

THE YIXING EFFECT

Echoes of the Chinese Scholar



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Several of the contemporary ceramists representing their interest in plants have been drawn to Yixing teapots that reference tree trunks, branches, seedpods, nuts and gourds. Canadian expatriate and Seattle resident Carol Gouthro is probably the most impassioned gardener of the group. She has contemplated Yixing ware for over thirty years and in 1999 made her pilgrimage there. A self-confessed obsessive about gardening, she tends a full sun garden, a native woodland garden, a shade garden, a bog garden as well as an herbaceous flowerbed. To inform her clay work, she seeks out plants with unusual forms and textures, adding color and fragrance to her criteria for selection. Incorporated into her teapots and goblets are acorn motifs, pod forms, flowers and branches to serve as feet or handles and different organic fronds for other compositional components.