



CONNECTICUT CERAMICS STUDY CIRCLE

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"George Ohr, the Mad Potter from Biloxi"

By Martin Eidelberg, Professor Emeritus of Art History,
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey

On Monday, November 11, Martin Eidelberg will take CCSC members and guests into the world of one of ceramics' most individualistic potters. George E. Ohr, the so-called "Mad Potter of Biloxi," was an eccentric potter and an equally eccentric self-promoter. If today we honor what are termed outsider artists, then Ohr was the original outsider. Although he began as a late Victorian designer, he quickly evolved a highly personal idiom of his own. He threw thin-walled vessels which began as simple forms but then he twisted, folded, and crushed them into what he considered to be artistic shapes. He turned bowls



Vase (views of both sides), George Ohr, Biloxi, Mississippi, 1895-1905. Earthenware, 9 1/2" H.

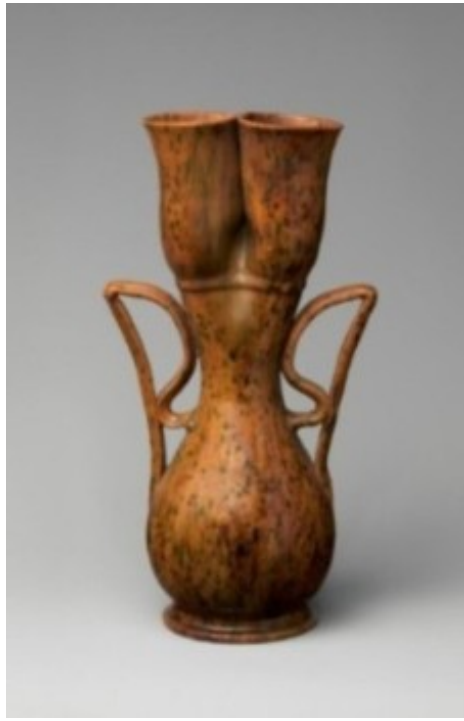
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York, gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2017

inside out. He often added fragile handles that were deprived of all function, and often

disparate ones were put on the same vase. He glazed one side of a vase with one color, and then glazed the other side a different color as though the vase were schizoid. In the same way, he had himself photographed as if coming out of both sides of a barrel simultaneously. He was a trickster at every turn, in everything he wrote and in every piece of pottery that he made.

Ohr was the consummate Arts & Crafts potter, working independently and leaving nothing to helpers. He dug his own clay, he threw the vessels and fired them in a kiln he built himself, he glazed them with his own innovative glazes, and then took charge of publicizing and selling them. Whereas we often think of the Rookwood and Grueby potteries as typifying the Arts & Crafts movement, he understandably despised them as being industrial enterprises. Obsessed with his unique genius and his almost divine nature, he rankled even those who were fascinated by his pottery.

Professor Eidelberg taught art history at Rutgers University for 38 years, retiring in 2002. He continues to be a prolific author and organizer of museum exhibitions in two fields: French 18th-century painting and late 19th-and early 20th-century decorative arts, focusing especially on glass and ceramics. He was one of the curators of the groundbreaking 1972 Princeton University exhibition on the Arts & Crafts Movement, an event which caused the modern reappraisal of 20th-century crafts. Since then he has written extensively on Grueby, Robineau, Van Briggle, Newcomb College, Tiffany and other leading American ceramists. He co-authored a catalogue of the Two Red Roses Foundation Collection of American pottery and also a catalogue of European decorative arts of 1900 for the Stuck Villa in Munich. Most recently he was one of the co-authors of the Metropolitan Museum's major publication of the Robert Ellison Collection of American art pottery, which appeared in September 2018. Dr. Eidelberg has received numerous awards and honors, including the Robert C. Smith Award in 1982, the George C. Wittenborn Memorial Award in 1983 and 1991, the Charles F. Montgomery Prize in 1984, the Henry Allen Moe Prize in 2007, and the American Ceramic Circle Book Award in 2011 for the best book in English on ceramics (awarded for his book on Tiffany pottery). He has lectured on ceramics in museums across this country and in Canada, from Toronto to Winter Park, Florida, and from New York to Los Angeles. He has spoken to the Connecticut Ceramics Study Circle on numerous occasions and has lectured on varied topics: "French Art Pottery," "Modern Ceramics by Famous Painters," and "American Art Pottery."



Vase, George Ohr, Biloxi, Mississippi, 1895-1905, earthenware, 10 1/2" H. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York, gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2017.

Salon Art + Design 2018, November 8-12

The Salon Art + Design at the Park Avenue Armory will feature several dealers of outstanding contemporary ceramics. Do visit it at the Park Avenue Armory on Park Avenue between 67th and 68th Streets; the preview evening is Thursday, November 8, and the exhibition continues to 5:00 p.m. on Monday, November 12. More information at <https://thesalonny.com>.

Do You Know of a 53rd Hong Bowl? Request for Information from the ACC

The American Ceramic Circle has sent out a request for information concerning Hong bowls, as follows: "A multi-year project on Hong bowls, the Chinese export porcelain punchbowls decorated with scenes of the foreign compound in Canton (Guangzhou), is being led by John Johnston at the Academy of Visual Arts in Hong Kong. Hong bowls date from approximately 1760-1820 and are usually polychrome but sometimes appear in grisaille. Thus far 52 Hong bowls have been identified in public and private collections. This project is attempting to locate all surviving Hong bowls and establish a stylistic chronology in addition to contextual studies. If you know of any Hong bowls not included in the list below - please contact John at Johnston@hkbu.edu.hk.

Collections with identified Hong bowls include: America: Winterthur Museum, Peabody Essex Museum, The National Museum of American History, US Department of State, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Art Institute of Chicago, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Baltimore Museum of Art, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Washington and Lee University, Shelburne Museum, Rhode Island School of Design Museum, Rhode Island

Historical Society, Norton Museum of Art, Dallas Museum of Art; UK/ Europe: British Museum, Leeds Museum and Galleries, Scheepvaart Museum, Maritime Museum of Denmark, Etnografiska Museet, Nostell Priory, West Yorkshire, Guimet Museum, Groninger Museum; Australia: Caroline Simpson Collection, Sydney Living Museum; Asia: Asian Civilisations Museum, Hong Kong Maritime Museum, Sze Yuan Tang Collection; Other: Jorge Welsh Collection, Hodroff Collection, Mottahedeh Collection, Malcolm M.B. Sterrett, Cohen & Cohen, Sotheby's, Christie's, Bonhams, Pollylatham, Bukowskis, IGavel."

CCSC Research Grant Available

Information will soon be available on the CCSC website concerning the availability this year of a CCSC Research Grant. Please visit ctcsc.org within the next few weeks for application details.

New Book: Chinoiserie: British Ceramics in the Chinese Style, 1750-1900

Richard Halliday, Ph.D. and Loren L. Zeller, Ph.D. have recently published a beautiful and comprehensive study of British transferware in the Chinese style. Richard is a dealer in the UK and Loren is a part president and founding member of the Transferware Collectors Club. For more information on the book and for order information, go to <https://chinoiseriebook>.

Haughton International Seminar

The Brian Haughton Gallery of London has posted online a film from last June's Haughton International Seminar, Diplomacy, Power and Wealth, for all to enjoy at www.haughton.com. The topic for next year's seminar is Great Collectors: Taste, Passion & Patronage and the seminar will be held in London from June 26-27, 2019.

Elsewhere in the Decorative Arts

November 5: "Drawn to Success. Thomas Chippendale as Draftsman and Cabinetmaker," lecture by Femke Speelberg, Associate Curator of the Department of Drawings and Prints, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Greenwich Decorative Arts Society, 1:15 p.m., the Bruce Museum, 1 Museum Drive, Greenwich, Connecticut. For information and registration, email greenwichdecorativeartsociety@gmail.com.

November 12: "George Ohr, the Mad Potter from Biloxi," lecture by Martin Eidelberg, Professor Emeritus of Art History, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey. CCSC, 1:15 p.m. at the First Congregational Church of Greenwich, 108 Sound Beach Avenue, Old Greenwich, Connecticut 06870. Information at ctcsc.org or call 203.912.7226.

November 15: "The black is sterling, and will last forever," lecture by Brian Gallagher, Curator of Decorative Arts, the Mint Museum, Charlotte, North Carolina. Pottery and Porcelain Club of Rhode Island, 2:00 p.m., Rhode Island School of Design Museum,

Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island. For information and registration, contact daisy.schnepel@verizon.net.

November 23: Historic Trade Demonstration of Redware Pottery with Stephen Earp. Historic Deerfield, Deerfield, Massachusetts, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information, go to www.historic-deerfield.org.

November 29: "Charlestownware: The Archeology of Boston's Potters," lecture by Joe Bagley, City Archaeologist, Boston Landmarks Commission. Ceramics Study Club, 1:00 p.m. at King's Chapel Parish House, 64 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts. Information at ceramicsstudyclub.org.

Ongoing through December 14: Exhibit: Mizusushi, Japanese Water Jars from the Carol and Jeffrey Horvitz Collection. Fairfield University Art Museum, Fairfield, Connecticut, Bellarmine Hall Galleries. Information at www.fairfield.edu/museum.

Ongoing to December 31: Exhibit, Reclaiming Splendor: Ceramic Design by Chunmao Huang. Banquet ware created for Chinese political leaders by Chunmao Huang, 2003 graduate of New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University. Alfred Ceramic Art Museum, Alfred, New York. Go to <https://ceramicsmuseum.alfred.edu/exhibitions> for information.

Ongoing through February 10, 2019: Exhibit: Rococo: Celebrating 18th-Century Design and Decoration, Historic Deerfield, Deerfield, Massachusetts. For more information, go to www.historic-deerfield.org.

Ongoing through March 17, 2019: Exhibit, Sterling Ruby Ceramics. Museum of Arts and Design, 2 Columbus Circle, New York, New York. Go to <https://madmuseum.org> for information.

Ongoing to March 24, 2019: Iridescence, featuring ceramics, glass and jewelry that have incorporated iridescence through the centuries. Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 East 91st Street, New York, New York. For information, www.cooperhewitt.org.

Ongoing to September 22, 2019: Masterpieces of French Faience: Selections from the Sidney R. Knafel Collection. Exhibit in the Frick Museum Portico Gallery, 1 East 70th Street, New York, New York. Go to www.frick.org for further information.
