

PAUL PHILP

When he was 15 years old Paul discovered Song Dynasty Chinese ceramics. That led to his further discovery of British craft potters such as Bernard Leach, Michael Cardew and Hans Coper. He was captivated by these early role models and St Ives artists such as Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth.

Paul has taken many years to develop the style and method of making his present work. He enjoys experimenting with rather severe geometrical shapes and then taking on the challenge of the more 'organic' sculptural pieces. With the sculptural pieces – shaped vases – he is never sure when he starts making quite how the final shape will evolve. He keeps an open mind as he continues to explore the form.

He has always had a deep interest in architecture and has studied vernacular buildings such as Japanese Minka. He is interested in ancient cultures, tribal art, and oriental art. His favourite art is the abstract art of the mid 20th Century.

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Texture and Form





PROCESS

The type of pottery is stoneware. It is a refractory high fired ware, but due to large quantities of grit it is slightly porous. The grit is in the form of potters grog (crushed fire brick) and sea sand. This makes the clay very tolerant of being modelled and carved.

The pieces are all hand built. They are made with relatively thick walls and then, when hard but not completely dry, they are carved until the right degree of fineness is created.

Every piece is fired 4 or 5 times and sometimes more. The reason for multiple firings is to harden on layers of oxides and slip (liquid clay) before more can be added.

The basic – biscuit or bisque – firing is done at 1120 degrees C and is simply to get the pieces solid enough to work on. The final firings are done at a temperature of 1250 degrees C or more.

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