

Beginning Ceramics Hand Building with Clay

ARTS 3320 Sec 02

3 credits

Art Complex, Art Building A, Room 102

Fall 2017

Instructor: Lauren Clay

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Office Location: Huntsville Campus, Art Complex building A Room 102 A

Office Hours: by appointment

Class is in session: M/W 3:00 pm – 5:50pm

Course Description

This course is designed to build an understanding of the historical significance as well as the contemporary relevance of clay as an art material. In this class you will learn a vocabulary of basic ceramic construction methods, basic low fire surface finishing and basic firing techniques. These techniques will serve you as tools to express and illustrate your conceptual ideas in clay sculpture.

Learning Outcomes/ Objectives

- ◆ Students will be able to employ basic ceramic techniques to create sculptural works with clay
- ◆ Students will have an understanding of and be able to utilize basic ceramic vocabulary terms
- ◆ Students will have a familiarity with and be able to identify ceramic artists
- ◆ Students will be able to confidently critique ceramic works of their own and of their peers
- ◆ Students will have a basic understanding for using ceramic glazes and firing kilns

Text: no text is required

Why do we make objects? *We will investigate these ideas in relation to making sculptural forms in clay.

The objects that we surround ourselves with and use on a daily basis hold an intimate place in our lives and often serve as more than purely utilitarian or decorative objects. As object makers I think it is important to reflect on your individual relationship to the objects in your life and why you choose to make the things you do.

Some thoughts to consider—

We use objects to represent us and others- people we know or don't know or people we wish to know. Objects we own are often inherited...making them seem precious or recalling a personal or cultural history that we align ourselves with. Objects we acquire often represent something we aspire to...making us think of the future or of our desires and goals.

Objects become surrogates for people places and things in our lives and as object makers we must ask ourselves questions about how we understand objects, the places they hold in our lives, how these objects are valued and how that value is assessed. Most importantly we will investigate how your interests and ideas are imbedded in the objects that you create.

PROJECTS

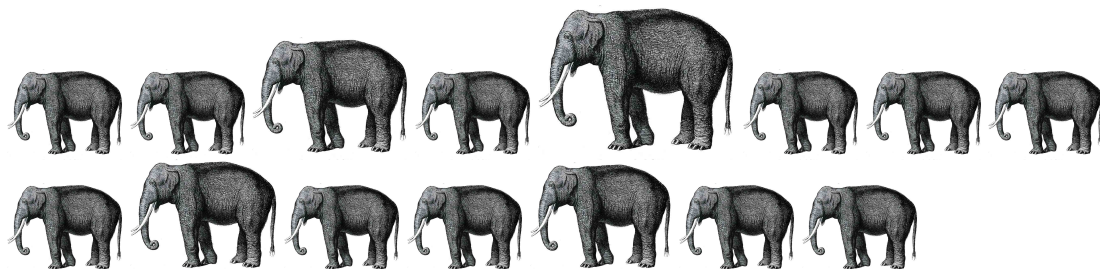
For each project you will receive a project outline sheet and when appropriate I will give a PowerPoint lecture to show historical and contemporary works by other artists that will serve as inspiration for the assignment.

This semester you will be assigned 5 projects that will address both the way you make (technique) and the way you think (your fabulous ideas).

These projects are designed to equip you with a basic understanding of clay as a sculptural material and to provide a structure for you to explore your ideas.

All projects will be made with earthenware clay and fired to Cone 04 or lower. Pieces must fit in the electric kilns. You will be introduced to various low fire slips, glazes and application techniques.

1. **First things First**-An introductory assignment emphasizing basic sculptural clay building techniques
2. **Colored Slip Decoration Techniques**-learn a variety of decoration techniques using colored slips
3. **Glaze Test Tiles**- You will each make a series of test tiles to better understand how glazes work in combination and to test surfaces prior to applying them to your work.
4. **Inspired By**- Choose a contemporary Artist who works primarily with clay and create a project that is inspired in some way by their work. You will also write a short paper and present a power point presentation on this artist. This project allows you to become familiar with the contemporary field of ceramic art and to experiment with new ways of forming objects with clay.
5. **Building Content**- Incorporating a material other than clay that adds to the content and context, you will create a piece that is installed by hanging, on the wall or some other way you devise to get it off the traditional pedestal.



A PACK OF ANIMALS

Ceramics is a medium that requires us to work together as a group to complete various tasks. The group activities will include, loading and unloading kilns, critiquing your work and keeping our classroom clean.

WHAT TO PACK IN YOUR TOOL BOX

1.You- I believe that art is inspired by life and I am sure we all lead very interesting and diverse lives. I encourage you to pay attention to your daily experiences, encounters, rituals, habits, histories, obsessions, conversations, and so on, and it is my hope that all of you will bring your experiences, ideas and opinions to share in this class. I think it is often through closely examining the world around us and sharing what we find with other creative people (like the ones in this class) that great ideas are realized and profound art is made. Our class is a time where this type of examination and conversation can and will take place.

2. Sketchbook of some type

1.Tool Kit from Bearkat Art supply (this kit is specially prepared for this class- you can't get it anywhere else and you absolutely need, it so get over there and buy it!) costs \$15.25

2. Plastic garbage bags to cover your projects- lawn and leaf are good. **YOU WILL NEED THESE!!!**

3. Container for tools

4. X-acto knife

5.12" or larger T square ruler- get one if you have issues sharing otherwise we have a few

6. Various sized paintbrushes...bamboo handled are great- we have some for shared use in the studio as well

7. Scraps of canvas, old sheets or fabric

8. Towel for personal clean up

9. Apron or old clothing so you don't mess up your clothes

SHARE BUT LABEL YOUR TOOLS-----they are easily lost.

CLAY

You will purchase clay in 25lb. increments for \$16.25 from Homegrown Marketplace formerly BearKat Bookstore. Located at 1108 16th Street across the intersection from Old Main Dining Hall. Go and ask for Longhorn Red. Make sure this is what you are purchasing, if you get the wrong clay you will have to return it and this will waste time. You can expect to spend about \$100.00- \$150.00 on clay this semester. I recommend buying 50- 100 lbs of clay to get started. You will want to get a ride or drive to drop off your clay—it is heavy!

Critique, Discussion, Participation

Critiques of your work and discussions in class are a critical part of learning to create and discuss artwork. The critiques are set up as a way for you to give and receive thoughtful feedback on your work and that of others. Critiques will take place at the end of each assignment. This is a process that you will continue to practice in art school and an important skill to develop in your career as an artist. All students must participate in these sessions.

Please talk with me if you have any concerns however you will not be excused from participation.

Timeliness, Multi-tasking and using out of class work time

Completing your studio projects in a timely and thoughtful manner is critical to your success in this course. In order to do this you will need to multi-task while you are in the studio and you will need to spend outside of class time working on your assignments. You do not have the same kind of homework for a studio class as you might for psychology or physics where you are able to complete it at home. You will need to come to the studio outside of class in order to complete your projects and succeed in this course. For this course you are expected to spend at least six hours per week on assignments – this is in addition to your class time. There will not be accommodations made if you choose to take your work home and it is broken in transit to or from the studio.

PAPER & PRESENTATION

As part of the project “Inspired By” you will each write a short 4 page research paper on a contemporary ceramic artist from a list that I provide and you will give a short power point presentation about the artist’s work as part of your projects. The power point presentation will be at the end of the semester and the paper will be due prior to starting the assignment. A more detailed handout will be provided along with the assignment.

GRADING

Clay is journey oriented in its process and yet gratifying at its destination, often the traveling to the product and problem solving along the way is as satisfying as the final result. In my grading I consider process, concept, result and effort.

Studio Assignments 72%

Paper and presentation 15%

Group Participation, Participation in class discussion and critique 10% (Helping with loading, firing, unloading of kilns and studio maintenance)

Wherewithal and gumption to progress 3%

Minus attendance

GRADING POLICY

A= Excellence. This grade is earned through superior effort and a highly developed understanding of concepts and principles presented in this class. It denotes achievement FAR in excess of class expectations.

B= Above average. This grade is earned through a high level of effort and a strong grasp of concepts and principles presented in this class. It indicates noteworthy achievement that exceeds class expectations.

C= Average. This grade is earned through satisfactory completion of all assignments and an attendance record with no more than three unexcused absences. It reflects the successful achievement of basic class expectations.

D= Below average. This grade is earned through substandard effort and failure to complete all assignments within their guidelines. It may also be earned through excessive absence, mistreatment of facilities or disregard for the safety and wellbeing of one’s classmates.

F= Unacceptable student performance.

Make Up Policy

I don’t accept late work. All work should be ready on the day it is due at the beginning of class unless you are notified otherwise. There may be extenuating circumstances where I will bend this policy but it is rare.

Attendance

Attendance is imperative

Please plan to attend all scheduled class sessions on time and plan to stay through the end of the scheduled class time. I will give you a short break during class but arriving late or leaving early will result in lowering your final grade. It is important that you are in class to witness the demonstrations, participate in critiques and utilize the workdays. We will be developing a community that will rely on active participation. **You will be allowed 2 emergency absences without question.** Use these for illness, weddings, births etc. I strongly recommend that you do not use these for oversleeping, hangovers, hangnails etc. **There is no such thing as an excused absence** after you miss more than 2 classes your grade will suffer. If you do miss class it is your responsibility to get all information that was covered in class. I will not repeat demonstrations or slide presentations. **After 5 missed classes you will no longer be able to pass the class. 3 late arrivals or early departures will count as an absence.**

******If you miss the Final Critique or the Final Clean up day your letter grade will be dropped by 2 letters. If you neglect to collect all of your work from the studio at the end of the semester your final grade will be dropped 2 letters.**

Studio Etiquette

More than just knowing which fork to use

The ceramic studio is a communal space therefore we respect one another and we respect the facility. A clean studio is a respectable studio. Clay is a messy medium and its mess can be potentially hazardous to your health, as clay dries it can turn into dust, this dust in large quantity can damage your lungs. The easiest way to fight the dust is by cleaning up with a wet sponge and clean water when you are finished working. Set an example and leave your space cleaner than when you found it.

Studio Assistants

There will be two student workers for the Ceramics Studio, their names and schedules will be noted on the chalkboard along with the open lab hours. When a student assistant is in the studio working they are here to help you with tools and equipment, technical issues, and simple questions about assignments. If they are in the studio working on their own work and not on the clock please be respectful of their studio time and reserve your questions for another time.

RESOURCES FOR CERAMIC ART

These are websites that have been created as a resource of contemporary artists using ceramics as a medium. The work ranges from utilitarian to sculptural and installation. Please browse these websites at your leisure and become familiar with the different methods in which artists use clay as an expressive and conceptual material.

<http://www.artaxis.org/>

<http://accessceramics.org/artists/>

NCECA <http://nceca.net/>

The National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts is a national organization that promotes and improves the ceramic arts through education, community-building, research and creative inspiration. NCECA offers programs, events and publications to support its membership of artists, educators, students, individual and corporate art patrons, gallery owners, museum curators and providers of ceramic arts-related products and services. If you are interested in pursuing ceramics this is an organization that you should become familiar with in order to find out about news and opportunities.

College Art Association www.collegeart.org

The College Art Association website is a great resource for standards and guidelines when it comes to professional practice. It is also a good resource for students to find opportunities for possible artist residency opportunities, grant opportunities, jobs in art related fields and exhibition opportunities

THINGS TO BE ON TOP OF



Save all your work until the critique- Do not throw work away or take it home until I have announced that you may.



I reserve the right to change the course calendar or requirements as I see fit.



This studio classroom is open for you to use when there are not other classes in session. Please follow the same etiquette when using the studio outside of class as you do during class. The building is open 8 am- 9 pm Monday – Friday. There will be studio hours on the weekend as posted.



No work made off campus may be fired without my approval; no work that is not an assignment may be fired without my approval.



If you come to class unprepared to work- for example- with out homework sketches, tools, clay or any other required material to work during class time you will be dismissed from class and counted as absent for the day. You will not be permitted to run errands during class unless there are extenuating circumstances, which are rare. You will not be permitted to get lunch coffee or take other long breaks during class- if our class meets during lunch or dinner make sure you grab a snack before class or bring something you can eat quickly to class and eat it on your break. **DO NOT EAT IN THE STUDIO CLASSROOM**



Do not have friends stop in to chat during class. Anyone not enrolled in the class will be asked to leave.



Please refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university.



Cellular phones and pagers must be turned off before class begins. That means when you walk through the door you should reach in your bag and turn off your phone. **If I have to ask you to turn your phone off or to put it away more than one time you will be asked to leave class for that day and be counted absent. You will not talk on your phone in this classroom if you do you will be asked to leave for the day and be counted as absent. You will not text while in this class- if you do you will be asked to leave for the day and counted as absent.**



The use of headphones is prohibited unless otherwise stated.



Students are prohibited from using tobacco products in class.



Students are prohibited from making offensive remarks, reading non-class related material, sleeping, talking at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction in the studio classroom. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave the class and be counted absent for that day.



Students who are especially disruptive also may be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.



You may not consume alcoholic beverages in this classroom or building.



Visitors in the classroom

Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.



Academic Dishonesty

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: http://www.shsu.edu/~slo_www/



STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail disability@shsu.edu). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Services for Students with Disabilities. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/811006.pdf>



USE OF PHONE & TEXT MESSAGING IN THE CLASSROOM

(Possible text) Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus impedes the mission of the university. Please *turn off or mute your cellular phone and/or pager before class begins*. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a directive to leave class or being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.



Student Absence on Religious Holy Days Policy

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: "a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20...." A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/documents/861001.pdf



The Writing Center

The Sam Houston Writing Center, located in Farrington 111, is open from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. on Friday, and 2 - 7 p.m. on Sunday. Writing tutors will work with you at any stage of the writing process (brainstorming, generating a draft, organizing a draft, or revising a draft) for any written assignment. The Writing Center operates on an appointment system, so please call (936) 294-3680 to schedule a session with a writing tutor. Skype sessions are available for distance students, and a tutor is available at the University Center. See website for more information: www.shsu.edu/wctr. For additional information or to schedule a class orientation, please contact us at 936-294-3680 or via email at wctr@shsu.edu. You can also find information on our website: www.shsu.edu/~wctr.



DEFACING UNIVERSITY PROPERTY

Do not paint on concrete, asphalt, trees, sides of buildings, etc. When using any kind of paint use a drop cloth or tarp to protect the surface from overspray. Defacing university property is prohibited by university policy. Students will be held responsible for the cost of damages to the facilities.



DEPARTMENT OF ART BFA REVIEW

The purpose of the BFA Review is to ensure that students have learned basic principles and techniques needed for advanced art courses.

All Art students must successfully complete all of the Art Foundation courses and the BFA Review before being accepted into a BFA program in Computer Animation, Photography, or Studio Art or Graphic Design. Graphic Design students must also pass a separate Graphic Design Review after the BFA Review.

The Art Foundation Courses are WASH, Drawing, and Foundations in Digital Art. (ARTS 1313, 1314, 1315, 1316, & 2313). Students must pass each course with a grade of C or higher to take the BFA Review and proceed to upper level courses.

The semester after all of the Foundation courses are complete, students must sign up for the BFA Review. Students should see an art advisor every semester to ensure they take the BFA Review on time. It should be taken the semester immediately following the completion of the Foundation Courses.

Students who do not pass the BFA Review may re-take it the following semester. Students who do not pass on the second attempt will not be allowed to continue as BFA majors, but may follow the degree plan for the BA in Art. Non-participation after signing up or being advised to sign up will count as a failure of that semester's review.

Graphic Design students must pass the BFA Review, complete Principles of Graphic Design (ARTS 2323) and participate in a BFA Review at the end of the semester that they are enrolled in Typography (ARTS 3322).

For more information on the BFA review see the Department of art web page: <http://www.shsu.edu/academics/art/review/>

SOME RULES AND HINTS FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OR ANYONE ELSE BY JOHN CAGE

John Milton Cage Jr. (September 5, 1912 – August 12, 1992)

John Cage was an American composer and pioneer of chance music, electronic music and non-standard use of musical instruments, Cage was one of the leading figures of the post-war avant-garde and one of the most influential American composers/ artists of the 20th century.

RULE 1 Find a place you trust and then, try trusting it for a while.

RULE 2 -----General Duties of a Student
Pull everything out of your teacher.
Pull everything out of your fellow students.

RULE 3-----General Duties of a Teacher
Pull everything out of your students

RULE 4 Consider everything an experiment.

RULE 5 Be self-disciplined. This means finding someone wise or smart and choosing to follow them. To be disciplined is to follow in a good way. To be self-disciplined is to follow in a better way.

RULE 6 Follow the leader. Nothing is a mistake. There is no win and no fail. There is only make.

RULE 7 The only rule is work. If you work it will lead to something. It is the people who do all of the work all of the time who eventually catch on to things. You can fool the fans, but not the players.

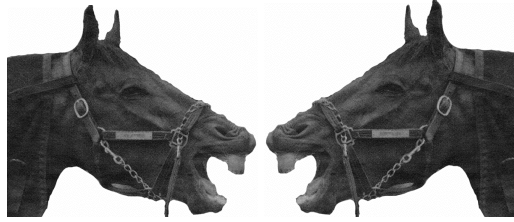
RULE 8 Do not try to create and analyze at the same time. They are different processes.

RULE 9 Be happy whenever you can manage. Enjoy yourself. It is lighter than you think.

RULE 10 We are breaking all the rules, even our own rules, and how do we do that? By leaving plenty of room for X qualities.

HELPFUL HINTS

Always be around. Come and go to everything, always go to classes. Read everything you can get your hands on. Look at movies carefully and often. Save everything. It may come in handy later



Beginning Ceramics Student Info Form

Name:

Year in school and years in school:

Major and concentration:

Where are you from?

What is your passion in life?

Why are you are studying to be an artist? OR Why are you taking this class?

List your three favorite artists from art history and briefly state why you like their work?

List your three favorite contemporary artists and briefly state why you like their work- contemporary defined as someone who is presently working and still alive.

What you would like to learn in this class:

What is the most recent thing you read and enjoyed, book, magazine, newspaper or other? Why did you enjoy it?

What experience do you have with clay?