

Adirondack

Native stone is elemental

"It's not twigs and birch bark, but it's still in the same spirit of how the Adirondack style came to be," artist Peter Shrope says of his Adirondack Rockware pottery.

Like a Great Camp craftsman using local materials to celebrate the wilderness, Shrope mixes his glazes and slips from the park's most abundant resource: the rock beneath his feet.

Since he began throwing pottery as an apprentice in the 1970s, the 58-year-old museum-exhibit designer sought ways to use supplies at hand—scrap wood for his kiln when he lived near New Hampshire sawmills or clay from his Baltimore backyard. But once he moved to Rainbow Lake, in 2002, finding a local connection for his art was more difficult. That is, until he looked at a chemical analysis of native conglomerate anorthosite and discovered the rock's makeup was similar to many of the elements already in his glaze cabinet.

From there it was just a matter of experimenting with different formulas of the finely crushed and sifted stone, mixed with stabilizing agents and colorants, to achieve a varied palette. (By itself, the iron in anorthosite lends a yellowish cast, a hue Shrope calls Adirondack Khaki.) The results now coat a signature line of stoneware mugs, bowls and other dishes, as well as one-of-a-kind molded tiles.

Shrope's work, which ranges from \$20 for a coffee cup to \$125 and up for decorative tiles and other art pieces, is available at XXXX XXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXX, the Adirondack Museum, in Blue Mountain Lake, and the Wild Center, in Tupper Lake.

Although much of his output is fashioned for everyday use and fired in an electric kiln for consistency, Shrope prefers the showpieces, like an orb vase that mimics the granite of the peaks around his home. His mugs may be popular, he says, but they're "just a small part of a bigger story."

For more information or to purchase Adirondack Rockware see www.adirondackrockware.com. —*Niki Kourofsky*



PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT PAUL