

arts shorts

BY SUZI STEFFEN

HOT POTTERY

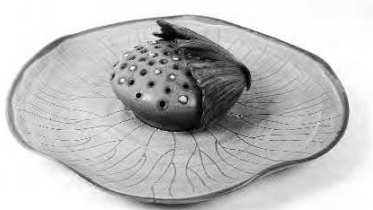
The Ring of Fire creates connections across the Pacific, from geography to art. "From the Fire: Contemporary Korean Ceramics" opens at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art with a free reception from 5:30 to 8 pm Friday, Feb. 2 and continues, with special presentations on teapots and celadon, artist lectures and a ceramics class, until April 22.

Why Korean ceramics? Well, curator Chung Hyun Cho, a ceramic artist and professor in the Department of Ceramics at the College of Art and Design of Ewha Women's University in Seoul, explains that Korean earthenware vessels from around 8000 B.C.E. have been discovered, so it's not like the ceramics tradition in Korea isn't venerable. But Korea was invaded over and over and, from 1910-1945, was occupied by Japan. Contemporary ceramicists in Korea look back to the Goryeo period, 918-1270 C.E., at the beautiful jade-green celadon ceramics, and the Joseon Dynasty's white porcelain pieces, but they create their own sense of a culture meeting both Eastern ideology and Western art theories. "In the West, artists are encouraged to explain their intention in their clay work, ...[but] ceramic artists in the East," Cho says, "believe that the artist has to immerse the self into clay for a pure end result."

In the exhibition catalogue, potter Warren Frederick notes that any artist deals with unique problems in an interconnected and open-source world: "how to be vibrantly modern and eloquently historical." All 54 artists, ranging in age from 30 to 80 and coming from many different regions of South Korea, work with this issue. Soo Jeong Kim's *Life-Lotus II* (pictured above right), for example, combines a Buddhist form, a celadon base and a studded flower form both organic and patterned in an odd, disturbing fashion. Hoo Keun Lim's *Letter of Paul to the Colossians* (pictured above left) mixes rough and smooth, Harry Potter and Christianity, colors and grey to provide a lively dialogue among materials as well as philosophies, and Jin Kyoung Kim's lovely porcelain underwear and blouse mix feminism and the tactile nature of clay to move in entirely new directions. The artists combine tradition and postmodern awareness, and the show provides a great opportunity for Eugeneans to see a wide range of thinking and practice in contemporary Korean ceramics.

WINE, MEXICO AND SONG

Peace out while you imbibe and bliss over art and local music, man! The **New ZoneArt Collective**, which recently moved to a larger space at 164 E. Broadway, kicks off a planned monthly benefit extravaganza Wednesday, Feb. 7 at 7:30 pm with the Peter Giri Project playing a **benefit for Eugene Peaceworks**. New Zone president Susan Klein, a member of the 245 Blair artists' group and an artist who experienced lots of synergy with art and activism in Berkeley, is most excited to be able to present a combination of local art and music by a local singer who writes his own lyrics and music. "Viva à la Mexico," a show by Ellen Gabehart, opens this Friday during the First Friday ARTWalk (see p. 13 for more info) and will be up when Giri performs. And you can drink too. "I'm so happy that Sweet Cheeks Winery will be there" Klein says. She's looking forward to finding other musicians who want a new venue; they can choose the nonprofit with which to split proceeds from the \$5 admission fee. For more information, contact New Zone gallery coordinator Steve LaRicca at 935-4308 or Klein at 513-5314.



불꽃의 혼

from the fire February 3–April 22, 2007
contemporary korean ceramics



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