

Ashes to Art

Thanks to the growing trend in cool customized burial containers, your corpse can now spend eternity in anything from a



Title: *Anubis* Artist: Jack Thompson Medium: Painted ceramic Copyright © 2003 Jack Thompson

handcrafted folk-art coffin from Ghana in the shape of a crocodile to a fancy bronze casket adorned with the logo of your favorite sports team. But why should slowly decomposing cadavers have all the fun? What about people who choose cremation instead of burial? Shouldn't their ashes have a stylish place to reside, not just

some boring old urn or a shoebox shoved away on a closet shelf?

Maureen Lomasney clearly thinks so. An artist and photographer dedicated to the proposition that beauty "can help to heal a troubled heart," Lomasney is the founder of Art Honors Life, a unique gallery in Sonoma County, California, specializing in original handcrafted cremation vessels. Priced from \$800 to \$1,900, these one-of-a-kind funerary *objets* range

from the elegant to the playful: a ceramic prayer wheel etched with autumn leaves, an earthenware jar made to resemble a lichen-covered rock, a Flash Gordon-style rocket ship of glistening aluminum, a delicate angel-adorned box of glazed porcelain clay, an exquisite

"cinerary vessel" of black walnut and gold leaf, even a vintage vacuum cleaner (the "Urn-a-matic") that can play "Seasons in the Sun" at the push of a button. Each is so sheerly beautiful that you may want to buy one for yourself and display it on a shelf even if you aren't quite ready yet to store your ashes inside it.

Besides her gallery, Lomasney sponsors an international "Ashes to Art" exhibition showcasing the work of her clients and runs a website called Funeria (www.funeria.com), where you can view examples of their work.



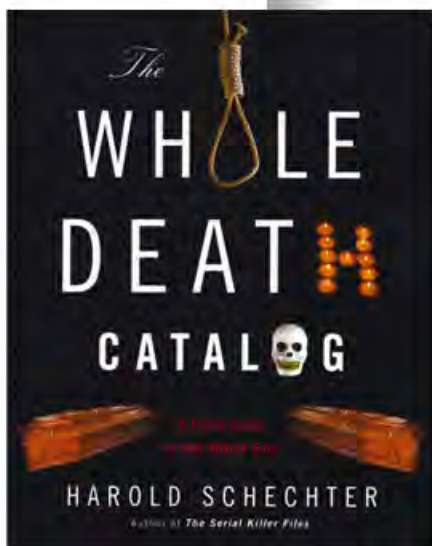
Title: *Urn-a-matic* Artist: Darin Montgomery Media: Vintage vacuum cleaner, Plexiglas, bone video and audio featuring the song "Seasons in the Sun" Copyright © Darin Montgomery

The Perfect Final Resting Place for Snack Lovers

Fancy-shmancy art urns are all well and good for the chardonnay-sipping, sushi-eating, NPR-listening crowd. But if you're more of a beer, pizza, and NASCAR type, you'll want something a little more down-to-earth. Thanks to Fredric Baur, the perfect solution is no farther away than your nearest supermarket.



Title: *Koa* Artists: Carol Green and Lynn Hayes Medium: Cast bronze Copyright © Carol Green and Lynn Hayes



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