

BETTY WOODMAN at the MET

by Hedy O'Beil

The modest vase, yet historically not so modest vase, is the single focus of the ceramic sculptor, Betty Woodman as seen in her show at the Metropolitan Museum. There has been more press about this exhibition which will run through July 30, 2006 than I can remember seeing, and well deserved.

Betty Woodman, who does not like to be referred to as a "ceramic" artist has worked in clay all her long life. She was born in 1930 in Norwalk, Connecticut. In High School she attended a pottery class and was hooked for life.

Mostly, she works on a potter's wheel shaping objects into endlessly unique, innovative forms that are glazed in brilliant joyous splashes of colors. When needed, she cuts shapes from flat rolled out clay, a little like making cookies. But this is no kitchen cookie cutter lady.

Woodman has looked intently into art history, studying the magnificent vessels made in ancient times. She has been inspired by Minoan, Mycenaean, Egyptian, Greek, as well as Asian art. It's all there in her work, the exuberance of Minoan flower forms, the black drawn lines of Japanese women in their kimonos, the construction of many vases into a monumental shape called, "Aeolian Pyramid."

At the core of her exhibition is the non-stop activity of Woodman's creative expression where a vase handle becomes a giant curlicue with its own glazed shadow. Brightly painted and striped cut out shapes are given a place on the wall surrounding a vase put on a ceramic shelf. In her hands, the simple vase has become a monumental art form that appears to grow organically filling the gallery with vitality, pleasure and awe.

There is no stopping Betty Woodman. The viewer can only stand in the gallery in amazement trying to take it all in.

INTERCHURCH ANYONE?

Interchurch Center Gallery is seeking theme shows. Five or six members should get together as "ARTIST OF ASCA" and organize their own show. You could assemble about five or six entries each. You must prepare your own proposal. Send the proposal and slides (or photos) of your work to Ms. Dorothy Cochran, Interchurch Center Gallery, 474 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115. Ms. Cochran will curate your slides and make her selection for a show. This is the only way to get a show at Interchurch. For more information contact Ms. Harriet FeBland, 245 East 63rd Street, Apt.1803, New York, NY 10021, or phone 212-759-2215.

THE SHAPE WE'RE IN

There's nothing whatever that matter with me
I'm just as healthy as I can be.
I have arthritis in both my knees
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.
My pulse is weak, and my blood is thin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

I think my liver is out of whack
And a terrible pain is in my back.
My hearing's poor, my sight is dim,
Most everything seems to be out of trim.
My doctor says my days are few
For every week there's something new.
The way I stagger sure is a crime
I'm likely to drop at any time.
I jump like mad at the fall of a pin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

Arch supports I have for my feet
Or I wouldn't be able to go on the street.
Sleep is denied to me night after night
So every morning I am a sight.
My memory's failing, my head's in a spin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

The moral is, as this tale we unfold,
That for you, and for me, we are growing old.
It's better to say --I'm fine with a grin
Than to let 'em know the shape we're in!

ANONYMOUS

MEMBERS RECENT SHOWS

GINNY ROGERS – John Slade Ely House, New Haven, Conn. Connecticut Women Artist, "77th Annual Open Juried Exhibition," May 7 to 28 2006. – ALSO – Playhouse on the Green Art Gallery, Bridgeport, Conn. "Portfolio," work of four artists, May 2 to August 15, 2006

LAWRENCE ALBUM – Bulter Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio, 70th National Midyear Exhibition, "Two Figurers," July 10 to August 27, 2006.

MEMBERS' OTHER NEWS

DECEASED

Isabel Folb Sokolow (died May 19, 2006)
Rowena Mae Leod (died in January 2005)
Cindy Creamer

CORRECTED E-mail addresses

Estelle Levy-art@whistlersheart.com
Joanne B. Ruggles - jruggles@calpoly.edu

NEW ADDRESSES & PHONES

Joseph V. Lubrano - 5170 Maris Ave., Apt. 200; Alexandria, VA 22304; 718-548-6790
Jami Taback - 75-25 153 St., Apt. 541 Kew Gardens Hills, NY 11367; (718) 380-0094.