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ART CREATED FROM SLOTTED CERAMICS

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Summary: Clay products have been accompanying mankind for several centuries. Ceramics surrounds us everywhere - these are household utensils and decorations, building and finishing materials, medicine. It is difficult to overestimate the role of clay in human life. Cutting clay for decoration began a very long time ago, recently there has been a growing trend towards the manufacture of thin-walled openwork clay products, which thus receive more airiness.

Keywords: slotted ceramics, potter's wheel, molding, openwork ornament.

Slotted ceramics, this openwork (slotted decor) - a through cut with a sharp subject (knife) of certain sections of the composition. To carve a pattern, the clay must be in a semi-solid state. First, we draw a pattern on the product with a pottery needle. Gently distribute the pattern over the surface of the product. Carefully cut out the pattern with a sharp knife, supporting the walls of the product with the other hand. You can use various cuts. Technically, the creation of an openwork ornament on a ceramic or porcelain product consists in cutting many small holes in the walls of the product in a certain order. In European languages, this technique is called reticulation (from the French reticule, in the lane "reticule" - a mesh handbag).

This type of decoration came to us from China. The "rice grain" cut decor technique was used by Chinese craftsmen in the 18th century. With openwork carving, ceramics become light and refined. In the walls of the vessel they cut throughholes, the size and shape resembling a grain of rice; after firing, these holes were filled with glaze, forming "windows", much more transparent than the porcelain mass surrounding them.

In Japan, in the city of Hirado, the center of pottery and ceramic production, magnificent openwork aroma lamps and other decorative items were created using



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this technology; the same technique was used in Sèvres. In Meissen, they made plates with edges decorated with delicate openwork patterns, under the influence of which the production of plates with an ornament of rectangular holes later began in Germany - ribbons were passed through these holes to hang them on the wall. Openwork porcelain fruit baskets were popular in England and were produced by factories in Derby, Worcester, Cogley and Lowestoft. In Leeds, fine openwork was made from "creamy" clay suitable for such work is much greater than other types of clay. This technology reached its peak at the end of the 19th century in a factory in Worcester, whose products were very popular - they produced magnificent openwork vases, baskets, fragrances, bottles for dry perfumes, etc.



Slotted ceramics has long entered our lives, and decorates it with its grandeur and sophistication.

The technique of cut ceramics is considered one of the most difficult, therefore, few ceramic artists work in it. Initially, it is necessary to prepare a decorated form - it can be a vase, a lamp, a plate, a mug and anything to your taste. You can fashion an even product not only with the help of a potter's wheel, but also manually, for example, by stamping in a mold or using a harness technique. The wall thickness of the product should be approximately 5 mm. A thick-walled product will look heavy and rough, but too thin partitions can burst during firing, and cutting a pattern while maintaining thin partitions will be very difficult. The product is dried to a leather-hard state, because it is at this stage that it is most convenient to cut through the walls. As tools, you can use improvised tools - drills, tubes, knives, and so on, and purchased specialized tools. On the surface of the clay with a pencil, you can draw a contour along which you will work. Any clay you carve can be reused after soaking, so you don't have to throw it away.



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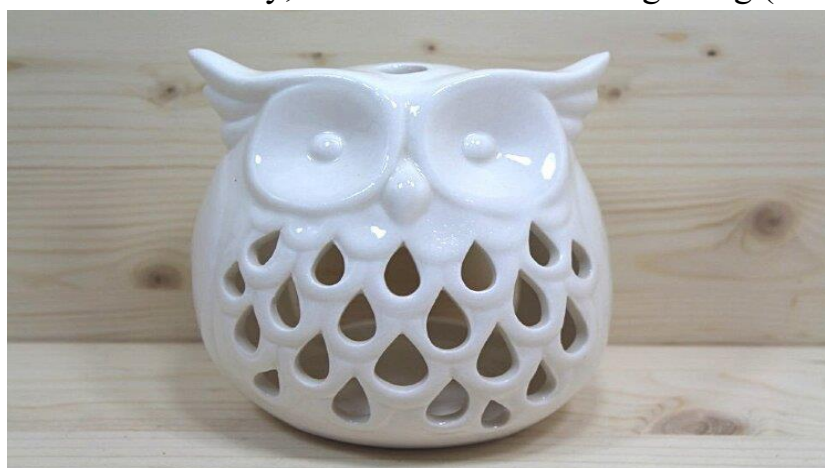
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Ornament depends on the imagination. You can cut through the pattern for the entire thickness of the clay wall, but it is possible only in the upper layer. All roughness after cutting out the ornament can be easily removed after drying. Two technologies were used to cut holes: either sections were removed, marked with special protrusions in the forms, or they marked and cut holes by eye, manually. The second technique was more complex and time-consuming and required more skill of the worker. In both cases, holes in the mass were cut with a thin knife with a pointed end, usually slightly moistened with water. The product had to be damp, and if the work continued for a long time, then the moisture content of the clay was maintained in various ways: the product was wrapped in a damp cloth or placed in a special metal box filled with wet rags or with a pot filled with water inside. If the clay dried out, it began to crumble when touched. When the openwork pattern was ready, the product was set to dry, and then fired without glazing ("biscuit" firing).



If glazing was necessary, then the master had to take special care to ensure that the glaze did not fall into the holes, unless it was supposed to use the method of "rice grain"; subsequently, the product usually underwent another, final firing.

Objects made using the technique of openwork ceramics are very thin, and the product looks as if it was woven from lace. "The work is very thin and light, but at the same time quite strong. In principle, ceramics were cut a long time ago, but cuts were made in the clay. But here the essence is such that there are very thin walls and there is little clay, but more air", This technique is used to make candlesticks, lighting items, openwork elements on dishes and Christmas toys, for example, carved balls that can be used to decorate a whole garland. The toys are light, so they don't pull the tree branches down. Lighting objects, including chandeliers, are very beautiful. The clay glows beautifully from the inside, and the works are magical,



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airy and mysterious. And you can also make elements of openwork and oncrockery. To make such an object, you need to learn how to make hollow products. You can make a small hollow ball by hand and then cut it through, or make a hollow object using a plaster mold. Stages of manufacturing an openwork ceramic product. Whichever way you decide to create openwork ceramics, they all consist of the main technological stages. The first stage is the preparation of the ceramic mass. The clay should be well kneaded, free of voids and air bubbles, and should not be too dry or wet. By the way, it is possible to correctly determine the moisture content of clay only in a practical way, so your feelings will help you with this.

Next, the ceramic product itself is formed. For example, you decided to make an openwork panel or an openwork candlestick, or maybe it will be an openwork fruit dish or just an abstract openwork souvenir. Flight of your fantasy should not be limited to anything. You are not just an artist at this stage, you are a wizard, mage and enchanter.

Then through holes are cut in the formed product to give an openwork effect. Next, the product is sent for drying, then firing and, if necessary, decorated with varnishes, engobes, glazes or other methods.

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