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Aor Sutthiprapha

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Date : 27 JULY 2013

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Aor Sutthiprapha creates ceramic works that draw from within, allowing for an internal dialogue to be translated through a meditative process into tangible forms.

Your current exhibition features some works from your **'Analog Series.'** I see that the focus of your Analog pieces is to honor the time consuming character of repetitive motion in the purposeful, meticulous nature of the pieces decoration. You described that this character of the work “foreshadows your internal dialogue.” Could you please elaborate on this idea and how the delicate, yet deliberate, patterning in the works serves to draw a picture of your internal thought process?

For me, working in ceramics is like sitting in the park. What one has to do is just relax, sit comfortably, and see what is going on around them. Rather than looking at the things outside of myself like trees, people, and things in the park, I just look at the things inside, my thoughts.

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Focusing on the body movement when you work with clay repetitively is like seeing a child playing in a garden; he runs, walks, jumps, and falls, and then he cries. When we see this happen again and again it reminds me that there is nothing much in everything, and all things are connected in one way or another. If that child starts to learn to walk and run, then he will jump and then he will fall and cry. When we see things happen again and again in this way, we will realize that if we do not jump then we will not fall and will not cry. But if we still want to jump, we may fall but we will not cry because we have learned that in the end the pain of falling that makes us cry will disappear and we will be able to walk again.

This is the conversation that I have within myself, as quoted in 'foreshadows your internal dialogue.' Through the repetitive process in these two collections of work - Weaving Indigo, and Analog – I have learned how to focus. The work is actually a method of contemplation and meditation. When one is in 'smardhi' they will be able to see and reflect on things easier and with more clarity.

You have described your practice and working with clay as “more than making.” A time when “your mind is so intensely focused that you lose yourself in meditation.” I think that for many artists and designers the process of creating work is much more meaningful, and ultimately valuable, than the actual finished piece. Would you agree with this? Or could you please describe the importance of the process portion of your practice?

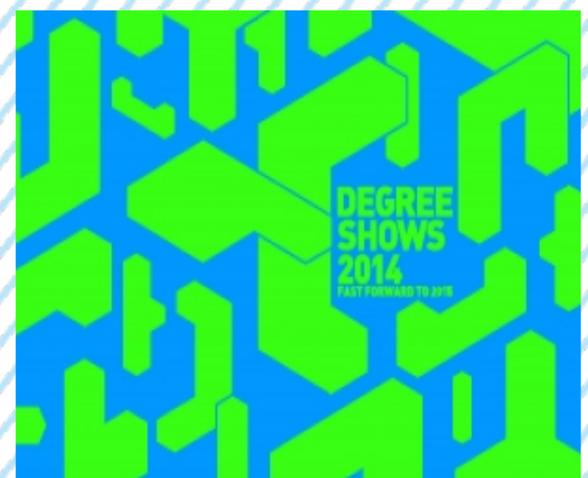
Yes I agree, but only partly. Because although I create ceramic works for myself, to fulfill my passion and my dreams, I also create ceramic works for my inner self-development. When one sees their work come out great they will feel happy and proud. Of course there is a certain expectation. Working in ceramics, you need patience and determination, time and money. I feel sad when the work doesn't come out as I expected, or there is some defect, but these feelings won't last long if you have really done your best; put your time and effort into it. I always see working as a new opportunity to try new work and make it better, to learn from mistakes. Ceramics, to me, is more than work; it is a passion that I always aspire to fulfill.

Your current exhibition also includes works from your 'Weaving Indigo : A Common Code' series. You have described that, for you, working through the stages of the clay is like working through changes one experiences in life. Could you please describe your 'Weaving Indigo' series and how these works reference living in a state of flux?

The process of work in the Weaving Indigo series is quite similar to that of the Analog series. The work is about repetition, a time-consuming process; but Weaving Indigo is a way of working with all conditions of the clay - raw clay, clay work, burnt clay, cracks, defects created during the process, this cycle happens again and again all the time throughout the creation of the work. You can see an apparent change and learn that no matter how much you want the clay to remain in one certain condition, it will be impossible, because there are so many factors that you can't control. It is like a human life that is perishable. It is the law of nature. Things change all the time, but sometimes it is so slow and gradual that we don't notice or see it. You can learn about life through the cycle of clay.

In some of your previous works, such as your 'Let's Sway and See It Goes' series from 2011, you celebrate the medium of clay's uncontrollable qualities within the works, referencing acceptance of life's impermanence and, at times, uncontrollable nature. For some, allowing the medium to have a certain amount of control over the final composition might be viewed as a compromise, but you seem to view it as more of an opportunity. Could you please discuss this series in more detail and how letting go and allowing the medium to steer the direction the pieces take has created room for you to “sway and see how it goes?”

When you work on any project it is critical that one understand the nature of the medium they are working with. Everything has its own



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character and nature. Clay is no different. What is controllable and what is not is something you can learn only from practice, feel it and play with it again and again, only then you will come to understand how much you can control and how much you have to let go. It is also a question of patience. Somethings you can control, others you may have to let go. It is like allowing the material to reveal its true nature, true essence and potency. It is an opportunity and not an obstacle if you can't control the clay. You will see how the material can be, giving it opportunity to shine, be free and express itself. In the end you will find that nature can always surprise us.

Lastly, could you please talk a bit about your background and how you ended up in Sweden? How has the change in location from your native Thailand to Sweden affected your artistic practice? Do you find that your work draws from different sources of inspiration following your physical relocation? Or is the dialogue internal enough that you feel as if you are working from the same place no matter where you are? Is the source of your inspiration something you carry with you, or something you find - or, perhaps, somewhere in between?

I was trained as a designer, so I used to work on paper and with a computer. Much of my past design work hardly came into production until I came to work as a ceramic designer at the **Mae Fah Luang Foundation** where I was given the opportunity to truly work with clay. Throughout the four years that I spent at the foundation, I touched, felt, played and worked with clay. That experience made me truly appreciate the process of working by hand; it is a lot of fun. I also had a chance to work on many non-profit projects along with various commercial ones. Eventually, I came back to ceramics as I had been convinced that it was the field I loved the most. In 2008, I decided to further my studies in an art school located in southern Sweden, a country that produces lots of design and art that I am fond of - a good mixture of handicrafts and machine-made works. The first school I attended was **Capellagården**, where I studied working with ceramics from scratch. Then, in 2010, I moved to **HDK School of Design and Crafts**, Gothenburg University, to study ceramic craft art. Before moving here I never questioned my own work so I can say that the school in Sweden was really the starting point for me on this path. I found that the main inspiration for me is located somewhere within myself, but the places and surroundings where you are can also make you express that inspiration differently. The atmosphere of the environment in Sweden is quite peaceful and calm. The colors and hues are natural and these conditions were reflected in my Weaving Indigo collection, while Analog is a reflection of the environment in Bangkok, drawing from the time when I returned to Thailand. Both collections, in reality, stem from one and the same idea, but take form through different interpretations according to the places I go.



Aor Sutthiprapha
www.aorsutthiprapha.com

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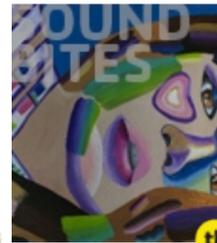
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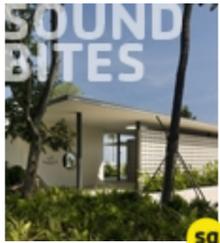
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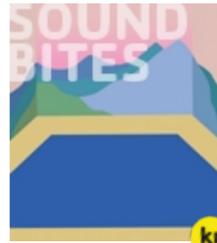
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