

## **Handbuilding :: The Boxer**

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You will construct a box or boxes for your next assignment. Boxes, when made out of clay, wood, or metal, are often used to signify something sacred or special. They hide something while indicating there is something special to be seen. They are containers, and your box will be a container for something very specific. It could be a container for specific types of objects (toiletries, jewelry, change, medication) or something more metaphorical (a hope box, fear box, wish box, boom box, etc.). The connection can be subtle, by association, or by contradiction. Please avoid the obvious. The decoration of the box must correlate to what the box is intended to hold – the outside has to reflect the purpose of the box. Obviously, what the box is made to hold can/will help determine its shape, but this assignment has a particular focus on surface.

### PARAMETERS:

The outside of the boxes will only be done with one slip color and the red of the clay body. The inside can be any color that relates to your piece. We will use the sgraffito technique for decorating. You may want to construct one big box, several small boxes, boxes that fit inside one another, or some variation thereof. I will not give a specific size requirement. I will only say that the work on the project needs to be commensurate with the time allotted.

### MORE PARAMETERS:

- The box has to be ‘off round’ and have edges. (Boxes have sides, a round box is a jar.)
- The outside has to be about (ore related to) what the box is intended to hold.
- The box has to have at least one lid.
- The outside of the box will only be decorated with one slip color and the red of the clay.
- The box must make use of the sgraffito technique.
- The box must be made using slabs or coils.

### R & D (RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT)

A good and well thought out sketch should be in my hands -- on a separate sheet of paper that I can keep -- no later than Wednesday, October 12th at 3:00 sharp. A photocopy of sketches/ideas from your notebook is fine. It should contain at minimum two things:

- 1) a sketch of your box
- 2) your ideas for decoration

Not having this to me by Wednesday at 3:00 will automatically drop your grade for this assignment one letter grade. If you have some serious conflict you should speak to me in private.

No physical mockup of the box is required, but you **MUST** make three 5" x 5" inch tiles **TODAY** for which you will practice your sgraffito on. (This is small enough to be transported in a purse or a bag if need-be). One way to work through how to build these boxes is to make a simple mockup out of cardboard.

**TECHNICAL:**

Your timing for finding the right time to carve has to be impeccable. It is always better to carve a little too dry than a little too wet. This requires patience (for the clay to be carved at the right stage) and attention to detail. Sgraffito can be tedious but its results are worth the time. Occasionally you will have to brush slip back onto the box to correct a mistake, etc. I will cover the following on next Wednesday's demonstration:

- How to make boxes

- How to use the sgraffito technique.

- Visual example of boxes and of sgraffito.