

CERAMICS

IRELAND

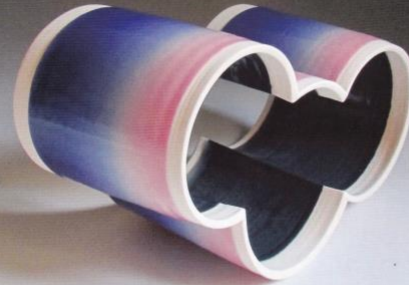


ISSN 1393-9531



Issue 42 2018 €6.00

MARTIN HARMAN



Horizon, 13 x 15 x 16cm 2017, Stoneware, slips, clear glaze

To wonder and imagine with an eye for curiosity and to experience something new, for me this is what it means to be human.

As a person experiencing this reality I found being creative using various materials important in expressing ideas. This creative process began at school around the age of sixteen. I was fortunate to have access to ceramic and fine art equipment. It was here that I was able to experiment with different materials and it was also the place where my enthusiasm for creating artworks started.

I enjoyed working with different materials and I remember being told that I was good at working with clay so I immersed myself within this medium. From school I continued to pursue this material through to college and university. To this day I continue to use clay. I still create two-dimensional artworks such as paintings and drawings as I find it useful to help generate ideas and develop the three-dimensional pieces.

Looking back, I realized that I was always drawn to creating artworks that took on an abstract quality. There was usually a point of reference to something real like natural and human-made found objects but this was always translated into artworks in imaginative ways to evoke new meanings.

Stonehenge, Salisbury, England



Fusion, 30 x 23 x 15cm 2017, Stoneware, slips, clear glaze

Although I experimented a lot it was not until I undertook my MA in ceramics at Cardiff School of Art and Design from 2010 to 2012 that I really began to focus. As a student I remember undertaking my first assignment that involved choosing a subject to generate ideas. I decided to focus my attention on the historical English Heritage monument Stonehenge located in Salisbury, England. It is believed construction started 3100 BC. I chose this monument as I have always been fascinated by mysteries and Stonehenge is a site that till this day keeps its meaning secret.

I had the impression that it was some kind of architectural structure, however it does not have walls or a roof. It hints at having a function although it is difficult to pin point. Particularly though, I was intrigued by the way it forced me to be curious, to lean as well as reflect upon my own existence. It is a place that seems alien in our current built environment, as there is no complete evidence as to what it is. It contrasts our present society where every building has a known function. It seems like each time I visit this monument I see it in a different way. It challenges my understanding, as it does not tell me how to think or what to do, I have the responsibility to make my own decisions based on my interpretation.

An interesting aspect to this monument is its construction. It is made up of individual blocks that come together to form a whole and these components remain visible. There is even evidence to suggest that it might have been built up in stages from a wooden structure then replaced by stones over a period of time. It has also undergone many re-constructions to preserve its integrity.

From this foundation I started to think about how to translate this into ideas that could then feed into the creation of artworks. Associated words developed like time, construction, architectural, organic, surreal or dream-like, unknown, inside and outside space. I then translated these words through the medium of clay.

The way in which I construct my ceramic sculptures is by cutting and joining singular components thrown on the potter's wheel. These consist of cylinders and cones. I usually apply coloured slips and glaze to the forms to create contrast. Studying for my MA provided me with a platform to think about how to convert ideas into a ceramic sculptural practice. This mind set has stayed with me and I continue to be inspired by Stonehenge. Moreover I continue to make ceramic sculpture in a way that has developed from my MA studies. Although more recently my making process has now included other shapes thrown on the potter's wheel such as spheres and hand building techniques utilising slabs of clay.

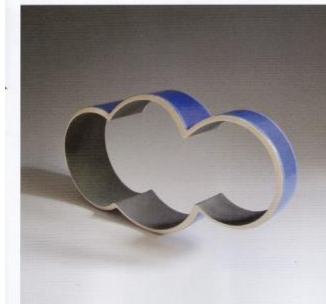
My creative journey is ongoing, my ideas and making process continues to evolve. At the heart of my work remains the desire to create artworks that evoke curiosity. More recently, I think my works, in some ways are not only an extension of my ideas but also my experience of life.

martinharmansart.com

UNESCO International Academy of Ceramics IAC member.

British artist based in Bristol, UK. Construction, imagination, possibility and curiosity are central to my work.

Construction 2, 49 x 25 x 12cm 2012, Stoneware, slips, clear glaze



Circuit, 28 x 23 x 16cm 2017, Stoneware, slips, clear glaze



Disjunct Geometry, 30 x 30 x 11cm 2016, Stoneware, slips, clear glaze
Curiosity, 24 x 24 x 18cm 2016, Stoneware, slips, clear glaze

