2026 JANUARY
Monthly Newsletter

OTTAWA GUILD OF POTTERS

Fired Up!

Next Meeting: January 14, 2026
Time: 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm
Location: Virtual via Zoom

President's Message

Happy New Year. I hope you had a wonderful holiday season with family and friends and were able to recharge your batteries both physically and creatively. Tis the season of skiing, snowshoeing, skating and walks in the woods. Were you able to indulge your other artistic endeavours - Painting, crocheting, photography or woodworking?

Welcome new members.

2026 is chocked full of opportunities to learn and do. The Programming Committee and Exhibition Committee have been busy. Come and learn with West Coasts' Sarah Pike who will be demonstrating her rhythmic stamped surface techniques. Lunenburg Nova Scotia's Joan Bruneau will be giving a workshop on her unique forms and beautiful surface decoration. The Ottawa Guild of Potters has two opportunities to participate in exhibitions. Celebrating Clay and the Annual Juried Exhibition that is part of the Ottawa Clay Festival and Spring Sale. Let's not forget a Raku firing later in the spring.

The OGP January and February General meetings will be Zoom meetings. This year we are trying something new. Our virtual meeting will be held on WEDNESDAYS. Join us on January 14th for a presentation from local social media influencer Andrew Szeto. On February 11th come and take a tour of Marie Drolet's Murai Ceramique Studio.

Congratulations to all who participated in the Holiday Sale. Thank you to all those that volunteered as well.

See you Wednesday January 14th at 6:30 on Zoom.

by Liz Fournier

SALE COMMITTEE

Each year, the Holiday Sale draws a wide and enthusiastic audience looking for meaningful, handmade gifts. You did not disappoint. Your creativity and craftsmanship were outstanding. It's inspiring to see such a diverse range of styles and techniques come together under one roof.

Here are a few Statistics for you:

Total Sales $198,201.00
Number of Potters 60
Total Number of Customers (Sales) 2,371
Total Number of Items Sold 6,217

An event of this scale is only possible because of the generosity and dedication of our members. Whether you were a sale participant, a volunteer, or helping spread the word, your support is deeply appreciated. The Holiday Sale not only promotes our artists but also strengthens our connection with the broader community.
We experimented with extended hours on Saturday night. It was a very busy night with excellent sale numbers.

A heartfelt thank-you to Nancy Riggs, Lisa Butler, and the entire Communications Team for their outstanding work promoting the Holiday Sale across social media platforms. Your creative posts helped spread the word far and wide. We appreciate all the time and effort you put into showcasing our Guild and its talented members.

Sincere thanks to Jocelyn Jenkins and the members of the Standards and Education Committee for their continued dedication to keeping our standards high. Your careful review, and commitment to education help ensure excellence across all aspects of our Guild.

Thank you to those members that volunteered their time to take a shift or two at the Sale and to those members that came to the Sale. Your support is appreciated.

A big thank-you to Erin Ryan Morgan, Ileana Tierney, Jane Bryttan, and Sue Ann Blakely for their tremendous work on the Holiday Sale. Creating the floor plan, coordinating the shift schedule, and organizing the job list are no small tasks. We truly appreciate your hard work and dedication.

Thank you,
Liz Fournier

Membership Committee Report

I'm pleased to announce that we now have 178 paid members! Please welcome three new members who joined us in December.

Jennifer Luck
Hintonburg Pottery
Stephanie Signorile

by Carol Holmes-Kerr

Activities & Programs

UPCOMING MEETING ACTIVITIES

You may have heard that we're meeting on Wednesday evenings in both January and February! We're taking advantage of the flexibility of holding virtual meetings to change the day of the week so that members who have ongoing Tuesday evening conflicts can participate.

Wednesday, January 14: It's our own Influencer Masterclass! Join Andrew Szeto – Ottawa influencer and business owner – for insights on how to use social media to support your pottery goals. Andrew will provide highly engaging stories and tips on creating content, helpful features of Instagram/Facebook, how to find/connect with followers and how to leverage the Guild's social media posts to expand your reach. Watch the GuildForum for the Zoom link!

Wednesday, February 11: Murai Ceramique studio tour!!! No need to leave your cozy home to visit the creative, beautiful space of Muraï Céramique in the glorious Gatineau hills. Join Marie Drolet as she shows us her space and talks about the activities she organizes at her studio. The link to join the Zoom meeting will be provided through the GuildForum in early February.

Tuesday, March 10: Artist statement "speed dating". Whirlwind, interactive workshop on honing your artist statement. Great prep for the upcoming Exhibition and to up your ceramics cred. This will be the return to Tuesday evening, in-person meetings.

Tuesday, April 14: The power of templates! Hands-on activity to hand build a vessel. Bring a friend! This is a fun activity and it's open to everyone. Will also learn about how to make templates and a brief exploration of the materials that can be used (tar paper, craft foam, cricut, etc).

cont'd

Activities & Programs

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

Sarah Pike: March 3rd – demonstration

(registration will open soon!)

That's right, Sarah Pike is coming to Ottawa and will spend a day with OGP and LOAM Clay Studio members! She will give a demonstration at LOAM Clay Studio of her techniques and tips on technical features of her pots.

For those who might be interested in doing a hands-on workshop with Sarah, she will be giving a two day workshop at Gloucester Pottery Studio on March 4 & 5, so keep an eye on their workshop page. I've been assured that the workshop is open to everyone.

Joan Bruneau: March 28 & 29 – Throwing and altering workshop

(registration will open in mid-February)

Renowned, award winning Canadian potter Joan Bruneau of Nova Terra Cotta Studio in Lunenberg, Nova Scotia is coming to Ottawa to give a two-day workshop on altering thrown forms.

Joan is a very popular presenter so this will be an excellent experience to build and enhance your skills. Over two days Joan will provide guidance on throwing and altering forms as well as slip application in surface decoration. This workshop is for potters who are at the intermediate or advanced stage at the wheel.

I'm very interested in your ongoing feedback and ideas – you can reach me at activity@ottawaguildofpotters.ca.

by Carmen Gervais

Follow us on social media, and tag us @ottawapotters:
Instagram @ottawapotters
Facebook @ottawaguildofpotters

Happy New Year potters, wishing you a creative 2026!
What a Holiday Sale that was!

Record-breaking in many ways, with so much amazing work from so many potters. It was great to have so many new participants, the pottery scene in Ottawa is exciting!

January is a quieter month for us, so it's a great time to focus on planning for upcoming events. We work closely with our Sales, Programming, Exhibition and other committees to support their promotional and event needs. We also aim to keep our Guild visible and engaged on social media.

Looking back at our Holiday Sale promotion–
December gave our social media a nice little glow-up. Thanks to the Holiday Sale buzz, our Insta picked up new followers and our posts (especially sale highlights) got more love than usual. Facebook also got extra reactions and comments as members and shoppers shared the sale anticipation. All in all, December socials had great energy and strong community engagement — thanks for helping make it happen!
Next up will be Great Bowls of Fire, our popular fundraiser for the Ottawa Food Bank, and an exciting exhibition opportunity, both coming in March.

Instagram Collaborations– try it!

We love collaborating with our members on Instagram to share what you're up to. If you have works in progress, behind-the-scenes moments, or an interesting post, let's collaborate.

It's easy– when you create a post or reel, tap "Tag people," choose "Invite collaborator" and search @ottawapotters. Once we accept, your post will appear on both profiles, helping your work reach a wider audience.

Nancy Riggs, Lisa Butler, Dawn McLeod, and Kyla Tyson

Guild member Jordan Danger has been included in Connect Online, the virtual juried exhibition from Fusion Clay & Glass. Look for her piece, "Letting the inside Out", on their online gallery. Link: clayandglass.on.ca/connectonline2026

Jordan Danger is also teaching a class at the Almonte Potter's Guild this February: Advancing your Pottery Through Design Development! This course is geared towards seasoned potters with at least two years experience, who are looking to take their creations to the next level. This seven week program guides you through ideas, sketching, 'wet sketching', drafts/prototypes, and completion of design...all in a way that will help you find your most creative ideas yet. Jordan has over a decade of clay experience, another decade of experience as a Creative Director in design teams, and recently graduated from Haliburton's full time Ceramics program. A great course to help you progress and get off your plateau! Link: classes.almontepottersguild.com

submitted by Jordan Danger
www.DangerCreative.com

Exhibitions Committee

Celebrating Clay: Vases and Flower Vessels- March 2026
Celebrating Clay in March will be in person! We are so excited to be partnering with Scrim's Florist, located in downtown Ottawa on the corner of Elgin and Somerset. The theme of this exhibition is Vases and Flower Vessels. We are currently finalizing details with Scrim's as we prepare for this opportunity, but we are looking at hosting the exhibition the last two weeks of March, complete with an opening reception. Applications will open at the end of January and beginning of February. As we will incur some costs to run the exhibition, we will be charging a small submission fee to cover those costs. We will send out a GuildForum notice and social media posts when applications launch, with more information about the fee. Scrim's has space for roughly 20 pieces, so unlike previous Celebrating Clay exhibitions, the Exhibition's Committee, along with Scrim's will be curating the exhibition and may have to reject some pieces.

Scrim's is also enthusiastically offering some exciting opportunities, like the option to show your vase with a floral arrangement price at cost, and a prize for the "Scrim's Choice: Best Vase"!
As a thanks to our wonderful partner, please show them some love by following them on social media. @scrimsflorist

Annual Juried Exhibition:
Begin thinking about your pieces for the Annual Juried Exhibition! The exhibition will be held from May 1-3rd, and applications open mid-April. Our juror this year is Mat Karas, a ceramic artist and Assistant Professor from Concordia University. Happy making!

If you have any questions, please email us at exhibitions@ottawaguildofpotters.ca

Exhibitions Committee

A warm welcome to the Guild's potters,

I am Matt Miwa, a team member from Scrim's Florist and our shop's lead organizer for the upcoming Guild show Celebrating Clay, Vases and Flower Vessels. The Scrim's team was absolutely thrilled when Joanna asked us to host OGP's first in-person exhibition since the pandemic!

We see ourselves as the little shop that can, we treasure our unique space, and we have recently taken steps to open Scrim's to more events and community gatherings. Located at the corner of Elgin and Somerset, one of downtown's busiest intersections, our shop is flush with foot traffic, window shoppers and warmly welcomes a community of neighbours, tourists, and any plant, floral and ceramic enthusiast.

If you've never visited Scrim's, we are a beautiful, expansive aquarium, thanks to our floor to ceiling windows, and we are so lucky to boast such a large and transformable space. Our shop's jungle atmosphere, with plants of every shape and size poking out from every corner transforms easily into sleek and elegant gallery space, with display options perfect for every kind of pot, vase, or ceramic piece.

Above and beyond a simple flower shop, Scrim's endeavours to be a place of Energy, Hospitality and Occasion, and Celebrating Clay, Vases and Flower Vessels is a perfect fit for our dynamic space. With your participation, we're looking to have a lot of fun, make a splash on Elgin, but most importantly, we're hoping to spark new relationships and build new networks and communities. We can't do it without you, so please join us for a wonderful, new experience, where we very much look forward to supporting you, as artists, and as new friends.

Always on the Up and Up, and on the Go, the Scrim's team is committed to a robust promotional campaign, artistic support and of course, a beautiful vernissage reception. For participants, there will be more details to follow but we very much encourage you to visit the shop, meet the team, and better understand the potential for Celebrating Clay, Vases and Flower Vessels. For any interested potter, Scrim's will happily provide both floral and plant arrangements at cost to be featured in your vessels, and we will happily profile all participants on our social media.

Until we meet, happy throwing, coiling and pinching!

submitted by Matt Miwa and the team at Scrim's Florist

Standards Committee Report: Holiday Sale 2025 Review

Once again, the Standards and Education Committee welcomed a large number of new-to-sale potters to the December 12-14th sale at Lansdowne. While the 10 new potters were fewer than the 13 welcomed to 2024's Holiday Sale, the quality and variety of work shown was a great addition to the sale. By and large all new potters showed up at the sale well-prepared to carry out their responsibilities. There were a few exceptions.

All of the 10 new-to-sale potters attended meetings at my home except one potter whom I met with at a sale in the Glebe. The meetings at my home were attended by several members from the Standards committee in addition to me. Liz Fournier also attended for the Sale committee. The meetings ran for several hours each and both meetings saw lively discussion and lots of questions.

The Standards committee (Rachel, Marianna, Lucie, Julie and Jocelyn), with the help of Colette Beardall and new-to-sale member Zohra Mahomed did the presale inspection. The big issues this sale related to glaze quality. Standards will try to address some of these issues in articles for the newsletter. Look for an article on using liner glazes next month! There were several cases of crazing on the inside of cone 6 pots. That feels like another article in the offing! Standards would also like to look into the matter of providing better information at sales to explain the differences between different firing methods.

The use of underglaze transfers and decals was another issue that came up around the sale this year. We already have guidelines relating to the use of molds: molds that we make ourselves are acceptable; unaltered, commercial molds are not. We are thinking of making similar guidelines for decals and transfers. At present we are thinking of two criteria. First the decal should be well-integrated into the work and second that it should be value added. We will be looking for "original" uses of these materials. At present, this issue is open for discussion. Let us know how you feel!

I hope the new year is off to a great start for everyone!

by Jocelyn Jenkins