

Glossary of terms – 3D

Burnishing Smoothing and polishing a clay or slipped surface with a smooth hard object such as a stone or back of a spoon to compact the clay so it forms a hard shell.

Ceramic Derived from the Greek 'Keramos' meaning 'earthen vessel'. Today it applies to a whole range of products i.e. bricks, tiles, pipes, porcelain, china, pottery, etc.

Clay Mould Casting Forming pottery by pouring slip into a porous mould, usually made from potters plaster

Coiling A means of building by hand; a pot using ropes of clay, laid on top of each other and smoothed together

Cross-section An interior view of a pot, as if you have cut through object

Dipping The application of a glaze by immersion and then allowing the excess to drain off.

Firing The process by which ceramic ware is heated in a kiln to bring glaze or clay to maturity.

Glaze A thin glassy layer formed on the surface of a ceramic article by the exposure of the glaze coated article to a high temperature

Glaze Stain Colouring agent added to a glaze

Gum Arabic A natural gum mixed with glaze or oxide to prevent smudging, to bind the colour before firing

Handbuilding Forming pots without using a wheel, by coiling, pinching and slabbing.

Kidney A plastic or metal tool used for modelling clay, so called because of their shape.

Kiln Pottery oven or furnace in which ceramic products are fired. May be fired by wood, coal, sawdust, electricity or gas.

Leather hard Partially dried clay ware. The ideal stage for turning, fettling, sponging etc

Lute Joining leather hard pieces of pottery together with slip or slurry

Maquette A basic scale model. A three dimensional sketch

Matte A soft finish with little or no shine

Model The original or prototype of the piece to be made. Usually in clay, occasionally in plaster

Mould A plaster former in which clay can be pressed or slip cast to create forms. Moulds can be made up of one section or multiple pieces.

Opaque Glazes that do not allow other colours to show through, as opposed to transparent glazes.

Oxidation To fire with an ample supply of oxygen

Papier Mache a malleable mixture of paper and glue, or paper, flour, and water, that becomes hard when dry, can be used to for 3D objects.

Raku An open sandy or grogged pottery, fired between 800°C and 1000°C and generally glazed with a lead glaze. The ware is taken from the kiln when red hot and placed in water or combustible material for reduction or carbonizing.

Resist A decorative medium, such as wax, latex or paper, used to prevent slip or glaze from sticking to the surface of the pottery

Sgraffito The cutting or scratching through an outer coating of slip or glaze to expose different coloured body beneath.

Slab building Making pottery from slabs of clay

Slabs Clay sheets rolled out and allowed to harden when they can be cut and handled, perhaps being joined together with slurry to form flat-sided constructions. Soft slabs can be draped over or inside formers and left to harden in that shape.

Slip Liquid clay

Throwing The technique of forming pottery on the potter's wheel. A ball of prepared clay is thrown on the wheel and it is centred and shaped with the hands.

Turning Trimming and shaping thrown pots in the leather hard state.

Wedging Kneading and mixing clay to remove air bubbles before commencing throwing or handbuilding