

## Mishima with Wax with Grace Sheese



A

Mishima is a technique used to inlay slip or underglaze into clay, terrific for drawing fine and delicate lines. Once you've used wax to seal the surface of the clay, adding more slip won't be possible, so make sure you're happy with the surface of your piece.

This is a very simple technique, but it does require a bit of extra time and patience. It is extremely important that you allow the underglazes, slips and wax to dry between each coat.

The dryness of your clay will dictate your line quality. Wetter clay produces thicker lines while drier clay allows for thin, clean lines. If you want to have lots of detail in your drawing the clay should be quite dry (think parmesan cheese consistency).

Placing a few drops of food coloring in the wax can help you determine where you've painted the wax. While colored wax may alter the color of your underglazes, this is only temporary since the colored wax will burn away during the firing process.



B



C



D



E



F

A. Paint 1-3 layers of underglaze or colored slip on your piece. This step is only necessary if you want your background to be a different color from your clay. Otherwise, skip to step B.

B. After the underglaze is completely dry, paint on a layer of liquid wax. The wax seals the surface of the clay, preventing it from absorbing any underglazes or slips. You can use water soluble wax but some brands of wax dry harder than others. You need a wax that dries hard and does not wipe or peel away easily.

C. Once the wax is completely dry, carve your drawing, making sure that the carvings break the wax and that the clay beneath is revealed. Different tools will produce different lines. This is a great way to experiment with line quality. If you want a clean line, make sure that your tool is sharp enough to carve through the wax without ripping or chipping the wax. Chips and rips create a messy line!

D. Using the color you want your lines to be, paint over the waxed areas. Since the wax sealed the clay, the underglaze/slip will only be absorbed where you carved.

E. Wipe away the extra underglaze/slip using a clean and slightly damp sponge. Remember to rinse out your sponge. Wiping the surface with a dirty sponge will just smear the underglaze/slip over your piece. It is easier to wipe the excess underglaze/slip if it is still wet. Dried underglaze or slip require extra force, which may scrub away the waxy layer. If you find that the wax or the underglaze/slip wipes away during this step, it means that either the wax was not completely dried or that your wax is too soft.

F. In the bisque firing, the wax will burn away, revealing the colors underneath. Light sanding will remove any residual wax or underglaze/slip.