

The Aquamanile

Potter's hands earth caked like dry river beds
Pinch and twist the clay to make a ram's head.
Then deftly mould and shape its bulky form.
He makes his mark, his seal before the glaze.
The aquamanile stands ready for sale.

Maid's hands work chapped grasp the water carrier,
She performs her task pouring water for her master.
His hands pale, soft, dimple its surface.
Hands dry, he completes his meal, smiles
At his proud purchase, the aquamanile.

Curator's hands white gloved cradle the ewer,
A ram, with feet of clay, that potter made.
A sturdy envoy from medieval age.
Touched by many hands across the years,
The aquamanile now stands – a survivor.

Carol Archer 2012