2008

Recollection

Erika Tada

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

Recommended Citation

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Thesis/Dissertation Collections at RIT Scholar Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses by an authorized administrator of RIT Scholar Works. For more information, please contact ritscholarworks@rit.edu.
Rochester Institute of Technology

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of

The College of Imaging Arts and Sciences

In Candidacy for the Degree of

Master of Fine Arts

Recollection

By: Erika Tada
Approvals

Chief Advisor: ______________________________ Date:______________  
Michael Rogers

Associate Advisor: ______________________________ Date:______________  
Luvon Sheppard

Associate Advisor: ______________________________ Date:______________  
Robin Cass

Permission Statement

I, Erika Tada, hereby grant permission to the RIT Library of the Rochester Institute of Technology to reproduce my thesis in whole or in part. Any reproduction will not be for commercial use or profit.

Date: ____________ Signature of Author: ___________________

Rochester Institute of Technology

This volume is property of the Institute, but the literary rights of the author must be respected. Please refer to Permission Statement in this volume for denial or permission by author to reproduce. In addition, if the reader obtains any assistance from this volume, he must give proper credit in his own work.

This thesis has been used by the following persons, whose signatures attest to their acceptance of the above conditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgements

I would like to express my appreciation to my professors, colleagues and family who supported me while I was finishing this dissertation.

The members of my thesis committee, Michael Rogers (Chair), Robin Cass, and Luvon Sheppard, have been invaluable throughout the completion of this thesis investigation. My special thanks to go Professor Michael Rogers and Robin Cass for their creative insights, innovative ideas and productive criticism of my artistic direction. Most importantly, they helped me develop my narrative and sculptural aspects. They have been an essential source of inspiration for my art career.

I would like to express heartfelt appreciation to my parents, Sekiyoshi Tada and Masako Tada, who supported me my entire life, and my husband, Hweawon Chung. This thesis is dedicated to them.
List of Tables

Approvals ii
Permission Statement ii
Acknowledgements iii
List of Tables iv
List of Figures v

I. Original thesis statement 1

Statement of the basic premises 2
Statement of goals and objectives of the thesis investigation 3

II. Critical discussion of the body of work in relation to the issues presented in the Introduction, Section I

1. Memories, present and future ........................................... 4
2. Nature ................................................................. 6
3. Glass characteristics and historical resources ...................... 7
4. Contents and contexts ................................................. 12
5. Artistic influences ..................................................... 16
6. Thesis work: Letter ..................................................... 21
7. Thesis work: Branches and Socks .................................. 23
8. Thesis work: Mailbox .................................................. 25
9. Extension of thesis work: Leaf ....................................... 27
10. Extension of thesis work: Bird and Stones ....................... 29

III. Critical discussion of the results of the thesis work, in relation, to the issue presented in the Introduction, Section I 31

Works Cited 33
List of Figures

Figure.1  Botanical Museum of Harvard University, Coffea Arabica L  ...... 10
Figure.2  George-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, Cabinet du Roy .......... 15
Figure.3  Joseph Beuys, Double Objects ........................................... 18
Figure.4  Joseph Cornell, Untitled (Dovecote) ................................. 20
Figure.5  Letter .................................................................................. 22
Figure.6  Branches and Socks .............................................................. 24
Figure.7  Mailbox 1023 .................................................................... 26
Figure.8  Leaf I .................................................................................. 28
Figure.9  Bird and Stones ................................................................. 30
Figure.10 Vegetables ......................................................................... 34
Figure.11 Mailbox 1223 ................................................................. 35
Figure.12 Mail of Love ................................................................. 36
Figure.13 Mail of Dad ................................................................. 37
Figure.14 Leaf II ........................................................................ 38
Figure.15 Leaf III ........................................................................ 39
Figure.16 Leaf IV ........................................................................ 40
Figure.17 Colanders ....................................................................... 41
I try to retain memories of my family and express the emotions I feel at the time I receive precious things, such as letters, pictures and small objects. These memories and objects of mine are protected and kept secretly and importantly in containers. I can look into these objects and be reminded of the places and time of my childhood experiences and travels.

After I came to the United States of America, I began to realize the importance of my family. I place special significance on anything that my parents send me or that reminds me of my native country. I keep my family and friends close by creating kiln cast glass sculpture that reflects the time we have spent together. My glass containers protect and keep these special objects.

Through my glass pieces, I hope to communicate with others. The viewers have their own personal memories and experiences, and I hope my pieces cause nostalgia in the viewer for what they have seen and experienced in their own lives.

Original thesis statement
Statement of the basic premises of the thesis

My current work is about my life, important events and special moments of happiness I have experienced. By having a dialogue with my emotions and expressing my pleasure in working with the glass, I can reflect upon my relationship with my family and friends, and look back upon my history and myself. Moreover, this process helps me adjust to my life here in the United States.

It is important to me to attach special meaning to even ordinary things which I see everyday. Having different sense-making abilities, I can find fascinating objects that have great details, colors, and shapes in both humans and nature. This relationship with the natural beauty of these objects helps me to feel happiness and emotional serenity; I may keep those in a jewel box. Moreover, when I take these objects in my hand and hold them, they take me back to places and moments in my past as far back as I can remember, giving me the remembrance of a pleasurable time. I also feel more intimacy with nature and commonplace objects that are related to my personal experiences, such as travel, memories, and my everyday life because I can conserve my special home and time.
Abstract

My central thesis meaning is seeking to recollect my authentic experiences and memories, and to encapsulate my emotions and any "small happiness" I encounter. For the concept of preservation of my memories, I intend to document important times and places by recalling my childhood and family history, and to make my memories eternal. During the process of creating my glass art, I can signify my personal experience in relation to my inner life. I am working with my feelings, and I make objects important and of great reverence in my life. Moreover, this process helps me assimilate a new culture and people here in the United States. Also, solitary feelings of isolation are consoled, and even the sense of distance from home is lightened. I try to represent the best of myself and my most personal and intimate feelings. Glass objects are collected as remembrances of my life that are also meant to evoke observer’s memories.
Critical discussion of the body of work in relation to the issues presented in the

Introduction, Section I

1. Memories, present and future

As a transplant from Tokyo, Japan, I keep my family and friends close by creating glass sculpture that reflects the time I have spent with them. My family, my experiences, and my Japanese culture have mostly influenced my art work.

My early family experiences play a large part in my artistic direction. I was brought up very rigidly as a second child by my father and mother in a traditional family. They have always been supportive of my education. My family also includes my brother and my sister. My father is a strict and persistent worker. My relationship with my father could not be described as close. I didn’t understand his strict education, and I barely have memories of the times that he played with me. My mother, who is so much more warm and tender, has the capacity and space to sympathize with us. I unconsciously look for pleasant moments from my past, and I am seeking to be immersed in warmth, like within my mother’s arms, before I know it consciously. One of the reasons for creating my glass work is the recollection of thoughts of the relationship between my parents and myself.

I was urged to study glass in the United States. I moved to Nebraska State to enter in 2001 with much enthusiasm for my future. In 2003, I began my graduate study in the Department of Glass and Sculpture at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT.) After I moved away from my home town, I straddled two very different cultures. I have tried to assimilate a new culture and incorporate my own cultural history. At the same time, I realized my family’s importance. My art has resulted in a focus on the history of my life.
I traveled to many places and countries over the past several years for my studies. I have visited galleries, museums, artists’ studios, and schools. The dialogue, which I have had with the other artists and people, gave me the opportunities to expand my aesthetic thoughts and other technical knowledge. Through those experiences in the United States, my interest in American culture/art and its uniqueness has grown, and my travel and everyday life have become significant. Also, I think that being raised in a traditional Japanese family has contributed to my affinity with those outside the cultural mainstream.

My work has evolved greatly, just as I have grown as a person and artist. My current work has matured as my vision has gradually developed by my immersion in the American culture and especially from the direction of my professors. To point out specific visual/conceptual changes is difficult to verbalize, so suffice it to say that I have grown through my experiences, both intellectually and technically. These changes in my work are sometimes easy to view and at other times are more subtle. I look forward to each day that I am creating, so I can discover my own artistic directions.

Growing as an artist and person, I plan to pursue my artistic goals by studying and visiting new places. I get a feeling of happiness and accomplishment when I create art, share, and communicate my ideas with others. The personal encounters, past, present and in my imagined future life, along with American culture, are all influential to my aesthetic imaginations. I want to enhance new ways of insight, perception, and awareness through my future experiences. I will continue pursuing exhibition of my art work internationally in the future.
2. Nature

All my life, I have been influenced by my surroundings, Japanese heritage, culture, society, nature and art. I have often been amazed and thrilled by my environment; this is what inspired me to become an artist and shaped the way I look at the world.

As traditional Japanese, I feel at ease to live as a part of nature and to appreciate the simple natural qualities of things, which is a Japanese aesthetic ideal. In the customary Japanese way of life, we deeply associate with nature and spiritual objects as one would with a friend by mutual affection and communication. The abundance of cloth, paper, wood, bamboo and clay, natural elements in our natural surroundings has been used in our daily lives since ancient times. These materials, effectively used, retain original qualities and become a symbol of nature in daily life in Japan.

I believe that I have great sensibility to see the aesthetic value in nature. I attach meaning to even the most diminutive and commonplace flower that people might pass without notice. Having extensive sense-making abilities, I can find fascination in objects that have complex details, colors, textures, and shapes from nature. Fascination might also be found in the recollection of wonderful natural sceneries from my extensive travels in the unique geography of Japan and other countries. In my travels, I have seen different conditions, climates, and nature adapt differently. I am interested in the nature of the four seasons in various parts of the world. There are familiar plants from back home that look the same everywhere, but they are different.

I became interested in plants and botany which has stayed with me all my life. By duplicating these objects in glass, I can observe such entities and constructs. It is the primary way for me to attach special meaning to everyday objects, which then become a symbol of the powerful way I communicate with nature. By enjoying these pleasures and having a dialogue
with nature, it soothes me to have a pastime that alleviates the sense of distance from my home country. I can reflect upon my relationship with my family and look back upon myself. These are constantly my artistic resources that expand my imagination further. The series of nature works, my life and the natural world are interwoven. I can see the wholeness of life and feel a deep reverence for the beauty of it all.

3. Glass characteristics and historical resources

I am attracted to glass as my art making material for many reasons. I was first drawn to glass because of all the artistic possibilities that glass presents. Glass as material is attractive itself, it is transparent, reflects the light, is smooth, attenuated, and abundant with rich colors. It is beautiful and synchronously intractable, its subtle and fragile. All its characteristics are the nature and strength of glass, which makes me attempt to control it. Glass articulates my intimate experiences and stops the time and freezes my memories as eternal.

When I began glass making, I used glass because of the interior space and its transparency, which present great potentials to me for my ideas. I took advantage of the interior to create new worlds. This space might be different from our lives and a seemingly endless and fascinating world. It reminds us what we have seen and experienced, something dear, a natural feeling, scenery into the past. We can imagine the world so that there may be something we identify with in the glass space, a space far from ours. At the same time, this world feels nostalgic in our minds.

Afterward, I started to utilize the glass transparency to create containment. Currently, I try to contain my expressions and emotions of the time that I receive the cherished objects such
as letters, pictures and small objects. The inherent transparent quality of glass allows me to look into the enclosed objects through the glass.

I combine many glass-forming techniques such as glass blowing, kilncasting, fusing, enameling, and various cold glass working methods. My principle technique is kilncasting, a method of kiln firing that uses color chunks of glass. I am interested in the relationships of blowing glass and kilncasting glass, mostly Pâte de verre. The most important reason for me to use glass blowing was to make containers, and kilncasting was to make the substances inside. It is visually interesting and possible to create reality in pieces that have the opposite characteristics of transparency and opaqueness, naturally forming the well-detailed object. Especially when I "handle" molten glass, I often feel that glass has a will of its own. I am always fascinated by the beauty of its movement. Working with made cast glass parts together with blown glass at the hot shop is technically difficult, and as result it gives me motivation and excitement.

My principle glass technique, Pâte de Verre, allows me the most possibility for my creative expression, conveying my thoughts, feelings, and unrestricted designs in detail. Pâte de Verre describes a technique of glass making, a method of kiln firing that uses color powder or crushed glass combined with binding agents. It means literally “paste of glass,” and originated in France at the end of the 19th century. The early stages of Pâte de Verre began in ancient Egypt. After the technique was lost with the invention of the glass blowing technique, which lent much better to mass-production, it was rediscovered by the French artist Henri Cros (1840-1907) in the end of the 19th century.

Also, Amalric Walter (1859-1942), Albert Dammouse (1848-1926), Francois Decorchemont (1880-1971), Georger Despret (1862-1952), and Argy Rousesau (1885-1953) were the representative French artists during the Art Nouveau Era and their work been
significant historical resources. Because these French artists kept the technique secret, it disappeared with the death of these artists. Currently, there is a lack of distinction between the term Pâte de Verre and casting technique even though the term Pâte de Verre is used universally by glass artists to categorize their cast glass works. However, I would say that there is distinction between Pâte de Verre and casting technique. Pâte de Verre is able to be discriminated from kilncasting according to the use of varied granule glass and possibility of color placement.

My technical, aesthetic and historical significance is the Ware Collection of Blaschka Glass Models of Plants-at the Harvard Museum of Natural History in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which is described below.

First, there is the triumph of all artistic naturalism, the successful deception of senses: these glass models are more lifelike than the most painstaking Dutch still life. Second, there is the triumph of enduring art over the ephemeral nature: it is the essence of the beauty of flowers to be fleeting, but the blue delphinium blossom, even the half-yellowed leaf, are frozen in time, like an insect in amber. Finally, there is the triumph of form over matter, of artistry over the resistance of natural materials: the sheer unsuitability of hard, brittle glass to mimic the delicate fronds, soft petals veined leaves, fleshy fruits, and thready roots of plants turns these models into wonders. What would be ordinary in nature become extraordinary in art.¹

Although Blaschka Glass was made by flameworking, I feel that it is connected to Pâte de Verre because of their delicate and time-consuming processes. The process of applying multiple colored powder glass to the mold is quite similar to the medium of still life painting, which requires close observation. It allows depicting inanimate subject matter. I used Pâte de Verre to
Fig.1. Coffea Arabica L.

Glass flower. Botanical Museum of Harvard University
make glass leaves, branches, vegetables, nuts, stones and shells from nature objects. The potentialities of varied colors make me try to duplicate natural features as close as possible. In order to capture the qualities of original nature, forms, colors, textures, and compositions, I closely examine the composition of every single piece of the natural object while packing the glass. According to Kent H, Gerge, as in nature, no two flowers or leaves of a single plant are exactly the same, so in the glass reproduction every minute variation is followed with the greatest fidelity.²

The results of kiln firing or Pâte de Verre are not exactly the same as I attempt. At times, it comes up with unexpected results of the color and flow of the glass and relies on various occasions to meet better natural appearance. An object which has been cast by this method characteristically exhibits rich and subtle colors and well-detailed soft translucent or opaque appeal which is significantly different from the appearance of blown glass. The surface of varying degree of matteness is directly related to the size of the glass granular fragments chosen and whether the glass that was added to the mold was transparent or opaque when it was applied. After annealing the mold with glass, it is taken out from the kiln and the glass is then removed from the refractory mold. Finally, the glass surface is treated by grinding, polishing, sandblasting, carving, acid-etching or artificial treatment.

The glass characteristic of tenderness, fragility and complexity help me to express my intimate experiences and capture the moment of the special time. Though the process requires extreme ability of sensitively and patience, my creative mind is put to work. The process of observation and painting the glass powder look like traces of my memories. It provides a method to recollect the experiences of my life. I will continue to research and to utilize Pâte de Verre for
my creative expression as an essential glass method. My technique is developed for duplicating the wonders of nature. The glass medium is the best vehicle to tell my personal history because of its unique characteristics. There is so much possibility to be found for my art.

4. Contents and contexts

In my career of creating art, there is one area that fascinates me. That is the relationship between artists and their works and the people who appreciate them. I seek to communicate with others through my glass. My work is open enough to engage with viewers while still being personal. It has the ability to elicit empathy from others; there is a quality in something that is experienced that arouses a feeling of pathos and pity, or love and happiness. I don't intend for the viewer to extract an exact meaning, but to experience some nostalgia or to relive his or her own experiences. In the end, only an impression from the visual dialogue will remain in the viewer’s mind.

How I communicate with my work is a language of metaphors in which I use symbols to define specific meanings in a specific context. Rabbits or birds represent people or an idea of “self”, multiple kinds of containers are “treasure boxes” or “nests” of memories and history, a place to store treasures. These symbols have the ability to bring one’s awareness out unconsciously and make each piece more intimate, adding poetic and narrative essences. The item of collection in the past is the evidence of specific time and place that we were there. The form can be an object, a photograph, or a diary with written words. These are “memory traces,” an indirect bridge to connect past and present across the transient gap. The idea of “memory trace” demands something that represents the past, carries information about it.
Throughout my life the rabbit, as a symbol, has been an emotional attraction and one of the objects that reminds me of my past. Whenever and wherever I see the moon, it reminds me of childhood and it relieves insecure feelings. “Rabbit! What can you see when you jump? You must see a full moon…” I hummed the song when I was a child. I thought that the dusky shadow of the moon was the figure of a rabbit pounding the rice cake in the moon.

The phases identifying the markings of the moon as a rabbit pounding a rice cake is based on the traditional psychological phenomenon involving a vague stimulus being perceived as significant. There are many legends of the moon that express our culture, and are as old as human consciousness. The image of the phases of the moon was thought to be related to birth, growth, decay, death, and rebirth, and serves as many different symbols. In Japan, the rabbit is thought of a symbol of the moon, originating from the story, “Rabbit in the Moon”. It is included in “Story of Konjyaku” volume 5, and it indicates the Buddhist idea that the Buddha’s original former life was as a Buddhist saint even though his transmigrations of the soul were into a rabbit, monkey and the king of the country as well. The story tells the heart of the rabbit, desperation and mercy. This is the story:

A group of animals came upon a beggar who asks them for help. Each animal left and returned with something for the beggar. One brought him sticks for a fire, another some eggs, and another some fruit, and so on. But, the rabbit was unable to find anything and came back empty handed. The rabbit was very sad that he could not give something to the beggar. He said to the beggar, “since I could not find anything for you to eat, you may eat me.” With that, he jumped into the fire. However, when the fire died out all the animals were surprised to see that the rabbit was not
harmed. For being so generous, the beggar put the rabbit on the moon as a reward, so that everyone could see and honor him. 

Birds are another symbol involved in my work. Birds have played prominent and diverse roles in culture, religion, folklore, art and design in human society. The bird is thought to have been the symbol of spirituality symbolizing a spiritual awareness and feelings of empowerment, hope, peace, and exhilaration. Soaring high in the sky, birds in flight may symbolize carrying messages from person to person. It may be a herald, bringing news about something that may soon come into being in our life. It also has a sense of freedom and hope. Singing, chattering, with an emphasis on the ability of the bird to correspond, it represents communication among people. Diligently nurturing and protecting their young and nests, birds are also typify love, care, resembling motherhood.

It is inspiring for me to be active and to pursue my art in this symbolic way since I had a close relationship with the rabbit and bird as metaphors in my work. This way of working helped me experience nature in a more intimate way. In my art, the rabbit and bird indicates self the relationships among people, and these can produce a viewer’s intimacy and affection because of its ephemeral nature.

In everyday life, containers have general use as repositories for collections, conveyance, and preservation. I observe the beauty of everyday objects and place special value to these forms as interpretations of my artistic purpose. The various containers are significant components to add particular contexts. These containers offer an idea of what they are and what they mean in my art. Multiple kinds of containers are “treasure boxes” or “nests” to preserve recollection of my memories. These protect secretly and importantly glass enclosures with which the containers
are functionally essential. In addition, the containers elicit a sense of wonder and curiosity. The status of the containment is that of a relay or a place of transit through which the eye must pass to reach its goal. The objects communicate to us through containers heightening our emotion of curiosity. In the 16th and 17th centuries, rooms and cabinets built to display collections of precious objects were amazingly elaborate and were called “Cabinets of Curiosity”. These cabinets can be small but still encompass the whole world in their collections of illustrated texts, maps, coins, scientific devices, seashells, other natural specimens, as well as man-made objects. According to Lynne Cooke and Peter Wollen,

![Fig.2. George-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, Cabinet du Roy, 1749](image)

Curiosity, therefore, is a term that indicates historically and culturally a specific attitude to the collection and display of objects, and would have had no meaning before 1550. To use the striking phrase of Krzysztof Pomian, who has done more than anyone else to revive interest in
phenomenon, it “enjoyed a temporary spell in power, while, at the same time, it is tempting to look more deeply into the precise position curiosity occupied between “theology” and “science.”

These are the genealogical connections between contemporary visual display and historical art cabinets, “Cabinets of Curiosity,” which both elicit an air of mystery. The interior is filled with rows of objects and side compartments and recalls the display cases of museums or department stores. “Cabinets of Curiosity” contributes to the concept of “memory traces”.

In my work, I consider using objects that tell poetic stories. I create glass components that are transformations of self, person, place and time, which reminds the viewers of introspective emotions. It is important for me to consider how the objects themselves communicate to the viewers. What role do the visual and the technical conditions of display fulfill in the viewers’ experiences? I would like to explore these ideas, as well as to keep pursuing the ultimate question: “Why do I make art?”

5. Artistic influences

I express my history using glass representing containers and commonplace objects as vehicles of expression of everyday life. There are two significant contemporary artists, Joseph Beuys and Joseph Cornell, who are influential artists to my aesthetic thoughts. These artists created sculpture responding their immediate recognition and expressed their messages into their works across to large number of people using common forms. They used the metaphor to represent varied meanings into each feature in their metaphysical world.
Joseph Beuys was a German artist who made social sculpture. He considered art as a medium for affecting social and political change. He envisioned the society using his mysterious and unfathomable objects such as the commonplace, unusual materials and objects, and animals, which became a vivid metaphor. He manipulated and transformed these objects, and gave them new meaning by altering and placing them in new contexts. The process of change inherent in Beuys’s art is also one of important metaphors for the transitory states of existence and ephemerality of the human condition. His objects, which often exist as the residue of action/event, are meant to provoke a discussion of larger social and political issues; however, he does not force anything to each viewer. Kazuhiro Yamamoto said,

His material is always a common object easily found in our everyday life…I am not referring to the mere function in everyday use where these objects are consumed and disposed of. Their original use as a tool, which is the ultimate purpose of their function that is, the materialization of efforts to lead better life is attempted in each one of Beuys’s works. However, or perhaps I should say naturally, it is not as if his works incorporate messages full of such preaching. He is trying to provide human beings, who are burying their talents in the use and consumption of the function of the tools they are given, an opportunity to switch on their dormant energy. By showing the viewers the sight of reality, each viewer has to extract the <counterimage> on his own account. All Beuys’s actions, installations, objects, sculptures, and lectures are a means of communicate onto evoke this counterimage. The materialization of this <counterimage>, which excludes any enforcement, is indeed a German method of romantic irony.
Fig. 3. Joseph Beuys, Double Objects, 1974-79
Vitrine, 205.7x220x49.5 cm
The other influential artist is Joseph Cornell. His most characteristic art works were sculpture of simple boxed assemblages created from surprising collections of found objects, photographs and beautiful and precious objects. He transformed these diverse objects from their original state into extraordinary and magical items. According to Hartigan, Lynda Roscoeb, Cornell assembled elements in matrix of metaphors designed to incite wonder, curiosity, and contemplation about the physical and spiritual interrelationship of man and nature.6

His box construction allows to tell the poetic stories within visual languages, controls the direction the viewer’s eye, and guides it around the surface of the box to four corners of the construction. He was also an archivist of expressing the time, which he juxtaposed old and new, combined past and present tense. These essential ingredients come through in his dusky retrospective of childhood, nature, fantasy, science and space. His elements were symbolized to specific meaning, and associated to his personal memories and experiences. His life was as work itself and archive of storyteller.

Bob Verschueren is a natural sculptor concentrating on his plant installation. His works influenced my aspect of the presentation. His choice of materials, artistic approach, and resonated provoking messages are most similar examples to my work. He uses common materials such as twigs, leaves and fruits, presents them as repetition, arranges precise, rigid geometric forms. His work gains strength and intrigue as a result of careful observation and instinctive response to the physical structure, shape, texture, and colors of nature within solid and artificial context of the chosen location.
Fig.4. Joseph Cornell, Untitled (Dovecote), 1953
Box construction, 37.5x27.6x7.3 cm
6. Thesis work: *Letter*

After I moved away from my family and struggled with new culture and people in America, I became introverted because of my loneliness. One day, my father sent me a letter with a small piece of beautiful coral inside. It was a most memorable gift from my father, and I strived to remember the moment of happiness of the time when I received his letter. I made thirty-five envelopes, one month letters from my father. The presentation of format is systematic repetition and setting envelopes in an array of seven envelopes by five lines, which indicate by a calendar, with individually dated labels. The cast substances of inside envelopes are unique to another, mostly composing of corals, shells and other remnants of the beach brought in from the shore. To create these pieces, I combine different techniques, glass blowing, which was to make the envelopes, and kilncasting which was to make the shells. The transparency of glass envelopes are blended with white shelves. Highly colorful and opaque cast objects are obviously a focal point, and these create realism to each feature. It is all my affinity for the transient of my life, its passing special moments and consequently my memories with my family. I hope that my work visually operates with the observers to recall their own past.
Fig. 5. Letter
Blown Glass envelopes and Pâte de Verre inserts, 100x180x10 cm
7. Thesis work: *Branches and Socks*

One day I was walking on campus, and I found a small surprise when I saw many broken branches sticking out from under the snow. I started to collect those pieces of branches; they were so cold. It was a similar feeling as I had when I collected stones and leaves as a child. There was a very special attachment and meaning to those branches because they only existed in that time and place. I duplicated in great detail, colors and forms from nature by using glass. I made seven bundles of branches for a week and the red and blue socks to each bundle. The small details of knitted twine draw attention to one area of the branch. The process of knitting socks took me back to some early moments in my life. It is like the caring of a mother for her children during the winter. I attempted to express my affection to those branches. Hence, I incorporated the other materials, red color twine, to reflect my fond and tender feelings. The favorite color I use was red because it is the essence of passion and beauty. The red attracts more viewers because red immediately makes the strongest notice of all the colors. The bundle with the blue sock is included a different shape of the branch to another and recognized a special day of a week. The tread hanging from the socks symbolized my continuing care. This piece let me expect the possibility to the interdisciplinary approach to my creative activity. I would explore with other sculptural materials, such as fabrics, quilts, and other raw materials to new medium. By expressing my intimate feeling to nature with my glass art, I can signify the times and places that I have been. It is the recollection of wonderful time and sceneries of my life.
Fig.6. Branches and Socks
Pâte de Verre, 8x50x30 cm
8. **Thesis work: Mailbox**

My idea, mailbox, came from my travel in Tasmania, Australia with my friend. The island appeared so artistic and imaginative and totally different from the city where I grew up. I felt a very special feeling when I saw many different characteristic mailboxes in front of each house. The mailbox is expressing each house with diverse colors and shapes. Some were old because people do not care for them, and a twig, a leaf, and a rag cloth unexpectedly appear in the shadow of mailbox. It is an entrance and an exit of people’s communication and the place of receiving and giving things among family and friends. Therefore, I attempted to express the mailbox, which is transfer of the information by glass. It is the primary way for me to everyday objects and a symbol of the powerful ways we communicate. Sometimes we may be surprised by special mails or gifts from others, through real letters and gifts are more special rather than any kind of electric communication. The surprising gifts and letters are more intimate and special among people. My intension of this series was to express the relationship between families and people in various situations. I turn my viewpoint to the daily objects, and it is the one of the works which I take account of personal special meaning on it. I take pride in my certain sensitivity to distinguish essence by my intuition.
Fig. 7. Mailbox 1023

Kiln Casting, Pâte de Verre, 21x22x50 cm
9. Extension of thesis work: *Leaf*

More recently I began making wall-based boxed construction by assembling multiple diverse elements. It is the experimentation of the altered presentation format. The boxed structure increases viewer’s emotion of curiosity. The box, the repository of my recollection, encloses all of my dreams past, present, and future; my past and present are interwoven. The items that I chose are natural objects that I collected from my recent travel in Seattle, Washington and features, birds, as a metaphor of "self" in the past. When I enter the innermost depths of a forest in Seattle, I found the extremely large leaf that I have never seen before. It is called "Devil’s Walking Stick", and I was fascinated by its size, great details, colors, and shapes, and its unique name made me more interested in it. When I hold these nature objects, they take me back to places where I visited in the past. Each memorable item establishes new mutual relationship and builds new context. It is one of my purposes is that my art work provides a trigger, visual language, to communicate with viewers, which reminds their introspective sceneries and emotions.
Fig. 8. Leaf I
Kiln Casting, Pâte de Verre, 64x 61x14 cm
10. Extension of thesis work: *Bird and Stones*

This piece is focusing on two symmetrical introspective memories of my childhood. Throughout my life, I have collected objects that have an emotional fascination, some objects remind me of happiness and some recall my sorrowful experiences. I used the shopping bag shape as a container with glass stones and a bird. The presentation as long horizontal display of seven shopping bags symbolizes the passage of the time. I lined up seven bags and the number indicates a week. The cast objects, stones and a bird, are placed inside of the bags or on the floor. I intentionally install the pieces on the floor to produce the enough atmospheres around them. The shopping bags, although all relatively similar dimensions to one another, all have unique shapes. The color symbolizes my diverse emotions. The multiple clear bags express the positive feeling to collect beautiful natural stones, and one black bag expresses the negative feeling to collect a dead bird, faced the other way. The use of appropriate color is also a visually significant part of my work and ties all items together as their common denominator.
Fig. 9. Bird and Stones
Blown Glass, Kiln Casting, Pâte de Verre, 26x170x26 cm
Critical discussion of the results of the thesis work, in relation, to the issue presented in the Introduction, Section I

My several installation works occupied entire atmosphere and time as a cohesive work at the gallery. My Master Fine Arts (MFA) Thesis Exhibition, “Recollection”, was started at NTID Dyer Arts Center from 9 January to 13 February 2006. In the entire show, my body of works presented remembrances of my life, which I composed the poetical imaginative short stories, world of imagination. Hence, these narrative works accomplished operating to the viewer’s mind and communicating with spectators. There were significant visual textures, such as presentation, space, size and color practices. My works’ setting formats had the keys, consistency and repetition, to produce sense of the collection of the memories. As a strong strategy, I used various presentations and the boxed structure elicits curiosity and the shadow and various sizes cause undulation impressions. Moreover, the pieces were set individually or as a group on the pedestal, wall or shelves, narrated to their specific contexts. The height of each piece was an effective part of the composition of the gallery because it directed the eyes of the viewers walking through and guided them to the next piece. The “Letter” was the central piece installed on the wall in the back of the gallery. It was the largest size and number of items installed among all of the works. The “Mailbox” series were separately composed on the pedestal as a single piece. The “Branches and Socks” was set on a lower pedestal as if they picked branches up from the ground. I attached the labels, which indicated the date or words; it leads the observer’s imagination to specific direction. Although I attempted adding the specific meaning, I believe that the viewer cannot totally grasp it but within their experiential. The color relationship tied the show together based on the white of the entire gallery wall and shelves,
glass transparency, and some kilncasting glass-colored objects. There was a bit of use of red color as sweetness and warmth in every other piece. The addition of materials such as wood work, fabric, twine stated further the delicate aesthetic values and emotion.

The glass elements with multiple kinds of containers expressed my collection of my diverse events. The elements of leaves, branches, seeds, shells, stones, and the symbols of rabbits and birds are my treasures of my life, which I chose to represent in my work. The bowls signified the customary times the meal, the socks were the affection of mother, and the mailboxes were the relationships among people. These features function as trigger associates, metaphors of the language. The content is sometimes too specific or personal such as rabbit or bird, so often the subtlety of visual reference helps to engage with others refer to the context.

The technical characteristics of Pâte de Verre cooperated with my aesthetic expression, capturing the reality of the nature and expressing all my intimacy with its characteristic of subtly. Certainly, my memories were all frozen. Glass transparency made it possible to look into the features through the containers, create a state of curiosity.

My life was enriched by the way I appreciate to the beauty of nature, and signify the existence of my family through completing this show. I conceived the best of myself and sequentially my works were resulted as transformation of my delicate feelings. Coming future, I anticipate discovering my own new artistic and life directions.


**Works Cited**


Cambridge, MA: Botanical Museum of Harvard University, 1992, p.103. Figure.1.

Cambridge, MA: Gerge H. Kent University Bookstore, 1908, p. 10.


Bay Press, Incorporated Bay Press, 1995, p. 23. Figure.2.


Tokyo, Japan: Fuji Television Gallery Co., Ltd, 1993, p. 48

Houston, TX: Menil Foundation, Inc, 2004, p.69. Plate 61. Figure.3.


Fig. 10. Vegetables
Blown Glass bowls and Pâte de Verre inserts, 100x90x25 cm
Fig. 11. Mailbox 1223
Kiln Casting, 21x22x50 cm
Fig. 12. Mail of Love
Kiln Casting, 21x22x50 cm
Fig.13. Mail of Dad
Kiln Casting, 21x22x52 cm
Fig. 14. Leaf II
Kiln Casting, Pâte de Verre, 22x32x8 cm
Fig. 15. Leaf III
Kiln Casting, Pâte de Verre, 28x19x8 cm
Fig. 16. Leaf IV

Kiln Casting, Pâte de Verre, 20x20x8 cm
Fig. 17. Colanders

Kiln Casting colanders and Pâte de Verre inserts, 128x165x32 cm