

FA107 An Introduction to the Art of Ceramics

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

An introduction to the art of ceramics through the production of functional homewares. This course will cover basic wheel throwing technique and a variety of hand building processes using stoneware clay. We will examine clay preparation, decoration techniques and both the glazing / firing process in an electric kiln.

This practical based course will focus on the production of homeware objects such as crockery and small vessels with an analysis of form, aesthetic and functionality. Historical and contemporary objects will be taken into consideration and through the learning and application of a variety of techniques such as pinch pots, coiling, kurinuki and sgraffito, students will be provided with an introduction of skills in which they can independently develop, refine and extend a ceramics practice.

Through experiencing this foundation in hand building and wheel thrown technique, the students will be expected to gain familiarity in a variety of processes, which will be applied to specific design projects throughout the semester. The creative elements of this course will be matched in technique, craftsmanship, and functionality of objects.

Requirements

This course is primarily practical and attendance to the 6 intensives is highly encouraged as they set the foundation of the self guided practice in the second half of this semester.

It is required that students

- Demonstrate a considerate shared studio practice. This includes (but not limited to) respect towards tools, materials and studio care.
- Understand the various stages of clay projects
- Show self directed project care (with specific attention to drying for multistage projects)
- Understand wedging, clay reclaim and sustainable studio practices

- Balance multiple projects
- Explore hand building techniques including pinch, coil and slab building
- Explore surface decoration

Students are also required to be comfortable and self-sufficient on the potter's wheel. They should demonstrate the understanding of fundamentals in throwing cylindrical forms and predetermined shapes (such as rounded forms, small bowls etc.)

Self-directed practice is expected. It is encouraged to take advantage of the facilities that are at Bard throughout the semester to refine skills learnt within the intensives. However please note there is a limited firing capacity of work. A selection therefore must be made of which work will be bisque fired and glazed. Also, due to firing limitations, pieces can also not be larger than 20cm in any direction.

'An Introduction to the Art of Ceramics' is a course that intends to cover the foundations of producing functional homewares. Basic tools, clay, coloured slip and white glaze will be provided and students are encouraged to find versatility within these. Students may choose to purchase extra materials (clay/glaze) at their own expense, but this is absolutely not necessary. It is vital that any extra materials purchased have a firing range of 1160°C. Any materials that do not meet this requirement will not be fired. Students must produce ceramic pieces for this class that are (or relate to) functional homewares. While students are encouraged to explore clay as a medium during their time at Bard College Berlin, they will be graded on their functional ceramics for this class. All work must be marked with initials or an artist mark.

Students are also assessed on their ability to work independently and responsibly. They will be graded on their ability to communicate with the Professor as well amongst themselves. This also includes their ambition to create ceramic homewares as well as their willingness to budget their time for all requirements connected to this class. This assessment also includes preparation, production, and cleaning up of spaces used at Bard College Berlin.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one

absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

It is vital that students attend the glazing class (date TBC) as this is a one off class in which the work will be glazed before firing.

Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FALL 2021: Some students may need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructors should make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

Assessment

Pieces will be assessed on functionality of the object, design and the integrity of technical craft. Students should demonstrate both a solid construction and an awareness of the design process/aesthetics.

Assessment 1: Students are required to produce four identical cups (in the application of their preferred technique)

Assessment 2: To design a cohesive 3 part functional tableware collection. This collection can utilize any of the techniques learnt throughout the semester. A design of the work must be submitted before the production of the pieces commence (due latest 1st October 2021) and the works must be realized, glazed and fired. Photo documentation (studio or styled) and short written self-assessment of these works must be submitted by Monday 6th of December 2021.

Assessment 3: A vessel must be submitted of each of the learnt techniques/assignments (see Assignments)

Assessment 4 (practical exam): Students will have a wedging and wheel thrown exam in which they should demonstrate a clear understanding of both techniques.

****Please note that the production of objects must be finished by November 12th 2021 to allow for drying, firing and glazing.****

Participation: Students will also be assessed on studio educate and safety, clay preparation, classroom participation, their self-guided practice, pottery fundamentals, attitude towards the material and its various potentials

Assignments

Students must complete 1 piece from each of the following assignment techniques for assessment.

These pieces can be either unfired or fired

- 1x pinch pot
- 1x coil built object
- 1x slab built object
- 1x Kurinuki cup
- 1 trimmed straight walled wheel thrown cylinder using 500 gram of clay with a minimum height of 9cm (unfired hight)

Students must also submit the following objects fired and glazed

- 1x object that utilizes sgraffito, slip decoration or carving techniques.
- A mug with a pulled handle
- A wheel thrown trimmed piece

*Please note that pieces from assessment 1 or 2 can contribute to these required assignments. It is just vital that there is one example of each of the techniques learnt for Assessment 3.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

Grade Breakdown

Assessment 1: 10%

Assessment 2: 30%

Assessment 3: 20%

Assessment 4: 10%

Participation: 30% (15% weeks 1-6, 15% week 7-14)

Schedule

Week 1- 30.8.21 Intensive workshop at “The Factory” from 2pm-8pm

Week 2- 6.9.21 Intensive workshop at “The Factory” from 2pm-8pm

Week 3- 13.9.21 Intensive workshop at “The Factory” from 2pm-8pm

Week 4- 20.9.21 Intensive workshop at “The Factory” from 2pm-8pm

Week 5- 27.9.21 Intensive workshop at “The Factory” from 2pm-8pm

1.10.21 Deadline for the designs of Assessment 2

Week 6- 4.10.21 Intensive workshop and practical exam at “The Factory” from 2pm-8pm

Week 7-11

It is expected that students engage in a self led ceramics practice. They should continue to explore the techniques learnt in the intensives as well as finish all assessment material. Student engagement is also assessed during this period. Students should contact Joon Park to help facilitate this.

12.11.21. FIRING DEADLINE -All pieces which will be fired must be completed and have begun the final drying process by this date. (Please note that it is possible for students to continue working on pieces that do not require firing after this date for assessment.)

Week 12- 14

(date TBC) An off site glazing session will occur in late November

6.12.21 Photo documentation and the written self assessment of Assessment 2 is due

(date TBC) A debrief session with Chris will occur in December

Scheduled class times will be available online under the relevant course heading:

<https://berlin.bard.edu/academics/courses/>

Grades Submission

Mid term assessment will consist of Assessment 1, Assessment 4 and half of the Participation grade.

Final assessment will take place after the final debrief and presentation of work in December.

Facility Guidelines:

“The Factory” – Eichenstrasse 43

The Factory Policy Agreement

- 1) “The Factory” at BCB (Eichenstrasse 43) has space and facilities available to BCB students with an academic purpose for using the building. Mandatory in-class orientations are required to retain chip access to the Factory. Chip access to The Factory is from 7am to 10pm every day during the semester. At 10pm students will be asked to leave the building by BCB security

personnel.

- 2) Students agree to only use the common spaces that are available for their needs, and must respect private spaces that are off-limits. For requesting to reserve the dance / theater space and / or Seminar Room 6, please fill out the online [Factory Reservation Form](#). The Factory Staff will get back to you within two weekdays. (Monday - Friday).
- 3) No smoking is allowed anywhere inside the building. There are to be no projects using open flames (such as candles, torches, lanterns, fireworks, etc.) inside any part of the building.
- 4) Fire exits and lanes must be kept clear of any obstructions.
- 5) Spray painting and handling of any hazardous (chemical or combustible) material is not allowed inside the building. Contact the Studio Arts Manager concerning working with these materials. All work surfaces (indoor and outdoor) must be properly protected with a drop cloth or a packing paper provided by the workshop.
- 6) No sandals, flip-flops, or bare feet will be allowed inside the workshop and studio 6.
- 7) Students must make sure all lights are turned off and doors are closed when leaving the building. No windows or doors are to be left opened or cracked. All electrical items must be unplugged when not in use.
- 8) If BCB workshop tools must be borrowed for a purpose outside of the building, please contact The Studio Arts Manager (by appointment).
- 9) There are to be no architectural changes to studios or any areas inside or outside of the building without first speaking with the Studio Arts Manager.
- 10) During completion week, any space used by a student must be returned empty with clean walls and floors. All garbage must be bagged (or boxed) and properly disposed of. Final grades may be penalized and / or fines imposed if items are left (or renovations unfinished) by the inspection deadline.
- 11) Contact Studio Arts Manager directly with any questions: j.park@berlin.bard.edu