

## ***What's the Fuss About Raku?***

**Colorado Springs, CO** - Raku (pronounced *Rah-koo*) We know it's not news that addictions are bad, but can Raku addiction be good? If you can't get enough pottery and are on a quest to find a unique Raku work of art, Hunter-Wolff Gallery offers the perfect solution. You can get a quick fix by finding dramatic Raku vessels by local artist Jerry Rhodes in sizes that range from 8" to three feet tall and taller. Rhodes' pottery satisfies even the most severe Raku addictions and will make you feel better than good!

So what is so special about Raku and why does it have this unusual affect on some people? Raku is simply beautiful. It is a form of Japanese pottery characterized by low firing temperatures resulting in a porous body and lead glazes. In traditional firing processes, the clay pot is removed from the kiln while still glowing hot and allowed to cool in the open air. Western Raku, however, is moved from the kiln to a reduction chamber to compensate for the differences in the atmosphere between wood-fired Japanese Raku kilns and gas-fired American kilns.

What happens next is critical to the final outcome. After the pieces are removed from the kiln, they are placed in a mass of combustible materials such as straw, paper, leaves, pine needles, and other organic matter to provide a reducing atmosphere for the glaze processing and to "stain" the exposed body surface with carbon.



Western potters, like Rhodes, rarely use lead as a glaze ingredient because of its high levels of toxicity. Rhodes says he uses more traditional glazes without lead and a classic post-firing reduction technique normally. Other times, he adds plant food, steel wool, or horsehair during the firing for a unique and dramatic surface effect. It is the one-of-a-kind finishes that keep the Raku addicts coming back for more!



Whether a Raku addict or just a beginning collector, Raku makes an excellent focal point in a room or enhances other prized artwork. Raku is so versatile that it fits in any setting or room and can be combined with most other collectibles because it comes in beautiful glazes, colors, textures and patterns, shapes and sizes and the Rhodes designs often include African porcupine quill accents and stylized lids.

Although available at Hunter-Wolff Gallery, Rhodes supplies several other galleries across the country as far away as New York, Washington D.C., South

Carolina and Pennsylvania. "Because Jerry Rhodes lives in Colorado Springs, we get first pick on his new work before the other galleries across the country," says owner Sharon Wolff. Visit Hunter-Wolff Gallery at 2510 W. Colorado Avenue and learn more about Raku and see for yourself why the Raku addiction is hard to avoid but easy to satisfy.

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