°C is.

And in case you don't, it's Quartz Inversion. A fragile stage of change during heating and cooling – a metaphor for the ceramic process?

# Q&A: SARAH CHRISTIE



Sarah Christie is interested in giving voice through ceramics. She utilises clay's place in everyday life with a political charge to engage audiences.

## Why did you study at CSM?

CSM has the only ceramics BA in London, and so maybe it chose me! But I was also excited to be in a school with so many other creative disciplines going on around my own subject, and that dynamism had huge appeal for me.

## What are your best memories of studying at CSM?

Going in early and having quiet time in the workshop; being surrounded by a fantastic, smart and engaged group of people all overflowing with ideas

## What is your worst memory of studying at CSM?

The many moments of lingering self-doubt.

## At college, who made a lasting impression on you?

Realising early in the first year that ceramics could be about ideas as much as it could be about objects. It seems obvious to me now, but in those first weeks, Duncan Hooson really opened my eyes to the

possibilities of ceramics, clay, and the many different paths that could be carved out with this material.

## What excites you about ceramics today?

I am really excited to see ceramics being interpreted in many different contexts, and confronting ideas and big questions. I also see clay as a political material; it's entirely everyday and even potentially banal, yet at the same time it carries messages of protest, allegiance, past and present narratives. That's one of the things I am interested in getting at.

## What do you see in the discipline's future?

I really hope that we will see more young people having the opportunity to work with clay at school, even though it's hard to be hopeful of that at the moment. Which is why I also hope that we will continue to find ways to provide adult education opportunities to allow wider access to ceramics to anyone. On the cliff edge of Brexit, it seems that, we will all need to fight harder for those opportunities.

**Image: Library (detail), 2016  
Sarah Christie graduated in 2016**

# Q&A: JOHN CHIPPERFIELD



John Chipperfield is a ceramist and glassmaker as well as a founding member of the Suffolk Craft Society.

## Why did you study at Central?

I had read Dora Billington's book *The Technique of Pottery* and was impressed, both by her writing and by some of the illustrations of Ian Auld's work. The location in central London appealed to me.

## What are your best memories of studying at Central?

Creating ambitious personal objectives and achieving them.

## What is your worst memory of studying at Central?

Everything was dependent upon our showing at the Diploma exhibition. One of the staff looked at my show and asked 'is that all you've got?!' (As if - 'boy, you're in trouble now!')

Feeling naturally vulnerable and insecure at that time - this sounded like a forecast of impending failure actually reinforced by his taking me to the pub and buying me a double whisky as if to anaesthetize me for the anticipated bad news! However, my pessimism proved to be unjustified.

## How did the course shape and define your future career?

The comparative versatility which the course required us to develop enabled me, with my wife, to run a production workshop accepting a diverse range of commissions including electrical insulators for Hollywood film studios, and for the NASA Space Shuttle, sculptures and tiles from architectural settings, wall tubes to control damp in buildings and many thousands of vessels - especially domestic tablewares - produced by slipcasting, jollyng, throwing and turning, and 'press-moulding' etc.

## What differences do you see in education between then and now?

Fifty years ago we received maintenance grants from our local authorities which enabled us to be more single-minded about our time in college.

We had no computers to work with so our technology was much more based upon manual processes. Photoshop was somewhere you visited to get your films chemically developed and printed.

**John Chipperfield graduated in 1966.**

## By Rob Kessler



Dan Arbeid with Jenny Knowland, lathe turning with clay. Early 1960s

## Beyond Billington

**A brief personal reflection on a lifetime at the Central, 1970–2016**

I arrived at the Central School of Art, as it was then in 1970, fresh from a Foundation in sleepy Solihull, drawn to the bright lights of London and the reputation of the course. *The Art of the Modern Potter* by Tony Birks, published in 1967, featured many of its graduates and teaching staff. The Craftsman Potters Association shop and gallery was flourishing in Soho.

Richard Slee and Alison Britton had just graduated and Andrew Lord was in the third year. It was a watershed moment for the course; it was the final year under the cultured and guiding influence of Gilbert Harding Green, HG as he was known, whose presence with his confident demeanour strolling through the department in his white blazer and silver-topped cane seemed to be from another era. The cane was deployed to point out to the technician which work outside the kiln room was worthy of being fired or not.

This was also a time of unimaginable resources, twelve students in a year and almost a member of staff each day of the week for each year group. A typical week ran like this:

**Monday:** Introduction to hand building with Gordon Baldwin. On the face of it a context-free introduction into the process of forming clay, encouraging clumsy hands to realise the sculptural potential of this messy and miraculous material, clay. Into the mix were added conversations ranging from black holes to the music of Stockhausen.

**Tuesday:** Throwing with Mick Casson. Muddy smocks tied up with string! Effervescent enthusiasm and a passion for the simple mastery of the wheel.

**Wednesday:** Surface design with Eileen Nisbet, a wonderful unassuming teacher who opened a rich world of ceramic decoration, from slip trailing and inlay to underglaze painting and lustre.

**Thursday:** Drawing and ceramic history with Bonnie van de Wetering, visits to London's many museums both large and obscure. The V&A, the Imperial War Museum, the Hunterian at The Royal College of Surgeons. Early Chinese and Peruvian blended with Staffordshire and Picasso, making a heady mix of influences.

**Friday:** Clay and glaze technology with Dan Arbeid, molecular formulae, geology, raw lead glazes, way above the heads of us young would-be potters, but somehow we emerged with the skills to confidently make and apply glazes.

In the second year, our horizons were expanded further as design approaches were introduced with slip casting, screen printing and the annual visit to Stoke-on-Trent to visit manufacturers, a defining part of the course that has continued unbroken for over fifty years. Fine bone china at Wedgwood, sanitary ware at Ideal Standard and electrical porcelain at Allied Insulators all opened our eyes to possibilities beyond the studio. And the teachers kept rolling in, Kenneth Clark, Sidig El Ngoumi, Peter Layton,

Rob Kessler is a visual artist and author who has worked as a technician, lecturer and professor within BA Ceramic Design for over four decades. He was University of the Arts London Chair in Arts, Design and Science until 2016.

Gillian Lowndes, Walter Keeler, and in the time honoured tradition of employing successful graduates Richard Slee returned as technician. On Fridays we had the opportunity to work in another department. I chose photography, which together with all the decorative techniques I had learned had a defining influence on my career.

With the departure of HG, the designer David Reeves was brought in to head the course and lead it in a 'designerly' direction, but his disaffection with the industry meant he encouraged a more arts and crafts, decorative approach. For myself and fellow student Robin Levien this felt like neither fish nor fowl and with the conceit of our own beliefs we actively ploughed our own furrow, he as a designer and myself as an artist. Despite the winds of change there was always room on the course for individuality to flourish and the course continued to produce exciting graduates: sculptor Edward Allington, Professor of Graduate Sculpture at the Slade Peter Allen, designer for Royal Crown Derby and potter Agalis Manessi and ceramic artists Lawson Oyekan, James Evans and Kerry Jameson.

After a brief obligatory spell as a technician I joined the teaching team in 1976 with the departure of drawing tutor Geoffrey Rogers to start a new career in the States. However, like most colleges around the country, as the course rolled on happily through the 1980s it was oblivious to the gathering storm clouds ahead. At Central the storm broke in 1989 when it was informed that it was to close and would develop a joint course with Industrial Design.



Sir Terence Conran on the first BACD client project, circa 1994

Following two years of development and a game of managerial musical chairs at the eleventh hour, the newly appointed head of college threw out a lifeline, to write a new course – Ceramic Design, a distinct alternative to the art/craft offering at Camberwell. Aware of the increasing competition to attract quality students, coupled with the difficulty of marketing a course that was perceived (wrongly) as being 'industrial' and

by default 'less creative', it was imperative to develop and communicate an expanded vision of what Ceramic Design could be.

With Kathryn Hearn as the new Course Leader the ideology reflected emerging design methodologies, in which context and collaboration could create new opportunities beyond the typical gallery route. A defining element being the >



## Q&A: KATHRYN HEARN

**Kathryn Hearn was Course Leader of BACD at CSM from 1989-2015. Her practice reflects the Cambridgeshire Fens, with its liminal, rural but industrial landscape.**

### Why did you choose ceramics?

Epiphany moment at the age of 15. I touched clay and it seemed like I could do anything with it. After that, drawing and painting seemed highly inadequate as a form of expression.

### What students and teachers made a lasting impression?

Many many students and year groups... always those students who saw the course as an opportunity and trusted us, because we then worked in partnership. The staff team absolutely believed in the subject.

### How did the experience shape and define your future career?

Defined it because it was 27 Years! But also because we fought to keep ceramics as a stand alone subject which many courses through the world and the UK failed to do. However UAL and CSM had the foresight to see the opportunity for Ceramic Design.

### What are the main differences in education between when you started and now?

Sadly decreasing making skills particularly from the

UK because of British schools either not valuing craft education, maybe lack of money to provide it and the National Curriculum being hollowed out creatively. However having said all that we now expect professionally much more of students to engage with the real world and put themselves up and out there and they always rise to the challenge.

### How do you perceive the value of ceramics?

It is a chameleon subject that can morph itself into so many different visual languages. It has a vast history and a fantastic future which resonates with individuals and society in a vast array of cultural interpretations.

### What do you see in the future for ceramics?

The democracy of the subject will become much more established with the development of the digital. Many people will be able to attempt to design in ceramics but if you know how to use the material, know its idiosyncrasies and histories, you will be very much in demand for your own designs but for others locally, nationally and internationally.

**Image: Trails & Tools Tall Vessel, 2016**



Working in the ceramic studio at Central Saint Martins, 2016

second year programme which introduces students to professional clients in the UK and beyond, Terence Conran, Elle Decoration, Ben & Jerry's ice cream, Fair Trade, the Crafts Council, the Red Cross and ceramic and glass manufacturers in Portugal, Poland, Austria,

France and China. The basic premise is the students operate both as individuals and in collaboration to reveal not only their design skills as a creative force but also the possibilities of clay and, in so doing, expand the client's own potential.

The designer Simon Stevens joined the team to complement the art and craft skills of the staff and the annual trip to Stoke became a more focused opportunity for students to meet manufactureres with which we were working on collaborative projects. An annual visit was introduced to Ambiente in Frankfurt, one of the world's largest trade fairs for manufactured goods. Students were encouraged to take their portfolios to show to manufacturers with a view to getting work experience.

In the spirit of practising what we preached, both Kathryn and myself led by example, on our second visit we took our work along and the following year our designs had been realised and were on show: Kathryn with Wedgwood and myself with Lengersfeld Porzellan from the newly unified East Germany. Over the years this visit has become a vital component of the course as we established relationships with many major manufacturers from around the world, culminating in 2014 with an exhibition of the work by final year student David Marques De Oliveira made during his residency with Vista Alegre Atlantis in Portugal.

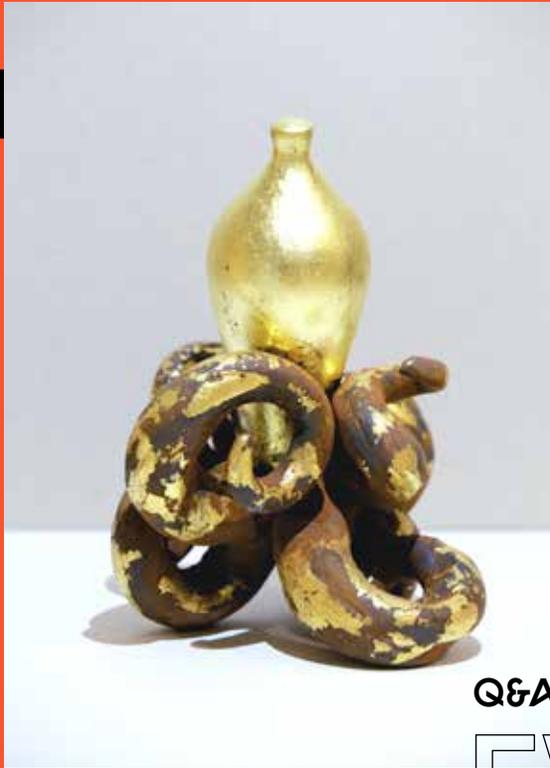
As one by one other ceramic courses were forced to close or become multi-disciplinary – sadly including Camberwell and Westminster – Ceramic Design at CSM has continued to evolve and push at the boundaries as a champion and guardian of the discipline. It constantly seeks to extend the scope of what is possible in the discipline while expanding the potential for each individual student. The course team has always approached problems

as opportunities by responding to the challenges of modern university education and continually updating practices to develop ideologies that prepare students for the complex but hopefully rewarding life in ceramics.

And so the wheel turns. In 1993 at a conference at the University of Industrial Arts in Helsinki I presented a paper that proposed a new curriculum for ceramics that focused on The Material – as a medium for sculptural expression grounded in fine art practice, Craft, acknowledging its history and reassessing its potential, and Design recognising its social responsibility to enhance the quality of life as defined by context, function and user. Over twenty years on it now seems a little simplistic, but it has proved a solid foundation for what has become a leading course in ceramic education.

As Dora Billington's glaze chart found its way into studios far and wide, the international profile of the students (government take note – long may it continue) ensures that the influence and philosophy of the course continues to be spread around the world, in workshops, schools, studios, galleries, design agencies and manufacturing industries. Recent collaborations have included an architectural design commission for a new ceramic cultural centre in Jingdezhen, China, The Art of Food, a tableware competition with students from The Pratt Institute New York and The Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design, Poland supported by Cmielow Porcelain, as well as a series of outreach projects in the UK supported by the Crafts Council and the British Ceramics Biennial to foster greater awareness of the value ceramics adds to our lives.

As Kathryn and I step aside, the new Course Leader Tony Quinn supported by Duncan Hooson and Emma Lacey, all leading practitioners in their own right, have the energy, ambition and insight to add a more global dimension to the course, and we look forward to a new chapter in the history of ceramics at Central Saint Martins.



## Q&A: JAMES EVANS

James Evans creates biomorphic sculptures using ceramic and metallic materials. His work has been exhibited at the Barbican Art Gallery, Collect and is in the V&A Museum collection.

### Why did you choose ceramics?

Good question, I have asked this many times. It was the physical engagement and the ability to push the material to its limits.

### Why did you study at Central?

I wanted to study there because of its reputation and was advised not to apply there because of the competition, but when I entered the main entrance and saw the architecture I had to go there.

### What are your best memories of studying at Central?

The student bar one floor down, and the guidance from the students a year above us.

### At college, what students and teachers made a lasting impression?

The tutors that made an impression, in no particular order, were, Richard Slee, Rob Kessler, Gillian Lowndes, John Chipperfield and the technicians JP and Ginge.

### How did the course shape and define your future career?

It took me from wanting to be a potter in St Ives, to somebody who wanted more answers from themselves and the material.

### What were the creative influences on you at the time?

My influences in general came from contemporary sculptors such as Richard Deacon, Richard Wentworth, Andy Goldsworthy, David Mach, to name a few.

### Why did you continue working in ceramics?

God knows why. The process and nature of the materials' fragility can be very frustrating, but I still enjoy making something physical that changes as it grows and offers up accidental opportunities.

### What do you see in the future for ceramics?

Recognition.

Image: Sucette, 2016  
James Evans graduated in 1987

Courtesy Marsden Woo Gallery



David Marques

Memento  
2013

# Q&A: ANDY ALLUM



Andy Allum is a practising ceramicist and has been a Ceramic Technician at Central Saint Martins since graduating in 1991.

## Why did you choose ceramics?

My first experience of ceramics was at secondary school, coiling if I remember. While studying O Level ceramics, we were taken on a school trip to Contemporary Applied Arts. I saw work by Gordon Baldwin, Ewen Henderson, Eileen Nisbet, Colin Pearson and Jacqueline Poncelet. The diversity of what could be achieved working with clay was my inspiration to go to art school and study ceramics.

## What are your best memories of studying at Central?

The relaxed structure of the course gave you the freedom to experiment and develop your work.

## What is your worst memory of studying at Central?

The Stoke trip – lost on the moors trying to find the hostel. Cold, dark and foggy, dodgy electrics on my Mini, no heat or wipers, and only side lights to drive by while my fellow students struggled with map reading duties.

## At college, who made a lasting impression?

John Chipperfield (Chip) for his enthusiasm and skill in the subject, and for his encouragement. Lawson Oyekan for showing me that you can learn from your peers as well as your tutors.

## How did the course shape and define your future career?

Since graduating I have been a technician at CSM for 25 years. I enjoy process, so where better to be than in the workshop where the focus is on making?

## What were the creative influences on you at the time?

Gillian Lowndes' work, her use of components collaged together, horizontally, exploration of forms and the decay of the surface. Anthony Caro's work of the mid 60s, again the emphasis on the horizontal and abstract construction with limited elements.

## What differences do you see in education between then and now?

An obvious difference in education now it that

student numbers have increased, whereas teaching staff have decreased. The demands on teaching staff have also increased: formative assessment, summative assessment, recording of tutorials and feedback all impact on the contact time with students in the studio.

## Why have you continued to work in ceramics?

As a material I find clay very rewarding to work with. The interaction you have with clay as you construct or manipulate it can be challenging, but as you work the surface it can be incredibly satisfying.

Image (left): Untitled, 2015  
Image (right): Untitled, 2015  
Andy Allum graduated in 1991

# Mastering Ceramics

## By Emma Lacey

BA Ceramic Design and MA Design (Ceramics) are part of the Product, Ceramic, Industrial Design programme at Central Saint Martins. Emma graduated from the MA in 2007 and became Stage Two Leader for BA Ceramic Design in 2016.

Emma Lacey is a ceramic designer with clients including The Conran Shop, Hakkanan and Sketch.

In 2005 I had a good full-time job teaching 3D Design, a car, a room in a nice flat in a decent part of London and a gym membership. For the first time I could imagine what my future might look like. So I signed up for a staff development course at the Tate gallery to reflect on my own practice as a ceramicist. Through that I was introduced to Kathryn Hearn and Simon Fraser at Central Saint Martins, applied for MA Design: Ceramics, Furniture or Jewellery, got in, sold my car, moved out of the flat and embraced the question mark which was now my future. I've never looked back.

I joined the MA with a breadth of experience in working with materials and good craft skills but I had an interest in making functional objects and had little experience in design. It was on MA Design: Ceramics, Furniture or Jewellery at CSM that I was able, through intense practice, research and reflection, to identify my own design philosophy and gain the crucial professional experience which I needed to build a business as a ceramic designer and maker.

Having grown a successful business where I work with a small team producing tableware to high-end retailers and restaurants, it feels right to come full circle and be back at CSM teaching on BA Ceramic Design. Our students are encouraged to recognise and seize opportunity and take risks, as I have in my own career. They are exposed to material and real world professional challenges, which foster enquiry and build their confidence and connectivity in ceramic communities of practice.

Everyday jug and rainbow mug, 2016



## Q&A: IAN STALLARD

Ian Stallard is one half of Fredrikson Stallard, an award winning avant-garde design partnership he began in 1995 with CSM BA Product Design alumni Patrik Fredriksson.

### Why did you choose ceramics?

Partly because I love making and I have always loved the material, and partly because of the historical and cultural baggage that comes with ceramics. At the age of 19 I enjoyed reacting against what I perceived as the stuffy propriety of ceramics in polite society.

### At college, who made a lasting impression?

Ginger (David Cook), our technician, was immensely supportive and continued to help me after CSM as I started my own ceramic business. The model for the Ming#1 vase in the exhibition was made together with him at his home. I could not have created this on my own as I did not have the equipment or the money to have it made for me.

### How did the course shape and define your future career?

By giving a comprehensive experience of all the facets of ceramic design, both industrial and

sculptural, while still being open to crossovers with other disciplines and ways of working.

### Are you still working in ceramics?

Yes, I wouldn't be happy doing only ceramics as I can't do everything I want to with it, but it's kind of like my favourite child.

### How do you perceive the value of ceramics?

I think the biggest value is its direct response to, and expression of, human contact and also its potential longevity allowing it to directly link us to historical cultures we would otherwise know little about.

### What excites you about ceramics today?

The fact that it exists as mass produced industrial design right through to fine art, and that the making process spans from the simplest most archaic methods to the cutting edge of technology. But with ceramics this has always been the case.

Image: *Villosus*, 2004  
Ian Stallard graduated in 1996

# Ta Duck

## The Annual Potteries Field Trip

In the first week of term the Second Year students go on a field trip to Stoke-on-Trent, the UK's historic centre of ceramic manufacturing. The group visit a variety of factories and studios, witnessing the application of craftsmanship and the ingenuity of production first hand. Students learn through watching and talking to the craftspeople, who are very happy to describe and demonstrate these hidden facets of production. The whole experience reveals the high level of skill and tacit knowledge related to turning clay to fine tableware, tiles, bricks and toilets.

The trip can be traced back to the early 1960s, it is one of the longest running subject specific educational trips in British education. Through this trip the BA Ceramic Design course – its teachers, students and alumni – can trace the development of production capabilities, the decline of industry and its subsequent rebirth. The value in studying industrial processes first-hand, and the sense of camaraderie shared during this trip, have made it a defining and memorable part of the course.

Saggar makers workshop at Gladstone pottery museum.



Students in front of the pitcher pile at Johnson Tiles



The Iconic Bottle kilns at the Gladstone pottery museum.



Students physically exploring a greenware toilet at Armitage Shanks.



Students in a design and trends discussion with the design team at Johnson tiles.



Students discussing the dark art of glaze dipping at the Emma Bridgewater factory.

Precision mixing of the slip clay body at Endeka Ceramics.



Upturned toilets on the assembly line at Armitage Shanks.



The 9th iteration of the annual Stoke trip prize quiz.



Resin fettling guides used to ensure uniformity in the hand finishing of clay toilets.



Student experiencing first hand how to make plates at Emma Bridgewater.



Student Peter Layton trying his hand at porcelain turning at Allied Insulators during the annual Stoke trip 1964

**Describe your time at Central / CSM in three words.  
Answers taken from participants of the Q&As**

Inspiring Stimulating  
Baffling Expansive  
Debauched Chaotic  
A Ceramic Revelation  
Short of time Intense  
Transformative Fun  
Exciting Challenging  
Fabulous Focused  
Nurturing Absorbing  
Dynamic Engaging  
Playful Informative  
Demanding Fulfilling

BA (Hons) Ceramic Design at Central Saint Martins is unique internationally as an undergraduate ceramics course with an emphasis on design, offering an in-depth exploration of clay and a wider engagement with the material's many contexts. The design lens with which we operate offers insight into the subject, allowing students to develop a personal perspective and practice within a broad definition of both ceramics as a medium and design as a subject. The breadth of practice within the course covers traditional archetypes, processes and skill sets while also examining the edges of the discipline and pushing into diverse collaborative opportunities.

If you like what we do then we would love for you to come and study with us.

If you are inspired by the energy and creativity of our students and graduates then collaborate with us. We are always open to exploring new contexts, applications and opportunities.

Anthony Quinn  
Course Leader BA Ceramic Design  
Subject Leader for Ceramics  
email: a.quinn@csm.arts.ac.uk



Follow our activities on  
Twitter: @csmBACD  
Instagram: csm\_bacd

[www.arts.ac.uk/csm](http://www.arts.ac.uk/csm)

Edited by  
Anthony Quinn and Carla Sorrell

Designed by  
Emily Schofield

Printed by  
Screaming Colour

This publication was printed on 140 gsm environmentally friendly recycled Evolution paper.

