

Ceramics

MONTHLY



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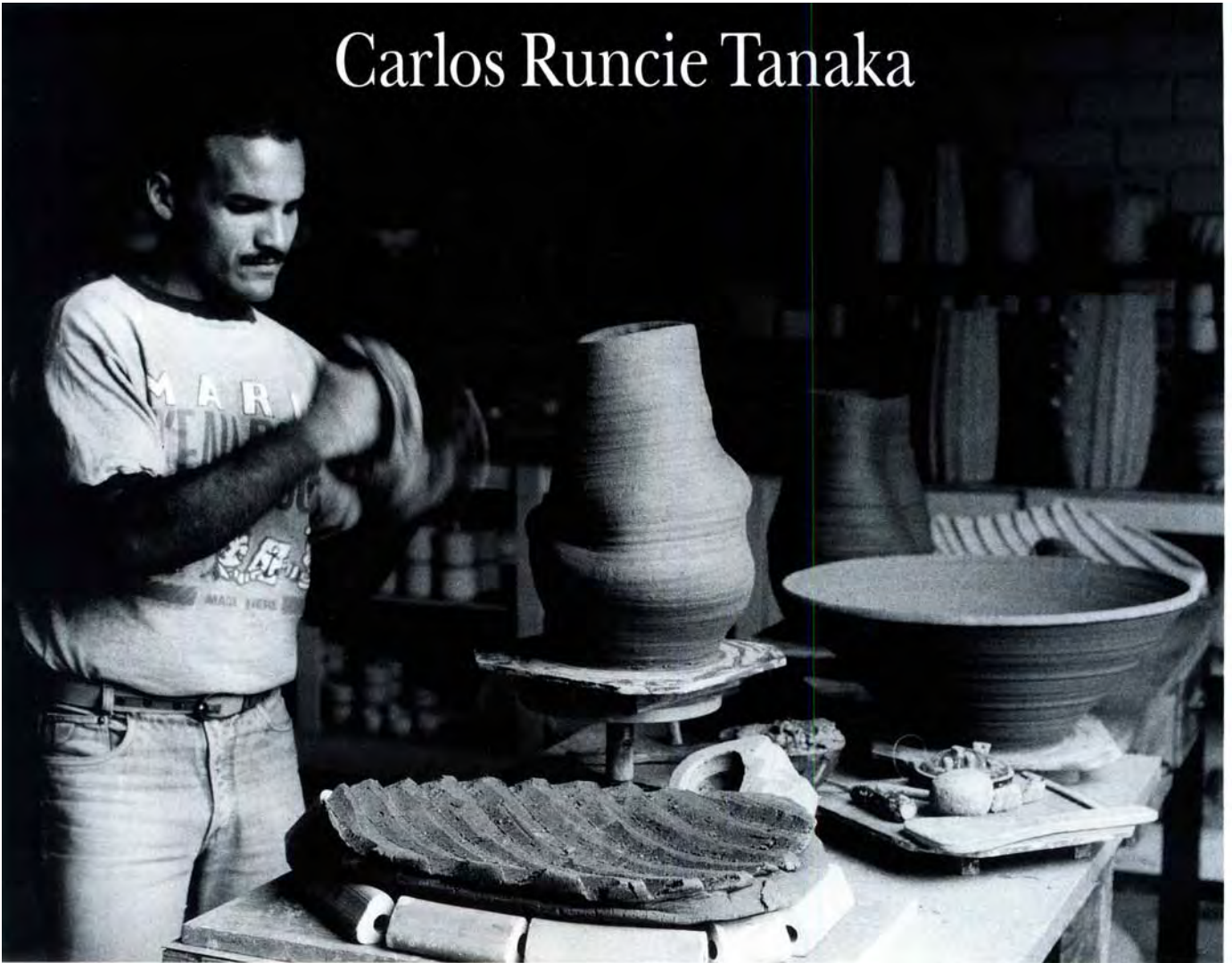
Sarah Frederick Inspiration can come from many sources and in many guises. Louisville production potter Sarah Frederick checks out the local farmer's market for ideas on form and color; see page 46.



Carlos Runcie Tanaka A Peruvian of Japanese descent, Runcie combines traditions from both cultures in his abstract sculpture and functional ware; page 26.

The cover Roddy Reed (Ybor City, Florida) makes a living from pinch pots! Like the mazes decorating some of these works, Reed's life took many twists and turns before he reached his goal of being a full-time, professional artist; see his story starting on page 41. *Photo: Robert Polzer.*

Carlos Runcie Tanaka



Carlos Runcie Tanaka produces both sculpture and functional ware at his studio in Lima, Peru.

"HONEST WORK is that which surges, not that which is forced. It is movement: the turning of the wheel, the free touch of the hand," says ceramic artist Carlos Runcie Tanaka, whose sculpture was featured recently at the Museum of Modern Art of Latin America in Washington, D.C. Included in "Parallel Propositions," his first U.S. exhibition, were 14 stoneware forms, assembled from wheel-thrown and handbuilt elements, accented with slips, and fired to Cone 9 in reduction.

A Peruvian of Japanese descent, Runcie is heir to two ceramic traditions. Since abandoning philosophy studies to work with clay 12 years ago, he has been "growing together with my materials. Through clay, I discover new forms; there is a response to my touch, intent, intuition. It is a process of togetherness: the wheel, the hand, the clay and something else."

In 1979, Runcie went to Ogaya, Japan, to apprentice with Tsukimura Masahiko, whom he had met in Lima. During the early '80s, he traveled to Italy four times, first to study, then to exhibit in group and solo exhibitions in Florence.

"After sharing the rigid work discipline of the Japanese potters in Ogaya, I found in Italy the freedom to break away from a tradition that had become somewhat oppressive. The Italians indulge in a greater design liberty; there is a playful attitude in their pottery that encourages you to try to get different elements together in a single pot."

Runcie finds functional ceramics rewarding, but not just from an economic viewpoint. "A production line of some sort forces you to solve technical problems under pressure. And, of course, there's the beauty of function achieved."

Now a studio artist in Lima, he sees recurring "traces of my first works, taking the circle and spiral as starting and finishing points. I search for the stylization of forms, creating open and closed volumes. I acknowledge the fortuitous element in these forms, that the limits of clay itself can contribute to the definition of lines"

His sculpture is wheel thrown and handbuilt from a mixture of commercially prepared and local clays. "Peru has wonderful natural clays, rich in iron and ilmenite, and my work relies heavily on their peculiar color as well as the textures produced by the surfacing of the fused ores at high temperatures.

"I am also perfectly aware that I do not have the last word in my work. Each ceramist has a very personal relationship with his kiln. The fire seals this relationship, and fire does not make concessions." A



PHOTOS: CARLOS VELASQUEZ

Untitled sculpture in two sections, approximately 16 inches high, stoneware and local clay, with slip and incising, bisqued, reduction fired twice to 1250°C (2282°F), \$1500.

“Vessel Object,” approximately 19 inches in length, coiled and paddled stoneware/local clay, patterned with slip and incising, single fired in reduction to 1250°C, \$1500, by Carlos Runcie Tanaka.

