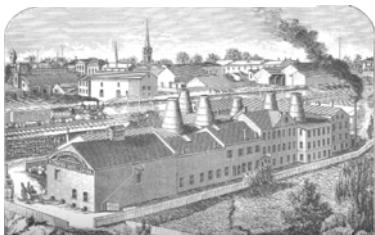


# TRENTON POTTERIES

Newsletter of the  
Potteries of Trenton Society



## Newark Museum Exhibit *100 Masterpieces of Art Pottery, 1880 – 1930*

The Newark Museum art pottery collection began with an exhibition in 1910, just one year after the institution was founded by John Cotton Dana, and since has grown to be one of the country’s premier holdings. Exhibited as a collection only twice in the past 25 years, in 1984 and 1994, the Museum honors its Centennial with a remarkable exhibition, *100 Masterpieces of Art Pottery, 1880-1930*, opening September 23 and running through January 10, 2010.

The Newark Museum’s art pottery collection began with Dana’s pioneering recognition of ceramics as an art form 100 years ago and continued with acquisitions of modern ceramics throughout the 20th century. According to Director Mary Sue Sweeney Price, “Newark was one of the first museums, if not the first, to see ceramics as art in the way painting and sculpture were seen by other museums.”

According to Ulysses Grant Dietz, Senior Curator and Curator of Decorative Arts, “John Cotton Dana also envisioned art pottery as a way to involve ordinary people with art; a way to draw them into his fledgling museum and into his library. He was very interested in the potential mass market that could be reached by art pottery in a way they could not be reached by paintings.”

“Informing and involving ordinary people in the wonders of the world of art continues to this day – 100 years later – to be his legacy and the

central theme of the Newark Museum’s mission,” Dietz said.

Funding for *100 Masterpieces of Art Pottery* is made possible by the generous support of Barbara and Bill Weldon. The Newark Museum's Centennial Celebration is sponsored by Prudential.

“One hundred years ago, pots were art,” said Dietz. “The vase was the ideal art object because, while still ‘functional,’ it could be set aside and admired purely for its beauty and the skill with which it was created. Artistic pots were also more accessible to the general public than paintings and sculpture, and thus were the perfect kind of art for the newly-founded Newark Museum in 1909,” he explained.

*100 Masterpieces* will track the notion of ceramics as art from the Gilded Age of the 1880s to its evolution into studio pottery by the outset of the Great Depression. The Newark Museum’s collection of modern ceramics was begun in 1910 with an exhibition entitled simply *Modern American Pottery*. The centennial project will feature more than 100 pieces of pottery and porcelain, including American and Native American as well as European and Asian ceramics. The exhibition will be entirely drawn from the Museum’s own collection, with the exception of two loans from the American Decorative Arts 1900 Foundation, according to Dietz.

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*The Potteries of Trenton Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the study and preservation of Trenton's ceramic past. Officers: President – Patricia Madrigal; Treasurer – Jay Lewis; Secretary – Brenda Springsted. Board: Ellen Denker, Richard Hunter, Meta Janowitz, Jay Lewis, Emma Lewis, William Liebeknecht, George Miller, Brenda Springsted, Rebecca White.*

## *100 Masterpieces of Art Pottery*

*(Continued from page 1)*

The “birth” of art pottery was part of the larger arts and crafts movement born in England in the 1860s. In the United States art pottery was hugely influenced by the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876, and the ensuing American embrace of such diverse aesthetic notions as Japonism and the Colonial Revival. William DeMorgan (1839-1917) in London and John Bennett in New York City were among the best known figures to explore pottery as art in the 1870s and 1880s, with painterly designs that romantically evoked the Middle Ages and the exotic East. Maria Longworth Nichols, a society lady from Cincinnati, brought art pottery into the American mainstream in the wake of the national Centennial, imbuing her Rookwood Pottery’s output with romanticized Japonism combined with French slip-decorating techniques.

As the nineteenth century came to a close, art pottery split into two distinct camps – the china painters and art potters. Decorated porcelains continued to play a major role in the world of artistic ceramics during the later Gilded Age, continuing a factory-based tradition with roots in the eighteenth century. Royal Worcester in England and Trenton’s Ceramic Art Company were key players in this camp. Art potteries, conceived as smallscale cooperative business ventures with a distinct division of labor, capitalized on arts and crafts ideals of handcraft and design. Ceramic decorating, which was a genteel hobby for well-to-do women, was at the same time a viable career path for both men and women in this period.

“Within the realm of art pottery, a further three-way subdivision produced artwares that were either focused on minimalist forms with remarkable, beautiful glazes; or on the sculptural

aspects of pottery as a three-dimensional form; or on the notion of the vessel as a canvas to be filled by an artist, emphasizing painterly effects,” Dietz said. These approaches would continue to inform the art pottery world even as it moved from the Art Nouveau to Modernism in the 1920s and began to evolve into the studio pottery movement of the post-Depression years.

*100 Masterpieces of Art Pottery, 1880-1930* is accompanied by a full-color catalogue funded by The Helen R. Buck Foundation.

### **ABOUT THE NEWARK MUSEUM**

The Newark Museum is located at 49 Washington Street in the Downtown/ Arts District of Newark, New Jersey, just three blocks from NJPAC and ten miles west of New York City. The Museum is open year-round: Wednesdays through Fridays, from Noon - 5 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays, from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., October 1 - June 30; and Saturdays and Sundays, from Noon - 5 p.m., July 1 - September 30. Suggested Museum admission: Adults, \$10.00; Children, Seniors and Students with valid I.D., \$6.00. Members are admitted free. The Museum Café is open for lunches Wednesday through Sunday. Convenient parking is available for a small fee. For general information, call 973-596-6550 or visit our web site, <http://www.NewarkMuseum.org>. The Newark Museum, a not-for-profit museum of art, science and education, receives operating support from the City of Newark, the State of New Jersey, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State-a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, the New Jersey Cultural Trust, the Prudential Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Victoria Foundation, the Wallace Foundation, and other corporations, foundations and individuals. Funds for acquisitions and activities other than operations are provided by members and other contributors. The Newark Museum is just a few steps from the NJTransit Light Rail Washington Park Station. Direct connection with the Light Rail at the Broad Street Station and through Penn Station makes the Museum a convenient ride from all points in the region.

## *Faces & Flowers: Painting on Lenox China*

**S**umptuous is the word that comes to mind in describing this new volume. Replete with a richly informative text and full color illustrations, *Faces & Flowers* is a welcome addition to the literature.

“Sumptuous” is also an assessment that no doubt would have pleased Walter Scott Lenox himself, whose intent was to create porcelain that would be recognized for its artistic excellence and beauty. The exhibition documents his success in that effort by focusing on the work created for the luxury market, an approach that also provides a fresh perspective on this familiar company.

It is that very familiarity that sometimes diminishes appreciation for the company’s work. The Lenox Company masterfully mass-marketed itself into an iconic American brand, the quintessential “wedding china.” Nonetheless, preceding this commercial success was the company’s initial incentive to create and market exquisitely painted and decorated porcelain for the high-end market. By focusing on these luxury goods, Ellen Paul Denker provides new insights into the artistic contributions of this legendary company. Lenox and his partner Jonathan Coxon, Sr., recruited a cadre of European and American artists to realize their dream of a “new American porcelain.” Their studio artists represented a heady mix of prevailing international styles and superb craftsmanship – a uniquely American tale of ethnic and stylistic diversity evolving into something new and distinctive.

*Faces & Flowers* invites a reconsideration of the company’s contributions to American decorative arts and much-deserved recognition for the

artists who created this remarkable body of work. Denker, the Museums of the University of Richmond and the private collectors who made the exhibition possible are to be congratulated for making this important project possible and accessible to the public.

– Reviewed by James F. Turk  
Salem County Cultural & Heritage  
Commission

**Editors Note:** *Faces & Flowers* has won a Gold in the 2009 Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC) Publication Contest. The competition was begun in 1988 to recognize and reward excellence in graphic design in southeastern museum publications. Winning entries are displayed as the SEMC’s annual meeting.

Ellen Paul Denker, *Faces & Flowers: Painting on Lenox China*, with foreword by Richard Waller, published by the Joel and Lila Harnett Museum of Art, University of Richmond, Virginia, 2009. ISBN 978-0-9765047-5-7, 72 pages, 51 color illustrations, soft-bound, \$20.00. To order, please contact the Museums at the University of Richmond via e-mail: [museums@richmond.edu](mailto:museums@richmond.edu) or call (804) 287-6424.



## *The American Ceramic Circle Announces 2009 Awards*

The American Ceramic Circle has selected three projects for awards in support of original research in the history of ceramics. Grants were made to Nicholas Panes for the topic English *West Country Potters and the American China Manufactory*; William Ross Hamilton Ramsay for *A Chemical Investigation into the Use of Steatite in Early English Porcelains*; and Nicholas Zumbulyadis for *Child's Play: Fun and Games on 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Faience and Porcelain*.

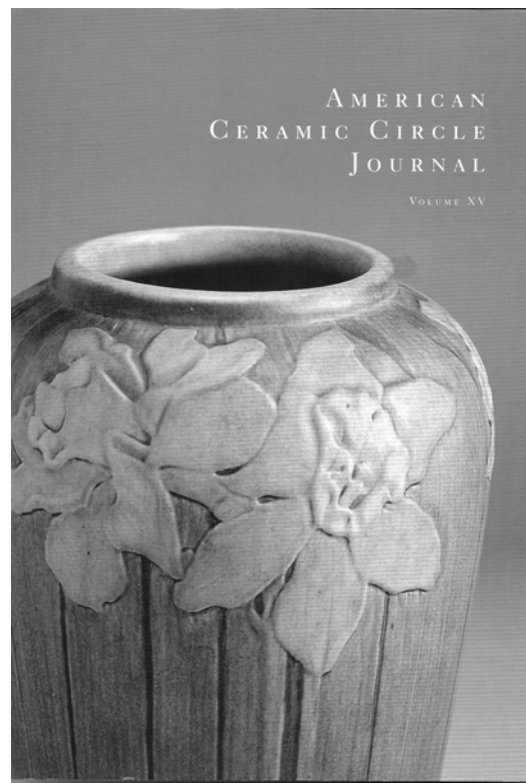
The ACC awards up to \$5,000 for expenses associated with the preparation of scholarly papers based on original research in the history of ceramics. Grant recipients are required to offer completed papers for publication in the *American Ceramic Circle Journal* and may be invited to speak at an annual ACC symposium. The next deadline for completed applications is April 1, 2010.

Previous grant recipients whose articles appear in the most recent *American Ceramic Circle Journal*, (Volume XV) are Ron Fuchs and Jennifer Mass, "Deciphering the *Declaration of Independence* on Chinese Export Porcelain," and Anthony Stellacio, "Reconfigurations in Clay: Ceramics in Twentieth-Century Lithuania."

An application form and a statement of general principles pertaining to the grants process are available on the website,

[www.amercercir.org](http://www.amercercir.org). Questions may be addressed to ACC Grants Chairman, Anne Forschler-Tarrasch, Curator of Decorative Arts, Birmingham Museum of Art, 2000 Rev. Abraham Woods, Jr. Blvd., Birmingham, AL 35203-2278 ([aforschler@artsbma.org](mailto:aforschler@artsbma.org)).

Founded in 1970, the American Ceramic Circle promotes scholarship and research in the history, use and preservation of ceramics. Symposia are held in early November at various museums. Future locations include Williamsburg in 2009 and Milwaukee in 2010. A limited number of scholarships to the symposia for students are available. For information about membership (including student memberships) and publications, contact Executive Director, Suzanne Findlen Hood, [sfhood@acc.hrcoxmail.com](mailto:sfhood@acc.hrcoxmail.com).



## *Utility and Artistry: Works of the Stangl and Fulper Potteries*

The Trenton Museum Society is proud to present a new exhibit showcasing the diversity of the Fulper and Stangl production over its long life. The exhibit, curated by Peter Meissner, Co-President of the Stangl-Fulper Collector's Club, will be the single best retrospective of the output of Fulper and Stangl ever staged.

The pottery first started in Flemington, New Jersey as Hill's Pottery Manufactory in 1815. After the death of Samuel Hill in 1858, Abraham Fulper, a longtime employee and relative of Samuel Hill, purchased the pottery from his estate. Later, Fulper's grandson William H. Fulper transformed the company from a simple utilitarian stoneware and earthenware pottery serving the needs of rural America to a growing company offering a diversity of products from Fulper Germ-Proof Filters (a forerunner of the water cooler commonplace in waiting rooms worldwide) to a high-end art pottery line that competed with Rookwood and Grueby.

Johann Martin Stangl, a German ceramic chemist, was hired to develop new glazes in 1911 and later went on to head the pottery. To coincide with the nation's changing tastes, he developed a new tableware line in 1920, produced in Trenton, of solid color dinnerwares. By 1935, all production had moved from Flemington to Trenton and the firm was using the name Stangl. In the early 1940s, Stangl developed the extremely popular white slipped red-bodied sgraffito dinner wares in a primitive style, harkening back to the region's Pennsylvania Dutch heritage. By mid century, a new Scandinavian style became popular. Shortly after Martin Stangl's death in 1971, the pottery was

sold to Wheaton industries, but only continued for a few years until the assets were sold in 1979.

The opening reception will be December 3, 2009 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Trenton City Museum at Ellarslie Mansion in Cadwalader Park. The exhibit will run until May of 2010. Curator Peter Meissner will give a talk on the history of the Hill-Fulper-Stangl potteries with a gallery tour on January 10, 2010 at 2:00 p.m.

In addition to the items Meissner will have on display, the trustees are providing an opportunity for Trenton Museum Society members to show off some of their cherished Fulper and Stangl pieces for all to admire. These items will be on display from December 3, 2009 to May 2, 2010.

The Potteries of Trenton Society (POTS), in cooperation with The Trenton Museum Society and the New Jersey State Museum, are sponsoring a symposium on Saturday, April 17, 2010, entitled "Staying Alive: The Hill-Fulper-Stangl Pottery in a Changing Marketplace" at the New Jersey State Museum Auditorium. This will include lunch and, following the symposium, a reception at the Trenton City Museum Ellarslie Mansion in Cadwalader Park, Trenton.



## *POTS Membership*

Membership in the Potteries of Trenton Society is open to all interested in Trenton's pottery industry and the ceramic products manufactured here. We welcome pottery workers, historians, archaeologists and collectors. Your contribution is used to support newsletter, lecture, meeting, and conference costs.

Annual Membership \$25

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to the Potteries of Trenton Society and mail to:

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120 W. State Street

Trenton, NJ 08608