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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BLOOMINGTON, ILL.--A three-person show, "Functional Ceramics With a Decorative Approach," will open at 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 7, in the Merwin Gallery at Illinois Wesleyan University.

The gallery will be open free to the public from 1-4 p.m. every day and 7-9 p.m. Tuesdays through Jan. 26.

Participating in the show will be free lance artists Stephen Fabrico and Sara Gast of Bloomington, N.Y., and Eric Jensen, instructor at the Lill Street Studio in Chicago.

Typical of the pieces in the exhibit will be such utile items as covered jars, teapots, tumblers and baskets.

Fabrico, for example, uses safe lead-free glazes which are a combination of pastel and earthtone glazes sprayed onto the pots. Subtle color variations are created where these glazes overlap. He says an average glaze firing takes about 12 hours to reach the proper temperature of about 2,350 degrees Fahrenheit and 16-18 hours to cool down. Fabrico's work presently is influenced by a mixture of Chinese and 20th century pottery.

Among Fabrico's exhibitions have been the Pacific States Craft Fair, San Francisco in 1981; the Northeast Craft Fair, Rhinebeck, N.Y., for the past six years; and a show at the Theo Portney Gallery in New York City in 1977.

Ms. Gast, like Fabrico a graduate of the State University of New York at Pfaltz, has exhibited at the Northeast Craft Fair since 1979. She was part of the Morristown (N.J.) Craft Market in 1979 and 1982. She exhibited in Trends in Stoneware at the A.R.T. Clay Studio, Chicago, and the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts Crafts 16 Exhibition, State College, Pa., this year.

Jensen earned a master's degree in ceramics from Cranbrook Academy of Art,

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Bloomfield, Mich. in 1973 after studying painting and ceramics at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and architecture at Iowa State University. From 1977-81, he was chairman of the ceramics department at the Evanston Art Center before moving to the Lill Street Studios.

Jensen won the Craft Award at the Miami Beach Arts Festival this year. He had one-man shows at the Bernal Gallery, Chicago, and Evanston Art Center in 1980, and a one-man show at the Illinois Arts Council Gallery, Chicago, and was part of the Chicago and Vicinity Clay exhibit at the Robbins Clay Co. in Chicago in 1981.