



About the Gallery  
Education Programs  
Exhibitions and Collections

Gift Shop  
Membership  
Newsroom

Artists Online

Current Exhibitions

Past Exhibitions

Permanent Collection

## 10th National Biennial of Ceramics: Autoportrait

September 14 to December 24, 2002

For twenty years, The National Biennial of Ceramics originating in Trois-Rivières, Quebec, has been a showcase of Canadian activity in clay media. Each exhibition has revealed different approaches in organization. This show combines the work of emerging artists with those who are more renowned, fostering a blend of innovation and tradition. This blend allows us to see the diversity, quality, and depth of ceramics throughout Canada today.

The theme for the 10th National Biennial of Ceramics is "self-portrait". Four regional curators were given the task of selecting artists whose works can be interpreted as being autobiographical in nature. Each artist has a different source of inspiration, therefore each has different artistic motivation, and so each conveys a unique message regarding origins, values, practice, identity and culture.



Continuing Journey: Karen Dahl

Much of the Atlantic provinces are sparsely populated. As a result, resource-based activities such as fishing and farming inspire cultural expression. Peter Powning's work appears architectural, representing a search for balance between man and nature. Reed Weir's work symbolizes the importance of fishing to the prosperity of the region. It also comments on the need for environmental conservation, so that the area's lifeblood is preserved, not debased. Ray Mackie's porcelain sting rays capture the beauty, mystery, and intrigue of the oceanic biosphere.

The artists chosen from Quebec take a more introspective approach. These artists invite viewers to draw their own conclusions regarding the meaning of their art. Gilbert Poissant's works, for example, are like windows open to time, each individual mural is a look towards his inner self. Analogous to Poissant's windows, Guy Simoneau's work resemble mirrors. Viewing them elicits some reflection of the viewer. Monique Giard creates symbolic forms, each epitomizing an aspect of her self.

Political activism is an overarching theme for the artists chosen from Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. Carol Hanson of Saskatchewan and Martin Tagseth of Manitoba both present work that embodies a frustration towards the future of agriculture, with Tagseth focusing on the treatment of farmers and Hanson focusing on the use of genetically modified organisms. Carol Bradley of Ontario presents "Agatha's Laundry", which symbolizes the tedium, loneliness, and sacrifice experienced by many women who live in suburbia.



Excerpts From The Gemini Diaries: Kirsten Abrahamson

The eight artists from British Columbia and Alberta have varied styles and use differing forms to express their individuality. Kirsten Abrahamson uses exuberant metaphorical imagery to explore the link between myth and reality. Jeremy Hatch created a commemorative plate that preserves initials from anonymous relationships.

In total, there are four artists from the Atlantic provinces, six from Quebec, eight from Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and eight from Alberta and British Columbia. A full list of artists, their locations, and the regional curators follows.



The one that got away:  
Reed Weir

#### **Atlantic Provinces:**

Regional curator - Alexandra McCurdy

Artists - Ray Mackie, Peter Powning, Sarah R. Saunders, Reed Weir

#### **Quebec:**

Regional curator - Yves Louise-Seize

Artists - Jacinthe Baribeau, Laurent Craste, Monique Giard, Pascale Girardin, Gilbert Poissant, Guy Simoneau

#### **Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan:**

Regional curator - Ann Roberts

Artists - Carol Bradley, Karen Dahl, Carole Hanson, Steven Heinemann, Noah Rosen, Jack Sures, Martin Tagseth, Wendy Walgate

#### **Alberta and British Columbia:**

Regional curator - Paul Mathieu

Artists - Kirsten Abrahamson, John Chalke, Jeremy Hatch, Tam Irving, Gregory J. Payce, Friederike Rahn, Rebecca Robbins, Garry J. Williams

Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery

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