

## September Workshop

Douglas Gray is a Professor of Art at Francis Marion University in Florence, South Carolina. He joined the faculty in 1997 and is responsible for teaching Pottery, Ceramics Sculpture and Three-Dimensional Design. Before coming to Francis Marion University, he taught at Sul Ross State University in Texas. He holds degrees from the University of North Texas and the University of Louisville.

In addition to his teaching responsibilities, Doug exhibits his artwork both regionally and nationally. Over the years, he has worked with galleries in North and South Carolina and in Texas. His work has appeared in several periodicals and books including Pottery Making Illustrated, Ceramics Monthly, Clay Times, Southern Living and the Lark Books' 500 Series. Originally trained in functional pottery, his work has evolved to include sculptural forms and installations. His current work utilizes a variety of traditional and experimental processes. He is particularly interested in color and surface, as developed on glazed and unglazed ceramic works. Additionally, he has developed various image transfer techniques on clay, a reflection of his interest in photography, printmaking, and storytelling.

### **Hands-On Workshop Description**

On September 15-16, 2023, Doug Gray, with the assistance of Sandy Singletary, will demonstrate the exciting alternative firing techniques Sagggar, Obvara, and Naked Raku processes in a hands-on workshop. Each of these techniques result in unique and exciting ceramic surfaces and expand the potential of a raku kiln.

Workshop participants will have the opportunity to fire (6) small clay works in these firings and then experiment with post-fire surface modification and sealing options.

**\*\*Work for the firings should be no larger than 6" and already bisque fired. The finished surfaces are non-functional, so decorative pieces are the best options. Burnished terra sigillata surfaces may enhance the saturation and intensity of the final colors; however, softer more muted results can be had using regular bisqueware. Recipe, instructions and discussion can be seen in the following thread.**

<https://community.ceramicartsdaily.org/topic/4468-how-to-make-simple-terra-sigilatta-in-a-plastic-bottle/>

### **Painting with Fire**

#### ***Doug Gray Sagggar Firing:***

Desiring pit fired effects for his and his students' pottery but unable to build an open pit fire on his university campus, Doug Gray found a solution using paper clay saggars in a gas fired raku kiln. This sagggar fired process begins with unglazed bisqued clay forms. Participants will direct the fired results of their own work by selecting from a variety of metals, metallic oxides, salts, and various organic materials to be packed into the saggars with their piece of pottery. Gray will demonstrate the process of making saggars using newspaper and clay slip and discuss the possible effects the added materials will have on the ceramic surface. With added heat, and

serendipity, the material in the saggars flash and fume, thus painting the clay surface with amazing, individualized color and surface markings.

Once the kilns cool, the saggars will be opened and Gray will demonstrate how to clean, seal, and enhance the clay surface using paste wax. He will also discuss how to further embellish the fired surfaces of with encaustic medium and various related materials. This can be applied to work from the other firing process listed below.

### ***Aluminum Foil Sagger Firing:***

This method uses aluminum foil as the sagger, which allows for a different firing speed than paper saggars. Metal salts and organic materials are applied to the surface of the clay pieces, resulting in beautiful one-of-a-kind surfaces. When the kiln reaches temperature, pots are unloaded immediately and allowed to cool briefly before the aluminum foil is removed for the big reveal.

### **Liquid Bread Dough**

#### ***Baltic Raku Obvara Firing:***

The Obvara firing process, which originated in Eastern Europe around the 12th Century originally involved scalding the surface of a clay piece to seal it. At the same time this process develops an amazing decorative surface. Bisqued pieces are heated in a raku kiln and then immediately removed from the kiln. The hot clay pieces are dipped in “liquid bread dough” and then dipped in water to rapidly cool the piece and stop the reaction. The effects are stunning.

### **In the Nude**

#### ***Naked Raku Firing:***

In this two-step firing process, bisqued clay pieces are coated with a “pop off” slip and a glaze and then fired in a raku kiln. When the kiln reaches temperature, clay work is removed and placed in a reduction chamber before being quenched with water. This drastic process causes the slip and glaze to pop off revealing an incredible naked clay surface. \*\*This process works best with a smooth surface that is coated with terra sigillata.

### **Workshop Schedule**

Friday, September 15, 2023

11:00 am -1:00 pm	Check in
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Baltic Raku information session and hands-on firings.
3:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Doug Gray presentation/demo and hands-on Paper Sagger fire preparation
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Stack kilns and paper saggars
6:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Cook out and fellowship.

Saturday, September 16, 2023

9:00 am – 10:00 am	Doug Gray presentation/demo of post fire - finish possibilities
10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Hands-on finishing techniques and Aluminum Foil Sagger fire
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch on your own
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Naked Raku
3:00 pm 4:00 pm	Finish up.