

Nicholas Bivins | Artist Statement | 2011

I make utilitarian pottery using a precise, clean, and efficient geometric language as I maintain an obsessive interest in looking for a personal definition of perfectly handmade. It is this fascination that propels me to practice my craft every day while continually searching for a satisfying balance of how much evidence of hand I put in, and how much hand I take out.

I am curious how functional pots continue to retain relevance in our contemporary society not only from elemental necessities of use and food service, but due to our indispensable need for connections to expressive thought. Being a studio potter provides me an opportunity to invent individual functional ceramic ware which will improve user's lives by satisfying needs for objects surrounding them to have emotional, imaginative, and personal relationships to one maker.

Through use, the connection between maker and user stimulates the body and mind by providing a dynamic daily experience that helps keep life from becoming anonymous and mundane. The simultaneous attention of the user on the objects and the attention of objects on the user reveal the unique nature of personal production for personal use. The act of use is then enriched by objects that require the viewers' attention while at the same time allowing them to enjoy the experience of replenishment. This perpetual shifting in focus shows that through function, the object holds power in its passive waiting for an active participant in the experience. This precise manipulation of the viewer/user allows a more conscientious operation thus presenting questions about what occurs when the perceived traditional definition of handmade is denied, the ambiguity of perfection, and the role that objects play in our lives.