TOWARD A GREATER
AWARENESS OF SHAPE

A Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Master of Fine Arts

by
Peter Hotchkiss Entorf, B.F.A.
The Ohio State University
1968

Approved by

Paul Boytay

Advisers
School of Fine and Applied Arts
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of my wife in the preparation of this thesis.
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Within the past two years there has been a slow intuitive growth in my approach to ceramic art toward greater awareness of basic shape and form relationships, while minimizing the practical considerations of function and economy of production. In order to emphasize the primacy of shape in the organization of a visual whole, and as a means of avoiding the pitfalls involved in relating shape to the qualities of tone, hue, texture, and applied decoration, these variables were deliberately excluded as factors to be dealt with in my work. Thus, an attempt was made to avoid the use of pots as a background for decoration, and to evolve instead subtle shape elements that would in themselves become the pot form.

The focus of activity as involved in this thesis was to achieve visual unity in ceramic forms, first in the planar orientation, then as volumes in space. Through experiences in drawing, there developed an awareness of the organization of two dimensional shapes as compositional elements. As this developing awareness was applied to making ceramic forms, the elimination of throwing marks as visual cues, the use of basic geometric shapes, blank surfaces, and monochromatic glazes, allowed the author to control the shape relationships as compositional elements, in a manner relating to that of the draftsman. Congruent to this, volumetric shapes were reinforced by the integration of overlay cues and figure-ground relationships
into the pot forms, and by the manipulation of size, position, and shape factors; thereby adding sculptural solidity to the ceramic object.

Examination of Chinese, Japanese, and pre-Columbian ceramic traditions has provided both subject matter and critical standards for this artist. China's Sung Dynasty and Japan's Edo period, in particular, have had a significant impact on the artist's search for a solution of the basic problem of organizing shape, because of the clarity of individual shapes and shape relationships, the general movement away from utilitarian function, and the contributions of all elements (necks, spouts, handles, etc.) toward a visually unified whole. The influence of the historic periods on the artist stemmed from a synthesis of many ceramic forms into a more definite attitude toward ceramic shapes, rather than from any particular historic example(s).

These traditions have been used as a basis for starting exploratory line drawings. Potting and drawing have served to set up both a critical ground and an operational ability to relate shapes. The use of line drawings centered attention on shape, internalizing shape images within the artist as a foundation for actual form production in the plastic medium. As an outgrowth of the graphic two-dimensional concerns, there emerged a move-
ment toward the introduction of organizational cues to reinforce the sculptural presence of the ceramic forms subsequently developed.

In selecting a clay body for production, one of high firing temperature was desired for its durability. Porcelain was chosen because of its even tone, and because it allowed for the elimination of uncontrollable flecks and pitting in the finished surface. An alternative method would have been the use of a slip over a speckled earthenware or stoneware body; this, however, was discarded as a possibility because of the tendency of slip to mask the crispness of forms.

While the particular color of an object was not of primary concern in the solution of the stated problem, maintenance of even tone was a fundamental desire. This was achieved through the use of clear or monochromatic glazes.

In general, the ceramic forms created illustrate a reduction of visual elements to the point where compositional change became more easily visible. The simplification of the problem to one of shape is in essence a stripping away of traditional glaze textures and body decorations which might serve to disguise relational incongruities under critical scrutiny. Currently these self-imposed conditions are in the process of being
removed by the artist as growth toward increased understanding and control over form relationships is gained, as exemplified by his most recent works.

Until recently, the author has primarily relied upon the symmetry of wheel thrown forms—a factor limiting the range of possible solutions. This too, however, is now being disposed of as a restraint and exploration has begun into asymmetrical form.

The body of completed work reflects an attempt at solving the problem of visually unifying ceramic compositions on the basis of shape relationships. Experience in overcoming technical difficulties has yielded results which have begun to help creative development. The point has been reached where enough has been learned to evolve a clear statement—but the statement has just begun to be made.
Cup #102, height 3½", diameter 2½"
Cup #99, height 2½", diameter 3½"
Cup #125, height 3½", diameter 3½"
Cup #123, height 3½", diameter 3½"
Cup #119, height 4", diameter 3½"
Candlestick #182, height 1¾", diameter 5"
Candlestick #156, height 3", diameter 5½"
Bowl #193, height 2", diameter 6½"
Salad Bowl #166, height 2", diameter 6½"
Dinner Plate #161, height 2¼", diameter 10½"
Bowl #172, height 3", diameter 7"
Bowl #185, height 3¼", diameter 4½"
Bowl #112, height 3½", diameter 5½"
Bowl #113, height 6½", diameter 8½"
Bowl #135, height 3", diameter 7½"
Cylindrical vase #124, height 5", diameter 5"
Footed Bowl #114, height 6½", diameter 7½"
Bowl with Base #175, height 4", diameter 7½"
Bottle #134, height 7½", diameter 3½"
Bottle #138, height 7½", diameter 4½"
Vase #131, height 7", diameter 4½"
Covered Bottle #146, height 3", diameter 5"
27  Covered Jar #134, height 9", diameter 4½".

28  Vase #178, height 8", diameter 6".

29  Vase #153, height 7", diameter 3½".

30  Vase #196, height 7", diameter 5½".

31  Hanging Planter #203, height 11", width 7".

Note: This line has a large percentage of faded writing and should be read with care. 6-24 to avoid injury.
Technical Data

Bodies

Porcelain Body No. 8-18

Kingman Spar 16.0
EPK Kaolin 44.8
Tenn. #7 Ball Clay 19.2
Flint 20.0
Talc 2.0

Note: This body has a low percentage of fired shrinkage and should be glazed with glaze 17-8 to avoid crazing.

Scandinavian Porcelain

Nepheline Synite 25.0
EPK Kaolin 25.0
Tenn. #7 Ball Clay 25.0
Flint 25.0
Bentonite 2.0
Whiting 2.0

Glazes

16-6 and Petalite cone 9-11

Whiting 32.6
EPK Kaolin 35.4
Flint 32.0
Petalite 10.0

17-8 cone 9-11

Whiting 24.0
Petalite 24.6
EPK Kaolin 32.7
Flint 28.0