

Basic Detail Report



Pitcher

Date

1950s - 1970s

Primary Maker

Wim Mühlendyck

Medium

Ceramic, salt glaze

Description

Pitcher with checkered motif of scenes of nature alternating with geometric designs. The pitcher has a narrow base, round globular body, a small spout, and one

handle. Wim Mühlendyck worked in the style of the Westerwald region in Germany, a pottery center beginning in the 14th century that was known for its clay quarries. The region witnessed a boost in pottery production late 16th century as the result of an influx of potters from what is today Belgium. Westerwald pottery flourished in the 17th and 18th centuries, and its style of gray stoneware with cobalt decoration spread up-river along the Rhine River to the Low Countries and to the British Isles. Wim Mühlendyck studied pottery at the Staatliche Keramische Fachschule in the mid-1920s, and with his friend and fellow artist Elfriede Balzar-Kopp, he subsequently reinvigorated the salt-glaze utilitarian pottery tradition of Westerwald. They exhibited their pottery at the Paris world expo in 1937, where they met with great success. Mühlendyck ran his own pottery from 1931 into the 1970s. His signature and maker's mark appear on the bottom of the pitcher, along with a stamp indicating production in West Germany (1949-1990). Mühlendyck's maker's mark is a stylized windmill, given that "mühle" means mill. MOIFA's German pottery collections includes steins, tankards, jugs and various other utilitarian forms, many of which are salt glazed, as is this pot. Most are the Westerwald blue-and-cobalt salt-glazed pots from the 18th century, but with examples as early as the 15th century. To add an example from the 20th century allows the collection to frame this style of pottery as a living tradition still practiced today. This pitcher includes various stylized animals, which Mühlendyck often did, alternating with areas of geometric designs—both of which are characteristic decorations of the Westerwald style.

Dimensions

14 x 15 x 15 in. (35.5601 x 38.1001 x 38.1001 cm)