Development of Form and Ornamentation of Handbuilt Ceramics

Howard Galen Flora
Fort Hays Kansas State College

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.fhsu.edu/theses

Part of the Art and Design Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholars.fhsu.edu/theses/779

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at FHSU Scholars Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of FHSU Scholars Repository.
DEVELOPMENT OF FORM AND ORNAMENTATION OF HANDBUILT CERAMICS

being

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 in Art Education

by

H. Galen Flora, B. S.
Fort Hays Kansas State College

Date 7-22-65 Approved Ralph S. Codin
Approved Major Professor
Approved Chairman, Graduate Council
DEVELOPMENT OF FORM AND ORNAMENTATION
OF HANDBUILT CERAMICS

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
H. Galen Flora
July 1963
Clive Bell, the English critic's statement that "We must bring with us our knowledge of space if we are to make the most of every kind of form," was indicative of at least a part of the problem of this study to attempt to achieve excellence of form and ornamentation of hand-built ceramic pieces. This study was the result of the writer having employed the handbuilt method of forming ceramic pieces for approximately two years and after having tried other methods with a lesser degree of success in achieving individuality of form.

The writer felt that the development of a form and its proper ornamentation could be most successfully done by limiting the scope of the creative study in the following ways:

1. Using one style or type of form and each piece being created with the objective of keeping it related in shape and/or design to all the others in this study.
2. Applying only the handbuilt method of forming, commonly referred to as "the pinch method".
3. Confining ornamentation primarily to the use of stoneware matt glazes #1, #2, and #3 combined with the
use of metal filings and/or metallic oxides placed in the clay before forming, added to the bisque fired surface, or on or within the glaze itself. Sgraffito designs either on the leather-hard surface or on the unfired glaze were used in some instances.

4. Using only stoneware No. 5 clay body and reduction firing of glazes, as opposed to oxidation firing, predominating throughout.

By the process of reduction firing, in which the amount of oxygen in the kiln atmosphere is reduced at certain stages of the glaze firing, thereby robbing some of the oxygen from the glazes and/or clay body materials themselves, together with the use of metals and metallic oxides the most desirable ornamentation and glaze surfaces were achieved.

Development of the form in this study presented many interesting challenges as the writer felt that by limiting the style or shape to the two and three-sided form, one could develop greater perfection or excellence of line and design. By limiting the materials used both in the clay bodies and in the glazed ornamentation, as well as the method of forming the pieces, it was felt that more proficiency could be achieved in the mechanics of the
process, thereby enabling the writer to reach a greater degree of excellence in form and ornamentation.

The handbuilt method of forming these ceramic pieces was used because the writer felt that this technique afforded the best possibility of achieving the desired result. Each piece was first conceived by drawing or sketching on paper. By using the handbuilt method of forming, a nearer representation of the drawing could be reached.

It is this writer's opinion that there are unlimited possibilities in the number of variations of a single type of form that are attainable. The limitations of reduction fired glazes in conjunction with metallic oxides and other forms of metallic compounds are unknown, but can produce the most gratifying results.
Three-Sided Vase

height: 8 inches

color: gray and green

clay body sgraffito with metallic filings inlaid, matt glaze #3
Two-Sided Vase

height: 9 inches

color: lavender, brown, and gray

clay body sgraffito, copper oxide inlaid, semi-matt glaze #1
Three-Sided Vase

height: 8 inches

color: brown and beige

clay body sgraffito with brown stain, iron filings, matt glaze #1
Three-Handled Vase

height: 9½ inches

color: gray-green

metal filings in clay body, semi-matt glaze #2 and hash glaze
Three-Cornered Bowl

height: 5 inches  width: 8½ inches

color: black, brown, gray-green

clay body sgraffito, copper oxide inlaid, metal filings in clay body, matt glaze #2
Three-Sided Urn

height: 11½ inches

color: ivory-white, green, and black

metal filings in clay body, appliqued design, matt glaze #2
Transitional Three-Cornered Vase

height: 5 3/4 inches

color: gold, gray-green, and pink

metal filings in clay body, on glaze sgraffito, matt glaze #2
Two-Sided Vase

height: 8 1/4 inches

color: white and brown

clay body sgraffito, red iron oxide inlaid matt glaze #2

Two-Sided Vase

height: 6 inches

color: white and gray-green

matt glaze with semi-matt hash glaze
Two-Handled Vase

height: 10 inches

color: ivory, green, and black

incised design with copper oxide inlaid, metal filings in clay body, matt glaze #2
Three-Sided Vase

height: 6 3/4 inches

color: brown, black, and gray-green

copper oxide and red iron oxide in clay body, matt glaze #3
Three-Sided Vase

height:  8 3/4 inches

color: black and gray-green

copper oxide and red iron oxide in clay body, on glaze sgraffito, matt glaze #2
Three-Sided Jar

height: 6 3/4 inches

color: brown and green

semi-matt glaze #17 with red iron oxide and copper oxide in glaze
Two-Sided Pitcher

Height: 9 inches

color: white and green
copper oxide design under glaze, matt glaze #2