

## Roly Bowls

Glazing isn't the only way to create beautiful surfaces!

Agateware pottery features swirling, marbled colors and was probably first developed to imitate the qualities of agate, a semiprecious stone with striated patterning. These swirling effects can be created by working with thin slabs of colored clay that have been layered together to make patterns. This technique allows for both precise and random effects.

Agateware was introduced in about 1730 by Dr. Thomas Wedgwood of Rowley's Pottery in Staffordshire, England. The random mingling of colored clays, such as red and buff, gave a broad veining to domestic and ornamental pieces. The English potter Thomas Wheildon greatly improved agateware in the 1740s by using white clays stained with metallic oxides. Repeatedly mixing different layers of brown, white, and green or blue clay yielded a striated, marbled effect.

### Grade Levels 3-12

*Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 25 students. Adjust them as needed.*

### Preparation

1. Familiarize students with Agateware examples.
2. Cover the tables with canvas.
3. Cut 2" slices of white clay and 1" slices of red clay with a wire cutting tool.

### Process

1. Provide each student with a 2" slice of white clay and a 1" slice of red clay. Stack the red clay directly on top of the white clay.
2. On a canvas-covered surface, combine the two colors with a rolling pin. Turn and flip the clay repeatedly and roll it out until you have created a slab about 1/4" thick.
3. Trim the irregular edges of the slab with a needle tool to create a rectangle. Start at one end of the slab and roll it up, "jelly roll"-style. If desired, you can square



### Materials

Amaco® #25 White Art Clay, 50-lb (30505-1025); share one box among the class

Amaco® #67 Sedona Red Clay, 50-lb (30506-3050); share one box among the class

Wire Clay Cutter, (30327-1018); share one between two students

Pro Needle Tool, (34920-1063); share one between two students

Rolling Pin, 8" wooden (30345-1008); share between two students

Blick® #12 Heavy Weight Canvas, 36" wide, (07301-1036); enough material to cover the tables



### OPTIONAL MATERIALS

Amaco® Self Hardening Stonex White Clay, 25-lb (33247-1025)

Amaco® Self Hardening Mexican Pottery Clay, 25-lb (33205-3025)

Mayco® Slump and Hump Molds, (30391-1020)

Amaco® Drape Molds, (32945-), (32962-)

Amaco® Lead-Free Underglaze Decorating Colors, 2-oz (30417-)

Amaco® Lead-Free Clear Transparent Glazes, pint, (30406-1026)

Blick® Acrylic Gloss Medium, pint (00623-1036)



## Process, continued

- off the ends of the roll by pressing them against the table.
- Cut the roll into even slices about 1/2" thick with a wire tool. Notice the spiral design. Place the pieces side by side in rows with their edges touching.
  - Roll over the top of the slices to combine them into a patterned slab. Turn the slab over and roll over it on the other side. Make sure there are no gaps in the slab.
  - At this point, the patterned slab may be cut apart and reassembled to form an infinite variety of designs. Try cutting the slab into strips and offsetting them or flipping every other strip upside down. After making your cuts, reassemble the pieces and roll over them again to combine them.
  - Make a bowl shape by hand or by draping the patterned slab into or over a bowl form or a plaster mold.
  - Once the bowl is dry, fire it to cone level 04. If you are using air-hardening clay, paint it with Gloss Medium.

## Options

- Add additional colors to your clay mix.
- Paint a slab of clay with a colored underglaze and let it dry slightly before rolling it out.
- Experiment with other forms made with slabs.



**Step 1:** Roll white and red clay together into a "jelly roll." Slice the roll into 1/2" thick pieces.



**Step 2:** Place the pieces side by side in rows with their edges touching.



**Step 3:** Roll over the pieces to form a slab.



**Step 4:** Cut the slab into strips, reassemble the pieces and roll over them again to re-form the slab.

## National Standards for Visual Arts Education

Content Standard #1 — Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes.

**K-4** Students use different media, techniques and processes to communicate ideas, experiences and stories.

**5-8** Students select media, techniques and processes; analyze what makes them effective or not effective in communicating ideas; and reflect upon the effectiveness of their choices.

**9-12** Students conceive and create works of visual art that demonstrate an understanding of how the communication of their ideas relates to the media, techniques and processes they use.

Content Standard #4 Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

**K-4** Students demonstrate how history, culture and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art.

**5-8** Students know and compare the characteristics of artworks in various eras and cultures.

**9-12** Students differentiate among a variety of historical and cultural contexts in terms of characteristics and purposes of works of art.