

# **Beyond the Slumped Platter**

Using Slump Molding techniques to create various ceramic forms.

By Chad Zielinski

B.A. Art Education, University of Florida

Art Teacher-Ceramics, Sculpture, AP 3D Design

Ben Lomond High School

1080 9<sup>th</sup> Street

Ogden, UT 84404

[zielinskic@ogdensd.org](mailto:zielinskic@ogdensd.org)

801-737-7937

[www.mrzsartclasses.weebly.com](http://www.mrzsartclasses.weebly.com)

# Slump Mold

- A hollow frame used to sag a slab of clay, creating a shallow vessel.
- These are commonly used to make shallow trays, platters, and bowls.



Slump Cut from Insulation Foam.



Slump Molds cut from plywood.

# Learning Objectives:

1. Learn how to create a slump mold.
2. Learn how to create a single slumped platter with a decorative hump border.
3. Learn how to build ceramic objects with mirroring slump molds.
4. See extensions for using slump molds in other creative ways.

# Hump Mold



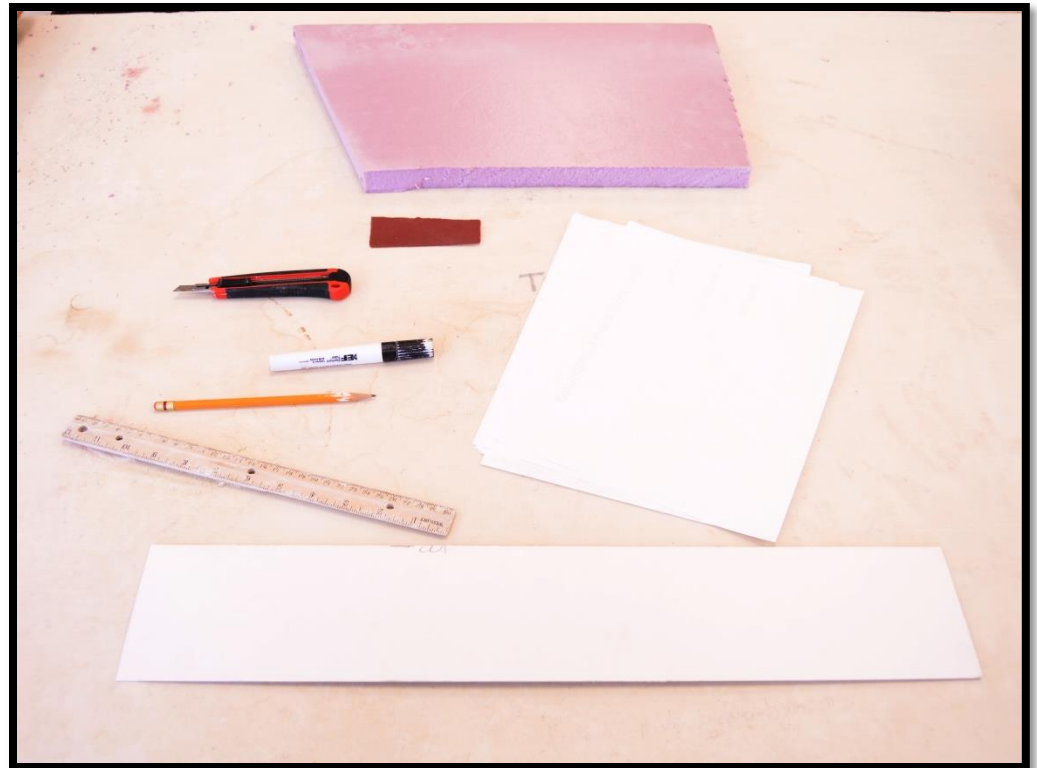
Custom Platter Slump.

- The opposite of a slump mold.
- They could be custom constructed or an artist could use found objects.
- The object is draped with clay so that the clay conforms to its positive form.

***Advisement: Clay shrinkage can cause fracturing with this process.***

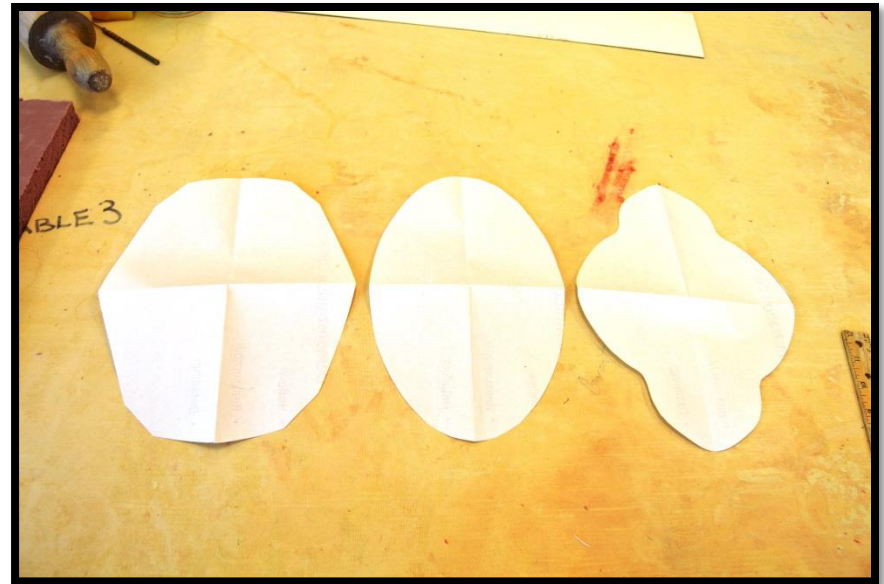
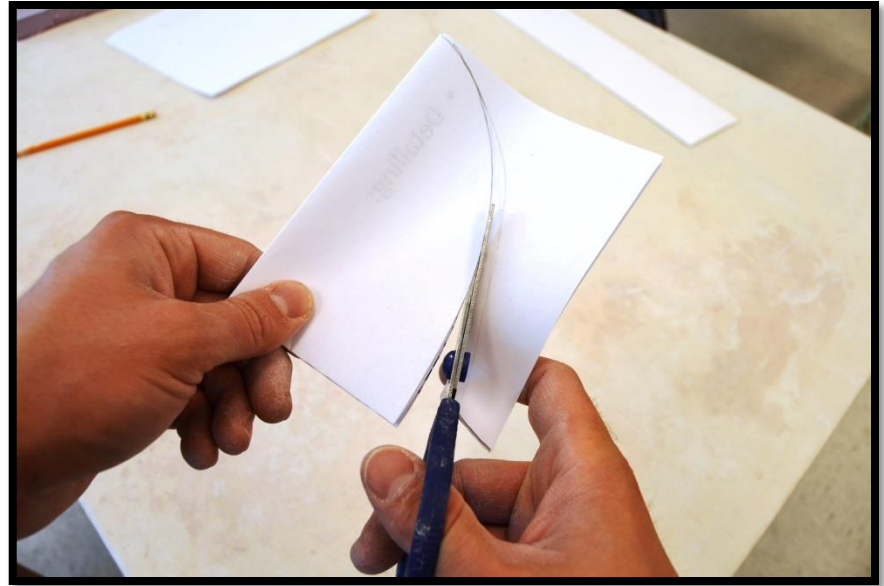
# Part 1: Creating A Mold

- This process demonstrates how to create a slump or hump mold using 1 inch Styrofoam insulation board.
- **Materials:**
  1. Foam Insulation
  2. Scrap Paper
  3. box cutter
  4. needle tool
  5. writing utensil
  6. Sand Paper



# Step 1: Design

- a) Fold paper in half twice.  
(1 long and 1 wide fold)
- b) Use a writing utensil to draw borders.
- c) Cut along line then unfold to reveal symmetrical patterns.
- d) Repeat, altering patterns for aesthetic choice.



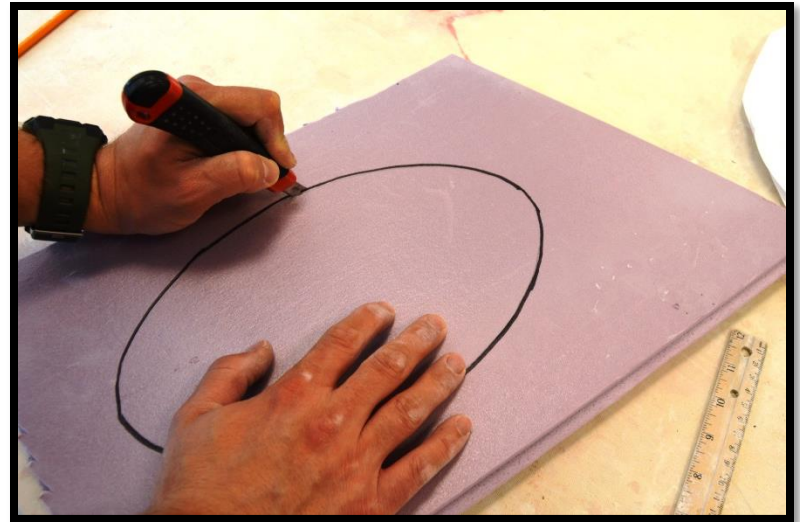
# Step 2: Trace and Cut Mold

a.



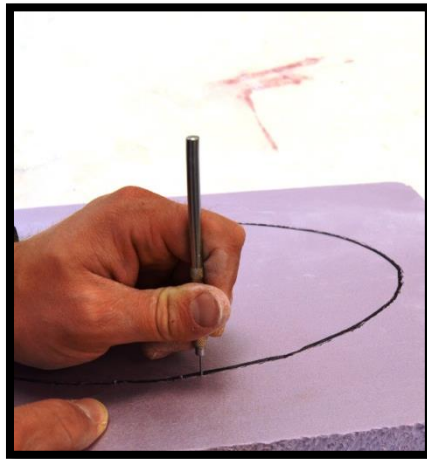
Hold cutout against the foam and trace.

b.



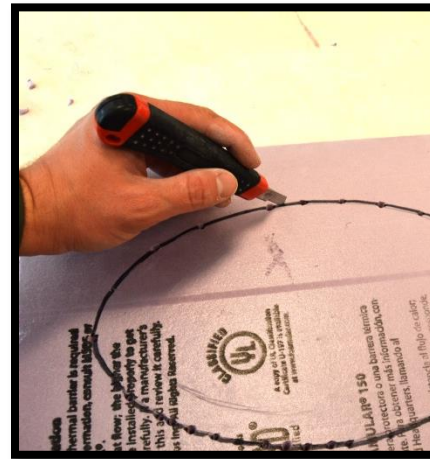
Saw foam up and down, don't drag the blade.

c.



Use a needle tool to poke a dotted line through the other side, trace, and cut the backside.

d.



# Step 4: Refine Mold



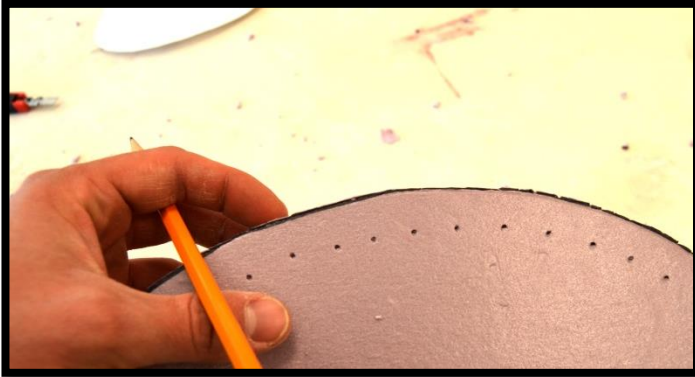
- a. Support the frame with your hands as you gently press out the hollow in the form.

- b. Use sandpaper to remove snags from the frame of the mold and create a rounded edge.





# Creating a Hump Mold



- a. Dot inside the border of your form cut from the slump mold.
- b. Cut pieces out along dotted line at a 45 degree angle.



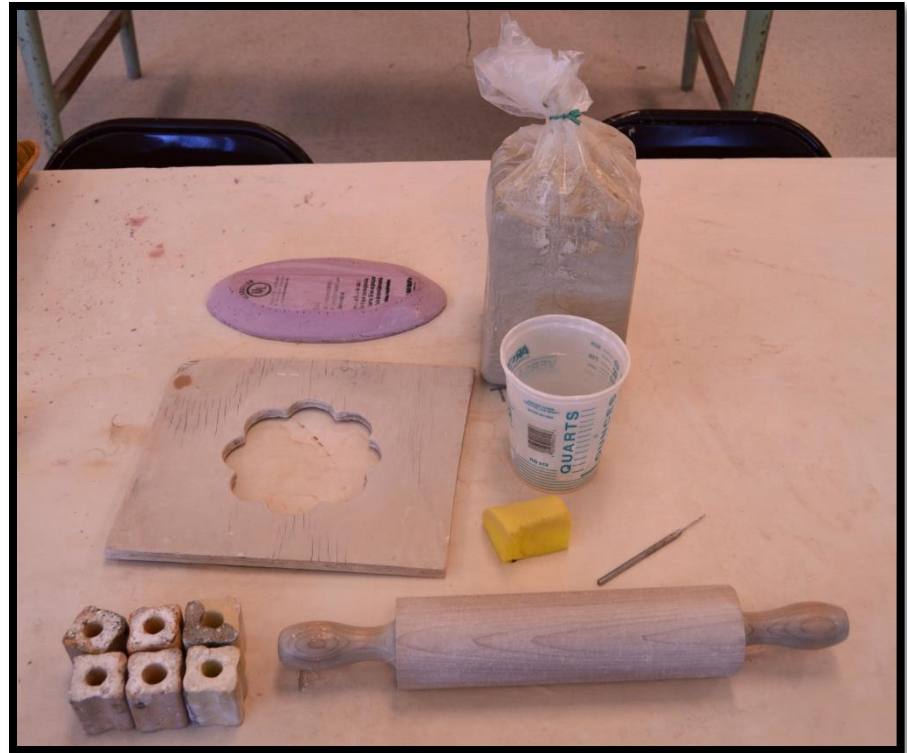
- c. Since the cuts are rough use sandpaper to smooth the surface and round and soften corners.



# Part 2: Basic Slump Forming

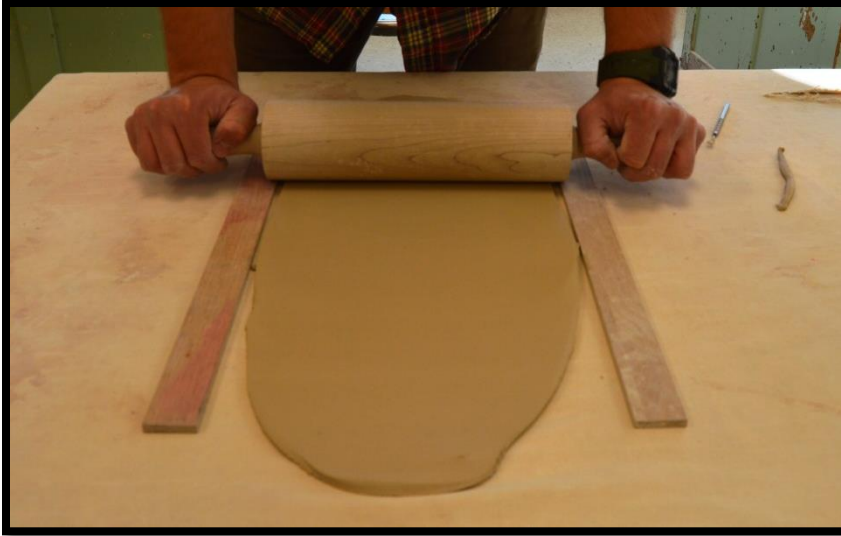
## Materials:

1. Clay
2. Rolling Pin/Slab Roller
3. Slump Mold Frame
4. Water
5. Sponge
6. Paper/Matte board Scraps
7. Writing Utensil
8. Box Cutter/Exacto
9. Needle Tool
10. Stilts (for deeper slumps)



- This part of the process could be a one day building project if slump molds were premade. (Great for those last minute AP Ceramics students!)

# Step 1: Laying Out the Slab



- a. Roll out a  $\frac{3}{8}$ " to  $\frac{1}{4}$ " slab of clay.



- b. Lay the slab over the slump mold covering the opening and frame edges.

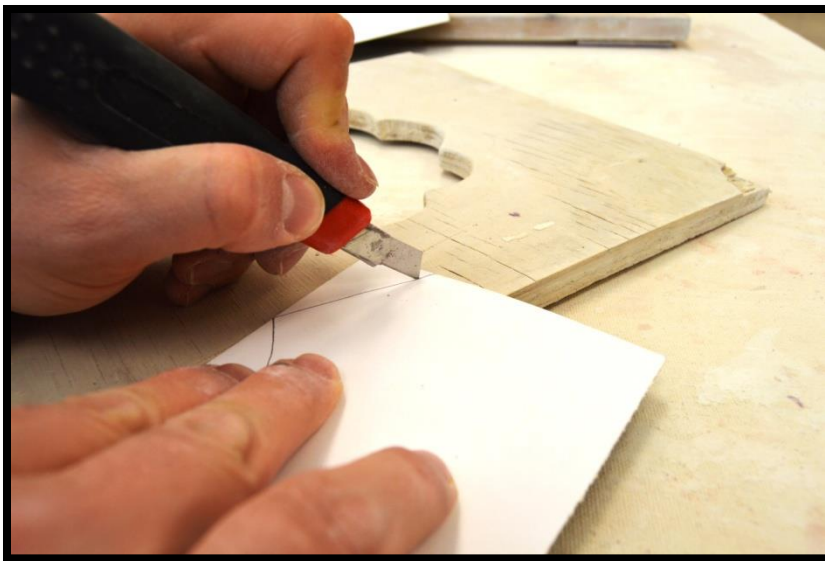
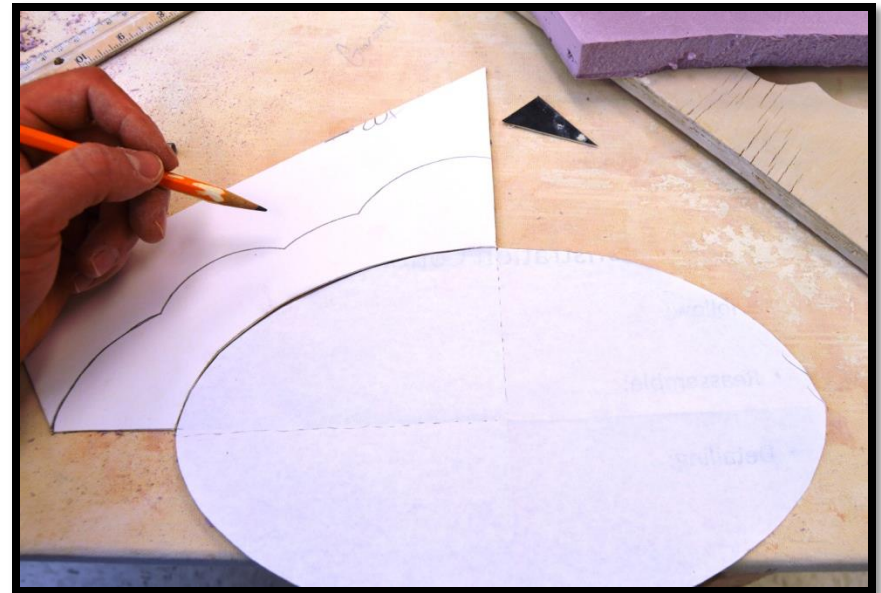
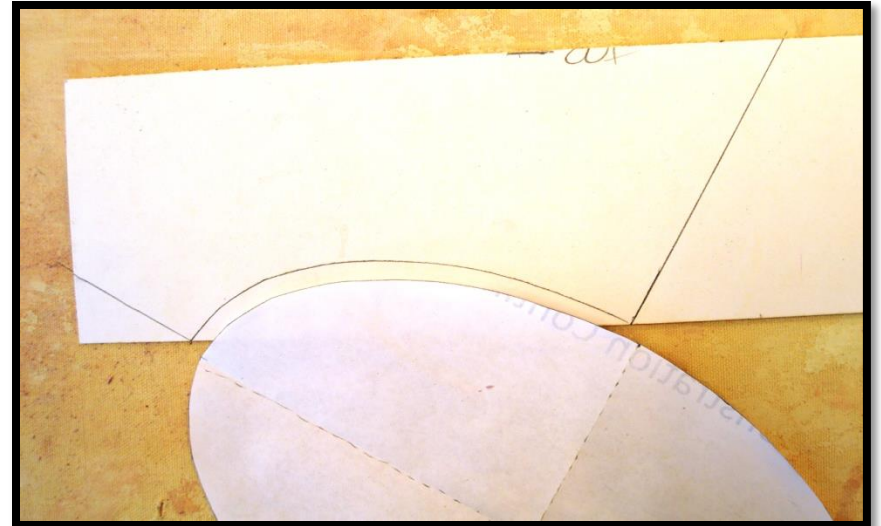
# Step 2: Slumping the Form

- a) Use a wet sponge starting from the far side of the form gently press the slab into the hollow.
- b) Turn the slab and mold to evenly press from all directions.



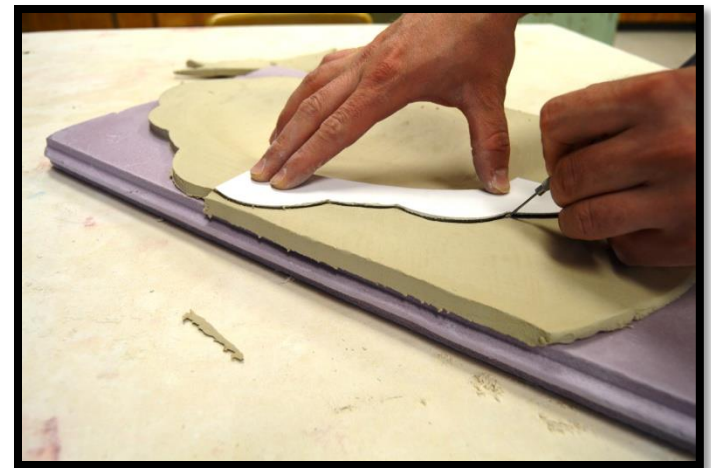
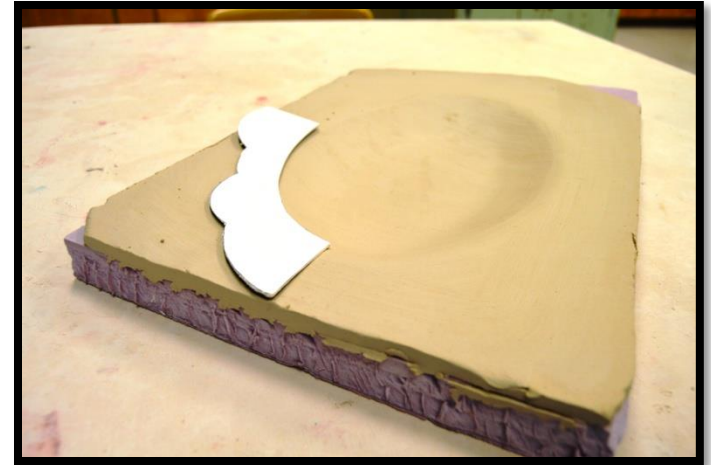
# Step 3: Designing the Border

- a) Align and cut scrap card stock to cover  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the border for your stencil.
- b) Draw the design of the border pattern for the vessel's edge.



# Step 4: Creating the Edge

- a) Align the cardstock stencil to the border of the work and use a needle to cut the edges.
- b) Flip and rotate the stencil to cut the remaining edges.



# Extension: Puffy Borders

- This takes the process a step further in expanding the dynamic potential of the three dimensional form.
- a) Form pieces of clay that fit under the vessel's border.
- b) Carefully lift edges and place clay hump underneath.



# Puffy Borders Part 2

a) Press and drag a wet sponge over the clay to conform the borders of your slab over the clay humps and soften edges.



a) Allow the vessel to dry past leather hard to before removing vessel from slump and hump mold.





# Finished Form (Greenware)



# Examples



Above and Right: Chad Zielinski



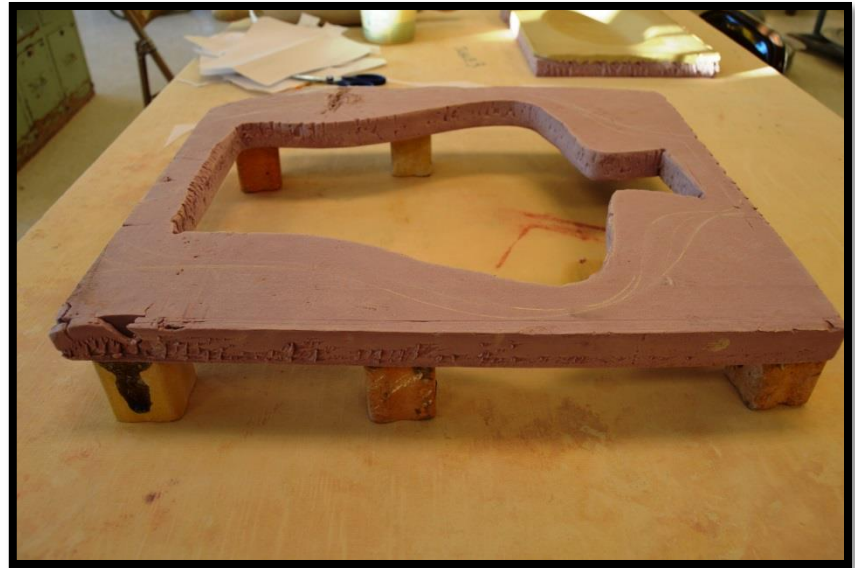
Above: Joe Singewald



# Part 3: Mirrored Forms

- This explores the potential of using slump and hump molds to create more than just shallow platters and other single slump objects.
- Geared more to intermediate/advanced students, this will challenge students to think creatively and utilize a higher level of technical skill in combining slumped forms.

# Slump Molded Vase: Step 1 Plan



- a) Begin planning by cutting various stencils to decide on how to create the general form.
- b) Follow previous instructions to create your slump mold.
- c) Use stilts to prop the mold for a deeper slump.

# Step 2: Slumping Sides



- a) Create the slump with a wet sponge.
  - The lip and foot should be slumped vertical.
  - The body should be carefully slumped deeper than the mold.
  - Watch for thinning and tearing.
- b) After clay is leather hard, lay the slab on a bat to create the second slump.



# Step 3: Attaching Sides

- a) Score and slip both slump molded sides outlining the form.
- b) Compress both sides together.
- c) Cut away excess clay.



# Step 4: Refine the Form



- a) Use a paddle to flatten or define attached edges.
- b) Patch holes and score cracked surfaces.
- c) Use a rib to cleanup, and smooth edges.

# Step 5: Add Details and Finish

- This varies based on what you want the students to do to the finished surface and how the final form is self supported.
- For this vase I added a pronounced coil for a foot and another coil for the lip.





# Asymmetrical Example



*Fluid Form* Chad Zielinski

# Puffy Handles

The mirrored slump process can also be used to create handles with more possibilities for volume and form.



*Mountain City Teapot Chad Colton Zielinski*

# Level 3: Deconstructing and Combining

- To continue to push rigor and critical thinking consider how students could break down slump forms or combine them with other techniques.

Works by Chad Zielinski



# Elliot Marquet Sculptural Forms

