

RAKU FIRING PARENT CONSENT

I grant permission for my son/daughter _____(name) to participate in **Raku Firings** throughout each school year that they take 3D classes. In doing so, I will release the school personnel of all responsibility in the event of an injury or accident. It is agreed that the student will conduct himself/herself in a safe manner.

Parent/Guardian _____

Date _____

RAKU PROCESS

Raku Pottery is earth derived...the firing process is unique and daring, and in the eyes of the Japanese Zen Masters, the process truly reflects the most fundamental rhythm of enlightened life.

A once-fired (bisque), unglazed pot is first coated with glaze and placed into kiln. The kiln is then heated to about 1,800° F at a fast rate. It is this first tremendous heat shock which often causes a pot to explode or to develop large "body cracks" in the clay walls. If the vessel survives this shock, almost immediate metamorphosis begins. The entire vessel glows like red-hot coal, and the glaze melts into a sheet of liquid glass.

At this point, the pot must endure a second shock as the potter uses tongs to remove the glowing mass from the kiln. As the cool air outside the kiln hits the glowing vessel, the severe temperature change produces the cracks in the glaze. These cracks are highly prized as characteristic of traditional Raku Pottery -- they are the "proof-marks" of the earthenware's having survived this dramatic trial by fire.

Upon leaving the kiln, the glowing pot is placed directly into an airtight container (metal trash can) filled with leaves, sawdust, or the like, which turns the naked clay foot black and highlights the valuable cracks in the glaze.

As if all this were not enough, the vessel (often still over 1,000° F) may then be plunged into cold water to halt the process.

And so the cycle of earth, fire, air and water is complete. Raku is a daring process, and a great many pots do explode during some phase of the firing. Those that survive the ordeal -- the test of fire -- are blessed.

See examples of previous student Raku work at our website www.southnewtonart.com