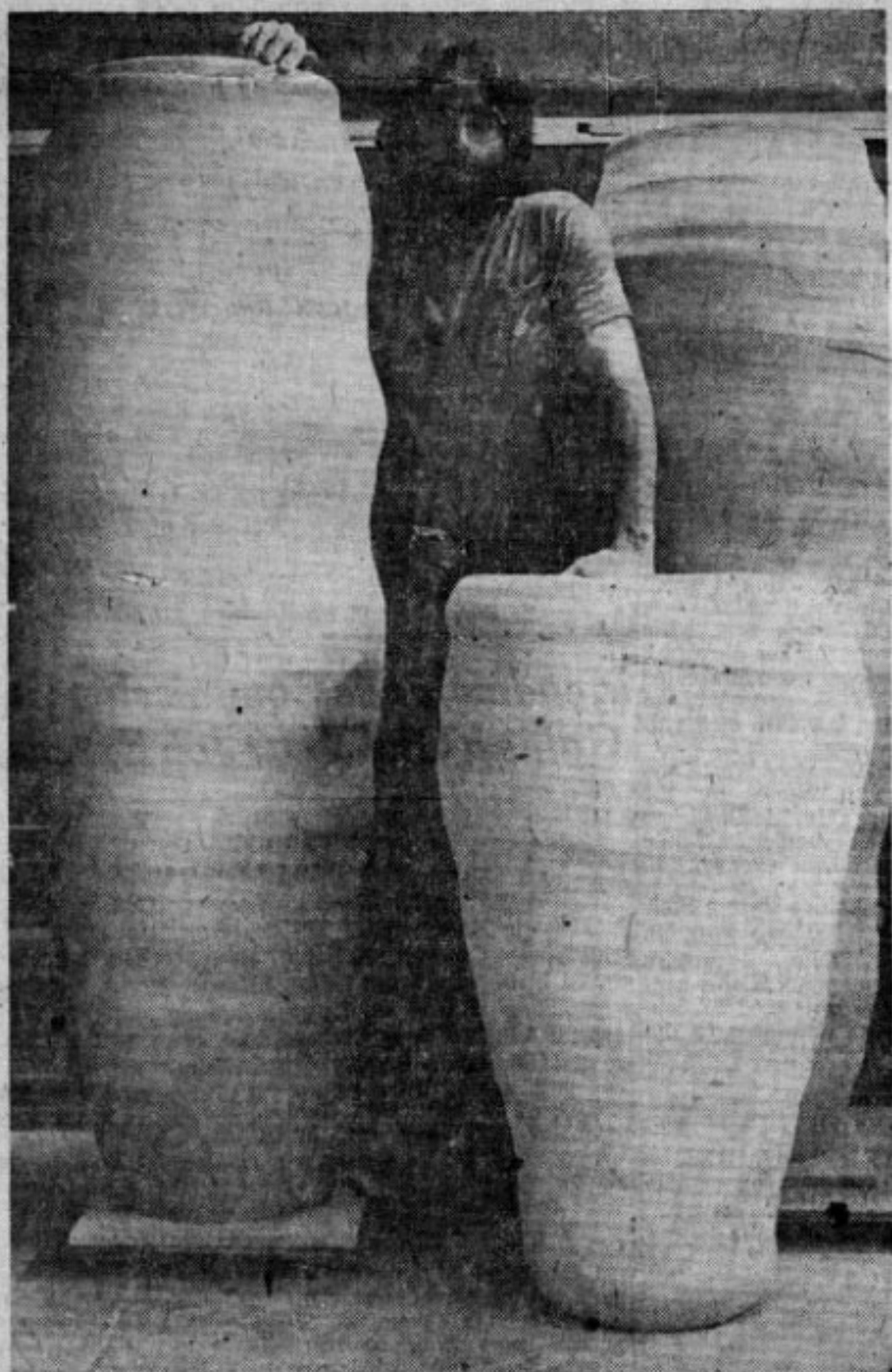


# Can You Imagine a Pot That's Tall as a Person?



Terise Slottin

Ron Levy with some of his outsize pots, before glazing.

By LISA HAMMEL

Can you imagine a ceramic pot so tall and heavy that it takes two strong men to schlep it into a kiln? Well, you don't have to imagine it. A number of these pots are now on view at the American Craftsman gallery, where Ron Levy is having a one-man show.

"I wanted to give pots the physical presence they deserve," said Mr. Levy, who is a teacher and the studio manager at Greenwich House Pottery. "The idea was probably directly related to going to Crete last summer. I saw these pots that were eight, nine feet tall. They were overwhelming."

The tallest of his pots are about 5 feet high ("they lose about 8 inches after being fired," Mr. Levy noted) and are matte-glazed in a blend of earth and grass and sky tones.

"Pots this size are normally never glazed," Mr. Levy noted, "because the ceramist is usually so involved in the form and size. But I wanted to draw people around them—not just have them give the pot one glance, and be overwhelmed by the form."

Mr. Levy seems to have succeeded. Once the size is taken in by the eye,

and the Ali Baba quality ceases to be quite such a surprise, the glaze, which is applied for the most part in irregular horizontal stripings, does lead the viewer into his own third dimension of encircling the rounded ceramic monolith.

Of the 30 pieces in the show, something less than half are not pots at all, but large, thick, slightly curved porcelain slabs—about 17 inches square—washed with a water-colorist's delicacy in tones of sunrise and sunset.

Yet, for all his esthetician's interest in the play of clay—its shaping, firing and coloring—one comes away from the small show with the conclusion that Mr. Levy is clearly as much intrigued by the technical and engineering problems of working this malleable product of the earth, as he is with its artistic possibilities.

Mr. Levy puts it more succinctly. "They all really were a lot of fun to do."

Prices for the pieces range from \$80 to \$140 for the porcelain slabs, and \$70 to \$700 for pots of varying size. The gallery shop, at 277 West 4th Street, is open Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 6 P.M., and Friday and Saturday evenings it is also open from 8 to 10. The show will continue through Saturday.