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Book Review: David McClelland, art critic.

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Michael Simon: Evolution. Univ. of North Carolina Press. 2011. c. 144p ed. by Susan Stokes Roberts. Photogs. ISBN 9780807872147. \$45. FINE ARTS

This is the first complete retrospective of potter Michael Simon's career from the 1970s to the present. In the late 1960's and early 1970s, Simon was one of a very dynamic group of ceramic artists who studied at the University of Minnesota with Warren MacKenzie. MacKenzie influenced a whole generation of Midwestern potters by transmitting a philosophy of clay work that derived from English potter Bernard Leach and his Japanese friends Hamada Shoji and Yanagi Soetsu. Indeed, there is an obvious Japanese tinge to the simple salt-glazed stoneware that Simon produces, but there is also a very American freedom to combine shapes from many cultural spheres with decoration. There are 112 glorious color photographs of the range of cups, teapots, bowls, plates, pitchers, and lidded boxes that Simon has made over the last 35 years. Following the photos is a short essay by Simon on the ethos of making pots; there are specific comments on each of the pots, as well as brief articles by MacKenzie, Emily Galusha, Mark Pharis, and Glen Brown before the book ends with a long biographical interview conducted by potter/writer Mark Shapiro.

Verdict This is the best summing up of a talented potter who exemplifies that 1960's inspired revitalization of the American craft scene. For readers who are interested in making or collecting ceramics, this is essential.

-David McClelland, Andover, NY.