

Like Reading Stream of Consciousness Literature: Analysis of the Ceramic Work of Shih Hsuan-yu

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I have served as a jury panel member for a number of ceramic art awards and seen many creative works with a wide range of different styles. Among them, I would say that the pieces produced by Shih Hsuan-yu are some of the most challenging ones. You can easily ignore exterior appearance of Shih's work from a cursory look, but a more detailed appreciation gives one the feeling

that something more is going on here. This leads to a search for greater meaning in each detail, for example the combination of different mediums is deliberate and meticulously precise. Putting every element together one step at a time and the intricate production process highlights an impressive control of technique.

Shih Hsuan-yu's work "Bird's Eye View of Consensus Paranoia," which won him an award at the 2000 Ceramic Art Biennial, can be reasonably viewed as his ceramic version of epistemology. A close viewing of "The Axis of the Metagalaxy/Sitar 2003" which recently won top prize at the "3rd Taipei Ceramic Art Awards" organized in 2003 by the Taipei County Yingko Ceramics Museum, is like reading stream of consciousness literature.

The piece has a straight lever that passes through the two ends, a string like steel cable, a constantly moving second hand and precisely placed letter symbols. It seems to say something and to offer a profound insight. The artist explains: "Things do not change but the standpoint of viewing varies. I utilized the front and back of a boat-shaped Sitar to express the dualism which floats between the virtual and the concrete of a dualistic universe." Although this is an extremely metaphysical point, it's also true for the real world, because the connection between the artist's work and real society allowing art-sociology to enhance and interpret its value.

In sum, Shih Hsuan-yu's ceramic art is built on tension - an invisible elastic cord - the more you seek to move away from it the closer it brings you.

共識妄想鳥瞰軸
Consensual Hallucination

陶土/玻璃/複合金屬
Clay, Glass, Metal
2000 100×21×38 cm 1235°C

制器規圖之漂流雙西塔
The Axis of the Metagalaxy / Sitar

陶土/玻璃/複合金屬
Clay, Glass, Metal
2003 133×50×34 cm 1235°C

