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Lecture: The Modern Approach to Wood-fired Ceramics

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ABSTRACT

Lecture "The modern approach to wood-fired ceramics" presents Michal Puszczynski's research project conducted in the U.S. at the Ceramic Complex, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona during nine months Fulbright Scholarship. Project has multiple objectives that attempt to explore the full range of activities and technical processes that accompany creating ceramic art work and the wood-firing process. The term „wood-fired ceramic“ describe pottery fired in devices called „kilns“ fueled with wood up to temperature 1350 C. In the past, most pottery around the world was fired that way. Nowadays, these techniques survived in limited places, since some time universities and ceramic centre running programs for artists and students to teach wood-firing courses. The surface of the wood-fired pottery that results from prolonged contact with an extremely hot flame and melting ash is desired by modern and traditional ceramic artists alike. Colour, texture, natural ash glaze deposit is why ceramics artists, pottery studios, and universities join together to continue those methods. The research program covered study over the teaching methods wood firing courses at universities in the United States, the series of experimental firing at Ceramic Complex and survey on the possibility of design and build a prototype of a new type of wood-fired kiln. Wood is only one renewable source of fuel, re-inventing new ways of using old methods combined with modern materials and combustion control systems its possible to make a new type of efficient and low emission device. Wood-firing ceramic could be an alternative and great model of sustainability to help reduce the carbon footprint emitted by ceramic processes.