**Pop Art Clay Portraits**

**in the style of Andy Warhol**

Andy Warhol (1928-1987) was a key figure in Pop Art, an art movement that emerged in the 1950s to become prominent over the next two decades. In the 1960s, Warhol created several “massproduced” images from photographs of celebrities such as Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley and Jackie Onassis.

The non-representational colors of Pop Art do not depict the artist’s inner sensation of the world. They refer to the popular culture, which also inspires Warhol to experiment with the technique of silkscreen printing, a popular technique used for mass production. By doing image transfer on clay, students can take a photograph or drawing of themselves or their favorite pop icon, duplicate it several times, and then experiment with various color combinations, just as Warhol did. Students will learn how to roll clay slabs, transfer an image to clay, and then carve on clay. Lastly, they will experiment with not only ceramic pigments, but with various paints to learn how color changes can affect identical images.



**Preparation:**

1. Visit **Warhol.org,** the Andy Warhol museum website.



2. Students will find a photograph of

themselves or a pop icon that they want

to use.

3. Divide clay using a wire clay cutter; need

approximately 2 lbs per student.

4. Cover tables with unprimed canvas to

keep clay from sticking.

**Process**

1. Make copies of the photograph by inkjet

printing or photocopying (not

laserprinting). It is helpful if the image is

digitally "posterized" first by making

copies of copies to remove multiples

levels of gray. A separate copy will be

needed for multiple tiles. Four identical

images can be printed onto an 8-1/2" x

11" sheet of paper.

2. With a watersoluble marker or gel pen,

draw over the lines of the image that you

want to transfer to the clay, see (A).

(A)

3. Roll slabs of clay, no thinner than 1/4"

thick. Clay thickness strips positioned on

either side of the rolling pin will facilitate

the creation of even slabs. Roll in both

directions to align the clay particles and

reduce the possibility of warping.

Carefully lift the slab from one end and

move it to a plywood board for the

remainder of the project.

4. Lay the image face down on the slab and

smooth the back side with fingers to

ensure good contact. After about 30

seconds, lift a corner to see if the image

has transferred to the clay. If not, allow

up to a minute for the transfer to occur,

then carefully lift the image from the clay,

see (B).

(B)

5. While the clay is still soft, use a ruler to

cut it into a tile, leaving a border around

the image. Wet fingers and smooth sides.

Do not lift thetile after cutting, as this can

cause warping.

6. After the tile has dried slightly, carve or

incise the dark lines of the transfer by:

— Using a triangular-shaped mini-ribbon

tool or other small modeling tool.

— Placing a clear plastic bag over the

image and tracing the lines with a

ballpoint pen. This results in a smooth

line. Experiment with a variety of depths

and thicknesses of the carved lines on a

scrap piece of clay.

7. After carving, sponge lightly over the

surface to smooth rough edges and

remove the remaining transfer. Dry slowly

on the board, turning the tile occasionally

to ensure even drying..

8. After the tiles are bisque fired, it’s time to

experiment with color!

— Apply acrylic paints--Brush Black into the

carved lines first, then sponge the

paint away from the surface of the tile. Then, add other colors to the surface,

starting with the lightest shades. Avoid

applying other colors to the Black in the

lines. After the acrylics are applied,

Each Tile will have a different color

scheme:

1. Monochromatic
2. Analogous
3. Complementary split
4. Triadic

Graded on:

Pop Art Concept/color schemes

Construction/process/following directions

Composition/use of space

Craftsmanship/use of time