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Take it a step further. At least one potter at the second annual Ceramics on the Edge show has heard this message.

Many of the 13 local participants now showing at the Doris Crowston Gallery at the Sunshine Coast Arts Centre in Sechelt took the meaning to heart and have taken several steps further to produce unique and challenging forms.

Take Jack Ploesser, for example. You may have a piece of Ploesser's functional pottery in your kitchen, but for this exhibition, Ploesser designed changes into his work making, his classic pitchers lean at a startling angle and creating a series of torsos in ceramic.

Vincent Massey, a fourth generation artist from off-Coast who specializes in traditional English and Japanese methods of making stoneware, juried the show. Massey confessed that Ploesser's work was among his favourites from the show.

Marilyn Butt, an emerging ceramic artist, also pushed a few boundaries to work obsessively with one form on which she experimented by altering the basic cylindrical vase shape. How far can a potter take a shape? Apparently in many directions — particularly by adding single or parallel rings. The result is fascinating to the eye.

Betty Keller, one of the show's organizers along with Heather Waddell, juxtaposes shapes in her ceramic lamp. The horizontal rectangular lampshade is offset by the vertical rectangular hand-built base where balance is achieved.

Outlandish shapes are the very juice of Susanne Biden's work. Her nine weird and multi-coloured pieces are like creatures that can be found at the sea floor or in the forest. One piece entitled A Sprouted Kernel looks like a macro chickpea with green shoots.

A new potter to the show, Pia Sillem, also works with macro versions of natural items as in her wall-mounted Nut Case, (a walnut shell?) and Barnacle, for example.

Other highlights include a magic pot by Liz de Beer and Waddell's whimsically titled pieces, particularly High Horse; a playful steed perched on cubes. Collaboration by Carlie Sanford and Timothy Niebergall features a meditative pair of hands that form a water fountain; the hands are set in an aqua bowl smoothed into a natural spiral.

When you go to see this show that runs until July 25, buy the available catalogue. It gives you much information about how each potter works, what types of kilns are used and what processes they follow. The gallery is at the Arts Centre on Trail and Medusa in Sechelt. Call 604-885-5412 for hours.



Jan DeGrass Photo

Leaning pitchers and altered torsos: Coast potter Jack Ploesser shows his work at this year's Ceramics on the Edge show.