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From yarn to clay, Maggie's a star!

At a recent art gallery opening in Greensboro, N.C., excitement was generated by the pieces displayed by a new and unknown potter, Maggie Weldon.

Maggie Weldon? The crochet designer? Yes! Maggie, who has designed outstanding crochet projects for many publishers over the past 20 years, has found a new medium!



Maggie Weldon in the kitchen enjoying a cup of tea.

Attending classes

Maggie and her daughter, Allison decided to take a pottery class together. Maggie wanted to make a large bowl and a utensil holder

for her kitchen counter. She had never touched clay before and found working with it quite a challenge. "I had trouble learning to turn the clay on a wheel," she said. "I guess the art of pot throwing takes a lot of practice and patience, and I had neither." Then her instructor suggested she try working with porcelain clay. "This clay is very soft and white," Maggie explains. "I preferred it to the darker clays used in throwing." Her instructor showed her a new method—hand building—which involves rolling the clay on a flat surface with a rolling pin, cutting out the desired shape, then placing it flat to dry or hand-shaping it into an object. Maggie successfully made delicate clay snowflakes and gingerbread men for Christmas gifts.

Creative experimenting

She progressed to experimenting with pressing crocheted lace into the clay, then forming it into boxes and cylinders to hold her crochet hooks. But she still really wanted to make that large bowl.

Finally she took the plunge. She rolled out porcelain clay into a large slab, then carefully pressed into it one of her large, intricate pineapple doilies. "The impression was stunning," Maggie says, "Everyone in the class was impressed, and so was I!"

She carefully cut around the points of the large 23"-diameter piece; then with the help of her instructor, lifted the slab into a large bowl mold, wrapped it

in plastic and set it on the drying shelf.

Maggie waited impatiently for the drying to be complete; finally the day came when the bowl could go into the kiln for firing. When the piece was fired, the kiln was opened to much excitement. "I almost cried," Maggie reports. "The bowl was one of the most beautiful things I had ever seen!"

Continuing in a new direction

That was the beginning of Maggie's new direction. Her pottery crochet is now shown in art galleries. "I'm not a potter, I'm a designer," Maggie insists. "My heart is really into crochet, but these pottery pieces are unique and so beautiful that I want to keep doing them. I'll keep going down this path and see where it takes me." And with Maggie's talent, who knows where she will go next?

For more information about Maggie, her pottery and her crochet, visit her Web site at maggiescrochet.com.



Maggie with her daughter, Allison, outside of her home in North Carolina.



Delicate crochet texture is combined with pure white clay to create this unique piece of pottery.