There are four components to the show. The first, a "historical preface," documents seven landmark projects in New York dating from 1900 to 1970 and involving such artists as John LaFarge, Louis Comfort Tiffany, Paul Manship, Isamu Noguchi, Harry Berthois, Marc Chagall and Louise Nevelson. Part two will focus on work since 1980 in clay, glass, wood, stone and paint by 15 makers: Steven Antonakos, Scott Burton, Ed Carpenter, Muriel Castanis, Ruth Duckworth, Richard Haas, Helena Hernmarck, Sheila Hicks, Joyce Kolb, Albert Paley and Rick Wrgley.

The third component highlights four recent projects: New York City's Rainbow Room and Club, with glass by Ray King, Dale Chihuly and Dan Dailey (see back cover); three installations in the Detroit People Mover Mass Transit System; the Christian Theological Seminary Chapel in Indianapolis, IN, a collaboration between artist James Carpenter and architect Edward Larrabee Barnes; and art in Manhattan's Battery Park City. The final section consists of four environments created especially for the exhibition by artists-architects teams.

A checklist of all objects in the exhibition will appear in a catalog entitled "A Discourse on Architectural Art," to include an essay by Jensen as well as commentary by 15 invited contributors. A program of lectures at the museum—Architectural Art: Three Perspectives—will further supplement the show (see page 104).

To be published May 25, the expanded June/July issue of American Craft will cover the issues, experiences and opportunities for craftsmen working with architects and designers on private and public projects, with articles on the collaborative process, percent-for-art programs and individual commissions. A variety of commissions executed by craftsmen across the country will be illustrated to suggest the scope of current activity. An essay by noted architectural historian Spiro Kostof, as well as features on Louis Sullivan and the craft of modeling, are planned in addition to the magazine's regular columns.

Learning Through Clay Theme of NYU Meeting

An unusual intensity and concentration marked "The Case for Clay in Secondary Art Education," a symposium held January 28-30 at New York University. Cosponsored by Studio Pottery Foundation and NYU, the gathering was intended to assess the current state of art education in three-dimensional media; facilitate the exchange of information and stimulate further research on the benefits of working with clay; provide examples and a forum for information on curricula and teaching resources; and recognize individuals who have done innovative teaching using clay in secondary and primary art education.

Gerry Williams, editor of Studio Potter magazine, and Judith Schwartz, professor of art and art education at NYU, had planned the program so that the 300 participants—from 49 states, Canada, England, Mexico and Brazil—spent most of the symposium in the same room at the same time. Everyone got to hear all the speakers, and there was ample opportunity during each session for questions and statements from the audience. While the scheduled presentations dealt mainly with ideas and attitudes, the flood of information was augmented by input from networking groups and individuals.

Often at conferences the real interest and interaction occurs around the edges in spontaneous discussion, and there was an opportunity for that at this gathering too. But rarely does the formal agenda hold an audience and provide a concentrated and open forum the way this one did. The symposium succeeded admirably in its purposes, bringing together educators from every level, administrators, writers, psychologists and ceramists.

Keynote speaker Edmund Burke Feldman, professor of art at the University of Georgia, outlined basic aspects of clay and its craft as a metaphor of creation, one relevant to a broad range of knowledge, education and expression. He noted that there is too much making and not enough reflection and criticism in all the visual arts, and that good teaching is basically an issue of moral integrity.

The handicraft model is more important than ever for general education, he asserted, pointing to the Japanese closeness to craft traditions as a major factor in that country's technological and economic success. The values of seeing, understanding and making, combined with social relevance—characteristics of 20th-cen
tury Western craft and design movements as well—could provide the basis for a reevaluation of the production process in our society, a reevaluation that might do more for American industry and economy than any tariffs.

William Daley, professor at the University of the Arts, Philadelphia, conveyed eloquently the enduring joy of making his first coil pot. For him clay is an “enorming” material, one that gives shape to thought processes as they work through and around the absolute restraints of solving real problems in the physical world. Dr. Lee Salk, the clinical psychologist and author, concluded the first day with an address titled “Self Expression, Self Esteem, and Mental Health,” in which he claimed that art education, particularly ceramics, is on the right track because it allows children to shape a piece of reality unique to them and teaches thinking and decision making in the physical world in a way that is creative and relates to the sciences. Salk responded to questions about working with adolescents and reminded the audience that teachers generally go unsung, yet many people have built their lives around a positive experience with a teacher.

Eigh teen educators were honored at the conference, and in a session titled “Scenarios in the Schools,” six of them—Squidge David, Leslie Eckmann, Mary Jane Moross, Jim Tabor, Michael Prepsky and Dale Ruff—described their programs. These were exciting and impressive, but then came the inevitable question, “How do you deal with the unbelievers? All these examples have been unique cases.” In response, Marcia Friedmutter, director of art for New York City’s Board of Education, provided a sobering description of needs and political realities in urban schools but urged everyone to make the effort to work their way through them, because art education reaches kids in ways that nothing else can.

John Littleton/Kate Vogel

May 1–May 21
1988

Illustrated Lecture
Sunday, May 1
3 P.M./Free
Renwick Gallery
Smithsonian Institution

From left, Robert Burnham, dean of NYU School of Education, Health, Nursing and Arts Professions, Dr. Lee Salk, Judith Schwartz, Gerry Williams.

A number of speakers expressed opinions—ranging from qualified acceptance to strong criticism—on the art education proposals of the Getty Foundation. Robert Gray, professor of art at the University of California, Los Angeles, characterized these as one of several efforts at “counter-reformation.” He warned that this approach and influences such as Allan Bloom’s book The Closing of the American Mind have disparaged progressive education for promoting creativity and self-expression and for allegedly neglecting rigorous knowledge and critical thought. Such approaches, he said, emphasize verbal, abstract, measurable knowledge in an attempt to make art as much as possible like other academic subjects. In New York City, according to Friedmutter, teachers are using concepts associated with the Getty program; in ceramics this means that in addition to making things, students are exposed to history, aesthetics and criticism, as well as to a multicultural component showing the contributions of diverse cultures.

In a session relating three-dimensional experience to the study of human development, Judith Burton, chair of art education at Boston University, found it astonishing that the connection between art experience and the development of abstract thought has not been thoroughly studied. She suggested that art should be a paradigm for abstract thinking in the way that the sciences are. Clay artist and teacher George Kokis gave a convincing demonstration that learning and knowing enhanced by physical reality are more meaningful than the abstraction of words and the disturbing formats of books and computers. He displayed a paper scroll, longer than a football field, that showed the history of art in relation to...
Homage to Architecture
April 8–May 7

Tom Freedman  
Stephen Whitney

Stephen Pemberton  
Barry Yavener

Bruce Volz  
Beth Yoe

Casa for Clay speakers, from left, David Baker, Edmund Burke Feldman, Judith Burton.

This theme surfaced repeatedly during the conference: in a reminder that the emphasis on self-promotion and production of commodities characterizing many college art programs was a recent development and that other traditions and role models still exist, in Feldman’s admonition that as teachers “you are not in business for yourself”; in Daley’s observation that “we want to be elitists, but where it really starts is in the public schools”; in Wayne High’s statement that “artists shouldn’t just stand on the sidelines and make comments.” And moving the focus for a moment from educational institutions, one questioner from the audience asked how organizations like the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts and the American Craft Council could be prodded to take teaching seriously.

In the final session, Burton cautioned that important values expressed in metaphors of creativity and spirituality have been treated cavalierly—as if they were self-evident or automatic.

Instead of wasting energy fighting reactionary programs, educators should accept the hard work of applying their skills and self-knowledge to meeting the real needs of children: “If you say it, show that you do it.” Baker warned the group not to claim that clay is the center of the art education universe, but to join with others in making a case for art education as a whole in which clay has equal status with other media.

The positive energy, mutual respect and support generated in the diverse gathering, particularly by inspiring examples of innovative teaching, were palpable. It was clear that clay, to many an end in itself, is also a means to many ends in a larger world. The challenge of making the most of this is not to be found only in seeking recognition and acceptance from that world, but also in an acceptance of broader realities, needs and responsibilities by people committed to working with clay.

Michael Boylen

Michael Boylen, a potter and glassblower, teaches art at Marlboro College, Vermont. Studio Potter magazine (June 1988) will carry a detailed report of “The Case for Clay in Secondary Art Education.” Audio cassettes of all sessions are available from Audio Archives of Canada, Inc., 7449 Victoria Park Ave., Markham, Ontario, Canada 1SR 2Y7. Resources currently available to art educators can be found in A Guide to National and State Arts Education Services, an 84-page compilation, published in 1987 by the American Council for the Arts. $14.95 (30 postage) from ACC, 1255 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019.

MOGUL GALLERY
2114 R Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008
202-328-8222

Slide Lecture:
TAGE FRID
Renwick Gallery
Sunday, April 24, 3:00 pm (FREE)