

CERAMIC PUBLIC ART PROJECT PREPARATION & EXECUTION

Technical Tips And
Product Information

#25

1. TEST ALL MATERIALS BEFORE COMMENCING

Ensure that application, thickness, firing temperatures, firing schedules etc. are observed and recorded and you create 'real' samples/trials of the styles of work for your project. These will aid others to understand the concept/style/materials while participating, especially if they have no pottery experience.

2. PLAN REALISTICALLY

Organising group projects can take longer to co-ordinate than anticipated. If working through summer, the weather will dramatically aid drying, and you may have to retard the drying process for large works. If working during winter keep in mind that large projects take a long time to fire.

3. CONSULT THE INSTALLATION PERSON(S) (TRADEPERSON/TILER ETC.) EARLY

Produce a sample piece so they can assess the weight, fixing methods, suitability, etc. before the work is done so that they ensure you are making a work that can be installed inexpensively, safely, effectively and on time.

4. SPREAD THE WORD

Keep others regularly informed of your progress and their enthusiasm will carry you along when 'it all seems too hard'. Input and assistance from outside your immediate project group can often be very useful and timely. Tell parents, staff, students, school supporters etc. via newsletters, talks etc. and hopefully this will produce volunteers.

5. USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PROFILE YOUR SUBJECT/YOUR PRACTICE/YOUR COMMUNITY

Major projects are a great way to 'show-off' to the art world/school/community... this may pay dividends when you need to seek funding, permission for special projects/events, etc. Take advantage of this opportunity to 'shine'.

6. PLAN TO 'UNVEIL' THE PROJECT SOMEHOW

Give the project added prestige – display it at your annual Art Show, community fair, school Open Day, parent teacher night, end of year function, etc. so more people see 'what a great job you've done'. Also, ensure all involved 'own' the project resulting in less vandalism because everyone involved will be on guard duty over 'their project'.

7. DOCUMENT THE PROJECT

Take a photo here and there as a resource. This will be effective in showing others how the work developed technically and conceptually. Use it at the 'unveiling' to educate your audience. This information could form the basis of a published article in an education, community or ceramic magazine. Put images on the school website etc.

8. MAKE SURE ALL THOSE WHO PARTICIPATE ARE RECOGNISED

Keep a list of participants. Thank them personally and publicly at the unveiling. Install a plaque at the work site thanking/recognizing those involved, especially sponsors.

9. USE THE HAPPY CONCLUSION/AFTER GLOW PERIOD

The happy conclusion/after glow period of the project is the ideal time to 'plant the seed' for the next project – BIGGER, DIFFERENT, BETTER? You'll be flavour of the month, so take advantage of the opportunity.

10. CONGRATULATE YOURSELF!

It wouldn't have happened without you! Write to your state Art teachers' journal, newspaper, community newsletter etc. relaying your experience. Place a paragraph in the school's annual report/school magazine, invite the local newspaper for a photo shoot. Lastly, place a photo of the work on an Art Department Christmas card/poster/brochure.