

San José State University
Department of Art & Art History

ART 133: Topics in Ceramic Sculpture, Experimental Processes, Section 02,
Spring, 2017

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Adam Shiverdecker
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Email:	adam.shiverdecker@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tu/Th 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Class Days/Time:	Tu/Th 3:00 pm – 5:50 pm
Classroom:	IS 124
Prerequisites:	Art 46 or Instructor consent
Department Office:	ART 116
Department Contact:	Website: www.sjsu.edu/art Email: art@sjsu.edu

Course Format: Studio

Course Description

This course explores advanced concepts, materials/processes, and techniques of creating ceramic forms and spaces. Building on basic understanding of composition/visual form as it extends beyond the surface and into the space of the mind, body, and environment, students are challenged to develop conceptually strong and provocative solutions that move beyond the object and into the space of the surrounding environment. This course invites students to explore creative and material processes that utilize the power of visual forms to evoke and provoke by challenging preconceived notions of what constitutes ceramic art. Students will be introduced to various methods of realizing three-dimensional forms, including additive and reductive form, construction and deconstruction, slip-casting, and various unfired capabilities; we will also explore the relationship between technology and clay.

While clay is the basic material explored in this course, students will be introduced to traditional and unconventional methods for creating surface treatments, appendages, and installation components. Students are expected to gain an understanding of the making of clay and loading, unloading, and firing of kilns, and acquire some general knowledge about the maintenance of a ceramic studio.

This semester our course will be divided up into four units. The following units will be covered:

- 1.) Ceramics and War and Politics
- 2.) Monumental Tiles
- 3.) Structures – False Positives

4.) Unfamiliar Territory – Creating your own process

PowerPoint presentations will provide an overview of both historical and contemporary ceramics. Studio assignments will vary in length and involvement and will be followed by group critiques. Engaged participation in critiques is mandatory and essential for your progress.

Basic studio maintenance and cooperative kiln loading/unloading is considered part of the class. In addition to studio work, students might occasionally be asked to visit on-campus galleries and attend Tuesday Night Lectures.

Other Requirements: Ceramics is a medium that demands long hours and constant attention, so expect to spend significant additional time outside of class working on your projects (three hours per week is baseline, will vary week to week.)

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Students will gain understanding of:

1. the language of ceramic vessels and forms
2. the nature and experience of ceramic vessels and forms
3. objects in relation to the spaces they occupy
4. vessels in relation to the body and user
5. the relationship between technology and conceptualization in clay
6. the possibilities and limitations of materials in relation to form and concept
7. additive and subtractive processes for generating form and space
8. equipment, safety, and certain fabrication methods
9. Craft vs. craft, and its position in fine arts
10. highly refined craftsmanship

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. a rapport with certain materials, tools, and processes fundamental to the understanding of ceramic form and space
2. an understanding of the role of materiality and tactility in visual experience
3. a vocabulary based in the fundamental principles of the potter's wheel
4. an understanding of criticism as an essential component of artistic development
5. a strong sense of craft and the ability to execute well-crafted work
6. facility thinking and working with the elements and principles of art/design
7. strong work habits and safe studio practice

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

There is no required textbook for this course; however, several texts will be read and discussed.

Readings

Confrontational Ceramics by Judith Schwartz

Ceramics In The Environment by Janet Mansfield

“The Handle” essay by Georg Simmel

“Pirates and Farmers” essay by Dave Hickey

The Ceramics Process by Anton Reijnders

The Ceramic Glaze Handbook by Mark Burleson

Postmodern Ceramics by Mark Del Vecchio

The New Age of Ceramics by Hannah Stouffer

Understanding Greek Vases by Andrew Clark et al

Ceramics: Contemporary Artists Working in Clay by Kate Singleton

Art & Today by Eleanor Heartney

Thinking Through Craft by Glenn Adamson

cFileOnline.org

Ceramics Monthly magazine

Ceramics: Art & Perception magazine

Required Materials

There is no textbook required for this course, but you are required to purchase your own tools and clay. You will need an assortment of tools (needle tool, trimming tools, ribs, fettling knife, small sponge, cutting wire, etc.). Normally sold as a kit, these items are available through the SJSU Ceramics Guild, the Student Union, or Clay Planet (Clay Planet is a local supplier located at 1774 Russell Ave., Santa Clara. Hours are M-F 9-5 and Sat 10-3, 408-295-3352, clay-planet.com.) Additional carving tools will be helpful and can be purchased at most craft stores or Clay Planet. You will also need to provide a lock for your locker, a metal fork (this will get gnarly, so don't bring in the good silver), lightweight trash bags (tall kitchen bags work well), small plastic containers (quart size yogurt or a little larger), cheap paint brushes of various sizes. You have the options of purchasing clay as needed through the SJSU Ceramics Guild (\$10 per bag) or mixing up free recycled clay. Consult me before bringing in other types of clay as it may or may not be suitable for the project and/or the studio and/or the firing technique for the project. A sketchbook is a must (nothing smaller than 5"x7" and you will need approximately 20-30 pages for this class).

Estimated Cost: \$70-\$90

Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT)

Many materials for use in this course require special handling. A HAZMAT tutorial and training will be conducted by instructor and staff.

Library Liaison

Rebecca Kohn: Rebecca.Kohn@sjsu.edu, 408.808.2061

Website: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/collectiondevelopment/CDhumanities>

GRADING INFORMATION

Grading in this course will be determined by a point system. There is a total of 100 possible points that can be earned. At the end of the semester these points will be totaled, and your final grade will then be impacted by participation as outlined above. You will receive a grade upon completion of each project. At midterm I will let you know where you stand in terms of class participation.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Ceramics and Politics:	20 points
Monumental Tiles:	20 points
Structures (“False Positives”):	20 points
The Unfamiliar Territory:	20 points
Contemporary artist paper:	5 points
Presentation:	5 points
Participation:	<u>10 points</u>
Total possible points:	100

Grades for each project will be determined by the following criteria:

- Willingness to explore, experiment and **take risks**
- Creative thought process and problem solving
- Understanding of materials and process and their relationship to your finished work
- Your ability to evaluate yourself and others
- Fulfillment and understanding of the assignment’s criteria and objectives
- Deadline – please note missed deadlines will result in a loss of 5 points per day. Be prepared to work outside of class to meet deadlines.
- Projects may be reworked for a higher grade at my sole discretion and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Please be aware this is a privilege, not a right; this option may not be available to you.

Final Examination (Critique)

Thursday, May 18, 2:45 pm – 5:00 pm.

GRADING SCALE

95-100 = A

90-94 = A-

87-89 = B+

83-86 = B

80-82 = B-

77-79 = C+

73-76 = C

70-72 = C-

67-69 = D+

63-66 = D

60-62 = D-

59 and below = F

A= Excellent work

B= Above average work

C= Average work

D= Below average work

F= Unsatisfactory work

Deadlines

You are required to meet deadlines for your work. Due to the timing of kiln firings involved in a robust facility such as SJSU, it is extremely important to meet deadlines. If your work is not ready at a deadline, show up for class with the work you have and speak to me.

Classroom Protocol

Critiques

Critical inquiry is vital in the studio arts process, which is why we hold group critiques for each finished project. Occasionally we will hold impromptu mid-project critiques. The purpose of the critique is to engage in constructive evaluation and is not synonymous with “judgment day.” That is to say that we are all responsible for removing ourselves from our work and look at it critically from the outside. We will address formal and craftsmanship concerns while investigating concept, content, context, meaning and interpretation. Everyone’s opinion is valuable in this process so it is essential for your participation in group critiques.

It is very important to me that everyone can come to class and participate to their fullest level of comfort and ability. Making ceramic wares and ceramic art requires a degree of questioning what you know, taking risks and embracing challenges. I will do my utmost to promote an environment where mutual respect, constructive criticism, and creative exploration are valued, and I expect the same from everyone who comes in the door. Since active critique of work is a vital part of this class, disrespect towards peers (or yourself) is not acceptable. I ask that you have the courage to speak your ideas and respect the ideas of others.

Attendance/Lateness

You are expected to come to class awake, fed, and ready to make, think and talk. Your timely and engaged presence is expected at every class meeting. Several topics will receive only one day of attention and by missing class you run the risk of coming out of the class with an incomplete set of skills.

Arriving late or leaving early disrupts the flow of class and undermines your own success. Please make every effort to arrive on time and prepared for class. Please let me know before class if you will need to leave early.

If you arrive after I have already taken roll, please let me know of your presence so you will be marked as late and not absent.

Room Care

A clean studio is a happy studio. At the end of each day, the studio should be in as good, if not better, condition than when we started. Everyone has responsibility for cleaning up their workspace and putting away or removing their work at the end of each day. At the end of the semester, all work must be removed from the room. Work that remains into the next semester will be thrown away. This is a messy business; failure to clean your workspace is not acceptable and will negatively affect your grade. **CLEAN UP** begins 20 minutes before the end of class. All areas you have used must be cleaned before you leave the studio. Per a healthy studio, cleaning up clay is best done with a wet sponge (it helps keep dust from dispersing throughout the studio).

No Cell Zone

Cell phones are wonderful devices that must be put away when you walk in the door. You can rejoin them later over break or at the end of class. Absolutely NO TEXTING during class.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>"

ART 133 / Topics in Ceramic Sculpture, Spring 2017, Course Schedule

**The schedule is subject to change with fair notice. Students will be informed in class and via email. .*

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/26	Course introduction; "Pirates and Farmers"
2	1/31	Ceramics and Politics Introduction; Make clay
2	2/2	Review sketches, class discussion
3	2/7	Process demo: large coil
3	2/9	Artists review; Workday
4	2/14	Mid-process critique; Workday
4	2/16	Kiln demo; Workday
5	2/21	DUE: Politics project (finished in wet clay, ready to dry); VISITING ARTIST: SERGEI ISUPOV Workshop/demo 12-4pm in IS 124, Lecture 5-6pm in Art 135
5	2/23	Tile Introduction; Plaster demo (modelling and carving)
6	2/28	Load kiln; Plaster workday; Plaster carving; Tile pressing
6	3/2	Presentations Discussion: Tile pressing workday
7	3/7	DUE: Tiles; Bulb glazing; Surface/glaze demo
7	3/9	Load kiln (Tiles); Politics project surface workday
8	3/14	DUE: Politics project glazed; Structures (False Positives) Introduction; Hard/soft slab demo
8	3/16	PRESENTATIONS (Group A); glaze tiles
9	3/21	Individual meetings; workday
9	3/23	NCECA; open studio workday
	3/28 & 3/30	SPRING RECESS
10	4/4	CRITIQUE: Ceramics and Politics
10	4/6	PRESENTATIONS (Group B)

11	4/11	CRITIQUE: Tiles
11	4/13	Scale exercise; Structures Workday
12	4/18	*ATC; DUE: Structures; Unfamiliar Territory Introduction; Mixed media presentation/discussion
12	4/20	Discussion: “The Handle”; Unfamiliar workday
13	4/25	Unfired experiments; Unfamiliar workday
13	4/27	CCACA (Davis); Independent workday
14	5/2	FINAL DAY OF WET CLAY
14	5/4	Decal demo; Surface workday
15	5/9	FINAL GLAZE DAY
15	5/11	CRITIQUE: Structures
16	5/16	CRITIQUE: Unfamiliar Territory
Final Exam	5/18	IS 124, 2:45 pm – 5:00 pm