

# John Glick: A Legacy in Clay

June 18, 2016 – March 12, 2017 · Cranbrook Art Museum





## **John Glick: A Legacy in Clay**

*June 18, 2016, through March 12, 2017*

JOHN GLICK IS a people's potter. In a career spanning over five decades, the ceramist has remained committed to the art and craft of functional vessels and their incorporation into the rituals of daily life. *John Glick: A Legacy in Clay* is the first major exhibition and publication to survey the immense range of ceramic vessels, tableware, and sculpture that has made Glick one of today's premier figures in American studio pottery. Mounted as the artist closes his historic Plum Tree Pottery in Farmington Hills, Michigan, the exhibition will include nearly 250 pieces representing all phases of his work, from the early vessels and tableware dating to Glick's time as a student at Cranbrook Academy of Art (MFA in Ceramics, 1962), to his conceptual ceramic sculptures from the last decades. The exhibition and publication are part of the John Glick Legacy Project, which also encompasses the placement of the ceramist's most important works in public museum collections around the world. *John Glick: A Legacy in Clay* is organized by Cranbrook Art Museum and curated by Cranbrook's Jeanne and Ralph Graham Assistant Curator, Shelley Selim. California-based independent curator Jo Lauria is serving as a curatorial consultant for the John Glick Legacy Project.

*Cranbrook Art Museum, August 2015*



# John Glick: A Legacy in Clay

June 18, 2016 – March 12, 2017

**Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan**

CURATORIAL ADVISOR, JO LAURIA

## **ARTIST'S STATEMENT**

*August 2015*

MY YOUTHFUL explorations foretold my life as an artist. What thrilled me as a boy was the process of making—casting plaster figurines, hand-dipping candles, enameling jewelry, building four-wheeled push-carts to ride in my Detroit neighborhood. Getting lost in the flow of discovering was my most intense thrill, and blessedly, my parents understood and encouraged me. Until high school craft courses invigorated me, my favorite learning took place outside the classroom. Subsequently skilled teachers at Wayne State University and then Maija Grotell at Cranbrook Academy of Art were instrumental in supporting my understanding of process and skills. These experiences culminated in my resolution to become a working clay artist in my own studio.

COMPELLED BY the spirit of making, I conceive of an idea, readily capture it with a drawing, and then create the tools in my workshop to form it into an actual, tangible object in clay, often within hours. Then ensues a varying series of pieces, flowing from this one idea.

Inviting the wooden, metal and plastic tools I've made to become instruments in my "jazz improvisations."

I TRUST MYSELF to risk and experiment with the variables of vocabulary, so that every part of the process is affected: design, form, texture, surface, slip-decorating, and eventually the glazing of the work. This organic process of "listening inside myself" keeps me vigorously in the flow of creativity, often taking me beyond function—to abstraction, sculpture, or to painting on large clay "canvasses."

ENCHANTED BY experimentation and intoxicated by the possibilities of theme and variation, I identify with the tradition of craft artists

I read about early on: potters, weavers, basket makers, woodworkers, glassblowers—craftspeople who created wares for their community, which in turn depended upon their work as necessary and desirable objects for use. Now, for me in my time, to hear that a family's life is made richer and more meaningful by using my dinnerware or by living with my wall sculpture in their home, my gratification is complete.

AFTER SOME years as an independent artist, I was asked to give workshops here and abroad, and was exposed—in vivo—to the apprenticeship tradition. Soon thereafter I began an artist-in-residency program in my studio, offering aspiring young potters a way to deeply develop their own ideas while learning from me the rhythm and practical aspects of running a studio, building kilns, and engaging with customers. In all there have been 36 young potters who each spent one year with me—their year of grace and enchantment.

HAVING COMPLETED their formal art school training, they were now free to lose themselves in the development of their unique ideas, free of the physical and financial pressures of actually establishing a studio. They learned to value their own excitement and imagination so that they could preserve it as they began their own careers. Mentoring younger artists while passionately following my own inspiration has given me a superbly contented and harmonious life.

## **PORTFOLIO**

BROWSE THIS SAMPLING of my Retrospective Exhibition, featuring more than 200 functional and sculptural objects spanning 50 years of my work in clay, which is coming to the Cranbrook Art Museum.



Porcelain Tea Bowl, 1990. Reduction fired. 5.25 x 3.75 inches.



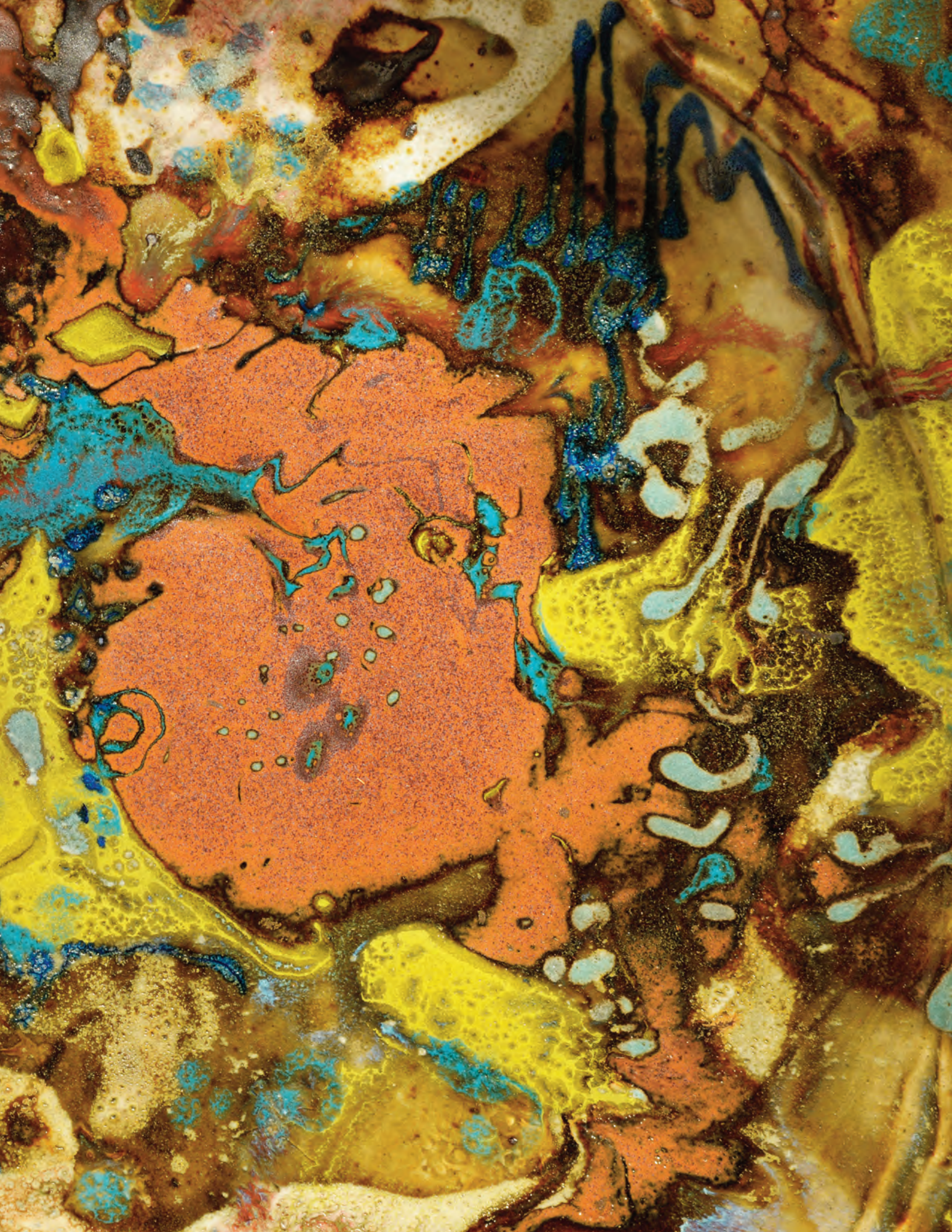
Place Series,  
1992. (detail) Stoneware  
and porcelain soda fired.  
21 x 12 x 9.5 inches.  
**INSET:** Place Series, 1992.







Stoneware Plate, 2006.  
Reduction fired. 25 x 4 inches.  
**BACKGROUND:** Detail.





Stoneware Teapot, 1990. Reduction fired. Walnut handle with embossing. 9 x 4 inches.





Stoneware Teapot, 1990. Reduction fired. 13.5 x 7 inches.





Stoneware Pitcher,  
1975. Reduction fired  
10.25 x 6.5 inches.  
**OPPOSITE:** Detail.





Stoneware Teapot, 1962. Reduction fired. Made at Cranbrook. 10.5 x 10.5 inches.



Stoneware Teapot, 1975 . Reduction fired. 9 x 9 inches



Lidded Stoneware Box, 1971. Reduction fired. 14 x 4 inches.





Lidded Porcelain Box with Walnut Handle, 1984. Reduction fired. 10.5 x 4.5 inches.





Lidded Stoneware Box, 2011. Soda-fired. 16.5 x 4.5 inches.





Stoneware Bowl,  
2014. Reduction fired.  
15 x 4 inches.

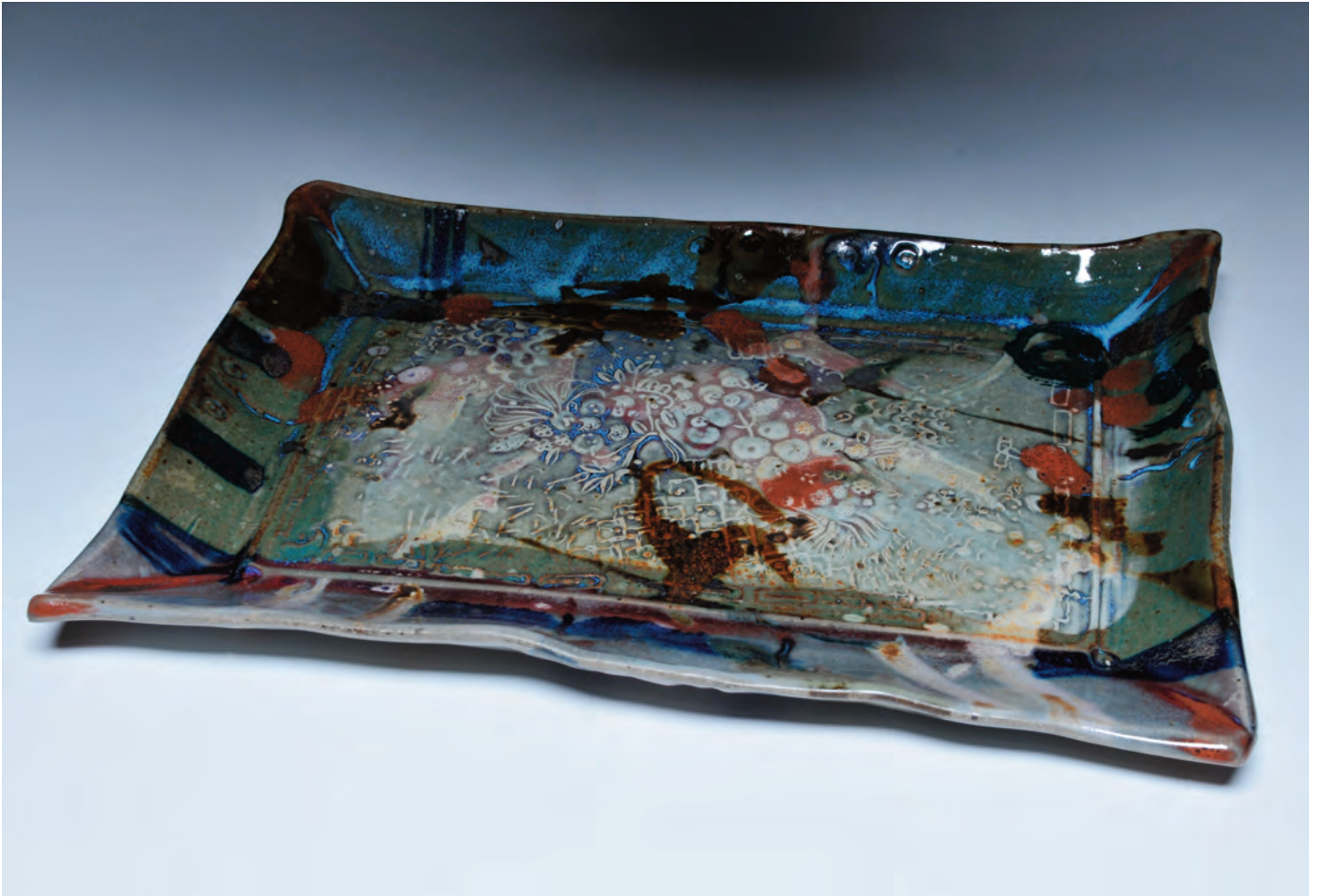






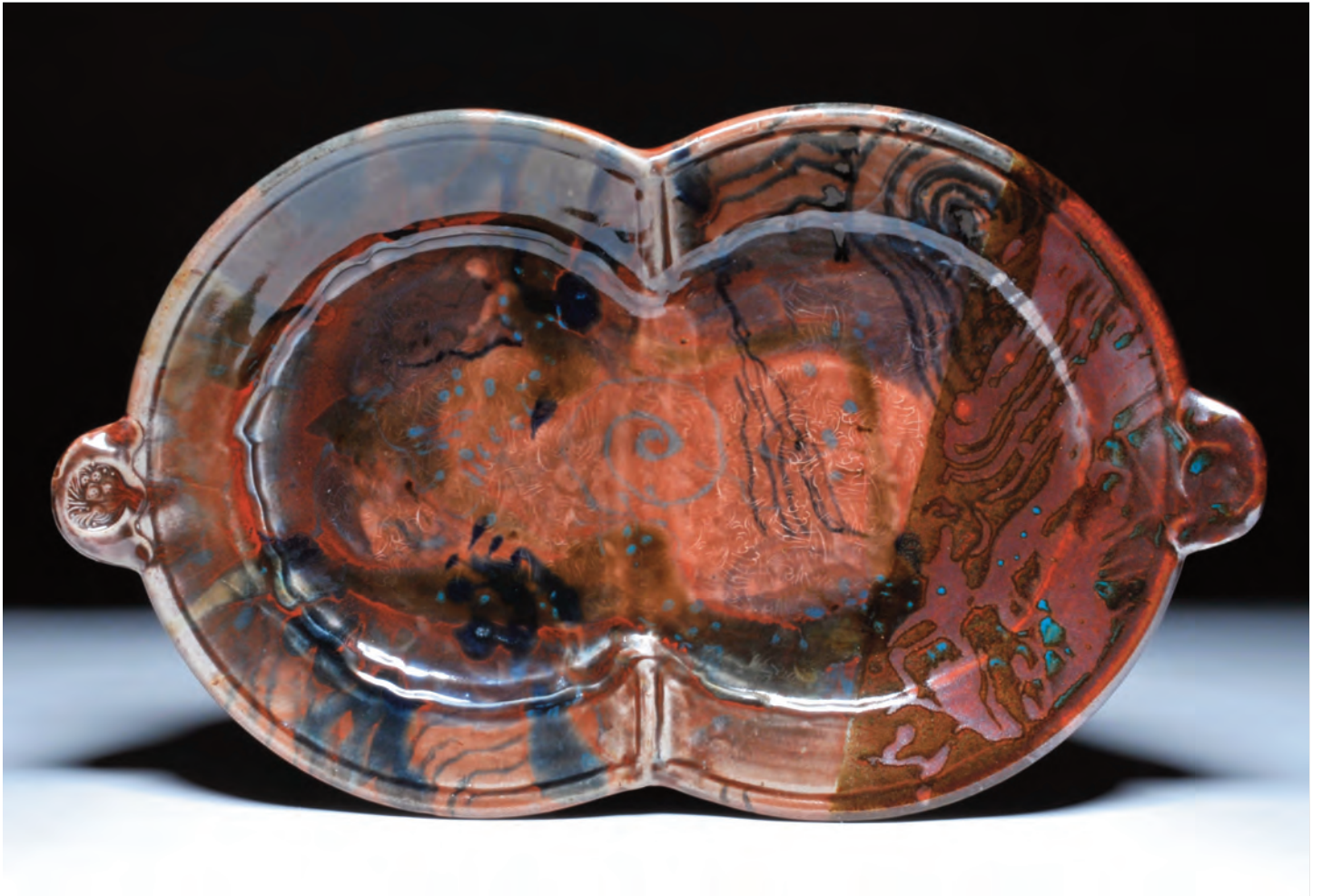
**OPPOSITE:** Stoneware  
Slab-made Tray, 1990.  
Reduction fired.  
20 x 17 x 3 inches.

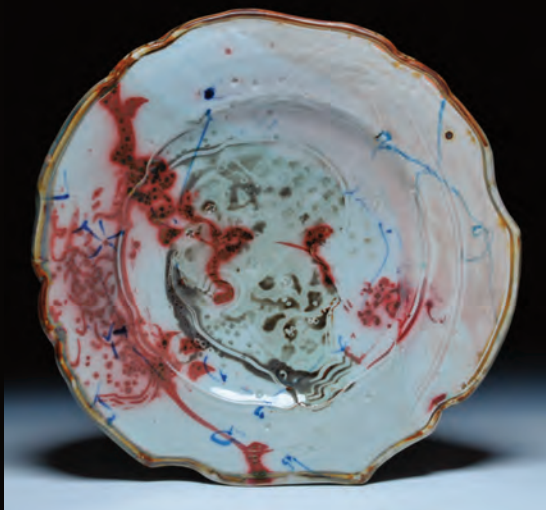
**ABOVE:** Stoneware Wall  
Panel, 1995. Reduction  
fired with post-firing  
etching. Promised gift to  
Cranbrook Art Museum  
from the Timothy and  
Marilyn Mast Ceramic  
Collection.  
22 x 28 inches.



**ABOVE:** Stoneware  
Slab-made Tray, 2013.  
Reduction fired.  
12 x 5.75 inches.

**OPPOSITE:** Stoneware  
Wheel-made and  
Joined Tray. 2013.  
Reduction fired.  
20.5 x 12.5 inches.





Stoneware Dinnerware  
Place Setting, 2013.  
Reduction fired.  
**INSET:** Porcelain Plate,  
1979. Reduction fired.  
15.5 x 2 inches.







**ABOVE:** Stoneware Teapot,  
1976. Reduction fired.  
9 x 8 inches.

**OPPOSITE PAGE TOP:**  
Stoneware Dinnerware  
Place Setting, 1965.  
Reduction fired.

**OPPOSITE PAGE BOTTOM:**  
Stoneware Dinnerware  
Place Setting, 1978.  
Reduction fired. Commis-  
sion for Mondale family.





**OPPOSITE:** Stoneware  
Slab-made tray, 2012.  
Reduction fired.  
15.5 x 15.5 inches.

**ABOVE:** Stoneware  
Lidded Box, 1975.  
Reduction fired.  
12 x 3.5 inches.



Stoneware Wall Relief in Three Parts, 1994. Soda-fired. 34 x 12 x 6 inches.





Stoneware Teapot Sculpture, 1990. Reduction fired. Added plum wood handle, sourced from the



plum tree which grew for years by the doorside of the studio at Plum Tree Pottery 9 x 5.5 inches.

## **COLOPHON**

*August 2015*

THE TEXT in this online catalogue is set in Bembo with Bembo italic.

Captions and heads are set in Franklin Gothic and Franklin Gothic bold.

DESIGN by Rostislav Eismont, Richmond, New Hampshire.

Plum Tree Pottery apprentice 1972-73. Art Director *The Studio Potter*  
magazine 1980-2015. Founded Red Mill Pottery 1979.

