



and to honour the skill of generations of nameless workers, the evidence of which remains potentially visible in the objects they made.

Brownsword's work has attracted international attention and a three-month residency at the European Ceramic Work Centre in s'Herogenbosch in Holland enabled him to find a new direction. While the exhibition contained examples of his figurative work from 1998-99 (useful as a reference point, as were his selected examples of Coalport), it was the work produced as a result of the residency, and in particular that produced in response to the Shrewsbury collection, that proved to be of the most interest.

While some artists might have chosen to express themselves through didactic or polemical works, Brownsword chose instead to present assemblages of objects that recall a lost, now almost mythic, past. Low plinths contained meticulously arranged fragments of varied scale, form, and finish, some abstract (similar to the elements in his earlier Salvages' series that also contained found objects) some almost figurative, resembling soft toys or anatomical parts. The Shrewsbury series produced a powerful poetic resonance, silently elegiac, like some future archaeological investigation into the traces of an unknown civilization. This is work that transcends its disputed art/craft boundary with great assurance and success.

Richard Noyce



JEAN-PAUL LANDREAU
OPEN EYE GALLERY,
EDINBURGH
SEPTEMBER 1-19

Jean-Paul Landreau's ceramics reflect the same vibrant atmosphere that pervades Edinburgh during these summer Festival months: colourful, theatrical and fun. Exhibited are a range of slip-decorated and painted earthenware forms: plates, bowls, coffee pots, vases and two decorated table tops. Each form is a canvas for a layering of colour, abstract shapes and drawn figurative imagery.

Landreau successfully creates a depth and an energy in his surface decoration. This is achieved through the compositional relationships of the different tones, colours and mark-making that comprise the total image. In the large platter 'visage et l'oiseau' (above) a rich wash of underglaze colours create a deep moody background tone. Upon this are placed vibrant solid shapes of colour, a bright orange spiral, a yellow triangle, a red cross, a star. Over these dynamic shapes are drawn a bird and a face using a graffiti technique. The simple sgraffito lines flow with a confidence and vitality, animating the layers of surface colour beneath.

It is a pity that the gallery was not able to display the work together. The ceramics are scattered around different corners of the two rooms, isolated amongst the paintings on the wall.

Displayed in more space and in sensitive groupings, the work

would have even more impact.

Landreau's ceramics demonstrate a skill and enjoyment for the tremendous palette of colour, surface quality and mark-making that ceramic can offer, but is so often avoided by potters. Both decorative and practical, his ceramics exude freshness and excitement.

Sarah-Jane Selwood

JITKA PALMER
WHITE GALLERY,
BRIGHTON
SEPTEMBER 2 - OCTOBER 28

Jitka Palmer's large shapes are amorphous but her paintings, in slip on earthenware, are engrossing enough for this not to matter. They are brought to life by the tension she has created between the private inner lives of the vessels and the scenes on show to the outside world. One might imagine that these are gratuitous 'paintings on pots'. Far from it; they are as much about containment - of narrative, of emotion, of reality - as they are about the public and private worlds they describe. In 'Celebration' the baby receives a cake, on the inside there is serious drinking going on, adult undercurrents to the event. In 'Florence', the outer surface shows the inspirational art of the trip, and inside we glimpse the artist, alone, writing postcards home.

The narratives are all taken from personal experience, and the skilfully painted faces and expressions give the characters credence. My favourite was



'Sisters', generous and loving on the outside, bitchy and quarrelsome on the inside.

Several pieces are about the gathering of food; 'Mushroom Picking', 'Orchard', I and II, and 'Allotment'. These show harvest as a social activity as well as part of a natural life-cycle. Hard work is depicted on the outside while the fruits of the labour are on the inside, bowls of strawberries, pears and plums, reflecting the domestic use of these forms (interestingly the television chef Gary Rhodes bought three works at the private view).

I had seen her pots before, at Chelsea Crafts last year, cramped together on shelves. Here the bright space of the White Gallery gives them room to breath. Ideally you need to be able to walk all the way round, and to see inside, a challenge for the exhibitor, which has been at least partially successful here.

On one piece an orchestra plays on the outside. A glimpse inside the pot reveals the choir singing Mozart's Requiem 'unsettledly'. You can almost feel the thinly coiled shape ringing.

Katy Bevan

LEFT TO RIGHT: Alan Caiger-Smith - Bowl; Charlotte Hodes - Gingham, New Strawberry, Italian Blue, 2001. Installation, 34 pieces, Spode China; Neil Brownsword - 'SY 0757', 'SY 0592', 'SY 0761', 2001 (Ceramic assemblages); Jean-Paul Landreau - Large platter, 'Visage et l'oiseau'; Jitka Palmer - Orchard II.