

Voulikos, Peter (1924-2002)

Bozeman, Montana

EDUCATION/INFLUENCES

- MFA-California College of Arts and Crafts-took clay class as requirement for graduation-never went back to painting
- Abstract Expressionism-exploring limits of clay medium, action-aggressive handling of material

BIG IDEAS/THEMES

- Spontaneity, improvisation, energy; responsible for pioneering ceramics as art form-beyond craft
- serious drug/alcohol problems during his life



KIA WORK-*Yellow Stone Saga*, anagama woodfired stoneware, 1985-88-Tour Suggestion for *Yellow Stone Saga*:

•Students sit around piece on floor, they are in a huge oven made of bricks. Oven shaped like ire is started, all hot air and ashes and coals go from firebox into the oven, which is called a kiln. The hot air rushes through the kiln and out the spout. Ceramic pots and sculptures sitting in the kiln are getting hotter and hotter. Wood ashes and coals rushing through kiln land on the ceramic pieces. They get so hot, they melt, and form the glaze, or surface that is on the pieces. Kiln is watched all day night for a week. Potters feed fire so it stays hot enough to bake the clay and to make the glaze. After a week, the fire is banked down and put out. It takes another week before it is cool enough to open the doors and get the pieces out.

•Main points about *Yellow Stone Saga*:

- Began as a stack of wheel-thrown bowls with a cylinder on top. Then the artist threw and slapped pieces of clay over them. This gives it an abstract, earthy quality.
- "Glaze" is not painted but one made by wood ashes and coals melting on the ceramic surface during firing.
- Wants you to think of the earth, not the typical ceramic bowls, plates and vases that potters make. Saying that "this is a work that was made from the earth and the trees and the fire."
- It is important to point out that some places are smooth, some very rough, depending on what kind of wood ash has fallen on the different surfaces.