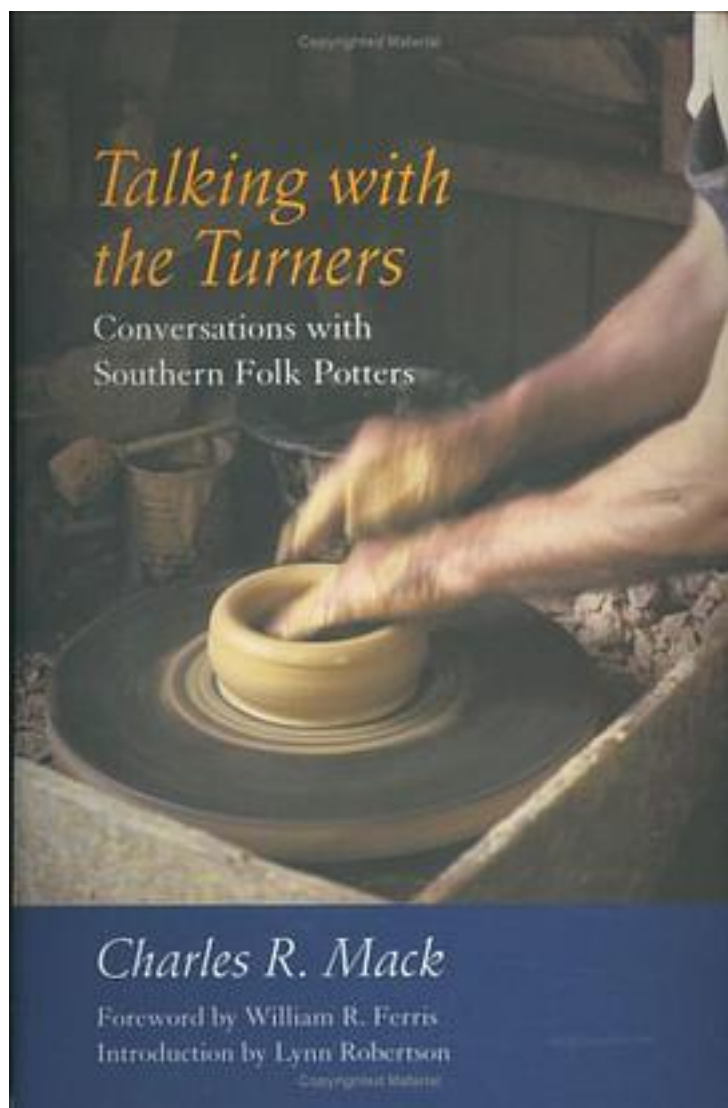


# Talking With the Turners



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Traveling the back roads of North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, Charles R. Mack spent the summer of 1981 talking with the potters who produced the face jugs, mugs, and plates that had skyrocketed in popularity in the late 1970s and collecting examples of their wares. He was, in effect, talking the pulse of a southern folkway on the brink of transition. With the benefit of a quarter century of hindsight, Mack has now gathered these interviews into *Talking with the Turners*, a single volume that documents the world of southern pottery as it shifted from the production of utilitarian wares to the aesthetic realm of folk art. In their own words the turners, most of whom are now deceased, explain what it means to be a potter, to be part of a profession that passes from generation to generation, to experiment with new designs while continuing to produce traditional forms of ceramics. Arranged thematically, the interviews emerge as an open dialogue among the participants--the type of backroom shoptalk that collectors and scholars are rarely privileged to share. In addition to the centerpiece interviews--many of which are also featured on an accompanying audio CD--Mack includes numerous color and black-and-white photographs of the potters, their shops, and their wares. Mack's extensive commentary sets these particular potters in the context of the larger American ceramics tradition, explains pottery techniques, and summarizes recent changes in pottery making. *Talking with the Turners* is augmented by an introduction by Lynn Robertson, director of the McKissick Museum at the University of South Carolina, and a foreword by William R. Ferris, the founding director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi.

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