

THE ARTS & CRAFTS MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
COLORADO ARTS & CRAFTS SOCIETY

www.colorarts-crafts.org

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SPRING 2009



You can make this beautiful oaken mantel clock with your own hands!

May 9 & 10 Spring Show and Sale Adds Local Color

For ten years the Colorado Arts & Crafts Society has brought together a wide range of artificers and companies producing some of the finest work in styles reflecting the aesthetic of the Arts and Crafts Movement. This year we have decided to involve local Colorado producers as well as our regulars. There are many companies which have dedicated themselves to a refined and necessarily smaller output than the mass market is made for. These local artisans are more concerned with quality than with quantity and we feel that they reflect the soul of the Arts and Crafts Movement as it has been revived.

Among our new vendors you'll find:

Nature's Palate: Flowers and floral arrangements for every occasion from local greenhouses and farmer-friendly growers.

Mountain Girl Organics: All natural bath and body products—olive oil soaps, shea butter lotions, lipbalms—handmade in small batches.

Old Timer Specialty Meats: Sausages of all kinds, made in Denver for over 60 years.

For Man's Best Friend, **Christine's Canine Cookies** brings the best homemade dog-biscuit treats for holistic canine health, using recipes made with gourmet ingredients designed to improve your pet's vitality, digestion, breath, and coat. Christine makes such doggie treats as: Chamomile Pupkin Bread, Spinach Florentine, Parsley Focaccia and Apple Dumpling cookies.

Cabin Creek Smokehouse Barbeque: From Conifer comes the Winner of Westword's Best BBQ for 2007 and 2008; Denver KMGH Channel 7's A-list. Cabin Creek will station their barbeque wagon out front of the mansion to delight your taste buds for lunch on Saturday and Sunday.

Arrangements are being made for even more. . .

Clockmaking Workshop — Space Limited

Don Nord from the Craftsman Wooden Lite Company in Williams, Arizona will teach 10 lucky students how to build and finish a Mission-style mantel clock to take home at the end of the day (*see photo above*). The class costs \$200 per person and includes all wood pieces and components of the 15-inch x 16-inch quartersawn white oak clock. This will be a piece you'll be proud to display in your home.

Reservations are *absolutely required* for the workshop. R.S.V.P. to 720-497-7632.

Weekend Talks & Demonstrations

The daily seminars, to be held in the Carriage House, will be led by nationally known experts who will focus on different aspects of the Arts and Crafts Movement. The schedule is the same for both Saturday and Sunday except where noted. A nominal fee of \$5 will be charged as admission to the weekend of talks since space is limited to 40 attendees per session.

We strongly advise you to call for a reservation to assure that you'll be able to get in. Call Cynthia at 720-497-7632 and give her your name.

This year we're also including ongoing demonstrations of both Navajo-style weaving by our own Kathy Strathearn, featured in the January issue of *The Messenger*, and of the printing art by Tom Parson of **Now It's Up To You Publications** who'll be bringing his portable hand press (*see the article on page 5 of this issue*).

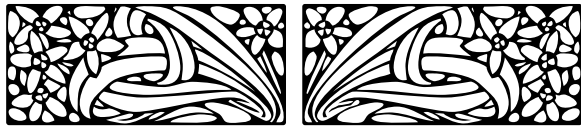
ADMISSION to this year's show, sponsored by **Stickley Fine Furniture**, is free to all so be sure to bring Mother, and all her friends.

See you on Mother's Day Weekend!

—continued on page 2



CORRECTION: In our last issue we had captioned this photo as, "Kathy Strathearn demonstrates Navajo-style weaving." In fact it is actually Rio Grande weaving that is shown. —Photo by Bill Strathearn



The Arts & Crafts Messenger, the newsletter of the Colorado Arts & Crafts Society, is published quarterly for the society's members as part of their membership contribution. Send comments to the editor, Philip Normand, 2732 Williams Street, Denver, Colorado 80205, or e-mail to phil01@normanddesign.com. All articles are © 2009 the Colorado Arts & Crafts Society, with rights reverting to the authors after publication.

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All correspondence concerning the society or membership should be sent to Colorado Arts & Crafts Society, 900 Colorow Road, Golden, CO 80401 www.colorarts-crafts.org

Lecture Schedule:

10:00-10:45 a.m.:

The Arts and Crafts in Colorado

Robert Rust, *Roycroft historian, author and lecturer*

Based on eight years of research by Robert Rust and Pamela McClary in preparation for their book and exhibition planned for 2012-13, this lecture will illuminate recent discoveries about the significant contributions of Colorado men and women, many of whom gained national and international recognition in the Arts and Crafts Movement.

11:00 a.m.-11:45 p.m.:

The Prairie Printmakers

Marc Williams, *Diverse Ayres Fine Art*

Founded by Birger Sandzen of Sweden in 1930, the Prairie Printmakers represent one of the most influential artistic collaborations of the early 20th century. Beginning with seven original members, the group eventually swelled to 47 (with more than 100 associates). True to their mission of making art accessible and affordable to the general public, they organized annual traveling exhibits and espoused an Arts and Crafts aesthetic that profoundly impacted the development of American art, particularly in the Midwest and West. Marc's talk will provide a brief glimpse of the history and philosophy of the artists while presenting actual works — many of which will be available for purchase.

Lunch Break: 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.

1:00-1:45 p.m.:

Period Gardening: Plants and Pots in the Arts and Crafts Style

Chad Brunette, *Thunderbird Design*

Formerly a horticulturist with Denver Botanic Gardens, Chad is an accomplished landscape designer who has enhanced many gardens in and around Denver's bungalow neighborhoods. After giving a brief introduction to gardening in the context of the Arts and Crafts movement, he will present a class on how to choose and arrange colorful plants from the period in beautiful containers for your porch, patio or backyard. Please bring your gardening questions for Chad to answer.

2:00-3:30 p.m. (Saturday Only)

Stickley Furniture Care

Mike Danial, *Stickley Historian and Restoration Specialist*

With more than 30 years' experience as a woodworker and finisher at the renowned Manlius, New York factory, Mike will show ardent collectors how to identify, value, maintain and restore their prized possessions and reveal the construction variations that distinguish re-issued Mission Oak pieces from original works.

2:00-3:30 p.m. (Sunday Only):

A Random Walk in Wood Noise

Alexander Vertikoff, *Architectural Photographer*

One of the leading photographers in the U.S., Alex specializes in architectural interiors and exteriors. His award-winning images have been on the cover and inside pages of every issue of *American Bungalow* magazine as well as dozens of other publications.

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Adelaide Alsop Robineau by Beth Bradford

For the Arts and Crafts enthusiast, Adelaide Alsop Robineau's ceramics are the absolute highlight of the splendidly diverse collections at Syracuse's Everson Museum of Art. The museum was established in 1897 as the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts and the decision was made in 1911 to limit its collections to American art becoming the only museum at that time to do so. In 1916, the museum purchased 31 of Robineau's pieces and shortly after purchased an additional 44 pieces. In 1932, the Museum established the Ceramic National Exhibitions in Adelaide's memory. That facilitated the support of up-and-coming artists and the collection of many of their prized pieces. The Museum currently houses the largest American ceramics collection in the United States. In addition to the American ceramics collection, the Museum holds a study collection of ceramics from around the world, spanning from 3,000 BCE to the present. The exhibited pieces allow the viewer to follow the development of styles and techniques of American ceramics. Discovering the diversity demonstrated by Adelaide's broad range of work proves to be the most wonderful part of the exhibit for one who is not already aware of her remarkable talent.

Adelaide Alsop was born in 1865. As with many other women of the time, she became proficient in the art of china painting, as it was one of the acceptable ways in which a middle-class woman would be able to produce an income. By 1892, she was teaching drawing and painting at a boarding school in Minnesota. She continued her own studies in watercolor and oil painting during the summer of 1893 at William Merritt Chase's school on Long Island. By the autumn of 1893, Adelaide was supporting herself as a teacher of china painting and by the sale of her decorated pieces and had rented a studio in Manhattan. She married the Frenchman Samuel Robineau whom she had first met earlier while living in Minnesota. He was a businessman who brought an interest in historic ceramics and collecting to the relationship. Together they established, in 1899, *Keramic Studio*, a magazine devoted to china painting designs and how-to articles for the amateur decorator.

With the changing of times and popularity of styles, overglaze decoration fell out of favor and china-painted ware became ineligible for awards at the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris. Adelaide began working directly with clay in 1901, took a class in underglaze offered by Charles Volkmar and began clay-working classes at Alfred University. She had two pieces exhibited at the National Arts Club collection of ceramics at the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo. *Keramic Studio* promoted the change from china painting to the development of pottery from clay to finish and to the making of high-fire porcelain. This change from decorator to potter proved the breadth of her artistic talent. According to her husband, "She did not like putting her designs on commercial white china, the shapes of which did not satisfy her. She wanted to make pottery but the making of ordinary pottery did not appeal to her; she wanted to do something different." The choice of por-



Scarab Vase, Apotheosis of the Toiler—photo: Beth Bradford

celain instead of earthenware or other faience was greatly influenced by the articles about it by Taxile Doat which Samuel translated for publication in the *Keramic Studio*.

Adelaide began experimenting with high-fired porcelain (*grand feu*). She developed a porcelain paste that proved to be more plastic than the European clays and allowed for greater manipulation. She experimented with different glazes and began to produce small porcelain vessels with a variety of glazes: from flowing matte to crystalline. She received much attention from exhibitions at the New York Arts and Crafts Society, the St. Louis World's Fair and an Arts and Crafts exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago. During this time, she and Samuel built a two-story Arts and Crafts style pottery in an undeveloped part of Syracuse. After briefly experimenting with production ceramics using two assistants, she determined that her work



Detail of the Scarab Vase. —photo by Beth Bradford

was too individual to be done commercially. From then on, she worked with only the help of her husband in preparation of the clay and experimentation with glazes and firing. In 1905, they built a house at the pottery property and named it “Four Winds.”

The 1905 exhibition of the Society of Ceramic Arts in New York City was an overwhelming success for Adelaide. She exhibited sixty-nine ceramic pieces: vases, bowls, jars and plaques. National and international publications were unanimous in the praise of her work. *The American Pottery Gazette* stated “There was not a poor piece in the entire group, either in form or color; the potting is excellent, while the knowledge of chemistry displayed.....would do credit to the Royal factories of Berlin, Dresden, or National Sevres.” The initial acclaim continued unabated. Adelaide was inspired to continue experimentation with different glazes, styles and techniques. She flourished for the next decade and a half, gaining more awards and critical raves.

The Robineaus continued to educate and share their love of the art. In 1908, they established *Palette and Bench* magazine, devoted to educating art students who might otherwise not be able to enroll in formal classes while continuing the Ceramic Studio. They taught at the Art Academy of the American Woman’s League in Missouri where Adelaide created many of the most celebrated works.

The decorative technique that Adelaide is most known for is described as “conventionalized motifs carved or excised in low relief.” This description does not do justice

to the beauty and fragility of any of her work, including perhaps her most famous masterpieces. In 1908, after 300 hours of carving, Adelaide completed *Lantern*, an 8½” tall, perforated shade in an Asian inspired style. The natural watercolor toned glazes highlight the floral medallions and panels. Art potter William Grueby pronounced it “the most wonderful ceramic piece ever produced in the United States.” Another work, *Scarab Vase, Apotheosis of the Toiler*, uses similar carving but in a very different style and glaze. The white and pale blue lidded and footed vase stands over 16” tall and is decorated with a multitude of stylized scarabs and accented by thin radiating lines in diamond patterns. It won the grand prize in pottery at the Turin International Exhibition in 1911. It required more than 1,000 hours to complete. Although these two pieces may be the most famous, they cannot be the only representatives of her work. She drew her inspiration for her shapes and glazes from all the great porcelain producers of the past from Europe and Asia. The shapes and sizes are variations on the traditional. The colors and glaze finishes seem virtually unlimited.

In 1912, Adelaide was elected a member of the Société Internationale des Beaux Arts in Paris and was awarded the Arthur Heun Prize for Craftwork at the Art Institute of Chicago’s annual crafts exhibition. More honors and awards came in the subsequent years including the grand prize for her ceramics at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exhibition in San Francisco. In 1917, she was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Science in Ceramic Art by Syracuse University. Unfortunately, economic hardships forced the closing of the pottery in 1918 but she continued work out of an outdoor kiln shed at Four Winds cottage. Two years later, she began teaching at the College of Fine Arts at Syracuse University.

Adelaide continued to stress the key concepts of the Arts and Crafts philosophy throughout the rest of her life. She continued to experiment with glazes and continued to show her work through 1928. While preparing new work for an exhibition in London she became very ill and died in early 1929.

Her body of work truly was unique and not to be duplicated. The New York art critic, Royal Cortissoz has stated, “Craftmanship like Mrs. Robineau’s is a blending of precious qualities—of knowledge, skill, judgment, taste and, above all, a sense of beauty. She had all that the pottery needs.” But beyond her work as an artist, her influence is more greatly felt because of her lifelong work as a publisher, editor, writer and educator.

Bibliography: Only an Artist—Adelaide Alsop Robineau, American Studio Potter, Thomas Piché and Julia A. Monti editors, Everson Museum of Art, 2006.

Tom Parson Brings His Handpress to the Show and Sale

A poet as well as a printer, Tom Parson was active in Seattle's poetry community in the 1970s

Since moving to Denver in 1983, and starting *Now It's Up To You Publications*, all of his work has been produced entirely by letterpress printing from hand-set metal type. He has printed dozens of works by poets from Seattle, Denver, and around the country, in a variety of small formats including poetry postcards, folded cards, broadsides, and chapbooks.

Tom's printshop includes more than a thousand fonts of metal and wood type, an extensive collection of cuts and ornaments, a 10x15 Chandler & Price platen press, a Vandercook SP-15, a 7x11 Golding Pearl, several roller proof presses and sign presses, and both 3x5 and 5x8 Kelsey presses. He also owns a complete Multigraph press outfit and two Monotype casters with approximately 80 fonts of matrices for the making of lead type.

In addition to poetry projects, the press offers a full range of job printing from hand-set type, and has extensive experience printing on handmade papers—working particularly with Ray Tomasso world-famous maker of handmade papers. Wedding invitations, birth announcements, business cards, stationery, postcards for gallery openings, yard sale posters, in the words of Tom's web site, "tie the press to the daily lives of people in much the same manner as poetry might be tied to the aesthetic and emotional needs of the human community."

Tom has conducted printing demonstrations in Leadville, as part of Oro City, an historical recreation of an early miners' camp; at numerous street fairs, school classes, and book festivals. He uses small proof presses and hobby presses to introduce the graphic pleasures of relief printing to new audiences. His workshops have been offered at the Ah Haa School in Telluride, and his lectures and demonstrations have been presented through the Book Arts League of Colorado.



Tom Parson, Typesetter and Printer

Pacific Northwest Arts and Crafts Exhibition to Open in Seattle

A major new exhibition opens on May 30, 2009 at the Museum of History & Industry (MOHAI) in Seattle that brings to light the exceptional work from the Arts and Crafts Movement in Washington and Oregon during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

The exhibition showcases significant buildings and interiors, furniture, glass, metalwork, ceramics, textiles, fine arts, graphics and book arts, and photography with over 175 objects drawn from public and private collections and over 130 reproduced graphics. Curators for the exhibition are Lawrence Kreisman, Hon. AIA Seattle, Program Director of Historic Seattle and Glenn Mason, co-owner of Cultural Images, a museum and historical society consulting firm.

The Pacific Northwest was active in disseminating information on the Arts and Crafts movement, displaying the most important producers of work in America at its fairs and in its art galleries, and advertising and selling these wares in its shops and department stores. A vibrant arts community banded together to support one another, to

learn the latest methods of working in clay, metal, glass, and wood, and to produce work that was often comparable to

the better known work of East and Midwest and California craftspeople. School children were brought up with a respect for handwork and with skills that would serve them well in building homes, making furniture, shaping metal work, doing embroidery, china painting, jewelry, and basketry—"beautiful necessities." Ultimately, their view of the world changed as they became more attuned to the value of harmony, balance, color, and proportion in shaping a supportive environment.

The Arts & Crafts Movement in the Pacific Northwest is based on the book of the same title by Kreisman and Mason (Timber Press, Portland, 2007), hailed by Professor of Architecture and author Leland Roth at the University of Oregon as shining "a revealing light on the history and the ethos of sustainability of the Pacific Northwest."



—continued on page 6

Our Fireside Room vendors include:

Craftsman Wooden Lite Company—Building cabinets, furniture and and lighting fixtures for over 25 years.

Dard Hunter Studios—Always a favorite at our show, Dard brings a wonderful array of items based on his grandfather's designs, from jewelry, tiles, cards and mottos to chinaware and doormats.

Diverse Ayres Fine Art—Vintage prints and paintings.

Dry Creek Art Press—Original woodblock prints by Leon Loughridge.

Laura Wilder Artwork—Beautiful prints by one of the premiere artists working in the A&C style.

North Prairie Tileworks—Minnesota's exclusive custom tile crafter, Specializing in creating ceramic tile for designers, architects and homeowners.

Phoenix Window Restoration—The restoration solution to your old house's window problems. Refurbish, don't replace.

Thunderbird Design—A full service landscaping company located in Denver, owner Chad Brunette understands Arts and Crafts gardens and the unique qualities of Colorado gardening.


2R Fine Arts/Roycroft Associates—Author, lecturer, dealer in Arts and Crafts era decorative arts, Robert Rust will bring out books and prints for sale from his extensive collection.

The book explores the ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement within a theme of regional identity, which found fertile ground in Washington and Oregon. Both states participated actively in the national Arts and Crafts Movement encouraged by exposure at two world's fairs that put the Pacific Northwest on the national and international map, Portland's Lewis & Clark Centennial Exposition (1905) and Seattle's Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition (1909).

There were significant contributions to a broad range of architecture and design arts, some of the most successful strongly influenced by the remarkable setting, climate, local raw materials, crafts of native inhabitants, and exposure to Pacific Rim cultures.




This groundbreaking exhibition, will travel to the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture in Spokane, the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma, and the Whatcom Museum in Bellingham after its run is completed on January 18, 2010. Partial funding for the exhibition comes from 4Culture, Seattle Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs and ArtsFund.





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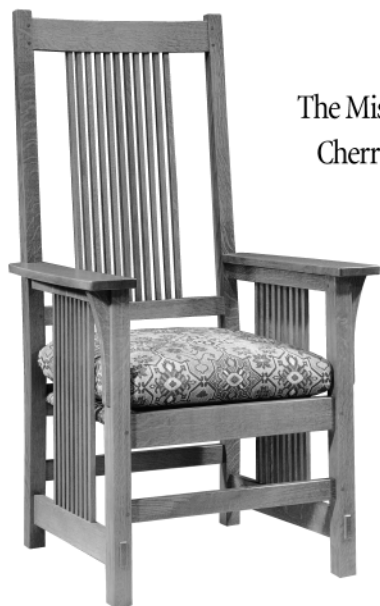
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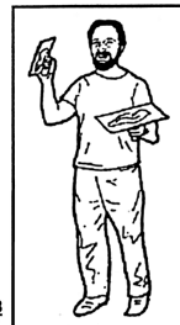
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