11-1-1999

Expression of relationship in life

Hoyeon Chung

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.rit.edu/theses

Recommended Citation
ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

A Thesis submitted to the College of Image Arts and Sciences in candidacy for the degree of Master of Fine Arts.

Expression of Relationship in Life

BY

HOYEON CHUNG

November 1999
APPROVALS

CHIEF ADVISOR : LEONARD URSO

DATE 11-20-99

ASSOCIATE ADVISOR : AMINTA ROMAGUERA-McNULTY

DATE 11/20/99

ASSOCIATE ADVISOR : BRUCE SODERVICK

DATE 11/30/99

CHAIRPERSON : RICH TANNEN

DATE

I, Ho yeon Chung, hereby grant permission to the Wallace Memorial Library of RIT to reproduce my thesis in whole or in part. Any reproduction will not be for commercial use or profit.

SIGNATURE

DATE 11/20/99
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. LIST OF FIGURES --------------------------------------- a
2. INTRODUCTION ---------------------------------------- 1
3. ARTISTIC INFLUENCES --------------------------------- 3
4. DISCUSSION OF THE SCULPTURES ---------------------- 11
5. CONCLUSION ----------------------------------------- 19
6. TECHNICAL INFORMATION ----------------------------- 20
7. BIBLIOGRAPHY --------------------------------------- 23
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Isamu Naguchi</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Isamu Naguchi</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Isamu Naguchi</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Henry Moore</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Henry Moore</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Henry Moore</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Henry Moore</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Coexistence 1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Mother and Child</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Independence</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Coexistence(table)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Harmony</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses a series of five sculptures that were made during my two years of graduate school at Rochester Institute of Technology. During that period, I realized and contemplated my existence. I spent much of my first year thinking about my emotions. The inspirations around me were getting more broad starting from different the interactions in all elements of my life.

This idea also might be universal. Even though all lives are different, there are similar characteristics that most people possess. People are living within boundaries. The boundaries can consist of several elements, such as family, friends, environment and time. These elements of life are very special for each of us. In this reason there is no exact same life or person in the world, but there are some elements all lives are based upon. Our lives make a big circle which starts with birth and ends with death, earning and losing. In terms of this view, we are all walking the same path with similar relationships. I am concerned with what most universal matters have filled our lives. The theme of my series of five sculptures is about substantial things in one's life: birth, youth, independence from, and dealing with family relationships.

In terms of creating images, giving shape might be the biggest challenge for creators. The essence of sculpture for me is the recognition of space, the perpetuity of our existence. In my personal opinion, all creators have their own language. The language of sculpture is a universal language and it can speak directly to us even though we know nothing whatsoever about a particular piece of work, apart from
what we can see right in front of our eyes. The aim of these works is to explore the way we declare invisible things in one’s life each with our own language.
ARTISTIC INFLUENCES

As a metal sculptor, defining a theme and giving it shape are laborious matters to me. These things are not only my problem, but most artists also have similar difficulties. Henry Moore and Isamu Noguchi, gave me solutions to these problems.

The theme of my body of work is based on elements of our lives. The elements are invisible things, for this reason, it is expressed through my symbolic language. What interested me most tended to be more abstract, verging on minimalism while creating vocabulary. I have one belief that is based on creating words. It has to start with something. Even the idea has to come from something that we can not see such as imagination, emotion, or feeling. This means every abstract form might have its own roots. In this reason, Isamu Noguchi and Henry Moore express their pieces with strong belief, suggesting to me a way of formulating my words. I am very impressed by Isamu’s artist statement:

1“A fine balance of spirit with matter can only concur when the artist has so thoroughly submerged himself in the study of the unity of nature as to truly become once more a part of nature- - a part of the very earth, thus to view the inner surfaces and the life elements.”

It shows clearly his desire to view nature though nature’s eyes. His work (figures 1,2,3) opened the way to understanding nature and the arrangement on my work with these elements. Noguchi’s philosophical trusts bring him to the world of art not only as a sculptor, but also in the roles of architect, spacial visionary and furniture

designer. Noguchi’s work cares about all dimensions and the relative perspective of our vision. Within this, lies volume, lines, shape, distance and proportions. The definition of space to him involves movement, light and time. Isamu is interested in all qualities of the space, not just the object.

Henry Moore believes that “the artist’s responsibility is to create a form that will be seen as beautiful by the viewer.” His definition of “beauty” is not only its visual qualities, but also the strong impression of the object. Henry Moore’s pieces, to me, have more forceful emotion than the general definition of beauty. His pieces are extremely powerful, even though, his language is always simple. His work conveys to me what I came to believe to be the essence of his artistic soul. The most attractive theme in his work for me, is Mother and Child (Figure 4). He created many pieces with this theme in 1927 and those pieces showed me his understanding of what he wants to express with the object. The pieces don’t look fancy or beautiful, but those pieces are containing more magnetic qualities such as depth of life and shape of internal truth. I also find rich psychological values arising from our subconscious as well as primal instincts through his mother and child images (figure 6,7).

Moore’s sculptural language is more simple but holds a strong message. Some of his pieces were described as figurative shapes, shown in figure 5. Henry Moore’s art held no secrets that he wouldn’t share with all people. He allowed non-artists as well as artists to fully understand his intentions and beliefs.

---

At this point I have a philosophical trust which is every shape that I create. It is a container for my thoughts. Moore’s work represents the idea of work in art clearly, having within the context of its genre and scale, to achieve the overarching, mysterious aura of greatness. Moore’s work is dominated by themes which are, as it were, in the major key; the rhythms of organic form, the vitality of primitive art, and above all the human figure. These themes, which can be discovered in nature and in the observation of expressions of magnetic beliefs, which are sacred in subjects such as *Mother & Child*, preoccupied Moore from the start.
Figure 1
Isamu Naguchi
Garden
(1951-52)

Figure 2
Isamu Naguchi
Table for A. Conger Goodyear
(1939)
Figure 3
Isamu Naguchi
Fish Face
(1946)
Figure 4
Henry Moore
Mother and Child
(1953)
Figure 5
Henry Moore
Madonna and Child
(1943)

Figure 6
Henry Moore
Stringed Mother and Child (1938)
Figure 7
Henry Moore
Mother and Child: Hood
(1982)
DISCUSSION OF THE SCULPTURES

Having relationships is an important element in one's life. The relationship can be between people, such as mother and child, human and nature or it can be between ourselves and God. My five pieces of sculptures represent these ideas. For this reason, each of the sculptures are combined from two parts.

In this piece (figure 8), the idea of parent and child is evident in the form. This sculptural lamp, entitled Coexistence, which measures 18" x 8" x 6", explores the abstract form in functional work and has two kinds of material to bring the lamp into the sculptural realm.

The two kinds of material used in this piece are copper and glass. The main part is a welded form, it consists of an exaggerated wave form which implies the image of parents. The wave shape stands on a base, that in turn holds the glass in place. The light shines out from the middle section of the wave form. The glass is illuminated as it is filled with light. I am most concerned with the treatment of materials and the expressive idea of the form. The patination gives the larger copper structure the appearance of age but also implies experience and knowledge. The glass appears very new and unprotected, needing guidance and the it is the copper that is acting as the protector. Cradling the glass, keeping it from harm, the piece has flowing forms in combination with angles giving it an abstract human shape. The reclining figure seems that it is peacefully resting with the glass being the child. The lighting element that comes from the copper structure flows into the glass which can be a metaphor for passage of knowledge from parent to child.
The relationship between parent and child is distinguishable from other relationships because there is no choice, the first kinship in one's life. For this reason, the relationship, is called “family.” It is treated as the most important and strongest relationship in one's life. Independence (figure 10), also possesses similar values as figure 8. But this piece expresses the period when the child wants to find self-awareness. At this time, we begin to dream about something better for life and the elements. We try to escape from the things with which we are familiar. This movement always brings uncertainty and expectation. These two pieces (figure 8,10) support glass surfaces that are not polished, the edges are allowing light through the sides (Figure 8). These glass characteristics imply that the image of the child is unfinished and in need of structure, showing potential, but still in need of guidance. Unpolished and irregular, the shapes can be compared to young children’s character.

The theme of Mother and Child, not only refers to the maternal relationship but also about fertility, maternity, and the universal growth idea. The piece (figure 9) of this series has a more stable shape and is a symbol of a mother and her child. As these two shapes are combined, it is making another figure. It shows the figure as mother feeding her child. That scene is a strong connection with most people’s childhood. It might be the reason that we feel comfortable when we see the reclining shape.

The fourth piece of this series is a table (figure 11). Friend, companion: These words remind me of someone who is always standing by my side. As we grow up, the boundary of relationships becomes larger and more complicated.
This piece represents this complex theme. It is combined from two separate pieces, or individuals, welded together. Glass was then placed on top of the welded pieces, portraying weight. This theme displays the idea of sharing the burdens of life together, such as husband and wife.

The last sculpture for my thesis exhibit (figure 12), entitled *Harmony*, is the relationship between invisible elements such as thought, belief, and soul and visible things such as the human body and the ground. The flattened bottom piece is two-dimensional and connected to a welded form that represents the ground, earth, or mother. It symbolizes that something exists as a base of one's life. The shape on top intimates the meaning of the elements in our lives we try to accept. This shape is based on inner motion, the mental movement within all of us.
Figure 8
Figure 12
CONCLUSION

With the five sculptures in this series, I took my first step in my journey into the sculpture world. I am still not sure where my future goals lie, but I am satisfied with these representations of my body of works at this time because I realize in one way, I am redefining my concerns. My concerns started from my personal memories or relationships, but those small stories might be part of my life or everyone's life. To me, the value of each piece is becoming a record for each moment in life. I want to continue to explore these universal ideas and portray them through my sculptural vocabulary.
PATINATION INFORMATION

The patination on copper is achieved through a very sensitive effect by humidity, temperature, and a condition of cleaning the surface and other situations. For this reason, even if the same amount of chemicals is applied each time on the same material, the result can be different. The differences can also create a variety of methods. Among the various methods, I used three kinds of methods: torch technique, sawdust technique and oxidation.

The patination was applied on three pieces (Figure 2,3,5) of my sculpture, working with the same chemicals, but the effect shows different colors and textures.

1. The Process for Patination on Image 1

| Chemical: Cupric Nitric- 350g |
| Water- 1 liter |

For the patination of Image 1, I used the torch technique with liquid Cupric Nitric. Before starting the patination process on the object, the object surface needed to be cleaned perfectly. The most important part of this process, was to get rid of the oil from the object. Cupric Nitric is saturated water and does not mix well with oil. I warmed the metal by using an oxy-acetylene torch and then spread the liquid Cupric Nitric on the piece. For getting a more natural color, doing this
several times at low temperature, heating it with a blow torch and then applying
the chemical thoughtfully was the best method.

The merit of this method was very succesful because I was able to control the
color and texture immediately.

2. The Process for Patination on Image 2&3&5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chemicals:</th>
<th>Ammonium Carbonate - 120g</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ammonium Chloride - 40g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sodium Chloride - 40g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water - 1 Liter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the patination of Image 2,3,5 I used the sawdust technique. The objects
have been evenly moistened with the solution. The first step, of cleaning the
object was also needed to prepare the surface. The solution was made of the
same chemicals and water as the previous proportion and then mixed again
with sawdust. At this point, the mixture of the sawdust and the liquid chemical
(Image 2) made a spotted, smooth surface. For the best sawdust effect, I
squeezed the sawdust to make sure that no liquid came out the wood chips.
This step was very important, because if the mixture was too wet, the texture of
sawdust could not be properly affected on the piece. On Image 3, I used this
method to get a rough surface and color. The result of this technique made an
irregular stain pattern and a variety of colors. On the other hand, if the mixture
was too dry, it would not apply on the piece at all. I applied this method on
Image 5, because, this method kept the inherent color of copper for the most part. Then the piece was placed in a container that was larger than the object itself, and filled completely (it was important to ensure that the sawdust is in close contact with the surface) with the mixture and then the container was closed. After this process was completed, I left it sit for 24 hours and then thoroughly washed it with cold water. The color continued to change until it was completely dry. After the period of air drying, it was wax finished.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


