

Tulliallan 2020

SPRING WEEKEND WORKSHOP, TULLIALLAN POLICE COLLEGE, KINCARDINE FIFE FK10 4BE

David Wright



SIMPLY TAKE A LUMP OF CLAY

I didn't set out to be a Potter, as a child I would draw on anything I could find and would make all sorts of things. Paper, card, wood, whatever came to hand. Clay passed me by and all I wanted to do at school was art and go to Art College.

I achieved A level in Art, Metalwork and Technical Drawing; that says it all really, my childhood spent happily in the countryside doing odd jobs to earn money to buy art materials and Balsa wood.

I chose to study Graphic Design at Art College; visiting lecturers encouraged me to pursue illustration as a career, but that didn't work out and I ended up in an advertising agency. I hated it, so I enrolled at evening classes to preserve my sanity. I just wanted to use my hands and make stuff for me. There was a place on the beginners course in Pottery, I took it and was hooked.

In the seventies, throwing and learning to throw was everything, hand building was dealt with briefly and not regarded as 'proper pots', despite well known potters like Ruth Duckworth and Gabrielle Koch. I didn't want to make perfect cylinders or mugs, bowls or cooking pots on the wheel, I just wanted to use my hands and see what I could do with a lump of this fantastic material called clay. It bends, stretches, is pliable and sticks to itself. If it doesn't work out, squish it up and start again.

I guess I taught myself, the only bloke on the course, sat at a bench in the corner with a whirler, locked in my own little world.

It is very limiting having only a couple of hours a week, wrapping half made pots in sacking and plastic until the next opportunity, so I started working at home when I could. You don't need much space or equipment to hand build with coils, but the small company that I had joined became very successful designing and building exhibitions and retail

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PLEASE NOTE: You do not need to login to the Bookwhen site. Ignore the login button on the top right of the page (this is if you already have a Bookwhen account). If you click on it you will get confused as you will be told your email address is not recognised. You only need a credit or debit card to pay for your 'Ticket'.

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interiors, so clay went on the back burner for a while. As the company grew my job became more manager than designer, lots of flying, hotels, meetings, late nights and impossible deadlines. I wanted to make things again, not for clients, just self indulgent little projects for my own personal enjoyment.

I bought a little electric kiln with my company bonus and started my next career. I joined a wood firing group and we tried to sell the produce from the kiln to help pay for my habit. I have been making pots full time since 2004.

I get asked all the time about what inspires me. Inspiration comes from within, my time spent as a designer taught me to look at form, function, negative and positive space. Eliminate the unnecessary, simplify. Picasso once said 'If there is such a thing as inspiration, it has to find you at work'. My work evolves, I work on a theme, recently coiled spiral forms. I may put it down for

a while to return later, often it will take on a different direction. I work mainly with clay, but wood and other materials are incorporated. I use discarded, found or waste timber. Sometimes the scrap wood used to fire the kiln is used. The ash used from burning wood is washed and used to make glaze. It is a symbiotic process, nothing wasted, the results often unexpected. I have gone full circle, back to where I started as a child, just making things with whatever comes to hand.

David Wright works in rural Leicestershire. All his work is hand build, mainly pinching and coiling. He uses simple ash and shino glazes and fires his pots in a small wood fired kiln. He works and fires alone.

He will make coiled box forms, spiral pots and a large footed bowl, so please join him at Tulliallan.