

Work Shop With Bev Ellis

Ceramic Books

For Books ends that will be bound

- make a template - I like to use cereal box cardboard I recycle
- Make sure to plan and poke through holes on the cardboard template where the holes for binding will be. Make them at least 3 millimetres or larger, remember shrinkage, keep holes at least one centimetre from the edge of binding
- Keep the clay flat as much as possible. Clay has a memory, and will go back to original shape or warp

After firing have students make paper or creatively use papers, tea dye or paint or print make the papers to bind.

*Books can be created in so many different themes, I always encourage creativity

Books that are all ceramic and are not bound.

-Two main ways to make

I will demo my Quick and dirty slab method, that I find fast and effective, as well as easies for students to grasp.

The other way requires a slab built box like structure and waiting for slabs to be just the right amount of dryness so that they won't cave in or collapse.

I will briefly talk about this method, and there are lots of on line tutorials.

Quick and dirty Slabs -Quick Take Aways

It helps to get to know your clay and how far you can push it, best firing times, drying times, maturing temperatures

I use Lots of compression of the clay with a rib, front and back

Attention to details, remembering to take out the form at just the right time,
(Too early, and the clay slumps, too late and the clay will have shrunk)

Bottom needs to be the same thickness as sides to not crack, Due mostly to drying time, clay shrinks as it dries, and if you have two different thicknesses of clay joined together the one piece will dry faster, and there will be separation likely and cracking

Trip: allow clay to have a long drying time, and long bisque firing time
Quick drying almost always results in cracks

Don't overstretch clay=Cracks

Work while the clay is most malleable for large clay shape changes: clay has a memory, decide what shape you are going to put it into, and try not to change back and forth, or you will have struggles and likely cracking later

Let clay set up before adding details that need to be "sharper"

Poke a hole in the bottom if cylinder mold won't come out- lets air release, then fill in hole.

Low fire bisque molds, or plaster molds work well as slump or hump molds because they absorb the moisture of the clay and then the clay releases from them easily

-However- watch carefully as the clay shrinks as it dries, and if it is on the outside of a bowl, the clay will crack as it dries, if left on

- be careful when working with plaster, you do not want plaster to get into your clay, it will cause the clay to explode in the kiln

Suggested Supplies

Recycled Newspapers

Painters tape

Cylinder forms

Recycled forms/many shapes

Bisque slump molds - make your own or pay a local potter/ceramic artist to make

Bowl- plastic, or ceramic sink bowl

Plate

Plaster mold/slump mold- make your own or purchase from Totally Ceramics in Surrey

Hope you had a great time! Thank you for attending. The sky is the limit! Keep Creating! Feel free to invite me to come into your class to do a workshop! I love working with students of all ages!

Professional Artist

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When You Can Use Specific Clay Techniques

Moist Clay

Rolling out slabs

Brush on Slips and engages

Impressing/stamps/objects

Slip trailing

Direct Carving

Pressing with open face mold

Pressing with carved plaster block

Leatherhard Clay

Brushing on slips and engages

Incising/Carving

Inlay

Shellac resist

Underglazes

Sgraffito

Screen-printing with underglazes

Bone-Dry Clay

Underglazes

Shellac resist

Sgraffito

Screen printing with underglazes

Bisqued Clay

Underglazes
Screen-printing with underglazes
Rubbing on stains
Glazes

Glazed Clay

Overglaze
Lusters
Decals

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