



Anne Currier and John Gill.



tedly "went back to school." John Gill and Anne Currier, faculty ceramists, team-taught me. Something unforeseen and wholly constructive happened so that the forty students got to see me become, instead, a student for the afternoon.

Anne Currier: "How come the feet of your bowls are so plain when the top edges are so involved with form?" John Gill: "Remember the feet on the Nishapur pots I showed you in that book in the library?" At the moment they were making these remarks there were five 14-inch bowls with altered rims standing ready before me to foot.

The fun began: I felt giddy. Blinders came off. I said, "I guess I get so involved with surface and topside issues that I have become comfortable with simple, generic foot styles," and happily launched myself at the five bowls with a fresh eye and an adventurous spirit. I was buoyed up by the cheering section of the students and faculty, and grateful to find I had fallen head over foot once again. Magically, the feet changed, echoing the altered rims in one, then two, three, four, and finally in five different ways. Pinched, carved, pushed, and asymmetrical solutions emerged that gave life to those tired feet.

The pots are now back in my studio and have been fired. They pleasantly haunt my thoughts. I am certain I will not go back to that comfortable, familiar foot treatment again. Too late for that. Thanks, Anne! Thanks, John! No mean feet!

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John Glick

Undefeated after all these years; or how I went back to school to get on my feet.

Feet! Especially the feet of many shapes of bowls have been a source of unending curiosity and challenge for me. Ten years ago a Japanese potter, Toyo Kobayashi, visited my studio. I think he felt my feet needed work. I agreed and welcomed his critique. He wanted me to look at historical solutions and was kind enough to send me a book devoted exclusively to the subject of tea bowl shapes and feet. Fascinating! Half the photographs in the text were views of upside-down bowls. I studied those feet, tried many variables, proportion changes, and differing elevations from the table surface. I

played many themes that came and went. Some worked, some didn't stand up well to my repeated examinations. Time passed.

Now, I'm a potter who loves surface. I adorn with and adore calligraphy, color, overlaps of glazes, the teasing mysteries of my kiln's kindnesses coupled with my potter's "body English." My pots were and are deeply concerned with surface and, yes, form. But first, it seems, comes surface. Feet tend to stay below the surface, literally.

And so it came to be that I went to Alfred University recently to attend my mid-career retrospective exhibition and enjoyed a three-day workshop for students there. On the last day I unexpect-