

COUTURIER**GALLERY**166 N. LA BREA AVENUE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**EXHIBITION:** 10th Anniversary Exhibition**GERTRUD & OTTO NATZLER** *ceramics***GALE ANTOKAL** *pastel drawings***DATES:** May 30 - July 5, 1997**OPENING:** Artists' Reception, Friday, May 30, 7-9pm**GALLERY HOURS:** Tuesday - Saturday, 11am - 5pm

Couturier Gallery opened ten years ago in May 1987. During the first four years, the gallery specialized in unique works of the Arts & Crafts Movement, with ancillary exhibits emphasizing the arts of the period. The change to representing contemporary work occurred in 1991, however, there has always been a carry-over commitment from the first years to show work that was "well-crafted" and spoke its own, clear aesthetic language.

Gertrud and Otto Natzler (1908-1971 and 1908- , respectively) came to the United States in 1938 from Vienna, Austria settling immediately here in Los Angeles. They brought with them modernist European ideas, introducing a unique style in ceramic design and glazing that had not before been seen in the U.S. Gertrud, the master potter, threw vessels of paper thinness, in forms that were Oriental in resemblance but with a hand and balance completely her own- simple, clean, soaring shapes. Otto completed these pieces with glazes of his invention, glazes that appeared as if they were cross sections of the entire earth; glazes meant to complement the particular shape; glazes not seen before in this country. This marriage of glaze to form revolutionized the course of contemporary ceramics in the early 1940's.

Gale Antokal, working with pastel on paper, draws stark still lifes rendering everyday objects. They usually depict a single object, such as a plate, a bowl, a bowling ball (sometimes two), placed on stark table or shelf against a blank background to simply and elegantly portray these as objects of meditation and elegant beauty. These works, often mistaken for photographs, are suffused with atmosphere suggesting great volume surrounding the object making it appear as if it has inner light and life.

The decision in selecting only these three artists' work instead of including all the artists who have exhibited here during the past 10 years was simple. The Natzlers were with the gallery from the first day the doors opened in 1987. Gale Antokal is new to the gallery and it was thought appropriate to have someone old, someone new, and no one borrowed!

For further information and/or press photographs please contact the gallery.