Ceramic Design : The Trapped Air Technique

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CERAMIC DESIGN, THE TRAPPED AIR TECHNIQUE

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A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science

by

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Fort Hays Kansas State College

Date 1-24-63

Approved
Major Professor

Approved
Chairman, Graduate Council
CERAMIC DESIGN, THE TRAPPED AIR TECHNIQUE

An Abstract
Presented to
Dr. Joel Moss
and the Faculty of the Graduate School
Fort Hays Kansas State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Art Education

by
JON T. HARTMAN
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CERAMIC DESIGN, THE TRAPPED AIR TECHNIQUE

The purpose of this thesis was to explore the possibilities of the trapped air technique in creating ceramic forms.

The trapped air technique grew out of the writer's experimentation with the various existing hand-built techniques. It was discovered that by trapping air inside a closed, thin-walled ball of clay the air would support the form while it was being created. The support provided by the trapped air helps eliminate the age old problem of unfinished forms collapsing as a result of poor construction or from being too wet.

The unique forms that result from the trapped air technique are believed, by the author, to be the most important contribution made by the method. The forms proceed naturally from the very nature of the method. These forms are very soft, gently flowing from one area of the piece to another. They are asymmetrical which adds variety, yet they contain the unity that is necessary to make a pleasing form.

Various clay bodies were used, Pittsburgh clay and stoneware #5 most frequently. Stoneware #5, which is a mixture of 50% stoneware, 40% fire clay, and 10% kaolin,
proved the best, as it can be fired at stoneware temperatures or may be used as a low fire body.

Glazing was not the primary problem of this study; however, the finish which is given a piece should enhance it. Experiments were made until the glazes fit the nature of the forms that result from the trapped air technique.

The artist believes this technique holds unlimited possibilities for the ceramist, and only through experimentation with forms, materials, and techniques may one hope to discover and contribute knowledge to the field of ceramics.
Stoneware Vase
Height: 8½"
Color: apple green with areas of brown-green to dark black-brown
Glaze: matt, reduction
Stoneware Bottle
Height: 8"
Color: light green with streaks of tan and areas of more intense green
Glaze: matt, reduction
Round Stoneware Bottle
Height: 5"
Color: combination of light blue, gray and dark browns
Glaze: matt, reduction

Round Stoneware Bottle
Height: 5½"
Color: black-green with mottled areas of light and dark green
Glaze: matt, reduction
Three-sided Stoneware Bottle
Height: 7 3/4"
Color: silver gray with areas of blue-gray to almost white
Glaze: gloss, reduction

Round Stoneware Bottle
Height: 4 3/4"
Color: combination medium gray and gray-brown, speckled with dark brown and traces of red
Glaze: gloss, reduction
Stoneware Bottle
Height: 9"
Color: light blue with areas and speckles of tan to dark brown-green
Glaze: semi-gloss, reduction

Hanging Stoneware Form
Height: 6¼"
Color: speckled dark blue to medium brown
Glaze: gloss, reduction
Flat Stoneware Bottle
Height: 9½"
Color: medium green with areas of dark green and dark blue
Glaze: matt, reduction

Square Stoneware Bottle
Height: 6½"
Color: dark blue with lighter blue speckles
Glaze: matt, reduction
Flat Stoneware Bottle
Height: 4 1/2"
Color: light blue with areas of silver gray gloss and some areas of tan
Glaze: matt, reduction

Stoneware Bottle
Height: 8 3/4"
Color: gray base glaze with specks of light green and dark gray, some larger areas of black-brown
Glaze: matt, reduction

Round Stoneware Bottle
Height: 5 1/2"
Color: light blue-gray with areas of medium blue
Glaze: matt, reduction