

Jeremy Hatch



Ceramech Model #5
porcelain, wheel thrown; wood, CAT scan
2000

My work challenges ideas and conventions commonly associated with ceramics and craft, but at the same time operates within these boundaries. I intend to draw attention to the frequently overlooked yet essential qualities of pottery by applying simple devices, making the viewer question what they are looking at or interacting with. The aesthetic appearance of my 'pots' is the first noticeable departure from traditional pottery. I exploit the ability of clay to take on the appearance of anything the maker chooses. In this case the thrown parts resemble hard-edged machine components from engines or spacecraft. I want to erase any 'handmade' qualities in my work, essentially denying William Morris' anti-industrial crusade, but also evoking consideration of it, through contrast. Similarly, the glazes I choose are non-decorative and serve only to reinforce the metallic qualities of the objects.

My 'pots' unavoidably tackle the concept of function as well. Clusters of mechanisms hang from the bottom of the lids and invade the 'functional' space of the bowl, rendering it useless. However, the viewers' or users' understanding of the piece is fully realized only through interaction. Thus, the utilitarian notion of appreciating an object through use and tactility comes into play.

The CAT scan images add new layers and importance to the ceramic pieces. They inform and complement each other. However, the truth of such an image is easily questioned, compelling a closer look at the ceramics. Exposing my pieces, in this case, does not diminish the mystery; if anything, it amplifies it.

Craftsmanship is an essential element in my work. I believe it is what attracts the viewer and holds his interest, but I also use it as bait, to lure the audience into acknowledging their dismissal of every day ceramic objects.