

through" and our industry is approaching that critical stage. In order to remain viable, we must appeal to what people want, not spend our time trying to convince people to change to be what we are. We must develop a renewed industry, a new image and a optimistic outlook.

We must be able to provide customers with the same elements that attract them to the other crafts they are now purchasing in those craft mega-stores.

Some misguided studio owners resist the suggestion of promoting ceramics in the home because they believe it to be a threat to their existing business. In fact, the opposite is true. As interest grows, more people will graduate to projects that require advanced technique, greater skill, professional guidance and access to larger kilns. As the home market expands, studio demand will become greater than ever.

We must begin by bringing back the creative process in full force. Encourage new fired artists to work with clay, to mold their own pieces, to combine their greenware or bisque with other crafts to develop desirable, use-

ful and/or attractive pieces that will appeal to a new generation.

The fired arts industry of tomorrow must be upscale, appealing to younger artists and upcoming baby boomers alike, home-based, able to be blended with other crafts, simple enough to be performed at entry levels without a teacher and broad based enough to encourage increased knowledge and proficiency.

The fired arts industry already possesses most of these elements. As an industry, we just need to develop the additional elements and we'll be positioned to experience the fastest-growing craft industry of the next decade, but we must make it happen. Let's begin by sharing rather than protecting, encouraging rather than discouraging, presenting a professional rather than an unprofessional image, speaking positively rather than negatively, building up rather than tearing down, supporting rather than boycotting and we will soon discover that fired arts will be growing rapidly and claiming its rightful place as a leader in the craft industry of the 21st century.



Joe Jones, Publisher