**ABSTRACT**

- This project is intended to experience traditional ceramic firing methods. Most ceramic artists today rely on electric kilns that are able to self-regulate and provide more predictable, consistent results. This research is meant to reintroduce traditional art techniques to maintain the unexpected results of historical pottery. Through collaboration with several local artists as well as research into traditions of potters throughout time, I have collected information on the processes required for several methods of firing. With this research, I hope to apply the methods to my own pottery. Documentation of the process along with sets of similar ceramic forms allows me to record the variations produced within each firing. I have experimented with pit-firing and completed a set of works that utilize a gas kiln. I hope to reinstate the unpredictable, unique results of less regulated firing methods.

**INTRODUCTION**

- Most electric kilns contain several internal sensors that are able to self-regulate temperature to reduce dramatic changes in oxygen levels, temperature, and airflow.
- Traditional firing techniques were unable to regulate as accurately; therefore, they produce a variety of results within each firing.

**METHODS**

- The methods that I am focusing on are Raku, pit, gas, and wood firing.
- Raku: created in 16th-century Kyōto; characterized by a rapid increase of temperature followed by removing the pottery directly from the kiln while red-hot then placing in a material of choice to produce visual effects
- Pit: a long fire in a pit dug deep in the ground while the piece is wrapped in materials of choice that will burn into surface of the pottery
- Gas: use of a specialized kiln that creates a gas reduction using a fuel such as a natural gas or propane.
- Wood: use of a specialized wood kiln that requires a long fire while constantly providing wood into the kiln to burn and produce the visual effects

**CURRENT RESULTS**

- Gas Fire: The gas firing achieved a high oxidation, resulting in a high variety of colors that ran down the pieces in many unpredictable ways. I used the same high-fire glazes in the same manner in order to properly analyze the variety produced by the gas kiln.
- Pit fire: I performed a home firing by wrapping small ceramic forms in a variety of materials while wrapped in tinfoil. Although I monitored and added to the fire for 6+ hours, the fire failed to reach high enough temperatures. However, the copper carbonate did create some red tones within the fire. The other materials did not create lasting designs, as they needed to reach higher temperatures.

**PLAN FOR CONTINUATION**

- As I continue my research, I plan to test more methods, including Raku and wood-firing. I will also repeat my tests of the gas and pit methods to analyze the techniques further and study the differences produced in the same firing methods.
- I plan to connect with more local artists that have the specialized equipment required for the other methods of firing. One such method that I will need a specialized kiln for is wood firing.

**CITATIONS**