



BMCA Clay Studio Offers Pit Firing Workshop in June

The art of pottery is as ancient as the practical need for vessels to hold things and the aesthetic need to express one's artistic abilities. Pottery shards are some of the most valued finds at archaeological digs throughout the world. All civilizations participated in this earliest of art forms. Now, at the Black Mountain Center for the Arts Clay Studio, you will be able to participate in a workshop designed to explore the same techniques used in prehistoric or biblical times.

A Pit Firing Workshop is scheduled from 4 -6 pm for three Tuesdays in June; the 16th and 23rd of June will find students making their clay pots at the Clay Studio in the renovated old City Garage near the Daugherty St. municipal parking lot. On June 30th students will travel offsite with instructor AJ Reisman to a nearby farm to participate in the pit firing process. At the pit firing, the clay creations are buried deep in the earth in a fire pit filled with layers of organic debris, sawdust, dog food, and carefully placed chemicals that will burn for ten hours to create the glazes and harden the pots.

In the Old Testament, the prophet Jeremiah uses the images of the potter working with clay to convey more complex images to the people of Israel. Those images, written centuries before modern civilization, are still demonstrated by today's use of the potter's wheel and the molding of clay in the potter's hands. Students in this class will have the same opportunity to learn the art of hand building or throwing clay to make the basic shapes; then experience the wonder of the final product as it comes out of a smoldering fire.

Whether you want to re-create this earliest of artistic experiences for yourself, or simply participate in a way of making pottery you haven't yet practiced, you will find the workshop invigorating and educational. The cost of the workshop is \$90, which includes all materials, and Open Studio time to work on pieces between classes. To sign up, call 828/669-0930 or come by the Black Mountain Center for the Arts at 225 W. State St. between noon and 5 weekdays, except Thursdays. Registration is limited to 10 participants so early sign-up is recommended.

For more information, go to <http://blackmountainartsclay.blogspot.com>, or blackmountainarts.org.