

# Lyrical Sentiments of Pottery Motivated by the Image of Nature

Shin, Jeongsoon (Korea)

## Introduction

As civilization progresses, we are growing more distant from nature, and there have been many natural disasters caused by serious environmental pollution. The development of material civilization has addressed various problems in modern society, but bringing lyrical sentiments to humans is not an easy task, rather development results in a huge distance from nature. Therefore, creative artists are responsible for stimulating human sentiments, and this is very valuable work.

Nature as a fundamental object of artwork is constantly described by people from the past, so nature and artwork are inseparable. My artwork also is motivated by the image of nature. However, it is not an attempt to imitate just the image of nature, but rather aims to describe the spiritual value and the inner world which is perceived by my sensibility.

Although I simplify the object in the process of my artwork, I try to describe the image of nature metaphorically and symbolically. In addition, I use “the pattern” (Mun Yang in Korean) in expressing a specific image and try to put the warmth and coziness of nature into the artwork.

When I design my artwork, I try to capture abstract imagery and express a snapshot of an image of nature so that people can be reminded of their experiences and memories which are stored in their subconscious. In other words, I expect people to have an opportunity to enjoy the pottery in their own way, which is based on individual experiences, so that it can also bring the calmness of nature into their lives.

My artwork starts with the theme of “nature flow”. Although this is a very abstract way of expression, it is not difficult to understand. Anyone can relate to it. My life is always close to nature, and I always admire nature’s mysterious beauty, which naturally links to my motivation to produce artwork.

## Body

When considering the characteristics of clays, it is important to be natural. As civilization progresses, our lives are becoming dreary, and we seek an environmentally-friendly lifestyle. I think art is one of the best ways to bring nature into our lives. It can wake up people’s sentiment. If the artwork can give us the feeling of nature’s coziness, then our lives would be more bountiful. In this sense, geological strata mean a lot. Not only their unique shapes, but also their long history which cannot be compared to the life spans of humans. Strata make people imagine and want to trace back to the past. This not only motivates people to find the importance of the moment, but also makes them imagine, just as a time machine would. If someone can feel this through the artwork, then that would be the moment that breathes the life into the art. Every artwork has its own energy. We cannot say it is necessary positive energy. However, even if it is a negative one, it would definitely be considered as the power of the art when it became the inspiration for thought. Pottery art has various shapes and colors. In addition, we can bring this art into our real lives, so we can say it is a unique field of art.

In modern society, people are too busy to enjoy the beauty of nature, such as wind, trees, blue sky, raindrops, and birdcalls’ sound. However, if we look around a little bit, we can feel nature’s wonder and beauty, and that deep emotion is more than just watching and hearing.

These experiences are accumulated as a memory, but that memory would not be fully recalled. That memory can be distorted or remade. Therefore, although the pottery features nature, it relies not only on its appearance, but also on the creation of another story from memory. Moreover, making pottery is one way to communicate with myself by pulling out the memory from inside my mind.

In the process of expressing invisible memory into visible artwork, the experience of making and glazing can become an important moment when I and the pottery can co-exist and breathe together. Throughout this moment, my experiences and memories are transformed into new artwork.

An artist's language of artwork is made by his or her thought and the way chosen to express it. Therefore, an artist should constantly connect to the thought so that its depth can appear in the artwork and study and experiment with methods of expression. To develop an artist's own language of artwork requires much time and numerous experiments.

My theme of artwork is "nature flow", but subtitles can be differentiated by my motivations or the flow of my thinking. I am part of nature flow, and it is very amazing to find myself being in nature flow. However, at the same time, it is also a difficult and lengthy process to express language. Artwork creates different impressions big and small touches. I realize that my life also coexists on this flow.

In order to express "nature flow" as a theme of my artwork, I try to find my motivation in nature. The theme of my first exhibition was "breathing sound" motivated by water and wind.

This theme includes my wishes to accept every situation in living a life, just as water and wind.

Water and wind have common characteristics of movement. I am motivated by this basic natural phenomenon. To express this dynamic characteristic, I used curves, and also bratticing and intaglio, to express massive and dynamic images of wind blown leaves and lapping waves. This is not just about the natural phenomenon, but also the way of expressing sentiment flow inside the mind.

Not only does water or wind swirl, our minds also swirl. I want to express the peaceful feeling, which gentle waves give.

By creating a certain physical space between the inside and the outside of a piece, I make a space to communicate, and apply concept of time into the space. It has the symbolic meaning that time cannot go by without a space. In other words, people's lives also need a space for communication to accept the changes of time.

Wind and water have the character of "flow". Our lives always face inevitable situations at any time, so we should all bear this concept of "nature flow" in our minds.

Under the big theme of "nature flow", I subtitled "trace the moment", because this work is tracing back to a certain moment. I started to find a way to express the beauty of the moment motivated by traces of strata.

When time seems to have stopped, it is still always the present progressive form. Even if civilization collapses, time will still flow and that would still leave the trace even if we cannot find it.

The reason why I found "nature flow" in strata is that lives have been settled on these strata for billions of years. That is just our history. Every phenomenon including the creation and destruction exists on the concept of time. This concept of creation and destruction is very similar to the process of "plasticity", because clay should go through destruction by fire in order to be created into the pottery. Creation and destruction are contradictory concepts, but they also can be interrelated, because creation cannot exist without destruction.

To express an intangible concept, I observe and analyze the strata. Strata have various textures and colors according to the period and geologic deposits. This is just like a human's life, which leaves traces by age and experiences. In order to express textures and colors in detail, I did numerous experiments to find out the relationship between clay and glaze. I experimented with glaze several times for flat surface treatment, and tried to express thickness by applying "YUN". Throughout these tests, I have created my own art language.

This process is not just one way of expression. It is very creative work in, which an intangible concept transforms into a tangible piece of artwork. Deep color and its unique pattern in trees, dynamic shapes, and the trace of time of a stratum, all these things are the power of nature, which make us appreciate it and think about it.

Tracing back to the past also gives us an opportunity to reflect upon our own lives seriously. Living a life is a very ordinary thing, but, depending on our attitude towards the changes in life, the quality can be different. This is something we can learn about from nature. If you can appreciate the artwork and feel it deep in your heart, then you are holding a microcosm in your mind. At the same time, you can feel the coziness and warmth of nature when you bring it into your life. From this point of view, creative artists should be able to evoke emotion in the art appreciator, and this is a very precious mission. Making art motivated by nature, and using the most basic material, which is clay, is the equivalent of building a microcosm. How wonderful this job is.

## Conclusion

A terminus ad quem for a human is nature. I try to express the imagery of nature by my own art language. If my artwork can bring any feelings or sentiments, even to one person, then I will feel very happy. It is a very meaningful job when that certain energy of artwork can give people ideas. Whatever the genre of the artwork, I feel my heart beating when I find great pieces of art.

The energy of artwork itself has enormous power. Art as a tacit language is able to open up the way of communication with someone, and this is the most attractive thing for the artist. It is also my biggest motivation to devote myself to this job.

I feel sorry for some artists who are satisfied with just the work process itself. Any artist in any genre of art can inspire people and can also give people the opportunity to explore an other world. Sharing this opportunity makes me feel very happy.

Traces of time share life with humanity leaving its footprint. Making pottery from clay through fire is creating a new small world. Traces in the time flow would become another footprint for someone to dream about. As long as time does not stop, the breathing sound of nature will motivate people, and people will make our lives beautiful and bountiful by building their own microcosms.

