



Education & Retreat Center

## WELCOME LETTER

### **Palm Spirits and Totems: Bringing Clay to Life**

**Instructor:** Doug DeLind

**Start Date:** 7/21/19

**End Date:** 7/27/19

Check-In Begins at 3:00pm at the Welcome Center on 7/21/19. Dinner 5:30 – 6:30;  
Orientation 6:45 pm

**Invitation:** I would like to take you back to your childhood to the day you discovered clay that sticky malleable substance that could be formed into anything using your imagination. Together we will find clay on Ghost Ranch and form it with our hands into beads, palm spirits those small intimate creatures no bigger the palms of our hands, personal totems embellished with grasses, flint chips, twigs or rusty wire and spirit bowls.

**Learning Outcomes:** I want to strip clay of all its baggage for you by demonstrating and you don't need to buy clay, glazes and a kiln to enjoy clay. I will teach you how to find clay in your own backyard, local stream or park and how to fire it using a minimal contained fire like a weber kettle or camp fire. I want you to be able to share and enjoy with you family and friends creating using found clay and pit firing like humans have been doing for thousands of years. (Children are welcome in the class).

#### **Course Schedule:**

Because there is a built in drying time with clay I invite you to join me after the evening orientation to start your creations. That night we will make beads and palm spirits using a clay body that I have brought. The first full day we will start on more palm spirits and a spirit bowls and go prospecting for clay and firing wood. On the second day I will demonstrate how I make totemic faces and help you decide what direction you want to go in. There will be time and opportunity to create items you are interested in making but there will be size limitations due to the fragile nature of clay and the primitive firing technique.

**Instructor Background:** I have been a professional artist for the past forty five years and I jokingly say I am too old for a website when actually I am too lazy and if you google my name there are examples of my work online. I sell my work through galleries, commissions. and art fairs. Currently Laura and our daughter Jody and myself are included in a show of cats at the Vale Craft Gallery in Chicago.

**Provided Materials:** I will bring clay and forming tools and amazing junk. I encourage you to bring any small objects to press into the clay that have a personal meaning to you or are just plain neat. At Ghost Ranch there are a wealth of objects on the ground that make interesting marks in clay. We will also search out burnishing stones for polishing the dried clay creations.

**What to Bring:** Also please bring a joie de vivre and I will supply the clay and the fire.

**FAQs:** Q: What will I make? A: We will start by making a pinch pot or a coil pot and some beads.

Q: How thick should I make it?

A: No thicker than your finger.

Q: Can I drink or cook or serve food in what I make?

A: No. We are making non-functional pieces...creations for the heart and soul.

**Testimonials:** I have worked with and enjoyed sharing my love of fire and clay with all ages and skill levels and challenges. I consider it a testimony that David Christensen has put in a pit fire facility at their home in Pennsylvania and one at their cabin as a result of my workshop and his wife Wendy is comfortable with the firing process.

**Recommended Resources:** As you look for inspiration please pull up on your computer or check books in the library featuring Inuit art, African art, The Venus of Willendorf and the Venus of Dolni and American Indian pottery.