SCULPTURAL FORMS
IN CLAY

by

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STATEMENT OF INTENTION

"Clay is a highly fluid and malleable material with a life of its own." Potters use it to produce works of art that attract the public, not only by the shape they produce or by the beautiful glaze on the pieces, but by the clay-quality itself. It is with this concept in mind that I decided to investigate "sculptural forms in clay." The aim is to explore the forms which whould by their existence comment upon the concept of the environment. They should also express ideas about society, about beauty, and about dealing with a material substance and yielding to it. The works are intended to show a transition of forms, techniques, and culture.

It is generally defined that crafts are functional objects; in other words, art that one can use. This project is also an investigation of this line of thought. The sculptural forms are meant for use. They are however, meant to be used in a different perspective. They are based on forms that can go right into people's homes; but, instead of the works solely being used as functional pieces touching "people's lips many times a day," they are to be viewed for their aesthetic values.

My intention therefore, is to face this very problem of creation and appreciation of "sculptural forms in clay" from three different aspects.

COMPOSITE FORMS

Although throwing on the potters wheel was a personally preferred technique of forming, the wheel in this project was considered a tool only and therefore it did not necessarily direct the shapes of the finished objects. My composite forms were first started by throwing bottles and hollow tubes (feet) on the potters wheel. I the pulled out long and fairly thick clay slabs and attached the footed bottles to one another. The slabs were then cut into smaller pieces and pressed round the joined ends of the footed bottles. The pieces were allowed to dry very slowly and after they were bone dry, they were placed in the bisque kiln. It is always wise to fire the bisque kiln very slowly and this I always do in order to limit chances of breakages or cracks on the pieces.

PLATE I

Four footed

Composite form

Height 13"



PLATE II

Paddled Off-Balance

Composite Form

Height 12½"



PLATE III

Composite Candle Stand

Height 13½"

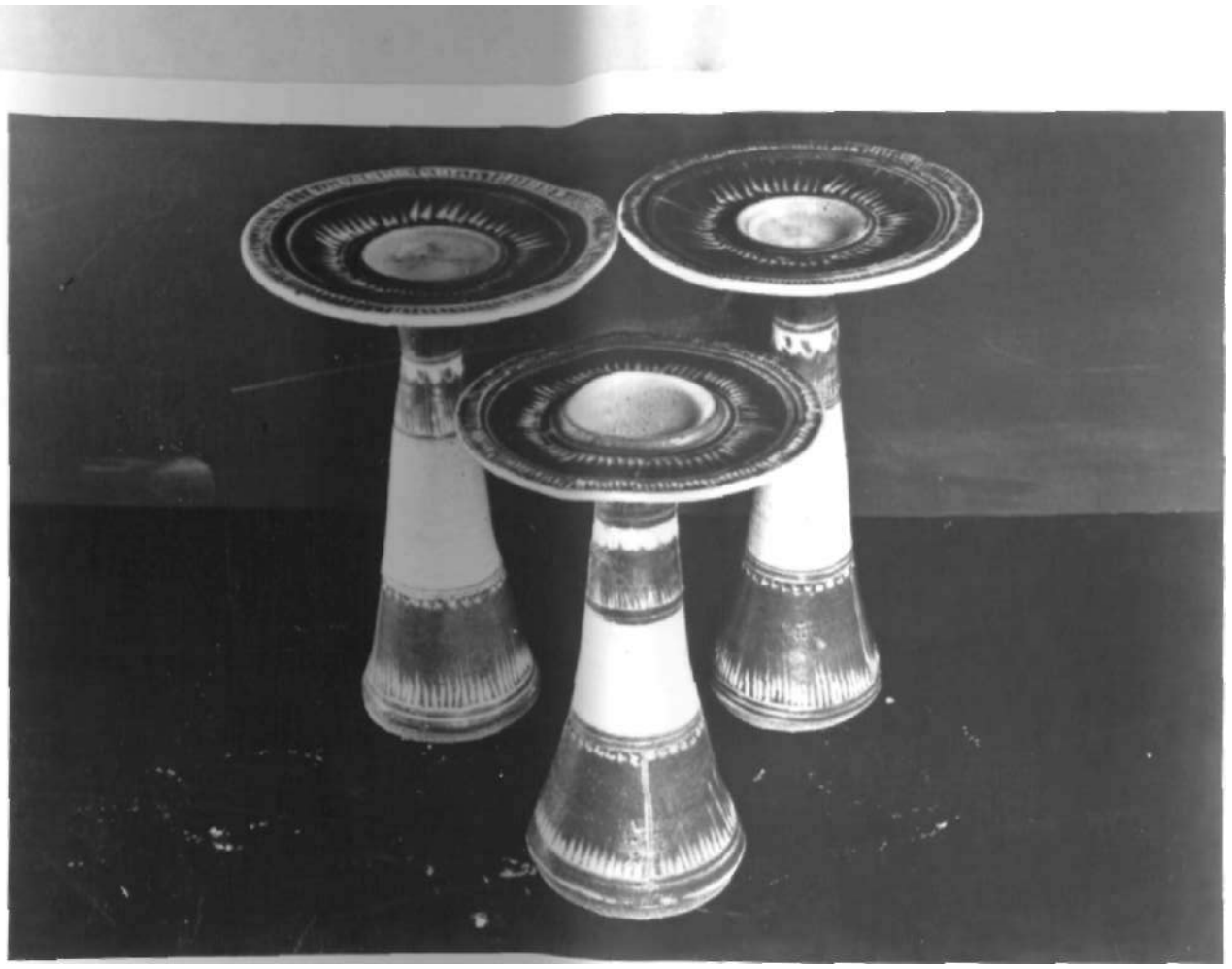


PLATE IV

Three Sided

Composite Form

Height 12"



FOOTED FORMS

I placed special emphasis here in the slab technique of clay preparation. I spread my clay on a big piece of cloth and rolled it up. The slab should have even thickness and it should be allowed to dry slowly and evenly before use. When the slab was ready I placed a well roped card-board box at the center of the slab and rolled the slab around it. This I did in order to prevent the clay from collapsing. The cardboard paper also helped in absorbing water content from the clay while drying, thus preventing my form from cracking. I then attached the base and the footing on the form. These processes were done when the big slab form was leather hard.

PLATE V

Rose-Top Footed Form

Height 22"



PLATE VI

Double-Top Footed Form

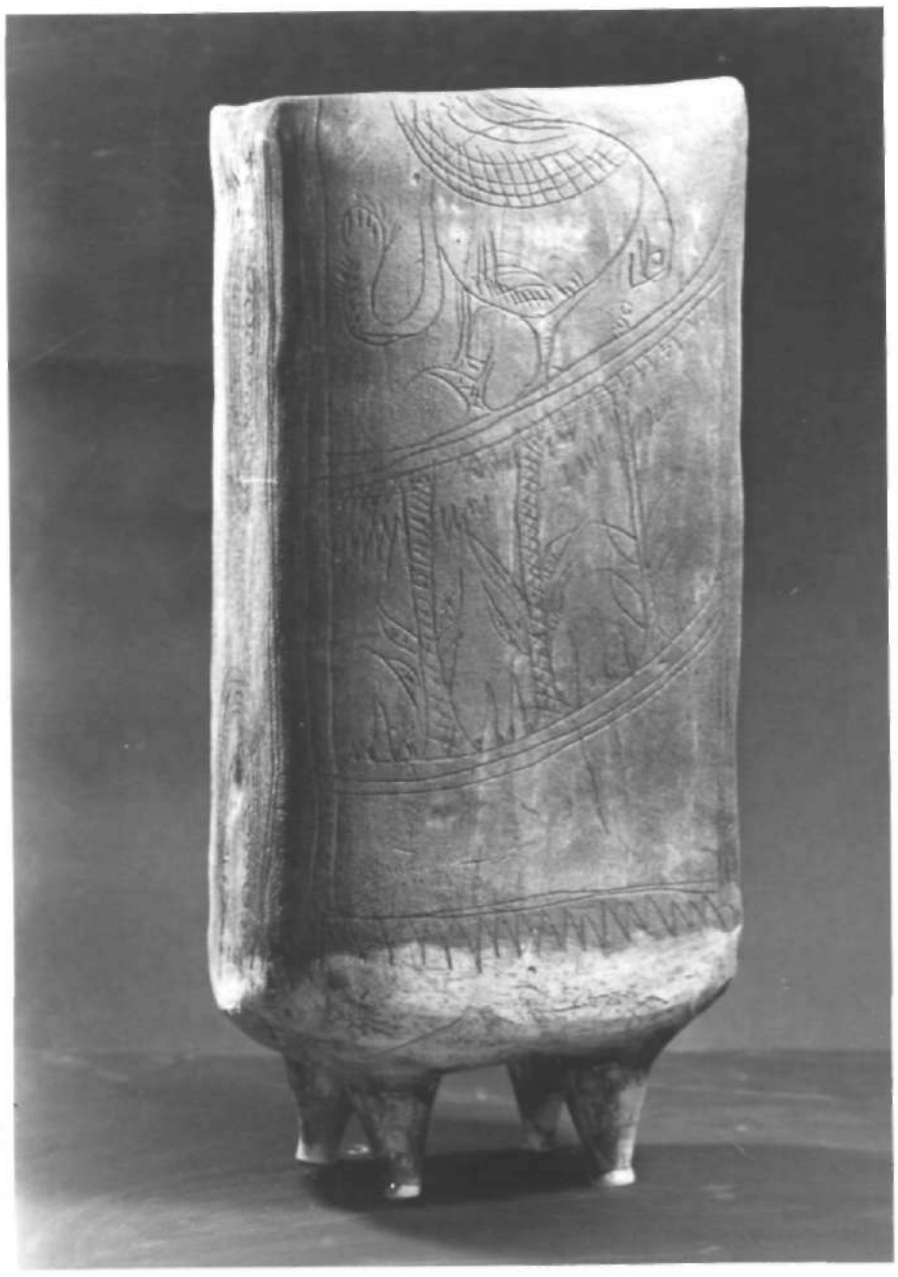
Height 16"



PLATE VII

Footed Form - The Bird

Height 32"



SLAB FORMS

These forms originated from the experiences I obtained while working with both my composite forms and my footed forms. I applied the same technical experiences I had used in preparing my other pieces. It is therefore the result of these experiences that generated my new slab forms.

PLATE VII

Cylindrical Slab Form

Height 24"



PLATE IX

Multiple-Top Slab Form

Height 18"



PLATE X

Double-Headed

Slab Form

Height 24"



AESTHETIC PROBLEMS OF MY FORMS

My research along this line was based on how I could achieve unified sculptural forms. I based my investigations on the relationship between form, design and color. In trying to create my forms, I discovered that physical property of clay had great control over my basic forms, particularly the slab forms. In order to achieve my complete artistic statements therefore, I attached "feet" to the bottom of the pieces in such a way that the body stands well and upright on them, thus giving the pieces good artistic balance. The designs of my culture were then applied to conform with the whole form. I in fact used red iron oxide on the pieces in order to bring up clear contrast between the texture of the claybody and the designs.

The aesthetic concerns of the composite forms deal mainly with the relationship of the different pieces and the spaces between them. In combining the pieces therefore, careful attention was placed on seeing how this problem could be approached. I sometimes"paddled off-balance" the pieces in order to modify the original geometric shape of the forms. I also modified the final forms by the glaze application. Glaze was applied either all over or on some top parts only in order to achieve my required aesthetic taste.

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As far as my slab forms were concerned, my intention was to create sculptural ceramic shapes of multiple combinations. Their aesthetic concerns were based upon the relationship of shape, size, placement and color. I applied red iron oxide on the pieces to help bring the right color that conformed with the shape and size of the pieces.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the stages of my work, I have attempted to create contemporary ceramic sculptural forms along with the application of design that has been a part of my life and culture. I can see further developments in the future from my present forms.