

California State University, Sacramento
Department of Art
Art 50 Beginning Ceramics Section 4
Fall 2004

Project Assignment One

Formal problem/Conceptual object: Sphere/Bowl

Make a series of at least six bowls to demonstrate your understanding of the relationship between the formal properties of a sphere and the cultural notion of a bowl. At the same time, make a series of hemispheres of equal proportion and scale so that they can be assembled into the form of at least one complete sphere. Work towards making bowls and spheres as wide as the span of your outstretched hand. Start with a lump of clay about the size of an apple, make a strong bowl and increase the scale in successive pieces.

It would be best to start making bowls by visualizing a sphere. Some examples of spheres are: basketball, turtle egg, the earth as seen from space, the structure of electrons orbiting the nucleus of an atom. What you might realize is that there is a virtual center point from which all points on the edge of the sphere are equidistant. When you make your bowls on the pottery wheel you create a center upon opening and the curve of the interior wall extending from that center determines a portion of an implied sphere.

Your technical goal is to make a single curve of unbroken line which gives physical structure and visual unity to the wall of the bowl and sphere. An ideal wall would be of even thickness from rim to foot. You probably will not be able to throw the wall to an even thickness but by trimming in the leatherhard stage of dryness, you can alter thickness as desired.

By throwing wet clay on the wheel, your hands leave a distinctive mark. It is your choice to retain a lasting record of your working in wet clay, or alter the surface and form of the drying clay with tools in a way that will contribute to the character of each bowl. In the best attempts surface and form will unify to support the underlying expression.

Project assigned: Tuesday, August 31

Greenware critique of at least three bowls : Thursday, September 16

Greenware critique of at least six bowls: Tuesday, September 28

Glazeware critique of the best of three bowls and one sphere: Thursday, October 21