Ceramic experience

Henry Hawkins Lyman

The University of Montana

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd
Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/1758

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
A CERAMIC EXPERIENCE

by

Henry Hawkins Lyman, Junior

B.F.A. Alfred University, 1966

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

1970

Approved by:

Chairman, Board of Examiners

Dean, Graduate School

Date
Clay is a substance that comes from the earth. Its basic composition is that of a hydrated silicates of aluminum. It will slake in water, and when moist it is capable of being molded. When clay is subjected to a temperature of 500 degrees centigrade, it will no longer slake nor will it be suitable for molding. In production of clay objects, the exposure to heat is called firing. Most objects are fired twice. The first firing is called a bisque, and it ranges in temperature anywhere from 840 to 1005 degrees centigrade. The purpose of a bisque is to make the clay insoluble in water, yet strong enough for handling.

After the bisque firing, the pot is glazed with a liquid suspension of finely ground minerals and fired once more until they melt together to form a glassy surface. The second firing ranges from around 635 to 1431 degrees centigrade depending on the amount of heat resistant materials in the glaze.

There are various ways of forming clay in its plastic state. Throwing on a potters wheel and building by hand are two of them. I have a preference for building by hand. I use mostly coils and slabs. My interest in ceramics is to embellish a surface with fictitious additions in order that a statement of some condition will resolve itself and justify such activity. The action is
executed on pieces intended to have a utilitarian function and those which have no function other than their dimensional existence.

The conditions to be resolved are those influences which surround me, particularly nature in its continual growth and change, and the existence of complete order in what may appear to be disorder. I attempt to allow each piece to grow and change at its own will. My knowledge of clay and the skill of my hands are tools to be used by the clay.

Other influences which have affected my work are those of the Art Nouveau Period and artists who worked at that time such as Antonio Gaudi. I find his work extremely warm and soulful. These are the things which I strive for in my own pieces.

My work takes form in a culmination of coils, slabs, dots, and flowerlike impressions. They are used collectively or in various combinations depending on the individual circumstances which surround the piece. Some of the pieces of lace and textures I use for impressions are of the Art Nouveau Period.

The method of construction depends on what physical properties the clay is capable of achieving under the given circumstances, as well as which methods are the most
cases it consists of applying the glaze, wiping it off in the high areas and leaving it on in the low areas so that the impressions of textures are emphasized. Most of the glazes I use are those formulated by other craftsmen. My main interest in a glaze is that it work effectively and moderately consistently.
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Spring Dreams
2. Untitled
   Untitled
3. Untitled Cover Jar
4. Montana Summer
5. The Emperor
6. The Empress
7. Mugs
8. Mugs
9. Mugs
10. Teapot
11. Urn
12. Vase
13. Vase
14. Bacchanalian Goblet - Top
    Untitled - Left Bottom
    Untitled - Right Bottom
15. Eye in the Garden
16. Odin's Chalice - Left
    Mrs. Mott's Bedroom - Right
17. Garden of The Soul
18. Garden of The Soul - detail
19. Magic Tree