

ARTIST



kiln and were anxious to get back in to see how the work was going.”

Trevor and his wife bought a “semi-derelict farmhouse” with outbuildings — roughly half way between Chesterfield and Two Dales — and while they were making the house habitable lived in a caravan in the farmyard. Now the place, once you find it, is utterly delightful and home to the pottery studio, kiln and showroom as well as incubator sheds for the fowl.

Trevor left Chesterfield College ten years ago and divides his time between the pottery and caring for his livestock which includes sheep, ducks, geese and hens. “I aim,” he smiles ironically, “to make pots in the winter and tend the animals in the summer.” Judging from the amount of pots on order and those waiting on the shelves to be fired or glazed, the winter season started very early this year.

His work can roughly be divided into two strands. There are his stoneware vessels (teapots, jugs, bowls and stewpots) which are finished in the rich, smokey browns of tenmoku glazes. Then there is a constant demand for his brightly painted, large square platters. “Yes,” he says, “I couldn’t paint and pot, so I paint on pots.”

The highly decorative use of colour and pattern, in figurative scenes such as views from windows, has been likened to Matisse and Raul Dufy, two painters

known for confident freedom of outline and brushwork. “I haven’t thought about it,” says Trevor.

The colour is applied in slips — a mixture of clay and water, but with other ingredients added to provide colour, that ensure the slip fits with the body of the pot during drying and firing and to promote bonding with the final glaze.

All this makes it very difficult to re-work the slip if you make a mistake in the painting and when Trevor says that it is difficult to be spontaneous, he means that you have to have courage to paint freely. When he says that he has not thought about his influences, perhaps it’s because it seems entirely natural to him to apply the colour boldly under these

circumstances.

The colourful platters are fired after painting, in the clean, oxidising atmosphere of the electric kiln. Not so the tenmoku wares.

Tenmoku is a traditional glaze for stoneware and it has a significant iron content. In the smokey, reductive atmosphere of the oil-fired kiln, it achieves rich, dark browns and almost black.

The best tenmokus have an expressive variation of colour caused by the glaze’s ability to flow. It tends to fill hollows and covers high points more thinly.

Though beautiful to look at and to touch, the range of kitchenwares and other vessels are all eminently functional. As he says: “New forms are tried out for

