

RECREATING ANCIENT GREEK CERAMICS

As.389.335 (01), Johns Hopkins University, Spring 2015

Thursdays, 1:30-5:00, 4 credits

Archaeological Museum Seminar Room, Gilman 150 and Baltimore Clayworks

INSTRUCTOR:

Sanchita Balachandran, Curator/Conservator, Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum

Lecturer, Department of Near Eastern Studies

Sanchita@jhu.edu

Gilman 137, Office Hours: By appointment

TEACHING ASSISTANT:

Ross Brendle, Graduate student, Department of Classics

Ross_Brendle@jhu.edu

Gilman 195, Office Hours: Wed. 1:30-3

PROJECT COLLABORATOR:

Matthew Hyleck, Potter and Education Coordinator, Baltimore Clayworks

Matt.hyleck@baltimoreclayworks.org

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This hands-on course in “experiential archaeology” brings together undergraduate students across disciplines to study the making of Athenian vases. Students work closely with expert ceramic artists, and in consultation with art historians, archaeologists, art conservators, and materials scientists to attempt to recreate ancient Greek manufacturing processes.

We will be apprentices to both contemporary and ancient potters over the next 13 weeks. The focus of this course is on the physical experience and process of recreating ancient Greek red figure vessels. We are extremely fortunate to have access to the Archaeological Museum’s rich holdings in red-figure vases, and we will consult them regularly in our recreation process. Our aim is to take seriously the physicality of these ancient objects, while also trying to understand something of their original contexts and material characteristics.

There is a vast literature on Greek vases, much of which we will not have the time to consult in this shortcourse. Similarly, there is a growing body of literature on the scientific analyses of Greek vases, much of which is too specialized to discuss in detail. However, we are fortunate to have numerous specialists joining us throughout the semester to provide their tremendous expertise and guide us through some of this information. Furthermore, many of these sources will be available to you in a bibliography should you wish to pursue these topics.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS:

This is a four-credit course and requires a serious commitment both in terms of time and engagement. Attendance is mandatory particularly as we begin to work on a new aspect of ancient Greek ceramic manufacture every single week. Please do not attend class if you are unwell so as to ensure the health of

your colleagues and instructors. Reasons for missing class such as medical excuses or other emergencies require official documentation.

The class will meet both at the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum, and more often, at Baltimore Clayworks. On the days that we meet in the museum, laptops, Ipads, tablets, cell phones and any other digital devices are not allowed during class time as ancient objects will be in use. Students with disabilities who may require these devices and/or other accommodations should speak with the instructor. Food, drink, and large coats and bags are not permitted in the Museum Seminar Room. See our visitor guidelines at: <http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/visit/museum-visitor-guidelines/>

When we are scheduled to work at Baltimore Clayworks (Baltimoreclayworks.org), please meet at the front entrance to Mason Hall promptly at 1:30. Special transportation has been arranged to/from Clayworks, and anyone who misses this transportation will therefore miss the class session. Please provide the instructor and TA with your cell phone number in case we need to contact you to coordinate transportation. Plan to wear clothes that can get dirty and bring as little as you need to work. An apron and a small towel may also be useful. Leave valuables, computers, Ipads, etc. at home. However, you can (and should) bring a camera/camera phone to document your work. If you wish to store any items in the Clayworks lockers, bring a small combination lock. Our transportation will leave Baltimore Clayworks at 4:40pm so as to be back on campus by 5pm.

Our class meetings will vary in format. Some meetings will include a lecture and discussion, followed by a session working hands on with museum objects or with clay. Others will be almost entirely dedicated to working with clay. Several sessions feature guest speakers who will either visit the classroom or talk with us via Skype. In cases when we are working with museum objects, you are expected to follow all museum procedures. You are similarly expected to follow all procedures at Clayworks. You are expected to leave all spaces cleaner than how you found them. Your work is not completed until spaces have been cleaned as needed, and all equipment put away.

Come to class on time, with the readings and assignments completed, and be ready to participate. Lack of preparedness for class will hamper your and your fellow classmates' progress and will not be tolerated. You should do the readings in the order specified by your instructor. Most readings will be available on Blackboard or online as indicated on the syllabus. Notify the instructor immediately if you cannot locate a reading.

CLASS ORGANIZATION AND GRADING:

Your grade will be determined based on the following criteria:

Class participation	15%
Blog posts, online profiles, comments	15%
Workshop journals	20%
Final tile construction and decoration	20%
Final presentation	20%
WYPR radio statement	5%
Poster preparation	5%

You will receive no credit for late work. Please plan your time so that your weekly assignments and your final project assignments are completed before the set deadlines.

Class participation

Your full engagement and participation is essential. This means doing the reading thoroughly, asking questions, looking closely at objects, working with clay, and trying things that are utterly unfamiliar to you. Remember that we are all working in unknown territory and your full participation will make this a more productive, thoughtful and enjoyable experience.

Blog posts

Our entire course will be documented through a blog on the museum's website:

<http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/the-collection/object-stories/recreating-ancient-greek-ceramics/>

Each week, the class will generate a blog post commenting on the experiences gained that week from working with the clay, concepts learned from lectures and/or visiting instructors, and also summarizing and analyzing the readings assigned for that week. **Each blog post will have one assigned writer; the rest of the class is required to comment on the blog posts in some way, either adding information about the experience, or posing questions, etc.** Your blog posts should be approximately 400 words long, and written in a thoughtful, analytical and yet accessible and conversational tone. Try to think about the key things that you learned over the past week. What new insights did you gain? How did looking at objects in the museum inform how you worked with your hands, or vice versa? What in the literature made/didn't make sense when trying to work with the clay? Be specific about measurements, proportions, names of tools, etc. Use your workshop journal to help you with this as well. In addition to the 400-word post, please include three images that demonstrate some of things you wrote about. Images should be captioned describing the activity, etc., with names of people included. In order to facilitate the sharing of images, we will set up a space for all images to be uploaded over the course. (A link for this through JHBox will be emailed to you after the first class). All images will be organized according to week. Please add any images you have on your cameras to this class "database". When mentioning any readings or websites you have looked at in preparing the blog post, please give a full bibliographic reference so that someone else who reads this will be able to look it up if interested.

You should email your blog post (as a word document) and images to both the instructor (Sanchita@jhu.edu) and the TA (Ross.Brendle@gmail.com) by midnight on the Sunday after class. So, if you are assigned to write about the class meeting on 2/5 (Thurs.), your blog post is due by 2/8 (Sun.) at midnight. **Late work will not be accepted.** Entries will be posted online by the following Tuesday by midnight. If you were not one of the assigned writers for the post, you must post a comment to by Wednesday by midnight. You can comment by going directly to the post and leaving a reply. Please note that your comments may not appear immediately, but they should show up within a few hours of your submission.

Online profiles

Each of you should prepare a short online profile. Mention your major, year of graduation, skills/experiences you bring to the course and your expectations/hopes for the course. This is very similar to the email you wrote to get accepted into the class, but should be tailored to three or four sentences for the blog. Please also take a photograph of yourself. These should be emailed to the instructor and TA by midnight on 2/1 (Sun.).

Workshop journals

You will each be given a paper journal to keep for the course of the semester. This journal should come with you to every class and be a place where you can keep track of activities, moments, insights, etc.

that occur during class time. It will also be where you write a “journal entry” about the work of the day—what you found challenging, interesting, unusual, etc. Journal entries are expected to be approximately 2 pages in length. **Photographs of your workshop journal must be emailed to the instructor and TA by Friday morning at 11am following each class.** They will be returned to you in class the following week. Selections from your journal will appear on the course blog, so do think carefully about how you write your entry, but do not edit it to feel like a “paper.” The idea is to share honest insights—be they complaints about how difficult the clay was to work—or the excitement about touching an ancient vase. Feel free to also include drawings, sketches, anything else that makes sense to you as you are working.

Tile construction and decoration

Given the size of the replica kiln we will construct, there is not enough space for each of you to recreate your own individual vessel; rather, you will make a small number of vessels in groups. However, you will work on creating individual ceramic tiles (approximately 3 inches x 3 inches in size) that you will prepare over the course of the semester. The purpose of the tile is to give you the opportunity to attempt the various techniques that we observe on the ancient Greek pottery we are trying to recreate, but with more freedom to create your own images and motifs. You will be expected to try every technique and make observations on how they were applied and how well they worked.

Final Presentation

Your work this semester culminates in a final presentation (seven minutes). The purpose of the presentation is to gather together all of the insights, research and experience you have gained over the course of the semester to discuss your process of recreating an ancient Greek vessel. The presentation should track your progress—and here you should refer to your workshop journals—from the very beginning of the semester through to the final products of completed tiles and (hopefully!) vessels. The presentations should also discuss ways in which the lectures, readings and discussions over the course of the semester impacted your process. Your powerpoints will be posted on our website/blog, so keep this in mind when you are preparing your slides.

WYPR Radio Statement

The progress of the course is being tracked by an audience of over 13,000 Baltimore-area listeners through the segment “Humanities Connection” on WYPR, Baltimore’s NPR station. To date, two segments about the course have already aired:

S. Balachandran, “Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum”, Sept. 4th, 2014

<http://wypr.org/post/johns-hopkins-archaeology-museum>

M. Hyleck, “Archaeology and the Ceramic Artist: Baltimore Clayworks”, Dec 11, 2014

<http://wypr.org/post/archaeology-and-ceramic-artist-baltimore-clayworks>

The final segment of this series is to be written and recorded by students in the course. We will work collaboratively on a statement (475 words) to be recorded at the WYPR studio on April 24th, and set to air at 5:45pm on April 30th. We will select the final readers in discussion collaboratively.

Poster preparation

Our course will be participating in the Undergraduate Research Day (April 16th) to be held at the Rec Center from 11am to 2pm. We will produce a poster for the day in collaboration, and will take turns standing by our poster (and our work!) that day.

FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

We will be collaborating with a team of filmmakers and photographers over the course of the semester in order to create an approximately ten minute documentary film of the experience of attempting to recreate ancient Greek ceramics. This means that for much of our time working with objects and clay, there will be a camera of some kind present. We will be working primarily with Dr. Bernadette Wegenstein (Director and Producer); Allen Moore (Cinematographer), and Daniela Mileykovsky (sound recordist). They are here to see what we are doing, to capture any of our “aha!” moments, or moments when things didn’t work and required some tinkering. They will mostly be in the position of observing our work, but may ask us on occasion to explain something or do something again. In general, we should almost forget that they are there and concentrate on the work at hand. **Please be yourself.** If at any time you are uncomfortable, please approach the instructor to let her know that you’d rather not be on film at that time. The Johns Hopkins University policy on use of images of students is here: http://pages.jh.edu/~news_info/policy/photography.html

Whenever you see (*) on the syllabus, that indicates that our filmmakers will be visiting with us that day.

A bit more about our filmmakers:

- Bernadette Wegenstein, Director and Producer, and Research Professor, Department of German and Romance Languages, Johns Hopkins University
<http://grll.jhu.edu/directory/bernadette-wegenstein/>
<http://bernadettewegenstein.com>
- Allen Moore Filmmaker, and Professor of Filmmaking, Maryland Institute College of Art
http://www.mica.edu/About_MICA/People/Faculty/Faculty_List_by_Last_Name/Allen_Moore.html

COURSE POLICIES:

Johns Hopkins University has laid out strict policies on ethical academic conduct. Ethical violations include but are not limited to plagiarism, forgery, unauthorized collaboration, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, reuse of assignments and lying. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any work that is thought to be plagiarized will receive a failing grade, and the Dean of Academic Affairs will be notified. See the guide on “Academic Ethics for Undergraduates” and the Ethics Board Web site (<http://ethics.jhu.edu>) for more information.”

Any work you do for this class must be your own, and any help you receive (from published sources, the Internet, fellow students) must be acknowledged in proper academic form (footnotes, bibliography, etc.). You are also expected to report any violations of these academics to the instructor. See the instructor if any of this is unclear.

COURSE COLLABORATORS AND VISITORS:

This course requires the insights of specialists across disciplines and across the country. We are fortunate to have extraordinarily generous scholars who will be joining the class, either in person, or via Skype conferences, to talk with us and share their expertise. You are expected to come prepared to ask questions of our scholars that will move our process forward in different ways. **Come to class with two questions in mind for each session/speaker based on your assigned readings and hands-on work.** Again, your engagement, enthusiasm and curiosity are essential and expected.

CLASS SCHEDULE

JAN. 29 (Wk 1): INTRODUCTION (MUSEUM)

Assigned Readings:

- Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum. “Attic Red-Figure Vases”. Accessed 25 January 2015. <http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/the-collection/object-stories/attic-red-figure-vases-in-the-johns-hopkins-archaeological-museum/>
- Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum. “Recreating Ancient Greek Ceramics.” Accessed 25 January 2015. Read the entire blog to date. <http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/the-collection/object-stories/recreating-ancient-greek-ceramics/>
- Listen to the WYPR segments about this course that have already aired:
 - <http://wypr.org/post/johns-hopkins-archaeology-museum>
 - <http://wypr.org/post/archaeology-and-ceramic-artist-baltimore-clayworks>
- Lynch, Kathleen M. “Drinking cups and the Symposium at Athens in the Archaic and Classical Periods.” In *Cities Called Athens. Studies Honoring John McK. Camp II*, edited by Kyle F. Daly and Lee Ann Riccardi. Lanham: Bucknell University, 2014: 231-271.

Guest Speaker:

Dr. H. Alan Shapiro, W.H.Collins Vickers Professor of Archaeology, Department of Classics, Johns Hopkins University

FEB. 1: PROFILE ASSIGNMENT DUE

Send in your profile for the blog to Ross Brendle by Sunday, Feb. 1st by midnight

FEB. 5 (Wk 2): *LOOKING AT OUR VASES (MUSEUM)

Assigned Readings:

- Read Odegaard Nancy and Grace Katterman, *A Guide to Handling Anthropological Museum Collections*, Los Angeles: Western Association for Art Conservation, 1992. Available in the museum M-F, 10:30am to 1:30pm. **Take a brief quiz on this material in the museum.** Also read our museum access policy here: <http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/visit/museum-visitor-guidelines/>
- Sparkes, Brian A. 2000. “Greek Painted Pottery.” In *Making Classical Art. Process and Practice*, edited by Roger Ling. Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2000: 62-77, plus plates.
- Look at how conservators study the way that ancient vases have changed/been changed over time. Accessed 25 January 2015:
 - http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/fragment_to_vase/
 - http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/apulian_vases/interactive/index.html

FEB. 12 (Wk 3): INTRODUCTION TO WORKING WITH CLAY/BEGIN TO PREPARE TILES (CLAYWORKS)

Assigned Readings:

- Hasaki, Eleni. “Craft Apprenticeship in Ancient Greece. Reaching beyond the Masters.” In

Archaeology and Apprenticeship: Body Knowledge, Identity, and Communities of Practice. Edited by Willeke Wendrich, Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 2012: 171-202.

- Williams, Dyfri. "Picturing Potters and Painters." *Athenian Potters and Painters. Volume II*. Edited by John Oakley and Olga Palagia. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2009: 306-317.
- Schreiber, Toby. "Clay". In *Athenian Vase Construction: A Potter's Analysis*. Getty Museum: Los Angeles, 1999: 3-8.
<http://d2aohiyo3d3idm.cloudfront.net/publications/virtuallibrary/0892364653.pdf>
- Richter, Gisela. "Preface" and "Technical processes." In *The Craft of Athenian Pottery*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1923. Read sections on "ingredients and properties", "washing" and "wedging": xi-xiii, 1-3.

FEB. 19 (WK 4): INTRODUCTION TO IMAGERY/FORMING VESSELS AND TILES (CLAYWORKS)

Assigned Readings:

- Schreiber, *Athenian Vase Construction*. Read sections on "Forming and techniques", 9-23; and "Kylix", 148-163.
- Richter, *Craft*, 4-19.
- Noble, Joseph Veach. 1988. *The Techniques of Painted Attic Pottery*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1988: 20-37. Read beginning with "Forming techniques" and end with "Forms and uses".

Guest speaker:

Ross Brendle, Graduate student, Department of Classics, Johns Hopkins University

FEB. 26 (WK 5): *FORMING VESSELS, HANDLES AND FEET, AND SURFACE PREPARATION (CLAYWORKS)

Assigned Readings:

Schreiber, *Athenian Vase Construction*, 26-28 (sections on "Leather hard" and "Slip"), and 39-52 ("Surface treatment").
Richter, *Craft*, 19-26.
Noble, *Techniques*, 103-121, pl. IX.

MAR. 5 (WK 6): SLIPPING AND PAINTING CERAMICS (MUSEUM)

Assigned Readings:

- Boss, Martin. "Preliminary Sketches on Attic red-figured vases of the early fifth century BC." In *Athenian Potters and Painters. Volume I*. Oxford: Oxbow Monograph 67, 1997: 345-351.
- Schreiber, *Athenian*, 53-54 ("Greek gloss and firing").
- Maniatis, Yannis, et al. "New Evidence for the Nature of the Attic Black Gloss." *Archaeometry* 35, 1, 1993: 23-34.
- Explore the Athenian Pottery Project at the J. Paul Getty Museum. Last Accessed 25 January 2015: http://www.getty.edu/conservation/our_projects/science/athenian/index.html
- Come to class with possible images for your vessels and tiles.

Guest Speaker:

Dr. Marc Walton, Senior Scientist, Northwestern University-Art Institute of Chicago Center for Scientific Studies in the Arts (via Skype)

MAR.12 (WK 7): *SLIPPING AND PAINTING CERAMICS (CLAYWORKS)

Assigned Readings:

- Artal-Isbrand, Paula and Philip Klausmeyer. "Evaluation of the relief line and the contour line on Greek red-figure vases," *Studies in conservation* 58, 4, 2013: 338-359.
- Aloupi-Siotis, Eleni. "Recovery and Revival of Attic Vase Decoration Techniques: What Can They Offer Archaeological Research?" In *Papers on Special Techniques in Athenian Vases*. Edited by Kenneth D.S. Lapatin. Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 2006: 113-128.
- Cohen, Beth. "Outline as a Special Technique in Black- and Red-Figure Vase-painting." In *The Colors of Clay: Special Techniques in Athenian Vases*. Edited by Beth Cohen. Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2006: 150–60. Available online: <http://www.getty.edu/publications/virtuallibrary/0892369426.html?imprint=jpgt&pg=3&res=20>

Guest Speaker:

Paula Artal Isbrand, Objects Conservator, Worcester Art Museum (via Skype)

MAR. 19 : NO CLASS –SPRING BREAK

MAR. 26 (WK 8): SLIPPING AND PAINTING CERAMICS/FIRING (CLAYWORKS)

Assigned Readings:

- Newman, Richard. "Ferrous and Ferric: A Review of Scientific Research on the Iron in Attic Greek Glazes." In *Papers on Special Techniques in Athenian Vases*. Edited by Kenneth D.S. Lapatin. Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2008: 105–12.
- Cianchetta, Ilaria, et al. "Investigating the Firing Protocol of Athenian Pottery Production: a Raman and Hi-Resolution TEM study." *Microscopy and Microanalysis* 20 (Suppl 3), 2014: 2038-39. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1431927614011921>
- Walton, Marc et al. "Material Evidence for Multiple Firings of Ancient Athenian Red-Figure Pottery," *Journal of the American Ceramic Society*, 96, 7, 2013: 2031–2035.
- Begin to dig kiln components into the ground at Clayworks

Guest Speaker:

Dr. Ilaria Cianchetta, Conservation scientist, Getty Conservation Institute, Collections Research Laboratory (via Skype)

APR. 2 (WK 9): *FIRING CERAMICS (CLAYWORKS)

- Hasaki, Eleni. "The Ancient Greek Ceramic Kilns and their Contribution to the Technology and Organization of the Potters' Workshops." In *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on*

Ancient Greek Technology. Edited by P. Tasios and C. Palyvou, Athens: Technical Chamber of Greece, 2006: 221–227.

- Kahn, Lisa C. and John C. Wissinger. “Re-creating and firing a Greek kiln.” In *Papers on Special Techniques in Athenian Vases*. Edited by Kenneth D.S. Lapatin. Getty Museum: Los Angeles: 129-138.
- Noble, *Techniques*, 2008: 148-165.
- Begin to dig kiln components into the ground at Clayworks

APR. 8 (WEDNESDAY, WK 10): *FIRING VESSELS AND TILES (CLAYWORKS)

We will begin to pre-fire our kiln during the day so that we can begin the true firing around 5pm and continue for at least eight hours. We will need volunteers to begin working in the earlier part of the day. The class is expected to be available for the overnight firing. Come prepared with multiple layers of clothes. Pizza and beverages to be provided for sustenance.

Assigned reading:

- Milne, M. “Appendix III. The Poem Entitled Kiln”. In Noble, *Techniques*, 186-191. We will read this at the firing.

Guest speakers:

Dr. Lisa C. Kahn, Associate Dean, Graduate Programs, College of Visual and Performing Arts, George Mason University, and John Wissinger, MFA, Archaeological Ceramics Consultant
Dr. Eleni Hasaki, Associate Professor, Department of Classis, University of Arizona
Co-Director, Laboratory for Traditional Technology

APR. 10 (FRIDAY): *OPENING THE KILN

It would be great to do this as a group—let’s try to find a time when we can all be present for the big moment!

APR. 11 (SATURDAY): ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM SYMPOSIUM (GILMAN 50)

More information to be announced.

APR. 16 (11-2PM) UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH DAY (REC. CENTER)

More information to be announced.

APR. 16 (WK 11): EXAMINATION OF FINAL VESSELS AND TILES, AND POST-FIRE INSCRIBING (MUSEUM)

- Schreiber, “Flaws and Defects,” *Athenian*, 57-66.
- Farnsworth, Marie. “Types of Greek glaze failure.” *Archaeology*, 12, 4, 1959: 242-50.
- Finalize our text for WYPR recording on the 24th.

APR. 23 (WK 12): FROM THE POTTER'S WORKSHOP TO THE CONSUMER (MUSEUM)

- Williams, Dyfri. "Greek Potters and Painters: Marketing and Movings." In *Pottery Markets in the Ancient Greek World*. Edited by Athena Tsingarida et al. Brussels: Centre de Recherches en Archeologie et Patrimoine, 2008: 39-60.
- Langridge-Noti, Elizabeth. "'To Market, To Market': Pottery, the Individual, and Trade in Athens." In *Cities Called Athens. Studies Honoring John M. Camp II*. Lanham: Bucknell University Press, 2014: 165-195.
- Stissi, Vladimir. "Giving the *Kerameikos* a Context: Ancient Greek Potters' Quarters as Part of the Polis Space, Economy and Society." In *Quartiers Artisanaux en Grece Ancienne*. Edited by Arianna Esposito and Giorgios M. Sanidas. Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires de Septentrion, 2012: 201-220.
- Sapirstein, Philip. "Demographics and Productivity in the Ancient Athenian Pottery Industry." In *Athenian Potters and Painters. Volume III*. Edited by John Oakley. Oxford: Oxbow books, 2014: 175-186.

Guest speaker:

Dr. Philip Sapirstein, Assistant Professor, History of Art, University of Nebraska–Lincoln (by Skype)
Faculty Fellow, [Center for Digital Research in the Humanities](#)

APR. 24 (FRIDAY): RECORD SEGMENT FOR WYPR IN THEIR STUDIO**APR. 30 (WK 13): STUDENT PRESENTATIONS (MUSEUM)**

- Individual Powerpoint presentations (seven minutes each).
- Send Powerpoint presentations to Ross Brendle by midnight, Wed. 4/29. Turn in your completed tiles for evaluation.
- Our WYPR piece is scheduled to air on the radio at 5:45pm. Maybe we can plan to listen together?

MAY. 6 (WED): Turn in workshop journals and tiles to the instructor

MAY. 14 (THURS): Pick up completed tiles and journals from instructor