

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

GEORGE W. RIGHTMIRE, President

COLUMBUS

DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS

PAINTING

SCULPTURE

DESIGN

HISTORY OF THE ARTS

CERAMIC ARTS

TRAINING OF ART TEACHERS

Sunday, May 15, 1938.

Dear Linn:

I was more than a little pleased to get your report of work done and progress made and your personal reaction to the situation and its problems. I enjoyed your first report - last December - too and fully intended to write you about it at once. But somehow I deferred my answer from day to day until the stream of things flowing past left my good intention caught in an eddy where it has drifted around with other neglected duties ever since. Your second letter shows that you are the understanding sort of Chap I thought you were and have at least partly forgiven me without asking.

I think you have made a very good record of accomplishment and I am glad



that Miss Pearson and Miss Paddock  
are pleased with what you have done.  
I hope that sales outlets will be developed  
which will eventually get your product  
moving as fast as you can make it.  
Large financial profit is of course impossible  
in a small studio set-up of that kind  
but I feel sure it can be worked out  
so that it will furnish a reasonable  
compensation to talented, industrious producers.  
Fortunately, I think, you are not obsessed  
by the idea of making a lot of money,  
but are aware of the real compensation  
which exists in the opportunity to work  
sincerely and honestly and hard along creative  
lines in a medium which you like  
for its own sake. You could get—  
rich faster selling Fuller brushes or  
mining stocks but you would not  
have half as much fun.

I am glad, too, that you are enjoying  
the simple life of the little town and  
the surrounding country. Increasingly  
I have the feeling that life would be  
more meaningful if there were less pressure



of things to do for superficial entertainment and more time to think a little, read a lot, or maybe sometimes "just set".

I am glad your new kiln works well and that you have been able to adapt Glaze D and perhaps others so that they fall within the acceptable "native materials" category; I don't mean to ridicule the native materials idea at all. It is fine to experiment with them and use them in every possible way. But it would seem to me unwise to set a hard and fast rule that ~~nothing~~ barred out every glaze which did not contain the native rocks.

Do you have electric current in the Town at a reasonably low power rate? If so I wonder if Miss Pearson would be interested in a small electric kiln for tests and small pieces. We have been doing some experiments along that line which are promising although not completely worked out as yet. Another very good development in small electric kilns is being made at The Mass. Institute of Technology under Professor F. H. Norton.



In your effort to improve the working properties of your clay have you ever tried adding a little Bentonite? It might not help at all but you might try its effect if you have not already done so. American Colloid Co. 363 West Superior St. Chicago, Ill. sells a good grade of Bentonite under the trade name Volclay. It is a fine powder which absorbs a great deal of water and forms a sticky paste. When 2% to 5% of it is thoroughly mixed with a clay body it increases plasticity and gives the clay more stability in the soft plastic state. If a body is very short and easily develops cracks in the plastic state Bentonite may help.

I don't know whether or not we shall be in Marblehead this summer. If we come East, I shall hope to drive into your section some week end and see what you are doing. Spring and summer should be fine there and I hope you will continue to like the place and your work more and more. Give my greetings to Miss Pearson and Miss Paddock. And to yourself the best of luck - Sincerely yours Arthur E. Baggs.