

## A word from our president

### The End is Nigh

Well the end of this year anyway. The year started well but then a nasty virus got in the way! Regardless we tried to keep in touch during lock down and managed a great exhibition. I note that motivation has waned somewhat with attendance during the day - Wednesday we have opened up and no-one else has eventuated. This is something to be discussed at the AGM.

### Our AGM and Xmas party on 2 December

Give some thought to helping out in 2021 and being on the committee - fresh ideas are welcomed!  
The positions on the committee will be decided on the day.  
Daphne is stepping down from the position of Treasurer after great service of a million years.  
The position of President is also up for grabs - we have an unwritten rule of 2 years maximum in this position and David has outlived his usefulness - time for a change. Are you up for it?  
We are also after  
2 Secretaries - minute and membership  
Vice President  
Newsletter Editor,  
Exhibition Sub-committee  
and Firing committee.

### Our Visions in Clay exhibition!

Again we have to thank the committee with Rachael Torepe at its head for a tremendous success.  
Now it is time to work toward the exhibition for 2021.  
Next year's exhibition will be in December - perfect for Xmas gifts.  
We also expect to have 2 pop-up-shops with BVAC during 2021 - more opportunities to sell your work.

### BVAC Pop-up-Shop

The pop-up is on 20-22 November in the Auditorium at the Botanic Gardens Mt Coot-tha.  
We have 5 members exhibiting this time. The Pop-Up will be open in the Friday from 10am to 5pm and Saturday 9am to 4pm and Sunday 9am to 3pm.  
Even if you are not involved come along and support local arts and crafts.

*Stay well and busy - cheers, David*

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Brisbane Visual Artists Community  
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**Christmas**  
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November 20	Friday 12 noon - 5 pm
November 21	Saturday 9 am - 4 pm
November 22	Sunday 9 am - 3 pm

Mt Coot-tha Botanical Gardens  
Auditorium

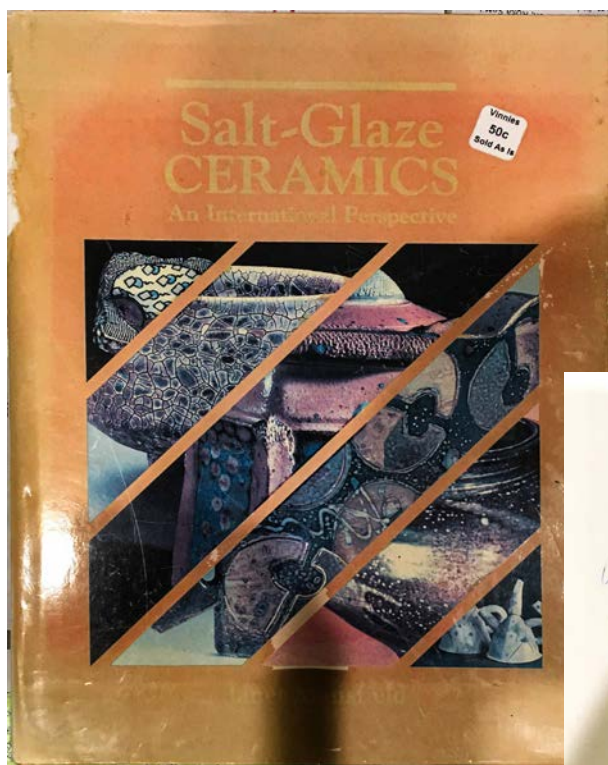
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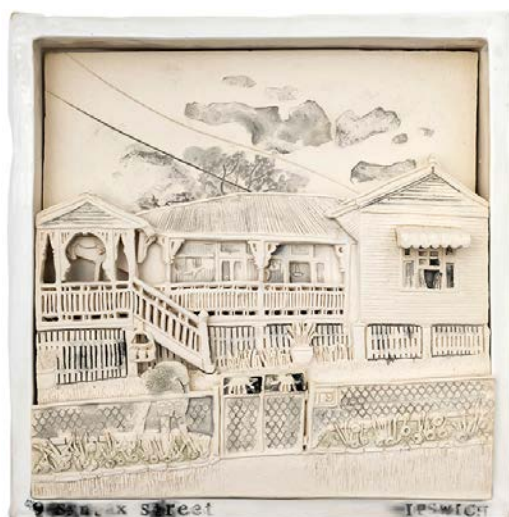
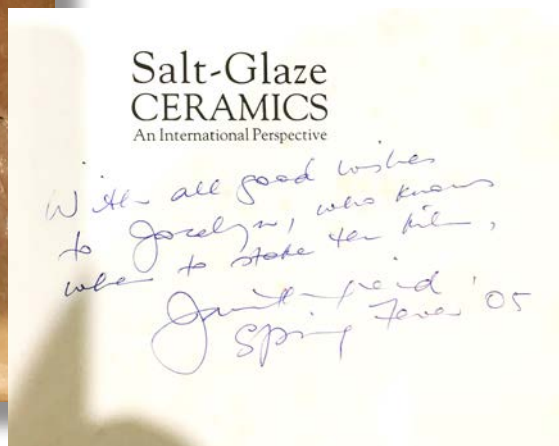
Newsletter  
David Bartholomew  
[david@vcgraphics.com.au](mailto:david@vcgraphics.com.au)

Done anything interesting artistically lately? Let us know with a few words and photos



Anthony found this book by Janet Mansfield - Salt-Glaze Ceramics, A International Perspective - in a Vinnies for 50¢ - original price \$ 69.95!

There is even a handwritten dedication by Janet inside



Gai introduced us to Janet Du Rand's work - some currently on display in Ipswich

#### LIVING IN IPSWICH: NEW WORK BY JANE DU RAND

14 Nov 2020 - 14 Feb 2021

The Ipswich Art Gallery is located in d'Arcy Doyle Place; a pedestrian mall section of Nicholas Street between Brisbane and Limestone Streets in the Ipswich CBD.

Living in Ipswich presents a charismatic and quirky selection of Ipswich's 'Queenslander' houses, each recreated in miniature as a glazed ceramic sculpture.

Reminiscent of little stage sets, the sculptures first project the homes' façades, timber fretwork and iron balustrades, and then, looking through the windows they reveal the intimate narratives of the lives lived within.

South African born ceramic artist Jane du Rand, immigrated to Australia in 2014. Today she lives in a 'Queenslander' in Ipswich.

Her studio can be found at Station Road Creative Precinct | Unit E, 241 Station Rd, Yeerongpilly, 4105



Tilers Turtle Back Sponges from Bunnings.

The whole sponge to the left is easily cut into smaller pieces for different uses.

These sponges wear well and hold an amazing amount of water.

Great for wheel and hand builders.

# Are your glazes food safe?

<https://digitalfire.com/article/are+your+glazes+food+safe+or+are+they+leachable%3F>

An excerpt from a lengthy article found by Anthony

## Are Your Glazes Food Safe or are They Leachable?

### Description

Many potters do not think about leaching, but times are changing. What is the chemistry of stability? There are simple ways to check for leaching, and fix crazing.

### Article

We live in a 'no fault' world. People tend to blame others for things. For example, it is fashionable to blame alcoholism and criminal behavior on our genes now. However, if your pottery is leaching harmful compounds into food or a drink, there is no one to blame but you. To be honest, you probably like to take the credit for your designs. Then you should also take responsibility. If you can calculate the oxide formula of your glaze and do a couple of simple tests you will be in the best good position to defend your use of them.

There is definitely a school-of-thought in both industrial and hobby ceramics that the 'leaching glaze' issue is totally overblown. Thus, if there is pottery leaching harmful compounds into food and drink, it is being produced both by companies and people that do not know any better and who have made a conscious choice to ignore the issue.

The US FDA (Food and Drug Administration) tests ceramic ware extensively for leaching metals often with distressing results. After a meeting and lunch with their representative at the American Ceramic Society convention I was very encouraged by their position on this matter. While they are ready to take action against offenders, they are much more anxious to see initiatives by companies and potters to learn how to recognize leach-likely processes, materials, and formulations and learn how to fix the problems.

There are lots of things we don't know about leaching in glazes. However what follows are some things we do know.

Glazes are glass and we tend to think of them as timeless, indestructible. However all glass leaches to some extent when it comes into contact with even water. With acids, especially if the contact occurs over a period of time or the acid is hot, the effect is obviously greater. Vandals, for example, simply use sulfuric acid in bingo doppers to etch graffiti into windows. This is evident by a change in the gloss and texture of the glass surface over time. Glaze color can change also. As a demonstration try 33% CaO, 42% B<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, 6% Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> & 18% SiO<sub>2</sub> at 950C. It should fizz and dissolve in vinegar within minutes even though it fires to a clear and apparently hard surface.

If a glaze is made from harmless materials like silica, dolomite, kaolin, feldspar, whiting, ball clay, etc. leaching is only a functional and aesthetic issue. But if the glaze employs metallic colorants (other than iron) or other minerals containing lithium, barium, lead, chrome, etc. then safety and legal liability becomes a concern.

The likelihood of leaching is not just a matter of whether the ingredients used to make a glaze are dangerous. The issue is complex, involving the ways in which the materials are prepared and fired and the formulations that are used. It is possible to use toxic materials safely and it is possible to compromise an otherwise safe glaze by unbalanced mixtures.

If a customer claims injury from leaching of your ware you have to demonstrate that there was no reason for you to have been concerned about the hazard and that you were diligent in researching the subject. If you don't know how to appraise a glaze's safety then play it safe. For example, there are ways to use barium safely but if you don't know them then don't use barium on food surfaces.

### Is the glaze mature?

If a glaze is not properly melted one cannot expect it to be resistant to leaching. While a simple visual inspection of a glossy glaze is usually sufficient to judge the degree of melt, it is especially difficult to tell if a matte glaze is properly developed. This is because glazes can be matte because a network of surface crystals have developed, because the glaze has a surface texture imparted by incomplete mixing of oxides during the melt, because high alumina affects the reflectivity or index of refraction of the glass, or simply because the glaze is not melted.

If a glaze is not properly melted then it will be leachable. The simplest way to tell if this is the case is to fire the glaze at one and two cones higher and lower than your production temperature. Line up the samples and it should be obvious.

### Is it balanced?

Glazes are leachable if they contain inadequate glass former and alumina. 'Flux saturated' glazes are very common because they develop interesting fired surfaces associated with non-homogeneous melts of more and less fluid components. However, for a glaze to be fluid, it needs to have lots of flux. If it has lots of flux then it is very likely that the silica and alumina are lacking. A glaze with high feldspar (50%+) is a classic example (feldspar by itself is leachable). If inadequate glass and intermediate oxides are available, coloring oxides that might otherwise be securely held in the glass structure may be available for leaching. Calculating the formula of your glaze (i.e. with INSIGHT) and comparing it with limit charts can be a good way to tell if adjustment is needed. Sometimes it is necessary to compromise a little of the visual character to produce a product more resistant to acid attack.

Another simple thing you can check for is material amounts that do not seem normal. It is common, for example, to see 5% talc in a glaze, but 30% is definitely not normal. Likewise more than 5% lithium carbonate or zinc is strange and needs explaining. Watch also for high amounts of Gerstley borate or boron frit (more than 10%) in high fire glazes, this is not normal. In addition, every glaze should have as much silica and kaolin as it can tolerate. High and middle temperature glazes with little or no silica or kaolin need an explanation. Low fire glazes must have lots of boron sourcing material like frit or they simply will not melt. Many frits are quite balanced as a low fire glaze (e.g. Ferro Frit 3195), others are not (e.g. Frit 3134) and need more added silica and kaolin.

### Firing Temperature

Higher temperature glazes contain less flux and more silica and alumina. Since silica and alumina are so closely related to glaze stability it follows that high temperature glazes are intrinsically more stable. However it is fairly easy to make unstable high temperature glazes also (fluid flux saturates are an example, they often contain little alumina). At high temperatures experimenters can mix a far greater range of materials and get a good melt because temperature is on their side. Thus it is easy to get 'sloppy' and adopt the attitude that if a glaze looks good it is also safe. Some potters even assume that any glaze is safe as long as it is fired at high temperature. It is common to see popular high fire recipes with very high metal oxide and barium contents. Matte glazes often contain abnormally large magnesia contents. These are destabilizing factors that temperature cannot counteract. With a knowledge of glaze chemistry you can create stable glazes at low fire, without it you can make unstable ones at high temperatures.

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