



# Frans Wildenhain 1950-75: Creative and Commercial American Ceramics at Mid-Century

*Bruce Austin*

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Steeped in modernist ceramic aesthetics, Frans Wildenhain studied under Gerhard Marcks and Max Krehan at the Bauhaus pottery workshop in Dornburg, Germany. There, Wildenhain met another potter, Marguerite Friedlaender, his future wife. Following World War II, Wildenhain emigrated to the U.S. Earning prizes for his art at the 1939 International Exposition in Paris and the 1958 Brussels World's Fair, Wildenhain also received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1958, became a Fellow of the American Crafts Council and his work is in the collections of the Smithsonian Institution, Everson Museum and the Art Institute of Chicago. This book features archival images as well as more than 150 rich, color photographs of the ceramics exhibited in 2012 at the Rochester Institute of Technology, NY. Six chapters offer contributions to scholarship on the artist, mid-century studio pottery and modern design, monetizing and commercial acceptance of mid-century handcrafted art at an innovative artists' cooperative, university education at the School for American Craftsmen, and an interview with collector Robert Johnson who donated his Wildenhain collection to RIT. The book is an essential document of the exhibition and an excellent reference for those interested in ceramics, crafts, mid-century design and art entrepreneurship.

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