

Selfridge Ceramic Art

Making Woodfired Flattened Teapots with Glazed Filled Stencils

Richard Selfridge



"Wild West Woodfired Teapot"
thrown woodfired stoneware, chun glaze
flashing slip, stencils, cone 11, 17cm.



"Yin Yang Ravens Woodfired Teapot"
constructed, woodfired, flashing slip, slip trailed,
feldspathic stones, 17 cm.

"Big Fish Small Pot: An International Small Teapot
Competition"

Saddleback Gallery, Mission Viejo, California
Honorable Mention

For more than 15 years we have been using rubber stencils to imprint our stoneware and porcelain work. Much of this work has been woodfired. We find it a good way to introduce Colour to woodfired pots which are sometimes more monochromatic with brown or orange values. It is also a way to introduce imagery as decoration. Often this imagery forms a subtle narrative.



The process starts with slabs of stoneware clay with nylon fiber. Bisqued "rock" split half molds are used to form the flattened discs of the teapot bodies.



"Japanese Maple and Peony Flattened Woodfired Teapot"
thrown and constructed woodfired stoneware, stencils, slip trailing, flashing slip, rolled rope, cone 11, 24cm.

Before the slab halves are pressed into their molds, the impressed and stenciled textures and images are accomplished in many ways. Care must be taken to orient the information to make sure the images are "right side up" on both halves. The molds are a bit irregular and are marked with a registry to avoid mix ups.



"Big Lizard Tortise Rock Teapot "
thrown stoneware, embossed, stencils cone 11, 21cm.



The lizard stencil which is cut from rubber inner tube is positioned on the slab disc which has been slightly thinned by throwing it onto the cloth covered bat. It is pressed into the slab with the finger tips.



The slab is placed stencil side down on a carved plaster slab which has a tortoise pattern. A rolling pin is used to press the clay into the pattern.



The slab is then lifted and placed into the disc mold where it is "bomped" into the mold with a sock filled with a plastic bag of sand. It is gently pressed in, trying not to flatten the texture from the plaster slab.



It is useful to trim the edge of the mold on a banding wheel.



A wire cheese cutter harp is used at an angle to make the cut.



After slipping the joined edges, the mold halves are pressed together. The molds are absorbent and the disc releases easily.



A fettling knife is used to cut the flashing of excess clay from the piece

The stencils have been cut from rubber "inner tube" after a pen drawing has defined the image. Sharp scissors work well to get great detail.



A collection of our hens and roosters.



Rolled textured pattern from bisqued roller.



Rolled corn produces a barnyard background for a chicken narrative.



Disc ready to trim "flashing" from outside.



Iris stamp is used on pre textured slab.



"Rope" stamp is pressed over dragonfly stencils.



Bird narrative pressed into slab.



"What Makes You Think He's Mine, Paternitea-Pot"
thrown and constructed woodfired stoneware, flashing slip, stencils cone 12, 20cm.



Lizard disc is wrapped in plastic to even out clay consistency.



Choosing lid gallery tops which have been kept under plastic.

Much care must be taken to keep the parts of the teapots harmonized in terms of their drying. Plastic, "the potter's best friend", is the way to keep everything drying at the same rate.



Spouts are thrown off the hump.



Thrown spout is cut with wire harp at angle to fit teapot body.



Lid seating gallery is thrown off hump and formed with plastic square rib.



Gallery top is cut with pin tool at upward interior bevel.



Tea strainer is punched in body after diamond lid is cut.



Bottom of spout expanded to fit contour of teapot body.



Spout is joined to body.



Teapot with spout, lid and fiddle head top knob awaits pulled handle.



"Yes He's Yours, Raven Paterni-Tea Pot"
thrown and constructed woodfired stoneware,
stencils, slip trailing, flashing slip, rolled corn
cone 11, 20cm., "Atlanta Teapot Festival " 2006
The Seen Gallery, Decatur, GA



Trimming excess edge before paddling.



Form is rounded and join smoothed with paddle.



The bottom is sliced to join slab bottom.



Height gage is used to mark cut off for slab bottom.



Cut form ready for slab bottom.



Coil joins body and base.



Soft coil is pressed to form profile join to bottom.



Sponged join ready for profile tool.



Carol using a profile tool on a terra cotta base.



Fitting the now ovaled seating top to the body before adding the spout.



Hole cut to receive spout.



Iris stencils on a rolled rope slab.



Using an egote to support the joining of the spout.



Using an egote to support the joining of the lid gallery to the body.



Slab lid with added thrown collar to keep lid in place when pouring.



Pulling handle slugs for teapots.



Cutting off slugs on newspaper with edge of little finger



Bail handle ready to apply to pot. Diamond shaped lid has a fiddlehead knob.



Back handle applied to body ready to pull into final shape.



Pulling handle on teapot body.



Landing tail of handle.



Thumbing on or attaching handle tail.



Stamping tail of handle.



Last adjustment of handle curve to body.



Teapot ready for lid and flashing slip.



Coarse brush hakeme slip is applied loosely.



The flashing slip is not good under most feldspathic glazes, so it is applied to the body below the top, which will be glazed.



Glaze in stencils is set off by flashing slip background. Slip trailed shino glaze gives depth to teaparty narrative.



Removing stencils from slipped teapot.



After bisque firing, the spout and handle will be waxed to resist glaze from all but the inside and top of the teapot. The stencil rooster and hen will then be filled with colored glaze.



"Back Glance to Suitor Woodfired Teapot" thrown, constructed woodfired stoneware, rolled corn flashing slip, stencils, slip trailing, cone 12, 13cm.



Sixteen teapots drying before bisque firing.