

The Way of *Pottery*—HO Ping-chung

香港藝術館一樓 專題展覽廳 (2)

1/F Hong Kong Museum of Art

Special Exhibition Gallery (2)

29.12.2000 - 25.2.2001



以
陶

修道

· 何秉聰



序言 *Introduction*



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「香港藝術家系列 III」，主要目的是向本地前輩藝術家致敬，以表揚他們的卓越成就；和向大眾介紹他們的創作，以推廣藝術的欣賞風氣。本系列的第三個展覽為「以陶修道 — 何秉聰」。

何秉聰先生是本港著名的陶藝家，一九一八年生，廣東南海縣人，別號「南海陶人」。何氏的故鄉離石灣約只有七公里，故自小已常到石灣遊玩，並對石灣的藝術陶塑有說不出的喜愛。何氏二十六歲正式開始在石灣學習陶藝，深受多位石灣陶藝老師如廖堅、梁華甫、梁世培等的影響。何氏揉合了各老師的煉土、各類藝術陶的塑造、釉彩配製、以及製窯及燒窯的技巧，並自始至終孜孜不倦地鑽研。事實上，何氏對陶藝的各種技術，由配土到燒窯、以及中國陶藝的發展歷史，可謂無一不精的。

石灣的陶藝以傳神見稱，而何氏的人物塑造就充份反映出這一特點。是次展出的「和合二仙」，臉蛋圓圓的二仙帶着愉快的笑容，對望着的眼神彷彿流露着一絲心靈相通。此外，這件作品的釉色溫潤古雅，可見何氏非常著重人物塑像的性格、造型和釉色的整體配合。「悲天憫人觀音」在舉目望向眾生的剎那間，悲愁的臉容上亦流露出一種堅定的信念 — 為眾生承擔苦難。「十八羅漢」素胎人物造像是何氏陶塑人物中的傑出作品。十八羅漢的造型參考了前人的陶塑作品、有關羅漢的繪畫以及佛教經文。然而何氏的十八羅漢就能給人一種親切感覺。例如其中一位「洗衣羅漢」就採用了一種很人性化的手法去處理。「洗衣羅漢」從日常生活平凡的工作中進行修煉，這亦多少反映到何氏的人生觀。何氏曾說過要以製陶之心做人，製陶是一種修行，要把做到最好的精神化到最高人格的境界，「要養成深廣的『書卷味』，除卻盡心力的技巧外，必須敦品養氣，習慣於作品的燒壞、破損，不以為意；別人譏譽，無動於衷.....忘情於譏譽則近乎道.....這就是習陶的最終目的。」（註）再說這素胎十八羅漢因為未施釉彩，故塑造上的精細之處盡現。其中尤以羅漢的衣紋處理得極為流暢利落，無論是飛揚的衣袖或摺疊的袍服，均有如中國繪畫中的運筆。刻衣紋的小木批在旋轉、壓、拖及頓錯之間，就刻劃出了靈活而富變化的線條，這可見何氏已把他在中國書畫上的領會引伸到陶藝創作，運刀如筆了。

除了人物外，何氏的動物陶塑亦極富神韻。「蟾蜍」的造型非常特別，與一般石灣蟾蜍口含銅錢者不同。俯伏着的蟾蜍伸出了一條後腿，給人一種蓄勢待發的力量感覺。何氏對所塑造對象的觀察入微由此可見一斑。何氏塑造的植物瓜果，無論是實用器皿或觀賞陶塑，均能表現其形態和質感。何氏的作品保存了石灣的寫實傳統的同時，也非常喜歡作新的嘗試。除陶藝外，何氏其實亦有以攝影和中國書畫的手法創作。他嘗試把攝影和書畫等平面圖像與半立體的陶塑浮雕合而為一，成為了獨特的掛屏作品。

何氏最為津津樂道的，除了他在陶藝創作上的成就外，相信會是他對陶藝教育的推動。何氏桃李滿天下，數十年來從不間斷為學生作悉心指導，並著書立論，與大眾分享自己的研究心得。其實，何氏的學生從何氏身上學習到的，又豈止是陶藝上的知識？何氏精通中國藝術、中國古文學、醫術及易學等，博學多才，然而他卻是很謙厚的；他對陶藝的知識極為豐富，卻從不疏於研究，亦毫不吝嗇把心得與人分享。何氏所傳授的是一門人生的哲理，是朱熹所言的「學莫便乎近其人」的身教。

是次展覽展出約四十件精品，包括人物和動物陶塑、植物瓜果和器皿、攝影、書法以及掛屏作品等，均能代表了何氏自六十年代至九十年代豐盛的藝術創作。何氏於一九九九年逝世後，香港藝術發展局特別追贈了「終身成就獎」予他，以表揚他一生的成就。而香港藝術館是次為何氏籌備的展覽，在籌備初期並未料到將成為一個回顧展。不過無論如何，這展覽代表了我們對前香港藝術館顧問何秉聰先生的致敬，以及對本港一代陶人的追思。盼望這展覽能讓大家對何氏的藝術有更深入及全面的認識。最後，特別多謝何秉聰夫人不辭勞苦協助展覽的籌備工作，謹此衷心致謝。

春送僧 唐代 貫休

蜀魄關關花雨深，送師沖雨到江潯；
不能更折江頭柳，自有青青松柏心。

曾柱昭

香港藝術館總館長

二〇〇〇年十月十六日

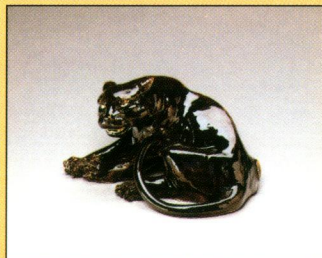
The presentation of "Hong Kong Artists Series III" aims to introduce the achievement of prominent senior artists in Hong Kong, as well as to promote art appreciation among the public. The third exhibition in this series is "The Way of Pottery - HO Ping-chung".

Mr. HO Ping-chung is a well-known ceramic master in Hong Kong. He was born in 1918, a native of Nanhai and his alias was "Nanhai Potter". The hometown of Mr. HO is only 7 kilometres away from the historical pottery centre of Shiwan. Starting from his early age he used to spend his spare time in Shiwan. The art of pottery in Shiwan attracted his attention and became his life long pursuit. He started to learn pottery-making in Shiwan when he was 26, and many established Shiwan potters, such as LIAO Jian, LIANG huafu, LIANG Shipai had inspired him. Mr. HO mastered techniques of pottery through studying these potters, in the mixing of clay, modelling and glazing techniques, and kiln building and firing. He had also been researching on different aspects of ceramic art, such as the history and development of Chinese ceramics. In fact, Mr. HO was an expert in almost every aspect of pottery-making.

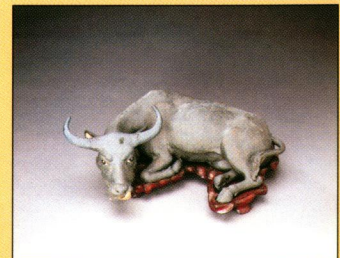
Shiwan pottery is known for its lifelike characteristics. This feature can also be found in Mr. HO's figure sculptures, such as the "Immortals of Harmony". The couple with round faces are smiling cheerfully to each other, and an invisible linkage is formed from their eye contacts. The classic elegant glazing of the figures also reflects the styles of Mr. HO. He has always emphasized the harmony of the disposition, the form as well as the glazing of a figure sculpture. The "Goddess of Mercy" shows her conviction through her eyes - to relieve all sorrows of human beings. The "18 Luohans" biscuit figures are a superb example of the lifelike quality of Mr. HO's works. Mr. HO had taken reference from senior potters, ancient paintings as well as Buddhist sutra, yet his Luohans have human touch about them. For example, the work named the "Luohan Washing Clothes" tells the story of a Luohan practising Buddhism through a routine job in the daily life. We can also get a glimpse of the philosophy of life of Mr. HO from this work. Mr. HO saw pottery-making the way of life and a way of practising Daoism. He said that we should try to cultivate the highest noble character while doing our best in our daily life. "We should not lament over the damages during the pottery firing. We should not care too much about praises or harsh criticisms. It is an approach towards the Way and the destination of pottery-making." (Note) Since these biscuit figures of "18 Luohans" are unglazed, the exquisite workmanship of Mr. HO can be observed. The movement of the folds is very smooth and fluent. The method of making the wavy sleeves or folded cloth is comparable to the brushwork of Chinese painting and calligraphy. The wood chisel working on the biscuit clay rotates, presses, pulls and ends forcefully to form different lines similar to brushstrokes. Mr. HO is well-versed in the art of calligraphy and painting and his styles are also reflected in his ceramic pieces.



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Besides pottery figures, Mr. HO's animals are also highly naturalistic. The form of the "Toad" is very different from those commonly found in Shivan pottery. The crouching toad with a hind leg stretched out at the very moment just before the jump, reflects Mr. HO's keen and accurate observation of his object. The vegetables and plants, be they functional vessels or sculptural forms, all possess a high level of resemblance in terms of shape and texture. On the one hand, Mr. HO inherited and retained much of the Shivan tradition, while on the other, he had also added new elements in his work. Other than pottery, Mr. HO did also photography and calligraphy. His unique hanging ceramic panels are indeed an attempt to combine the two-dimensional photography, painting and calligraphy with pottery to become a semi-sculptural ceramic relief.



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Apart from his artistic achievement, Mr. HO is always praised for his contribution in teaching and promoting ceramic art. In the past decades, Mr. HO has been a devoted and untiring teacher to his numerous followers. He shared unselfishly with others his insight in research through his writings. As a matter of fact, there are more than just ceramics that Mr. HO's students can learn from him. He was knowledgeable in Chinese art, classical literature, medicine and "the Classic - the Book of Changes"; and yet he was also a humble and modest man. His extensive knowledge in ceramics has never stopped him from further investigations; and he never hesitated in sharing his findings with others. His teaching was indeed a philosophy of life.

This exhibition features about forty selected works by Mr. HO from the 1960s to 1990s. They include human figures and animal forms, plants and naturalistic objects, photography, calligraphy and ceramic panels. To acknowledge the outstanding contributions of the master, the Arts Development Council specially granted Mr. HO the "Lifetime Achievement Award" after he passed away in 1999. Even though this exhibition was not meant to be a retrospective show when it was first conceived years ago, it now embodies much of our fond memory and respect to Mr. HO Ping-chung, our former Museum Adviser. It is our wish that the exhibition can bring viewers a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the artistic achievements of Mr. HO. Last but not the least, sincere thanks are due to Mrs. HO Cheng Miu-ling, who has given full support and invaluable assistance to the preparation of the exhibition.

"Farewell to a Monk in Spring" Guan Xiu Tang Dynasty
The Song of Cuckoo accompany the falling petals,
I bid you farewell amidst the rain.
Without a twig of willow for you at the river-side,
The evergreen pine and cypress will reflect my heart.

Gerard C. C. TSANG
Chief Curator
Hong Kong Museum of Art
16 October 2000

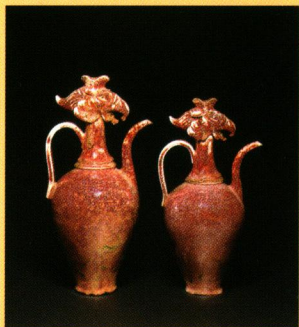
小傳 Biographical Notes



何秉聰（一九一八－一九九九），別號南海陶人，祖籍廣東南海縣，一九四九年定居香港。何氏自幼醉心陶藝，早年在廣東石灣自學陶藝，深受多位著名石灣陶藝前輩的影響。自一九七〇年代起，何氏於香港自設陶藝工作坊，致力於陶藝教育工作及創作。何氏亦為香港、澳門及星加坡等地的文化藝術機構教授陶藝課程及主持專題講座。何氏曾任香港藝術館名譽顧問。何氏作品曾多次於香港及海外展出。何氏的著作有《陶藝雜談》等，並協助編撰《石灣陶藝》及《歷史・神話與傳說－胡錦超先生捐贈石灣陶塑》。

五十多年來，何氏對陶藝的鑽研從不間斷，對石灣陶藝的源流及製作瞭如指掌，尤其釉彩的研究。何氏的作品富石灣陶藝的形神，亦流露出時代的氣息與其真摯的性情。何氏亦嘗試於作品中將書畫技法及攝影與陶藝相結合，風格獨特。何氏於一九九九年逝世，香港藝術發展局追贈了「終身成就獎」予他，以表揚他一生在藝術教育與創作上的超卓成就。

HO Ping-chung (1918 - 1999), also known as the "Nanhai Potter", was a native of the Nanhai district of the Guangdong province, who settled in Hong Kong since 1949. With deep interest in ceramic art in his young age, Mr. Ho started to learn pottery-making in Shiwan, drawing inspiration from various established potters. He founded his own ceramics studio in Hong Kong starting from 1970s and pursued a career as an artist as well as a teacher. Mr. HO also conducted ceramic courses and lectures at various cultural institutions in Hong Kong, Macau and Singapore. His works have been widely exhibited in Hong Kong and overseas. Mr. HO has been the Honorary Adviser of the Hong Kong Museum of Art. His publications include the book "The Art of Pottery" and articles contributed to the exhibition catalogues "Shiwan Pottery" and "History, Love and Legend - Shiwan Pottery Figures Donated by Mr



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WOO Kam-chiu", published by the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

With his artistic cultivation in ceramic art for over fifty years, Mr. HO acquired deep knowledge of the history and techniques of Shiwan pottery, in particular in the study of glazes. His works reveal the true essence of Shiwan pottery art and at the same time reflecting the artist's passion and the spirit of his contemporary era. He also mastered the art of photography, Chinese painting and calligraphy and ceramics to create his unique style and attained superb achievements in pottery art. When Mr. Ho passed away in 1999, The Hong Kong Arts Development Council granted him the honor "Lifetime Achievement Award" in recognition of his accomplishments in art and education.



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First published by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, December, 2000.
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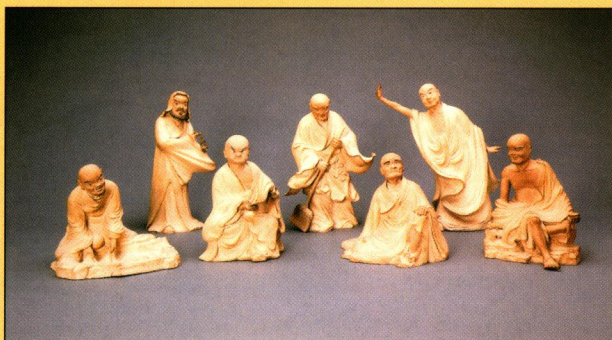
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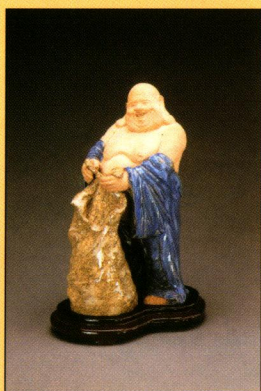
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