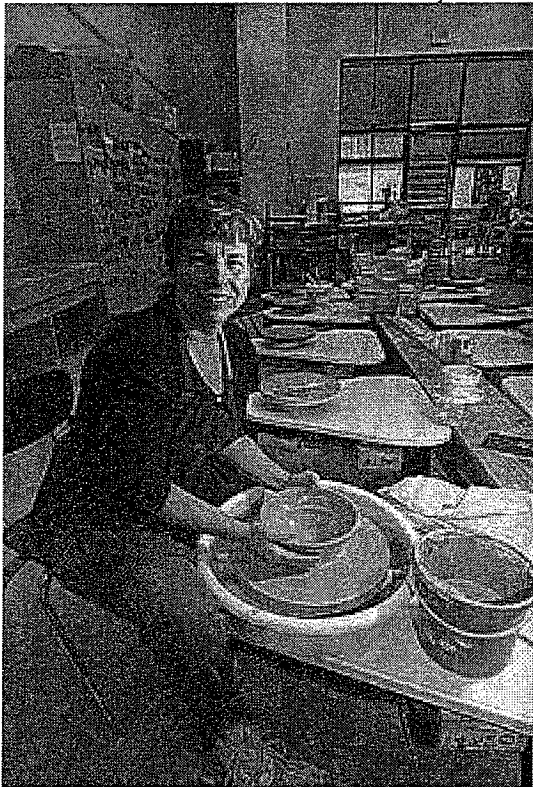


Susan Hutchcroft

Master Clay Artist

Susan Hutchcroft is a multi-media artist with an emphasis in clay. She has a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Arkansas. Susan's work is recognized with Juror's Choice Award of Excellence and Best of show. Her installations can be seen in regional and local exhibitions. Susan is the Artistic / Executive Director of Northwest Arkansas Community Creative Center.



Millefiore Technique

Photo credit: J.P. Wampler

Susan has provided training and teacher resources for educators at Fayetteville Public Schools and at Walton Arts Center's summer Arts With Education Institute. In these educational resources, Susan introduces an innovative technique to teachers, using two classic media (clay and paper), to teach creative design and critical assessment of artwork. The Paper Clay techniques are immediately usable in the classroom and hassle-free because they do not require firing. Students are involved

in the creative process from beginning to end through designing and building armatures, paper clay sculpting, and assessing their work.

This resource information explores the ancient technique of *millefiore*, a process of layering colored clays. Many slabs of color are combined in patterns and cut through in cross-section to make intricate designs. This technique provides opportunities for classroom discussions of shape pattern, color and contrast, and builds sequencing, problem solving and critical thinking skills in students.

A professional development workshop for educators was presented in Reinboth studio as part of the Arts With Education Institute, summer, 2003.

Arkansas Art Standards:

- Students will inquire/explore/discover historical, cultural, social, environmental, and personal references from which to develop concepts/ideas.
- Students will use their creativity in a wide variety of media, techniques, processes, and tools to develop original works of art and design.
- Students will reflect upon, respond to, and rediscover the art work and concept of self, of others (past and present), of environments, and of diverse cultures.

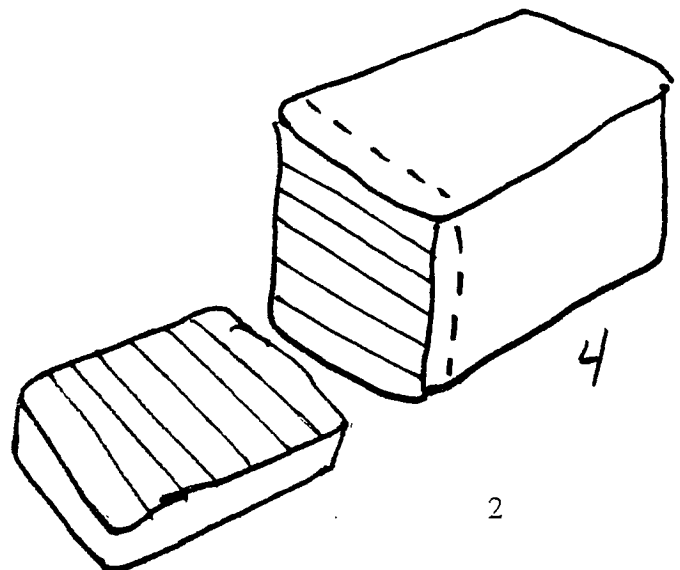
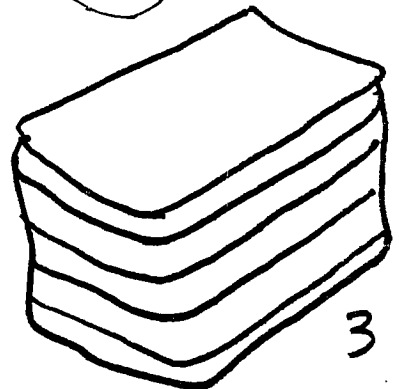
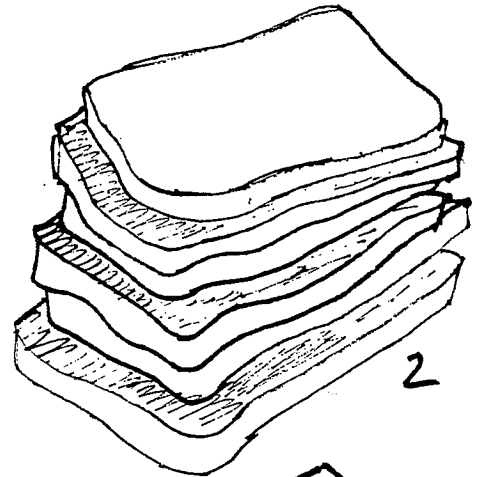
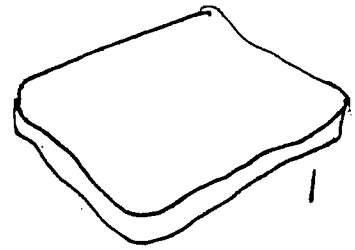
Play Dough/Crayola Modeling Clay Millefiore

Supplies:

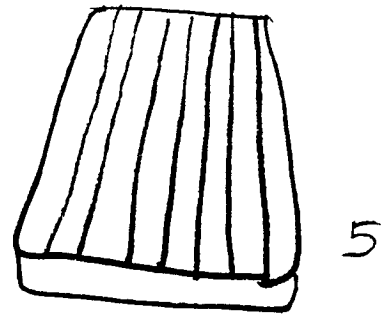
At least 3 colors of Play-Dough/ Crayola Modeling clay
Plastic Baggies to keep clay moist and workable
Cheese cutter
Bowl of water

Process:

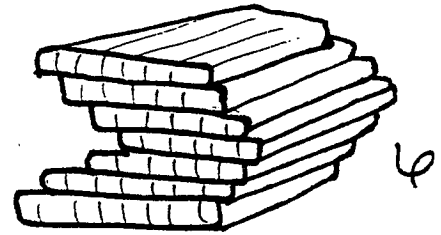
1. Create several slabs of each color (approximately 2"x3" and no more than 3/16 " thick) by slicing or patting. Fig. 1
2. Continue slicing or patting slabs of clay. Each slab should be made of a single color, but make many slabs of different colors.
3. Alternately stack contrasting colored slabs until you have a stack about 2" high. It helps to put a little water between slabs to help clay stick together and stay moist. Have the kids just wet the ends of their fingers. Fig. 2
4. Pick up the stack and pat it gently on to the table to form a block (approximately 2"x 3"). Smoothing the sides of the block helps the block hold together. Fig 3
5. Place the block on a smooth surface and using the cheese cutter, slice down one side. The pattern will be visible on the cut surface. Fig. 4
6. Continue slicing with the cheese cutter. Slabs can vary in thickness, but no thicker than the cheese cutter.



7. Lay a slab down on the table with the stripe pattern perpendicular to you. Wet the surface with a little water. Fig. 5

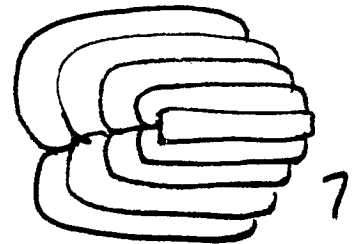


8. Lay a second slab on top of the first, shifting the second slab a little to the right. As a rule, shift the slab the distance of its thickness, i.e. $1/16^{\text{th}}$, slabs should be shifted $1/16^{\text{th}}$. Fig. 6



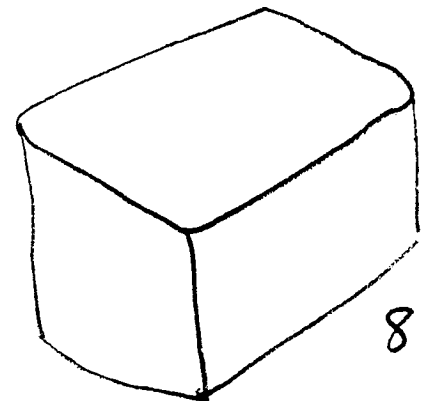
9. Continue stacking slabs in this manner until half the block is done. Then continue stacking but shifting slabs to the left. Fig. 6

10. Once block is complete slightly wet the outside surfaces.

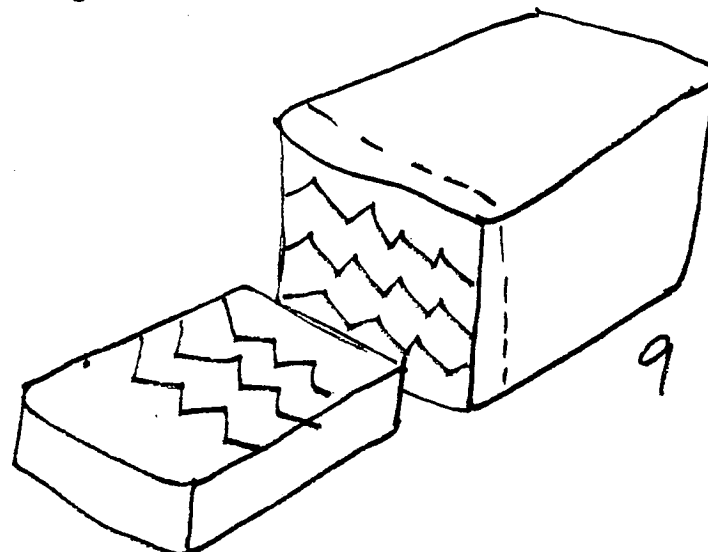


11. Pat the block back into shape by pushing edges together and tapping it on the table. Fig. 7 & 8

12. Cut off the end of the block using the full thickness of the cheese cutter. The block has four sides and two ends. You must cut from the ends to see the pattern. Fig. 9

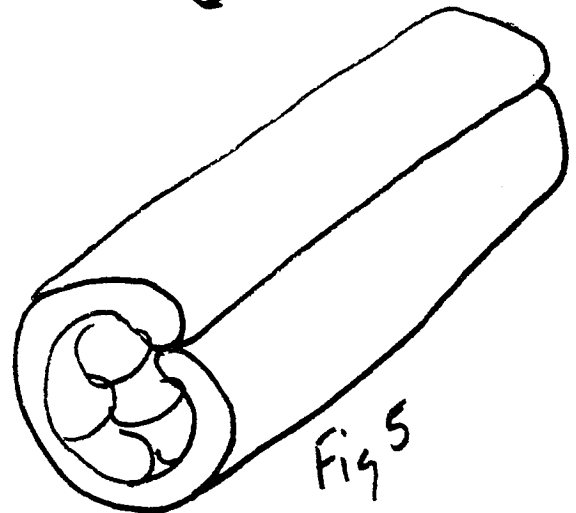
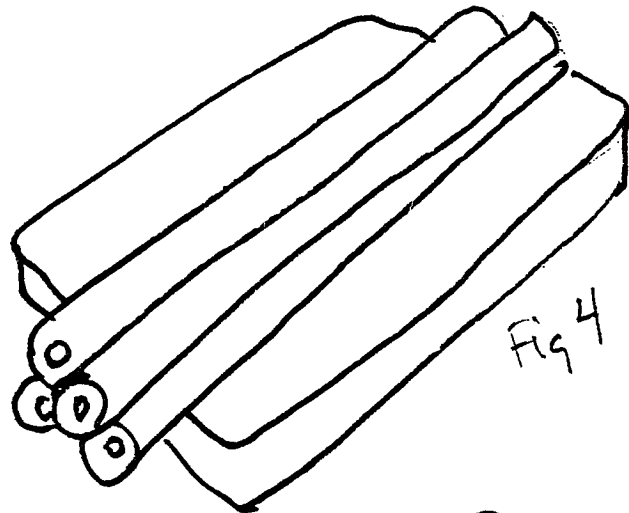
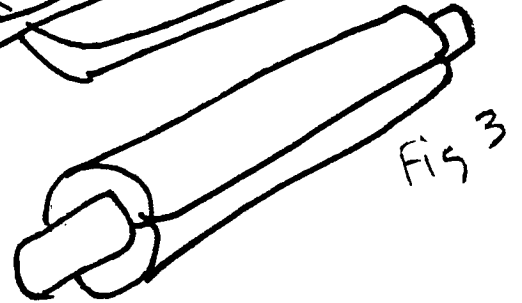
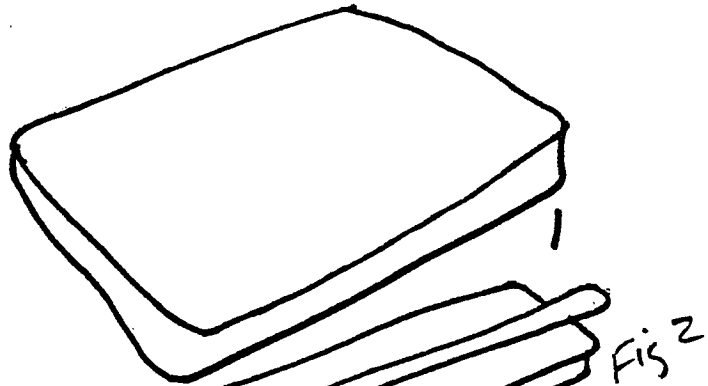


13. You can now pinch, pat, and roll slices of clay into different shapes. Several pieces can be placed together by overlapping. Remember to use a little water to help different pieces of clay stick together.



Design Variation One:

1. Slice or pat one color of clay into a slab measuring 3" x 4" and no more than 3/16" thick. Set aside. Fig. 1
2. With another piece of clay, roll a 1/2" coil of one color 3" long or longer.
3. Pat coil into a narrow slab (approximately 1 1/2" long). Fig. 2
4. Roll out another coil making it very thin and approximately 3" long.
5. Place thin coil on top of the narrow slab using a little water to make clay stick together. Fig. 2
6. Roll the narrow slab around the thin coil. The slab will encircle the coil. Fig. 3
7. Lay this coil on the 3"x4" slab using water to make the clay stick together.
8. Create more coils using steps 4-6 and continuing stacking them on the 3"x4" slab until you have a group of coils 1"x1" thick. Fig. 4
9. Roll the big slab around the coils using water to insure they stick together. Fig. 5
10. Pat and smooth out the outside surface. This will help the roll stay together. The ends will look disorganized—but this makes it even more exciting to slice through and reveal the internal pattern. Fig. 5
11. Using the cheese cutter, cut off a slice from the end. Continue slicing



and use these patterned pieces of clay to create.

Design Variation Two:

Taking a prepared millefiore block and rolling it into one piece

1. Cut off the ends of a prepared block to view the pattern.
2. Using a small rolling pin or short length of closet dowel carefully roll out the block a little at a time, alternating directions.
3. Roll on both sides to get an even spread of the design.

Traditional Clay Millefiore

Supplies:

1 ½ to 2 lbs of clay per student

Smooth wooden board, board covered in heavy canvas, or heavy canvas to lay on table

Soft cotton cloths measuring approximately 1 foot square

Bowls of water

Paper and pencils

Fishing wire (10 lb test)

Washers or bolts

Rolling pins or thick dowels

Inexpensive paintbrush with soft bristles

1. Prepare at least two colors of clay.
(Iron oxide is a cheap ingredient for adding color). Stoneware and porcelain for high fire or white and red earthenware for low fire can be bought premixed and ready to use. Wedging two colors together in varying proportion can make varying shades of color.
 - A. Commercially bought stain (Mason stains) can be added to the clay in varying percentages. Allowing your white clay to dry, then break into small pieces.
 - B. Weigh the dried clay to assure accuracy for duplicating color. Test samples are a good idea. Add color and water to make the mixture the consistency of mashed potatoes. Colored clay mixing is quite a bit of work best suited for older students.
 - C. Lay the clay out on cloth until dry enough to wedge.
2. Form clay into rectangles (2" x 3" and at least 1" thick) in preparation for slicing.

3. At this point decisions need to be made to determine the final patterns. It is a good idea for students to start writing down their steps.
4. Basic construction of blocks requires these steps:
 - A. Slicing of clay (slabs) in various thicknesses. Use the thinnest wire possible that is still strong enough to slice the clay. 10 lb fishing wire works well with washers or nuts on the ends for gripping.
 - B. Place clay slab between two soft clean cloths and roll out slightly to compress the clay molecules together. The cloth leaves a nice smooth surface on the clay, makes handling easier and helps keep the colors from smudging.
 - C. As one starts to lay the slabs together a light brushing of water or colored slip (colored clay watered down) must be applied.
 - D. Lightly compress the clay after applying a layer to help keep the clay block together.

After making the block wrap the clay up in Saran Wrap (excellent for keeping clay moist) and continue another day. This also gives the clay time to equalize the moisture which makes a more stable block.

Designs:

The 3 designs under the Play Dough sections are easily adapted for use with traditional clay.

Rolling and Combining techniques:

have a dramatic effect on the design. Try rolling:

1. In one direction only
2. Many directions
3. One side only
4. Both sides
5. Flipping from one side to the other frequently.

Try combining different designs together:

1. Encircling one inside the other
2. Creating scenes

Once your students understand the basic building techniques you will be amazed by the unique designs they come up with. You'll hear a lot of "WOW" and "IT WORKED!"

Recommended Suppliers:

Mason Stains
P.O. Box 76. East Liverpool, Ohio, 43920-5076
Bulk buying of stains (5lbs or more)

*L & R Specialties
202 E. Mount Vernon St., Nixa, Mo 65714-9679
I prefer their earthenware

*Flint Hills Clay Works, Inc., Marion, Kansas, 66861
Does group shipping to lower delivery costs

*both will custom mix for a price.

A.R.T
www.artclay.com A.R.T. has Mason Stains in smaller amounts. Request a catalog.