Ancient Clay Techniques

FA25_FINE _ARTS_2996.501_Ancient Clay Techniques
CRN: 75398
Fall 2025 Saturday 10:00-3:00

Istructor: Janice Pacifico
Office: 103 (Shared)
Office Hours: M/W 11:30-12:00 or by appointment
The best ways to contact me are through. office hours or email.
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Course Content:

FINE ARTS 2996-501 Ancient Clay Techniques is a Topics class with no prerequisites. It explores the traditional coil, scrape and polish method of making pottery used by many primitive civilizations, in particular, the indigenous peoples of the Americas. Students will expand critical awareness of the cultural importance of pottery as it has developed through the ages. Lectures, group discussions, assigned projects and critiques will assist the student's growth and critical understanding of the impact of primitive clay methodology on contemporary cultures

Student Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate working knowledge of processing raw materials, forming processes, polishing and decorating, and pit-firing methods in the production of coil and scrape pottery.
- Exhibit patience, persistence and creative problem skills.
- Develop ability to think visually and communicate ideas.
- Identify and discuss major developments in the evolution of primitive pottery
- Demonstrate ability to discuss and defend work in relation to concepts, ideas, techniques, processes, and experiences.

- Understand and relate primitive pottery techniques in the context of contemporary cultural pottery expressions

Materials

Students will need the following materials: Drywall screen, sandpaper or sandstone, polishing rocks, Brushes, Small Bucket, Plastic, Masking Tape, Spray Bottle, Clean up sponge, small sponges, Notebook, Towel, Lock. No glazes are used in this class

Suggested Text

Primitive Pottery: Hal Reigger
Talking With the Clay: Stephen Trimble
Finding One's Way With Clay: Paulus Berensohn
Message From The High Desert: Clint Swink

Student Responsibilities

Students are required to complete all assignments on time, participate in scheduled critiques, class discussions and maintain a safe, respectable, positive studio environment.

Student Responsibilities (Continued)

Art studio classes are very different than other classes. The majority of work is done in the studio due to equipment and material needs. Students are expected to work in the studio several hours each week in addition to scheduled class times. Open studio hours will be announced.

Neither dishonesty nor unruly behavior will be tolerated in the classroom; such actions will lead to being dropped from the course. According to our Student Code of Conduct found on page 121 of the 2014 – 2016 UNM-Valencia Catalog:

"Appropriate disciplinary procedures and sanctions shall be applied to any student who commits, or attempts to commit, any of the following acts of misconduct: 2.4. Academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments: claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University

records."

Students are expected to attend every class on time, fully prepared for each day's work and clean the studio before the end of each class. More than three absences without prior consultation may result in a failing grade or a drop from the class. Leaving excessively early or arriving late three times results in one absence.

Students are responsible for lecture and demo information missed if absent. No repeats of lectures or demos will be given due to lack of attendance.

Cell phones need to be put on mute during class times. If you must receive a call during class time leave the studio before you answer. No phone conversations, text messaging, web surfing, movie watching etc. in studios.

If you have any issue that may need special attention or accommodation, please see me after class. All personal information is kept strictly confidential. Likewise, I keep all grades, personal information, etc confidential. Please understand that I will not give out such information on the phone or through email or to anyone other than you.

Grading

Grading is based on completion of course assignments (no full credit will be given for late work), quality of individual technical and critical development, personal commitment and ability to work in a community studio setting. Personal commitment involves regular attendance, consistent effort, completion of work and participation in group critiques and the general willingness to try. **Greenware is not finished work.**

There are two required group critiques, midterm and final. The midterm critique measures progress made on assignments up to that time and final critique is where all work is evaluated for grade.

Assignments	65%
Critiques	25%
Attendance/Participation	10%

Ancient Clay Techniques PROJECT & CRITIQUE RUBRIC	**A+, A, A- (100% - 90%)** Demonstrates outstanding skill, discernment, and working knowledge of hand building, throwing, combined processes and surfaces development. Quality of work is excellent, and is integrated with exceptional creativity Outstanding patience and persistence with outstanding problem solving skills demonstrated Demonstrates an outstanding ability to discuss and assess work in critique and class discussions. Demonstrates extensive use and understanding of concepts and terminology used in the discipline
B+, B, B- (89% - 80%) Demonstrates moderate skill, discernment, and working knowledge of hand building, throwing, combined processes and surfaces development. Quality of work is good, and is integrated with some creativity Moderate patience and persistence with medium problem solving skills demonstrated Demonstrates a solid ability to discuss and assess work in critique and class	**C+, C, C- (79% - 70%)** Demonstrates average skill, discernment, and working knowledge of hand building, throwing, combined processes and surfaces development. Quality of work is modest, and is moderately integrated with creativity Average patience and persistence with average problem solving skills demonstrated Demonstrates an average ability to discuss and assess work in critique and

discussions. Demonstrates competent use and understanding of concepts and terminology used in this discipline	class discussions. Demonstrates an average use and understanding of concepts and terminology used in this discipline
D+, D, D- (69% - 60%) Demonstrates a lack of skill, discernment, and working knowledge of hand building, throwing, combined processes and surfaces development. **Quality of work** subject to changes) Wk 1: August 27: Introduction a is borderline acceptable, and is poorly integrated with creativity Limited patience and persistence with limited problem-solving skills demonstrated Demonstrates a limited ability to discuss and assess work in critique and class discussions. Demonstrates poor use and understanding of concepts and terminology used in this discipline	**F (59% and below)** Fails to demonstrate skill, discernment, and working knowledge of hand building, throwing, combined processes and surfaces development. Quality of work is unacceptable, and is not integrated with creativity No patience and persistence with no problem solving skills demonstrated Does not participate in discussing or assessing work in critique and class discussions. Shows little or no understanding of the concepts and terminology used in this discipline

Schedule

Week 1: August 23 Syllabus/Lecture/Demo on finding, digging and processing clay.

Week 2: August 30 Demonstration of coil pottery
Assignment one

Week 3: September 6. Workday.

Week 4: September 13 Demonstration of scraping and sanding

Week 5: September 20 Demonstration of Slipping and Polishing

Week 6: September 27 Demonstration of decorating techniques

Week 7: October 4 Demonstration of lids **Assignment 2**

Week 8: October 11 Fall Break**-No Class**

Week 9: October 18. Work day

Week10: October 25 Demonstration of handles

Week 11: November 1 **Assignment 3**

Week 12: November 8 Workday

Week 13: November 15 Workday

Week 14: November 22 Workday

Week 15: November 29 Pit firing

Week 16: December 6 **Final Critique** Studio clean-up
Required for grade

Please note:
An all-day field trip to dig clay will be scheduled based on weather conditions and student schedules

Assignments

Assignment 1: 25 points
2 small coil, scrape and polish pots

Assignment 2: 20 points
1 large coil and scrape pot, including decoration and lid

Assignment 3: 20 points
1 large coil and scrape pot including at least 1 handle