Ceramic transfers or decals offer exciting creative potential for studio-based artists or designer-makers. A ceramic transfer allows pictures, patterns or text to be transferred onto ceramic forms – 2D and 3D. This added layer of meaning might have artistic or commercial ends. Importantly, print can achieve distinct aesthetic effects on ceramics that are not possible by using other decoration methods such as hand painting.

Drawing on over twenty years of experience, Kevin Petrie offers a focused analysis of the potential of ceramic transfer printing as a creative medium. He traces the history of the subject and explains the distinctive visual qualities of a range of transfer printing methods. The specific materials and techniques for making versatile screen-printed ceramic transfers are explained – from the ‘low tech’ to the more sophisticated. Other approaches by artist researchers are also brought together and recent developments with digital transfers appraised. A range of case studies shows the potential and diversity of approach in this area, which extends beyond ceramics to include enamel on metal and glass.