Potter's Association of Namibia

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2019

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Pottery Teachers in Namibia

Jacqui Jansen van Vuuren WINDHOEK 081 8618869
jacquijvv@gmail.com
Beginners to advanced students welcome.

Renate Williamson WINDHOEK 081 2433766
rossler@iway.na
Beginners welcome.

College of the Arts (COTA) WINDHOEK
Children's and adults classes offered.
Filamon Kapolo - 081 471 0256 or
Mitchel Gatsi - mitchell.gatsi@yahoo.com

Carola Lorck SWAKOPMUND 081 2987274
lorckc@iway.na
Children, adults - all levels of experience welcome

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Potters.namibia@gmail.com
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FOLLOW US:
IG: @namibianceramics
FB: https://fb.me/namibianceramics

Welcome from the Chair

We made it through the '3 months of January', and I hope you are all ready for a creative and enriching year! This year holds quite a few exciting events for us, and I am positive we will see most of your faces and wonderful creations at all our events.

Once again this is a big year for PAN as we will host our 9th Biennale exhibition in August. We are delighted to announce that Clementina van der Walt (clementina.co.za) has agreed to be our main judge, guest exhibitor and workshop presenter! Clementina is a very accomplished ceramicist, with an impressive resume of international exhibitions, collections and residencies. She will present 2 workshops during her visit to Namibia, one in Windhoek and one in Swakopmund. The workshops will explore the creative development of a theme, focusing on making an anthropomorphic figure with a functional dimension. I know it may sound very abstract, but we feel sure that Clementina's open, informative and gentle approach will help us make sense of it all! More information on that closer to the time.

In addition to the Biennale we have several workshops and fun activities lined up. As our fill-a-bowl was quite successful last year, we thought of doing something similar again this year. The twist this year however will be that instead of bowls, we would like to sell hot drinks in a lovely handmade MUG! It will be mid-winter after all. (perhaps with a muffin or cupcake) If you don't know how to start your pottery making off this year, and just need to get into the swing of things, perhaps you can start with making some unique mugs.
See our proposed calendar of events at the end for other important dates for this year.

Some of you may have noticed that more often than not you receive emails from Estee instead of me. The reason for this is that because we are few on the committee and all struggling to juggle all our respective responsibilities and work (a sign of the times I guess) we are sharing the committee tasks. Emails trigger anxiety in me, and as I don't spend much time at a desk, Estee has agreed to help me with them.

Another change that we are in the process of introducing this year, is that each of the 4 committee members will soon be assigned 12 or so members whom they will be contacting personally on a regular basis in order to engage you, our members, more effectively!

The last big change in the way PAN will operate is the membership fee structure. In the economic climate we are currently experiencing, we have decided to give our members a more cost-effective option, by making it optional to include the quarterly CSA magazine as part of your membership. So here is our suggestion, on which we would appreciate **your feedback by end of February**:

- An annual PAN standard single membership for N$ 260
- An annual PAN couple's membership for N$300
- The option of adding the quarterly CSA magazine to your membership at an additional N$320 for four magazines, delivered to your postal address / residential address.

This means the categories of 'friend of PAN' and 'student/pensioner' would then fall away.

Lastly, we always appreciate hearing from you and seeing what you have been up to in the studio. So if you have any pictures, ideas, suggestions or a tip you would like to share, please email us. We're striving to develop a stronger bond between all our members.

All the best, and I hope to see you at some, if not all, of our events this year.

Jacqui

DEPTH

An exhibition by Jacqui Jansen van Vuuren

November 2018 at the Project Room

ARTISTS STATEMENT

This year, I was involved with making some pieces for The Shipwreck, which has led me to the work/style I'm doing now. The technique is inspired by the robust delicateness of our desert environment and the ethereal quality in our sunsets. Developing this technique, I tried to explore the possibility of creating visual depth with ceramic work fired in an electric kiln. This can often be very challenging, because there are very few variables with his firing process, thus not a great deal of interaction between the clay body, glaze and heat. I use a semi-porcelain clay on the potter's wheel to create simple, modern, but elegant feminine forms, similar to sections of an egg. I try to invoke a sense of fertility, possibility and life. The surfaces are a combination of watered-down slips and oxides, layered a painterly manner, to create ethereal excitement, which is visually balanced and grounded with metallic patinas. I'm quite excited about the possibilities of this technique and how far I can take it to create visual depth.

NEW CERAMICS 2018

Sarie Maritz exhibition
November 2018 at her home studio In Klein Windhoek

Sarie Maritz's annual exhibition of new work towards the end of last year was a very successful event once again.

There is always something new coming from Sarie's studio and this time she delighted her fans and collectors with new sponge-printed bowls and platters, as well as some of her pernennial favourites.
Thanks to her daughter Saar for the images.

This month we begin a new quarterly series in the form of members notes on their pottery journeys.
Carl Narib illustrates how he is taking pottery to the people of his home town Kamanjab where his grandmother was a potter before him. We're very excited that the clay word is spreading! Thank you Carl.

MY POTTERY YEAR | 2018

By Carl Narib

Last year was a remarkable, exciting year filled with many new opportunities. I mostly worked on wheelwork building on pieces to get a bigger, taller piece. I also presented workshops in Kamanjab with the women of the town, where we managed to produce a lot of fine, artistic pieces and they learned a lot. There we were visited by the Prime Minister of Namibia, and she was very pleased to see how pottery is gaining awareness and appreciation in Namibia. A large number of women arrived for the workshops and were very keen on learning about pottery and painting showing a great interest in pottery. I hope and believe that this year will be filled with even more fun and exciting workshops with PAN and locals.

Please Diarize this date:

AGM : 25 March 2019 6pm at *Jacqui's house*
We really look forward to seeing you there – we have lots to plan and be happy about this year!!
But, we can't make it happen on our own, and every pair of hands and brain is needed ☺
This is **your** association for the **love of clay**, so lets do this together!

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9th Namibian Ceramics Biennale : 2019

Important dates:

Entries to be submitted:	Saturday 10 August
Judging takes place:	Monday 12 August
Collection of unsold work:	Wednesday 14 August
Opening /Awards ceremony At NAGN Main gallery	Thursday 15 August
Windhoek Workshop by Clementina van der Walt	Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 August
Swakopmund Workshop by Clementina	Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 August
Collection of unsold work:	Saturday 14 September

We are thrilled that South African ceramist **Clementina van der Walt** has accepted our invitation to be our guest selector, judge and exhibitor this year and we look forward to welcoming her and her partner, Albie Bailey to Namibia.

Read more about her here:
https://clementina.co.za/about/clementina-van-der-walt/

Due to the success of our Fill-a-bowl Fundraiser last year, we will be repeating the event again this year. But with two new angles...

- This year we would like to sell MUGS and fill them with hot drinks (it'll be winter) AND...
- It's going to be on a Saturday morning which means every one can lend a hand at manning the stall!

How about making matching mugs, 2 or 4 the same? Or single one-offs?

Jacqui will be demonstrating throwing mugs on the wheel (this attracted lost of interest last year) and we might even sell muffins or cupcakes....what do you think?

Please save the date and start making those mugs now!

WORKING FOR THE 2019 BIENNALE

(Notes from Sharon Flewellen's personal clay journal)

It's time to START NOW and yes! .... You are good enough to enter! To build up your self-confidence just do what you enjoy doing most and do what you do best. Trust your instincts. Picasso famously said: "Inspiration finds you when at work..."

PREPARE MENTALLY …..
Decide what you want to make and in what overall category (e.g. functional, decorative, traditional, sculptural, etc) and do detailed sketches of each. Focus on a basic theme or concept to be continuous throughout everything you make; this will evolve into your own personal style. Never copy another's work. Study a piece you admire, determine what makes it successful and extract an element of it to develop into your own.... find the "Wow Factor"!

SET A GOAL …… Commit to completing everything within a set time frame. Plan a strict schedule, including breaks; work backwards from the deadline date, planning for every eventuality. Be realistic and don't put last-minute pressure on yourself by not allowing enough time! Draw up a detailed timetable/timeline/progress sheet with columns showing daily, weekly, monthly tasks required for all the necessary processes. This helps one focus, gives direction and reduces stress.

REFINE TECHNIQUE ….. Picture the finished item mentally before starting. Explore various methods; choose the correct clay for the project; settle on only two variations of design, construction and decoration, etc. Keep craftsmanship and aesthetics always uppermost in mind! Don't waste time ... dump it if it doesn't work. Do not fall into the "failure trap" of only making one item – make more... make twenty! Practise makes perfect!

BE CRITICAL …… Do not be "precious" about every item you make - be strict: submit only your very best! Carefully assess everything you make throughout all the processes. Ask outsiders for an opinion if you can't critically assess your own work. (But don't ask friends or family - they love you and will not wish to hurt your feelings with a truly unbiased opinion.) Never underestimate the buying public – they are very discerning when it comes to opening up their purses and will not easily buy work that is second-rate. Exhibition entries that are obviously flawed will not fool the selectors either so don't downgrade yourself by entering imperfect work.

DO NOT BE DEJECTED if your work is not accepted for a judged exhibition! Selectors have been chosen specifically for their experience in a particular field and are as objective and unbiased as is humanely possible in performing their duty. Nevertheless judging is always subjective and merely one person's opinion. Do not take the "non-selection" of your exhibition entry as personal criticism – the selector does not know you! He/she is judging your work, not you the maker. Constructive criticism is a valuable learning opportunity! Take it in good spirit, learn from it and keep working!

Postscript

What is the "Wow Factor"? ..... It's that ethereal element we all try to achieve with our work. It is the happy singing of the maker's heart when he/she just knows that a piece has turned out well. It's difficult to describe in technical terms as it is a gut feeling – an instinct – a "love at first sight"! Mostly it is about visual communication, engagement by the viewer with an item which has appealing synchronization of concept, material and technique. It's about capturing the attention of the viewer and leading them on an exciting path of discovery with your work.

Various factors usually combine and are expressed together to make an item successful:
Originality and the personal style of the maker;
Content and context;
Composition: the important elements of design (line, shape or form, texture, colour or surface) all brought together in balance, harmony, variation and also contrast; Unique and competent handling of material and technical skill and professionalism;
.... and a little bit of luck and rich blessings from the kiln goddess!

Example of a WORK IN PROGRESS TIMETABLE for BIENNALE 2019

Month:	FEB				MAR				APR				MAY					JUNE				JULY				**AUG**	
Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2
Mon	X	X		X	X		X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X	X	
Tues	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X	X	
Wed	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X	X	
Thurs	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X				X	
Fri	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Sat				X	X	X					X	X	X			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Sun					X	X						X	X				X	X	X				X	X			

Colour coded legend for each task:
PINK = Planning/ Designing & Preparing materials & workplace; **LIGHT GREEN** = Making;
DARK GREEN = Decorating; YELLOW = Drying; **ORANGE** = Firing & Cooling; **BLUE** = Decorating & Glazing;
PURPLE = Sorting & Assessing; **GREY** = Labelling & Packing;
RED =

10 August Delivery deadline!

Renate's Summer Pottery Tip

Terra Sigillata

Have you ever looked at burnished pots closely? Have you noticed the smooth, soft, velvety shine that just invites you to touch and cherish your artwork? Nothing can compare to that soft look and no glaze application can equal it. But burnishing pots is long, hard and painstaking work. Some artists use a pebble to smooth the pot with water, going over and over the pot until the desired look is achieved, others do the same with the back of a spoon, which I preferred, simply because a spoon is easier to hold over a longer period of time than a tiny pebble.

Still – it is not easy to get the proper effect. And that made me turn to the internet to find easier ways to do this. And I discovered Terra Sigillata! There are endless ideas on how to make your own Terra Sig and a zillion instructions on how to apply it. I have tried a multitude of recipes. All work wonderfully well, but all take time – something most of us don't have. I have bought books, watched countless YouTube Videos, tried and tested, fired my Terra Sig pots in a pit fire, my electric kiln, even tried clear glaze to see the effects.

And in doing so I have stumbled upon a super quick and easy way! I found a YouTube Video by Marcia Selsor, which is wonderfully inspiring. Do yourself a favour and check this out:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btZqkI0z8-U

Nothing could be simpler and more effective! So, in short, here is her recipe of how to make simple Terra Sigillata in a plastic bottle:

Fill a plastic litre bottle 3/4 full of water. Add 250 grams of ball clay and about 2 or 3 drops of sodium silicate. Shake vigorously and let the mix set for an hour or so, until you see three separate areas of the mix. Clear, light and dark. Keep adding drops maybe up to 7 drops after several settlings, shaking vigorously after each addition, until the water on the top level retains a little colour after an hour of settling.

Next, punch a hole in the bottle at the bottom of the lighter colour mix, just above the lowest and darkest layer. This is the Terra Sig. Let it squirt out of the hole and catch in a container. Discard the bottom bit (bottle and all). Wait until your piece is bone dry and apply to the piece with a soft brush. Burnish with a soft foam sponge or soft cloth after each application. Do as many as you like until it is as shiny as you like it. No elbow grease required, stunning results!

DID YOU KNOW?

Huester Machine Tools in Krupp street will service your pottery wheel for you ☺

Call them on 061 237083 to book your machine's service and make throwing a pleasure again!

If you have a hot tip to help potters in Namibia please share it with us

potters.namibia@gmail.com

Calendar of proposed events for 2019

25th March 6pm	AGM at Jacqui's house (address will be mailed to you)
April	Workshop (still to be confirmed)
18th May (afternoon/evening)	Fun Raku Day at Jacqui's house
22 June (morning)	Fill a Mug Fundraiser at Windhoek City Market
10 August (Saturday)	Submission of work for Biennale
15 August (Thursday evening)	Opening of the 9th Biennale at the NAGN
17+18 August	Windhoek workshop with Clementina van der Walt
24+25 August	Swakopmund workshop with Clementina van der Walt
14 September (Saturday)	Collection of unsold pots at NAGN
October	Workshop (still to be confirmed)

Your committee would like to wish you a very happy year of potting and we look forward to seeing you all at the AGM on the 25th March at 6 pm.

We will mail you nearer the time with the address.

Let's make this 9th Biennale year one to remember with great pride!

All the best for 2019

Jacqui, Renate,
Estee and Annabelle