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ART
ALIVE

The Pottery of Fance Franck



ART ALIVE

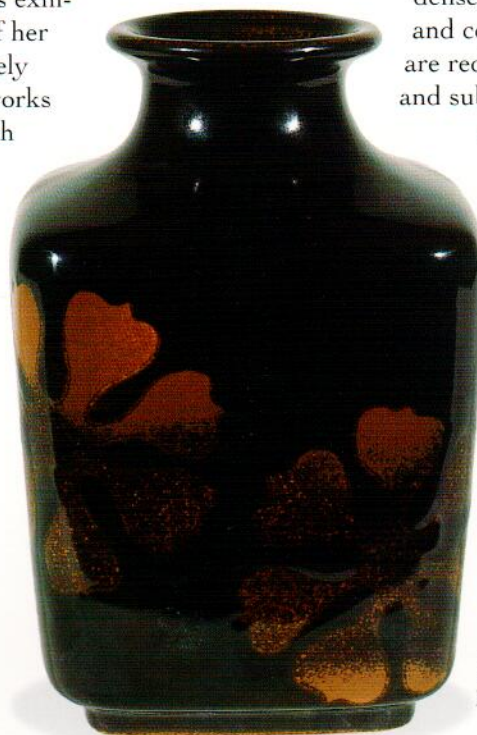
The Pottery of Fance Franck

“Art alive,” legendary potter Lucie Rie once stated, “is always modern, no matter how old or young.” Rather than being dictated by the time in which the work was created, this understanding of ‘modernity’ relies on the living presence of the work itself. It speaks of the piece as a living being, which continues to blossom and to be experienced in new ways. The ceramic art of Fance Franck beautifully expresses this idea of ‘art alive;’ her works possess a simultaneous dynamism and poise. Looking at her works is far from a straightforward process, in that the vases and bowls are occupied with the play of dualities: light challenges shadow, abstraction converses with representation, two dimensionality confronts three dimensionality, and simplicity collides with complexity. As a result of these tensions, a sense of energy and visual excitement pervade her porcelains and stoneware. In this exhibition of her works, the animation of her pieces is further accentuated, as purely abstract compositions mingle with works with representational details and with those whose very forms assume the guises of natural objects.

American-born Franck has spent most of her artistic career in Paris, while also spending substantial time traveling and working in China, Japan, England and the United States. Her look back to the Chinese and Japanese ceramics of the past is evident in

COVER TOP: High Scalloped Bowl
5 1/5 x 8 1/4 x 5 1/8" PG161
Porcelain-Celadon Glaze

COVER BOTTOM: Low Oval Bowl
5 1/5 x 8 1/4 x 5 1/8" PG160
Porcelain-Saturated Iron Glaze



LEFT: Large Rectangular Vase
9 x 6 1/2 x 5 1/2" PG187
Porcelain-Black Glaze, Cypress Motif



ABOVE: Large Oval Scalloped Bowl
5 1/2 x 8 x 6" PG167
Porcelain-Celadon Glaze

her use of traditional shapes and glazes. In fact, she is credited with the discovery of a technique for reproducing the fifteenth century Chinese Fresh Red glaze, or xianhong, of the Ming Period. Yet, the traditional is in dialogue with the contemporary, an Eastern perception in dialogue with a more Western view, as seen in the large porcelain bowl, PG140, with its ancient copper red glaze and more modern streamlined shape, or in the black rectangular vase, PG187, which combines a conventional form with a rather bold cypress motif. Despite, or perhaps because of, her intense study of eastern glazes and methods, Franck is able to use these traditional sources as a springboard upon which to convey her personal means of expression.

Much in the same way as a painting by Henri Matisse or a sculpture by Sol LeWitt is condensed to the fundamentals of line, shape and color, the ceramics of Fance Franck are reduced to the essentials; she masterfully and subtly uses line, form and glaze to achieve the greatest effect. The oval scalloped bowl, PG167 shines in its simplicity and delicate evocation of a seashell, while the fresh red bowl, PG140, inspires the viewer to lose herself in its pure, monochromatic cranberry glaze and perfect geometric form. Her technique of coil-building, which consists of creating bands of clay by flattening each millimeter of clay

between one's thumb and index finger to produce the desired shape rather than by throwing forms on the wheel, bestows a very personal and matchless quality to her works; hand building enables her pottery to also assume shapes not possible if attempted on the wheel. There is a meticulous refinement to her art. And yet, one must remember that the potter, unlike the painter or sculptor, surrenders a degree of power to her artistic partner, fire. Therefore, her bowls, vases and jars are the fusion of artistic precision and spontaneous artlessness.

Many of her works can be discussed using the vocabulary usually reserved for describing paintings or works on paper, for their surface designs are often surprisingly two dimensional. The large earthenware bowl, PG162, for instance, is reminiscent of an emphatically flat line drawing by Paul Klee. And yet, one cannot overlook the fact that the design adorns a three dimensional surface rather than that of a canvas. The pottery and the viewer's interaction with it is enriched and enlivened by Franck's play with dimensions. Looking at PG162 again, the repeating circle pattern along the sides of the bowl also works to emphasize the round shape of the object, highlighting the tension between a representation of a circle and a round object occupying a circular space. In the green porcelain vase, PG194, "Flying Trapeze," triangles and trapezoids interact with each other in a way that suggests depth and the sense that one shape protrudes from the other. In fact, not only do the shapes extend into space, but they also swivel on an imaginary axis. Such a complex perception of space is one of the defining characteristics of Fance Franck's artistic talent.

Upon the surface of the rectangular porcelain vase, PG154, leaves fall from an unseen height and a breeze provokes a slender branch. At the same time, the silhouetted foliage is reminiscent of fossil imprints or a child's art project, a wax paper rubbing of leaves



ABOVE: Large Rectangular Vase "Flying Trapeze"
8 3/4 x 8 x 6" PG194
Porcelain-Grey Green and Celadon Glaze

and twigs. Determined horses gallop around the celadon vase, PG206, while dog roses are scattered 'haphazardly' in the round bowl, PG168.

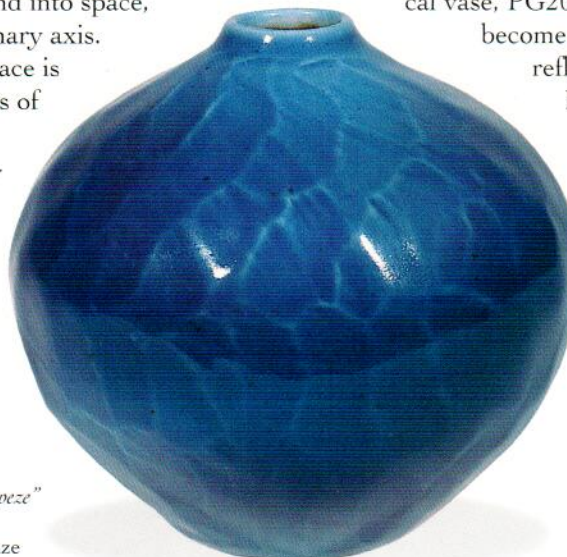
Suggesting rather than telling, alluding to rather than naming, Franck's ceramic art evokes many ideas and moods, while stimulating all the senses. In PG154, as well as in the stoneware oval vase, PG152, an organic pattern falls diagonally across the surface of the vase, thus generating a sense of activity. Her dynamic use of diagonal lines and undulating forms, like the subtle wave of the porcelain, spherical vase, PG157, animates her pottery, infusing it with a spirit of its own. Not only can this vase be read as a resemblance of an ocean swell in terms of its shape, which gives the effect of perpetual motion, but also in the

way in which it conjures a sense of limitlessness and music. Franck uses these qualities to transform her pieces into organic beings. Many of her pots are candidly anthropomorphic or vegetal, for titles like "Green Fruit," "Eccentric," "Cranes," and "Emerging" aid in directing the viewer's attention to the biological dimension of her works.

At the same time that her works of art communicate vitality, Franck also manages in an extraordinary way to achieve a stillness and peacefulness. Her choice of glazes, celadon, green grays, iron blues, and brown blacks, are natural and earthy. The richness of the glazes, as seen in the saturated blue glaze of the spherical vase, PG205, compel the viewer to quietly become absorbed in its color and the reflection of light against the surface.

Possessing a unique finesse, composure, excitement, and above all, beauty, Franck's art finds a delicious balance, reveling in both the union and friction of different dimensions and perceptions. Her works are still-lives in motion, transformed into beings with a remarkable presence and spirit.

— Alicia Currier

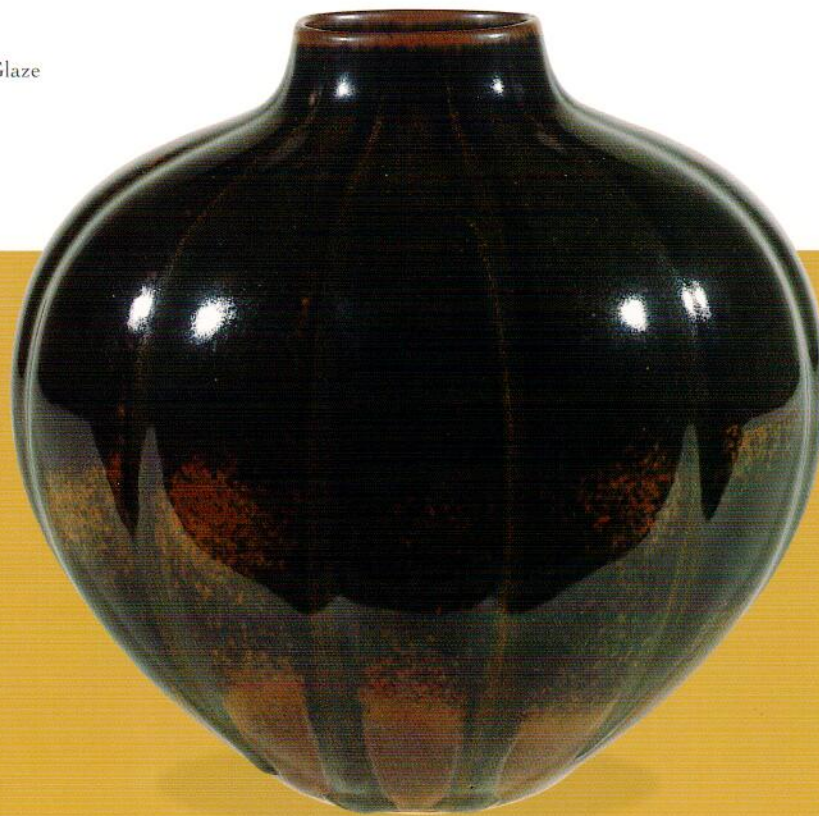


LEFT: Spherical Vase
4 x 4 3/4 x 4 3/4" PG205
Porcelain-Blue Glaze



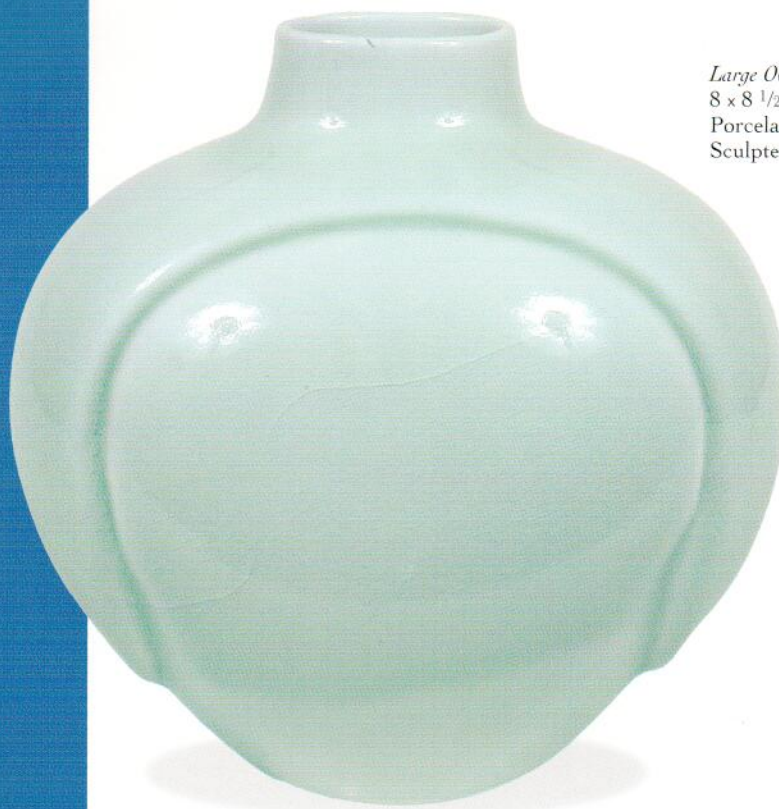
Large Bowl
9 x 13 x 13" PG140
Porcelain-Sacrificial Red Monochrome Glaze

Large Oval Scalloped Vase
7 1/2 x 8 x 5 1/2" PG189
Porcelain-Saturated Iron Glaze

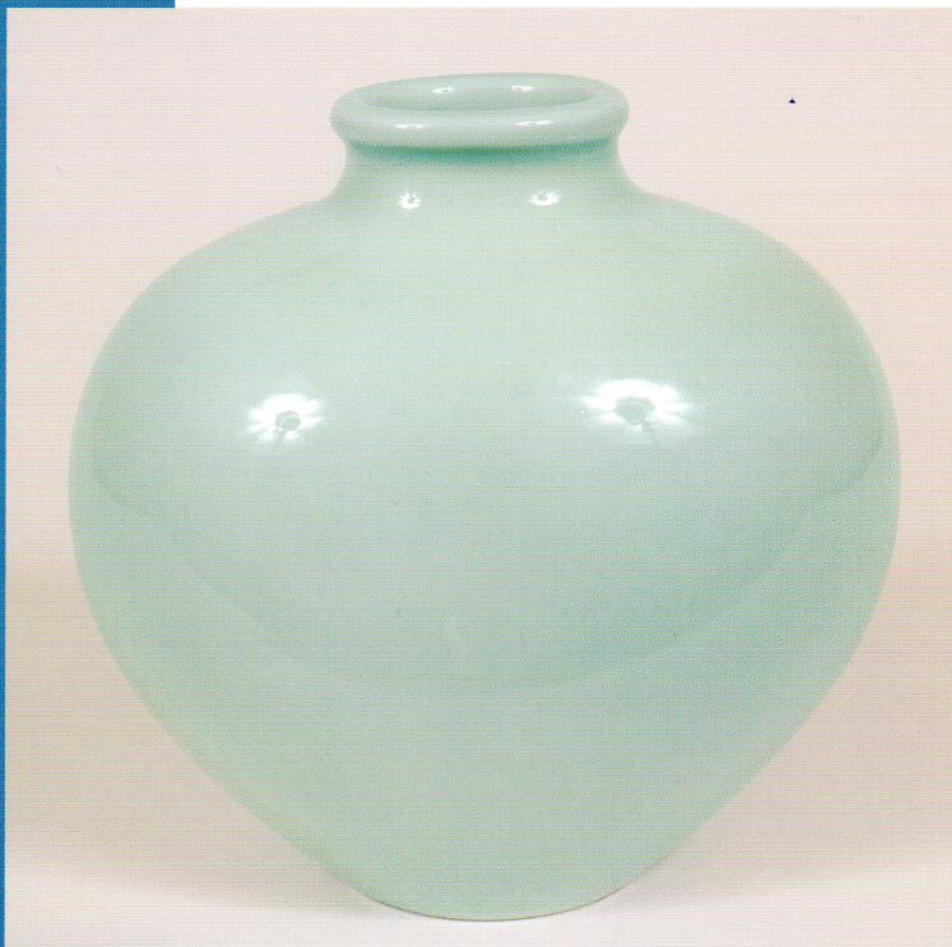


Large Oval Scalloped Vase-Raised Foot
8 x 8 1/4 x 6 1/4" PG190
Porcelain-Saturated Iron Glaze



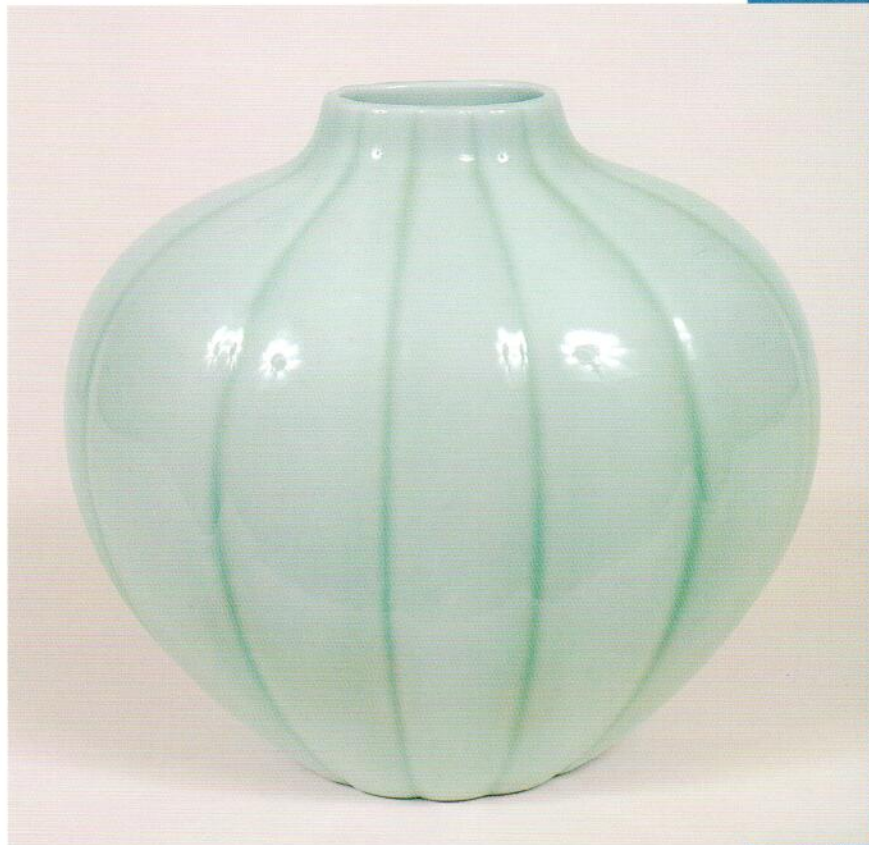


Large Oval Vase "Interchange"
8 x 8 1/2 x 6" PG164
Porcelain-Celadon Glaze,
Sculpted Relief Décor

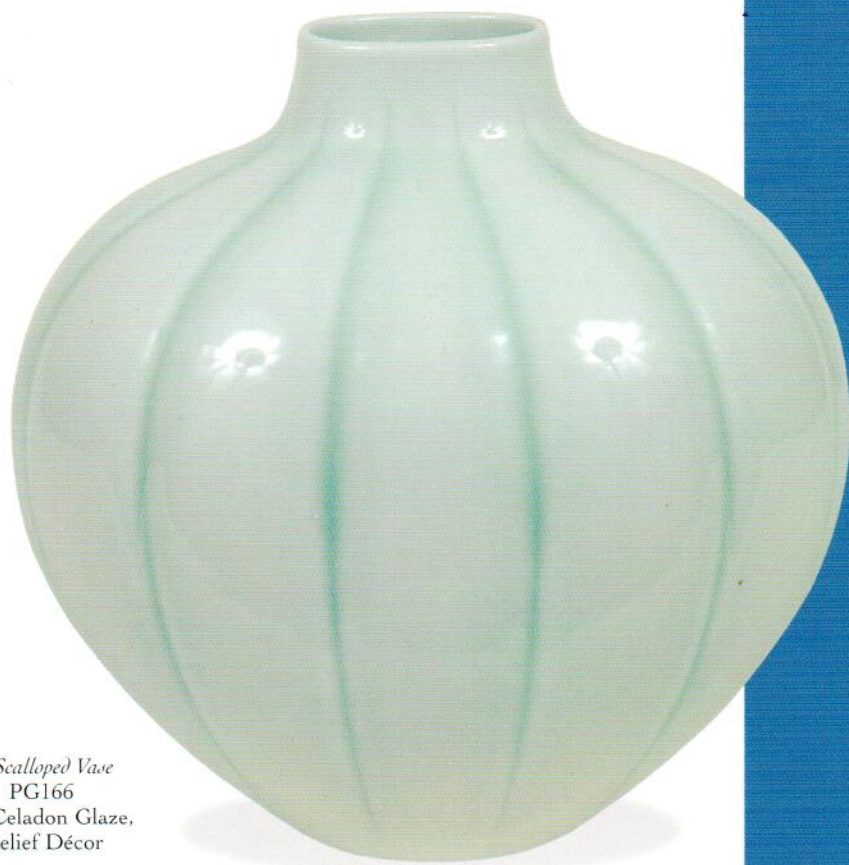


*Large Oval Vase,
Thick Rim*
8 x 8 1/4 x 6"
PG165
Porcelain-
Celadon Glaze

*Large Oval
Scalloped Vase*
7 1/2 x 8 x 6"
PG165
Porcelain-
Celadon Glaze,
Sculpted Relief Décor



Large Oval Scalloped Vase
8 x 8 x 6" PG166
Porcelain-Celadon Glaze,
Sculpted Relief Décor



Low Scalloped Bowl
 2 1/2 x 8 x 5 1/2" PG170
 Porcelain-Celadon Glaze



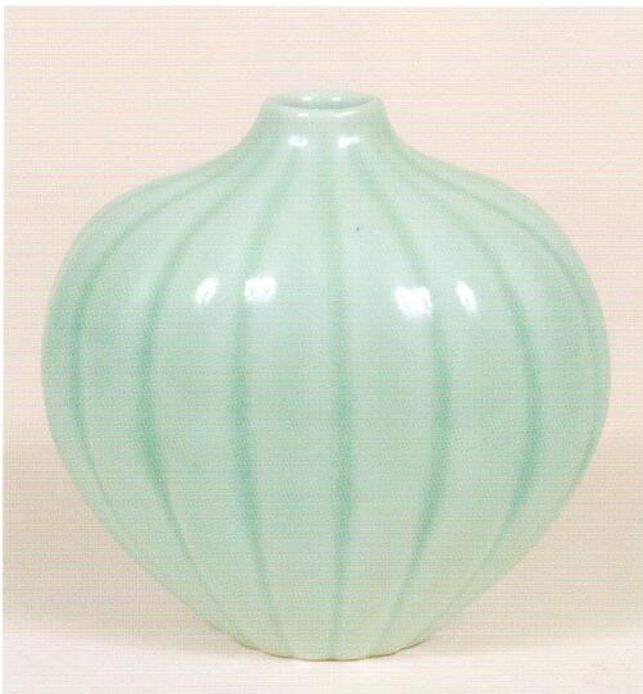
Low Oval Scalloped Bowl
 2 1/2 x 8 x 5 1/2" PG171
 Porcelain-Celadon Glaze



ABOVE: Small Oval Bowl
 1 1/2 x 3 x 2 1/2" PG179
 Porcelain-Celadon Glaze

ABOVE: Small Bottle with Concave Shoulder
 5 x 3 x 3" PG178
 Porcelain-Celadon Glaze

ABOVE: Small Bowl-Three Pointed Rim
 2 x 3 x 3" PG180
 Porcelain-Celadon Glaze



LEFT: Small Oval Scalloped Vase
 5 1/2 x 5 x 3 1/2" PG174
 Porcelain-Semi Matte Celadon



ABOVE: Round Bowl
 3 1/2 x 7 1/2 x 7 1/2" PG185
 Porcelain-Celadon Crackle Glaze, Décor Horses in Underglaze Iron



Small Oval Scalloped Vase, "Green Fruit"
 5 1/2 x 5 x 3 1/2" PG173
 Porcelain-Celadon Glaze

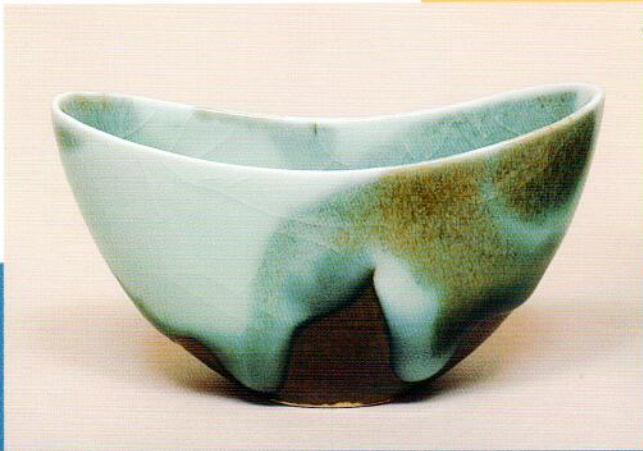


Spherical Vase, "Eccentric"
 4 x 4 1/2 x 4 1/2" PG175
 Porcelain-Celadon Glaze,
 Relief Décor



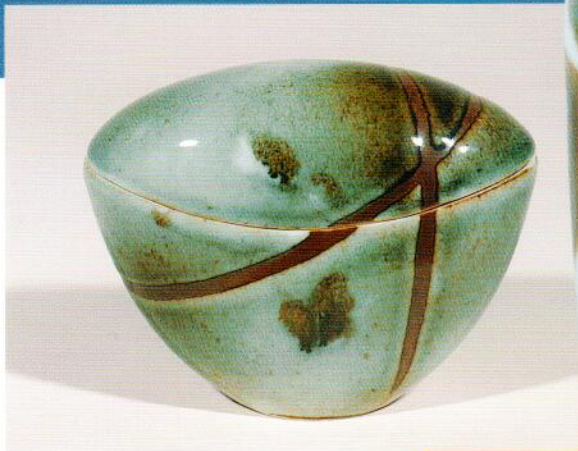
LEFT: Small Bottle
 3 x 3 x 3" PG212
 Porcelain-Ash Glaze,
 Three Black Spots

Small Bowl, "Emerging"
 1 1/2 x 3 x 3" PG181
 Porcelain-Celadon Glaze,
 Two Vertical Relief Décor

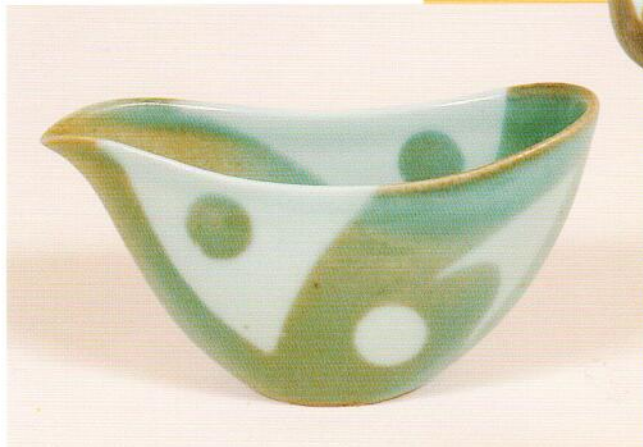


LEFT: Oval Vase
 5 x 5 x 2 1/4" PG149
 Porcelain-Décor Grey, Brown,
 White Spots

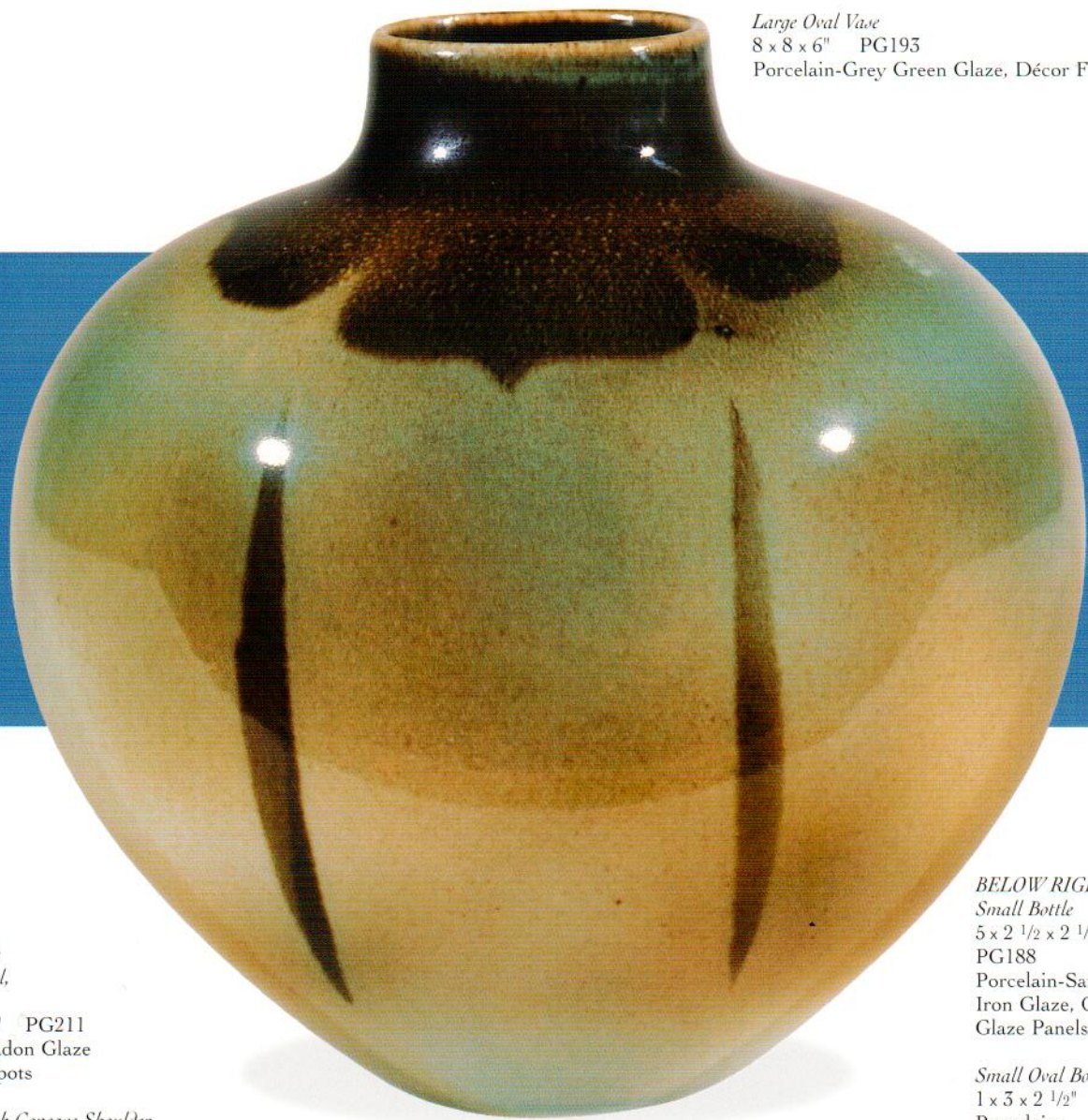
BELOW: Large Rectangular Vase
 "Flying Trapeze"
 8 x 8 x 6" PG195
 Porcelain-Grey Green and Celadon Glaze



ABOVE: Oval Box, "Stone"
 4 x 5 x 2 1/2" PG210
 Porcelain-Grey Glaze,
 Décor Brown Veins



LEFT: Pitcher Vase
 2 3/4 x 5 1/4 x 2 1/4" PG172
 Porcelain-Grey Green and Celadon Glaze
 Décor Triangles and Circles



Large Oval Vase
 8 x 8 x 6" PG193
 Porcelain-Grey Green Glaze, Décor Fruit

BELOW LEFT:
Small Oval Bowl,
"Flow Study"
 1 1/2 x 3 x 2 1/2" PG211
 Porcelain-Celadon Glaze
 with Brown Spots

Small Bottle with Concave Shoulder
 5 x 3 x 3" PG177
 Porcelain-Celadon Glaze

BELOW RIGHT:
Small Bottle
 5 x 2 1/2 x 2 1/2"
 PG188
 Porcelain-Saturated
 Iron Glaze, Grey
 Glaze Panels

Small Oval Bowl
 1 x 3 x 2 1/2" PG207
 Porcelain-
 White Spots Inside
 and Outside



Rectangular Vase
8 3/4 x 6 1/4 x 5 1/2" PG154
Porcelain-Clear Glaze,
Décor Vine Leaves in Underglaze Blue



BELOW: Small Round Bowl
1 1/2 x 3 x 3" PG202
Porcelain-Blue and White
Interior, Engraved Lines

Small Round Bowl
1 1/2 x 2 1/4 x 2 1/2" PG201
Porcelain-Blue Glaze

Small Oval Bowl
1 1/2 x 3 1/2 x 3" PG200
Porcelain-Décor Magnolia
Motif in Underglaze Blue





Small Bottle with Concave Shoulder
 5 x 3 x 3" PG203
 Porcelain-Blue Glaze



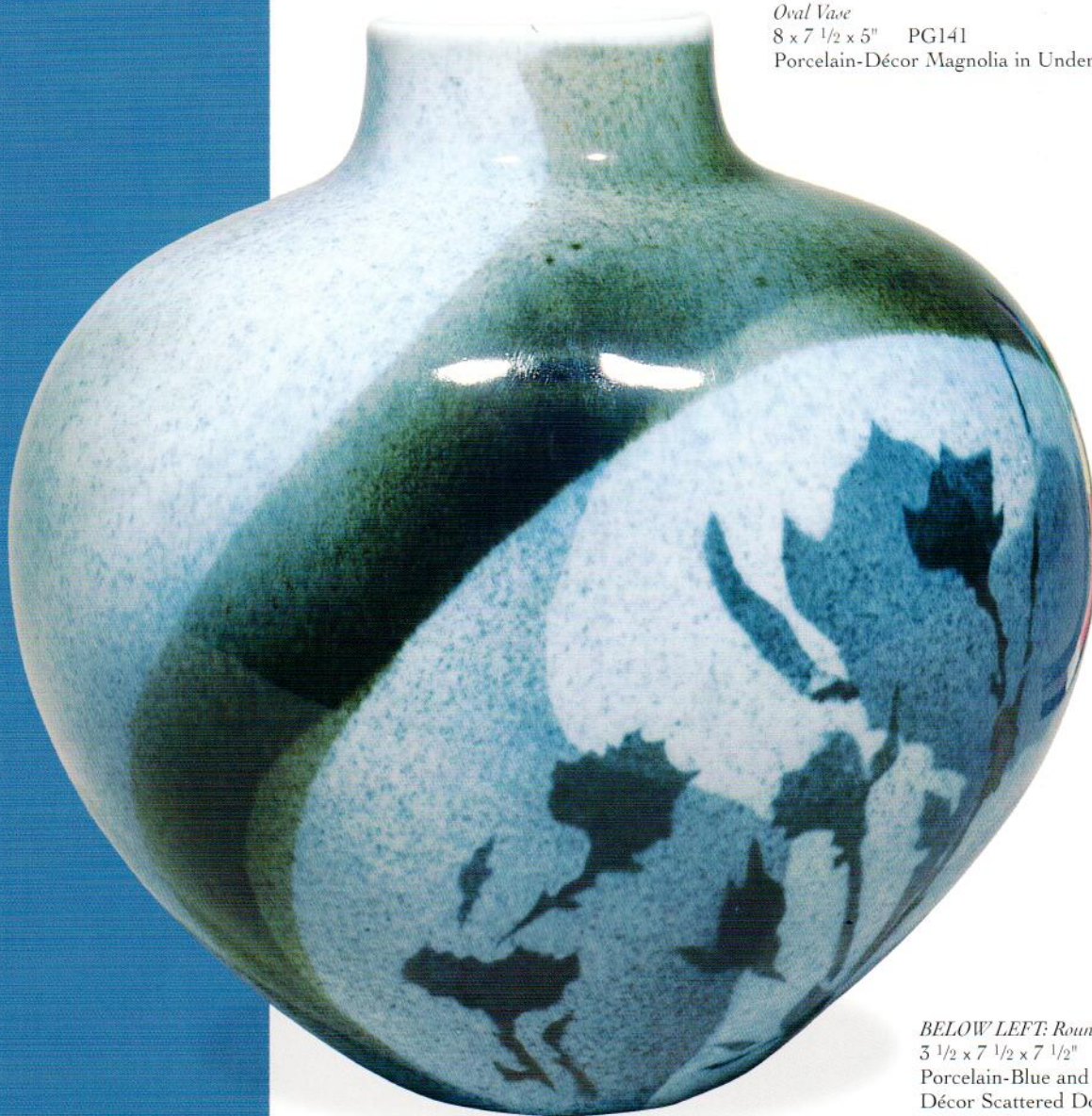
Small Bottle
 5 x 3 x 3" PG204
 Porcelain-Blue and White
 Décor Magnolia Branch
 Motif

Oval Jar, Four Panels
 4 x 3 1/2 x 2 1/2" PG199
 Porcelain-Blue and White,
 Décor Rose Leaves

Oval Jar, Four Panels
 4 x 3 x 2 1/2" PG198
 Porcelain-Blue and White,
 Décor Rose Leaves



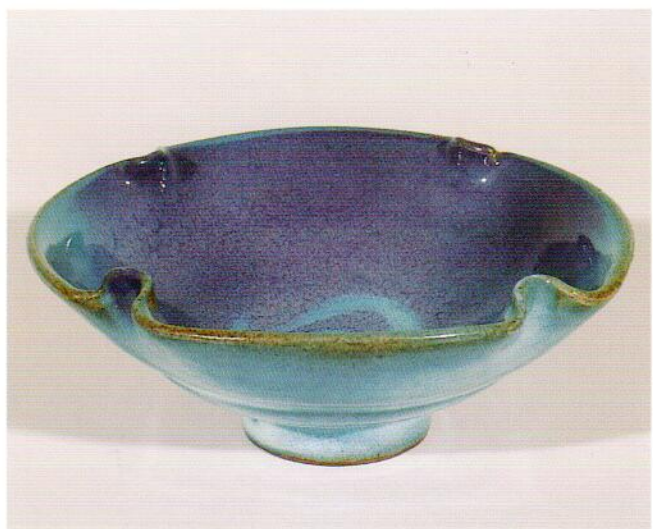
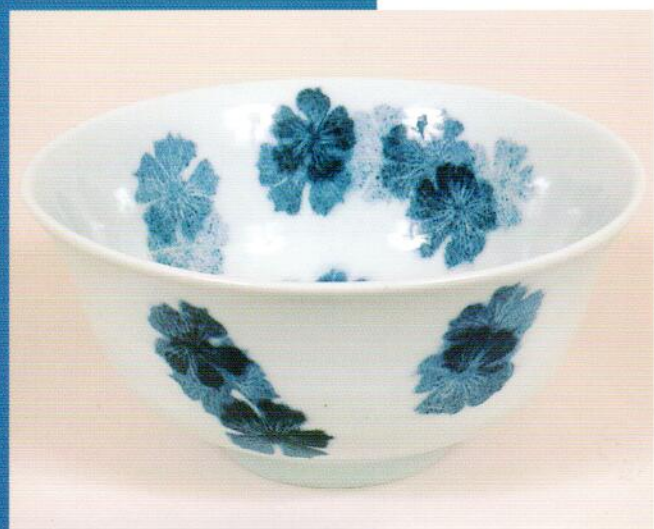
Large Rectangular Vase
 8 3/4 x 8 x 6" PG197
 Porcelain-Underglaze Blue Décor,
 Cypress Motif



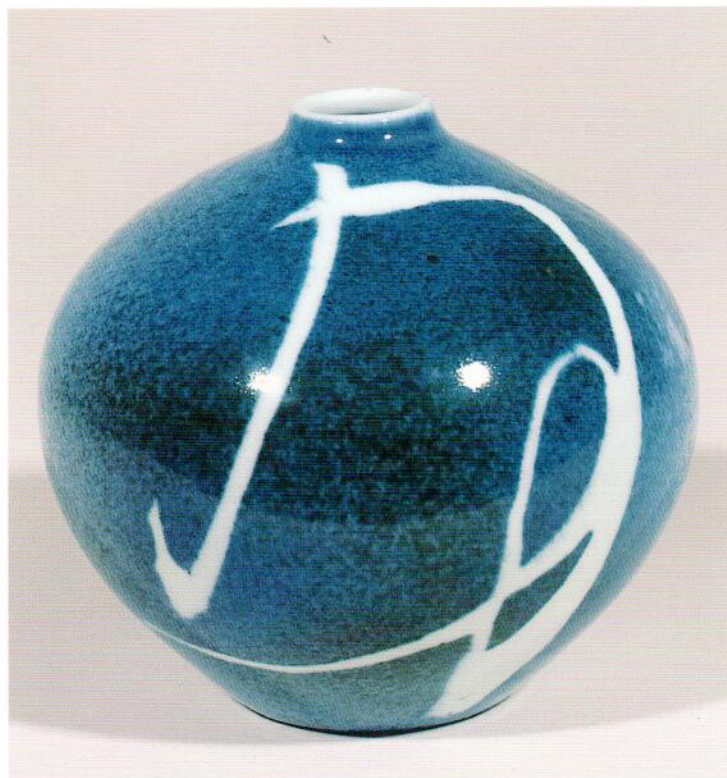
Oval Vase
8 x 7 1/2 x 5" PG141
Porcelain-Décor Magnolia in Underglaze Blue

BELOW LEFT: Round Bowl
3 1/2 x 7 1/2 x 7 1/2" PG168
Porcelain-Blue and White,
Décor Scattered Dog Roses

BELOW: Bowl with Indented Rim
2 3/4 x 7 1/2 x 7 1/2" PG215
Stoneware-Iron Blue Glaze



Spherical Vase, "Moon"
4 1/2 x 5 x 5" PG196
Porcelain-Blue and White
Décor Japanese Characters



Square Oval Vase
6 x 8 x 8" PG206
Porcelain-Celadon Glaze,
Horses in Underglaze Blue



Round Vase
5 3/4 x 4 x 4" PG216
Stoneware-Iron Blue Glaze with
Copper Décor and Winged Seeds



Spherical Vase, "Eccentric"
4 x 4 1/2 x 4 1/2" PG191
Porcelain-Saturated Iron Glaze



Spherical Vase
4 1/2 x 5 x 5" PG157
Porcelain-Saturated Iron Glaze



Oval Vase "Ellipse"
5 2/3 x 8 1/2 x 6" PG159
Porcelain-Saturated Iron Glaze

Rectangular Box
5 x 5 x 4 1/2" PG158
Porcelain-Reddish
Brown and Black
Glaze, Décor
in Yellow and
Brown



*BELOW: Small Bottle
with Concave Shoulder*
5 x 3 x 3" PG208
Porcelain-Saturated Iron Glaze

Oval Jar, Four Panels
4 x 3 x 2 1/2" PG215
Porcelain-Saturated Iron Glaze,
Brown and Black



Rectangular Pot
7 1/2 x 6 x 5 1/2"
PG153
Porcelain-Brown
Black Glaze, Brown
Cyprus Cones
Motif in Reserve



Flat Oval Vase
4 1/2 x 6 1/2 x 4"
PG185
Porcelain-Saturated Iron
Glaze, Diagonal Décor



Flat Oval Vase
6 1/2 x 5 1/2 x 3"
PG182
Porcelain-Saturated Iron
Glaze, Diagonal Décor



Square Oval Vase
4 1/2 x 8 3/4 x 7 1/2"
PG192
Porcelain-Saturated
Iron Glaze

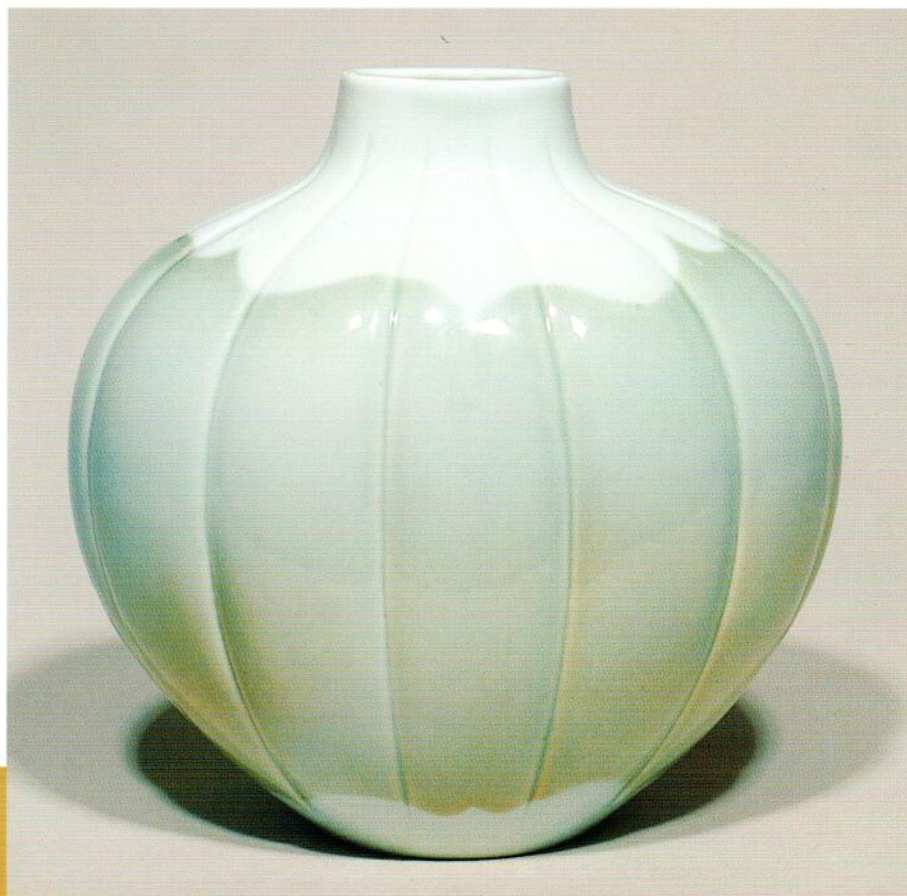


Oval Vase, Curved Rim
5 1/2 x 5 x 3 1/2"
PG186
Porcelain-Saturated
Iron Glaze



High Flat Oval Vase, "Cranes"
8 x 5 1/2 x 4" PG184
Porcelain-Black Glaze, Brown Motif

Oval Vase
7 3/4 x 7 x 5"
PG142
Porcelain-Décor
Persimmon in
Underglaze Iron
Scalloped Cross
Section



Large Oval Scalloped Bowl
5 x 8 x 6" PG169
Porcelain-White Matte Glaze Inside



Large Oval Vase
11 ²/₃ x 12 x 5 ¹/₂" PG152
Stoneware-Celadon Glaze, Décor Briars

FANCE FRANK

A Selected Biography

University Studies

Rice University, Houston, Texas: literature, philosophy, history of art.

Université de Paris, la Sorbonne: French literature, philosophy, aesthetics.

Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts: French and English poetry

Training in Plastic Arts

Boston Museum School, Boston, Massachusetts: sculpture and history of art.

Greenwich House Pottery, New York City: apprenticeship in pottery.

Institute of Technology of Nagoya, Seto Division: ancient Japanese glazes.

Activities in the Field of Ceramics

- 1959** Finds the Rue Bonaparte Studio with French ceramicist, Francine del Pierre
- 1969** Commissioned by the French Ministry of Culture to create works and do research at the Manufacture de Porcelaine de Sèvres
- 1979-1980** Fellow of the Japan Foundation
Creation of 70 works at Fukagawa Porcelain Manufactory
- 1983-1985** In Japan to create porcelain for Dansk Designs
- 1986** Research and creation of fresh red-glazed porcelain, under the auspices of Asian Cultural Council, New York
- 1987-1989** Invited to study the archaeology and technology of Ming copper red porcelain
Presents slides of recent works at the Museum of Jingdezhen
Lectures at the Guimet Museum on China trips, and on copper red research
- 1990** Lectures on copper red porcelain: in Oxford, at the Ashmolean, in London at the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Percival David Foundation, and in Paris
- 1991-1992** Red research data published by the University of London
Report on red glazes at the request of the French Cultural Ministry's National Center for Plastic Arts
- 1995** Lectures at the symposium on Chinese porcelain at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
- 1994** Named the *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*
Lectures at Paris' 7th Arrondissement City Hall
- 1995** Writes one of the introductions to an exhibition of Tea Ceremony ceramics presented Cernuschi Museum
- 1996** Named one of the four "alumni of the year" of Rice University for achievement in art
- 1997** Film, *Ceramics by Fance Franck at the Hermitage*
- 1998** Pieces purchased by the Fine Arts Museum of Houston
Large vase purchased by the Fine Arts Museum of Boston
- 1999** Named Vice President of the French Society for the Study of Oriental Ceramics



Oval Vase, "Flow Study"
4 1/2 x 4 1/2 x 3" PG209
Saturated Iron and Celadon
Glaze, Grey Black Spots

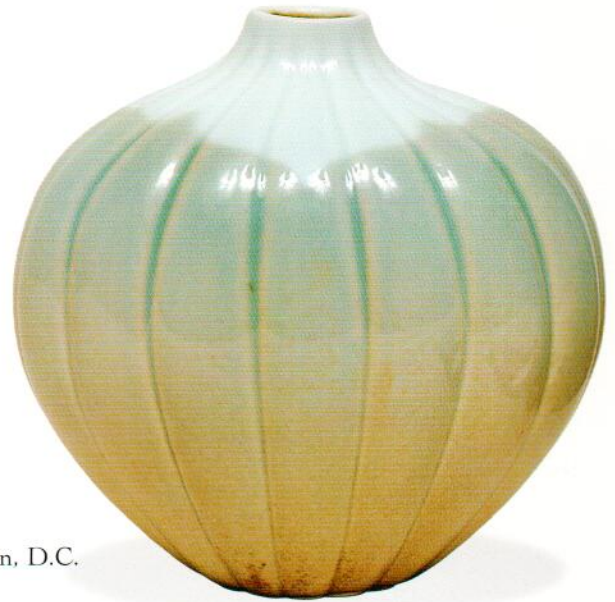


Small Oval Elliptical Vase
2 1/2 x 5 x 2" PG214
Porcelain-Brown and
Black Glaze

- 2000 Acquisition of vase by Cleveland Museum of Art
Lectures to French Oriental Ceramics Society
- 2001 Acquisition of vase by the Seattle Art Museum
Lectures to Houston Museum of Fine Arts Ceramics Circle of Bayou Bend
- 2002 Organizes symposium of Japanese Raku for French Society for study of Oriental ceramics
Visit of Paris branch of National Museum of Women In the Arts
Visit of Society of Friends of the Orient
Visit of the Franco-Japanese Friendship Association

Exhibitions

- 1971 Museo de Belles Artes, Caracas
- 1975 "Peintures de Sergio de Castro, Poteries de Fance Franck", Château de Ville d'Avra
- 1974 Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg
- 1975 "Fance Franck, Pottery-Sergio de Castro, Small Paintings", French Cultural Center, Luxembourg
- 1976 Hetjens Museum, Düsseldorf
Musée Dobrée, Nantes
Musée Municipal, Cholet
- 1979-1980 Kyoto Municipal Museum
Fukuoka Municipal Museum
Takashimaya Art Gallery, Tokyo
- 1980 "Sèvres Porcelain", Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
Métiers d'Art Show, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris
- 1981 Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausaw, Wisconsin
Fine Arts Museum of the South, Mobile, Alabama
New Harmony Contemporary Art Athenaeum, Indiana
Seattle Art Museum
- 1985 Chunichi Shimbun: International Ceramic Arts, Nagoya
- 1985 "Designers-Creators", Seibu Gallery, Tokyo
- 1986 "Porcelain by Fance Franck", Hetjens Museum, Düsseldorf
- 1988 East-West: Contemporary Ceramics Exhibition, Seoul, Korea
- 1989 "L'Europe des Céramistes", Abbaye Saint Germain, Auxerre
- 1990 "Sacrificial Red Glazed Porcelain by Fance Franck", Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
- 1991 Fina Gomez Collection, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris
Atelier Francine del Pierre, Paris
- 1992 Atelier Francine del Pierre, Paris
- 1995 "L'Oeuvre au Rouge - Poterie de Grand Feu de Fance Franck",
Baur Collection, Geneva
Presentation of new works (Sister Moon and Brother Sun) for the chapel of Francis of Assisi, New Harmony, Indiana
"Les vases communicants", in collaboration with the Sogetsu Ikebana School of Japan
- 1996 "Ceramics by Fance Franck", The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg
- 1998 "The Poetry of Nature", Pucker Gallery, Boston
- 2000 "Pure Geometry, Natural Grace", Pucker Gallery, Boston
Hillside West, Daikan Yama, Tokyo
Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian Institution
- 2001 Walter Gomez Gallery, Baltimore
- 2002 "Art Alive," Pucker Gallery, Boston



Oval Vase
4 1/2 x 4 x 3" PG147
Porcelain- Décor
Persimmon in
Underglaze Iron



Bowl
2 1/2 x 5 1/2 x 5 1/2" PG176
Porcelain-Semi Matte
Celadon Glaze, Iron Spots

ART ALIVE

The Pottery of Fance Franck

CREDITS:

Design: Leslie Feagley

Editor: Jeanne Gressler

Photography: Max Coniglio



EXHIBITION DATES:

8 March 2003 - 9 April 2003

OPENING RECEPTION:

8 March 2003, 3 to 6 pm

The public is invited to attend.

The artist will be present

*Large Bowl
8 1/2 x 15 x 15"
PG162
Earthenware-Tin
Glaze, Décor
Winged Seeds*

PUCKER GALLERY
171 Newbury Street
Boston, MA 02116
(617) 267-9473
FAX#: (617) 424-9759
email: contactus@puckergallery.com
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