

HOSTING A STEVEN HILL ELECTRIC FIRING WORKSHOP 2024

THROWING, SPRAYING AND ^6-8 ELECTRIC FIRING

I love the variation that occurs naturally across the surface of salt, soda and wood fired pots. I salt fired for 2 years in the early 70's but spent the next 38 years reduction firing in gas kilns. During the time I reduction fired I learned to create atmospheric surface qualities through careful blending and layering of sprayed glazes.

In December 2008 I discovered that reduction plays a rather insignificant role in the finished look of my pottery. The cascading rivulets of ash-like glazes and mysterious microcrystalline mat surfaces work just as effectively in oxidation as they do in reduction! Even the rich brown and orange colors that I always attributed to reduction firing are possible in oxidation.

This workshop is designed to help you get the most out of YOUR glazes, applied to YOUR pots and fired in YOUR electric kiln. I will demonstrate the basic techniques of spraying and also spend time with more

advanced theories of layering and blending glazes. I will cover ^6-8 glaze firing and briefly discuss lowering the maturation point of ^10 glazes to ^6-8. I will suggest ways to experiment with the layering process to create your own unique look.

On the first day I will throw, assemble, apply slip and discuss my philosophical approach towards making functional pottery. On the second day I will demonstrate my personal techniques of spraying and layering glazes and students will glaze their pottery. We will then load the kiln(s) and fire overnight to ^6-8. On the third day I will lead discussions on firing schedules and the equipment required to set up your own spraying studio and on further glaze experimentation. On the morning of day 4 we will unload the kiln(s) and discuss the work.

I will bring fired examples of finished work to discuss with students and they will be available for purchase.

I like taking responsibility for creating the magic. I'd rather put the energy into applying glaze, instead of chopping wood and firing kilns.

Geoffrey Wheeler

I never forgot these words from Geoffrey Wheeler's Emerging Artist presentation at NCECA in 2001. In December of 2008 I decided it was time for me to see what I could do with electric firing and the results have challenged my fundamental beliefs about firing!

Steven Hill

Schedule for 4-day participatory electric firing workshop:

Day 1

- I will throw a few pots, assemble and quick dry them, while discussing my philosophy on making functional work and design as it relates to functional pottery.

Day 2

- I will lecture on spraying and demonstrate the techniques involved. Participants will glaze in the afternoon, with me overseeing and guiding each student's application. We will load the kiln(s) and fire overnight.

Day 3

- Further Discussions on spraying techniques, firing cycles and the equipment to set up a spraying studio. Ideas for follow up glaze experimentation after the workshop. If there is time, I might do another throwing demo.

Day 4

- We will unload the kiln(s) and discuss the results.

Requirements for hosting a participatory workshop:

- The workshop facility should have a minimum of one cone 6 programmable electric kiln. The number of students should be determined by the available firing space, with a maximum of 12.
- Participants should bring 2-3 small to medium size vertically oriented pieces ready to be glazed. **They should be in the range of mug to small vase size (no more than 6-8" in width or height).** They should also bring 1 small horizontal piece, such as a bowl, plate, or tile, **(no more than 6-8" in width)** to see how the glazes react on horizontal pieces. My work will be raw glazed (bone dry) and single fired, but participants should bisque fire their work if they are used to glazing bisque ware. The clay used should be ^6 or ^10 porcelain (the preferred choice) or white stoneware. If students use a darker stoneware or red clay it will make my glazes look dark and dingy and there might be blistering in the glazes.

- The facility will need to mix adequate quantities of 9 of my glazes ahead of time to use during the workshop. As an alternative, some ceramic supplies have mixed the glazes for glazing workshops.
- A temporary spray area can set up outdoors if it is protected from inclement weather (an art fair tent can be used for this purpose). You will need a compressor, worktables, and a banding wheel (set up with the banding wheel at approximately chest level). I will bring the spray guns and hose with me.
- If the studio has an indoor spray booth, this would be ideal!
- We will be working with 9 glazes, and I will bring spray containers for each glaze.

Cost: \$4000 + expenses (travel (mileage or airfare), food, lodging)

Steven Hill received his BFA from Kansas State University in 1973 and has been a studio potter since 1975. Steven's work is exhibited and sold in nationally juried shows and is featured in many ceramics books. He has conducted over 200 workshops throughout the United States and Canada and has written 11 ceramics articles; "An Approach To Single-Firing" (January 1986, **Ceramics Monthly**), "Long Distance Runner" (December 1989, **Studio Potter**), "Don't Put The Flames Out" (February 1994, **Ceramics Monthly**), "Pulling Handles", (Spring 1998, **Pottery Making Illustrated**), "Where You've Been Is Good And Gone, All You Keep Is The Gettin' There" (April 1998, **Ceramics Monthly**), "Spraying Glazes", (March 2002, **Pottery Making Illustrated**) "*Common Ground: A Showcase of National Artists-In-Residence*" (**Ceramics Monthly**, January 2006), and "An Approach to Single Firing – Further In", (January 2006, **Ceramics Monthly**), "Rethinking Ceramics Workshops", (**Ceramics Monthly**, May 2007), "The Eight Month Workshop: A Journey of Discovery", (**Ceramics Monthly**, June 2008). Steven's most recent article, "Atmospheric-Like Effects for Electric Firing" is in the March 2012 **Ceramics Monthly**.

In 1998 Steven co-founded **Red Star Studios Ceramic Center** in Kansas City, MO and he co-founded **Center Street Clay** in Sandwich, IL in 2006. Currently Steven is doing what he does best... Making pots, writing about ceramics, teaching workshops, and letting someone else take care of business! His new home is **323 Clay** in Independence, MO.

STEVEN HILL POTTERY

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