ROVIN CERAMICS
A MOTAWI COMPANY

Monoprinted Wall Pillows
Grades 9-12

Ceramic artists use the wall pillow form to create art that more closely resemble contemporary painting canvases or sculptures rather than traditional ceramic tiles. We will use a GR Pottery Form to create volume and the monoprinting technique to decorate the flat surface.

Monoprinting differs from other print making techniques because it does not allow for making duplicate images. Monoprinting gives the freedom of creating unique images with the final product having the quality and texture of a printed image.

For this example we used 3 colors to separate the foreground, middle ground and background. In print making, the order in which you add colors and layers needs to be well thought out.
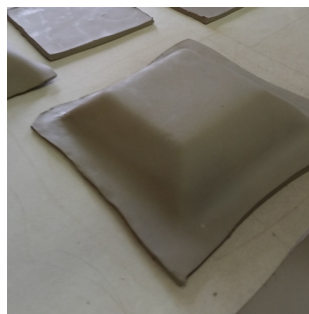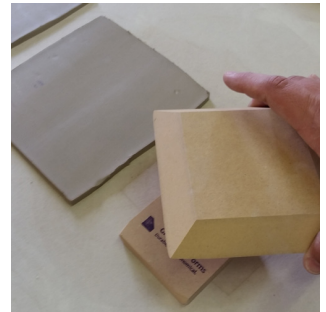
Objectives
Build a 3 dimensional ceramic wall piece
Understand foreground, middle ground, and background
Plan and execute a Monoprinted Image

Materials Needed

Clay
GR Pottery Form 5" x 5"
GR Spacer
Rolling Pin or Slab Roller

Rubber Rib Tool or Brayer
Needle and Scoring tool
Variety of Underglaze Colors
Hole Cutter
Newsprint Paper

Building the Wall Pillow

1. Using a rolling pin or slab roller make a slab ½ inch to ¼ inch thick. Rotate slab while working to get even clay compression

2. Cut 2 squares from the slab around 6.5" x 6.5" in size. This should allow enough clay to drape the slab over the form

4. Place the GR Spacer under the 5" x 5" mold to lift it off the work surface, then drape slab over form. Use a sponge or your hands to press the slab down over the drape mold. Allow clay to set to leather hard

5. Once leather hard, cut the draped form to desired size and then cut your second slab to match

6. Use your Needle and scoring tool to scratch and attach the two pieces

7. The flat side of the pillow will be the front and the formed size will be the back. Use a hole cutter in the center of the back to create a notch for hanging

8. Wrap the wall pillow in plastic to keep it leather hard until you are ready for printing

Monoprinting with Underglaze

1. Cut a piece of newsprint paper to the approximate size of your wall pillow. This will serve as your "printing block"

2. The first color used will be the foreground. We used brown to paint the outlines of a hot air balloon. Allow the underglaze to dry to tacky and apply a second coat

4. The second color will be the middle ground and you can paint completely over the first layer if needed. Apply two coats and allow to dry to tacky

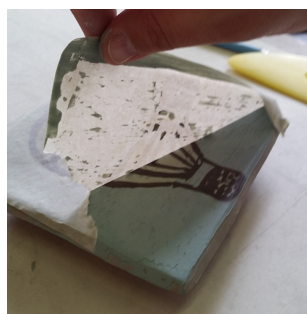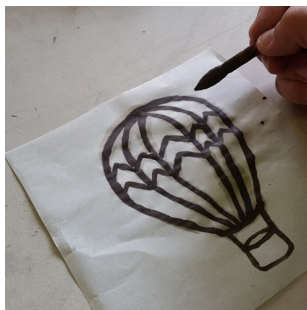5. The third color will be the background. Paint over your entire image with the last color you're using

6. Paint your pillow the same color and allow both your image and your pillow to dry to tacky. Do not let them dry completely. *this technique works because the underglaze will stick to itself as long as it remains tacky

7. Once tacky, carefully flip and lay your newsprint paper image onto the flat surface or your wall pillow

8. Press out any air bubbles using a print making brayer, a soft pottery rib or your fingers. Let it set up shortly to allow underglaze to stick to pillow and release from newsprint

9. Test to see if the paper is ready to be removed by slowly lifting one corner. If too much of the image does not release, lay the paper back down and apply more pressure

10. Allow pillow to dry, bisque fire and apply a layer of clear glaze. Fire to glaze temperature and then it is ready to hang on the wall

Adaptations

Less Challenging:
»Try printing onto flat tiles or using only 2 colors

More Challenging:
»If screen printing supplies are available students can print multiples onto newsprint before transferring onto clay
»Students can also experiment with transferring their printed images onto round or thrown surfaces
»Adding more colors to the process requires more forethought and planning