

STAMPED CLAY AMULET

INTRODUCTION

Create your own stamped clay amulet inspired by Kenturah Davis' debossed clay portraits in the [Dark Illumination](#) exhibition at OXY ARTS.



Left: Example of stamped clay. *Right:* Kenturah Davis' debossed clay portrait.

Kenturah Davis creates portraits using a unique technique with clay and pencil. She rolls out slabs of clay, and while the clay is still wet she presses text stamps into them to create **debossed** letters. After firing the clay, she arranges the individual tiles into a grid and then draws a portrait using graphite pencil on top. The places where the pencil marks are darker reveal the letters beneath.

VOCABULARY

Debossed: stamp a design into the surface of an object so that it is indented.

MATERIALS

- Air dry clay
- Pencil
- Stamps, leaves or other objects with interesting textures
- Paint pens or acrylic paint
- String
- Beads

STEPS

1 Take a piece of air dry clay about half the size of your fist and roll it into a smooth ball. Using the palm of your hand, press the clay ball onto the table to create a flat disc. Be careful to not press it too thin - it should be about a 1/4" thick so that the clay doesn't break or crack. Smooth out any cracks in the clay using your fingers. If there are cracks you can't get smooth, dip your finger in a small amount of water and rub it gently along the clay until it is smooth.

2 Using stamps, leaves, or any objects with an interesting texture - press into the clay to create shapes or patterns. Kenturah Davis uses letter stamps in her artwork. Think about what kinds of interesting shapes you can create by pressing into your clay.

Using a pencil, poke a hole into your clay disc, about a 1/4" away from the edge.

3 Let the clay dry - depending on the type of clay you have and the weather, this might take up to a week. Once the clay is dry you can decorate it with paint pens or acrylic paint. How does painting the amulet reveal or change the way the debossed stamped shapes in your clay look?

4 Use beads, string, ribbon, or whatever materials you have to create a hanging chain for your amulet. Since air dry clay is delicate, we recommend hanging this amulet in a window or on your wall - somewhere where it will stay safe.

Take a photo of your projects and send them
ffleming@oxy.edu or tag us @oxyarts