

**Design for the Urban Landscape:
Eastern Aesthetics, Western Interpretation
May 19, 2014
CiA
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We've begun our exploration of urban design elements in two different ways. We've looked at different urban elements—specifically manhole covers—from various prefectures in southeastern Japan and read Mark Reibstein's book *Wabi Sabi*, where the ideals of Japanese beauty are understood as the "imperfect, impermanent, and the incomplete."*

Assignment—Using these two elements as points of departure—the manhole covers and the notion of *Wabi Sabi*—I want you to create two separate manhole cover designs. The first needs to deal with your impressions of Baltimore: what images would you want to see on the manhole covers throughout the city? The second is more personal: what image would want on an individual cover that describes or defines you?

Part I—manhole cover design

- Begin in your sketchbook drawing two separate designs. Use any drawing materials you'd like.
- Once you've finished your drawings, choose one to translate into clay. Use a 10-12" roundel as your base.
- Clay tools are on the center table.
- You can create a pattern from your sketchbook drawing using tracing paper if that makes creating your clay roundel easier.
- Feel free to adapt your design as you move from drawing to clay.
- Once you've finished your manhole cover, place on back counter to dry
- Return all tools to their homes and clean up your desks

Part II—glazing

- All glazes are on the center table
- If you want a smooth, solid covering, using 3 coats. If you prefer something lighter or sketchier, 1-2 coats will do.
- Clean the underside of your roundel off so your bisque ware doesn't stick to kiln when it's fired.
- Clean up your supplies and make sure your desk is sponged off.

*Koren, Leonard (1994). *Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets and Philosophers*. Stone Bridge Press