Sculptural and functional explorations in wood and metal

Scott Gilliam

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SCULPTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL EXPLORATIONS IN
WOOD AND METAL

By

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Date: August , 1972.
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"It is only in writing about his artistic experiences that a man realizes how unrecoverable they are and, worse still, that he is a handler, or at least, observer of his own feelings. He must temper in some manner with his reactions in order to externalize them. It is a very nervous making proposition."

Max Kosloff
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INTRODUCTION

The written portion of my thesis is primarily an essay on the ideological evolution I have been experiencing during the last three years and work I have produced concurrently with this evolution.

Although the title could suggest that my work represents an exercise in design, it is definitely not that. The competent combining of materials is not the end in itself, but rather a means to engaging and working with emerging ideas and feelings about form. The essay and my work make no conscious attempt to be an arbitrarily imposed experience in research and the solving of formal problems. When formal problem solving does occur, it is out of the impetus to fulfill personal needs that consequently require systematic procedures to be fulfilled.

The work centers around visual ideas that preoccupy me at this time and that I feel the need to explore. Because these ideas are not always distinct entities in my mind, it is sometimes hard to invent procedures to investigate them. My work is the by-product of my investigations. Since I am concerned with visio-tactile ideas, physically building things proves to be the best procedure for investigating them. Building ideas is the best feedback for more ideas. I enjoy this process and it is why I choose to explore ideas of this nature.
It must be mentioned that with regard to my work I am quite sure that I am presently involved in the beginning phases of an endeavor. So, obviously, this essay is not a synopsis of a finished subject, but rather a report on the state of my situation and thinking as it now exists.
CHAPTER I

In his final speech in the film "The Great Dictator" the little man (Charlie Chaplin) says:

Machinery that provides abundance has left us in want; our knowledge has made us cynical; our cleverness, hard and unkind, we think too much and feel too little. More than machinery we need humanity...

I have often had feelings similar to this impassioned comment. Where he says "machinery", I can easily hear "manufactured commodities". It seems that most manufactured things are actually machines, or devices anyway (machines for cooking, machines for sewing, machines for sitting, and on and on...).

However, upon reflection, I don't think that all machines or manufactured articles deserve this severe indictment. It is probably not important whether a thing is manufactured or hand made. But the spirit in, or behind, an object - the ethic or set of values that accompanies the creation of that object - is very important to me. All too often these seem to produce results outlined by the "Little Man" above.

The merit and credibility of these values is often revealed visually by means of man made objects.

---

Their function, design, construction and the very actuality of their existence provide means for interpretation and evaluation. (See Figure 1) Evaluation is, obviously, a subjective enterprise based on a complex mixture of the evaluator's life experiences and his particular id. Quite often, today, evaluation takes the form of simple, mindless acceptance probably because the object and the evaluator are of the same loin. There is no basis for conflict or tension between user and object because they are the same in spirit. Therefore, there is no real evaluation either intellectual or emotional.

Objects are very important to me because they are a means through which I can understand my cultural milieu. The socio-cultural environment manifests itself in the physical world it creates.

The "Little Man's" comment is surely an indictment of the spiritual fabric that lays behind our man made environment-- the visual as well as bureaucratic construction of our civilization (the latter begets the former by means of the society's ethics). It is an anguished cry of realization (enlightenment?) and is not uncommon as of late.

It is this awakening of consciousness that troubled me as a designer of manufactured objects-- a participant in building the environment. Pondering this dilemma can make it hard to feel at peace with oneself as a designer. You realize that you are a participant in and, therefore, share responsibility for, whatever exists and you are becoming very dubious of what exists.
Figure 1. Trolley Car. New York. Ca. 1887

Opinion: A example of an object created (by hand and machine) with sensitive regard to transportation as a delightful event.
Objects, then, are a means of communication. They possess the potential to reflect and reinforce the status quo (embody the accepted ethic) or challenge it. In general, mass produced items accomplish the former; individual items often achieve the latter. This I consider sculpture and it is the way I wish to approach object making. It is a major ethical reason for my abandoning "design" to do "craft".
CHAPTER II

An influential ideology in product design for over fifty years has been that of the "functionalist" school which is best stated in its most rigid form by Meis van der Hoe's law of mechanical selection:

...objects should tend toward a type which is determined by the evolution of forms between the ideal of maximum utility and the demands of economical production, which conforms inexorably to the law of nature.\(^2\) (See Figure 2)

This Darwinian approach to design represents a strong force in my educational background.

Most Industrial Design education emphasizes a faith in rational, systematic design processes and expects visual manifestations of this approach in the end product. Mine was no exception. It seemed and, in the case of mass-produced items, probably often is a reasonable ethic.

It is difficult for me (and perhaps unnecessary) to disengage myself entirely from the ideological milieu in which I was educated. This milieu has been a source of anxiety for me because after working for six years as a designer, my mind was in a turmoil. The reality I found myself in was in conflict with the basic principles of my

Figure 2. Barcelona Chair by Ludwig Meis Van der Rhoe

An example of design by the "law of mechanical selection".
education. That reality was the business world.

In short, I found that there was little room for those well-intended principles except when they represented economic profit. Attitudes of design were turned off and on with the flux of the marketplace. I learned that in the "functionalists" law previously stated, the powerful factor of sale had been omitted or not considered. In truth that elegantly spartan axiom can only function in a vacuum (much like a doctrine in art) untouched by the realities and incalculables of business. Or it must exist, as it does, in a defiled form where it loses its aesthetic viability. I learned that what all my fellow "professionals" were really engaged in was not the principles of their profession, but those of business. Businesses' business is business—NOT design or engineering or accounting or economics or any other discipline.

There is no doubt that if we are not to become victims of what we ourselves produce, we must quickly attain a society based on other values than buying and selling.3

In this environment my commitment to design as a spiritual activity could not be a fulfilling experience for me. An intense need to have my work satisfy self-realization drives, and the need to reconcile myself with the ethically contradictory situation of my profession made it necessary for me to repudiate Industrial Design

(as it is generally practiced) and experience design in another context. That context was to remove design from business and engage in it as an art—an activity for/of the soul.

The decisions that will shape our society in the future will have to be arrived at, developed and carried out through technology and efficient systems. But they must be based on the same criteria of respect and appreciation for human capacities, freedom and responsibility that prevail in art.4

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4Ibid., p. 173.
CHAPTER III

There was a period when it was my desire to be an interpreter of our technical society by giving visual form to its manufactured objects. I felt it necessary to do this in accordance with contemporary concepts of "functionalist" design philosophy. These concepts appeared to me to represent the most logical approach for fulfilling the needs of, and expressing the quality of, our age. It represented a very optimistic and naive outlook.

Not only was I not fully cognizant of the business realities that effect the functionalist doctrine mentioned in Chapter II, I didn't realize that I was not actually "interpreting", but "designing" within the framework of a preconceived aesthetic doctrine. Any actual interpretation or expression had taken place long before, when the doctrine was composed.

I was also naive in thinking that there actually was a best way to "interpret" any phenomenon—especially one as pervasive as our technological society— or that designing within a precomposed theory devised by other persons was legitimate "expression".

"Labeling is the perennial human substitute for thinking."—Susan Sontag

11.
Furthermore, I was living a curious dichotomy because "interpretation-expression" is a very subjective activity, allowing vast differences of approach. Therefore, it is not even compatible with the "functionalist" values of objective design in which I thought I believed. (See Figure 3) In general, objects designed within the confines of "functionalist" dogma do not deal with many factors, such as irony, humor and sex, that would be considered too nebulous, personal and undefinable to deal with in a rational and objective manner. (How can one deal with these rationally?) However, the more "formal" factors of design, such as line, volume and color can be dealt with fully and elegantly.

I suspect that the "functionalist" - "rationalist" approach is the only viable means for dealing with our consuming society and its requirement of mass production. How else can one design objects for a large, heterogenous group? Otherwise there would be no standard. Chaos and anarchy would exist. This would be mostly due to inept, confused and insincere expressions of other aesthetics (just as it is now -- witness our highways!) that are less definable.

I, personally, must opt for some of that anarchy because it seems that, as our society becomes more technically oriented, we tend to systemize, objectify and, consequently, depersonalize all that is man made. This is a very alienating and even hostile situation for me to live with.
Figure 3. "Meth-Matic", 1953; Wire. 26" x 30" by Jean Tinguely

Tinguely personalizes technology by subjecting the machine to his own whimsy, making it joyous, laughable and definitely something one can cope with.
Due to the new found awareness, mentioned in Chapter II, about my profession and increasing uneasiness about the situation mentioned above, I needed a more intimate relationship with the product and all the steps that might create it. I wanted more of the form determining factors to be personal ones, coming from within myself. While objectivity had been my chosen goal, subjectivity was my inner need.
Prior to the Industrial Revolution craftsmen (artisans) were the designers and manufacturers of society's needed goods. They usually worked with a particular material and type of product because it took many years to perfect competitive skill and gain required knowledge in their material and area. Quantity, quality and the form of each specific object depended on a single individual. As individuals they were generally anonymous to the larger society and, although they probably took pride in their profession, it was considered "labor" or a "trade".

The Industrial Revolution changed and diminished the central role and need for individual craftsmen. With the development of narrower skill specialization (requiring less learning time and technical knowledge of an individual), exact duplication, interchangeability of parts, high speed machinery, and other mass manufacturing procedures, it was no longer practical for one individual to devise and totally build products. The pragmatic indispensibility of the craftsman was no more.

It appears to me that this situation somewhat parallels the fate of visual "artists" several hundred
years before. Where they (the "artists") used to be anonymous and indispensable communicators of the social order to the populace of society (tradesmen—just like the craftsmen) they became separate and special individuals indulging in the activity of "art". The direct need for their work diminished. Their activity evolved to be more like that of poets and philosophers. It became a cultural activity or "art" form. This phenomenon seems to have happened—or be happening—with the crafts also, only it happened—is happening—later in history.

The crafts share many structural components with the visual "arts". Both deal with physical, manipulatable visual media and require consideration of visual (design) elements. In addition, contemporary crafts often have the same cultural and motivational reason for existence as the visual "arts" (music also). The boundary, if there is one, is nebulous and often hard to distinguish. In addition to sharing structural components (line, mass, media, physical workability, color, texture, proportion, etc.), they both are concerned with aesthetic concepts of form—idea—content relationships.

Perhaps now the difference lies only in the somewhat different requirements made of them in history. Where the visual "arts" dealt primarily with visual ideas and the communication of intellectual and emotional concepts, the crafts were concerned with fulfilling visual and physical needs. But this is a dangerous generalization and must be
accepted with reservation. One has only to look at the objects of past eras to see factors that I just ascribed to the visual "arts" existing alongside "craft" factors in the same object. (See Figure 4)

The distinction must, and probably always will, lie within the particular object in question.

Because the craftsman has now been relieved (if he so desires) from the strictly functional requirements of his trade, he can choose to deal with the media of his craft in a much more subjective manner like the "artist" deals with his. Thus the gap between "art" and "craft" closer. Any difference there was had to do with type of concern and approach and not in skill, media or subject. The "spirit" is the same.
Figure 4. XVI-XVII Century "Vargueno", Italian; City Museum, St. Louis

A seventeenth century answer to the problem of storage, rich with symbols and motifs contrived to convey and reinforce ideas other than storage alone.
CHAPTER V

It might be said that the Industrial Designer is the craftsman of modern industry. He is a determiner of form through fabricating processes. But, unfortunately, because of the complexity of industry, his skills are not sufficient to create a product singlehandedly. He must collaborate with and depend on the skills of many other disciplines to realize a product. Instead, he must effect his ideas indirectly through drawing, model making and other media usage. And in designing, he must think vicariously in terms of processes remote to his direct intervention. His visual concepts are strongly influenced by a multitude of complex parameters dictated by production, end use and marketability. His intuitive grasp of all these elements is crucial to his trade. Unlike the craftsman of old, his own physical capabilities rarely have a direct influence on the materials and, therefore, the form.

To regain more personal control of factors determining the form of the object and to satisfy my need for direct manipulation of the materials of which it is made, I turned from industrial design to craft. This meant that I was still dealing with usable objects—objects that people commonly surround themselves with—
but in a more intimate way. And the factor of function (end use and physical workability) was now totally within my control. I could use it as a quality, or sculptural concept (abstraction component), to be dealt with in any manner that I determined.

"Functionalist" values no longer have an exclusive hold on my consciousness. I move away from this classical-empirical-rational philosophy to a more existential preoccupation, where absurdity is given preoccupation and no values are sacred.

Modern art always projects itself into a twilight zone where no values are fixed.5

I move away from "design" to "art".

5Steinberg, Leo, Contemporary Art & The Flight of its Public, quoted in Battcock, Gregory, The New Art, an Anthology, p. 45.
CHAPTER VI

The great sculpture of the past emerged in forms energized by deep and hidden values and forces other than a mere need to produce interesting or challenging forms alone. Magic, ritual, clan attachment, ancestor worship, gods, sacrifice, war, post-mortem life, judgments of hell and heaven, sex, hate, love were some of the activators and functions of formal imagination.

While it is true that our sensibilities today are somewhat reflexed to appreciate technological forms there are deeper forces at work. Sculpture predicated on formal sensibilities alone, no matter what its expressiveness, caters to areas of experience outside the central sensibilities of our time since the thirties. The Furies as well as Dionysius have been unloosed through wars, revolutions, faddisms and varied deep dissatisfactions and elations. Sculpture is called for that is personal yet fashioned out of these central forces of life today, as well as out of the everpresent sweep of nature that makes man what he is.

But sculpture should not merely be relevant to our time and the eternally biologic; it should accomplish this in the most intense way. In order to get this a formal structure is necessary that is adequate to the situation. For myself, ideas, feelings, unconscious drives and other factors are drawn into the organized forms, hopefully to be held in dynamic suspension there. Thus the original generating forces are not frittered away as overt subject-matter, but rendered in dramatic tension with the abstract forms forever as mysterious as life.

Every utilitarian object has a contemplative function as well as a technical one. It is primarily with this contemplative capacity that I am now concerned --

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poetic function. (See Figure 5) I do not want to imply that work done within the framework of "functionalist" doctrine has no contemplative quality; rather, that it is more cerebral in this respect. There is a higher degree of conscious reasoning employed in viewing the object, as well as more standardized criteria for evaluation. But for me:

...The important relationship in a work of art is not between two or more forms, but between itself as a complex event, and the spectator. A paradox of abstractionism (and "functionalism") is that it imposes "apartness" on the work of art, rather than allowing us to discover it personally for ourselves.

I would like to fabricate objects that are more encountered than understood.

As in "functionalist" approach, utilitarian elements in my objects serve as a basis for form invention. All components continue to serve both utilitarian and visual functions simultaneously. Nothing is added for visual reasons alone. But, the visual is definitely emphasized over utility and the function is often distorted to serve, or accentuate, visual and intellectual ideas. (See Plate 1). Hopefully the viewer will encounter these ideas in an emotional-reactive way.

Each work of art demands its response, and the urge that drives man to create—like the creations that result from this strange instinct—is inseparable from a form of "literature".

7Kosloff, Max, Critical Schizophrenia & The Intentionalist Method, from Wattcock, Gregory, The New Art, an Anthology, p. 128.
Figure 5. Palisander wood table for display of prints, 1926, called "Cla-Cla" by Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann, 1879-1933

Opinion: A magnificent example of functional elements organized into a "poetic" result.
whether written or not, whether immediate or premediated. May not the prime motive of any work be the wish to give rise to discussion, if only between the mind and itself?

After this the classification (chair, table, etc.) of the object should become a conscious situation that requires contemplation. The form does not follow the function but, instead, emerges from it and becomes a separate entity owing only its origin to utilitarian reality. One can reflect back on these origins as a point of reference. (See Figure 6 & 7)

Implication of ephemeral and indistinct qualities such as sensuality, humor and joy are very important. Hopefully, by taking advantage of the fact that the object is a recognizable thing, I can accentuate or reinforce stimulation of these subjective experiences.

It seems that this kind of thinking hints of "surrealism" -- where recognizable objects are altered or placed in relation to one another in such a way that our perception of "truth" about these objects and what they represent to us is challenged. Although it is not my intention to be "surreal", this is somewhat the case. I think that the craftsmen, who deals with recognizable objects, often touches on "surrealism" due to the fact that he can't avoid subjecting objects to an interpretation that is very personally his own "reality" about them. (See Figure 8)

Figure 6. "Kitchen Implement Holder", French XIV Century.

The functional object serves as a basis for playful manipulation of material.
Figure 7. "Door Handle Detail", Paris, 1894
Figure 8. "Chest" by Roberta Kohn, 1964

"Surrealism" or furniture?
My forms often have organic, animal-vegetable like qualities that definitely impose themselves on the factual reality of the object. I think that this is due to two factors that require elaboration.

1. The cumulative influence of my desires, personality, libido, psyche and conditioning (includes "formal" education) on how I perceive situations and deal with them.

2. The personal interaction between my physical self and the materials being worked—the way I work and respond to particular qualities of the materials (probably due to all the influences mentioned in number 1).

1. I wish to subject common objects to my fantasy or whimsy in order to give each a character that is either an accentuation of, or a parody on, what it already is (like a caricature); to use the utilitarian elements of the object as a source of form invention and sensual stimulus for myself and the observer; and, above all, it should be joyful, and emphatically optimistic about its own existence. (See Figures 7 and 9)

Thus far, taking functional parts to excess or subjecting the entire object to a transmutation beyond the confines of its utilitarian form are essentially the routes I have experimented with. Unlike pop art, I do not wish to point out the commonplace but, rather, I wish to subject the commonplace to my restructuring—to make the
Figure 9. "Topless, Bottomless, Frontless, Backless Racer by Creative Playthings.

A surrogate race car-But a toy, not a model. Toys, unlike models, allow their creator to deal with his fantasies freely and to derive significant form from the "real thing" with invention and freedom.
commonplace uncommon. (See Plates 1 through 9) Of course, for the viewer to experience thusly, he must accept my restructuring.

It seems to me a function of modern art is to transmit anxiety to the spectator; so that his encounter with the work is a genuine existential predicament.9

It is the point of view that sanctifies; it is selection and placement that will make of anything a sculpture....10

2. As I wish to subject objects to my vision, I want materials to serve this end. But it is only through understanding of the nature of these materials that I can accomplish this. I have found that through this understanding, which requires an intimate, physical involvement, the materials in turn effect my vision. Knowledge and understanding guide the concept.

I have worked primarily with the traditional materials of wood and wrought iron and have handled them, for the most part, in a traditional manner. But my forms have often reflected my own personal approach to the materials which is a unique occurrence. Isamu Noguchi said in reference to his materials and processes: (See Figure 10)

I should like stone to be treated like a newly discovered medium. Both concepts and execution could then be re-examined. Any medium, after all, is new (or old) in time.11

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9Ibid., p. 45.
11Ibid., p. 39.
Figure 10. "Avitar", 1947, by Isamu Noguchi. Georgia Marble, 78" high.
To me there is no single way of making sculpture... Labor and tools are the means for projecting private imaginings into actuality. Skills and tools are to be found as needed; a bulldozer, or a stonemason.  

The deepest values are to be found in the nature of each medium. How to transform but not destroy this...  

In dealing with my materials I have found that knowledge in one enhances knowledge in the other, either through the contrast in their differences or through the emphasis in their similarities. When working the two, one discovers that they are quite a different experience from one another. The iron is fast and immediate; the wood slower and it requires more preconsideration before acting. This effects how I use them in the form. I will predesign the wood parts (as to general form and structure) and save the moment of execution for the designing of the iron parts. I preconceive only the need (character and function) of the particular iron part and "design in" a place for it in the wood structure. Thus far I have built and "evolved" my designs from this point of view; i.e., by building the wood structure almost to completion and then doing the metal to the wood. Any additional woodworking is minor adjustment. Primarily, the iron is

12Ibid., p. 39.
13Ibid., p. 39.
worked to the wood; not the wood to the iron. On occasion I do this with the wood also by predetermining the general shape and specific construction methods and then allowing the final form to evolve within these confines and in juxtaposition to the metal. Wood's sensual qualities and little discoveries that influence the shaping emerge in this way.

When bringing the two materials together, physically, the decision as to which material to move (or shape), and how and when is based on each material's characteristics. Working the wood is mostly a subtractive process. You can more easily remove material then add it. Working the iron is primarily a matter of controlling and determining the length of, along with altering and varying the cross-sectional shape of, a bar. It can be manipulated indefinitely and parts are added or subtracted with relative ease.

The physical differences between the two materials play an important role in how they are used in the object. They assume functions related to their nature. The iron is sinewy and strong in comparison to the wood, and I often use it to support masses of heavy wood forms. The effect is that of a line supporting a shape (See Plate 1); strong visual contrast results. Line can be foiled against mass or open space. (See Figures 11 and 12) Accessory elements, such as hinges, handles and closures, serve as devices for exploring these relationships. (See Plates 2
Figure 11. Church Door, Sweden.
Figure 12. Table, Spanish, XVII Century, 33"x41"x65".

Line(iron) contrasted with open space.
and 5) The wood is essentially mass or volume. The iron is essentially line. I have tried to play these two factors against one another to emphasize each material's intrinsic nature.

It is weight that gives meaning to weightlessness. Lightness added to lightness does not add tension but diminishes it.\[14\]

Tension between the two materials is essential for the expression of each.

\[14\]Ibid., p. 61.
CHAPTER VII

Time will not be taken here to make in depth criticism of my individual pieces. I would like to comment on some general thoughts I have concerning what I have done, should have done and plan to do.

Working in the two materials of wood and metal has slowed my skill development in each, thus creating a great deal of frustration. This is due to the expending of my available energy resources over two crafts simultaneously. This drawback is partially offset by the satisfaction and insight gained in bringing the two materials together and experiencing them as a totality. The idea germination it allowed (stimulated) is exciting and valuable.

As mentioned earlier in this text, I have evolved the metal components out of their function (hinges, handles, legs, etc.). The form of these components could (should) be further explored by giving deeper attention to how they attach to the wood structure. The secondary metal "attachments" (screws, bolts, rivets, etc.) for these components could also be a source for form study and deserves greater attention than I have given to date. My
drawings illustrate some thoughts on these matters. (See Appendix)

Because of the slow rate at which I have been building my pieces, sketching is an important tool for developing from idea to idea. I can evolve and eliminate through sketching (drawing) much like a potter would evolve and eliminate through actual building in his media. This requires working (sensing) "vicariously" through the drawings rather than through the actual media. Sometimes my "sense" of what I could practically accomplish in the metal has been off and I have encountered difficulties when trying to actually carry out an idea. This is probably due to my neophyte status with regard to my experience with metals in contrast to my experience with wood.

I have always used metal as an accessory to, or part of, a multimedia piece. I believe that at this time more skill progress can be achieved in each material by using them separately in single media pieces.

Since my forms continue developing, even in the construction phases, the end result is never exactly like the drawing. But the drawings are essential to understanding the media, as well as a tool for idea generation.

Whether they are specifically referred to or
not in the text, the photographs in this paper are of things that influence my work and thinking.

I am particularly interested in old objects of furniture, machinery and architectural detail. The oft times sensitive use of multiple materials and the personal manner of solving functional needs fascinates me. The way materials relate to one another and function cannot really be discussed as well as they can be "felt". It is basically a happy or "right" feeling. (See Figure 13)

Toys represent, to me, the ultimate example of the characterizing of objects of our "real" world. They can be anything from serious, totally abstract form games to total parodies or cartoons. The freedom to control all aspects of all components of a "real" object exists at its best in the case of toys because they don't remain "real" objects but instead become symbols for the imagination to utilize. (See Figures 9 and 14.) Hot rods and "choppers" are much the same in this manner except that functional requirements can be more confining and these "toys" deal with the "real object" as retaining usability as the "real object". Our imagination must remain confined somewhat within the bounds of the plausible.
Each material (wood and metal) assumes a visual and physical function.
Figure 14. Toy Locomotive, French, Brass, 1890

By emphasizing the salient characteristics of the steam locomotive, not merely duplicating them, the creator of this toy has captured the essence of the steam age.
Bizarre ideas, sensitivity to materials and form, finish and skill are matters of aesthetic consideration. These "machines" are true contemporary American folk art. (See Figure 15)
Figure 15. Hot Rod, by Gale Plummer, Oregon

A big toy—It is almost more of a cartoon than an automobile.
CHAPTER VIII

The painter and sculptor Barnet Newman said:

The subject matter of creation is chaos. 15

This comment was made by a man who, in many respects, epitomizes the "conceptual" in visual aesthetic thinking. Over the period of his entire life he reduced the art of painting to an experience of a kind of profound tension, or energy, utilizing color as his vehicle. Paint, and even color, was a means for expressing his inner feelings (a metaphysical system)-ideas about that larger question of chaos.

This kind of thinking and use of media, in visual art, seems to represent one extreme (pole) in aesthetics - the "conceptual". The other, I think, is when an artist is "materialistic" or media oriented. By this I mean that as opposed to being strongly concerned with general abstract concepts, like those of Mr. Newman, and engaging in the use of visual media to explore them, the artist's ideas (forms) take impetus from the materials he works with. It is a more sensual and less stoic approach.

I expect that neither of these extremes exists in its pure state. But when I consider things in this perspective I can see myself and other people on a scale of reference where these extremes represent opposite ends of the spectrum. Perhaps all art falls somewhere between "media orientation" and "concept orientation."

In this regard I think that the crafts tend toward the "materialist" end. I also tend this way, due to my emotional need to "work" materials. But I know that there is also a strong tendency to the "conceptual" working within me also. Specifically, I am concerned with questions of sculptural form (maybe all form) being a matter of tension and contrast. That is, a visual counterpoint through juxtaposition of: material to material, texture to texture, to line, to mass, to space and function to non-function.

I cannot separate these intellectual concerns from a side of me that needs to "react" to materials and be physically working with them. My mind does not want to function separately from my body.
Plate 1. "Popcorn Box" by Author. 12" x 28" x 30"
Mahogany and wrought iron.
Plate 2. "Popcorn Box" by Author. Another view.
Plate 3. "Wiggely Box" by Author. 16"x16"x60", Mahogany, Poplar and Wrought Iron and mirrors.
Plate 4. "Wiggely Box" by Author.
Another view.
Plate 5. "Chest" by Author. 21"x30"x8", Birch and Wrought Iron
Plate 6. "Chest" by Author. Another view.
Plate 7. "Vanity", 72" long, $\frac{1}{4}$" high, $\frac{3}{4}$" deep. Mahogany, glass and aluminum. By Author.
Plate 8. "Vanity" by Author. Another view.
APPENDIX

DRAWINGS BY AUTHOR
TALL PROPORTION

SINGLE HINGE ON ONE EDGE — ALSO A LEG
SUPPORT & HINGE

SWIVEL OPEN
Panel Const.
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