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**AMERICAN ART POTTERY**  
**from the Moody Collection at the Hickory Museum of Art**

The Museum of Texas Tech University (MoTTU) is proud to present *American Art Pottery from the Moody Collection at the Hickory Museum of Art*, scheduled to open in the Special Exhibitions Gallery, **Sunday, July 16**, and running through September 10. The Museum is located at 3301 4<sup>th</sup> Street (SE corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Indiana Avenue), where ample free parking is available in the north and west parking lots.

From the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains comes a remarkable collection of American Art Pottery. This exhibition of over 130 pieces celebrates the gift of Frances Johnson Moody to the Hickory Museum of Art in Hickory, North Carolina.

The story behind this collection is a heartwarming one. Frances “Fran” Johnson Moody and H. Leslie “Less” Moody were married in 1932. They met a few years earlier at Ohio State University where they were both students in the Fine Arts Department. Fran's emphasis there was sculpture, and Less' was ceramics. Less studied under the great ceramics teacher Arthur Baggs, and Fran went on to study for a year at the Art Students League in New York. Both of them had wonderful training and strong artistic foundations for their careers in the Art Pottery world.

Their careers began as the period of artistic innovations in art potteries across the United States was beginning to wane. Less started out at Lovefield Potteries in Dallas and then went on to work at the Abingdon Pottery in Abingdon, Illinois. They remained at Abingdon from 1934 until 1942, with Fran working as a freelance sculptor and Less as a manager and designer. In 1943, Rookwood, the premier American Art Pottery producer, hired Less to help save the financially unstable company; however, Less found that there was no opportunity for the innovation he felt would save Rookwood, so he left after two years.

In 1945, Less established his own pottery shop in Hickory, North Carolina, which he called Hyalyn Porcelain. Fran kept her hand in the pottery business by designing figurative ware and some of the sculptural details of the pottery at Hyalyn.

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After the death of Less Moody in 1973, Fran developed a real interest in collecting fine examples from the Art Pottery era. At that time she decided to establish a collection at the Hickory Museum in Less' honor. Since he was not only from Ohio, but also grew up in Zanesville, Ohio, home to three of the top potteries of the era, Fran's focus for the collection was Ohio art potteries.

The largest number of pieces represented are from Rookwood, the pottery considered to be the best in terms of style and commercial success. The collection includes pottery by the best decorators at Rookwood including Kitaro Shirayamadani and Matthew Daly. A beautiful vase by Laura Frye, inventor of the Rookwood standard that many of the other potteries copied, is also in this exhibition. In addition a two-foot high masterwork by Rookwood founder Maria Longworth Nichols is painted with floral images, gilded on the edges and textured to give a relief image. Other potteries represented in the collection include Roseville, Weller, Owens, Rum Rill, Tiffany, American Encaustic, Van Briggle, Fulper, and Redwing.

For more information or to request special assistance, contact the MoTTU Education Office at 806.742.2432, or email to [museum.education@ttu.edu](mailto:museum.education@ttu.edu). Stay up to date with MoTTU exhibitions and events at [www.museum.ttu.edu](http://www.museum.ttu.edu).

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*“There’s something for everyone at the Museum.”*