



Exploring Earthly Delights: Mundane and Beyond

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When we stayed with Harry Davis in New Zealand in 1980, he told us the life of the potter was “mundane”. With huge hue and cry we said it was anything but boring (what most North Americans mean when they say mundane). Oxford and he said it meant “of the earth”. Latin *mundus*. On reflection, our work for the last several years has been dealing with the attempt to transcend and sometimes recapture the mere earthiness of common clay. Three territories we have explored: Majolica terra cotta, translucent porcelain and wood fired stoneware are all different ways of transforming raw materials into something beyond the ordinary.

We offer for exhibition these three different types of work as dimensions of our continuing exploration. The majolica presents both the formal (illusionistic) and the painted world with our recurring themes of nature in flowers, still life, figuration and mythology. The translucent porcelain is a man-made material transformed by the fire to make a glass; a white ground for intense color and the carving and drawing of naturalistic motifs. Lastly, the wood fired stoneware are special pots that have “been somewhere” – they have experienced an extreme assault of ash and flame, a thermal wind that decorates them with scars and blushes where they have been touched by nature. At their best they resemble a beautiful “found rock”. We are back then to the earth. We learn by handling clay how far it will allow us to take it. We are the instrument – it is the transcendent material. It is a constant challenge – anything but “mundane”