

Kamaka Pottery

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ANAGAMA

These pots were made by either Estelle or Bruce Martin and are unique in New Zealand. They are fired in a large, modern day anagama kiln in the traditional manner of ancient times.

Anagama is a Japanese word, 'ana' meaning hole or cave and 'gama' meaning kiln. The original anagama were built directly into clay hill sides as an upward sloping tunnel. First developed in Korea about the 4th century A.D. they were used in Japan from about the 6th through to the 14th century. Traditionally fired with pine wood for an extended time (8-16 days) to produce a very high temperature. The resulting pots were marvellously coloured by the flame, ash from the wood, and the smoke from this long firing. Many fine examples from the 12th-16th century still exist in Japanese museums and collections despite having been through long burial in the ground - a testimony to the strength and durability of anagama pottery.

After seeing the pots from a modern day Japanese anagama at Sanyo Fujii's pottery in 1978 we resolved to build such a kiln in New Zealand. Our attraction to anagama pots was immense so that all obstacles were overcome to build one. The Kamaka anagama is approximately 500 cubic feet and is fired only once each year for nine to ten days. We use approximately 25 tonnes of split pine wood during this time with two teams of stokers working 12 hour shifts. The fire is re-stoked every 5-7 minutes on average, and each time another bundle of wood is put into the kiln it disturbs the ash which is carried through the large single chamber by the natural draft to be deposited time after time onto the pots. In this way the pots that were put into the kiln 'raw' or unglazed develop their colour and glaze-like coatings.

Following our first firing of the Kamaka anagama we returned to Japan in 1982. During 1983 Mr Sanyo Fujii, a master Japanese potter, stayed with us for seven months and participated in our second firing. The pots made for the 1983 firing were based on the traditional Japanese utensils used in the tea ceremony. A selection of these pieces were shown at a joint exhibition with Mr Fujii at the Mitsukoshi Gallery of Fine Art in Osaka in 1984.

Since 1984 we have continued to explore traditional forms and to develop our interest in ikebana containers. The natural colours of anagama pottery blend with and enhance the colours of nature in a way that cannot be achieved with any other type of firing.

Kamaka anagama pottery is available from our workshop gallery and from some of the major NZ Craft Shows.

1986 Merit Award Bruce Martin - Fletcher Brownbuilt

1987 Merit Award Bruce Martin - Fletcher Brownbuilt

1988 Merit Award Estelle Martin - Norsewear Art Award

1990 Merit Award Estelle Martin - Norsewear Art Award

1990 Principal Award Bruce Martin - United Group/Suter Art Awards



ANAGAMA POTS BY ESTELLE AND BRUCE MARTIN

ANAGAMA

The power of flame acting directly with the clay - the wood fuel showering ash and burnishing the surfaces with colour. Time and endless falls of ash (around 2,000) enrich the surfaces so the pottery comes from the kiln alive with colour. The great heat has vitrified the clay into permanency. This traditional kiln was used firstly in Korea about the fourth century. Korean potters built anagamas in Japan and the style of pottery was further developed by longer and hotter firings.

Through our association with master potter Sanyo Fujii we have retained our interest in traditional pots - using Iga, Shigaraki and Bizen wares as a base. The pots fired in Japanese kilns are used for the Tea Ceremony - the fresh water jars, incense boxes, flower containers and platters for serving food.

A great deal of vitality and energy is needed and expended to make the pots for and to fire such a large kiln. Our enthusiasm still remains for these pots but age is now the factor which has made us decide that we can no longer safely take of the long firings of between 8 and 10 days duration.

The nine years that we fired our anagama have been rich in experience. For New Zealanders, it has taken some time for an appreciation of the surfaces and the rougher textures to be accepted. We have found that after a number of viewings, many become appreciative and become as enthusiastic as we are. It does take some time to 'see' and it is a challenge to Western style with the smooth surfaces and decoration.

From the 1000 or so pots in each firing there is a huge variety of surfaces and colour. Depending on the iron content of the clay or the placement in the kiln, an individual response is achieved on each pot. Those around the fire grate are coated with wood coals and lashings of ash. The first two stacks also receive generous coatings of ash. Under the side stoking ports another effect is produced. And high iron bearing clays respond to the flame and smoke at the rear of the kiln.

NO	POTTER	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
1	Bruce	Fresh Water Jar Mizusashi "Summer Willow"	\$600
2	Bruce	Kogo "Pillar Stone"	\$250
3	Estelle	Jar Busy at work	\$175
4	Estelle	Bamboo "Nothing grows here"	\$500
5	Bruce	Platter on Trivet "The fading Light of the Setting Sun"	\$850
6	Estelle	Mizusashi "Old Fire Grate"	\$700
7	Bruce	Shigaraki Tsubo "Behind the Reed Fence"	\$1200
8	Estelle	Cylinder "Lasting Passion"	\$500
9	Estelle	Platter "Rose"	\$175
10	Bruce	Kogo "Corner Stone"	\$120
11	Estelle	Bottle "Feather Cloak"	\$250
12	Bruce	Kakahana "Sweet Moment"	\$90

13	Estelle	Kakahana "Maybe"	\$90
14	Bruce	Tsubo "One Hundred Thoughts"	\$1500
15	Estelle	Hanaire "Guardian"	\$400
16	Bruce	Cylinder "Okarito"	\$600
17	Bruce	Platter "Kowhai"	\$300
18	Bruce	Box "Soaked Earth"	\$800
19	Estelle	Ring Bottle	\$300
20	Bruce	Boat "Tranquillity"	\$480
21	Estelle	Twig Pot "Pod"	\$500
22	Estelle	Vase "Against the Wind"	\$400
23	Estelle	Vase "Robe of Feathers"	\$500
24	Bruce	Bottle "Mountain Rain"	\$700
25	Bruce	Hexagonal Jar	\$750
26	Bruce	Fluted Dish "Autumn Serving"	\$175
27	Estelle	Dish "Flower"	\$275
28	Bruce	Bottle "Through the Silver Smoke"	\$500
29	Estelle	Mizusashi "As If in Dreams"	\$650
30	Bruce	Bowl "Float Bowl"	\$120
31	Bruce	Kogo "Houseboat"	\$90
32	Bruce	Jar	\$500
33	Estelle	Vase "To Catch an Arrow"	\$400
34	Estelle	Vase	\$150
35	Bruce	Plough "The earth's Turn"	\$560
36	Estelle	Bowl "Bell"	\$275
37	Estelle	Vase "Spring Shower"	\$500
38	Estelle	Teardrop Vase	\$275
39	Bruce	Boat "From Ancient Times"	\$560
40	Bruce	Tsubo "Shimmer of Light"	\$500
41	Estelle	Tsubo	\$350
42	Bruce	Boat Ikebana	\$250
43	Estelle	Hanaire "Autumn Fires"	\$300
44	Estelle	Vase "Night Shades"	\$600
45	Bruce	Hanaire "Silken Finery"	\$400
46	Estelle	Hanaire "Beneath the Pine"	\$400
47	Bruce	Tsubo "Sundown"	\$500
48	Estelle	A B C D E Single Flower Containers	each \$35
49	Bruce	Bottle "One Holey Bottle"	\$280
50	Bruce	Mizusashi "Beyond Knowledge"	\$650
51	Estelle	Bottle	\$400
52	Bruce	A B C D E Single Flower Containers	each \$35
53	Estelle	Hanaire "We found a Feather"	\$400
54	Estelle	Hanaire "Against the Tide"	\$400
55	Estelle	Bottle "Rivers End"	\$180
56	Estelle	Tsubo "Forest"	\$1200
57	Bruce	Platter Serving Dish	\$300
58	Bruce	Cylinder "To the Sun's Path"	\$450
59	Estelle	Ikebana	\$275
60	Bruce	Kakahana "Old Man Dreaming"	\$120

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