1973

The Sequential Development of Decorative Forms and an Analysis of Sculptures Produced During the Final Stage

Larry Edward Sluder
Eastern Illinois University

PAPER CERTIFICATE #2

TO: Graduate Degree Candidates who have written formal theses.

SUBJECT: Permission to reproduce theses.

The University Library is receiving a number of requests from other institutions asking permission to reproduce dissertations for inclusion in their library holdings. Although no copyright laws are involved, we feel that professional courtesy demands that permission be obtained from the author before we allow theses to be copied.

Please sign one of the following statements.

Booth Library of Eastern Illinois University has my permission to lend my thesis to a reputable college or university for the purpose of copying it for inclusion in that institution's library or research holdings.

May 7/1973 — Author
Date

I respectfully request Booth Library of Eastern Illinois University not allow my thesis be reproduced because _____

_____

_____

_____ _____
Date Author

THE SEQUENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF DECORATIVE FORMS AND AN ANALYSIS OF SCULPTURES PRODUCED DURING THE FINAL STAGE

(TITLE)

BY

LARRY EDWARD SLUDER

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1973
YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

May 7, 1973
DATE

MAY 7/73
DATE

THE SEQUENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF DECORATIVE FORMS AND AN ANALYSIS OF SCULPTURES PRODUCED DURING THE FINAL STAGE

BY

LARRY EDWARD SLUDER
Master of Arts, Eastern Illinois University, 1973

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in Art
at the Graduate College of the
Eastern Illinois University, 1973

Charleston, Illinois

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It gives me great pleasure to make some expression of thanks to those persons who helped me in the preparation of this thesis. I am especially indebted to my advisor, Dr. Krutza. Her sustained interest, assistance, and numerous suggestions have been most beneficial to me in the completion of this paper.

I would also like to express personal thanks to my wife, Darla, who gave me assistance and encouragement throughout the entire program.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT.)

INTRODUCTION

During this graduate program of study it was my first intention to produce ceramic pieces which possess a rich decorative quality. This paper shows the various stages of development that the artist experienced while trying to achieve this goal. The sculptures produced in the final stage are of such significance that they are analyzed in depth.

Part I of this paper deals with the development of a direction intended to produce decorative ceramic pieces. After experimentation with several methods of decoration pressed coil designs are produced. As problems are encountered, changes must be made that place the pressed decoration on larger forms. Improvements made with each stage produce new pieces excitingly different than the ones before. As development moves into its final stage, a striking difference is discovered. When these sculptures are compared with pieces in the beginning stages it becomes apparent that emphasis on decoration has greatly declined. In its place is a concern for form and an integration of parts. Part III analyzes these final sculptures in terms of positive and negative area, movement, relationship of parts to the whole, decoration, and their human-like qualities. Within each section, it is explained how various modification have contributed to the overall success of the sculptures in this final stage of development.

It is a relatively simple matter to find definition for decoration, form, balance and other elements of design. The importance of developing

fundamental concepts of form, balance, movement, proportion, decoration, among others is continually stressed. Statements like, "The form is weak," or "Various parts of the form create a delicate balance," are difficult to fully comprehend unless the artist has experienced success and failure through his own working process. In order to gain a full understanding of these principles and place them in their proper perspective, the artist must establish a direction in his work. More important, he must develop this direction as far as his imagination and creativity can take it. Only after time and exposure to the media can he formulate his own concepts of design.

PART I

EXPERIMENTATION

It was my first intention to produce a more decorative ceramic piece believing that the result would be an even more exciting statement. New and different glazes would not be sufficient. Perhaps, the key might lie in the new textures, designs, and application to the basic forms.

Feeling that this would be the best procedure to follow, I began searching for various textures and methods of applications. A variety of objects were tried to produce new textures--hair rollers, spatulas, pointed objects to produce a stippled design, container lids and others. Several methods of application were tried. Modeled figures placed in recessed areas of a thrown form were tried. There were also attempts made using the paper frisket technique on a surface. Although these experiments proved to be quite interesting, they were just not what I felt was necessary to provide a satisfactory answer to the problem. The textures tended to be most successful as overall patterns and seemed to be rather monotonous.

The use of coils have always seemed fascinating, especially when they might be used as added decoration. As experimentation began, it was soon discovered that the mere application of coil decoration was too subtle. The three-dimensional line quality became engulfed by the surrounding solid areas. By placing coil forms in a plaster mold a more open network was produced. This totally eliminated the flat surfaces behind the coiled designs. By laying soft coils in a bowl-shaped mold, pressing the

intersecting areas together, and letting the entire design set to leather-hard stage, there was produced an open design which had a form of its own. With variation in the choice of plaster forms, it was no longer a necessity to rely on thrown forms for support of the coils. Some examples of this result are seen in Plates I, II, and III. This development would have to be considered the first concrete direction established toward the intended goal of a more decorative form.

As experimentation proceeded, the molded coil forms became larger, thus producing greater stresses on them. Warpage frequently occurred in the glaze firing. The coils (slightly larger than the diameter of a pencil) would pull away from each other causing the entire form to slump. This also limited the size and depth of the plaster molds. If the coils protruded too far from the vertical plane the coil froms warped even more. Not only was this method of coil design structurally weak, it was also time consuming. After coils were carefully placed in a plaster form, all overlapping areas had to be worked and smoothed together. When completed, the design had to remain in the mold until dry enough to support its own weight. The final result, having lost its novelty, did not seem worth all of the needed effort. Continued use of the conventional ball shapes was discouraging. The elaboration of lids on thrown forms, as in Plates II and III, was an interesting experiment; however, the final results were not that exciting.

Although various problems had been encountered, this coil technique seemed too important simply to abandon. If, however, larger and

more unique forms were to be created, thus getting away from the conventional two part spheres, it would be necessary to alter the present method.

COILS PRESSED FROM PLASTER MOLDS

In order to save time and possibly eliminate warpage, a clay design of coils was made similar to the one seen in Plate V. By pouring plaster over a clay design, a negative mold was produced (See Plate IV). Now the coiled design could be reproduced as many times as needed, simply by pressing clay into this mold. After arranging these pressed designs in a large mold, it was discovered that this new method was more successful than the earlier more involved process. In fact, there were three major improvements made by using the new pressed mold method. The first and most obvious improvement would be the amount of time saved. Coils no longer had to be rolled out separately and, then carefully arranged in a plaster form. Scoring and working the clay together was needed only where one pressed design met another.

The other two major improvements might be better explained by looking at Plates VI, VII and VIII. In all three examples, the decoration is more easily seen. Also, each decorative form is far more impressive than earlier works because of its larger size. In comparison to Plates I, II and III, the new larger design patterns have achieved greater emphasis in relation to their overall form. They have become a contributing part of the piece, adding to its strength and beauty.

The new method was also a success from the aesthetic standpoint. By using the same mold repeatedly, a quite pleasing rythmic pattern was

developed within the form. This tended to give the design a much stronger unity, a quality lacking in the earlier works. With the development of the pressed mold, a big step forward was taken. Now, larger and more pleasing decorative forms had been created with a much greater efficiency. (This is not to imply that the earlier method of mold construction would not have produced similar results if pursued further.)

COIL DESIGNS AND THE TOTAL FORM

With the coil design technique now vastly improved, work continued at an even greater pace. Many large decorative pieces were done. Three examples of pieces completed during this time are seen in Plates IX, X and XI. These were pieces typical of the direction taken after the development of the pressed coil decorations. The sculptures were larger and glazed in brilliant whites, blue, and metallic lustre. In viewing them as a group, one was impressed by the lavishness of the pieces. Ornate sections in gold lustre glazes created a striking contrast with their adjacent surfaces which had been glazed in brilliant whites, blues, or blacks. However, the total effect was still not sufficient to satisfy the original decoration problem. The original intention was, of course, to develop a more exciting piece of ceramics by the use of decoration. The decoration seemed to be successful, but it had now become its own statement, independent of the other parts of the total form. Plates VI, VII and VIII show this imperfection quite vividly. In both Plates VII and VIII, the pierced-work decoration has become a form of its own, almost totally segregated from the other parts. There appears to have been little attempt to create a unified coordination among its parts. The sculpture seen in Plate VIII was probably the most successful in visually tying together the pierced form with its adjacent shapes. This was achieved by arching squeezed coils first from the central form to the base and then from the central form to the top. The transitional coils were

then further emphasized by the application of gold lustre.

In Plate VII, the problem was more severe. Three large, squeezed coils were placed on both sides of the belly-like base and, then stretched to the collar form near the top. The pierced decoration, rectangular in form, was then placed between and inside this cage. The large coils served two purposes in this sculpture. First, they attempted to create a smooth transition from section to section; and secondly, they were to create the appearance of volume when the piece was viewed from the side. The success of these large additions were minimal. The decoration of the pressed mold was partially hidden by the large coil, causing the mold form to be viewed in sections.

The source of this unification conflict might be considered a technical problem. Because the pressed coil design (once it was assembled) had to remain in the plaster form until almost leather-hard, it was impossible to reshape the form once it was removed.

The remainder of the sculptural form then had to be constructed around or added to this basic shape. With the construction taking place in sections, the final outcome had little choice but to be a segregated statement. However, the development of this particular technique would be successful only if it could be used in coordination with the other parts of the entire form. Once again a change had to be made.

With a conscious effort made to improve the total form, work continued. Rather than first creating the decorative part of the form and then

adding thrown forms, the procedure was reversed. This was achieved by joining two or three thrown forms. See models in Plate XII. As the example shows, the forms were usually closed ovaí or egg forms joined side-by-side or in a stacked fashion. After the thrown forms were securely joined, the decorative coils (several coils had already been arranged face down on canvas and worked together forming a slab) were then laid over various areas of the thrown forms. Plates XIII and XIV are finished examples of this new method. Selected portions of the slab were paddled into the thrown surfaces creating a smooth transition from one surface to another. In most instances the slabs actually spanned the negative area created by joined ovals. Once again this enabled the decorative pierced work to be easily seen, creating a striking contrast between it and the thrown surfaces. And at the same time there was established for, perhaps, the first time a unity among the various parts. The pierced-work now served as a unifying element for the total form.

By comparing pieces shown in Plates XIII and XVI with all preceeding pieces, another important fact was discovered. These two latest pieces were the first to lose symmetry. This also might have been a contributing factor to the overall success of the pieces. Prior to this development, the use of symmetrical balance was heavily relied upon. Molds for the decoration were of regular form; and as they were contructed, everything added to one side was added to the other. There was established in the piece a formal balance which at first, seemed to be an attractive feature. With

time, however, the piece lost its impact. This observation might best be summarized by the philosophy of Dr. Lancelot Law Whyte, a famed British physicist. He said, "Man is attracted by symmetry and yet symmetry is a dead end."[1] Symmetry by nature makes the form static, which is, "...a symbol of death, not life."[2]

---

[1] Lancelot Law Whyte, Accent On Form (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 17.

[2] Ibid., p. 17.

COILS IN SLABS PLACED ON LARGER FORMS

This new method seemed quite successful when used on small thrown forms. How would it work on much larger forms? Would there be a warpage due to increased size? These questions were soon answered as the first of these larger forms were completed (Plates XV and XVI). These pieces were even more exciting than the previous ones, with only minor warpage in the pressed coil decorations. Again symmetry was eliminated, while producing forms that were once more unified. Two new additions were made on the pieces seen in Plates XV and XVI; one is of significance in some of the last pieces. In viewing Plate XVII (close-up of Plate XVI) it is seen that a textured area has been added atop the body of the sculpture. Its smooth curves have created a gentle transition from the intricate body-work to the finishing statement of the neck. In Plate XV small coils were used to fill some of the negative area between pressed mold surfaces.

Very shortly the pressed mold decorations were eliminated and replaced by uniform rolled coils. Most of the warpage occurred in these newly added areas. During the drying stage, some of the coils would shrink, developing small cracks. Occasionally they would appear in the areas connecting the coil to the body. Later in the firing, some of these cracks enlarged; some of the coils even separated. It was found that by retarding the drying period, the majority of these problems were eliminated.

With the completion of several more sculptures using the same methods of construction it appeared that there was little progress being made to improve the form. This is not to say that the sculptures being made were failures. In fact, they were quite attractive. One good example of this is shown in Plate XVIII. Resembling in form, a goat-skinned wine container, the sculpture displays a pleasing co-ordination between pierced decoration and paddled surfaces. The neck flows gracefully into the body of the form while the pinched lip creates a soft finishing statement.

The problem seemed to be that the sculptures were still not large enough to successfully produce the desired impact on the viewer. Furthermore, the basic forms of the existing sculptures were generally too close to the bottom, making them appear heavy and squatty. By using a large cylindrical form as a foot, the problem could be solved. But, this technique was used in the pieces shown in Plates VII and VIII. It raised the form off the ground, but it did little to relieve the appearance of massiveness.

ELEVATION OF THE FORM

By using three narrow legs to elevate the body, as in Plate XXI, the sculpture took on an entirely new appearance. Even though the belly-like section was the largest used to this point, it was prevented from becoming to heavy by the incorporation of the three legs. The openess of the legs has enabled the form to remain light. After the completion of the "White Figure" an even larger form was attempted. This sculpture, seen in Plate XXII, was placed on larger and longer legs. The body was fashioned in a likeness to the "White Figure." But, rather than placing a spout-like form on top, a head and neck was used as the finishing statement. By molding a bold collar that came around the head and neck and into the body, a more unified form was completed. These two sculptures will be discussed in detail during the discussion in Part II. In both later sculptures (Plate XIX and XXII) one important feature was omitted. This was the first time that the use of decorative pressed molds had been eliminated. Through the working process the decorative design has lost its importance in relation to the total success of the form. As explained earlier, thrown forms were assembled before any of the pressed decoration was applied. During construction of these thrown forms primary concern became the organization and arrangement of the forms into a pleasing, proportional sculpture. Although the pressed mold decoration seemed to have died, it was replaced by giving attention to an even more important principle of form. In the previous two sculptures, the pressed

mold decoration was seen only in a token manner: small uniform coils were placed across hollowed areas on each side of the body of the sculptures.

With the incorporation of legs to elevate the total form, the sculptures now take on a new and excitingly different appearance. Decoration has been greatly reduced, but its absence is not missed. In its place has developed a growing awareness of form.

PART II

PLATE I

PLATE II

PLATE III

PLATE IV

PLATE V

PLATE VI

PLATE VII

PLATE VIII

PLATE IX

PLATE X

PLATE XI

PLATE XII

PLATE XIII

PLATE XIV

PLATE XV

PLATE XVI
"LACED BOTTLE"

PLATE XVII

PLATE XVIII

PLATE XIX
"WHITE FIGURE"

PLATE XX

PLATE XXI

PLATE XXII
"MASKED FIGURE IN RED"

PLATE XXIII

PLATE XXIV
"CROWNED FIGURE"

PLATE XXV

PLATE XXVI

PLATE XXVII
"MOTHER AND CHILD"
by HENRY MOORE

PLATE XXVIII
"RECLINING FIGURE"
by HENRY MOORE

PLATE XXIX
"ETERNAL SPRING"
by AUGUSTE RODIN

PART III

RELATIONSHIP OF PARTS TO A WHOLE... AWARENESS OF FORM

The development of all pieces considered in this thesis can be placed into three general phases: pierced-work based on classical forms, refined pierced work used with geometric forms, and limited decoration placed on "Humanoid" forms. As discussed earlier, it was with the conclusion of the second phase that a need for emphasis on form was discovered. The sculptures in Plates VI, VII and VIII were quite successful. After all, structural problems had been overcome and a more rhymthical decoration with the pierced work had been achieved. However, the geometric forms were done by using a symmetrical balance limiting the possibilities of variation. Once symmetry is employed, continued development of any piece is almost always dictated by the formal rules of symmetrical balance. "A statue [for that matter any sculpture] may be well-proportioned because its parts are equally balanced, but it may appear to lack rhythm because it is cold and lifeless..."[3]

This is how the sculptures of this second phase appeared... cold and lifeless. They lacked feeling and emotion. In the future, the various parts of the sculptures would have to have a more direct relationship toward <u>each other</u>. No matter how much emphasis is placed on the balance of its parts, a sculpture will lack a feeling of total form if the parts are not related to one another.

---

[3] Guido Ballo and William Heinemann, Ltd., <u>The Critical Eye</u> (London, 1969), p. 198.

In the third phase a transformation occurs. Refinements to decoration application vastly improve the sculptures' appearance. (These refinements will be discussed in "Decoration.") The greatest improvement, however, deals with the transformation of cold, trophy-like sculptures into emotional forms that possess a wholeness. The "Laced Bottle" and "Crowned Figure" (Plates XVI and XXIV) are prime examples of this transformation. The pierced-work in both sculptures is no longer a separate part of the form. The twisting coils tie together the separate parts. The pierced-work and repeated coils in the sculpture (Plate XXIV) tend to serve as a focal point for the whole piece, acting as a bridge to all other parts. They become, in a subtle way, the cohesive elements for the entire form, as the center of an Oreo Cookie attracts its two outer shells. "It is only when all the factors of an image are completely attuned to one intrinsic vital feeling that is expressed in the whole...that a truly artistic 'form' is achieved."[4]

Another important fact to consider about this and other sculptures of the third phase is that all the parts that are assembled to produce the final form are far more complicated than those geometric forms in the second phase. This makes the task of unification even more difficult; and when done successfully, as in the "Masked Figure in Red" (Plate XXII), this makes the final statement even more impressive.

---

[4]Susane Langer, Reflections on Art (Baltimore, Maryland: The John Hopkins Press, 1958), p. 75.

In the "Laced Bottle" (Plate XVI) the form of the sculpture is not necessarily complicated, but neither is it symmetrical. Its organic hollows around the neck are subtly repeated underneath the pierced-work. Here the pierced-work pulls together the large shapes from the top and bottom. The basic form of the sculpture is kept simple and smooth as the pierced-work completes the oval. This is easily seen in the detailed view of the "Laced Bottle" (Plate XVIII).

Emphasis on totality of form can also be seen in two other sculptures of this last phase, the "White Figure" and "Masked Figure in Red" (Plates XIX and XXII). The significance of their human-like qualities are discussed later. There are some points, however, which should now be discussed about the form of these two "humanoid" sculptures. In both sculptures the neck not only carries the viewer's eye to a finishing statement, but repeats the slender line of the legs. This contrast to the central form magnifies an even greater sensation of mass.

The use of the rib-like coils in both sculptures serve an identical purpose as the ribs Henry Moore used on his bronze reclining figure of 1936 (Plate XXVIII). He says, "...the ribs contrast with easy, wave-like movement of the rest of the piece, and literally pull together what would otherwise be a group of disconnected episodes."[5] Although the area around the ribs are similar in surface and contour, these coils create a gentle transition from surface to surface and at the same time produce a soft contrast

---

[5]John Russell, Henry Moore (New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1968), p. 74.

to the large smooth area (Plates XXI and XXIII).

In the "Masked Figure in Red" (Plate XXII) there is found another important comparison of the relationship of its parts to the whole. The large modeled collar surrounding the head creates a hollow. On the other hand, the long flowing legs are quite solid. Yet, both legs and the collar are similar in modeling. They are opposite in form and purpose, but are parallel in emotion, feeling and expression. Once again, there are two completely different parts of a form working together to produce a total statement.

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE AREA

Developing an attunment of parts toward a total statement is very important for the success of a sculpture. However, the relationship of volume and its resulting positive and negative area is also an essential quality necessary for success. Moholy-Nagy expresses his feelings toward volume in the following statement:

> "... sculpture is the best form, the original form, for taking possession of volume. Compared with volume, everything else--technical handling, weight, structure, representational ideas, likeness, expression, proportion, rhythm, consistency, color, texture... is secondary, belonging to the sphere of mastery of details.[6]

The positive and negative areas in all of the sculptures of this third phase ("Humanoid" Forms) can be placed into two categories: (1) the positive and negative area of the internal, (2) the positive and negative areas of the surface.

In the two earlier sculptures of this group (Plates XXIV and XVI) the abundance of both internal and surface variation is easily seen. A close-up view of the "Crowned Figure" (Plate XXV) reveals the organic, cage-like network of the molded coils which enclose an inner space. In the "Laced Bottle" (Plate XVI) this negative area permits the viewer to actually penetrate the surface and see into a new space-volume environment. Unknowingly, the viewer is drawn into internal space through gradually recessed hollows. As the pierced-work flows from the large smooth

---

[6] Moholy-Nagy, Vision in Motion (Wisconsin: Cuneo Press, 1947), p. 218.

surfaces, their lacing coils surround portions of the inner form. As this form continues toward the center, the surrounded portions get deeper and deeper...thus, drawing the viewers eye inward. The upper portion of the "Laced Bottle" (Plate XVII) reveals continued use of broken space. The gentle folds of the slab produce smooth but definite protrusions which contrast with the overall form. These curving folds also create superficial negative hollows similar in feeling to those in the center.

The positive and negative area in the pressed mold of the "Laced Bottle" is very similar to the "Crowned Figure" (Plate XXIV). The rib-like parts and their hollows seen in the "Crowned Figure" (Plate XXV) create another positive and negative space relationship. The repeating coils contribute to the elimination of the heavy quality found in the solid massive areas. Henry Moore's "Mother and Child," 1938 (Plate XXVII) show a similar approach. "The string provokes movement of the spectators' eye along its length and thereby increases his awareness of the space within the sculpture..."[7] The use of these coils and their similarity to Moores' string is further seen in a detail of the "White Figure" (Plate XXI). In all of the sculptures using the coiled ribs, a shallow negative space is created and emphasized. It is this space that gives the viewer an illusion of seeing within the outer form.

---

[7]Herbert Read, Henry Moore (New York: Frederick A. Prager, Publishers, 1966), p. 122.

"HUMANOID FORMS"

Three of the last pieces done in this third phase have remarkable similarities to the human form. Although each sculpture evolved from one made before it, there was no predetermined intention to produce human-like forms. The human qualities seemed to develop out of natural necessity to improve the form. Earlier sculptures seemed heavy and low to the ground. Legs were employed to elevate the total form into a new space relationship. As parts were assembled, it just seemed "natural" to complete the sculptures in a manner seen in Plates XIX, XXII, and XXIV. In comparison to other sculptures created in the entire series, these three pieces feature a strong feeling of mass and volume, especially the "White Figure" and the "Masked Figure in Red." "Actual physical size has an emotional meaning. We relate everything to our own size and our emotional response to size is controlled by the fact that men are between five and six feet high."[8] Because of their similarity to the human form, even with the use of three legs, the above statement takes on even more importance.

Each sculpture can be divided into three basic sections. The "body" in each is comprised of the most massive area. The bodies are conveniently placed between "legs" which lift the volume from the foundation, and a "finishing statement" that has been placed on neck-like forms. In the "White Figure" and "Crowned Figure" (Plates XX and XXVI) the

---

[8]Henry Moore, The Creative Process (New York: The American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1952), p. 76.

finishing statements are decorative shapes that could easily symbolize crowns. This is especially true of the "Crowned Figure" (Plate XXIV) which has a textured, four pointed form placed on the neck. Although this sculpture has the least obvious human-like characteristics of the three, it still contains a human personality. This is because it was created with a princely erectness, an aloof calm.

The "Masked Figure in Red" has a skull shaped form placed atop the neck. With its cavities that echo the hollows of the head, along with its basic oval form, this overall effect of the finishing statement contributes greatly to a definite human feeling. The large protective collar, wrapping the head and neck is suggestive of the neck-pieces worn by the Victorian nobility of England.

Originally, the "legs" of the sculptures in this phase were strictly functional. They served only one purpose, to elevate the form. In a detail view of the "Crowned Figure" (Plate XXV) it clearly shows the triangular supports that lift the body from the horizontal plane. They are thrown cylinders joined in a cluster and paddled into the lower portion of the body. The use of three legs is almost a necessity when dealing with sculptures of this size and media. Although the use of legs on this sculpture seem quite simple and relatively insignificant to its relationship of the human form, it is perhaps the single most important contribution to the development of the "humanoid" forms. This was the first use of legs of any kind. And, although quite basic in shape, these legs gave the sculpture a totally new appearance. For the first time, a truly sculptural form had been

created. Regardless of their simplicity, the legs emphasize an organic flow into the central form.

More emphasis is placed on the development of legs in the next two sculptures. In order to make them more human-like, the legs were modeled with contours and protrusions, suggestive of bulging muscles (Plate XXI). Each leg tapers to an enlargement at the base. This base had also been modeled with subtle hollows and blunted toes. In this sculpture the shortness of the legs places extreme emphasis on the mass in the central part of the sculpture.

Handled in much the same way, the legs of the "Masked Figure in Red" are much longer than those of the previous two sculptures. Their length is emphasized by vertical modeling similar to tendons and ligaments. They extend downward to large knobbed feet. Because these legs comprise almost one-third of the entire form, it was necessary to devote more emphasis on detail and modeling on them than on the legs of the "White Figure".

In each of the three sculptures discussed it is perhaps the "body" that attracts the greatest attention. Each sculpture, however, is handled in a different manner. For example, the "Crowned Figure" (Plate XXIV) has a body rich in decoration. It contains pierced-work wrapping around the entire body, with several groupings of ribbed coils that flow down the neck and into the body. Definitely not overpowering, the body creates a full and hearty connection with legs and neck.

The body in both the "White Figure" and the "Masked Figure in

Red" is stripped of practically all pierced decoration. The coil decoration is placed on each form in a manner similar to the arrangement of human ribs. These coils define the volume of the form rather than enclose it. Handling of ribs on the body of the sculpture is quite similar to the technique Henry Moore used on his "Reclining Figure" of 1921 (Plate XXVIII). In reference to Moore's sculpture, Herbert Read says that "...there is organic reference for each apparently arbitrary element--for example, in this particular figure the three rods that cross the hollowed chest refer to the ribs..."[9]

Along with its ribs, the body of the "White Figure" gives this sculpture its most human-like quality. The large smooth belly which swells over tiny legs can suggest nothing else but the abdominal cavity. It has swollen beyond the confines of the rib cage. The ribs flow from shoulder-like forms into each side of the body.

Obesity is not a problem in the body of the "Masked Figure in Red." The stomach area is large, but is supported by larger and equally massive legs. The weight is more evenly distributed, as the ribs carry the viewers' eye toward the hind quarters of the body. Here the surface is broken into two large protrusions similar to the buttocks. The rounded masses flow gently into the hollow of the back and down into the muscular legs.

As seen in all three parts--legs, body, and finishing statement--there are enough human-like qualities throughout each sculpture in this

---

[9]Herbert Read, Henry Moore (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1966), pp. 90 and 93.

"humanoid" phase that the viewer can easily relate to them through his own knowledge of nature. "The meaning and significance of form itself probably depends on countless associations of man's history. . .the humanist organic elements will always be of fundamental importance in sculpture, giving sculpture its vitality."[10]

---

[10] Brewster Ghiselin, The Creative Process (New York: The New Library of World Literature, Inc., 1952), p. 77.

DECORATION

Many changes have taken place in ceramic pieces made throughout this program. Perhaps the most dramatic and even ironic change is the use of applied decoration. In the early stages of development, decoration was of primary importance. In fact, all changes dealt with ways in which greater emphasis could be placed on decoration. Plaster molds were made so that pressed coil designs might become more uniform. Sculptures seen in Plates VI, X and XI show how a single design, that was repeated, greatly improves the appearance of the sculpture.

In other sculptures of the "geometric" phase the pierced-work seemed to get smothered by the glaze application. The two trophy-like sculptures, Plates VII and VIII, show the addition of gold and black lustre glazes. These were added to the pierced-work in an effort to bring out the glaze covered designs. Although the lustres brought attention to these pierced areas, their use created even greater emphasis on the segregation of parts. This is, of course, the major problem with forms produced during this phase of development.

Pierced decoration is almost totally eliminated in the "White Figure" and the "Masked Figure in Red" (Plates XIX and XXII). The rib-like coils are the only remaining similarity to the pressed-mold surfaces used. Along with the ribs, a subtle decorative quality is created through modeling of concave areas connecting the legs with each body. As the cavities were paddled, a linear texture was produced. This decoration was made even

softer with the application of glaze. The muscle-like undulations on the legs and neck areas might also be considered decorative areas within each sculpture. However, they are in definite contrast to the once-used pierced decoration. The subtle decoration no longer contains the viewer's eye, but directs him up and around the entire form.

The "Masked Figure in Red" displays a rich but subtle decoration in the collar area. Once again, soft modeling has created a flowing, decorative movement around the head and neck. Because the fringe of this collar extends into the body, the decoration is not restricted to one specific region. The sculptures were comprised of specific forms that were decorated and specific forms that were undecorated.

As the sculptures become larger, the pierced decoration becomes more a part of the total form, as in the "Laced Bottle" (Plate XVI). The pierced-work is no longer confined to a geometric form that is only part of the whole. It could now function as decoration contributing to the entire sculpture and not just to a confined form. The decoration follows the contours of the piece, creating a more fluid movement.

With the employment of legs and an emphasis on improving the total form, the use of decoration gradually diminishes during the "Humanoid Phase."

The sculpture containing the greatest amount of decoration in this phase is the "Crowned Figure" (Plate XXIV). Once again the pierced decoration flows around the body, blending into its almost spherical shape. These decorative coils of the pierced areas are of great significance to

the "Crowned Figure." Their elaborate, rich qualities help to give the sculpture its princely stature.

Both sculptures ("White Figure" and "Masked Figure in Red") are glazed with very brilliant color. By using one color over the entire form, a more complete and total statement is produced. Black speckles from granular ilmenite seemed to define the volume of the "White Figure," as it flowed over the rounded surfaces. The brilliant white surface also tends to balance the appearance of obesity by giving the belly a lighter quality.

The blood red glaze of the "Masked Figure in Red" contributes to the unity of parts as does the glaze in the "White Figure." The personality and character of the figure contributes to the vitality of this sculpture. An illusion of death, possibly suggested by the tilted skull, is emphasized even more by the blood red glaze.

Although the use of pierced decoration has greatly been reduced in the "Humanoid" figures, the sculptures still possess rich decoration. The decoration is subtle, seen in the glaze and in modeling. It is no longer an applied decoration but, a decorative quality that comes from within each sculpture, an integrated part of the total form.

MOVEMENT

Although difficult to discuss as a separate element, a feeling of movement is vital to the success of any sculpture. It can not work alone but, will contribute interest and vitality to the piece.

The sculptures in this "Humanoid Phase" of development display movement that occurs as a result of modeling within each form. The "Crowned Figure," "White Figure," and "Masked Figure in Red" display little diagonal movement. Their movement is vertical, with the eye traveling from top to bottom, giving to each piece a feeling of strength and dignity.

Auguste Rodin utilized movement in practically all of his sculptures. In attaining reality of the human form, Rodin incorporated movement and modeling, giving his sculptures the illusion of life.[11] In "Eternal Spring" (Plate XXIX) the figures almost come to life. Unlike the "Humanoid" figures, both man and woman are embraced, capturing a momentary action. They are not posed in a rigid manner, but are free and life-like. However, the movement which Rodin creates in this and many other sculptures depends not only on pose, but also on modeling. The rounded hips of the girl flow into her slender waist. The viewer's eye is carried along this line and out, around her elbow. As the modeled surfaces on both their heads and bodies meet, a delicate line pattern is created. From the arm of the

---

[11] Rodin, On Art and Artist (New York: Philosophical Library, 1957), p. 82.

girl to this line pattern, the viewer's eye is brought back into the center of the composition. This handling of movement is carried throughout the entire sculpture.

In the "Humanoid" sculptures, pose contributes very little to the feeling of movement. The modeling of each piece, however, produces results quite similar to the movement found as a result of Rodin's movement.

Indirectly, movement has been discussed during the transition from the "Geometric forms" to the "Humanoid forms." This is due to the fact that movement, or rather the lack of transitional movement from one part to the next, was the primary reason for development of these "humanoid" forms. One particular example of this is the introduction of legs to the sculptural forms. As stated earlier, the use of legs lifted the mass into the air and prevented gravity from visually forcing the form into the horizontal plane. Sculptures in Plates XXI, XXII and XXV clearly show this. However, elevation is further accomplished by the feeling of movement that is created through modeling in the legs and the paddled hollows immediately below the belly of each sculpture. These undulations carry the viewer's eye from the slim legs into the mass of the body. "Movement is the transition from one attitude to another."[12]

Within the body of each "Humanoid" sculpture, movement plays an important role. Since parts of these sculptures either point toward or extend

---

[12] Ibid., p. 85.

from the body, it is crucial that the viewer's interest be kept at a maximum within the body. The pierced-work wrapping around the body of the "Crowned Figure" (Plate XXIV), provides the movement in this sculpture. Plate XXV (close-up of "Crowned Figure") shows how the coils made from pressed molds flow around the body. Their linear quality create a feeling of movement that carries the viewer's eye from one hollow to the next. The rib-like coils flow gracefully down the neck and into the body, once again bringing the viewer to the focal point of the sculpture.

A feeling of movement found in Rodin's sculptures can also be found in the "White Figure" and the "Masked Figure in Red." Their smooth rounded forms enable the viewer to visually move up and down the surface of each piece. With this freedom to move about the contours of each form, the viewer obtains life-like qualities which give each sculpture its own personality.

Perhaps the greatest feeling of movement in these two sculptures is created through modeling. It is not a realistic modeling of muscle tone as in Rodin's "Eternal Spring," but a soft modeling resulting as various parts within each form come together. In the "White Figure" a strong feeling of movement is created as the massive belly folds into the shoulders and legs. The modeled hollows direct the viewer's eye around the entire body, and down the front leg. The horizontal creases that are created as the rounded forms and hollows meet, direct the viewer's eye, in stair step fashion down to the base of the sculpture. This is seen in Plate XXI

(close-up of body and legs).

In the upper portion of the "White Figure," delicate modeling contributes further to the feeling of movement. Plate XX (close-up of neck of "White Figure") clearly shows the line patterns created by the tendon-like modeling. Emphasized even more by strong shadows, the line continues down the hollow of the back and into the body.

The "Masked Figure in Red" displays modeling qualities quite similar to those found in the "White Figure." The neck has a finishing statement far different from the one seen on the "White Figure"; the legs are much larger. The manner in which both neck and legs are modeled is, however, identical to the "White Figure." Once again, this modeling produces line patterns that direct the viewer's eye in toward the center of the sculpture. An interesting feeling of movement is also produced inside the body. The paddled contour flowing underneath the ribs and around the legs, delineates the suggestion of a large breast-plate. The suggested line is again repeated as the cavity below the neck flows into the top of the chest.

In a close-up view of each sculpture (Plates XXI and XXIII) the rib-like coils are seen. Since these ribs connect the smooth surfaces, attention is easily focused upon them. With their directional line quality, the viewer is again sent visually exploring the surface of the belly and onto the shoulder or buttocks areas. It is also interesting to compare the effect that the rib areas have on each sculpture. In the "White Figure" the ribs are slanting down, giving further emphasis to the obesity of the figure. On the other hand, the ribs bend upward and into the chest of the

"Masked Figure in Red." The coils add emphasis to the erectness of the sculpture. Movement is not stopped at the chest area. The protective collar begins here, gently flowing up and around the tilted head. The coils in the head fan out and direct the viewer's eye back down the neck and into the body.

The feeling of movement is handled in many ways. As seen by the previous discussion, this artist chooses to develop this quality through modeling. Rodin was a master at this technique, but chose to suggest even greater movement through pose. Regardless of the number of techniques used by the artist to create the feeling of movement, one fact is certain. The vitality and human emotional quality of a sculpture is enhanced by the illusion of movement.

CONCLUSION

The various stages of development seen throughout this program can be compared to a statement by Herbert Read taken from The Origins of Form in Art. He says:

> "What I would like to establish for all these early human facts, is an evolutionary sequence that passes through three stages: (1) conception of the object as a tool; (2) making and refinement of the tool to a point of maximum efficiency; (3) refinement of the tool beyond the point of maximum efficiency towards a conception of form-in-itself."[13]

A similarity is seen when one replaces Read's "tool" with the intended direction of this program of study. After a period of experimentation, the conception of a specific direction is reached. With the use of pressed designs from plaster molds, decorative ceramic pieces were produced. However, problems with form and support of the pressed molds had to be overcome. The decorative areas in pieces of the "Geometrical Phase" were segregated from other undecorated surfaces, creating problems with the unification of parts. "Refinements" were made in order to solve these and other problems. With the completion of the sculptures in the "Humanoid Phase", the intended direction has extended "beyond the point of maximum efficiency" to a "conception of form in itself."

Elevation of the form, refinement of applied decoration, transformation of pieces into more organic forms--all of these changes have resulted

---

[13] Herbert Read, The Origins of Form in Art (New York: Horizon Press, 1965), p. 69.

in sculptures that now convey an aesthetic appeal of emotion and totality.

With the conclusion of the final stage of development it can be seen that many dramatic changes have occurred. These changes which occur in the sculptures also represent a reflection of the change of ideas of the artist. An emphasis on decoration has been replaced with a concern for form, integration and movement.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ballo, Guido. The Critical Eye, London, England: William Heinemann, Ltd, 1969.

Champigneulle, Bernard. Rodin, New York, New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1967.

Collier, Graham. Form, Space, and Vision, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963.

Elsen, Albert. Auguste Rodin, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965.

Elsen, Albert. The Partial Figure in Modern Sculpture, Baltimore, Maryland: Baltimore Museum of Art, 1969.

Ghiselin, Brewster. The Creative Process, New York, New York: The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1952.

Graenewegen-Frankfort, H. A. Arrest and Movement, Russell Square, London, England: Faber and Faber Limited, 1965.

Hill, Anthony., ed. Directions in Art, Theory and Aesthetics, Greenwich, Connecticut: New York Graphic Society Ltd., 1968.

Hodin, J. P. Barbara Hepworth, New York: David McKay Co. Inc., 1961.

Kepes, Gyorgy, ed. The Man-Made Object, George Braziller, Inc., 1966.

Koffka, K. Principles of Gestalt Psychology, New York: Harcourt, Bruce and World, Inc., 1963.

Langer, Susanne K. edit. Reflections on Art, Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1958.

Ludovice, Anthony. Personal Reminiscences of Auguste Rodin, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: J. B. Lippincott, 1926.

Meyer, Fred. Sculpture in Ceramics, New York: Watson-Guptill Publications.

Moholy-Nagy, Sibyl. Moholy-Nagy Experiment in Totality. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950.

Moholy-Nagy, L. Vision in Motion, Wisconsin: Cuneo Press, 1947.

Poore, Henery Rankin. Composition In Art, New York: Sterling Publishing Company, Inc., 1967.

Praeger, Frederick A., Publisher, The Hand and Eye of the Sculptor, New York: 1969.

Ransden, E. H. Sculpture: Theme and Variations, London: Lund Hamphries and Company, 1953.

Rathbone, Richard Adams. Introduction to Functional Design, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1950.

Read, Herbert. Art and Alienation, New York: Horizon Press, 1967.

Read, Herbert. The Forms of Things Unknown, New York: Horizon Press, 1967.

Read, Herbert. Henry Moore, New York: Frederick A. Praeyer, Publishers, 1966.

Read, Herbert. The Origins of Form in Art, New York: Horizon Press, 1965.