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CRAFTS ASSOCIATION of BRITISH COLUMBIA

1386 Cartwright St, Granville Island, Vancouver, BC V6H 3R8

phone: 604-687-6511 email: cabc@telus.net

Gillian McMillan

2214 St. George Street
Port Moody BC V3H 2G2
Tel: (604) 937-7696
Email: mcmillan@sfu.ca

Artist's Statement

Clay has been a major part of my life for more than three decades now! At a Teacher Training College in London, England, I concentrated on painting and lino print-making but was fascinated by pots being made downstairs and took one course.

Quite a few years later, after I had immigrated to Canada to teach in Montreal, moved West, married an archaeologist and we'd bought our first and only house here in Port Moody, I took pottery classes. While our two sons grew up I was lucky to be able to make and sell pots from home, and teach wheelthrowing at various community centres and schools in the Tricities area.

One of the best ideas I've had was to apply to go to Emily Carr College of Art & Design (now Institute) in 1991. Three years fulltime, with intensive Summer classes too, led to my BFA and the confidence to consider myself an artist.

Since then I've shared a studio in Vancouver, helped to launch an Arts Centre in Port Moody with a flourishing clay programme, and now have reestablished a comfortable studio in my basement and garden/kiln shed.

I teach intermediate wheelthrowing at the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Burnaby, and offer workshops on the application of slips to leatherhard clay tiles and pots. Phone or email to ask the date of the next workshop. Sometimes I enjoy working on collaborations and special commissions.

Image List

1. "Amphora", earthenware coated with terra sigillata, 20" tall x 13" wide, 2002
2. "2 Jugbirds", earthenware, slip-painted with terra sigillata and clear glaze, each 10" long x 5" tall, 2002
3. "Dragonfly Bowl", earthenware, slip-painted with terra sigillata and clear glaze, 13" wide x 9" tall, 2002

Process

Because I have now realised that I enjoy painting with bright colours as much as throwing pots on the wheel, I have chosen to use earthenware clay and an electric kiln. The lower temperature this process requires allows the slips to retain their rich colour. My slips (liquid clay), generously stained green, ochre, teal, blue and yellow, are painted on to wheelthrown jugs, bowls, plates and vessels and slab-formed tiles and platters made with a strong, terra cotta clay. When the pieces are bone-dry, terra sigillata is painted on the undersides and other areas, and they are bisque-fired. Then a food-safe, durable, clear glaze covers the slip-painted body of the vessels and they are fired a second time. My pots are intended to be used and can go in the dishwasher.