

ROCKY RIVER PUBLIC LIBRARY  
COWAN POTTERY  
MUSEUM  
*EXHIBIT GUIDE*



1600 Hampton Road  
Rocky River, OH 44116  
www.rrpl.org; www.cowanpottery.org  
Cowan Pottery Museum: 440-895-3763  
Carol Jacobs, Curator, c.jacobs@rrpl.org  
Library: 440-333-7610


Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.-9 p.m.  
Friday-Saturday 9 a.m.- 6 p.m.  
Sunday 1 p.m.-5 p.m. (school year only)

Free Admission – Please arrange for group tours in advance.  
PowerPoint presentations available – Contact the curator.

BACK COVER: Elsa Vick Shaw, Egyptian Maidens, 1930  
R. Guy Cowan, Scarf Dancer, 1925

FRONT COVER: Paul Manship, Europa, ca. 1928  
Photo by Wetzler Studios

9-2008 rev.

  
**ROCKY RIVER**  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
*& Cowan Pottery Museum*

# ABOUT THE MUSEUM

The recently expanded Cowan Pottery Museum is located primarily on the first floor of Rocky River Public Library (renovated in 2006-2007). It features over 1200 pieces of a distinctive form of American art pottery created at the Cowan Pottery Studio in Lakewood, Ohio from 1913-1917 and in Rocky River, Ohio from 1920-1931 by R. Guy Cowan and his associates. It was one of the nation's leading potteries during the 1920s, and the Cleveland area's only major pottery. Cowan Pottery represents a visual cultural heritage unique to Rocky River and Cleveland.

## COLLECTION

Cowan Pottery styles range from Arts and Crafts to Art Deco, and draw from sources in mythology, literature, religion, nature, and daily life. Unique shapes and colorful glazes are hallmarks of Cowan Pottery, which is known both for its utility and its beauty. Collection highlights on display at the Cowan Pottery Museum include unique and limited edition ceramic sculptures. Also on view are equally beautiful production items for everyday life such as vases, bookends, bowls, candlesticks, figures, lamp bases, flower frog figures, and a famous punch bowl by Viktor Schreckengost known as the Jazz Bowl.

About 40% of the collection is on view at any given time. Behind the scenes, the museum also includes a

storage room and a modest archive containing some of R. Guy Cowan's work notes, correspondence, and manuscripts. The Cowan Pottery Museum, established at Rocky River Public Library via a generous private bequest, opened its doors on February 26, 1978. Ever since then, it has housed the largest publicly-owned collection of Cowan Pottery in the world, and it is the only museum in the world devoted solely to the acquisition, preservation, and promotion of Cowan Pottery.

## ARTISTS

R. Guy Cowan was a ceramics engineer, designer, artist and educator. As founder and head of the Cowan Pottery Studio, he was responsible for more than 80% of the innovative design produced. His associates included such prominent artists and designers as Elizabeth Anderson, Arthur E. Baggs, Alexander Blazys, Paul Bogatay, Edris Eckhardt, Waylande Gregory, Richard O. Hummel, A. Drexler Jacobson, Raoul Josset, Paul Manship, José Martin, F. Luis Mora, Elmer L. Novotny, Margaret Postgate, Guy Rixford, Viktor Schreckengost, Elsa Vick Shaw, Walter Sinz, Frank N. Wilcox, and Thelma Frazier Winter. Many were students and/or faculty members at the Cleveland Institute of Art. Most had distinguished careers in other areas of artistic endeavors in addition to their work for the Cowan Pottery Studio.



Viktor Schreckengost, Jazz Bowl, 1930

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