

Masterclass - Carving Clay with Halima Cassell

This course is for anyone interested in working with their hands - beginners and the more experienced alike. It is set within a large purpose-built studio within our grounds which allows you plenty of space to develop your work and achieve your sculptural aims.

Come with your ideas of what you wish to create or be inspired by the skills and knowledge that the course has to offer. There will be plenty of source materials available for inspiration and just being in stimulating surroundings will fire your imagination.

The course is taught by myself along with assistants. I specialise in pushing the clay to its limits – there are several processes, which are easy to learn. These techniques will bring life to your two-dimensional ideas as we develop them into three-dimensional creations, bringing excitement and dynamism to your forms.

The principles of the technique are introduced through a series of short demonstrations. The rest of the time will be spent making your clay piece with guidance and support. Help will be on hand every step of the way. Once completed, your pieces will need to dry out and then be fired in the kilns. Please note that this does mean that you will not be able to take completed work away with you, but we will notify you once your work has been fired and is available to collect.

Five days course - Course is suitable for all - for beginners, intermediates and advanced. The course theme and structure will essentially be in line with my working practice and process. The clay forms will be made (with help) using basic traditional hand-building methods (which I use to create my pieces) such as coil building, slab building, using a former/mould.

Initially, we will begin with an introductory PowerPoint presentation followed by a discussion - introducing my inspirations, my work and my methodology/processes. This will be followed by time designing ideas for your creations. One-to-one discussions will follow to finalise which design you choose to make and the practicalities surrounding it as well as discussing and deciding upon the best method to make your chosen piece. You will then proceed to start creating your design in three dimensions. Everyone will reach different stages at different times, depending on their ability/confidence and the complexity of their form and design.

Daily timetable

There may be slight variations to this but essentially we start at 9:15 (arrive at 9.00am if you would like coffee/tea first). Officially finish at 6.00pm, although the studios will be open later should you wish to continue working in the evenings, however, please note that if you do wish to use the studios after 6.00pm this needs to be with prior agreement and you will need to be confident in continuing your work with little assistance and observe appropriate health and safety guidance.

Last day – classes 9:15pm - 4pm (Time given to tidy up and to have a final discussion regarding the pieces you have all created and to complete feedback slips). Lunch will be at the earlier time of 12.00pm.

Refreshments/meals

Tea, coffee biscuit/cake will be available throughout the day - self-service. Individuals to take breaks as and when they feel the need throughout the day. Optional organised break at 10.30am and 4.30pm

The main meal of the day is provided at 1.30pm

Course materials

All clay, equipment and firing/kiln costs are included.

Students will need to bring

It is not crucial, however, do think about something you would like to make - a sculpture, functional form, wall art, something for the garden, etc..... you can also decide on your ideas once you are here after I give my presentation talk (which may spark ideas for you to work with).

To make a piece from a former - bring with you, any large dishes that you like the shape/form of (as this can be used as a former to make the initial shape of your piece.

If you want to make a spherical piece, bring a large bowl - with a depth roughly half of the size of the diameter.

A personal apron, if you prefer to bring your own. There are many available here to choose from.

Drawing book and pencils/pens for design work – plenty of paper will be available here if you prefer.

Health and safety

The tutor (myself) will familiarise students with health and safety issues/requirements relevant to this course.

Students may work unsupervised on their agreed project once they have satisfied the tutor as to their confidence and competence.

If students wish to work later than 6.00pm, there is a local Village Shop, half a mile down the road which does local food - closes at 6pm. There is also the Kangaroo (village pub, just around the corner from the shop) which does an evening meal.