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Interactive Ceramics

Thesis of the DLA Dissertation

Moholy-Nagy University of Art

2009

I. Motivation

My strong belief is that a livable World needs calming, harmonious and thought provoking objects. The aim of my objects is to move the observer from the profane to a different dimension. My intent is that the time one spends with my object function the same way as the road to the Japanese tea houses the way Zen Masters designed them for the common folks. The ROAD that is winding has steps and forces the tiptoeing traveler to concentrate on the journey and forget the everyday problems thus entering the Tea House purged.

II. Genre

My work can be divided into two periods. Following graduation (1992), for eight years, shape had the dominant role in my objects. In the following period thought-provoking content was most important. For more than one reasons my work does not fit into one genre. On the one hand, in my objects with certain utility the utility function is secondary. It serves as an invitation to explore and it is the means to elongate the exploration. On the other hand, my objects that don't have any obvious utility, still need to be manipulated by the observer to gain full understanding of their meaning. If I had to categorize my work, I would say it falls between sculpture and ceramics.

III. Functional Characteristics

The shapes and details that I use for my objects portray a number of basic symbols. Such as the egg or seed form, circle, square, window revealing a sphere, crevices revealed by cracks (cave) and colors. These stimulate the subconscious of the observer even when he is not aware of the meaning of the symbols.

My two periods are distinct in the shapes I use. During the first period my shapes are even, orderly, closed, block-like and meticulously finished. My later work produced liberal, uneven shapes. In spite of these large differences, remarkably the objects "emanate" the same way. They have the same feel of a uniform internal order. This dissertation describes the overriding principles I always use when I decide the scale and rhythm of my objects (symmetry, frame of reference, scale, contrast, exaggeration or concealment of details, finish, and roundedness)

IV. Use of Material and Color

I always use stoneware when I create my objects. I feel that it is important to make my objects heavy; they should feel dense with a stone-like surface. When I create with this material, I am literally and figuratively part of a natural circle where the natural base material is amalgamated with human created geometry, numbers and

symbols that reflect natural law. I can best express the message of my work with natural colors. In my works form has the lead importance to colors.

V. Interactivity

Objects created during the first eight year long period evoke the same experience no matter who is the observer. My later works could be called “half-finished” as they have to be “finished” by the observer’s associations and physical manipulation. These works are invitation for an intellectual adventure that - as it is true for most games - don’t have the same outcome every time.

What I am striving for is to enable the observer’s journey in the calm that the interaction with my objects creates.

I use the characteristic interactivity of my objects as “lures to calm”. I induce cooperation as my work cannot be understood completely until the observer becomes an active participant. I offer the joys of playing a game that creates active participation and a relationship with my objects that is how the full effect is created. A simple observer (the way art is usually consumed) transforms into a co-creator, because of the interactivity passive becomes active. Instead of frontal conveyance, I offer collaboration thru participation. I finish my objects to a level where it is obvious what kind of participation is solicited.

Lately I use text in an increasingly direct way to the point where text takes the central character of the object and the object only serves to “highlight” the text. These texts are always “indirect” inducing associations or veiled, ironic or philosophical in nature. These works are discussed in the last chapter.