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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Clay Studio Marks 40 Years of Teaching, Creating and Promoting the Ceramic Arts with 40-Hour-Long Celebration

Old City Philadelphia's cultural anchor to host unprecedented anniversary event, May 9-10, including free exhibitions, demonstrations, film screenings, fitness, food and drink, family-friendly activities and a fiery kickoff celebration

PHILADELPHIA — **The Clay Studio**, an internationally renowned center for the ceramic arts and an anchor of the arts district in Philadelphia's historic Old City neighborhood, will mark its 40th anniversary with an epic 40-hour-long celebration, **Fired Up at Forty**. Taking place **May 9 to 10** at The Clay Studio's headquarters (137-139 N. Second St., Philadelphia, PA 19106), **Fired Up at Forty** is made possible with support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The weekend extravaganza will feature a wide variety of free activities and events to encourage friends, neighbors and new audiences to experience all the ceramic center has to offer.

Kicking off on Friday, May 9, the marathon of events begins with a gathering of civic leaders, artists and supporters to watch a thrilling **live Raku pottery firing**. That same morning, coffee drinkers in Old City and throughout Center City Philadelphia may be unwitting participants in the **Guerrilla Mug Assault**, in which Clay Studio volunteers will offer those carrying to-go cups an upgrade to a handmade mug. Later in the day, guests can participate in **Candy Coated Cocktails**, a happy hour/silkscreen workshop with well-known local artist Candy Coated (6-8 p.m.); and a **Claymation Viewing Party** (9-11 p.m.).

On Saturday, May 10, start the day with **Sunrise Yoga** (7.30-8.30 a.m.); get energized with a **Coffee Hour and Studio Tour** (9-10 a.m.); and bring the family for **Clay Instrument Making and Jam Session** (10 a.m.-1 p.m.). In the afternoon, enjoy an **Ice Cream Social and Bowl Decorating** (2-4 p.m.), and throughout the day, watch Clay Studio artists duke it out in **Wheel Battle** competitions.

Throughout the weekend, day or night, audiences can visit the installation **Occupation**, a collaboration between two ceramic artists who are also war veterans. The artists, Ehren Tool and Jesse Albrecht, will start with a bunker made from hundreds of pounds of raw clay; over the course of the installation, they will turn the clay into a wall made of hundreds of cups. Visitors will be invited to leave their own mark on a cup and return after firing to take it home.

The celebration ends with a culminating fundraising event, **Fired Up at Forty: A Celebration** (May 10, 6-11 p.m.), at American Street Showroom (2201 N. American St.), including artisanal food, drink, dancing, and art experiences. For tickets, visit theclaystudio.org.

Meanwhile, in the gallery, newly appointed Curator of Artistic Programs **Garth Johnson** has curated a second exhibition, **The Clay Studio: 40 Years** (April 4-May 31), showcasing 40 ceramic artists who have been affiliated with The Clay Studio throughout its history, including all 12 current resident artists and a grouping of international artists. The exhibition, which opened in Milwaukee at the 48th annual National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) Conference in March, chronicles both the evolution of the organization and of the use of clay as a material for creative expression.

Says Johnson: "In 2014, craft is experiencing a revival where handmade goods are entering national and global conversations about sustainable lifestyles. We're celebrating the fact that, 40 years after its founding, The Clay Studio is still at the forefront of these conversations."

Founded in 1974 by five Philadelphia artists, The Clay Studio is a nonprofit educational institution, gallery and studio dedicated to teaching, creating and promoting the ceramic arts. Over the past 40 years, The Clay Studio has hosted guest artists from 45 countries, served over 20,000 schoolchildren through its Claymobile Outreach program, fired more than 1 million pieces of art and functional pottery in its kilns, and welcomed more than 200,000 people to its First Friday gallery openings. Through outreach programs, classes, exhibitions and workshops, The Clay Studio has brought the joy of clay to thousands of children, students, artists and enthusiasts.

The Clay Studio is located at 137-139 N. Second St., Philadelphia, PA 19106. Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sunday, noon-6 p.m. For more information, call 215-925-3453 or visit theclaystudio.org.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

All events are FREE and open to the public unless otherwise noted.

City-wide event: **Guerrilla Mug Assault**

Friday, May 9, 7 a.m.-noon

Throughout the city, teams of Clay Studio volunteers will be leading the charge to encourage the use of handmade items. Anyone found drinking from paper to-go cups will be offered an upgrade to a free handmade mug in exchange for providing a few words about the experience of being “mugged.”

Kick-Off Event: **Raku Pottery Firing**

Friday, May 9, 9 a.m.

Join Clay Studio staff, civic leaders and artists as we celebrate the start of our 40-hour marathon with a live demonstration of Raku firing. For this ancient technique, artists will pull red-hot smoldering pottery from a flaming kiln and transform the pots into finished glazed pieces before your eyes.

Exhibition: **Occupation**

Friday, May 9, 10 a.m. – Saturday, May 10, 6 p.m.

Occupation is a collaboration between ceramic artists Ehren Tool and Jesse Albrecht, both of whom are veterans of war. These artists will be on site throughout the anniversary celebration (including overnight), transforming hundreds of pounds of clay into hundreds of ceramic cups. Visitors are invited to interact with the artists, learn about their creative process and leave their own mark on a piece as it evolves. Participants can return after the cups have been fired to pick up the cup they helped create.

Youth event: **Fun and Learning with Clay**

Friday, May 9, 10 a.m.-noon (private workshop)

To highlight the work The Clay Studio does in the community, and to emphasize the important role arts education plays in the learning process, The Clay Studio will host sixth-graders from E.M. Stanton School. The students will take part in the creative process and experience the act of using their imagination and artistry to create their own works of art with clay.

Workshop: **Team Building and Getting Dirty**

Friday, May 9, 3-5 p.m. (private workshop)

The Clay Studio’s Team Building Workshop is taking the staff from Think Brownstone out of the office and away from the daily grind, and putting them into a new environment for some creative play. This hands-on workshop aligns body and mind, promotes new thinking, develops group problem-solving abilities, and is a fun way to energize and revitalize a group.

Food and Drink: **Candy Coated Cocktails**

Friday, May 9, 6-8 p.m.

Join Philadelphia-based artist Candy Coated (formerly Candy DePew) for a cocktail hour filled with imaginative drinks. Candy will also work with visitors to create fun, functional silkscreen works.

Screening: **Claymation Viewing Party**

Friday, May 9, 9-11 p.m.

To cap off Fired Up at Forty's first day of activities, The Clay Studio will host a screening to highlight short films that feature the detailed and laborious art of stop-motion animation using clay.

Fitness: Sunrise Yoga

Saturday, May 10, 7-8 a.m.

Get your creative juices flowing and center your mind and body with a sunrise yoga session, courtesy of Kaya Aerial Yoga, in The Clay Studio's beautiful and inspiring exhibition space.

Food and Drink: Coffee Hour and Studio Tour

Saturday, May 10, 9-10 a.m.

Enjoy coffee and breakfast sweets courtesy of High Point Café while enjoying a behind-the-scenes studio tour. See where creativity happens, and it might inspire you to become a part of it.

Youth event: Instrument Making and Jam Sessions

Saturday, May 10, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Join guest artist Kevin Ramler for family workshops focused on making and playing clay instruments. Using basic hand-building techniques, participants can create flutes, rain sticks, maracas, drums and xylophones. Kids and parents also have the opportunity to play one of hundreds of clay instruments that Ramler has created. This workshop is open to all ages, and the instruments made during the workshop can be picked up two weeks after the event.

Contest: Wheel Battles

Saturday, May 10, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Watch as our studio artists go head-to-head in a variety of competitions, from who can throw the largest pot in 7 minutes to who can throw the largest vessel while blindfolded. A few willing participants will have the chance to get their hands dirty and join the competition by teaming up with a Clay Studio artist. New wheel battles will kick off each hour.

Food and Drink: Ice Cream Social and Bowl Decorating

Saturday, May 10, 2-4 p.m.

Create a personalized bowl for your favorite frozen treats. After you decorate your bowl, enjoy an ice cream sundae. Your artwork will be available to pick up two weeks after the event.

Ticketed Event: Fired Up at Forty: A Celebration

Saturday, May 10, 6-11 p.m.

To cap off its 40-hour marathon of activities, The Clay Studio will host a fundraising event at American Street Showroom (2201 N. American St.). Celebrate The Clay Studio's four decades as leaders in the field of ceramics while enjoying artisanal food, drink, dancing and an auction in a

uniquely beautiful setting. A portion of your ticket purchase is tax-deductible, and proceeds support the work The Clay Studio does to provide a unique learning environment in which to experience the ceramic arts. Tickets are \$250 and can be purchased by visiting theclaystudio.org.

ABOUT THE CLAY STUDIO

Celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2014, The Clay Studio is a nonprofit educational institution, gallery and studio dedicated to teaching, creating, supporting and promoting the ceramic arts. Since 1974, The Clay Studio has hosted and exhibited world-class ceramic artists and brought the joy of clay to thousands of children, students, artists and enthusiasts throughout the Philadelphia region. Both a community center and an arts institution of international stature, The Clay Studio seeks to make art accessible through the tactile medium of clay.



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To request photos, interviews and more information, please contact:
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