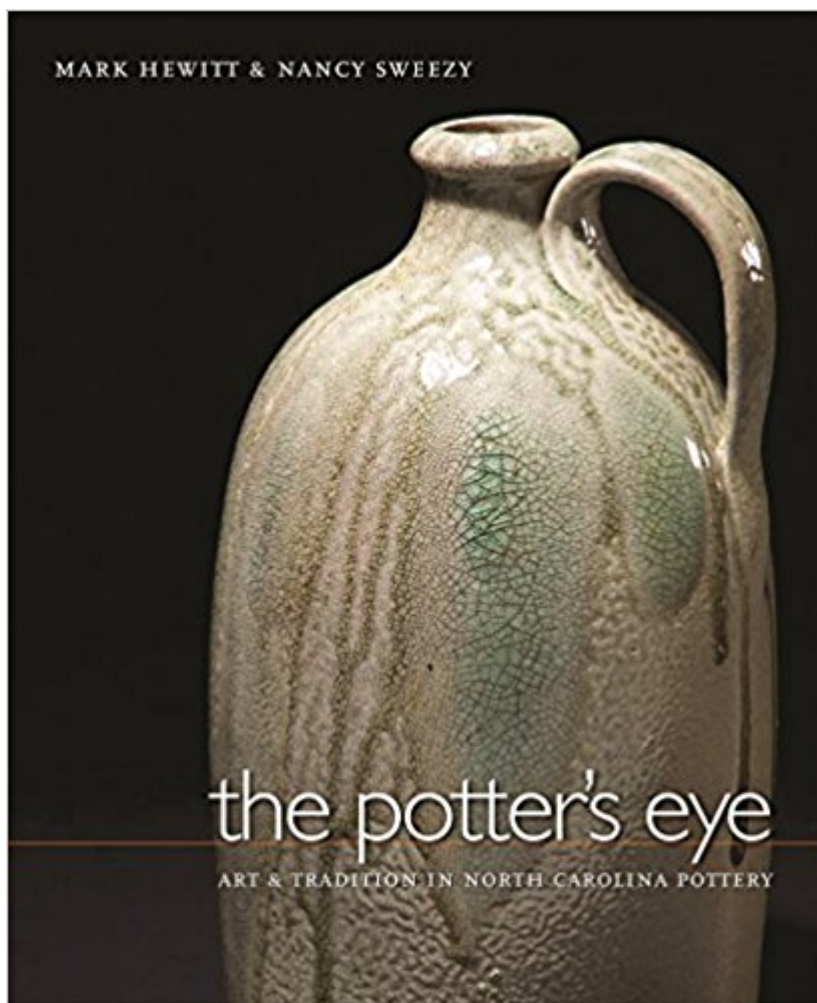


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# The Potter's Eye: Art And Tradition In North Carolina Pottery



## Synopsis

Classic North Carolina stoneware pots--with their rich textures, monochromatic glazes, and minimal decoration--belong to one of America's most revered stoneware pottery traditions. In a lavishly illustrated celebration of that tradition, Mark Hewitt and Nancy Sweezy trace the history of North Carolina pottery from the nineteenth century to the present day. They demonstrate the intriguing historic and aesthetic relationships that link pots produced in North Carolina to pottery traditions in Europe and Asia, in New England, and in the neighboring state of South Carolina. With hundreds of color photographs highlighting the shapes and surfaces of carefully selected pots, *The Potter's Eye* honors the keen focus vernacular potters bring to their materials, tools, techniques, and history. It is an evocative guide for anyone interested in the art of North Carolina pottery and the aesthetic majesty of this resilient and long-standing tradition.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 296 pages

Publisher: The University of North Carolina Press; First Edition edition (October 31, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0807829927

ISBN-13: 978-0807829929

Product Dimensions: 9.3 x 1.2 x 11.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #557,877 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #120 in Books > Arts &

Photography > Other Media > Ceramics #205 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Crafts &

Hobbies > Pottery & Ceramics #999 in Books > Arts & Photography > Collections, Catalogs &

Exhibitions

## Customer Reviews

"More than an exhibition catalog; it is a collaborative work of art." -- "Western Folklore"  
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"This exciting work succeeds in its mission to 'signal and celebrate the artistry of North Carolina's greatest production potters,' but this work has accomplished much more--it has challenged and tutored scholars and collectors to view the stoneware of North Carolina with a 'potter's eye'." -- "Journal of Folklore Research"

Mark Hewitt and Nancy Sweezy's *The Potter's Eye* is a lavish tour of 19th-century North Carolina stoneware, with both historical comparisons and contemporary work based in the tradition. . . . It is the quality and breadth of Mark Hewitt's eye--how he has assembled and illuminated these great old pots--that makes *The Potter's Eye* an essential book for anyone who cares about the history of clay. The vitality of the work of the contemporary potters, and Nancy Sweezy's expert capturing of their voices, make it equally valuable for readers interested in the synthesis of tradition by craftspeople today.--American Craft

More than an exhibition catalog; it is a collaborative work of art.--Western Folklore

Exquisitely illustrated. . . . [with] incredibly detailed surface shots.--Ceramics Monthly

[Hewitt's] critical evaluation eloquently makes a link between the very old and the new and in doing so rejuvenates our 'eye' and inspires us to view the work of the North Carolina stoneware tradition in a new light. . . . Hewitt introduces the reader to a new vocabulary of expression and technical insight, a grounding which well prepares and informs our senses for the Nancy Sweezy interviews with six contemporary North Carolina potters who continue to turn and burn. . . . The many powerful, full page, color photographs of the exhibits taken by Jason Dowdle . . . immediately grasp our attention.--The Log Book

I have great respect for Mark Hewitt and Nancy Sweezy. I deeply appreciate what they are doing, and that their writing is based on wide personal experience, profound insight, and wisdom.--Gerry Williams, Studio Potter Organization

Perry and her coterie of authors provide expert introductions to the state's pottery as a whole and to the significant benchmarks of its cultural history. . . . Jason Dowdle created special photography for *The Potter's Eye* that examines the form and surfaces of each pot in ways not previously expressed in books on ceramics history. This volume is worth owning for its visual beauty alone.--Winterthur Portfolio

Returning to the roots of the North Carolina tradition, *The Potter's Eye* focuses on the 'classic' pots from nineteenth-century and contemporary potters, adding intriguing historical and aesthetic comparisons to work from Asia, the northeastern United States, and South Carolina. The grouping of pots is original and well thought out. Hewitt develops several themes with particular energy--the use of local materials and wood firing, the influence of Asia, and the power of tradition--all of which are crystallized in Sweezy's superb interviews with the potters themselves.--Charles G. Zug III, author of *Turners and Burners: The Folk Potters of North Carolina*

A handsome heavy book, thanks largely to Jason Dowdle's gorgeous photographs. . . . The writing is poetic, persuasive, and at times, almost polemical.--North Carolina Historical Review

This exciting work succeeds in its mission to 'signal and celebrate the artistry of North Carolina's greatest production potters,' but this work has accomplished much more--it has challenged and tutored scholars and collectors to view the stoneware of North Carolina with a potter's eye.--Journal of

Folklore Research A lavishly illustrated celebration of [the stoneware pottery] tradition. . . . The Potter's Eye honors the keen focus vernacular potters bring to their materials, tools, techniques, and history. It is an evocative guide for anyone interested in the art of North Carolina pottery and the aesthetic majesty of this resilient and long-standing tradition.--New England Antiques Journal [Hewitt and Sweezy] are just nutty about North Carolina stoneware: salt- and alkaline-glazed surfaces, poetic shapes, regional clays, Asian influences. [In The Potter's Eye] the language of pottery is a language of love: pots are 'taut-bellied' and 'pregnant,' 'blistered' and 'scarred.' . . . The sensual prose makes it enjoyable and informative. . . . The Potter's Eye does what any good tour guide should do: gently compels you to look and look again, focusing on the nifty details.--Oxford American

Wonderful information and resources for anyone who collects or enjoys Southern pottery, especially pieces from North Carolina. Great Reference Book if you attend auctions and estate sales.

Great book for the history of traditional pottery in North Carolina. Photos are terrific. Mark Hewitt compiled a wonderful tool for the collector and for the student of N C Pottery.

The Potter's Eye was an exhibit at the N.C. Museum of Art. This companion book manages to capture the exhibit. Mark Hewitt's and Nancy Sweezy's words illustrate the pots almost as well as the photos. This is a book I return to time and again for inspiration.

Great book!

A fine book with essays and some 90 photos with commentary on pieces shown in the NC Art Museum's early 2006 exhibit. But if you are not familiar with pottery and potting be sure to read at least the first dozen or so comments on the individual pottery pieces - some important descriptions and definitions are provided of the various kinds of kilns, pottery designs and styles. Otherwise you may be baffled by the name and term dropping later in the book. A book I will revisit often. The photographs are superb and the essays are insightful. I especially liked the discussions by potter and exhibit curator Mark Hewitt on the interplay of tradition and contemporary work: "a delightful syncopation of perception and expression, nudging the old world into the present...tradition is a mirror, reflecting who we are and how we measure up. It is the voice of our pottery forebears, encouraging, revealing, holding our feet to the fire. Tradition is one of the voices of the divine."

The Potter's Eye by Mark Hewitt and Nancy Sweezy is a must for lover's of North Carolina pottery. Organized in a logical way, the book offers a wonderful review of the stoneware tradition still alive in North Carolina. The book connects the North Carolina tradition of pottery making with traditions in Europe, Asia, and other states in the U. S. Lavishly photographed with rich details, The Potter's Eye is sure to impress. Perhaps the best part of the book are the interviews included with modern potters: Kim Ellington, Mark Hewitt, Ben Owen III, Pam Owens, Vernon Owens, and David Stuempfle. Legends in their own time. The Potter's Eye is not a coffee table book. It will become an integral part of your library as soon as you receive it. Peace

You spend your whole life being told to look for pottery from you GG Grandfather (Thomas Chandler). That he was a potter, or he made pots, but to find out just how good is really was was humbling. The images in the book are amazing. I have been a photographer my whole life and this book really captures the essence of the the pottery. It was nice to see someone actually take the time to photograph the pottery with good composition and great lighting. Thank you for revealing my families cherished past.

An absolute gem of a book; clear, comprehensive, and beautifully illustrated.

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