



500
PERCENT

POTTERY BY
MARK
HEWITT

PUCKER GALLERY
BOSTON

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MY FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH MARK HEWITT WAS AT A CONFERENCE on wood firing that took place in Iowa three decades ago. At the time, wood firing was an exotic and exciting practice with only a couple dozen active kilns in the country and a few wood kilns in academic programs. (My, how times have changed!) Mark was on a panel about aesthetics. A question came from the audience: “To what extent is the success of a pot due to its firing?” There was a pause; none of the august panelists on stage seemed eager to untangle this knot. Finally, Mark gave a kind of exasperated sigh, stared directly at the questioner, and said firmly, “The clay is 100 percent, the forming is 100 percent, the decoration is 100 percent, and the firing is 100 percent.” There was no further discussion on the matter. As I have come to know Mark as a colleague and friend over the years, I have often thought about that question and his answer. What makes a successful pot? Everything.

Mark produces non-stop, making purposeful and accessible wares built on a foundation of this high standard. With the intention, passion, and energy he brings to each pot he makes, to speak of “400 percent” seems fitting. The work in this exhibition is a snapshot of a mature potter—33 years on and thousands of pots thrown and fired at his home studio in Pittsboro, North Carolina. The finely potted clay walls and breathy volume of these pots testify to the extreme wheel skills Mark has honed over the years. Most have rich, flowing, salty, ashy surfaces and a loose decorative approach that plays against the taut consistency of his forms: slip-trailed swags and dots, colored glass runs, incised patterns, and finger wipes that animate symmetrical shapes with a quirky spontaneity. The less predictable and relaxed flesh brings tension and drama to these vessels’ well-structured bones.

Rather than the heroically scaled jars he is also known for, Mark includes in this exhibition a group of celadon wares (including MH209, MH218, MH220) from his newer wood kiln. Here, there are no tricks of contrast. Except for the reveal of raw clay near the foot, these pots

All works are stoneware.

Cover:
TEN-GALLON VASE
yellow ash glaze with black slip bands and blue glass runs | 28 x 11 x 11" | MH204

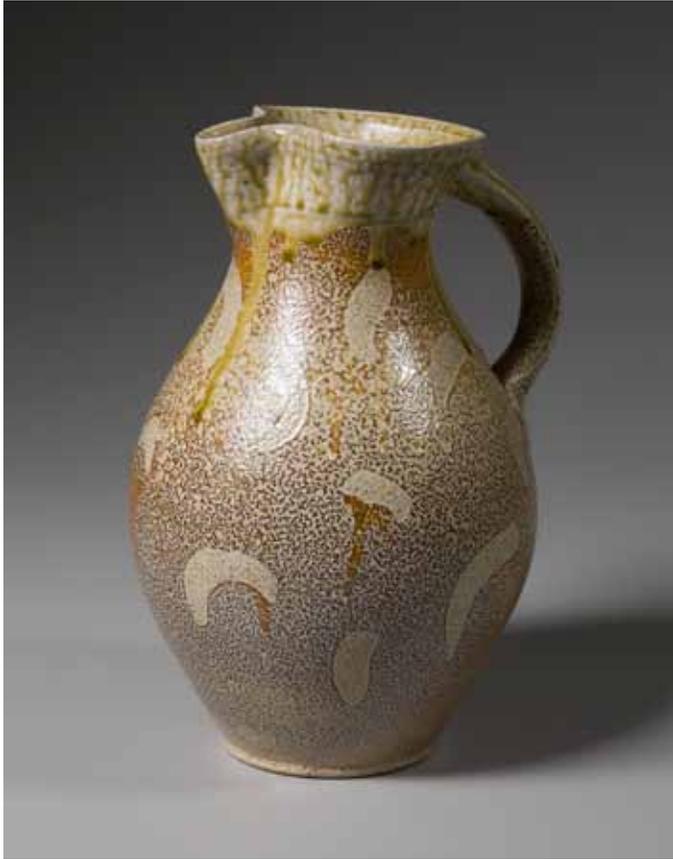


SLAB PLATTER
salt glaze with white slip and glass pool | 2 x 21.5 x 12" | MH259

are all form and subtle coating of glass in shades of grey, green, and blue. While a few have underglaze slip trailing, or contrasting dots of color, those of pure form and color signal a new and challenging minimal direction for Mark.

Generally, Mark allows himself little formal wobble, except perhaps in his vases, with their slightly wavering vertical lines impressed into the freshly thrown clay. A quartet of weighty trays (MH256-MH259) surprises, then: they seem to be primordial canvases, eschewing the expectation of the “good pot” that Mark himself has helped articulate, pushing against the quotidian parameters of his virtuosic practice.

Though he didn’t say this back in Iowa, in addition to the clay, forming, decoration, and firing, the success of a pot depends on the context in which it is seen, acquired, and understood. Herein lies another equally elusive 100 percent, for without a supportive audience, no potter can thrive. Just as Mark has mastered the production of pots, in collaboration with his wife, Carol Peppe Hewitt, he has also put extraordinary energy into fostering his local ceramic community, and he has consistently and eloquently engaged intellectually in the local, national, and international conversation about the meaning of handmade pottery in a way that is rooted in history and place. Mark’s approach to regionalism—his building of a culture of support for



PITCHER
kaolin slip with pale ash glaze neck and finger swipes
12.5 x 9 x 9" | MH233



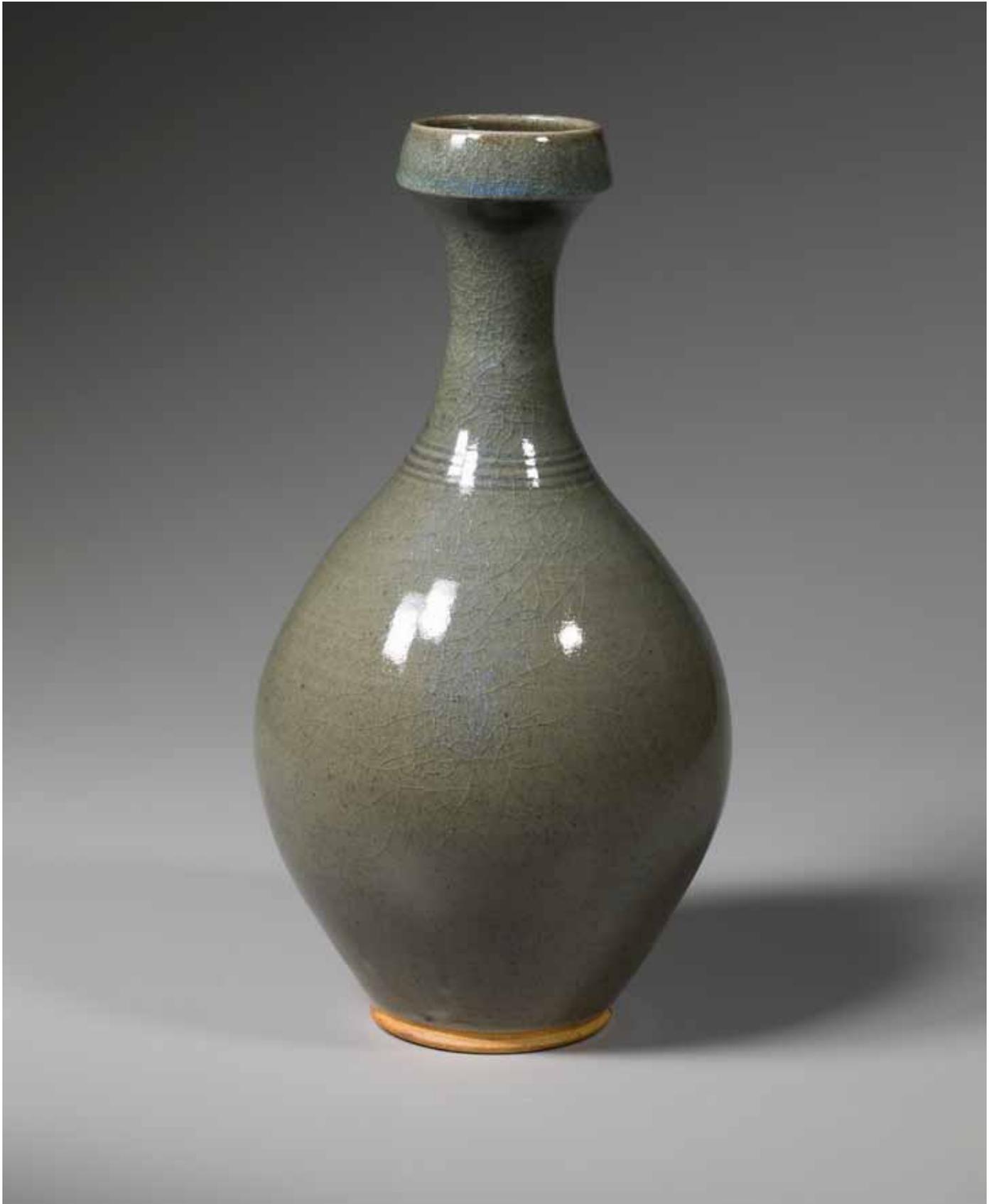
PITCHER
kaolin slip with salt glazed circles and blue glass runs
15 x 9 x 9" | MH231

pottery with kiln openings, his connections with area academic institutions and museums, and his training of young apprentices—provides a model that has rippled out from Pittsboro, through North Carolina and beyond.

In his crafting of a compelling context in which studio pots are significant and even essential to contemporary life, Mark broke ground and built a foundation on which many of us, and especially our younger colleagues, stand. In his writings, lectures, and public persona, he articulates the complex meanings and pleasures of non-academic, functional, accessible pottery, belying what some claimed were increasingly irrelevant practices. His willingness to take on the doubters, often on their own intellectual territory, has put wind in the sails of his many fellow voyagers. All of us, whether on parallel or tangential potting trajectories, have been carried forward by his 500-percent life in clay.

—MARK SHAPIRO

*Mark Shapiro has made wood-fired, functional pottery in Western Massachusetts for the past thirty years and is a frequent workshop leader and panelist. He edited *A Chosen Path: The Ceramic Art of Karen Karnes* (UNC Press, 2010), is a founding member of POW! (Pots on Wheels), and directs *Apprenticelines*, which seeks to support and expand studio ceramic apprenticeships. His work is included in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC and the Museum of Ceramics at Alfred University in New York.*



VASE
blue celadon glaze with horizontal incised bands on neck | 15 x 8.5 x 8.5" | MH218



VASE

blue celadon glaze with horizontal bands on neck and vertical lines on body | 13 x 7 x 7" | MH220 (left)

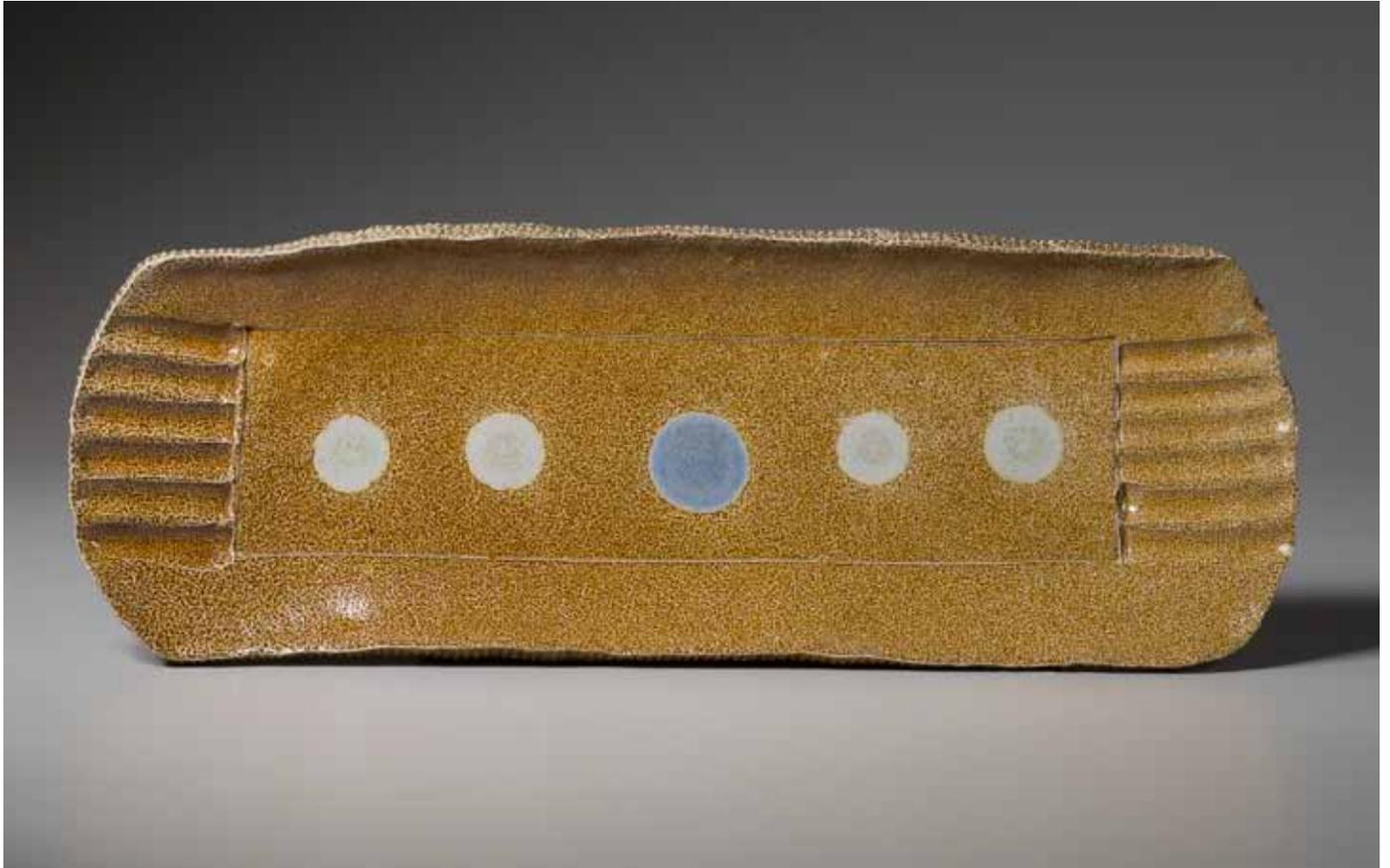
FLUTED VASE

celadon glaze with rippled bands | 9 x 5 x 5" | MH209 (right)



SLAB PLATTER

salt glaze with clear and blue glass pools and ember charring | 2 x 20 x 7.5" | MH256



SLAB PLATTER
salt glaze with finger grips and glass pools | 2 x 22 x 8" | MH257



SLAB PLATTER

salt glaze with kaolin slip, geometric lines, and glass pools | 2 x 23 x 8" | MH258



TEN-GALLON VASE

yellow ash glaze with black slip shoulder and neck, decorative panels, and blue glass runs | 23 x 11 x 11" | MH205



STRAIGHT MUG

yellow ash glaze with spiral slip trailing and blue glass run | 5.25 x 5 x 4" | MH248 (left)

TUMBLER

kaolin slip with finger swipes, blue glass runs, and yellow dots | 5.5 x 3.5 x 3.5" | MH253 (center)

BARREL MUG

salt glaze with looping slip trailing and blue glass run | 6 x 5.5 x 5.5" | MH243 (right)



PLATTER
celadon glaze over white and red geometric slip trailing | 21 x 21 x 4" | MH260



STEIN

salt glaze with dark ash glaze neck, looping slip trailing, and blue glass runs | 7 x 5.5 x 5.5" | MH238 (left)

STRAIGHT MUG

yellow ash glaze with incised decoration and blue glass runs | 5 x 5.5 x 4" | MH247 (center left)

VASE WITH HANDLES

salt glaze with natural ash and horizontal incised bands on neck | 8 x 4.5 x 4.5" | MH225 (center right)

TUMBLER

kaolin slip with finger swipes, blue and clear glass runs, and black dots | 5.75 x 3.5 x 3.5" | MH252 (right)



LIDDED JAR
kaolin slip with fluted body, medallions, and pale ash glaze neck and lid | 15 x 9 x 9" | MH230



VASE
black manganese glaze with yellow neck and yellow dots on shoulder | 14 x 6 x 6" | MH223



LIDDED JAR
alkaline glaze with ember charring, incised horizontal bands, and blue glass runs | 16.5 x 9 x 9" | MH227



VASE

lilac slip with salt glaze finger swipes, black neck, and yellow dots on shoulder | 17 x 7 x 7" | MH221



STEIN

salt glaze with pale ash glaze neck and blue and clear glass runs | 7 x 5.5 x 5.5" | MH236 (left)

BARREL MUG

gray salt glaze with looping slip trailing and blue glass run | 6 x 5.5 x 5.5" | MH245 (center)

FLUTED VASE

salt glaze with horizontal lines at top and bottom | 8 x 4 x 4" | MH210 (right)



VASE WITH HANDLES

kaolin slip with blue glass runs and horizontal incised bands on neck | 8 x 5 x 5" | MH226 (left)

LIDDED JAR

kaolin slip with fluted body, salt glaze bands, and blue glass runs | 14.5 x 9 x 9" | MH229 (center)

PITCHER

kaolin slip with alkaline glaze neck, finger swipes, blue glass runs, and medallions at neck | 11 x 6 x 6" | MH235 (right)



FLUTED VASE

blue celadon glaze with iron slip dots | 15.25 x 6.5 x 6.5" | MH207 (left)

FLUTED VASE

black manganese glaze with kiln ash | 18.75 x 8 x 8" | MH206 (center)

TRIANGLE VASE

yellow ash glaze with a horizontal band | 17 x 7 x 7" | MH211 (right)



TRIANGLE VASE
yellow ash glaze with blue glass runs and a horizontal band | 9 x 5 x 5" | MH216 (left)

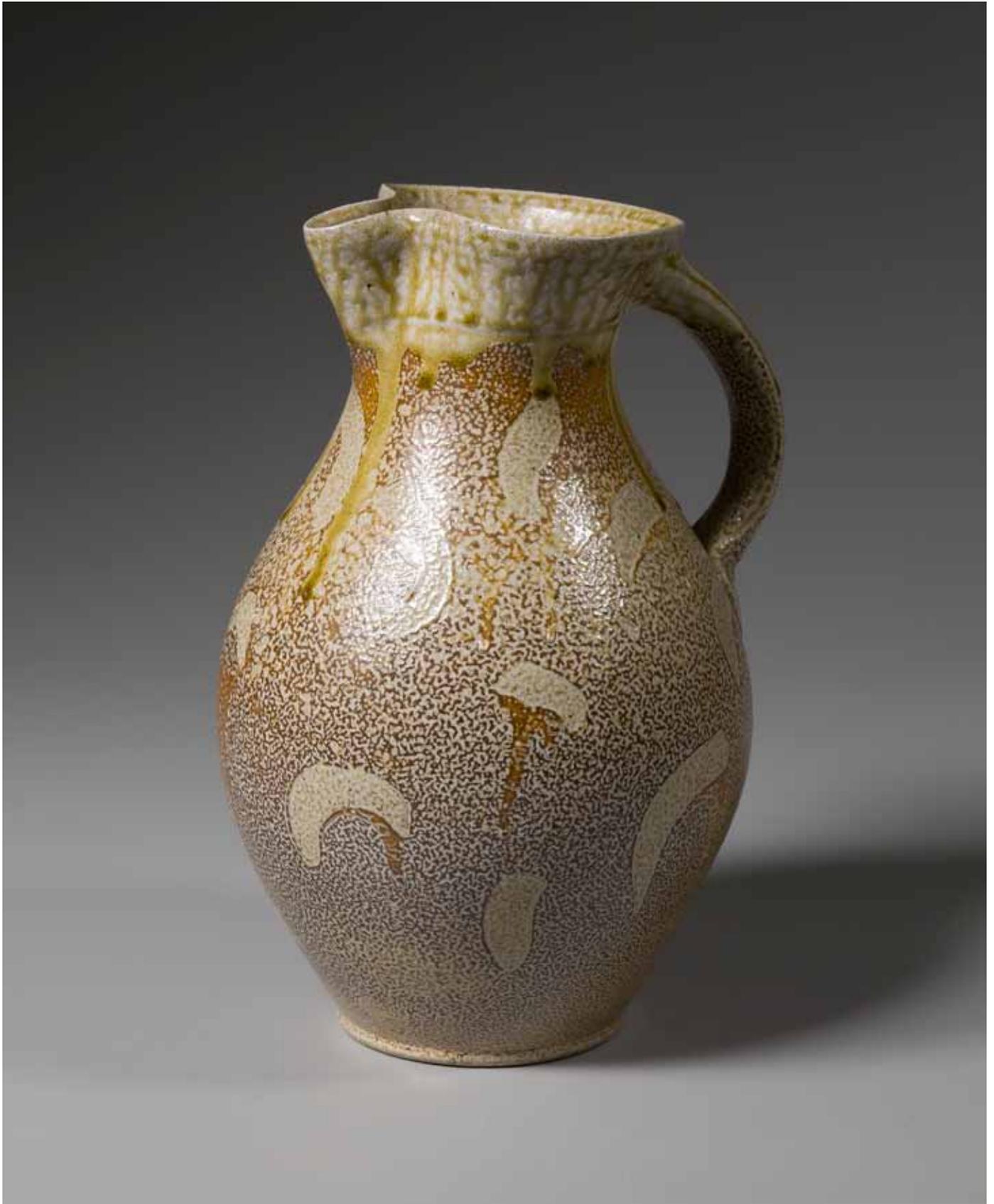
TRIANGLE VASE
salt glaze with blue glass runs | 11 x 5.5 x 5.5" | MH214 (center)

TRIANGLE VASE
kaolin slip with geometric finger swipes | 14 x 6.5 x 6.5" | MH213 (right)



PITCHER

kaolin slip with salt glazed circles and blue glass runs | 15 x 9 x 9" | MH231

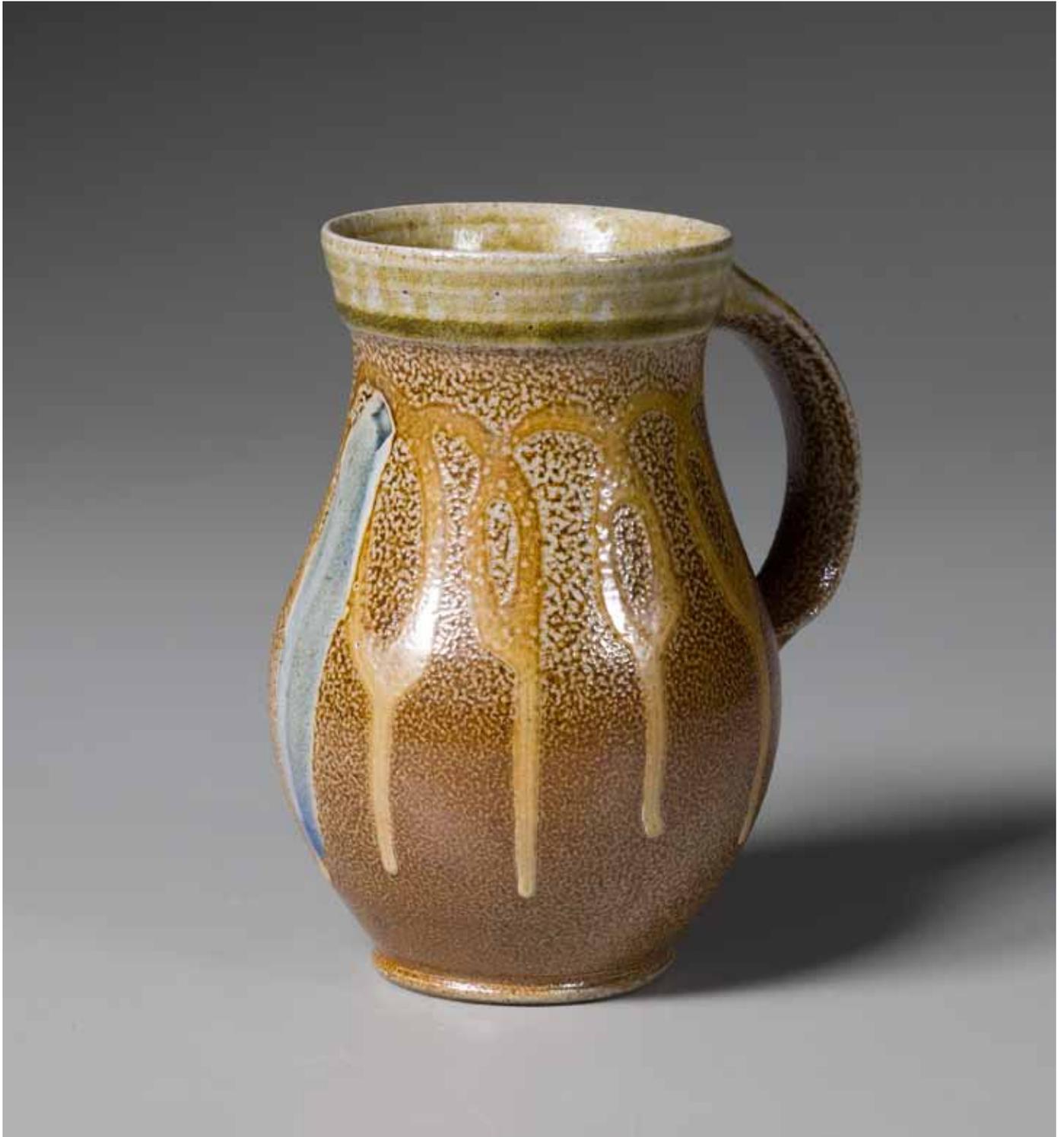


PITCHER

kaolin slip with pale ash glaze neck and finger swipes | 12.5 x 9 x 9" | MH233



TRIANGLE VASE
kaolin slip with geometric finger swipes | 16 x 7 x 7" | MH212



BARREL MUG
salt glaze with looping slip trailing and blue glass run | 6 x 5.5 x 5.5" | MH244



STRAIGHT MUG

yellow ash glaze with geometric slip trailing and blue glass runs | 5 x 5 x 4" | MH246

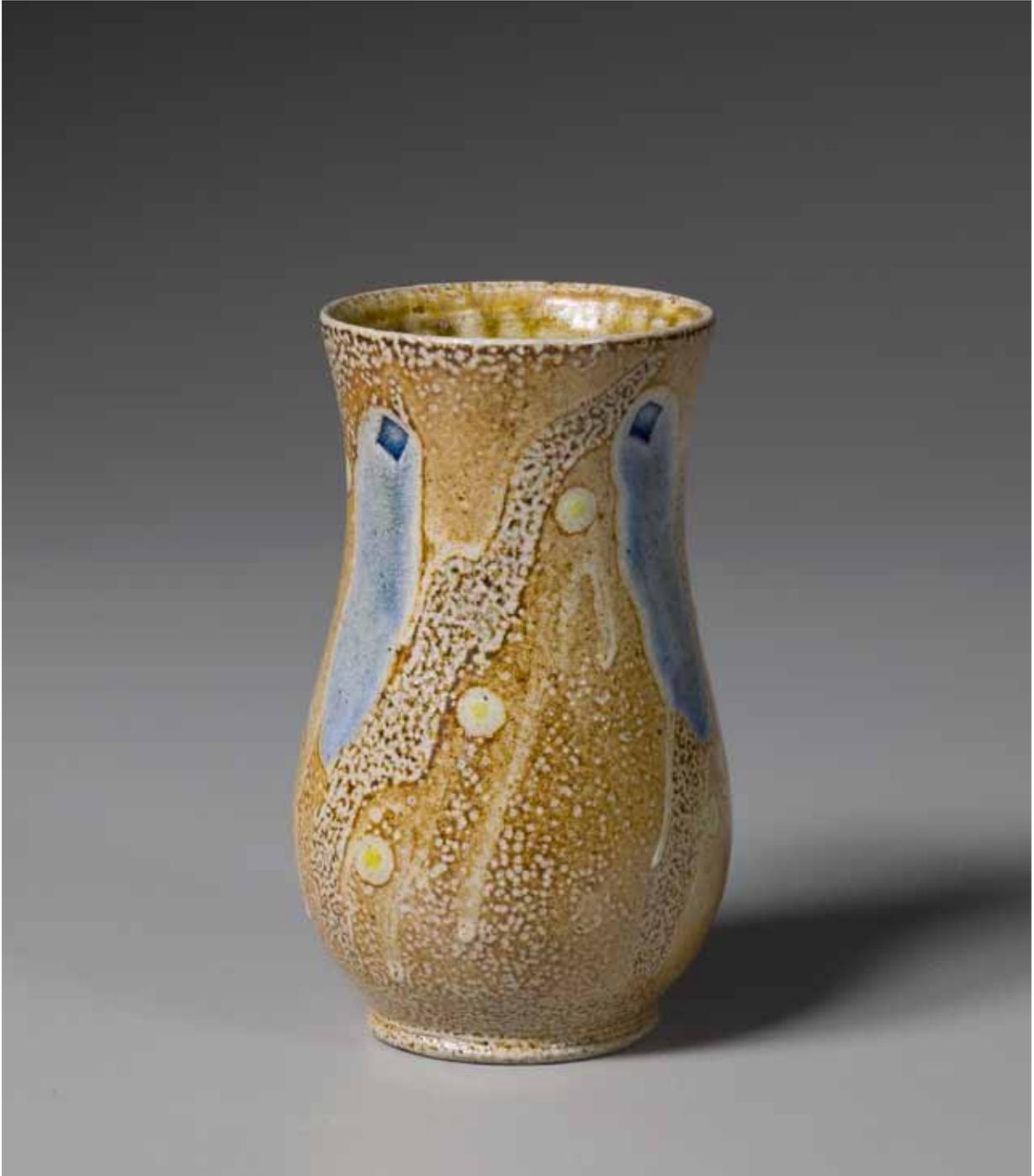


STRAIGHT MUG
yellow ash glaze with brown floral slip trailing and blue glass runs | 5 x 4.75 x 3.75" | MH249



STRAIGHT MUG

salt glaze with floral slip trailing and blue glass run | 5 x 5 x 4" | MH250



TUMBLER

kaolin slip with finger swipes, blue glass runs, and yellow and white dots | 5.25 x 3.5 x 3.5" | MH254

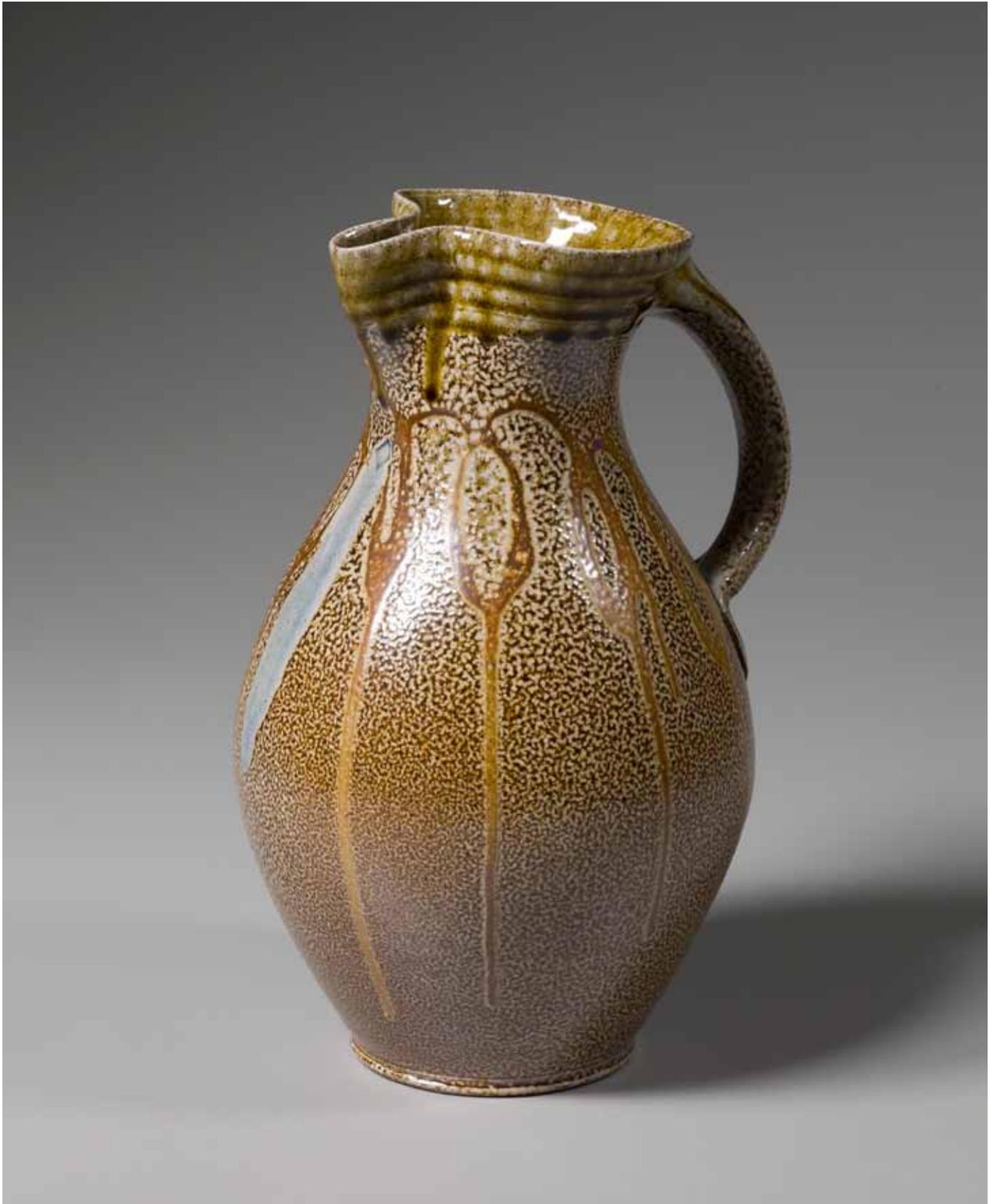


STEIN

salt glaze with dark ash glaze neck, looping slip trailing, and blue glass runs | 6.5 x 5.5 x 5.5" | MH239

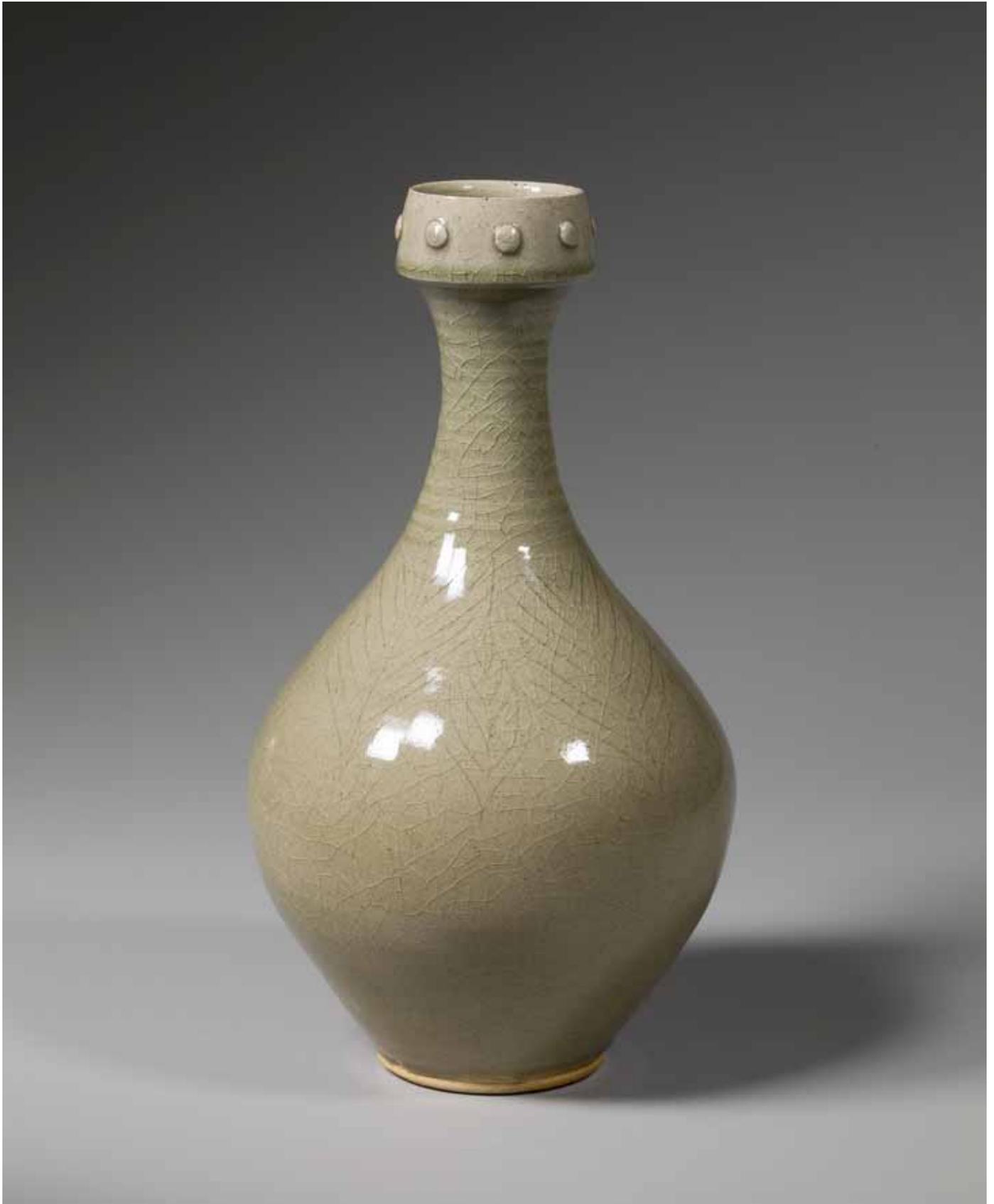


BARREL MUG
yellow ash glaze with brown floral slip trailing and black dots | 6 x 6 x 6" | MH240



PITCHER

salt glaze with dark ash glaze neck, looping slip trailing and blue glass runs | 12 x 7.5 x 7.5" | MH234



VASE
celadon glaze with medallions on rim and leaf slip trailing | 15.5 x 8.5 x 8.5" | MH217

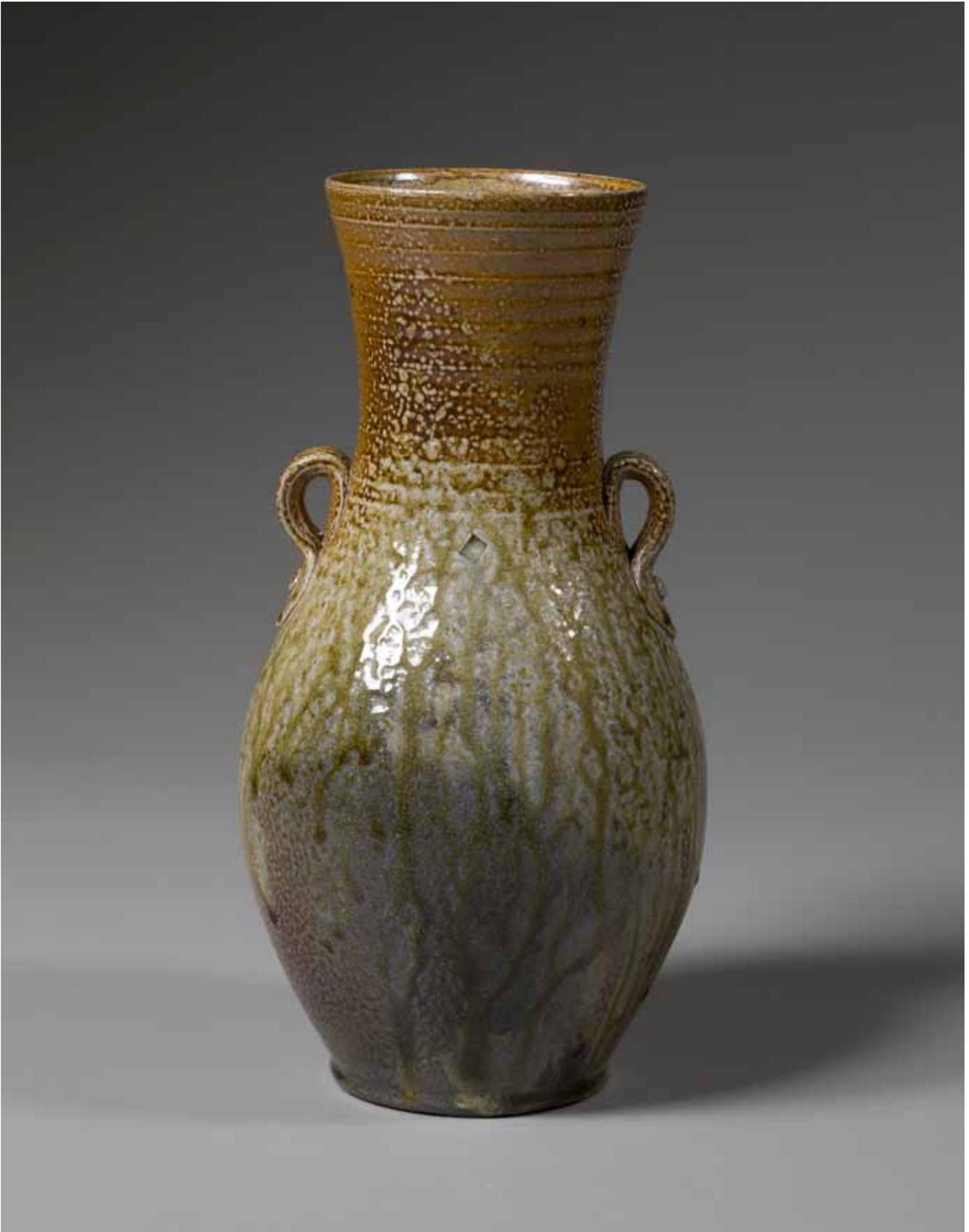


VASE
lilac slip with finger swipes, yellow neck, and black dots on shoulder | 14 x 6.5 x 6.5" | MH222



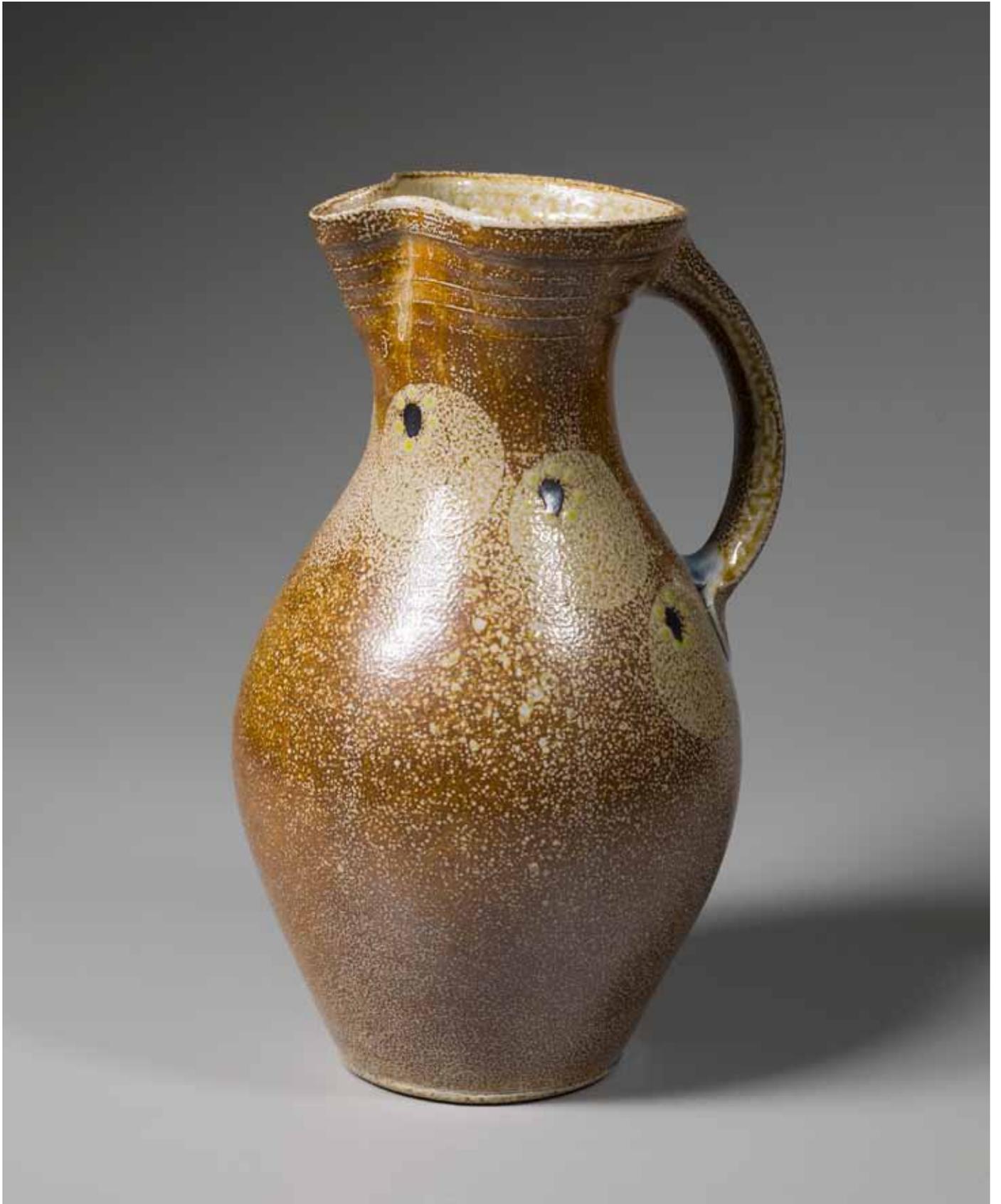
LIDDED JAR

kaolin slip with alkaline glaze neck and lid and finger swipes | 15 x 9 x 9" | MH228



VASE WITH HANDLES

kaolin slip with heavy natural ash and blue runs | 12 x 6.5 x 6.5" | MH224



PITCHER

kaolin slip with salt glazed circles, black and yellow dots, and blue glass run on handle | 14.5 x 9 x 9" | MH232



BARREL MUG

pale ash glaze with blue and clear glass runs | 6 x 5.5 x 5.5" | MH241 (right)

TUMBLER

kaolin slip with finger swipes and blue and clear glass runs | 6 x 3.5 x 3.5" | MH255 (left)



TRIANGLE VASE

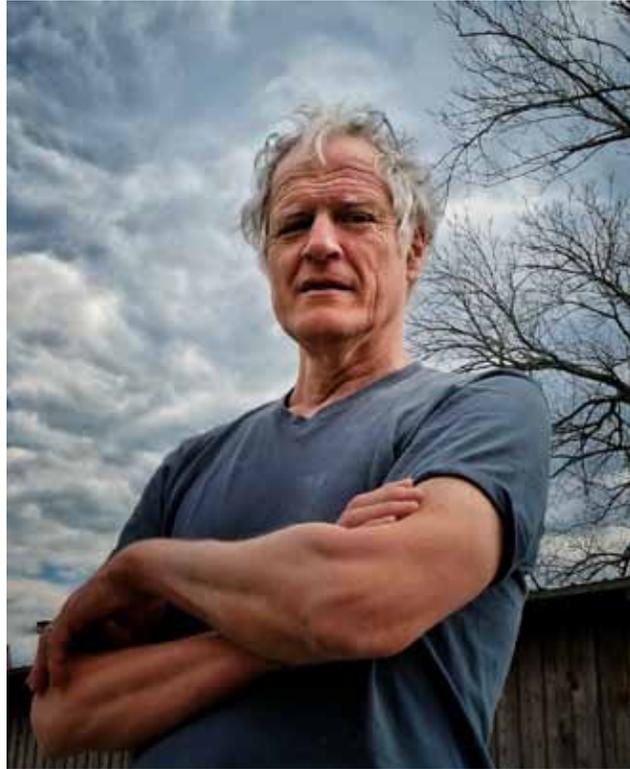
salt glaze with natural ash runs and a horizontal incised band | 9 x 5.5 x 5.5" | MH215 (left)

VASE

celadon glaze with incised dots on neck and floral slip trailing | 13 x 7 x 7" | MH219 (center)

FLUTED VASE

salt glaze with ash runs and horizontal incised bands | 9.25 x 5 x 5" | MH208 (right)



MARK HEWITT BIOGRAPHY

MARK HEWITT HAS BEEN MAKING DISTINCTIVE FUNCTIONAL POTTERY in North Carolina since 1983. He fused what he learned in his native England as an apprentice to pioneering potter, Michael Cardew, with the ceramic traditions of the American South, bending those aesthetics into an elegant contemporary style. He uses local clays and glaze materials, and fires his pots in a large wood-burning kiln. His recent work reassesses aspects of industrial ceramics, the production of which is most familiar to him, as his father and grandfather were directors of Spode, the fine china manufacturer. Hewitt was featured on the *Origins* episode of the PBS television series “Craft in America” in 2009, and with Nancy Sweezy co-curated and wrote an accompanying book for the 2005 exhibition *The Potter’s Eye: Art and Tradition in North Carolina Pottery* at the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh. He was the 2014 Voulkos Fellow at the Archie Bray Institute in Helena, Montana, a finalist for the 2015 American Craft Council/Balvenie Rare Craft Award, a 2015 United States Artist (USA) Fellow, and is President of the North Carolina Pottery Center in Seagrove. His works are featured in numerous museum collections including the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC.

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DATES:

4 February through 19 March 2017

OPENING RECEPTION:

4 February 2017, 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM

The public is invited to attend. The artist will be present.



STRAIGHT MUG

salt glaze with floral slip trailing and blue glass run | 5 x 5 x 4" | MH251 (left)

STEIN

salt glaze with blue and clear glass runs | 7 x 5.5 x 5.5" | MH237 (center)

BARREL MUG

salt glaze with looping slip trailing and blue glass run | 6 x 5.5 x 5.5" | MH242 (right)

PUCKER
GALLERY

ESTABLISHED 1967 BOSTON

PUCKER GALLERY
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contactus@puckergallery.com

GALLERY HOURS:
Monday through Saturday
10:00 AM to 5:30 PM
Sunday 10:30 AM to 5:00 PM

Please visit www.puckergallery.com to view current and past exhibition catalogues, read artist biographies, and subscribe to the *Pot of the Week* e-mail list.

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