

Open-Air Ceramics

Inspired by Japanese Pottery

Summer Art Sessions @ the Woodson



Drawing inspiration from *Nature, Tradition & Innovation: Contemporary Japanese Ceramics* in the galleries and during outdoor exploration, participants will create original, hand-formed pottery using white-earthenware clay. Referencing the organic forms and natural motifs of the Japanese ceramic tradition, children will develop their pottery designs while exploring how pattern and texture are created in clay.

Participants' ceramic pieces – once sufficiently dry – will be pit-fired days later by Museum educators, revealed during Art 101: Pit-Fired Pottery on Thursday, August 3, 5:30-6:30 pm, and then displayed at the Woodson Art Museum through August 27.

Ages 5-8

Tuesday & Wednesday, July 11-12



9 am – Noon

Fee: \$25, Museum members; \$35, non-members.  

Ages 9-12

Thursday & Friday, July 13-14


9 am – Noon

Fee: \$25, Museum members; \$35, non-members.  

Fee includes all supplies and materials.



 **Call 715.845.7010 to register**

 **Scholarships available thanks to the Wisconsin Valley Art Association; call the Museum to inquire.**

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Pit Firing Process

Pit firing, believed to be the oldest ceramic-firing technique, was used worldwide for thousands of years before the invention of the kiln. Fire and smoke – caused by smoldering “fuel,” such as wood shavings, leaves, or grasses – can create striking surface effects on pottery.

1 Traditionally, a pit was dug into the earth where unfired pots were placed amongst the natural materials. Today, ceramists often use large barrels or metal trashcans (as seen here) instead of a pit. Holes drilled through the sides of the trashcan allow enough airflow to sustain a slow-burning, smoky fire as the layers of sawdust and wood scraps are consumed.



2 Initially, fuel in the can is ignited and the fire grows quickly, producing large flames for several minutes.



3 Once the fire dies down, a lid is placed on the can to trap most of the smoke; excess billows out of the small holes in the sides of the can.



4 The fire is tended for several hours until extinguished and it's safe to remove the lid to ensure all the fuel has burned and the ceramics can be removed.



5 Once the ceramics cool and can be handled, the makeshift kiln is unloaded and the pottery is rinsed to remove extra ash and other residue from the surface.

