

Project 5: Overglazing

Overglazing, in the context of this course, is the application of a thin layer of glaze made from translucent clay enhanced with Sodium Bicarbonate.

There are two ways of applying an overglaze layer:

- Using the pasta machine to spread a fine sheet of glazed clay on top of a veneer: you do this when you want some distortion of the pattern beneath the glaze.
- Manually applying a fine sheet of glazed clay on the completed veneer: you do this when you don't want distortion – you do not pass the veneer through the pasta machine.

Overglazing adds a veil of mystery.



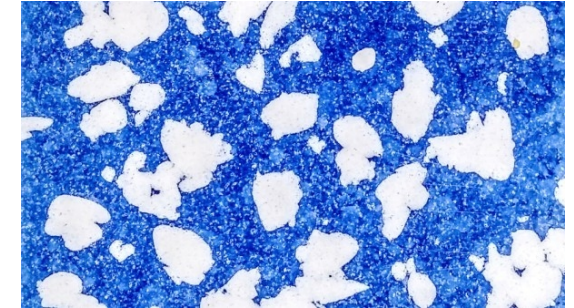
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Process 1. Overglazing with the pasta machine: Terrazzo with full overglaze

Overglazing can personalise the simplest of techniques.

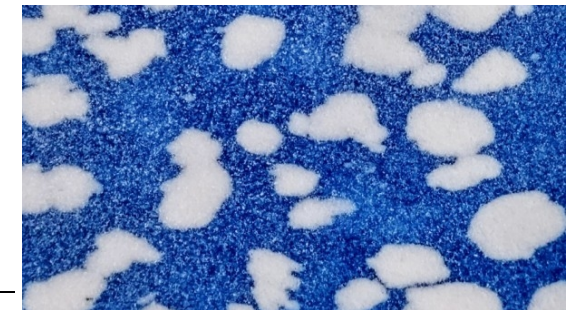
To illustrate, we are going to overglaze a veneer made with Terrazzo. This technique consists in sprinkling crumbs of hard clay over a sheet of clay then burnishing the sheet.

The image shows a Terrazzo veneer without overglazing. The blue sheet was enhanced with Sodium Bicarbonate. The veneer was sanded with 180 grit after curing.



Terrazzo veneer without overglazing

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- a** Condition blue clay; add Sodium Bicarbonate; run it through at PM4
Sprinkle crumbs of white clay over the blue sheet
Condition translucent clay; add Sodium Bicarbonate; run it through at PM6



Terrazzo veneer showing overglazing

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- b** Place the glaze sheet over the blue sheet
Burnish then run through at PM4
Cure and sand
- Run it progressively through one way at PM3 then in the other direction at PM4 to even out the distortion.
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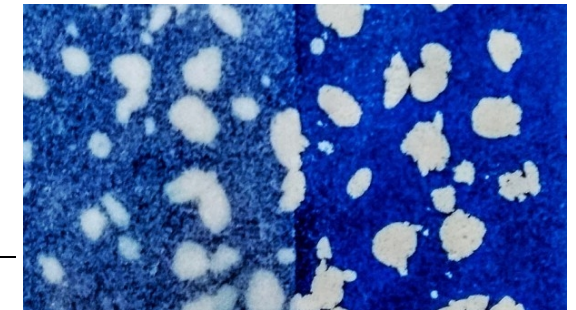
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Process 2. Overglazing without a pasta machine: Terrazzo with partial overglaze

Running an overglazed veneer through the pasta machine as we have done in **Process 1** has a number of advantages:

- It thins the overglaze layer, making it more transparent,
- It smooths out the underlying pattern,
- It is quick.

If you do not want to distort your pattern, you must apply your overglaze by hand and not use the pasta machine. Partial overglazing is one of these situations and is a simple method of adding interest to a veneer and where you want to maintain the pattern across both naked and overglazed parts of the veneer, as shown.



Terrazzo with partial overglaze

a Create a Terrazzo veneer as described in **Process 1.a** above

Create a paper-thin glaze sheet with translucent clay and Sodium Bicarbonate and apply it to a portion of your veneer

To create the glaze sheet, refer to **HowTo – Make a paper thin sheet**. The thinner the sheet the better as it reduces the risk of CO2 pockets forming.

To apply the glazed sheet to the veneer, cut a rectangle into the glaze sheet, and lay it over a part of your veneer.

b Burnish

Burnish from the separation line back to the edge in order not to distort the straight separation line between the two zones.

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Process 2. Overglazing without a pasta machine: Terrazzo with partial overglaze

c Cure

Cure at the lowest temperature and for the minimum time required to avoid the formation of CO2 pockets.

d Sand

Sand with 180 grit until the pattern defines itself to your satisfaction. If it requires a lot of effort, it means your overglaze layer was too thick to start with. Make it thinner next time!

If you see CO2 pockets showing, place the veneer on a tile and return it to the oven for a few minutes. Take it out with the tile and while it's still hot, roll the metal dowel over it to deflate the trapped gas. The tile will keep the veneer hot longer. As you have thinned the overglaze by sanding, these pockets will escape more easily.

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Process 3. Overglazing without a pasta machine: full overglaze over silk-screening

Silk-screening is a technique where you don't want distortion of the pattern under the glaze.

Because the overglaze provides a protective layer, you are not limited to acrylic paint, but can use other media such as pastels and pigment powders.

- a Condition white clay and run it at PM5

Make a first print with a silkscreen using any glue that dissolves in water

Select a silkscreen that has a large pattern. I chose Moiko's

https://www.etsy.com/fr/listing/811743723/moiko-gros-meshsoft-pastels?ref=shop_home_active_180

Place the screen on the clay, and instead of using acrylic paint, use any glue that dissolves in water. Apply the glue sparingly – just a few dots here and there that you spread over the whole silkscreen.

Remove the screen and immediately wash it under running water. You will notice that the glue is very kind to your screen as it washes off more easily than acrylic paint.

The pattern of glue on the clay is only noticeable when you hold it to the light.



The Moiko Silkscreen I selected

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Process 3. Overglazing without a pasta machine: full overglaze over silk-screening / continued

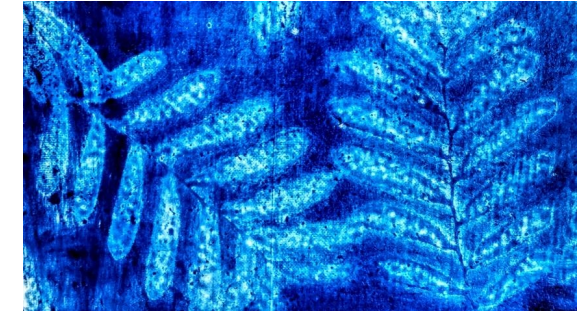
- b** Let the glue dry then apply pigment powders

Burnish over absorbent paper

The glue is dry when it is no longer shiny. Rub as much pigment into the clay for all of it to be absorbed – too much will not be absorbed. Use whatever rubbing technique or tool that you like to do this. Be mindful that pigment powder can stain your fingers.

Rub hard enough to incorporate the pigment into the clay, but not too hard as to remove the glue. If the glue is not completely dry, you will smudge your pattern and have to start over.

Place a sheet of absorbent paper over the clay and burnish. This allows the pigment to penetrate.



Clay with pigment over the glue

- c** Dampen a small sheet of absorbent paper and mop the pigment off

Absorb any remaining dampness with a sheet of absorbent paper

Dry with a hair dryer

Prepare a sheet of wax paper and two sheets of absorbent paper.

Dampen one of the absorbent sheets but it should not be wet. Place the damp side of the paper over the clay and cover with the wax paper. Burnish. This will enable the absorbent paper to lift loose pigment and the glue from the clay.

Remove the papers and apply the second sheet of dry absorbent paper. Burnish to absorb any remaining dampness.

Finish the drying with a hair dryer. It is crucial that it is bone dry.



Clay after lifting the glue and pigment

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Process 3. Overglazing without a pasta machine: full overglaze over silk-screening / continued

- d** Make a paper-thin glazed sheet and lay it over the entire surface of the veneer
Burnish

To create the glazed sheet, refer to **HowTo – Make a paper thin sheet.**

Burnish extensively for at least 30 seconds to ensure that the overglaze adheres to the sheet below and absorbs the pigments.



Veneer after applying the overglaze

- e** Cure and sand

Follow the curing and sanding instructions described in **Steps 2.c and 2.d** above.



Veneer after sanding