

The Social Life of Pouring pots

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Mary Barringer, guest curator

March 11 – May 8, 2005 | Northern Clay Center | Minneapolis, Minnesota

This publication and the exhibition it documents were made possible with the support of several generous donors to Northern Clay Center's exhibition program. These include Continental Clay Company, Frances and George Reid, and the Windgate Charitable Foundation.

In addition, this activity is made possible in part by a grant provided by the Minnesota State Arts Board through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature, a grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation Minnesota, and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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<http://www.northernclaycenter.org>

Manufactured in the United States.

First edition, 2005

International Standard Book Number
1-932706-05-4

Seven years ago, at Northern Clay Center's first American Pottery Festival, Mary Barringer delivered a slide lecture on the history of pots that pour. It was a talk filled with useful as well as arcane information, wit, and shared delight in a subject that might appear obscure but in fact, connects intimately with daily life. Afterwards, we discussed, wistfully, the possibility of doing an exhibition based on Mary's talk, but were deterred by financial constraints. Those constraints were removed with the special exhibition funding received by the Center in 2003. Exemplifying the theory that all good things come to those who wait, *The Social Life of Pouring Pots* happened after a long wait. We were finally able to commission Mary to curate the exhibition, write the essay for this catalogue, and deliver a new version of her lecture.

Within the context of a medium-specific art center, Northern Clay Center's goal is to show the array of possibilities for creative work in that medium. Our exhibitions have included utilitarian pots, sculptural and installation uses of clay, historical and architectural objects, and industrial ceramics. We have included well-known and emerging artists from this region as well as the rest of the country and world.

As we did with this particular exhibition, we occasionally invite a knowledgeable person not on the staff to serve as guest curator for an exhibition—someone who knows about a specific kind or form of ceramics or who has a wonderful idea for an exhibition—or, preferably, both. Mary Barringer definitely brought both capacities to her task of curating this exhibition, in addition to her distinctive skills and knowledge as a potter. She ably achieved the intent of the Clay Center's exhibition program: to educate—and to delight, to challenge, and to engage. On behalf of all of us at NCC, I thank her for her work on this project.

The Social Life of Pouring Pots is our first major exhibition of historical pots. It brought with it particular demands, especially for security and the conditions of display, which were new to us. However, we believe the effort was worthwhile. Many of the pots in this exhibition have long been in storage or are not usually visible to the public. This is the first time they have been assembled to illustrate their original context and use in both the intimate and public acts of serving liquids. The exhibition allows us to connect with the idea and the reality of history in an unusually immediate way. As Mary points out, while we may have lost some of the direct practices and traditions that led to the design and specific use of particular pouring pots, both potters and users will be able to see the sources of many well-known and well-used forms.

Foreword

Emily Galusha, Director

A number of institutions and individuals made this exhibition happen, besides Mary Barringer and the Clay Center's staff. We thank the lenders to the exhibition: The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Mary Barringer, Warren MacKenzie, Jeff Oestreich, Thomas Thunnell and an anonymous individual. In addition, the Weisman Art Museum generously supplied vitrines to protect the objects on loan to us; our thanks to Mark Kramer for his assistance with the installation.

I would like to offer a special thanks to the staff and board of the Institute. We tested their ability to be good neighbors, constrained as they are by their archival responsibilities and requirements for security. Northern Clay Center is an unconventional exhibition partner for the MIA, but we were able to work through the many issues raised by our desire to borrow work from their collection. The following individuals at the MIA were especially helpful: Bob Jacobsen, Christopher Monkhouse, Jennifer Carlquist, Joe Horse Capture, Molly Hennen, Laura DeBiaso, and Tanya Morrison. DeAnn Dankowski and the MIA photographers Dan Dennehy and Donna Kelly provided images of MIA objects for the catalogue. David Ryan pulled the dying rabbit from the hat and revived it; and finally, director emeritus Evan Maurer has been a steady supporter of the Clay Center's several partnerships with the Institute.

At the end of the exhibition information is another way of understanding the act of pouring: the formula and graph that describe the parabola formed when liquid is poured. (The equation, graph and image were produced by Professor Gary Parker and his graduate students Wonsuck Kim and Miguel Wong at the University of Minnesota's Civil Engineering Department.) Now, when the teapot spout dribbles, you can figure out why.

1. Anatomy of a Pouring Pot

Pitcher. Ewer. Teapot. Creamer. Flask. Jug. These objects comprise a form family, united by purpose and enlivened by diversity. What makes a pitcher different from a jug? The precise definitions have faded; "ewer," for instance, originally meant a pot for holding water (*eau*, in French) on a washstand, but it also refers now to a small lidded and spouted vessel—and is sometimes just a catchall term. "Jug" and "pitcher" are often used interchangeably, though something called a pitcher might have a wide mouth and pronounced lip, while a jug is more likely to be narrow-necked. Creamers and teapots at least proclaim their contents (though you might find syrup in one) without reference to their forms. Although the words have now lost the specificity they once had in potters' and household inventories, they still describe a class of forms with a common function. Any vessel, upended, will empty its contents, but these pots speak of the deliberate and directed act of pouring.

All pots—indeed, all human-made things—arise in response to a need or problem. The problem which engendered these pots might go something like this: how do I collect some of this liquid, carry it over there, and put it into a smaller container for use, without spilling too much? Just as a vehicle for conveying things overland must have wheels, a carrying body, and a means (animal or mechanical) of locomotion, a pot for pouring must have certain constituent parts—most fundamentally, one that contains and one that delivers. The part that contains may be straight or swelling, shallow or deep, depending on whether what is contained is hot or cold, viscous or thin. The part that delivers can be as simple as a pulled-out rim or as specific as a long attached spout. Its shape and placement will determine the pace of delivery: a lot or a little? A gush, a stream, or a few drops? From these basic elements and their proportions, we can infer the pot's primary purpose: active serving, storage, or display.

Each component of a pouring pot is highly variable, and the variations can tell us something about the liquid (common or precious), the setting (public or private), the occasion (formal or informal) in which the pot plays a part, and perhaps even the people (upper or lower class, cosmopolitan or rural) who used it. In the shape and width of the foot, for instance, we can see whether it was made to sit on a table, on the ground, or on top of a head. A pitcher whose body rises smoothly to a shaped spout is a vessel whose ins and outs are uncomplicated. Easy to fill, pour, and clean, it invites daily use of readily-available substances: cider, beer, or iced tea. A slight constriction at the neck slows the pour, but only a bit, as compared to a narrow-necked jug, whose delineation of parts echoes the separation between the act of containment and the act of delivery. Such a pot takes better care of its contents, keeping out dirt and bugs and guarding against sloshing, and it also gives the user more control over how fast and where to pour. Perhaps what it holds is more valuable (spirits or holy water), or used more sparingly (condiments). Perhaps the pot is used as much for storage or display as to serve. A highly decorated or beautifully proportioned



Spouted Ewer
China, Asia
mid 19th century

The Social Life of Pouring Pots

Mary Barringer



Handled Jug
Lwena, Democratic Republic of Congo, Africa
20th century

pot may be a high-status object, made for a special occasion or a discerning owner. Or it may be a form honed over many generations to be most elegantly suited to a particular and vital need. The tasks of which pouring pots speak are so general that they persist to this day, and so specific that they have begotten an astonishing vocabulary of forms and parts, gesturing animatedly through time.

2. *The Idea of a Jug*

Pouring pots have sometimes been used in writings to stand for a certain principle. If the idea of a bowl, for instance, has sometimes been enlarged and abstracted to evoke the heavens or cosmic space, the idea of a pitcher remains stubbornly human, utilitarian, and social. In “Seeing and Using” by Octavio Paz, the pitcher embodies the values of craft as opposed to art. It is made for use rather than for contemplation, and resides in the humble but sensuous female domain of the kitchen rather than the formal one of the museum. It stands for the body as opposed to the mind, and for the hand as opposed to the machine. The lowly yet vividly particular water pitcher symbolizes life as it is lived, and is celebrated by Paz as a precious human endeavor distinct from what he terms “the religion of art”.

In what might be the most abstruse essay ever written about a pot, Martin Heidegger in “The Thing” places a pouring pot at the very center of his thesis. For him a jug is the realest kind of object, one which exists not merely in relation to a subject-observer, but as an entity with its own qualities and powers. When Heidegger speaks of a jug as a *thing*, he means not just a material object, but, in the original sense of the old German word, a gathering, something which brings together. A jug, therefore, is not so much a material object as a material *event*, actively unifying the human, natural, and divine realms: the water or wine from the earth, the people and/or gods invoked. For Heidegger, the jug’s opening is its most essential feature, because the “outpouring” is its most fundamental characteristic. (As Paz says, “if it is empty, it must be filled; if it is filled, it must be emptied.”) Through dense and sometimes mystifying tangles of language, Heidegger wrestles with and names the very quality of the jug which interests us here: its activeness, its potential to engage on many levels and to channel meaning. Even when at rest the jug evokes activity, and even when far removed from its original context it carries traces of that context in its form and decoration.

3. *The Social Life of Pouring Pots*

How does it do this? First, its form suggests actions which have not changed much over the past several thousand years. Our bodies and their relationship to the physical world have remained fairly constant in that time; regardless of culture or circumstance, a pitcher presented with its handle pointing to the right and slightly toward us speaks as clearly as a baby extending its arms. We know without thinking what we are being asked to do. And we know, from our own assimilated and accumulated memories of pouring, how much of something this pitcher holds and how precisely or sloppily it will deliver its contents. Our



Pitcher
England, Europe
1900

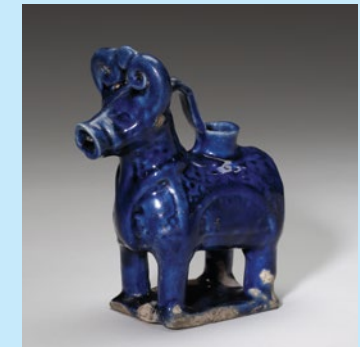
familiarity with the workings of its form gives us access to the particularities of its useful life and allows us, possibly, to imagine outward from there.

Whatever the specific *function* of pouring pots, their *role* is that of intermediary. We use them to carry liquids from their source, in nature or the place where they are produced or stored, to the living space: from the barn, well, or pantry, to the table or altar. In the process, a liquid is transformed from a generalized substance, common to the region or climate, into something particular and cultural. In that transformation it acquires associations of everyday-ness or special-ness, nourishment, celebration, hospitality, class. So it stands to reason that the vehicle for this journey would itself be something extremely cultural—would, through its form, craft, material, and decoration, speak of the meaning of this liquid and this occasion to its participants and users. Water may be a universal substance, but a pot to *carry* water conveys a very particular set of ideas about what that substance means in the human sphere. Contained in and poured from that pot, water takes on attributes which have little to do with its physical nature, and everything to do with what people think about it, use it for, and value about it.

Vessels for water perfectly illustrate this process, because their universality underscores their particularity. A vessel for bringing water from a stream or well (or from the sink to the wait station) must be easy to fill, manageable to carry but large enough to justify the trip, and able to be emptied without too much loss. In a temperate climate, such a vessel can have a wide mouth or spout, whereas in a hot or dry one, a smaller neck makes for less evaporation and spillage. The size of the water pot might pertain either to how far the user is from the source, or whether the water is for drinking or for other household uses. Until the advent of indoor plumbing, such pots were a common fixture of settled places. They have been of more interest to anthropologists and historians than to art historians, and rarely appear in art museums until they have ventured, you might say, further into the house; that is, become associated with the feast or ceremony rather than the kitchen or washroom. Here, more refined or elaborately decorated water pots appear. *Aquamaniles* are small animal-shaped pots for washing the hands at the table, indicating in plain view all the guests’ good manners; they appeared (along with tables) during the Middle Ages in Europe, and earlier in Persia. Islamic ceramic traditions include many water vessels clearly intended for refined company or ritual use, including elegant ewers with long spouts and elaborate, luster-glazed decoration. The water poured from these pots almost seems like a different substance from the water carried in wide-mouthed jugs all over Europe. In a harsh climate, water marks the boundary between nature and civilization, and the pot that holds it locates very vividly the place of rest and refreshment. Ewers sometimes sit at the center of Persian paintings, symbolizing the graceful hospitality expected of a cultivated and observant Islamic home. Here, as in the writings cited above, the pot stands for an idea, embodying cultural values of refinement and generosity.



Pair of “Jiffy Ware” Pitchers
Viktor Schreckengost, American, born 1906
United States, North America
1942



Aquamanile (Ram Shaped Ewer)
Rayy, Persia (Iran), Middle East, Asia
13th century



Ewer
Kashan, Persia (Iran), Middle East, Asia
Late Seljuk, 12th – 13th century



Kundika (Buddhist Water Vase)
China, Asia
T'ang Dynasty, 8th century

In Asia, the rise of Buddhism in the eighth century introduced new rituals and meanings for water and pots to go with them. The *kundika* is a water pot whose form probably originated in India; it appears in both Hindu and Buddhist art as an accoutrement to spiritual practice. The kundika is filled through an opening on the side and water is ritually poured or sprinkled from the long neck. This elegant form was made in metal as well as ceramic, and disseminated through China, Japan, and Southeast Asia in the wake of Buddhism's spread. Another pouring form from Asia, the *kendi*, probably evolved from the kundika but was used more for drinking and social than religious purposes. Kendis are short and bulbous rather than elongated, with a narrow neck to permit one-handed lifting. They are filled from the top and poured through the spout, which is often their dominant feature. Some spouts are long and dramatically tapered, to allow multiple users to hold the pot aloft and pour precisely into the mouth without touching it. Others are bulbous ("mammary-spouted") or spool-shaped with tiny openings. Kendis plain and fancy have been made all over Southeast Asia, and were also imported to the region from China from the 10th to the 19th century. They were and still are used as everyday drinking vessels, and ritually in weddings, funerals, and inaugurations.



Kendi
Indonesia, Asia
10th century

Until the importation of coffee and tea, Europeans didn't really drink water if there was anything else available (or use ceramic vessels if they could afford metal), so Northern European pots of any degree of refinement are more likely to have been for beer, cider, wine, or hot drinks such as mead or posset. Made of milk heated with wine or ale, sugar, and spices, posset was both a drink for invalids and, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a social concoction. Small, plain versions of posset pots were meant for the sickroom, but the decorated tin-glazed examples are clearly party objects. They are large, lidded, and raised up on decorative feet probably derived from metal versions. More elaborate examples exist, but the one shown here is sufficiently festive-looking to suggest an occasion of some importance. The narrow spout allows careful pouring of the liquid out of the bottom of the pot, while the broad opening permits spooning out of the curds which have risen to the top. Here is a pouring pot whose decoration and scale clearly signal sociability and occasion, but whose form seems awkward until you know what posset is. Then the placement of the spout and the proportion of the lid make complete sense, even if the appeal of the drink remains somewhat unfathomable to contemporary tastes.

Posset Pot
Bristol, England, Europe
1710 – 1720



New types of pouring pots have often arisen in response to new beverages or methods of distribution, as well as to fashion and ceramic technology. The introduction of hops into malt liquor in the 15th century created a better-tasting and therefore more popular beer. German potters, already among the most skilled in Europe, responded with vessels for storage, serving, and drinking, for both domestic use and export. At

roughly the same time two other developments influenced the pots: salt-glazing, which made possible impermeable, economical, and finely detailed vessels, and woodblock printing, which disseminated new styles of imagery and decoration. These converged with rising beer and wine consumption to create a true ceramic moment. Glass would eventually render these beer and wine pots obsolete, but German salt-glazed jugs from the 15th and 16th centuries, with their moulded designs of leaves, faces, classical scenes, and coats of arms, comprise one of the great families of ceramic pouring pots.

All over Africa, too, pots for beer have traditionally been made of clay, though they resemble the German pots only in their generous bellies. Often they are round-bottomed, made to stand on the ground rather than on a table, and large enough to serve several drinkers. Beer and palm wine are both brewed in and drunk from these pots; in fact the pot is often what makes a social occasion. People sit around it and partake; the pot is the "gathering," in Heidegger's sense, and specifically distinguishes this type of drinking from solitary consumption.

When tea and coffee were introduced into Europe in the early 18th century, an explosion of pots suited to *their* preparation and serving came about. Heating liquids requires an extra step of preparation, extra time, and the use of fuel, and vessels for serving them are likely to convey, in form and decoration, some sense of the extra work involved. When it first appeared, tea's exotic appeal and the "value-added" nature of its preparation pretty much guaranteed a demand for new, special, and specialized pouring pots. They needed to be lidded, and they needed to be fine, advertising the rarity of their contents and the taste and status of their owners (and, by association, the person served). Looking at pouring pots from Europe before the appearance of tea, one sees nothing that resembles what came to be the standard teapot forms; these were borrowed, along with their contents, from Asia, or from metal forms which would lend the status of silver and pewter to this new activity. The early teapots from England are small, fragile, and formal; they required careful handling and speak unmistakably of refinement and luxury. As tea became more widely available and popular, teapots became more democratic, available in a range of styles and prices. By the 19th century, the nature and formality of the occasion was signaled by the teapot itself—plain or fancy, porcelain or earthenware—rather than by the mere presence of tea.

In Asia, meanwhile, vessels for heated liquids had been made since the second or third century, and pots for tea appeared when it was brought from India in the eighth century. Although many Chinese pouring pots look like "teapots" to Western eyes, many were in fact for wine, which was traditionally served warmed. The extra step of heating the wine (like the extra step, in classical Greece, of diluting wine with water) gave rise to pots whose specialness reflected the care and resources invested, and Asian wine pots were luxury objects reflecting supreme artistry and the most advanced ceramic technology of the day. Early teapots, on the other hand, were often straight-sided and flat-bottomed, with a high, short spout and no lid. They would



Teapot with Cover and Stand
Staffordshire, England, Europe
c. 1740



"Bellarmine" Jug
Germany, Europe
mid 18th century



Beer Pot
Nigeria (?), Africa
20th century



Octagonal Ewer and Cover
China, Asia
Northern Song Dynasty, 11th century

seem to be an awkward shape for hot tea, and these “ewer” forms faded once tea-drinking became more formalized, in China among the scholar class in the late Song Dynasty (11th–12th century), and in Japan by the warrior-aesthetes who popularized the tea ceremony during the 16th century. In both cases, teapots evolved into objects that were as much for contemplation as for sociability, and carried a heavy load of allegorical, philosophical, and aesthetic references along with their contents.

Pouring pots whose main function is narrative or iconographic, including commemorative and burial objects, broaden the concept of utility. Sometimes grave goods are simply the same kinds of pots that would have been used in life, and represent the continuation of earthly life after death. But there also exist many semi-functional, highly elaborate grave vessels that refer to use although their main impact is figurative. Many of the Central and South American ceramic vessels that have survived into the present feature representations of animals, vegetables, people, or social scenes, and also display at least rudimentary pouring spouts. Since these vessels could convey much of their meaning simply through representation, it must surely also mean something that they do so within the framework of a particular function. But what might it mean? Does

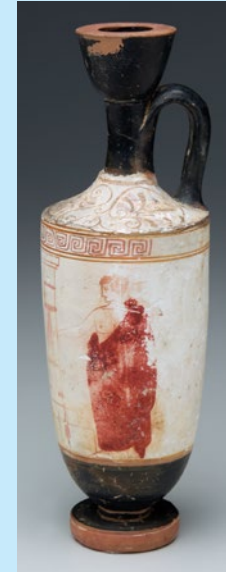
Vessel in the Form of a Dog
Colima, Pacific Coast region, Mexico,
North America
3rd century B.C. – A.D. 4th century



the spout activate the figure by suggesting use or interaction, in the way Heidegger suggests? Though anthropologists often unhook the image from the pot, as if it can be considered apart from the form, surely there is intent and another layer of association when that image is linked to the suggestion of a familiar activity. These pots may never have been meant to pour, but something about pouring, whether as a ritual act, a gesture of nourishment or appeasement, or a memory of human events, is carried in their forms.

Similarly, narrative or commemorative images can be enlivened by their placement on pouring vessels. Throughout ceramic history such images have been found on vases, platters, and pitchers. The painted *maiolica* of Renaissance Italy brought a sophisticated level of painting to ceramics—not simply decoration, but framed and themed—that had not been seen since the Greeks, two thousand years earlier. These narrative pots showcase their paintings: the brilliance of the color, the skill of the brushwork, and the subject, whether portrait or allegory. They would not have been used much for food—that wasn’t their primary purpose—but while a commemorative plate reads as a round painting, the same image on a pitcher will retain a figurative echo in the vessel form and a faint call to action in the handle and spout. The image is animated by these associations; a commemorative pitcher, no matter how decorative, cannot completely shake off the hand in its handle, or the pour in its spout.

Ewer
China, Asia
4000 – 3000 B.C.



Lekythos
attributed to The Bird Painter
Greece, Europe
5th century B.C.

Inside a glass case in Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts sits a curious small pouring pot with a squat globular body, long neck, and bulbous spout. It is painted, none too carefully, with cobalt blue decoration and fitted out with an elaborate silver spout, handle, and lid. Though described on the label as “English, 17th century,” it can’t have been *made* in England, because it is porcelain, and it would be a hundred years before that technology was mastered in Europe. In fact, the pot was made in Asia, and its silver mounts were added later. In Elizabethan England, its function was probably to hold (and pour) brandy or port, and to be one of a wealthy gentleman’s luxury possessions, displaying his cosmopolitan taste for fine spirits, newly-available porcelain, and the superlative craftsmanship of English silversmiths. Despite what must have seemed like an awkward spout and rather crude brushwork, its foreignness made it valuable and special. Indeed, if this gentleman had a portrait painted of his family and home, such a pot might easily have been featured.

In another life, and minus its silver jewelry, this pot was a *kendi*, made in China during the Ming Dynasty (14th–17th century) for export to Thailand or Indonesia. A porcelain *kendi*, especially one with a mammary spout, would also have been a special possession in a Buddhist household at that time. There, it might have been used ritually for libations or weddings, distinct from the locally-made earthenware kendis kept for regular use. All over Southeast Asia, demand for glazed kendis was strong enough to keep Chinese potters busy making them, and examples have been found in shipwrecks as far away as the East African coast.

When we look at this pot it is easy, on one level, to “get” it. Its handle fits our hands (better than the clothes its maker wore would fit our bodies) and its shape and capacity speak of actions we still perform. It belongs to a family of forms that is robust and still producing offspring. We can clearly see from its metal mounts that it was once special to someone, and its presence in a museum asserts that it still is. Its familiarity beckons, but its meanings shift and change. The fascination of pouring pots—especially pre-industrial ones where function, technology, and style are so closely entwined—lies in this tension. They are familiar yet enigmatic, close to us yet far removed. We don’t need *handmade* pots any more, but we still need and use containers to carry liquids from their source to their place of consumption. Thinking about the pouring pots in our lives—the watering cans and maddening restaurant creamers, the long precise spouts for oil, olive or 10W/40—we can imagine similar purposes for historical pots. We shouldn’t presume too much, but at least we can grasp, in a more than theoretical sense, the lives they once lived.



Ewer
Object place: England
China, Asia
Ming Dynasty, Wan-li period, c. 1610

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Mary Barringer received a B.A. from Bennington College in Vermont and has been an independent studio artist since 1973, making both sculpture and functional pottery. Her work has been exhibited internationally at such venues as the Mint Museum, Charlotte, North Carolina; Lacoste Gallery, Massachusetts; and the World Ceramic Expo in Korea. She has lectured and taught at universities and art centers across the country including Ohio University, the University of Nebraska, and Penland School of Crafts. In addition to her studio work she has written on historical and contemporary ceramics and was recently named editor of *Studio Potter* magazine. She lives in western Massachusetts.

Exhibition Checklist

Notes: Objects are grouped by region and country and in approximate chronological order.

* indicates objects that were included in the exhibition in photographic form only.

All descriptive information was provided by the lenders.



Lifa Amphora
 China, Asia
 Han Dynasty, 1st century B.C. – A.D. 1st century
 Burnished pottery
 13-1/2" x 11-1/4" x 12-11/16"
 The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
 Gift of Ruth and Bruce Dayton

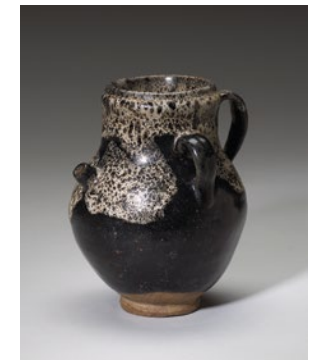


Kundika (Buddhist Water Vase)
 China, Asia
 T'ang Dynasty, 8th century
 Earthenware with green lead glaze
 9" h.
 The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
 Bequest of Alfred F. Pillsbury

Ewer with Cover
 China, Asia
 Five Dynasties – Song Dynasty, 10th – 11th century
 Yueh ware, porcelainous stoneware with celadon glaze
 9-1/8" x 5-7/16" x 4-7/8"
 The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
 Gift of funds from Ruth and Bruce Dayton



Ewer
 China, Asia
 4000 – 3000 B.C.
 Ceramic
 12-15/16" x 7-7/16" x 5-7/16"
 Private Collection of Thomas Thunnell



Ewer
 China, Asia
 T'ang Dynasty, 618 – 907
 Glazed earthenware
 7" x 5-1/4" x 5-1/4"
 The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
 Gift of William G. Siedenburg





Pilgrim Bottle

China, Asia
Northern Song Dynasty, 960 – 1127
Ceramic
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr.

Octagonal Ewer and Cover *

China, Asia
Northern Song Dynasty, 11th century
Ch'ing-pai ware, porcelain with pale-blue glaze
8-9/16" x 6-5/16" x 5"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of Ruth and Bruce Dayton



Cup with Handle *

China, Asia
Song Dynasty, 960 – 1127
Ting ware, Glazed porcelain
3-1/16" x 4-1/2" x 4-5/16"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of Ruth and Bruce Dayton



Ewer *

Object place: England
China, Asia
Ming Dynasty, Wan-li period, c. 1610
Porcelain with silver mounts
8-11/16" x 7-11/16" x 5-1/4"
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Theodora Wilbour Fund
in memory of Charlotte Beebe Wilbour



Ewer

China, Asia
Ch'ing Dynasty, 17th – 18th century
Blanc-de-chine porcelain
6-5/8" x 6-15/16" x 3-5/8"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of funds from Ruth and Bruce Dayton



Spouted Ewer

China, Asia
mid 19th century
Ceramic
5-1/2" x 5-1/2" x 5-1/2"
Private Collection of Jeff Oestreich

Kendi

Indonesia, Asia
10th century
Ceramic
6-5/16" x 8-9/16" x 6-3/4"
Private Collection of Thomas Thunnell



Carved Ewer

Korea, Asia
12th – 13th century
Ceramic
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr.



Bayon Khmer Pot

Thailand, Asia
14th century
Earthenware, glaze, and incised decoration
4-5/8" x 6"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of funds from Cliff and Sue Roberts



Sake Pourer

Ken Matsuzaki
Japan, Asia
c. 1996
Shino glazed ceramic
4" x 8-1/4" x 5-1/2"
Private Collection of Warren and Nancy MacKenzie





Lekythos
 attributed to The Bird Painter
 Greece, Europe
 5th century B.C.
 White-ground slip-glazed earthenware
 8-3/4" x 2-3/4"
 The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
 The Miscellaneous Works of Art Purchase Fund

Beaked Vessel

Persia (Iran), Middle East, Asia
 c. 1500 B.C.
 Ceramic
 6-1/2" h.
 The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
 Gift of Mr. and Mrs. I.D. Fink



Ewer *

Kashan, Persia (Iran), Middle East, Asia
 Late Seljuk, 12th – 13th century
 Kashan ware, earthenware with molded décor under lapis-blue glaze
 9-15/16" h.
 The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
 Bequest of Alfred F. Pillsbury



Aquamanile (Ram Shaped Ewer)

Rayy, Persia (Iran), Middle East, Asia
 13th century
 Earthenware
 7" h.
 The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
 Bequest of Alfred F. Pillsbury



Jug
 Germany, Europe
 16th century
 Ceramic
 10-1/4" x 6-1/2"
 The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
 Gift of Mrs. John Washburn

"Bellarmine" Jug

Germany, Europe
 mid 18th century
 Salt-glazed stoneware
 17-3/4" x 10-1/2" x 10-1/2"
 Private Collection of Warren and Nancy MacKenzie



"Bellarmine" Jug

Germany, Europe
 mid 18th century
 Salt-glazed stoneware
 13-1/4" x 8-1/2" x 8-1/2"
 Private Collection of Jeff Oestreich



"Bellarmine" Jug

Germany, Europe
 mid 18th century
 Salt-glazed stoneware
 8-3/4" x 5-1/4" x 5-1/4"
 Private Collection of Jeff Oestreich





Posset Pot
Bristol, England, Europe
1710 – 1720
Tin-glazed earthenware
9" x 9-1/2" x 8-1/4"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. George R. Steiner

Teapot

England, Europe
c. 1740
Creamware
5-5/8" x 7" x 3"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of Mrs. Sumner T. McKnight



Teapot with Cover and Stand *
Staffordshire, England, Europe
c. 1740
Agate ware
4-7/8" h.
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of Mr. And Mrs. Leo A. Hodroff

Puzzle Jug

Liverpool, England, Europe
c. 1750
Tin-glazed earthenware
6-7/8" x 5-1/8" x 6-5/8"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. George R. Steiner



Coffeepot

England, Europe
early 19th century
Glazed ceramic
11-7/16" x 9-7/16" x 5-1/2"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of Mrs. Eunice Dwan



Telegraph Jug
Staffordshire (?), England, Europe
c. 1866
Glazed ceramic
9" x 6-5/8" x 4-9/16"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of Various Donors, by exchange

Gravy Boat

Liverpool, England, Europe
19th century
Porcelain
4-3/4" x 7-1/8" x 3-1/8"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of John R. Van Derlip, E. C. Gale and others



Japonesque Teapot with Stand

England, Europe
c. 1885
Transfer ware, glazed earthenware
7-1/2" x 10-1/2" x 6"
Private Collection



Pitcher

England, Europe
1900
Earthenware
7-1/2" x 6" x 6"
Private Collection of Jeff Oestreich





Vessel in the Form of a Dog
Colima, Pacific Coast region, Mexico, North America
3rd century B.C. – A.D. 4th century
Ceramic, pigment
14-1/2" x 15-1/4" x 7-1/2"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
The John R. Van Derlip Fund

Double Spouted Vessel *
Nazca, Central Andes region, Peru, South America
100 B.C. – A.D. 600
Ceramic, pigment
7" h.
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund



Globular Vessel with Face of a Warrior King on Spout
Chimu, Peru, South America
8th – 15th century
Earthenware
6" h.
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. George B. Millard



Aryballos
Incan, Cuzco, Peru, South America
15th century
Ceramic, pigment
13-1/2" h.
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
The William Hood Dunwoody Fund



Beer Pot
Nigeria (?), Africa
20th century
Earthenware
17" x 13-1/2" x 13-1/2"
Private Collection of Warren and Nancy MacKenzie

Vessel *
Nupe, Nigeria, Africa
20th century
Unglazed ceramic
11-3/4" x 8-3/4" x 6-1/2"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
The Christina N. and Swan J. Turnblad Memorial Fund



Water Pot
Teke, Democratic Republic of Congo, Africa
20th century
Earthenware
12" x 8-1/2" x 7-1/2"
Private Collection of Mary Barringer



Handled Jug
Lwena, Democratic Republic of Congo, Africa
20th century
Earthenware
13" x 8-5/8" x 8-5/8"
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
The William Hood Dunwoody Fund



Gravy Boat, American Modern line

Russel Wright, American, 1904–1976
 Steubenville, Ohio, United States
 c. 1955–1959 (designed 1938–1939)
 Glazed pottery
 2-1/2" x 10-1/2" x 3-13/16"

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Gift of Antay S. Bilgutay

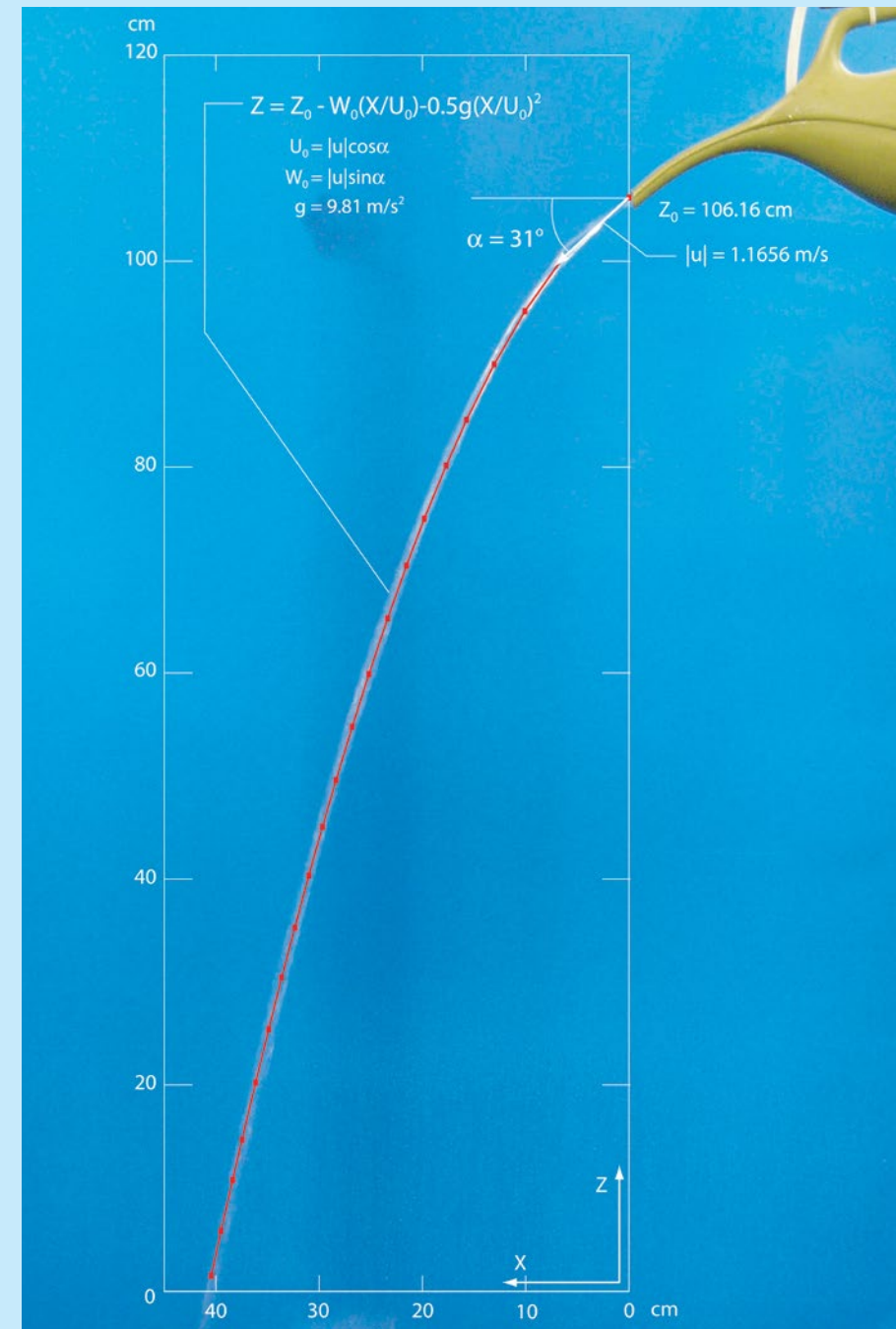


Pair of "Jiffy Ware" Pitchers

Viktor Schreckengost, American, born 1906
 United States, North America
 1942

Glazed earthenware
 6-1/2" x 7"

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
 The Modernism Collection, Gift of Norwest Bank Minnesota



Anatomy
of
 a Pour

Northern Clay Center

Northern Clay Center's mission is the advancement of the ceramic arts. Its goals are to promote excellence in the work of clay artists, to provide educational opportunities for artists and the community, and to encourage and expand the public's appreciation and understanding of all forms of the ceramic arts.

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Exhibition display graphics were provided by  DIGIGRAPHICS
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ISBN 1-932706-05-4
\$10.00



The Social Life of Pouring Pots

Guest curator, Mary Barringer, Editor of *Studio Potter* magazine

The pouring pot serves not only as a container of liquid, but also as a symbol of human routine and behavior. The traditions of making and using pouring pots have required potters to make objects that function specifically to *this* liquid, *this* room, *this* group of people. A sampling of the resulting variety of pots tells a story about each pot's one-time social life. This exhibition features pots from around the world, and from the 16th century B.C. to the 20th century A.D.



Northern Clay Center
2424 Franklin Avenue East
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55406