

Teapot by Jim Connell

Lynn Brofman OOM July 2011

Note: this is not the image of the MIA teapot but a similar one. When I get back to MSP I'll take a photo and send an updated image

Title: Teapot

Artist: Jim Connell

Date: 2004

Medium: Decorative Arts and Utilitarian Objects, Ceramic

Size: 23 7/16 x 12 1/2 x 7 1/16 in. (59.53 x 31.75 x 17.94 cm)

Institution: Minneapolis Institute of Arts

Accession #: 2005.119.1a,b

G 275

Thin, vase-shaped body, flaring outward slightly and inward to small mouth; long, tapering spout; very tall twisted handle on top; small cover; red and black with carved curved forms on body



Questions

The artist says that he is influenced by early Chinese ceramics and design. What do you see that might reveal that influence?

How would you describe this teapot?

Color, Texture, Size

If you had this teapot in your home how would you use it?

Key Points

- Jim Connell says: "At the Kansas City Art Institute, we were taught to look at historical precedence for our influences. My particular interest is the Sung dynasty of China, which has expanded to other inspirations from Chinese and Korean pottery. All my forms go back to the classical forms of Chinese pottery, and then I innovate with playfulness in terms of textures, color."
- He has a magical love of the wheel
- He describes his work as "Revolt against Tupperware society"
- Uses sandblasting, special shaping tools to achieve the texture, curving structures

Bibliography

Contact Information:

<http://www.winthrop.edu/cvpa/faculty/default.aspx?id=12858>

The Columbus Dispatch Artist Interview:

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/arts/stories/2008/06/29/2_KAIZ29.ART_ART_06-29-08_E6_9JAILAE.html?sid=101

For The Columbus Dispatch

Red Sandblasted Carved Lidded Jar



Jim Connell teaches ceramics at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, S.C., his home for 20 years.

Born in Woodstock, Ill., Connell studied ceramics at the Kansas City Art Institute and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Connell recently finished his sabbatical, during which he researched Chinese ceramics in the collection and archives of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Q: What do you like about working with ceramics?

A: It's hard to put into words. There's a comfort for me in working with it.

You can get all romantic about it as getting back to the earth, our roots -- and ceramics as a revolt against the Tupperware Society.

There is a lot to that.

We are tied to ceramics for 30,000 years or more. Even cavemen may have used it, although they didn't fire the clay.

Q: Describe your techniques and aesthetic.

A: I work on the wheel. I am a thrower.

I've always had that magical love of the wheel.

The work is then carved, shaved, to alter it to create a variety of faceting.

Q: Are all your vessels functional?

A: I was trained as a functional potter, and that's always an element. But many of my pieces are oversize, one-of-a-kind pieces. They are more-decorative works based in functionality.

Some of my surfaces render them nonfunctional.

Since I sandblast some of them to give them a unique surface texture, it renders the surfaces unusable.

I also have to use a fixative, and those chemicals are not good for ingesting.

Q: In their form and aesthetics, your works have influences from eastern Asian pottery.

A: At the Kansas City Art Institute, we were taught to look at historical precedence for our influences.

My particular interest is the Sung dynasty of China, which has expanded to other inspirations from Chinese and Korean pottery.

All my forms go back to the classical forms of Chinese pottery, and then I innovate with playfulness in terms of textures, color.

Q: Do you create more sculptural or figurative works?

A: Luckily, I'm a college professor and I don't have to worry, unlike many of my colleagues who must make a living at ceramics.

Over time, I've done hand building, playing with molds and other experimentations.

Q: What do you like about teaching?

A: I love the students. They keep you alert, on your toes.

I like being alone, like many artists, but it's also nice that teaching allows you to hang out with students.

Winthrop University Update:

<http://www2.winthrop.edu/enews/Articles/Vol7/Issue2/connell.asp>

Goggle Images:

http://www.google.com/search?q=jim+connell+pottery&hl=en&client=safari&rls=en&prmd=ivnso&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=b9_fTamaGsXn0QHc753dCg&ved=0CC8QsAQ&biw=1018&bih=698



American Craft Aug/Sept'98 "Vessels That Pour" By Polly Ullrich, Photographs by Guy Nicol pp. 64-69

Notes

The Northern Clay center has some periodicals that describe Jim Connell's technique. I plan to contact them to see if I can get access to the articles.... If so...I'll send an addendum.