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DELISLE, RICHARD. Stoneware Containers. (1977) Directed by:
Walter Barker. Pp. 2.

This thesis exhibition contains a selection of high fired stoneware containers with an emphasis on bulging shapes. The thesis was exhibited at the Weatherspoon Gallery of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro from January 11 to January 23, 1977.

On file in the Jackson Library of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro are 35 mm. color transparencies of the works.

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STONEWARE CONTAINERS

by

Richard Delisle

A thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Fine Arts

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Approved by


Thesis Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following committee
of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of
North Carolina at Greensboro.

Thesis Adviser Walter Barker

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December 9, 1976
Date of Acceptance by Committee

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CATALOGUE

1. Lidded container 18 inches high.
2. Stoneware container 20 inches high.
3. Lidded container 15 inches high.
4. Stoneware container 20 inches high.
5. Stoneware container 16 inches high.
6. Stoneware container 17 inches high.

STONEWARE CONTAINERS

The work in this exhibition is an attempt to recapture some of the elements and mostly the feelings responsible for what we identify today as classical shapes in Eastern ceramics, such as the Raku pottery of Japan or the white and blue porcelain of the Yuan Period in China.

The Chinese, Japanese and Korean potters were so gifted that they constantly pushed the limits of their technique and their creativity in their art forms. The fifty years between the T'ang Dynasty (618-906 A.D.) and the Sung Dynasty (960-1278 A.D.) sees the Chinese potter emerging with new technical knowledge. He is now capable of achieving glazes of a quality unknown before that day, while his forms are now characterized by their simplicity and energy. The evolution of their art is so exceptional that they must have had profound personal and even spiritual motivation. As suggested in The Art of the T'ang Potter, both technical knowledge and strong personal feelings were required to achieve such perfection.

I decided to work on a large scale choosing the slow process of throwing the lower section of a pot and building it up with coils. In this method, there is a progressional development which helps me to be more aware of proportions and more importantly, there is an identification with the work.

Finally, the shapes I am dealing with are always very close to nature; I choose to look closely at such natural elements as a

rain drop, a flower or a fruit and create similar shapes in my work. These natural shapes always unite simplicity with energy, and possess that delicate balance I find so difficult, yet important to achieve in my work. These different elements lead me progressively to the bulging shape which I approach in two ways. First, I project the bulging shape upward by inverting the convex curve in the lower section of the piece; the second approach sees the convex curve of the bulging shape elongated so that within a single curve there is still an upward projection.

The completeness of each work is finally achieved in the glazing process. After testing the glazes on smaller but similar shapes, I can decide which glaze will complete a certain piece. The size and the shape have a definite influence on the choice of glaze I will apply to each piece. On the large bulging shapes, I must avoid any glaze that will be too shiny, as the glare is distracting to the work itself. A selection of light colored glazes (white, grey or celadon) is most satisfactory, although black does confer a definite presence to the work. A glaze will very often yield more than one color and in this case, the fire is the active element responsible for such a change. This is often an effect I try to accomplish by the way I position certain pieces in the kiln.

In realizing this work, I found that equal respect must be given to clay and its plasticity, water and its necessary but sometimes destructive presence, and to fire with its endless possibilities and without which ceramics does not exist.