



Clay: A Studio Handbook

By Vince Pitelka

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Drawing on more than 30 years of experience in ceramics, author Vince Pitelka has created the most practical, all-inclusive studio handbook for students, studio artists, educators and all those interested in the art of clay. The ten chapters in **Clay: A Studio Handbook** address the full range of ceramic processes, and bring a lifetime of ceramic knowledge directly into the hands of potters. Concerned about safe and efficient studio operation, Pitelka pays diligent attention to safety practices.

Professional potters, students, teachers even serious weekend potters will find this book is their single best resource for gaining, retaining, and expanding a solid understanding of clay. And after that, this book helps you move your work forward, with detailed descriptions of techniques you may have tried and abandoned, or techniques you've been yearning to try out but didn't have clear guidelines for.

Nothing on earth is more essential, more organic, more basic than clay. Children play in the dirt. They make mudpies. Kids like that (if they're lucky) grow up to be potters like us. We have a freedom that's often hard to put into words a freedom to express joy, sorrow, hope, whimsy, and more in a medium that flows beneath our fingers like a river of creativity. When it dries, we coat it in the color of our own imagination and relinquish it to another of nature's most basic elements: fire. What comes out of the cooled kiln is a snapshot in time, a moment of history forever frozen in its place a beautiful piece in the present that could easily become an artifact of the past in a future we may never see.

As potters, as artists, we don't always see ourselves as playing a crucial role in history. But, then, neither did the first people who put hand to clay and made the first artistic expression of the human spirit in a form you could hold in your hand. Many of us work on instinct, on intuition beyond our time. But even with inspiration, the laws of physics still hold sway over the clay, and the more we know about its properties and potential, the farther we can take our work. There is such a vast amount of knowledge you need to excel as a ceramics artist, and no one head can hold all that information.

And what if you're serious, but not a professional? **Clay: A Studio Handbook** is like having a giant secret stash of Albany slip hidden away in your studio (see pages 5 and 146 to see why that would be an advantage). **Clay: A Studio Handbook** answers life's most pressing questions in the field of clay: Why does my beautifully shaped bowl come out of the kiln twisted? How do I incorporate more color into my work without glazing my pieces to

death?

When are my pieces dry enough to fire? Can I accelerate the drying process without putting my work at risk?

What do I do when everything I throw comes off the wheel and heads right back into the recycling pile?

Where do I begin to set up my own studio?

Who can help me solve the big problems and the little ones?

The author, Vince Pitelka, is an established ceramics artist. With more than 30 years of experience, Pitelka answers your questions about materials, studio safety, tools, equipment, clay and glaze mixes, firing processes and techniques, and more.

Pitelka's descriptions and explanations cover every area of ceramics you can imagine, from pinch pots to studio setup to manageable marketing. Brush up on techniques as diverse as nerikomi (p. 118) and mishima (p. 108), or explore an unconventional approach to slab building.

This is the most practical, hands-on reference book on clay you can own.

Whether you're a seasoned professional, a teacher, a student, or a determined dabbler, this book is a valuable resource you don't want to be without. You'll go back to it again and again.

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Editorial Review

Review

Few [books] are as comprehensive, well thought-out and clearly written as this. --*Ceramic Review*
January/February 2002

If you work with clay if you want to work with clay you want this book. You need this book. It covers everything you need to know about working with clay, from details about tools and materials to techniques for forming and firing **Clay: A Studio Handbook** by Vince Pitelka is the best there is for all around info on clay. --John Hesselberth

Vince's book is a great how-to book! Anyone just starting to work in clay should have a copy. It details a very wide breadth of what can be done in pottery, great pictures, clear description of each technique. --Dan & Laurel, Pfeiffer Fire Arts

...tool to develop skills, for guidance in setting up a studio and to use later as a reference resource. --*Pottery In Australia, June 2001*

Vince's is the best all-around clay book that I have encountered. --Charles Moore, Sacramento, CA

I have read several books on pottery and technique and this book, for all-inclusive information, beats them all. One definitely that should be in everyone's studio. I actually could visualize making forms as I read the text. It gets right down to the molecular level of events that happen in the kiln, things I didn't know before. Wonderful work!! Take a class, then read this book. You'll want to play with clay the rest of your life. -- Sherry McIntosh, Saskatchewan, Canada

About the Author

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

William Leininger:

Nowadays reading books become more and more than want or need but also be a life style. This reading behavior give you lot of advantages. The advantages you got of course the knowledge the actual information

inside the book that improve your knowledge and information. The info you get based on what kind of publication you read, if you want have more knowledge just go with education and learning books but if you want feel happy read one together with theme for entertaining including comic or novel. The particular Clay: A Studio Handbook is kind of publication which is giving the reader capricious experience.

Jackie Gonzalez:

Information is provisions for people to get better life, information nowadays can get by anyone on everywhere. The information can be a expertise or any news even restricted. What people must be consider when those information which is from the former life are challenging to be find than now could be taking seriously which one is suitable to believe or which one typically the resource are convinced. If you have the unstable resource then you obtain it as your main information it will have huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen in you if you take Clay: A Studio Handbook as your daily resource information.

Clifford Harris:

Reading a guide tends to be new life style in this era globalization. With studying you can get a lot of information that may give you benefit in your life. Along with book everyone in this world can easily share their idea. Guides can also inspire a lot of people. Lots of author can inspire their own reader with their story or perhaps their experience. Not only the story that share in the guides. But also they write about the data about something that you need example of this. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your sons or daughters, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors these days always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some study before they write to the book. One of them is this Clay: A Studio Handbook.

Gloria Castaldo:

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