



Dear Students:

Welcome to the Adams School of Art. To make your clay experience enjoyable, please review the studio policies below to help keep a clean and safe working environment.

### **Clean-up Details:**

- Students should wash all their areas they have worked in or around: clean the wheel and splash pan, floor, tables and all equipment and surfaces in the glaze room.
- DO NOT THROW CLAY DOWN THE DRAINS. It damages plumbing, which is very sensitive.
- Wash hand and tools, bats, splash pans, in the reclaim buckets near sink before rinsing under the faucet.
- Please follow the rule leave it cleaner than you found it!

### **Clean-up at the Sink:**

After following the instructions above for processing SOLID CLAY that you can scoop up with your hand your splash pan should have no solids in it and your water bucket only has clay colored water in it. (Please do not put tools in reclaim buckets) You can proceed to wash your splash pan, water bucket, sponge, and tools out in the sink. Rinse everything off over the water the sink using the faucet.

### **Clay and Glaze Temperature**

One of the most important pieces of information there is for ceramic students is understanding firing temperatures. Clay and glazes are fired at many different temperatures to get different surface effects. The different temperatures are referred to as cones.

Cones are small cone shapes objects that are placed in the kilns to read interior temperature so the person firing the kiln knows when to turn the kiln off. We will be firing your work at Cone 6.

### **Firing Your Work**

Please know that Faculty and Staff make every effort to take utmost care of your pots once they enter into the firing cycle. Please take the time to understand our system so that you can avoid any future frustration. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask your teacher or anyone on staff. As with everything, there is a learning curve to the process and we are here to make it as simple and satisfying as possible.

## **Understand the Firing Cycle**

After you finish making your piece, it needs time to dry completely. If it were to go into the bisque (first firing) kiln before it was completely dry, it would run the risk of exploding when the kiln reaches water-boiling temperature! Once your piece is “bone dry” it is ready to go into the kiln for bisque. You can put it on the “Greenware” shelf before it is dry, but know that our staff won’t put your piece into the kiln until it has had time to dry, which can sometimes take up to a week.

Bisque firings happen as frequently as we are able to fill a kiln. Once classes get going, that is weekly, and sometimes more often than that. We make every effort to fire pieces in time, but at the same time, we cannot perform miracles or fire kilns that are half empty.

Once a piece is bisque, it is ready to glaze. Pieces are bisque to a low temperature, which means the clay body is still porous but can no longer decompose back to clay. This means that glaze will be, in a sense, “sucked” onto the surface. Try putting the tip of your tongue to a bisque piece - it will almost stick! This means your piece is prime for accepting glaze.

Once you have glazed your piece, it is time to put it on the “Shelf for Glaze Kiln” shelves near the kilns on the rolling cart. All pieces will be low fired to cone 6.

Once there is enough work to fill a kiln, the pieces will be glaze fired. It takes 2 to 3 days for low firings. Pieces that have been fired will come out of the kiln and go to the shelf labeled finished glaze ware.

PLEASE make sure a piece is YOURS before you take it!

Always initial the bottoms of your pieces to avoid confusion. Pieces shrink and are transformed in the firing, and you might not recognize it!

## **Glazing your Work**

Glazing is another transformative stage in the evolution of your work and it involves experience and practice. It is suggested that you glaze your work, as it is bisque to make observations and get to know the variations and nuances of the process. Enjoy the process. Make it part of the whole experience of being creative. Set aside adequate time for glazing your pieces as it requires different skills. Glaze as you go. If you glaze your pieces several times throughout the session, you will learn how the glaze performs and varies by its placement in the kiln. Each time you glaze you will be able to make informed decision

## **Application Tips**

- Keep a bowl with clean water & sponge near you
- Clean pot with damp sponge to remove all dust particles.
- Cover an area with newspaper so you can wax you pots.
- Wax foot where appropriate. Let dry before beginning to glaze.
- Decide on glaze and application technique. (i.e., dipping pouring etc.)
- Stir the bucket of glaze well, being sure to release all glaze from the bottom of the bucket.

- Please ask your instructor for help if you wish to double dip your pot. This might cause your glaze to run, attaching your pot to the kiln shelf, causing damage to your piece and the shelf. If you are interested in layering our pots with multiple glazes, ask an instructor which glazes, go well together.
- Clean bottom or foot thoroughly, no glaze should be on the bottom of our pot, or it will stick to the shelf in firing! Should only use 1 glaze for the first time. And should wipe glaze off ¼" from the bottom wall.
- Place our piece on appropriate glaze shelf so it will be fired.

### **Safety**

- Clay and glaze dust is not good for you. To that end, please follow the following rules.
- Absolutely no eating in the wheel or glaze areas.
- If you are sanding your piece, you must do it outside.
- And whether it is bone dry or bisque, you should wear a dust mask.
- Please do not eat or drink in the wheel and glaze studios.

### **Helpful definitions for ceramic terms and tools**

Bat – A slab or platform on which clay is handled; a circular device attached to the wheel=head.

Bisque – Underglaze clay, fired at a low temperature

Bisque Firing – The process of firing unglazed clay to a low temperature to harden the clay and drive the physical water from it.

Clay Body – A mixture of different types of clays and minerals for a specific ceramic purpose.

Glaze – A glassy coating that has been melted onto a ceramic surface.

Greenware – unfired clay that is bone-dry, a state in which lay forms are absent of water molecules and hence the most fragile.

Kiln – Enclosed containers of various sizes – build of refractor brick and heated by electric, gas, oil, wood to tempers from 1500F to 2340F. In which pots are fired.

Leather hard – clay which is dried sufficiently to be still, but which is still damp enough to be joined to other pieces.

Plasticity – The property of a material enabling it to be shaped and to hold its form.

Underglaze – Colored decoration applied to bisque clay then coated with clear glaze. Typically made of clay slip and raw pigment.

Wedging – Method of kneading clay to make it homogenous; ridding the clay of all air pockets.

Glaze firing – typically the second firming of a piece pottery which has been coated with glass forming materials. The approximate temperature for this firing is 2300.