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有關台灣現代陶藝的介紹可分為二個部份，第一屬於一般性介紹，從陶瓷教室到陶瓷推廣活動、展覽、競賽與陶藝組織的狀況來為大家作一個報告。第二部份，將就台灣陶藝之發展，尤其是最近一、二十年來所呈現出來各種不同的風格與表現形式或內容上作介紹。

壹、台灣現代陶藝發展概況

台灣現代陶藝的發展，可從民國七十年說起，當時歷史博物館舉辦了「中日國際陶藝展」，此後，各式各樣的陶藝展覽就逐漸開始蓬勃發展。這項展覽引起相當大的迴響，台灣陶藝透過那樣的一個交流展認識到陶藝的新面貌，作陶者發現嶄新的空間讓他們發揮創作。隨後，在1985年，台北市立美術館建館，不久就舉辦了一次台北國際陶藝展，這是台灣首次舉辦大型國際陶藝展覽，參與的國家非常多。這個非常重要的里程碑，讓國內的陶藝家與愛陶者一次並大量地欣賞到來自世界各地的陶藝作品。國立歷史博物館於是從1992年開始舉辦國際競賽，如1992年現代陶藝國際邀請展。另1989年台灣省立美術館(現更名為國立台灣美術館)，舉辦了當代陶藝展。而國立歷史博物館在舉辦了這些現代陶藝的各項展覽後，更陸續舉辦美國與歐洲之台灣陶藝巡迴展。一時之間，全省各地的文化中心也因為陶瓷風氣盛行，陸續舉行各式各樣的展覽。從民國75年到85年這十年間，是台灣陶藝發展一個非常蓬勃的時期；在這段時間裡，除了展覽次數增加外，也因為這種陶藝創作風氣的盛行，增加並鼓舞了作陶者創作的原動力，同時也因為展覽的推廣，使投入陶藝創作者增加不少。民國85年之後，因為景氣不佳，陶藝創作的熱潮已經不像前十年那麼熱烈，無論是國內的公營機構與私人藝廊所舉辦的展覽次數都逐漸下滑了。一直到目前，景氣還沒有出現好轉的情況，所以我們現在所看到各種的展覽，與五、六年前相比，在數目上其實相差甚遠。

在陶藝競賽部份，首先是1981年初國立歷史博物館所舉辦的「中華民國陶藝雙年展」。這是國內一個非常重要的展覽，透過這個展覽，造就了不少現在仍活躍於陶藝界的專業陶藝家。在縣市部份，台北縣也透過美術展覽的方式，視陶瓷為一個很重要的項目，尤其是最近幾年，更設定陶瓷為縣立美展的重要展項，每隔一年就舉辦一次。鶯歌本地也在近年來透過金鶯獎的設立，讓陶藝競賽增加了一個發揮的場所，讓作陶者能夠展現自己的作品。文建會在民國74年左右於民族工藝薪傳獎也設有陶藝工藝之項目。從去年開始，文建會把民俗工藝獎改名為傳統工藝獎，其獎金非常高，對國內傳統的工藝製作無疑起了很大的啟示作用。至於由民間舉辦的展覽，最著名的就是最近才開幕頒獎，由和成文教基金會舉辦的台灣金陶獎。此獎在1992年創立，原本是以學生為主的競賽，後來由於反應非常熱烈，作陶者都希望把它擴大成社會組也可以參與的展覽，於是持續舉辦學生組與社會組的金陶獎，並在2000年進一步擴大規模成為國際性的金陶獎。從陶瓷博物館三樓展出的得獎作品中可發現作品展現的效果非常好，並且從中可以一窺整個國際陶藝發展潮流的概況與趨勢。此展覽之價值，從金陶獎的成功中就能夠得到一個非常大的啟示。

第二部份將為各位簡介台灣陶藝推廣活動的現況。台灣陶藝的推廣力量主要還是來自民間，因為在台灣的教育體系裡，有關陶瓷的科系並不多，除了台灣藝術學院之外，目前最高學府就是台南藝術學院的應用藝術研究所，所以主要的推動還是要依靠民間的陶藝教室。初步統計台灣現有的陶藝專業教室約有90多家。至於分佈的區域，台北縣市大約有30多家，桃竹苗地區有10多家，中部地區有20多家，南部地區有差不多20家左右，東部地區約有10家。這些民間陶藝工作室主要是做陶者本身設立的工作室，並兼陶藝教室之用，因此規模都不大，約以10人至30人最多。在設備方面，以電窯最多，其次為瓦斯窯，其他窯爐則比較少見，因為築窯不便以及可能需要比較特殊的燃料與場所。在師資方面，因為這些陶藝教室大部份都是做陶者兼做陶藝教室之用，所以多由做陶者本身兼任教室的陶藝老師。在經營方面，工作室的負責人一般都負責原

料的採購、配釉與燒成作業，工作十分繁重。而且陶藝教室的收費不能太高，因此在這種狀況下陶藝教室的經營是很困難的。而在教學內容方面，陶藝工作者的技藝大都由其老師傳授或自學，科班出身的可以說是佔極少數。因為學習的範圍並不是很寬廣，所以所學的陶藝知識與技能就變得比較偏頗，無法學到周全的技術。因此未來仍要仰賴教育或其他專業機構去增加陶藝師資的陣容。專業的研究機構、學校、專門學科與鶯歌陶瓷博物館等應多舉辦陶藝師資之研習，讓一般陶藝教室的師資能獲得改善，我想這是未來可能經營的方向。

在台灣陶藝推廣機構方面，在政府資料有登記的，有下列幾所：1992年設立的中國現代陶瓷學會、1992年中華民國陶藝協會、1993年台灣省陶藝學會、1995年南投縣陶藝學會、1996年台中縣陶藝學會。此後各地陸續成立正式與非正式的陶藝學會。民間有關陶瓷研究的機構也有很多；包括早期的愛陶雅集、陶瓷雅集、好陶集、高雄市陶友會、高雄縣鳳邑陶會、聯合陶友集、集集柴燒陶研究會、北區陶藝教育聯誼會，以及最近很流行的柴燒，各地也紛紛設立柴燒據點，並成立台灣柴燒研究會。鶯歌地區因為做陶人口眾多，對陶瓷釉藥研究之需求也相當殷切，因而設立了釉藥研究學會。這些組織的設立是為了要讓台灣陶藝能夠獲得更寬廣的空間，讓未來的陶藝創作有更大的揮灑。最後我想介紹一些跟陶藝作品與消費者之間有相當密切關係的專業藝廊。如早期的陶明舍，就是一間從很久以前就開始以銷售陶藝品為主的藝廊，到目前還在經營中。隨後出現的有現代陶文化園、客中座、陶藝後援會、遠清藝術中心、水里蛇窯文化園、當代陶藝館、雙義陶藝文化館、春稻藝術中心、岡山陶坊等。近一、二十年來各地設立的藝廊起碼有20家以上。當然藝廊的經營並不是那麼容易，所以這些年來因為經營不善而關閉的藝廊為數也不少。尤其近十五年來經濟不景氣，讓藝廊的經營更為困難。現在能存活下來的大概是原數的一半左右。不過近年來鶯歌地區非常積極地推廣「觀光產業」，把陶瓷當作是一個非常重要的觀光資源，再配合政府實施的週休二日制度，吸引了很多民眾前往觀賞及採購。這個配合的效果非

常良好，我們可以從一些鶯歌老街的店面不斷地翻新，及相繼成立的富貴陶園、田園陶坊等藝廊在近幾年變得十分熱門中可以看出，這些措施促使了藝廊的現代化及其與民眾的密切接觸；再加上鶯歌陶瓷博物館的成立，相信一定能夠帶來更多的人潮，也希望能為陶藝的流行與發展帶來新的刺激。我們衷心的希望透過鶯歌陶瓷博物館，能夠在陶藝推廣上發揮更大的力量。

貳、台灣陶藝的表現內容與形式

一、從「實用」觀點看台灣陶藝

A、傳統器型上釉藥的個性表現

傳統陶瓷器的製作是以實用為最主要的考量，所以器形表面的釉藥選擇也以實用需求為優先，若有釉彩變化也僅止於裝飾效果，因此，型制與釉色均未能呈現作者的風貌。現代陶藝創作則是以表現個人風格為重，所以現代陶藝家常在傳統陶瓷器造型上，運用釉藥在高溫的熔融變化，造成流紋、結晶、發泡、蜷縮等效果；有的則利用噴釉的方式使不同釉色間具有渲染、漸層的色調變化；或以潑釉、淋釉的方法，讓不同的釉色交疊熔融，而呈現多重的釉彩表現。此外，陶藝家還利用各種形式的窯爐及不同的燃料與燒成方式，燒製出自然灰釉、鹽釉、樂燒、燻燒等特殊效果，使傳統陶瓷器型上充分散發出陶藝家的個性與情懷。

B、現代陶藝器型上釉藥的個性表現

在工藝製作上，不同的時代背景對材質的要求與裝飾效果的呈現，有很大的差異，這在陶瓷器的製作上尤其明顯。現代陶藝是表現當下的生活思維與時代精神，因此，陶藝家對於作品質感與圖紋的詮釋極為重視。陶瓷坯體所使用的黏土，因原料成份與添加材料的不同，在燒成後會出現釉色與質感的差異，質地細緻的坯體，具有溫潤、清雅的气質；而粗糙的質地則呈現原始、質實的韻味。陶藝家透過坯體的質感處理，能適當地表現出個人的情感與意念。此外，將坯體視為「畫布」，經過適當的設計與安排，再運用各種裝飾工具，把釉料、化妝土處理在坯體上，使陶瓷器型外觀呈現豐富的圖紋裝飾，也充分顯示出陶藝家

的設計風格與裝飾技巧。

人類燒製陶瓷作為生活上的器物使用，已有數千年的歷史，在這長期的陶瓷器製作之中，雖然隨著人類生活型態、文化背景、宗教風俗的不同，而在陶瓷器的造型上有所變化，但是卻也形成固定的造型樣式。雖然一定的型制可以讓陶瓷器充分發揮實用的功能，但是同時也喪失了許多造型的發展性與趣味性。在現代陶藝表現中，造型的多樣化是最主要的特色，而陶藝家對造型的詮釋尤其是作品表現的重要基礎。因此，陶藝家紛紛脫離傳統陶瓷器型制的束縛，而將個人的造型觀點結合對現代生活的體驗，儘情地發揮造型的可能性，使陶瓷器除了具有實用的本質外，更展現視覺、觸覺與空間變化的造型效果。

01 陶瓷實用機能的设计

長期以來人類利用黏土燒製成各式各樣的生活用品，陶瓷器成為日常生活的重要器物，因此在習慣上「陶瓷」便是碗、盤、杯、壺，或瓶、甕、缸等日用器物的總稱。時至今日，儘管新的材料不斷地被開發出來，取代了部份陶瓷用品的製作，但是陶瓷器仍然在現代生活中佔著極為重要的地位。而隨著人類生活水準的日益提高，生活用品的種類也趨於多樣化，因此，從陶瓷材料所發展出來的創新用品也顯著地增加。在現代陶藝創作中，陶藝家一方面充分發揮對陶瓷材料特性與製作技巧的表現能力，一方面結合對生活器用需求的敏感度，創作出具有創意的實用陶瓷作品，展現藝術與生活結合的陶瓷藝術特質。

在傳統上陶瓷器是為了生活上的使用而製作，所以陶瓷具有「實用機能」的原始宿命，基於現代藝術注重對材料特質的詮釋與造型意念的表達，而引起現代陶藝創作者對陶瓷「實用」與「非實用」意義的質疑與探討。因此有些陶藝家從陶瓷的「實用」觀念出發，創造出看似陶瓷器的造型作品，而實際上「實用」的可能性不大，其或是僅具表象而完全無法使用的「器物」造型，這類作品常綜合器物的「實用」要素或造型符號，卻做出非實用的陶瓷造型，藉著人們對「實用器物」的固有概念，而造成「概念」與「實際」的相互矛盾，並透過這種「逆說」式的表現手法，讓人們重新省思「器物」的意義。

二、從純造型表現看台灣陶藝

在立體造型表現中，單純的幾何造型在視覺上往往造成強烈的印象，尤其當光線投射在這類作品上時，所造成的光影變幻是極為豐富多變的，所以雕塑家常運用單純的幾何造型創作作品。在現代陶藝表現上亦復如此；陶藝家常利用黏土豐富的可塑性，結合適當的成型技巧，創作出形狀簡潔有力的造型。而陶瓷材料的表面具有特殊的質感與釉面，充滿微妙的光影效果，可讓陶瓷造型表面的光影變得豐富而多彩。同時，許多陶藝家也利用這種豐富的光影變化，及陶瓷造型所易於架構出來的穿透空間，結合視覺的慣性原理，在作品上呈現視覺上的錯覺現象，使作品在三次元空間中因陶瓷造型的光影變化而產生視覺幻象。這種結合材料特性與質感、色彩效果的造型創作，是其他材質所少有的。

02 陶瓷造型的表現與空間

陶瓷造型有一個重要的特性，就是陶瓷造型大多為中空，這是由於陶土塑形後必須經過乾燥與加熱燒製，才能成為陶藝作品，實心的陶土塊體，有時會乾裂，或者會因加熱燒爆而不能成形。因此，陶瓷造型內部的中空現象，便成為陶藝造型的特殊要素。這種特性在傳統的陶瓷器造型上固然如此，而現代陶藝表現上，也自然成為表現上的重要部份。另外，在現代陶藝作品中所常見到的局部開口部份，更具有聯繫作品內部空間與外部空間的特殊意義。事實上，陶瓷器皿本身就具有內外空間關係的特質；開口較小的瓶、罐類陶瓷器，其內部空間是隱藏在器體內部，藉著開口與外部空間相連接。而開口較大的盤、碗類器皿，則其內外空間雖無明顯分界，但是卻依然存在。因此，以器皿為創作主題的作品，其口緣的變化與開口的形式，便成為表現內、外空間特色的重要因素。

陶瓷材料由於具有豐富的可塑性，可做出許多的質感變化，同時也可塗施釉彩，增加色彩效果。所以能維妙維肖地仿造出其他材料的質感與色澤。因此，利用寫實表現的方式，用陶瓷材料製作出其材質的「物品」，也是陶藝家常運用的表現手法之一。作者藉著逼真的陶瓷寫實造型，引發觀賞者在視覺、觸覺與固有概念之間的矛盾，來突顯被仿製「物品」的存在意義，以及從該「物品」所衍生出

來的各種問題。除了表現泥土豐富的可塑性與傳神的描寫不同材質的「物品」外，這種寫實作品表現方式常被陶藝家用來探討人類生活「物質化」的現象。同時，由於陶瓷材質的不易風化，能長時間「存在」於自然環境之中，這種存在也造成環境的負擔，陶藝家基於對陶瓷材質特性的深刻體認，藉寫實的陶瓷造型來探討環境污染問題、資源的回收問題，以及「人」與「物品」之間的相互關係。

D、陶瓷材料本質的探討

陶瓷材質取自於大自然的土石。材料本身便具有許多面貌與天然特性，這些面貌與特性是陶瓷最原始、最真實的一面，也顯示出自然界中許多神秘與令人敬畏的部份。由於人與自然的密切關係，來自於大自然的土石原本對人就具有一種特殊的意義；因此，陶藝家在利用陶瓷材料製作器皿與表現造型之餘，對於陶瓷材料本質的探討，也懷有極大的興趣。當然，對於這個主題，作陶者總是以虔敬的心情與認真的態度，並從自己對陶瓷材料的特殊偏好，來切入主題加以探討。呈現陶瓷材料的原始、真實面貌，固然可顯示出自然現象的神奇與多變，但是最重要的莫過於陶藝家欲透過這些材料的原始風貌，敘述出自己對材料的主觀詮釋、描述自己對材料的特殊感受，及自己與陶瓷材料之間彼此契合與相互抗衡的部份，並從作陶者與陶瓷材料間的互動中，引申出自然與人類之間的微妙關係。

E、裝置與空間

近十餘年來，由於環境、空間要素在現代美術中逐漸佔有重要地位，藝術作品的表現，已不侷限於作品本身，在作品四周的空間及相鄰的物體，都可視為作品的延伸，或者說：作品表現的概念可隨四周環境的改變而有所變化。因此，陶藝創作也受到這種創作觀念的影響，產生了與以往不同的表現形式。在這類型的陶藝作品中，有些作品是在燒製完成後只是一堆單元「物體」，必須運到適當的展示場所，加以裝置組合之後，才能成為「作品」。有些作品則依照展出場所的狀況，而調整作品展出的形式；更有些作品在不同的展出地點，分別搭配其他不同的媒體展現出來。尤其陶瓷材料來自於大地，與環境、空間之間存在著極為特殊的關係，以及陶瓷材料過火熔鍊中產生質變的歷程，使得結合環境與空間要素的整體作品，產生了更為深層的意義。

以陶瓷材料的材質與塑性，可仿製出許多其它材質的質感，具有理想的寫實表現能力，但是由於不同的素材各有其特殊的材質特性，如：色澤、量感、透明度、柔軟度……等，也有很多是陶瓷材料中不易表現的部份。因此，在現代陶藝製作中，常選擇適當的異質素材，來彌補陶瓷材料表現的不足，同時也強調陶瓷材料與其他材質之間的差異性。就作品的表現形式而言：以陶瓷材料仿製其他異質材料的質感或形態，其主要目的在於突顯「陶瓷」材料表現的可能性，同時也是作者本身描寫能力的一種表現，其目的是呈現陶瓷與其他異質材料間的諧和共存狀態。而在陶瓷作品中，引進其他材料媒體並組合在一起時，則可藉不同材料的材質特性，彼此相互對映，造成欣賞者在視覺上的特殊反應，而達成作者所預期的效果。所以，在現代陶藝作品中，隨著創作主題的不同需要，作陶者適當地導入不同的異質材料，以表現陶瓷與異質材料的衝突性與和諧狀態。

G、情感與意念的表達

藝術創作是個人情感的抒發與心中意念的表達，在現代社會中，由於人際關係的惡化、環境污染及過度物質化的結果，各種病態現象層出不窮，因此藝術家對這些社會現象、對人類生存的地球、大自然，便產生許多不同的觀點，並用各種不同的藝術形式表達出來。在陶藝創作中，由於材料呈現面貌的多樣性與成形方法的便利性，以及陶瓷材料本身的特殊意義，使得現代陶藝的形式能將各種不同的情感與意念表達得極為淋漓盡致。因此，在現代陶藝中以此做為主題來表現作品的亦不在少數，這正是近年來陶藝能從實用的工藝製作中，迅速地在藝術創作領域中大展身手的重要因素。藝術創作是個人情感的抒發與作者心中思想、意念的表達，儘管其表現形式與媒材豐富多樣，但作品中所呈現出來的精神與內涵卻是共同的。陶藝創作由於前述各種創作表現的特殊性，使得現代陶藝具有相當寬廣的表現空間。當今的陶瓷藝術，由於與現代藝術潮流緊密的結合，使得創作的範疇不斷擴大，而在現代藝術的洪流之中，也由於陶瓷媒體的融入，豐富了藝術表現材質的多樣性，而就陶藝創作表現而言，藉著各種新觀念的產生與新材質的應用，增進了作品的多樣化，也增添了陶藝表現的可能性。

Ceramic Art in Taiwan Today

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Any introduction to modern ceramics in Taiwan can be divided into two parts: one is a general introduction, involving teaching, promotional activities, exhibitions, competitions and the organization of ceramics. The second refers to the increasingly diverse development of ceramics in Taiwan, especially the range of different styles, expressive forms and content that have appeared over the last two decades.

I . Development of Modern Ceramics in Taiwan

Modern ceramics in Taiwan can be dated from the Sino-Japanese International Art Exhibition held at the National Museum of History in 1981. This helped to stimulate interest in ceramics and was followed by a number of different ceramic exhibitions. The response to this exhibition in Taipei was immediate, particularly as it introduced completely new ideas to the ceramics industry and artists in Taiwan through the format of cultural exchange. As a result, those involved with ceramics were suddenly presented with a completely new creative space into which they could develop. In 1985, not long after its establishment, the Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM) held the Taipei International Ceramics Exhibition, the first time such an international ceramics exhibition was held in Taiwan. Artists from many different countries participated and the latest equipment was used to make the experience a truly magnificent affair. This exhibition was an important milestone, in that it provided an unique opportunity for local ceramic artists and pottery lovers to view and appreciate works from all over the world. At the same time, the positive response to the Sino-Japanese International Art Exhibition at the National Museum of History in 1981 led

to a floury of activity and development in local ceramics. This culminated in the holding of international ceramics competitions, such as the Modern Ceramics International Invitational Exhibition in 1992. Three years earlier the Taiwan Provincial Museum of Arts (today's National Taiwan Museum of Arts), organized a contemporary ceramics exhibition in 1989. After a series of modern ceramics exhibitions the National Museum of History went on to host a touring exhibition of ceramics works from Europe and the US. In response to the newfound popularity of ceramics, Cultural Centers across Taiwan began to hold exhibitions themselves. As such, the period 1986-1996 was a period of great energy and vitality in the development of ceramics in Taiwan. Not only did the number of exhibitions increase the popularity of ceramic art also stimulated greater creativity. At the same time, this steady promotion of exhibitions led to a dramatic increase in the number of people involved in ceramics. Since 1996 however, economic downturn has dampened this enthusiasm somewhat and there has been a fall off in the number of ceramics exhibitions held both by public art institutions and private galleries. Today the frequency of exhibitions being held is considerably less than the number just 5-6 years ago.

The first ceramics competition to be held came at the beginning of 1981, when the National Museum of History held the " International Biennial Exhibition of Ceramic Art, R.O.C. ". This was an extremely important exhibition and helped to make the name of a generation of professional ceramic artists, many of who are still active today. Taipei County also adopted the art exhibition format to demonstrate the importance it attaches to ceramics. This has been especially true over the last few years, with ceramics a key component of the twice yearly Provincial Arts Exhibition. The creation of a Golden Yingko Award in

Yingko has also become an important ceramics competition for artists to exhibit their work. In around 1985 the Council for Cultural Affairs also introduced a ceramic and crafts section to its National Crafts Heritage Award. Last year, the Council renamed this award the Traditional Crafts Award. Winners receive a substantial cash payment and the award has greatly helped to increase interest in traditional crafts in Taiwan. In the private sector the most renowned competition, the Taiwan Golden Ceramics Awards held by the Hocheng Cultural and Education Foundation was established in 1992. Initially the award was directed at students but the enthusiastic response meant that this was later relaxed to allow the participation of other ceramic artists, with the addition of an extra "Public Group" to the original "Student Group". In 2000 this was expanded still further with the addition of an International Golden Ceramics Awards. The quality of award winning works can be seen in the display on the third floor of the Ceramics Museum. Indeed, these are an excellent example of developments and trends in international ceramics over the last few years. The value of this exhibition lies in the fact that those who win an award are inspired to work harder and to devote themselves even more to ceramics.

In this second section I will be introducing some of the activities undertaken in Taiwan to promote ceramics. The first point to make is that most ceramics promotions have come from the private sector. In Taiwan very few departments in the formal education system teach ceramics. Indeed, at present there the only classes available are at the National Taiwan College of Art and the Graduate Institute of Applied Arts at the Tainan National College of the Arts. This paucity of educational opportunities is the main reason why most promotional activities are sponsored and organized by private ceramics workshops. Rough figures suggest that there are currently around 90 such workshops

in Taiwan. Over 30 of these are in Taipei, 10 in Taoyuan, Hsinchu and Miaoli, 20 in Central Taiwan, about 20 in the South and 10 in the East of the island. In the main these private workshops have been established by ceramic artists themselves and also double as classrooms. As such, they tend to be quite small with 10-30 people. Most have electric kilns, though some maintain gas kilns. Other types of kiln are rarely seen these days, because building such a kiln is difficult and requires the supply of special fuels and a special site. Because these workshops are in most cases established by ceramic artists for their own use and also teach ceramics courses, the artist himself usually takes on the role of teacher. The individual responsible for the workshop is also in charge of purchasing raw materials and the glazing and firing processes. At the same time workshops tend not to charge students a great deal in tuition fees. On the whole this makes the operation or management of such ceramics workshops extremely difficult. The technical and artistic skills of those working in a workshop are invariably either learned from their teacher or self taught. Those who have graduated from related ceramics classes tend to be in the minority. Because the area of study is relatively narrow, the ceramic knowledge and technical skills learned by students tends to be unbalanced, as they are unable to learn a comprehensive range of skills. Consequently, we will still be reliant on education or other professional institutes to swell the ranks of ceramic teachers. To aid this process, professional research institutes, schools, specialist departments and the Taipei County Yingko Ceramics Museum should hold more study programs for ceramic teachers. This is one way to improve the quality of teaching in ceramics workshops.

In Taiwan the number of organizations registered with the government as promoting ceramics include: the Chinese Modern Ceramics Academy Taiwan and the Chinese

Ceramics Association Taiwan (CCAT) established in 1992, the Taiwan Ceramics Academy established in 1993, the Nantou County Ceramics Academy (established in 1995 and the Taichung County Ceramics Academy established in 1996. After this date many official and unofficial ceramics associations were established across Taiwan. There are also a number of private research institutes devoted to ceramics. These include older organizations such as: Ceramics-Lover Association, Ceramics Favor Association, Hao-Tao Association, Kaohsiung City Friends of Pottery, Kaohsiung County Fengyi Ceramics Association, United Friends Ceramics Association, Chichi Wood Fired Ceramics Association and the Northern Ceramics Education Association. More recently, wood fired kilns have been especially popular, with a number being set up across the island and the creation of a Taiwan Wood Fired Ceramics Research Association. Because of the sheer number of people involved in the ceramics industry in Yingko, there is a particularly strong demand for work on glazing, hence the establishment of a Glazing Research Academy. The development of these organizations has been part of a process in which ceramics in Taiwan has sought greater developmental space, so that future ceramic works are more diverse in nature. Finally, I'd like to introduce a few specialist galleries that are on the front line of contacts between ceramic artists and consumers. One example, the quite old Ceramics and Friends Gallery has been selling ceramic art for some time now and continues to make a living from doing so. Other galleries include the Modern Ceramics Cultural Park, Welcome Ceramics Gallery, the Ceramics Support Association, Yi Ching Art Center, Shui-Li Kiln Ceramics Cultural Park, the Contemporary Ceramics Gallery, Shuang Tzu Ceramics Cultural Hall, Chun Tao Art Center and Kang Shan Ceramics Workshop. Over the last 20 years more than 20 ceramics galleries have opened for business in Taiwan, though the difficulties of

managing such galleries has resulted in the closure of many of these over the last few years. Particularly over the last 15 years as the economy has faltered, many galleries have found it particularly difficult to make ends meet. Those galleries still operating today probably account for around half of the original number. However, the Yingko area has devoted much time and effort to promoting the "tourist industry" over the last few years, an approach that has chosen to highlight ceramics as an important tourist resource. With the governments introduction of a two day non working weekend this approach has been hugely successful. Visits to Yingko and related purchases have increased dramatically. This success is most evident in the constantly changing shop fronts in many of the old streets of Yingko Town and the recent popularity of such galleries as Fortune and Wealth Pottery Place and China House etc. These measures have helped the art galleries modernize and improve their relations with the public. Add to that the recent opening of the Taipei County Yingko Ceramics Museum and I am certain the crowds travelling to Yingko can only increase, which will further stimulate the popularity and growth of ceramics in Taiwan. We wholeheartedly hope that the Yingko Ceramics Museum becomes a major force in the future promotion of ceramics nationwide.

II .Expressive Content and Form of Taiwanese Ceramics

(A) A "Functional" Perspective of Taiwanese Ceramics

The single most important consideration in the manufacture of traditional pottery utensils was functionality. As such the choice of glaze was also based primarily on the functional needs of a given piece. Any changes in glaze were made purely for decorative effect. As a result, the artist was unable to assert his or her own style in either shape or glaze. In contrast, modern ceramic focuses

predominantly on individual style. Modern ceramic artists often use the shapes of traditional ceramic utensils but deliberately alter the glaze through high temperature melting to create flowing lines, crystals, bubbles or swirl effects. Some even spray glaze onto ceramic works creating an exaggerated sense of layers and color changes. Other approaches involved splashing glaze or dripping glaze, which allows different colors to mix and melt together. In this way, modern ceramics has adopted a wide variety of approaches to glazing. At the same time, ceramic artist have also used different types of kilns, fuel and firing methods to produce a variety of special effects, such as natural ash glaze, salt glaze, raku fired, smoke fired etc. This has enabled artists to use traditional ceramic shapes whilst still giving full rein to their own creative character and emotions.

B Innovations in the patterns and texture of traditional ceramics

Throughout the history of industrial art major differences have occurred in the demands made of materials and decorative effects. This is particularly evident in the manufacture of ceramics. Modern ceramics seeks to express the thinking of life today and the spirit of the times. Consequently, modern ceramic artists attach great importance to the quality and interpretation of patterns in their work. The difference in raw materials and added materials in the clay used by a clay body, means that the coloration and feel produced by firing can differ markedly. A clay body with a fine texture is gentle and elegant, whilst a rough texture shows the lasting appeal of the primitive and simple. By altering the texture of the clay body, ceramic artists are able to display their own feelings and ideas. In addition, the clay body can also be viewed as a "canvas". In other words, through proper design and arrangements, different decorative tools can be applied, with glaze and engobe added to the surface of the clay body. In this way

the exterior of the ceramic object is covered in rich decorative patterns and motifs, fully displaying the design style and decorative skills of the ceramic artist.

Mankind has used pottery to make utensils needed for daily life for several thousand years. In this long history of development although the shape of utensils has changed with changes in lifestyle, cultural background and religious customs, nevertheless, a certain fixed approach to shaping has taken hold. Although this fixed approach ensured that pottery fulfilled its functional use, it also resulted in the loss of development possibilities and interest in multiple shapes. The diversity of shapes is one of the main characteristics of the expressionism of modern ceramics, just as a ceramic artist's interpretation of shape is one of the foundations of that expression. As such, modern artists have all broken away from the confines imposed by traditional pottery shapes. In so doing they combine their own ideas on shape with their experience of the modern world, liberally probing the inherent possibilities of different shapes. In this way modern ceramic works are no longer merely functional, increasingly they also incorporate a sense of vision, touch and changes in space.

C Innovation in the functional properties of pottery

Mankind has made use of pottery fired utensils as an important part of daily life since the beginning of history. In many respects the word pottery is now synonymous with such objects: bowls, plates, cups, pots, bottles, earthen jars and urns etc. Even today and despite the fact that newly developed materials have taken over in the manufacture of many utensils, pottery still has an extremely important position in modern life. Indeed, as standards of living improve there is increasing diversity in the materials from which such utensils are made. As a result, there has also

been a clear increase in the number of products made from ceramics. In the creative process of modern ceramics the artist seeks to make the most of the expressive ability inherent in ceramic materials and production techniques at his or her disposal, whilst combining this with a sensitivity for utensils used in daily life. The result is creative yet functional type of ceramics that highlight an art form built on the integration of art and life.

E. Redefining "functional" ceramics

Traditionally pottery was produced for use in daily life and as a result it has often been stuck with its "functional" destiny. However, the importance attached to the interpretation of materials and shapes in modern art has caused modern ceramic artists to question the "practical" or "impractical" nature of pottery. Starting from the received understanding of pottery as functional, many modern ceramic artists have deliberately created works that whilst they appear to be "functional" in fact not at all, or are only representational in having no "practical" use whatsoever. Such work tends to combine the main "functional" elements or shape semiotics of daily use utensils, but ultimately create ceramic shapes that are completely non-functional. By using fixed ideas about "functional utensils" these artists juxtapose "concept" and "practice" in their work. By adopting this "counter" expressive approach, the audience is forced to reconsider the definition of what constitutes a "utensil".

(B) A View Of Taiwanese Ceramics from the perspective of Pure Shape Expression

Simple geometric shapes and angles always make a strong visual impression in three-dimensional shapes. When light is reflected on such works the changes in shadow created can be extremely rich and varied. That is why

sculptors use simple geometric shapes in their work and why modern ceramic expressionism has followed the same path. Ceramic artists often make use of the plasticity of clay together with suitable molding techniques to create shapes that are simple yet powerful. In addition, ceramic surfaces have a special texture and glaze full of minute shadow effects that can make the changes in shadow on the surface of ceramic work rich and varied. At the same time, Many ceramic artists utilize this richness of change in shadow and the way a work occupies space combined to the principles of habitual vision, to create a sense of visual distortion in their work. This results in a three dimensional visual illusion mapped out by the changes in shadow created by the shape of the work. Indeed, works that combine material characteristics, texture and color are rarely seen in other materials.

Most ceramic works share one defining characteristic, they are hollow in the middle. This is true because after clay is shaped it must be dried and fired before becoming a ceramic work. Solid pieces of clay can crack or expand as a result of the heating process making it difficult to maintain a fixed shape. To avoid this problems the hollowed out center has become a special element in the shape of ceramics works. It was true for traditional pottery utensils and has remained and important element in the expressionism of modern ceramics.

In addition, the often seen partial openings of modern ceramic works serve to link together the internal and external space of a piece. In fact, this relationship between internal and external space has always existed with ceramic vessels. With bottles or vases that have only a small opening for example the internal space is hidden and the connection

with external space achieved only through the one small opening. Where we are talking about plates or bowls although there is no apparent distinction between internal and external space, a distinction continues to exist. As such, when producing vessels such as these the changes in the opening and its actual form are important elements in the expression of internal and external space.

C. Imitating real life in the shape of ceramics

The plasticity of ceramic materials means that they can be used to produce a wide range of textures, and glaze can be added to enhance the color effect. As a result, it is possible to imitate the texture and color of other materials in a way that is absolutely lifelike. Many ceramic artists have adopted the expressive method, using pottery to depicting the properties of other materials. By using the ability of ceramics to imitate other materials, the artist highlights the contradiction in the mind of the audience with regards visual and tactile experiences and existing ideas. This makes the meaning of the existence of the imitated "object" and the questions raised by it more pronounced

Other than highlighting the rich plasticity of clay and its vivid ability to depict "objects" made from other materials this imitative method of expression is often used by ceramic artists to discuss the phenomenon of "materialism" in human life. Also, the fact that ceramic materials weather well and can "exist" for long periods of time in the natural environment creates a great burden on the environment. With their deep understanding of the character of ceramic materials artists often use such imitation ceramic work to discuss the issue of environmental pollution, resource recycling and the interrelationship between "mankind" and "objects".

Ceramic materials are derived from earth and stone in the natural environment. As such they come in many shapes and possess a variety of natural qualities. These properties represent the most primitive and real side of pottery, whilst displaying the mystery of the natural world in a way that draws immediate respect. The close relationship between mankind and nature comes from the fact that the earth and soil from which clay is derived has a special meaning for man. An artist using of ceramic materials to make vessels and expressive shapes retains a major interest in the essence of the ceramic materials he or she uses. Of course those involved in pottery look on this subject with great piety reverence and seriousness, and participate in this discussion from their own special interest in pottery materials.

By displaying the primitive and real nature of ceramic materials, one can also show the mystery and changeable nature of nature. However, the most important element is that ceramic artists use this primitive nature to narrate their subjective interpretation of the material, to depict their own special feelings and their relationship and mutual struggle with ceramic materials. It is this interaction between artist and material is effectively a portrayal of the subtle relationship between man and nature.

Over the last decade the fact that environment and space play such an important role in modern art has meant that artistic performance is no longer restricted to the work itself. This is true in the sense that works now extend to the space and other objects around them, or one could say the concept expressed by the piece changes with changes in the immediate environment. Ceramic works have been similarly influenced by such creative notions, creating an

expressive form very different from the past.

Some work is one piece or "object" after being fired and therefore requires a suitable exhibition space combined with an installation, before it can truly be considered a "work of art". The way other works are displayed can be adjusted depending on the exhibition venue. Still other pieces can be combined with different media depending on the venue. Because ceramic materials originate in nature, they have a special relationship with the environment and space. The way a pottery work changes after firing means that the whole work, combining environment and space elements, is given a deeper and more profound meaning.

F. Harmony and conflict with other materials

The nature and plasticity of clay makes it possible to imitate the texture of many other materials, giving it the expressive ability to copy reality. However, different materials possess their own special characteristics, such as color, density, transparency, softness etc. that ceramics can not easily express. Modern ceramics therefore often involves the selection of other materials to make up for those areas where its own expressive capacity is insufficient, whilst also highlighting the difference between ceramics and whichever other material is used.

As to the expressive form of a work, when ceramics imitate the texture or form of other materials the main aim is to highlight the expressive possibilities available to ceramics. At the same time, this is also an expression of the descriptive powers of the artist, the aim being to express the harmony and coexistence of ceramics with other materials. When a ceramic work does make use of other materials it does so to make a clear contrast with the different characteristics of that material. In modern ceramics the artist introduces other materials, depending on the different needs of different creative motifs, to express the harmony

and conflict between ceramics and other materials.

E. Expressive characteristics

Artistic creation is an expression of personal emotion and heartfelt ideas. In modern society the deterioration of interpersonal relations, environmental pollution, excessive materialism and an array of other maladies have drawn artistic comment. Hence, different ideas concerning these social phenomena, the earth on which we live and Mother Nature, are often expressed through different artistic forms. The diversity of appearance, convenience of shaping and special meaning of ceramics materials means that modern ceramics has been able to express a wide range of emotions and ideas. Many modern ceramic works take this as their motif. This indeed is the main reason that ceramics has, over the last few years, been able to transform itself so quickly from a subject of functional industrial art and crafts to a major contributor in the field of the creative arts.

Art is the expression of personal emotions, the artists thinking and ideas. Even with an expressive form and media that is rich and diverse the spirit and meaning of any work is shared. The creative and expressive characteristics detailed above give modern ceramics considerable expressive space into which to develop. In addition, the close relationship between contemporary ceramics and modern art trends has resulted in the constant expansion of creative categories. Moreover, the inclusion of ceramics in modern art has enriched the diversity of an expressive artistic material. In terms of ceramic expressiveness new ideas and the use of new materials have increased the diversity of ceramic art and created new expressive possibilities.