





Clockwise from top left: Chris Weaver talking about his Fletcher entry on Potters' Night; Jean-Francois Foulhoux, the winner, talking to Peter Stichbury; judge Torbjorn Kvasbo and winner, the winning entry *Grand Coquille*

Photos by Tony Bacon

small clubrooms to see slides from Sasja Scherjon (Netherlands), Lucie Landau (UK), Victoria Howlett (Australia) and Torbjorn Kvasbo (Norway). There would have been plenty of room, Peter Lange contended, if it wasn't for the arrival of "ten troublemakers from Taranaki"! While demonstrating his sculptural pieces in the afternoon Torbjorn shared his views on art, philosophy, politics etc - comparing our country to Norway where they have laws which encourage the arts. For example, there's one that requires all new buildings to spend 1% of the building costs on art work. Torbjorn is one of 300 artists in Norway who receives a stipend from the Government of about \$2500

per month which will continue until he is 67. The catch is that you have to have been working for about 26 years before you get it! The following are a few quotes from Torbjorn that Kathy jotted down - food for thought: "If it's too busy, make it simple." "Throwing has no rules" "Work should relate to something - body, pose, attitude, shape." "There are no accidents, just happenings." "An idea in your head is not new anymore."

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## FLETCHER BROWNUILT POTTERY AWARD 1985

Auckland War Memorial Museum

For only the second time in its nine year history, an overseas entry has won the prestigious Fletcher Brownuilt Pottery Award.

The \$5,000 1985 award was won by Jeff Mincham of Adelaide, South Australia, with a large raku jar.

The judge, Maria Kuczyńska of Poland, made 13 merit awards, 10 of which were for overseas entries. The three overseas merit awards went to American, Japanese and Australian entries. Of the more than 100 entries received, 10 were selected by the judge for the exhibition at the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

Merit award winners:  
Merit award winners:  
Steve Fullimer, Nelson.  
Yusata Hashigami, Japan.  
Campbell Hagan, Auckland.  
John Panser, Auckland.  
John K. Sato, USA.  
Lesley LeGrove, Stratford.  
Frank Light, Carterton.  
John Panser, Auckland.  
Lynette Pearson, Manurewa.  
Julia van Helden, Esaubourne.  
Fenny Walker, Australia.

From left: The Prime Minister, David Lange the managing director of Fletcher Brownuilt, Trevor Hunt, the judge, Jeff Mincham, the award winner and the award winner Jeff Mincham.

Photo: courtesy of Brits DCA Ltd.

NEW ZEALAND POTTER No. 2, 1985



Maria Kuczyńska demonstrating at Auckland Studio Pottery Centre. Photo: Tai Aroha



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# Fletcher show challenges the world's best

NBR 10 6 74

The Fletcher Challenge Award has leapt in international status to become one of the three major international awards. JOHN DALY-PEOPLES checks out this year's flavour and looks at where it's going

New Zealanders have always had the sneaking suspicion that our pottery was the best in the world. Unfortunately it seems to remain just a suspicion because we rarely get to win any major international prizes. That has happened again at this year's Fletcher Challenge Awards. To make it even more unpalatable, the winner this year is an Australian entry. Fortunately, the winner is Japanese.

This year there have been a total of 161 entries, 26 of which are New Zealand entries, selected from nearly 900 entries from 40 coun-

Moyra Elliott, the award organiser, believes that changing the nationality and attitudes of the judge each year is useful.

"We get a new insight into the view of ceramics in that part of the world from where the judge comes. The way that ceramics would be seen in the Czech Republic is very different from how it would be viewed in Australia or America."

Each year the judge makes a personal selection of the work to be included in the exhibition. A couple of years ago the American Ron Nagle was looking for someone of a nationality other than

Fletcher Brownuilt and the ASP also choose the judge, the former paying all the expense of bringing that person home well worth it, Trevor Hunt feels. "Having an overseas judge has been one of the primary concepts of the award since its inception. The award also views are passed from overseas to New Zealand potters."

With judging being such a personal affair, it is not surprising that there is necessarily a bias. But that is not necessarily a bad thing, says Pam. "I personally think it's good having one person. There's nothing to be added or subtracted from the award. The fact this year's judge, Don Keitz from USA, rejected for display pots from two previous winners, had works declined often take about the select club to which they belong. But the judge's subjectivity is definitely one criticism of the award. "The person who really wins does so on a basis of a lottery. It's interesting that previous winners can be seen in the exhibition but it hasn't gone down as intended but it hasn't met the eye of the judge. It can fluctuate so much from year to year."

Whether criticism, the Fletcher award has attracted attention from both New Zealand and overseas potters. Now an international event, the substantial prize in the southern hemisphere. Both local and overseas entries have steadily increased over the years.

At the first time pots submitted to this year's award. Some have been forwarded at great personal expense by the potter concerned.

It is interesting to note that in the Fletcher Brownuilt, the losers sometimes gain as well. He points in his office to a large, beautifully glazed pot which he says was submitted to the award for final selection a few years ago. "We



Len Castle entering at Auckland Studio Pottery Centre.



Auckland Studio Pottery Centre, Onehunga

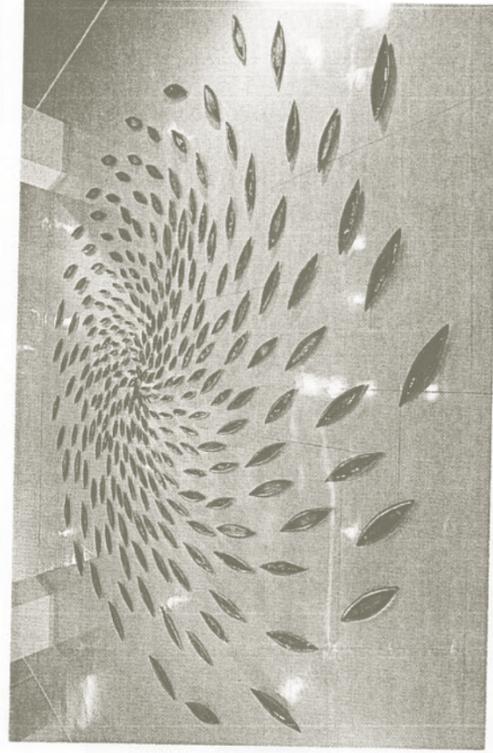
15

## Object Activity

The Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award 1996 Auckland Museum Te Papa Whakatahi July 28 - August 25, 1996

DOUGLAS LLOYD-JENKINS

In Search of The Yeti



"Many Wishes" by Mitsuo Shoji... Fletcher Challenge Award premier award winner

exhibition. There is a sense of it being political and there is a strong emotional edge to it.

For the first time in many years there is a lack of colour in the exhibition, it is a sombre show. There are the odd touches of colour as in John Parker's work and even in the work of Catrin Howell. It may be in part the judge's dislike of superficial ornamentation or the type of entry but it is in many ways a welcome change.

It is a show that seems serious and that makes one much more conscious of the context in which

way New Zealand potters have access to the best pottery show in the world as well as the fact that some of the best ceramicists come as judges, entrants or award winners. This has probably been the most important shift in New Zealand pottery in the last decade. New Zealand potters are part of the world ceramic fraternity.

Over the past three years the Fletcher Challenge Award has jumped in international status from being just another pottery show to

## 10TH FLETCHER BROWNUILT POTTERY AWARD 1986

Judge: Jeff Mincham of Australia, who was the 1985 winner

In conjunction with the Auckland Studio Potters Auckland War Memorial Museum

From left: The judge, Jeff Mincham, who was also last year's winner, Steve Fullimer from Nelson; the managing director of Fletcher Brownuilt, Trevor Hunt; the award winner, Steve's wife, Sapodilla Canyon. (See front cover photo)

Photo courtesy: Brits DCA Ltd. Public Relations Consultants, Parrnell.

Trevor Hunt retires this year as managing director of Fletcher Brownuilt. He was the instigator of this Award and has taken a very personal interest in it for many years, and in the Auckland Studio Pottery Centre in Onehunga. The Centre benefits not only from the publicity surrounding this major annual pottery sale of works sold at the exhibition.

The NZ POTTER wishes to thank Fletcher Brownuilt staff for their work in organising this Award, the Auckland Studio Pottery Centre, the Auckland War Memorial Museum for supplying the excellent venue and facilities - and especially Trevor Hunt for his 10 years as managing director with Trevor a long and fulfilling retirement.

The Award winning pot Sapodilla Canyon by Steve Fullimer of Nelson is our front cover photo, taken by Ces Thomas.

Rick Ridd of Wanganui has set a record, in having a piece accepted every year for the 10 years of the exhibition. He has been a winner in 1978 and has in less than 4 Merits to his credit.



Howard Williams, with merit winner Merilyn Williams, Anna Campbell and Jan Small



David and Jenny Stewart



John Parker



Moyra Elliott



Peter Meads



Robyn Stewart



Winner Jeff Mincham with merit winner Robyn Stewart



Russell Taplin



George Kofis



Peter Lange



New Zealand Potter Vol. 29 No. 2, 1986

The Fletcher Challenge  
Ceramics Award:  
a cultural enquiry

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Grant Thompson

The Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award (1977–1998) was for many years, New Zealand’s most enduring art award, certainly the most internationalist local visual arts award and one of the most generously sponsored.

## Introduction

Philip Clarke — Director



1977



1978



1979

While many visual arts awards have come and gone the Fletcher Challenge Art Award, although defunct for over a decade, is through its palpable legacies still with us.

Objectspace aims to provoke new assessments and *The Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award: a cultural enquiry* does this by considering the co-ordinates of this event which include the public positioning of contemporary practice, competition, collections, commerce and community, excellence, internationalism, partnership and professionalism and how these factors were put into play and shaped part of our cultural infrastructure. Such an enquiry has, I believe, not been previously undertaken. Given the increased number of such events internationally, and the investment they attract, this is a useful enquiry to undertake.

Curator Grant Thompson notes the role of the Award’s manager Moyra Elliott who was chiefly responsible for professionalising the initiative and extending its international profile. Twenty years on from her appointment, Moyra’s own career as a professional is increasingly international. This option is surely, in part, one of the legacies of the Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award.

Curator Grant Thompson proposed this project to Objectspace and we congratulate him for undertaking this enquiry and bringing it to fruition. It has provided an opportunity to publicly exhibit most of the winning works for the first time for many years. Soon after we agreed to stage this project we approached The Fletcher Trust, the owner of the Award’s winning works to seek their assistance. On behalf of the curator and Objectspace I would like to thank The Fletcher Trust particularly Chairman Angus Fletcher and Art Curator Peter Shaw for their enthusiastic response to the project. Similarly the Award’s other partner, Auckland Studio Potters has supported the project in numerous ways and we especially wish to acknowledge the contribution of Peter Lange and John Pirtle. Manukau Institute of Technology has generously provided assistance and I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Mead Norton and Dr Christopher Thompson.

Objectspace gratefully acknowledges the major funding of Creative New Zealand and the ongoing support of Auckland City, The Chartwell Trust and Karikari Estate Wines and the support of the Objectspace Donors.

The title of this essay first appeared as the heading to a brief paragraph published in the New Zealand Potter<sup>1</sup>. The item announced a new competition inaugurated in association with the Auckland Studio Potters (ASP) the Fletcher Brownbuilt Pottery Award (FBPA).

## New Competition Open to All Potters



1980



1981



1982

The first FBPA opened in 1977 and continued for a period of ten years. It changed hands in 1986 and briefly took the name Fletcher Challenge Pottery Award (FCPA) before establishing itself in 1989 as the Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award (FCCA). The award had its final and twenty-second presentation in 1998. The shifts in name from Brownbuilt to Challenge and from Pottery to Ceramics provide a concise summary of the changes that occurred over the life of the Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award.<sup>2</sup>

In preparing this essay, I was particularly interested in making use of the locally published potters' journals to gain a sense of the culture surrounding the Fletcher Awards. The journal-come-newsletters<sup>3</sup> provided a sense of the ceramic community's engagement, or discomfort, with the sponsored award and an understanding of the local context into which 'The Fletcher' made its presentations. The published material revealed international participation as a matter of constant interest to those commenting on the awards, and this matter has provided the focus for my inquiry. I offer some thoughts on the role of the international judge and the importance of international participation for the award's growth. Finally, I make some comment on sponsorship and cultural awards.

From the award's inception, its organisers saw the participation of international ceramists and an overseas judge of international repute as essential to building the award's significance. Trevor Hunt, a member of the ASP Centre Committee and General Manager of Fletcher Brownbuilt, commented that, "Having an overseas judge has been one of the primary concepts of the award. It gives an impartial factor and also views are passed from overseas to New Zealand potters."<sup>4</sup>

There was little disagreement with Hunt's views among local ceramists who seemed to welcome the outsider's eye as offering their work a fresher, less partial assessment than the one provided by their local colleagues. The international judge brought knowledge and experience of a different, but related practice of ceramics that gave their decisions increased value for the local audience. Selection by an international judge suggested the chosen exhibits as making sense in an international context, as having qualities that someone foreign to the producing culture could apprehend and appreciate.

The second point Hunt makes regarding the opportunities for knowledge transfer made possible by the presence of the FBPA judge, point to the

1. Anonymous, 'New Competition Open to All Potters', New Zealand Potter, Vol.18, No.2, (1976): 30.

2. For full discussion of the history of the Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award, refer to: Anonymous, 'Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award: End of an award - end of an era', Claynews, Vol.18, No.4, (1998): 7-8; Moyra Elliot, 'End of the Fletcher, End of an Era', Object, No.1, (1999), 66-68; Peter Shaw, 'The Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award 1977-1996', Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award 1996, (Auckland: Auckland Studio Potters, 1996), unpaginated.

3. My main source for 'published material' was the holdings of the University of Auckland Elam Library. Of particular value were Claynews, New Zealand Potter and the New Zealand Society of Potters (newsletter). I am also grateful to the library's collection of newspaper 'clippings' accessible through the INZART website <http://magic.lib.auckland.ac.nz/inzart/>

4. Tara Werner, 'The Fletcher Brownbuilt Award', New Zealand Potter, Vol. 26, No. 2, (1984): 14.

long established practice among New Zealand ceramics groups of inviting colleagues of international standing to conferences and gatherings. The guests demonstrated their craft, lead workshops and provided their assessment of the work of local ceramists, sometimes in the role of selector and judge at a society's annual exhibition. The Fletcher award contributed to that ongoing dialogue by appointing judges able to travel to centres around New Zealand to deliver lectures and workshops. In some instances, locals had met the Fletcher judge on an earlier visit while participating in a national or regional event. Some would return repeatedly and in turn, hosted visits by New Zealand ceramists. This limited, but influential coming and going of clay-workers helped to close the distance between international ceramic traditions through the exchange of individual and localised knowledge.

Although established within an international network the Fletcher judge remained a sole judge, a decision many applauded for its ability to eliminate the often compromised decisions of jury committees. Others felt sole judges would deliver idiosyncratic decisions based on personal taste rather than the relative merits of each submitted work. Len Castle for example expressed the opinion that,

The person who really wins does so on a basis of a lottery. It's interesting that previous winners can be rejected. It's not that their work has gone down in standard but it hasn't met the eye of the judge. It can fluctuate so much from year to year.<sup>5</sup>

Castle's observation that a work must "meet the eye of the judge" if it was to gain recognition in a competitive environment, simply stated the reality of juried prizes. John Chalke, judge of the 1996 FCCA wrote in that year's catalogue on the difficulty of working through 2,300 slides to produce an exhibition and then select a winner.

Of all the repeated jury phrases the one that is mentioned most is that someone else would have chosen it all differently. There's a good reason why it's repeated and should carry on being so. We all come to the dance with a varying set of experiences. We've travelled differently, we have aged differently and thus we have different visions.<sup>6</sup>

In the first two years of the FBPA, the judge provided the award's only international presence, but in 1979, overseas entries were invited and



1983



1984



1985

5. Tara Werner, op.cit. 15.
6. John Chalke, 'Juror's Statement,' Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award 1996, (Auckland: Auckland Studio Potters, 1996), unpaginated.
7. Tara Werner, op.cit. 14.
8. *ibid.*
9. Bruce Wallace, Battle of the Titans: Sir Ronald Trotter, Hugh Fletcher and the rise and fall of Fletcher Challenge, (Auckland Penguin Books, 2001): 56.
10. Moyra Elliot, 'End of the Fletcher, End of an Era,' Object, No.1, (1999), 66.
11. *ibid.*
12. In 1996, the value of the Premier Award increased to \$20,000 and the five Certificates of Merit introduced in 1990 increased from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

seven of the 75 works presented in the award exhibition were from international ceramists, five from Australia and two from Britain. The number of international entries continued to increase over the remaining period of the Fletcher Brownbuilt sponsorship, although the event remained primarily a national competition distinguished from other national award exhibitions by the presence of overseas entries.

Trevor Hunt described the Fletcher Brownbuilt as an event that helped with 'internal' company building. 'Fletcher Brownbuilt is one of many in the Fletcher group; a lot of little companies with individual identities. Within Brownbuilt itself, collecting pottery has struck a chord with everyone. It helps us build up the company image internally.'<sup>7</sup> Tara Werner reported evidence of that collecting in the Brownbuilt headquarters as, 'everywhere, on counters, shelves, nooks and crannies.'<sup>8</sup> Her profile of the company and its relationship with the ASP suggested something almost familial, even the first discussions concerned with the possible sponsorship of a ceramics award, took place between Hunt and potter Ruth Court while they and their families holidayed together in Fiji.

In 1987, the Fletcher Challenge Limited share price hit a record high of \$6.20, profits were \$344 million and the return on the shareholders' funds at 25% was well over the 1982 level of 15 per cent.<sup>9</sup> This happy situation was the outcome of the successful merger of Fletcher Holdings with the Challenge Corporation, a pairing that produced Fletcher Challenge, at the time, New Zealand's most internationally successful corporation, and in 1987, the fresh sponsor of the FCCA. The shift in sponsorship also saw significant changes in the award organisation.

Previously, Fletcher Brownbuilt had provided all the management systems necessary to the realisation of a national award event, as well as supplying most of the labour required to produce the exhibition, the new sponsor however, expected the ASP to take full responsibility for all aspects of the award's administration, management and production. In 'a directive,' the new sponsors indicated 'that the Award should become more commercially oriented, enhance its prestigious nature and increase its profile, particularly internationally.'<sup>10</sup> As well, Fletcher Challenge decided to make the opening night function an opportunity for 'corporate entertaining'<sup>11</sup>. To support the changed arrangements and to further promote the award, Fletcher Challenge provided ASP with substantial financial resources and increased the value of the Premier Award from \$5,000 to \$10,000.<sup>12</sup>

Moyra Elliot described the Fletcher Challenge relationship with the ASP as ‘a “hands off” policy except where signing cheques is concerned.’ Elliot’s comment was a tongue in cheek acknowledgment of the sponsor’s willingness to leave matters of policy with the award administrators and a small ASP sub-committee. Fletcher Challenge’s concerns lay principally with the opening night where they took the opportunity to invite many guests and where their name appeared formally as sponsors.<sup>13</sup>

Richard Busby in *Measuring Successful Sponsorship* wrote,

Sponsorship in simple terms, is the acquisition of the rights of association [...] Successful sponsorship succeeds in identifying qualities and values in the [...] event being sponsored and transfers those values to the sponsors own brand or company.<sup>14</sup>

Busby’s words seem to describe the exchange that occurred between ceramists and corporates in the award’s opening night event. Each contributed their best to the evening and each benefited from the publicity generated through the association. Those who attended these events confirm them as sparkling affairs and the success of these evenings must have contributed to Fletcher’s growing enthusiasm for the FCCA, as must the steady increase in the number of international entries.

In 1991 for the first time, international entries exceeded those from New Zealand – 233 international entries, 13 more than the 220 from New Zealand. In 1998, the final year of the award’s presentation, there were 791 entries from 58 countries, 91 were selected for exhibition of which, eight came from New Zealand and for the first time, no New Zealand entry was included among the Merit Awards.

The substantial increase in international entries to the award is largely attributable to the work of Moyra Elliott who accepted the position of FCCA director in 1989. A notable success for Elliott was the appearance in 1990 of a large number of entries from Japan. Totalling 32 in number and including that year’s two jointly selected Premier Award winners, the Japanese participation came about not through the direct efforts of the organisers, but through a happenstance of personal connections typical of the networks the Fletcher awards built on and developed.<sup>15</sup>



1986



1987



1988

Japanese participation was important to the developing character of the FCCA because of the unique qualities and histories such works could bring to the exhibition. Organisers felt that the near total absence of Japanese entries prevented the Fletcher from claiming a truly international reputation in the world of ceramics. As well, they were concerned that the award’s standing was not yet sufficient to retain the Fletcher Challenge sponsorship. The organisers felt that a significant increase in participation by Japanese ceramists in the FCCA would increase the award’s international prestige and secure ongoing Fletcher Challenge sponsorship.<sup>16</sup> The strategy worked at all levels. ASP members were enthusiastic in their support of the increased international participation, Fletcher’s responded positively to the exhibition and committed to a further period of sponsorship and the public received an opportunity to view what one correspondent to the *NZSP* newsletter described as ‘the Van Goghs of the ceramic world’.<sup>17</sup>

Peter Gibbs, in his review of the 1990 FCCA exhibition in which Japanese ceramists created so strong a presence wrote,

For the first time, Kiwis failed to scoop the majority of the accolades and had to bow to the pressure of the world’s leading ceramic artists. The show now seems certain to go on and attract attention from all over the world. But can we take the heat? Will our leading potters be happy to go on getting the boot from their own show in order to see overseas potters swoop on the prize money?<sup>18</sup>

Gibbs’ comments drew a strong response from New Zealand ceramists who confidently retorted that the ‘locals’ were more than willing and able to compete on an international stage. Furthermore, they welcomed the opportunity to see the work of overseas ceramists whose practices might otherwise remain paper bound in magazines and books. A letter written by Alan Watt, then Head of the Ceramic Department at the Canberra Institute of the Arts, extended on local responses to Gibbs’ comments. Watt wrote,

In many ways it is because the awards are not necessarily going to the “locals” that gives the prize its independence, respectability and attraction to foreign submission, and allows the New Zealand public to view, at first hand, many unique concepts and techniques in the ceramic arts. The benefits from exposure to such works and the intellectual challenges it provides, undoubtedly has an effect in the long term.<sup>19</sup>

13. Moyra Elliot, and Robin Paul, ‘Letter,’ *Claynews*, Vol. 11, No. 4, (1992): 12.

14. Quoted in Morel, Mary, and Alison Bartley, *Arts Partners: Success stories in New Zealand arts and business partnerships*. (Wellington: Creative New Zealand, 1998): 28.

15. Moyra Elliot, ‘Shigenori Itoh and the Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award,’ *Green Gallery Collection at Auckland Museum: Celebration of an Acquisition*. (Auckland: Auckland War Memorial Museum, 2009), 29–30.

16. *ibid.*

17. Lesley LeGrove. ‘Letter to the editor’ *New Zealand Society of Potters*. Vol. 9 No. 4, (1990): 9.

18. Peter Gibbs, “1990 Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award,” *New Zealand Society of Potters*, Vol. 9, No. 3, (1990): 19.

19. *New Zealand Society of Potters*, Vol. 9, No. 6, (1990/1991): 6-7.

The relative merits of that long term ‘effect’ found a public airing at the 1996 Creative New Zealand funded symposium, Art for Clay’s Sake held at UNITEC, in conjunction with the 20th FCCA anniversary exhibition. Fletcher Challenge and the ASP had both expressed interest in extending the annual award beyond the confines of the exhibition and saw the symposium as a way of achieving that goal. The symposium invited six panellists, three from New Zealand and three from overseas, to present prepared papers discussing eight selected works in the 1996 FCCA exhibition. The panellists received an image of each work to prepare their presentations. Two of the panellists also presented discussion papers.<sup>20</sup>

The international panellists dealt with their selections critically, applauding and dismissing as they saw appropriate, but the New Zealanders, to varying degrees, contextualised their responses by expressing concerns regarding the increasing dominance of sculptural ceramics in the FCCA exhibitions and in the world of ceramics generally. In part, the concerns focused on ceramists’ apparent abandonment of the domestic environment in preference for the white box of the gallery where function and tactility had given way to a ‘desire for attention’. Douglas Lloyd-Jenkins described non-functional ceramics as,

[living] on in the hermetically sealed circuit of international competition in pursuit of monetary prizes seen to approximate the rewards of the inaccessible art world and provid[ing] legitimising compensation for perceived neglect.<sup>21</sup>

The greater concern however was the perceived lack of criticality in ceramists’ decision to move away from traditional forms into the world of non-functional ceramics. Justin Paton wrote,

What’s wanted is the best of both worlds: objects that refuse to act embarrassed about the functional traditions whence they spring, while also remaining alive, unruly and conceptually alert enough to hold their own in the image-haze of the 1990s.<sup>22</sup>

Lloyd-Jenkins and Paton both acknowledged that the 1996 FCCA exhibition included some excellent work – Richard Parker’s ‘Vase – White Splashed’ received enthusiastic acclaim from all panellists – but found the award’s promotion of novelty over innovation as counter productive to the growth of New Zealand ceramics. In another context, Lloyd-Jenkins suggests that



1989



1990



1990

20. Plans for a publication did not eventuate, but the *New Zealand Potter* published the symposium papers. Refer to, Robert Kay, ‘The Forum: Art for Clay’s Sake’, *New Zealand Potter*, Vol.38, No.2, (1996): 15-27.

21. *ibid*, 21.

22. *ibid*, 23.

23.

Douglas Lloyd-Jenkins, ‘Object Activity: The Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award 1996’, *Monica*, October/November (1996): 30.

24. Moyra Elliot, ‘End of the Fletcher, End of an Era’, *Object*, No. 1, (1999), 68.

25.

Peter Gibbs, ‘The Fletcher Challenge Report’, *Ceramics: Art and Perception*, No. 10, (1992): 67.

this situation had arisen because, ‘both corporation and competition have, up until now, had an abhorrence of critical investigation, preferring publicity over critique.’<sup>23</sup>

The assessment seems accurate. The demands placed upon award organisers by the change in sponsorship required them to create an event that would generate media coverage in the popular press as well as specialist ceramics publications. Under such circumstances, the needs of the local ceramics community became secondary to the needs of the award. For the award organisers, the focus of the award was the award. They had to ensure its continued commercial importance to the cultural sector, maintain its respectability in the ceramic community and uphold its symbolic value to potential participants and judges while satisfying the demands of the sponsor. All this required something much more spectacular than the annual NZSP national exhibition and the award’s annual budget, in excess of \$100,000 in the final years<sup>24</sup>, ensured such an event was possible.

Peter Gibbs, reviewing the 1992 FCCA in the Australian journal *Ceramics: Art and Perception* opened his comments by noting the introduction that year of slide selection and the marked increase in responses from leading international ceramists. He concluded his piece by commenting,

The 1992 awards mark the point of no return for the Fletcher show. [...] There is no longer any question of its being a New Zealand event with a selection of overseas works for comparison. It is now an international extravaganza in which Kiwis compete on an equal footing.<sup>25</sup>

Gibbs’ description in an Australian journal of the FCCA as an ‘international extravaganza’ must have thrilled organisers. The words confirmed that the organisers’ efforts to increase the award’s standing and raise its international profile had succeeded; the Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award was no longer simply an event, but a spectacle. Ceramics in this context was not something you made or something you used, it was something to look at, something to collect, perhaps even contemplate.

The FCCA and its antecedents are part of a system of cultural prizes that draw on the forms of a money economy, but also extend the notion of economics to include a whole range of cultural and symbolic transactions. They are part of the much larger world of symbolic capital, ‘where “capital”

is not merely understood in its narrow sense, but rather is used to designate anything that registers as an asset, and can be put profitably to work, in one or another domain of human endeavour.<sup>26</sup>

The ability of a cultural prize to navigate the two fields of symbolic and economic value becomes apparent in the Fletcher's practice of awarding *and* purchasing each year's Premier Award winning work. On the one hand, the maker receives an award that includes an amount of money that is symbolic. It speaks of the wealth and prestige of the award and the generosity of the sponsor. It is not possible to earn or lose this symbolic value; it is a gift. Even when the chosen maker has spent all their winnings, the symbolic value of the award remains a form of symbolic capital. Having increased the cultural significance of the work through selection and confirmed its newly acquired status through a cash award, the sponsor then purchases the piece at a price established by the maker removing it from the possibility of further exchange. In this double transaction, the sponsor presents the piece and then consumes it performing a gesture that has the feel of the total-destruction associated with the 'potlatch'<sup>27</sup> of traditional gift-exchange economies.

In January 1999, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs published a survey into the sponsorship of cultural events and activities.<sup>28</sup> The Ministry distributed surveys to 100 businesses of which 70 provided a return. The survey examined the previous three financial years, 1996-99, the final three years of FCCA presentations. I would like to think that Fletcher Challenge was one of the 9% of businesses that indicated they had sponsored a competition or award in the previous three years. Even without their participation, the survey provided interesting information on corporate cultural sponsorship contemporary with that of Fletcher Challenge. When the survey asked businesses to identify the factors most important to their decision making on cultural sponsorship, 62% considered increased brand awareness as very important while 9% thought it of little or no importance.

Of interest in relation to the FCCA were the 10% who indicated that it was very important to them that sponsorship arrangements associated their business with activities or events of international significance. 62% saw little or no importance in an association with significant international events and 42% of businesses answered that they had never wanted to have a say in the content of a cultural event or activity they were sponsoring. Given that the year in which the survey was completed was also the



1991



1992



1993

26. James F. English, *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, awards and the circulation of cultural value* (Cambridge, Mass. & London, England: Harvard University Press, 2005): 9.

27. A potlatch is a festival or ceremony practised by the indigenous people of the Pacific Northwest Coast. In the potlatch, hierarchical relations within and between clans, villages, and nations, are observed and reinforced through the distribution or sometimes destruction of wealth, dance performances, and other ceremonies. The status of any given family is raised not by who has the most resources, but by who distributes the most resources. The hosts demonstrate their wealth and prominence through giving away goods. Refer to, Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The form and reason for exchange in archaic societies*. New York & London: W.W.Norton, 1990.

28. Ministry of Cultural Affairs. *Survey of Sponsorship of Cultural Events and Activities*. Wellington: Ministry of Cultural Affairs, January 1999.

29. 'Awards at risk as cash dries up.' *New Zealand Herald*, 29 October 1998.

year Fletcher Challenge ceased its sponsoring relationship with ASP it is again interesting to note that of the 70 surveyed businesses 23 (42%) thought there would be a decrease in the sponsorship available from New Zealand businesses for cultural events and activities. The most common reasons cited for this included the state of the economy, upcoming major sports events, and an inability by cultural organisations to show the commercial value of cultural sponsorship.

The survey results indicate that Fletcher Challenge's involvement with an internationally significant event was unusual, but their willingness to leave content matters to the event's organisers was not. Perhaps decisions concerning cultural content seemed too difficult in New Zealand in the lead up to the new millennium, I do wonder however, if those 42 businesses were as reluctant to participate in the shaping of non-cultural events and activities. The general anticipation of a decline in cultural sponsorship suggested that the cessation of the Fletcher/ASP relationship was inevitable despite the continued success of the association. 1998 also saw the Smokefree Fashion Awards (formerly the Benson & Hedges Fashion Awards) end their 33 year history because they too, were unsuccessful in finding sponsorship.<sup>29</sup>

The ASP support for the Fletcher award was constant and largely voluntary. It was the driving force behind the award events. The line up of award winning works tells the story; large pots disappeared to make way for sculptural works informed by the enthusiasm of potters for ceramics. The enthusiasm was largely uncritical. Reviews of the award exhibitions published in potters' society newsletters or national publications remained strictly descriptive examining judge's selections in terms of their formal qualities or the likes and dislikes of the reviewer and only rarely considering those selections in the broader context of New Zealand ceramic practice. This willingness to absorb and practice international styles led to much experimentation with new forms, but little innovation in established traditions.

The tendency of local ceramists to pick up and try out new styles may be indicative of the general eclecticism that seemed to run through the award's history. There was often comment in letters and columns on the unpredictable nature of the award exhibitions from one year to the next, the fluctuations in the number of exhibits and awards, the varying approaches to selection and on occasions the apparently erratic decisions made within a single selection. This does not seem to me a surprising situation given the broadness

of the single judging criteria of excellence in ceramics. It is possible to measure excellence in any number of ways and each judge seemed to re-establish that measure in the course of their selection. A larger issue than individual interpretation was the absence of a single tradition against which a judge might assess all entries. In a culture where there is a defined and established ceramic tradition the judge has a clear path to travel, but that situation had already begun to unravel before the first FBPA presentation reached the Auckland museum's exhibition halls. As John Chalke pointed out, each judge was the product of an individual set of experiences and selected the award according to that knowledge.

One of the things the Fletcher Award's did best for me, a non-specialist viewer, was to make available ceramic objects of some significance in a way that allowed me to feel close to the work. This is an experience I have discussed with a few friends and colleagues who also wandered through the Fletcher awards of the 1990s and all agree that those exhibitions introduced us to a form of practice that we found engaging, but would have otherwise not encountered. For me, the Fletcher award's success lay in its ability to engage and hold an audience beyond the membership of local ceramic and pottery groups. The first success was the securing of substantial enthusiastic support from a wealthy patron.

The initial relationship of the ASP with Fletchers through its Brownbuilt subsidiary flowed naturally. Trevor Hunt, although not a potter, was a good friend of ceramics and brought his company's vast resources into play to support the fledgling society's ventures into community teaching. In each of the draft charters proposed during the merger between Fletcher Holdings and the Challenge Corporation, the final point in each document consistently identified the desire to operate in a socially engaged manner. The relationship with the ASP is one of the many examples of how Fletchers gave substance to that commitment. When Fletcher Brownbuilt let go of the awards in 1986, there was a brief period of uncertainty, but Fletcher Challenge, aware of the importance of the award to a now international ceramics community reinvigorated Fletcher's association with the Auckland Studio Potters. By then, the future of the ASP was secure and perhaps there was no further need for the relationship, but the Fletcher award had become an animal unto itself and able to support both its benefactors' interest in extending their community engagement. In the second phase of the Fletcher/ASP association it is the strength of the award that seems to drive the sponsorship.



1994



1995



1996

Richard Busby's definition of sponsorship speaks of the transfer of 'qualities and values'. During the Brownbuilt/ASP period it seemed that the respective 'qualities and values' of the two brands transferred to the award, but in the Challenge/ASP association the transfer changed direction. The FCCA established itself as the 'brand' and its 'qualities and values' were enhancing the reputations of its collaborators. This model of sustained and shared commitment to excellence, whatever the outcome, is the Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award's cultural capital and its legacy.

### Grant Thompson

Programmes Leader at the School of Visual Arts, Manukau Institute of Technology.  
grant.thompson@manukau.ac.nz

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# The Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award Timeline

The timeline includes details of each year's Fletcher award and information gleaned from the pages of the New Zealand Potter.



1998

1976 **New competition.** The display featured grass and artificial turf spelling out a large FB when viewed from above.

"An award of \$1000 for the best entry to be decided by an overseas judge will be made annually by Fletcher Brownbuilt. Competing pots will be displayed in an Auckland location. The prize winning entry will become the property of the sponsors and the other exhibits will be for sale at a price nominated by their makers with a percentage of sales to be given to the Auckland Studio Pottery Centre. This award is to be known as the Fletcher Brownbuilt Award, and will be made for the first time in April/May 1977."

New Zealand Potter, Vol:18, No.2, 1976:30.

1977 **FBPA Judge** Les Blakeborough, Australia  
**Premier Award** John Anderson, New Zealand  
**Merit Awards** 2 New Zealand

The first call for entries in the FBPA invited submissions of "a pot or set of pots which used the medium of ceramics to highlight the sculptural content of the entry." Sixty entries were received, fewer than expected. Some commentators suggested that potters were suspicious of the corporate involvement. The judge presented the Premier Award of \$1,000, and two Merit Awards of \$250.

1978 **FBPA Judge** Shiga Shigeo, Japan  
**Premier Award** Rick Rudd, New Zealand  
**Merit Awards** 2 New Zealand

Thematic entry abandoned and 'excellence' established as the sole judging criteria. The judge presented only one Merit Award.

**Premier Award** Chester Nealie, New Zealand  
**Merit Awards** 9 Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States of America

The value of the Premier Award increased to \$3,000. Judge Gwynn Pigott selected 99 works for exhibition from the 300 New Zealand and overseas entries. Pigott commented that her selection was "very much one of personal rapport with the pots."

1983 **FBPA Judge** Asako Watanabe, Japan  
**Premier Award** Ray Rogers, New Zealand  
**Merit Awards** 7 Japan, New Zealand

115 works were selected for exhibition. Margaret Milne commented in the ASP newsletter that, "A reduction in the number of works chosen from a record number of overseas entries, perhaps reflects a general rise in the standard of work offered by our 'ongoing potters'."

1984 **FBPA Judge** Don Reitz, United States of America  
**Premier Award** Marilyn Wiseman, New Zealand  
**Merit Awards** 9 Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States of America

In a year that Marilyn Wiseman won the award with a large platter, judge Don Reitz commented on the small number of entries from producers of domestic ware.

**Beyond Craft – Natwest Art Award.** "An exhibition of craft, small art works and sculpture suitable for the enrichment of our living and working environments." One award of \$1,000.



1997

1985 **FBPA Judge** Maria Teresa Kucynska, Poland  
**Premier Award** Jeff Mincham, Australia  
**Merit Awards** 13 Australia, Japan, New Zealand, United States of America

In the ninth year of the Fletcher Brownbuilt Pottery Award the value of the Premier Award increased from \$3,000 to \$5,000.

**Beyond Craft – Natwest Art Award,** an exhibition of 245 works by 122 artists. Two awards of \$1,000 each.

**Cable Price Toyota Award Exhibition,** Suter Gallery Nelson. One award of \$1,000 and three merit awards of \$200.

**Whitcoulls Award** for Sculpture and Drawing. One award of \$750 and one of \$500 in each section. Judges made only one nomination in each category believing that there was no single work deserving of a national award.

**Winstone Ties That Bind,** a selected theme exhibition sponsored by Winstone Ltd. at the Wellington City Art Gallery in conjunction with the Crafts Council of New Zealand. One award of \$2,000 and two awards of \$500 selected by Marlise Staehelin, Switzerland.

1986 **FBPA Judge** Jeff Mincham, Australia  
**Premier Award** Steve Fulmer, New Zealand  
**Merit Awards** 12 Australia, New Zealand

Jeff Mincham, Premier Award winner in the 1985 Brownbuilt Award returned as selector and Judge. Trevor Hunt retired from Fletcher Brownbuilt and the company relin-

quished sponsorship of the award. For some months the Award's future seemed in doubt.

**Cable Price Toyota Award** Exhibition, Suter Gallery Nelson. One award of \$1,000 and three merit awards of \$200.

Sixth **BNZ Art Award** at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, Wellington. Two \$1,000 awards selected from pottery, sculpture print and photography.

1987 **FBPA Judge** John Maltby, United Kingdom  
**Premier Award** Steve Fulmer, New Zealand & Chester Nealie, New Zealand  
**Merit Awards** 4 Australia, New Zealand

Fletcher Brownbuilt Pottery Award became the Fletcher Challenge Pottery Award. The award steering committee appointed Leo King as the paid award organiser.

Following the first presentation of a joint Premier Award, Fletcher Challenge, in what was perceived as a vote of confidence in the award, agreed to write two cheques, each to the full value of \$5,000. The joint award was a second Fletcher Premier Award for both recipients.

**Beyond Craft: Natwest Art Award** at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts.

Inaugural **Winstone Craft Award** \$10,000.

Inaugural **Norsewear Art Award** in conjunction with the Central Hawke's Bay arts festival. The Award invited entries in three categories, pottery, wool and painting. Each category offered an award of \$1,000.

1988 —  
 FCPA Judge  
 Patti Warshina,  
 Premier Award  
 United States of America  
 Premier Award  
 Sandra Black, Australia  
 Merit Awards 6Australia,  
 Czechoslovakia, New Zealand  
 Value of the FCPA's Premier Award  
 increased to \$10,000.

The value of each of the three  
**Norsewear Art Awards** in-  
 creased to \$2,000. The exhibition  
 included 82 pots, 49 paintings and  
 13 woollexhibits.

**Innovation in Craft, National  
 Provedent Fund Art Awards** at  
 the New Zealand Academy of  
 Fine Arts. Two \$2,000 awards.

**NZFP Pulp & Paper Limited  
 Tokoroa Art Award.** Total prize  
 money \$8,000.

1989 —  
 FCCA Judge  
 Peter Lane, United Kingdom  
 Premier Award  
 Jeff Mincham, Australia  
 Merit Awards 15Australia,  
 New Zealand, United Kingdom,  
 United States of America

Australian, Jeff Mincham won the  
 Premier Award for the second  
 time.

The Fletcher Challenge Pottery  
 Award became the Fletcher Chal-  
 lenge Ceramics Award and Moyra  
 Elliott was appointed as its direc-  
 tor with the specific task of raising  
 the Award's international profile.

Continued and increased financial  
 support announced for the Waipu-  
 kura based **Norsewear Art  
 Award.**

New Zealand Craft, **National  
 Provident Art Award.** Awards  
 increase to \$3,000.

with sponsorship from the United  
 Group and New Zealand China  
 Clays. One award of \$500 and two  
 Merit Awards.

**Second New Zealand Crafts  
 Biennial,** Challenge Properties  
 Limited in association with Win-  
 stones and the Crafts Council of  
 New Zealand \$10,000 award and  
 exhibition at the Auckland War  
 Memorial Museum. Udo Sellbach  
 of Australia made the selection.

1990 —  
 FCCA Judge  
 Elizabeth Fritsch, United Kingdom  
 Premier Award  
 Seiji Kobayashi, Japan  
 & Eicho Kawano, Japan  
 Merit Awards 20Australia,  
 Japan, New Zealand, United  
 Kingdom, United States

FCCA introduced five cash Merit  
 Awards each of \$1,000 while leav-  
 ing the judge free to continue  
 awarding Certificates of Merit at  
 their discretion. Judge Elizabeth  
 Fritsch distributed the highest  
 number of Merits in the Award's  
 history.

The FCCA achieved a new level of  
 overseas participation receiving  
 120 entries from 23 countries. 32 of  
 these were from Japan and in-  
 cluded the joint Premier Award  
 winners who each received a  
 cheque for \$10,000.

**Norsewear Art Award** included  
 in the official programme of the  
 New Zealand 1990 celebrations.

**New Zealand Society of Pot-  
 ters 32nd National Exhibition**  
 joined with an existing biennial  
 award jointly sponsored by the  
 United Building Society and Suter  
 Art Gallery, Nelson. One award of  
 \$5,000 and two of \$1,000 each. Due  
 to a requirement of the sponsors,  
 the normally NZSP members only  
 exhibition was open to all pot-  
 ters'.

**Northland Society of Arts** held  
 the region's first pottery awards

United States of America

For the first time, slide selection  
 was employed to decide the  
 works for inclusion in the award  
 exhibition. The number of coun-  
 tries that provided entries in-  
 creased to 38 and of the 182 exhibi-  
 tion pieces, only 39 came from  
 New Zealand. Total entries num-  
 bered 600.

**Norsewear Art Award** in-  
 creased the value of the three  
 awards from \$2,000 to \$2,500  
 each.

**Second Cleveland Ceramic  
 Awards.** Premier Award of \$3,000,  
 One merit award of \$1,000 and  
 two of \$500.

1991 —  
 FCCA Judge  
 Ron Nagle,  
 United States of America  
 Premier Award  
 Tim Currey, New Zealand  
 Merit Awards 9Japan,  
 New Zealand, United Kingdom,  
 United States of America

For the first time international en-  
 tries to the FCCA out numbered  
 those from New Zealand.

The **Norsewear Art Award** was  
 rumoured to be on the verge of  
 collapse due to the sponsoring  
 company's entry into receivership.  
 Twenty-five of the sixty employ-  
 ees led a local buy-out of the  
 company and agreed to continue  
 sponsorship of the Norsewear Art  
 Award. 183 works selected for ex-  
 hibition from a record 571 entries.

Inaugural **Cleveland Ceramic  
 Award** held in the Glenfalloch  
 Woodland Garden Chalet, Dune-  
 din. Judge Cheryl Southern, Di-  
 rector of the Dunedin Public Art  
 Gallery selected the three award  
 winning works from 146 New Zea-  
 land entries.

1992 —  
 FCCA Judge  
 Akio Takamori,  
 Japan/United States of America  
 Premier Award  
 Lara Scobie, United Kingdom  
 Merit Awards 15Argentina,  
 Australia, Denmark, Germany,  
 Japan, Hungary, New Zealand,  
 The Netherlands, United Kingdom,

United States of America

For the first time, slide selection  
 was employed to decide the  
 works for inclusion in the award  
 exhibition. The number of coun-  
 tries that provided entries in-  
 creased to 38 and of the 182 exhibi-  
 tion pieces, only 39 came from  
 New Zealand. Total entries num-  
 bered 600.

**Norsewear Art Award** in-  
 creased the value of the three  
 awards from \$2,000 to \$2,500  
 each.

**Second Cleveland Ceramic  
 Awards.** Premier Award of \$3,000,  
 One merit award of \$1,000 and  
 two of \$500.

Inaugural **New Zealand Easter Society  
 of Potters Royal Easter Show  
 Award** Exhibition sponsored by  
 Auckland Gas Company Limited.  
 Two awards of \$3,000, one for  
 functional objects, the other for  
 non-functional works and a \$1,000  
 award selected by popular vote.  
 Only members of the NZSP could  
 submit entries.

1993 —  
 FCCA Judge  
 Kari Christensen, Norway  
 Premier Award  
 Susannah Israel,  
 United States of America  
 Merit Awards 16Australia, France,  
 Japan, New Zealand, Norway,  
 Switzerland, United Kingdom,  
 United States of America

The five FCCA Merit Awards dou-  
 bled in value to \$2,000 each. 800  
 entries were received from 20  
 countries of which 145 were se-  
 lected for exhibition.

The Kodak Student Photography  
 Award inaugurated in association  
 with the FCCA.

**Norsewear Art Award** contin-

ued, but organisers expressed  
 concern regarding the declining  
 number of entries in the ceramics  
 section. Some suggested that the  
 decrease was due to the Easter  
 Show Awards run concurrently by  
 the NZSP.

Third **Cleveland Ceramic  
 Awards** in conjunction with the  
 NZSP's 1993 Clayvanz conference.

**Second NZSP Royal Easter  
 Show Award Exhibition.** Six  
 \$200 Western Potters Material  
 Awards replaced the popular  
 vote award.

Inaugural **Humegas Award** for  
 excellence in ceramic design held  
 at the Baycourt Exhibition Hall, Tau-  
 ranga. One Premier award of  
 \$1,000.

**The Mug Show.** Lopdell House,  
 Tiriangi. A Tiriangi Community  
 Arts Concl. Project with four  
 awards sponsored by the Potrage  
 Licensing Trust.

**Real Craft '93 Exhibition,** 'one  
 of the major craft events in the  
 South Island' offered two awards  
 of \$1,000 sponsored by The Cleve-  
 land Charitable Trust.

1994 —  
 FCCA Judge  
 Jindra Vikova, Czech Republic  
 Premier Award  
 Mitsuo Shoji, Australia  
 Merit Awards 17Australia,  
 Canada, Czech Republic,  
 Israel, Japan, New Zealand,  
 Norway, Sweden, Taiwan,  
 The Netherlands, United Kingdom,  
 United States of America

The first FCCA 'Potters' Evening'  
 held at the Museum – an informal  
 gathering of makers and the inter-  
 ested to discuss works in the exhibi-  
 tion. New buildings were  
 opened at the Auckland Society  
 of Potters Onehunga premises.

event attracted 14,000 visitors.

1998 —  
 FCCA Judge  
 Torbjorn Kvasbo, Norway  
 Premier Award  
 Jean-Francois Foulhoux, France  
 Merit Awards 5Germany,  
 Norway, The Netherlands,  
 United States of America

From 791 entries from 58 countries,  
 91 were selected for exhibition of  
 these, only eight came from New  
 Zealand. For the first time, no New  
 Zealand works won Merit  
 Awards.

Ten overseas ceramists with ac-  
 ceptances in the 1998 FCCA pre-  
 sented a body of their work in an  
 exhibition titled Extension, run  
 concurrently with the Fletcher at  
 Pils of Ponsobny.

Fletcher Challenge announced  
 that due to a reassessment of their  
 sponsorship commitments there  
 would be no further Fletcher Chal-  
 lenge Ceramics Awards.

Judge of the twelfth **Norsewear  
 Art Award** was Californian mu-  
 seum curator, Jo Anne Northrup.  
 The value of each of the three  
 awards increased to \$4,000.

Seventh **NZSP Royal Easter  
 Show Pottery Awards.**

Sixth **Mug Show** at Lopdell  
 House. Organisers, the Tiriangi  
 Community Arts Council offered  
 awards with a total value of \$2,100  
 sponsored by the Potrage Char-  
 table Foundation.

The fourth **Birkenhead Licen-  
 sing Trust Pottery Award**  
 opened at a new venue, The Bruce  
 Mason Theatre, Takapuna.

presented by Cooney, Lees &  
 Morgan, and five \$100 awards sup-  
 plied by local businesses.

1997 —  
 FCCA Judge  
 Janet Mansfield, Australia  
 Premier Award  
 Philippe Barde, Switzerland  
 Merit Awards 5 Estonia, New  
 Zealand, Norway, United  
 Kingdom

The call for entries to the 1998 FCCA  
 listed awards of reduced value, a  
 Premier Award of \$15,000 and  
 Merit Awards of \$1,000 each.

Ceramist Raewyn Atkinson took  
 the Premier Award in the Ceramics  
 and Glass section of the  
**Norsewear Art Awards.**

Sixth annual **Cleveland Ceramic  
 Award** at the Glenfalloch Home-  
 stead, Dunedin with awards total-  
 ling \$5,500.

Sixth **NZSP Royal Easter Show  
 Annual Pottery Award.**

Third **Birkenhead Licensing  
 Trust Pottery Award.** The or-  
 ganisers, Westshore Community  
 Arts Council noted the appear-  
 ance of many new names in the  
 catalogue including those of re-  
 cent arrivals to New Zealand from  
 South Africa, Korea and Taiwan  
 and students from various teach-  
 ing institutions including polytech-  
 nics'.

The inaugural **Cleveland Art  
 Awards** sponsored by the Cleve-  
 land Charitable Foundation held  
 at the Dunedin Centre. Categories  
 were: Painting, Works on paper,  
 Ceramics, Glass, Sculpture, Textiles  
 and Jewellery. Each section of-  
 fered a Premier Award of \$3,000, a  
 Highly Commended Award of  
 \$1,000, a Merit Award sponsored  
 by Southern Clays in the ceramics  
 section, and a Student Award. The

Ro Cambridge appointed director  
 of the Fletcher Challenge Ceramics  
 Award following Moyra Elliott's  
 resignation. Fletcher Challenge  
 announced its ongoing sponsor-  
 ship of the award for the next five  
 years.

Tenth **Norsewear Art Award.** The  
 top award in the Ceramics and  
 Glass section went to a cast glass  
 work by Emma Camden. A merit  
 prize was also awarded in each  
 discipline. The judge, Grace Co-  
 chrane selected 93 exhibits from  
 465 entries.

**Cleveland Ceramics Award** ex-  
 tended to include the Glenfalloch  
 Sculpture Award and offered  
 awards to a total value of \$4,500.

The fifth **NZSP Royal Easter  
 Show Annual Pottery Award**  
 offered three awards, Tableware,  
 Sculpture and Industrial Design  
 each worth \$3,000. The established  
 six Western Potters Merit Awards  
 were joined by an award of \$1,000  
 for excellence in student work.

**Gas Centre Ceramics Awards**  
 in association with Waikato Society  
 of Potters, Waikato Museum of Art  
 & History. A Premier Award of  
 \$2,500 and two Merit awards of  
 \$500 each.

**Second Birkenhead Licensing  
 Trust Pottery Award.** Entry to  
 New Zealand potters only.

The second **XPO New Zealand  
 Ceramics Award** expanded to  
 include the work of glass artists.  
 The Premier Award of \$10,000 re-  
 mained and one Merit Award of  
 \$2,000 was awarded in each disci-  
 pline.

**Harvey's Real Estate National  
 Ceramics Award** hosted by the  
 Bethlehem Pottery Club at Bay-  
 court, Tauranga. A Premier Award  
 of \$1,500, a second award of \$500

**Humegas Awards** added a sec-  
 ond prize of \$500 sponsored by  
 Cooney Lees & Morgan, and four  
 merit awards of \$100 provided by  
 local businesses.

**Gas Centre Ceramics Award.**  
 Waikato Society of Potters, Waikato  
 Museum of Art & History. Hamilton  
 Gas Centre Premier Award and  
 two merit awards.

The inaugural **Birkenhead Li-  
 censing Trust Pottery Award.**  
 Premier Award of \$1,000 and five  
 smaller sponsored awards. Entries  
 were received from around New  
 Zealand.

**XPO New Zealand Ceramics  
 Awards** established by event and  
 exhibition organiser XPO Group  
 Ltd in association with NZSP and  
 Art NZ Ltd, to help ensure the fu-  
 ture of New Zealand ceramics and  
 pottery. Premier Award of \$10,000  
 and second prize of \$2,000. Or-  
 ganiser Allison Mellsop did not  
 see a conflict between the new  
 award and the FCCA because the  
 XPO Awards have been estab-  
 lished solely for New Zealand ar-  
 tists'.

1996 —  
 FCCA Judge  
 John Chalke, Canada  
 Premier Award  
 Yasuko Sakurai, Japan  
 Merit Awards 5 New Zealand,  
 United Kingdom, United States  
 of America

The 20th Anniversary FCCA saw  
 the Premier Award grow to  
 \$20,000 and the five Merit Awards  
 to \$5,000 each. To mark the anni-  
 versary, all previous Premier  
 Award winning works held in the  
 Fletcher Challenge Art Collection  
 were displayed in an exhibition  
 alongside the 1996 award show.  
 As well, the ASP organised a Cre-  
 ative New Zealand funded forum  
 at Unitec.

The developments were made  
 possible by the monies generat-  
 ed through the FCCA.

The eighth **Norsewear Art Award,**  
 Waipukurau.

**Cleveland Ceramics Awards.**  
 The Foundation added a \$250 Stu-  
 dent Award to the prize list.

Third **NZSP Royal Easter Show  
 Annual Pottery Award.**

**Humegas Award,** Tauranga this  
 year presented in association with  
 NZSP National Convention and  
 featured as part of the Society's  
 annual National Exhibition.

**Trigon Ceramics Award,** Wai-  
 kato Society of Potters, Waikato  
 Museum of Art & History, Hamil-  
 ton. Three ranked awards and a  
 merit selection.

1995 —  
 FCCA Judge  
 Takeshi Yasuda, United Kingdom  
 Premier Award  
 Prue Venables, Australia  
 Merit Award 15Australia, Canada,  
 Denmark, Japan, New Zealand,  
 Norway, Switzerland, Thailand,  
 The Netherlands, United States  
 of America

Entries totalled almost 900 from  
 48 countries, of which 148 from  
 24 countries were selected for ex-  
 hibition.

**Norsewear Art Awards** in-  
 creased in value to \$3,000 each  
 and the ceramics section opened  
 to entries in glass.

Fourth **Cleveland Ceramics  
 Award** at the Glenfalloch Home-  
 stead.

**NZSP Royal Easter Show An-  
 nual Pottery Award** gained ma-  
 jor sponsorship from CCG Indus-  
 tries Ltd.

# The Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award: a cultural enquiry

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Grant Thompson

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