

INTUITION AS A DESIGN ELEMENT

• It was midday, in 1980, sitting on an Alicetown kerb side and eating hot runny meat pies out of paper bags. George was saying,

"As you travel on life's path, no matter wwhat your goal, keep your eye upon the doughnut and not upon the hole".

Hot gravy burning my teeth and gums; my mind distracted by the sound of trucks and buses, Japanese cars; chattering office girls and slow shoppers moving by, I thought,

"What's so wrong with looking at the hole?" (Or did he mean whole?) To this day I do not understand the significance of this message. Others who hear it, laugh heartily as if they know. I've heard them and it makes me wonder.

I was born with the idea (or maybe I was taught) that design is divided into elements and principles. The elements are Shape, Line, Colour, Tone, Texture.

A book I read said that Space and Motion were elements too and that seems sensible. The principles of design were the ways in which you can 'play' with and manipulate the bits and pieces I've just listed.

Harmony seemed to be the most important principle to be understood and tamed, making things comfortable to look at and so on; not to offend! (You may have noticed I lapsed into the past tense while thinking of design principles - it must be an intuitional slip!)

Other principles were Contrast, Rhythm, Repetition - and more I have forgotten. Oh! and Balance. (Very very important, how could I forget that?)

• Not only is design important, I was told (or did I tell myself), but it is very closely linked with art. In fact, if you don't look too closely you can't really tell the difference. I really want to be an artist so it seems that I have to have design too.

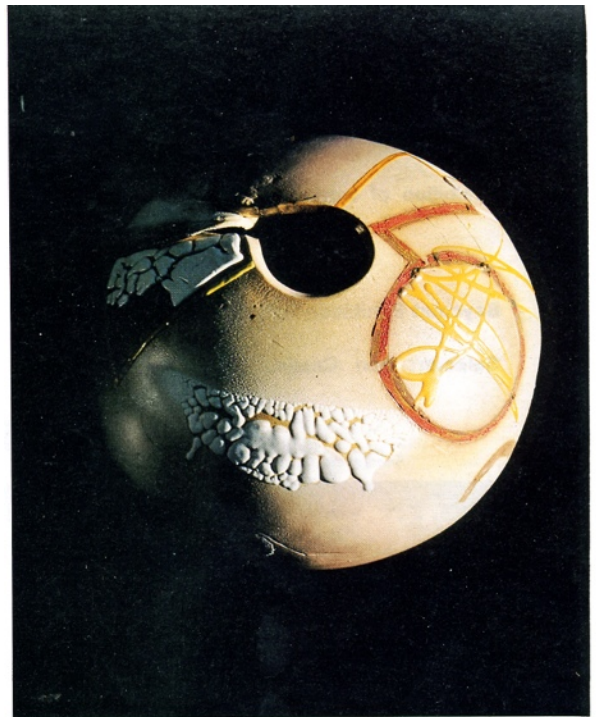
Voices off-stage... "What craftspeople need is more sense of design."

"Design sense is really lacking."

"Why aren't there more workshops in design?"

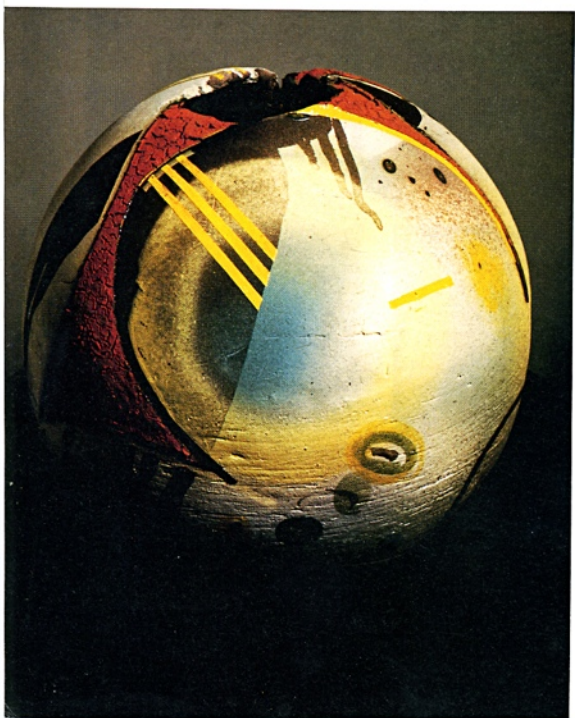
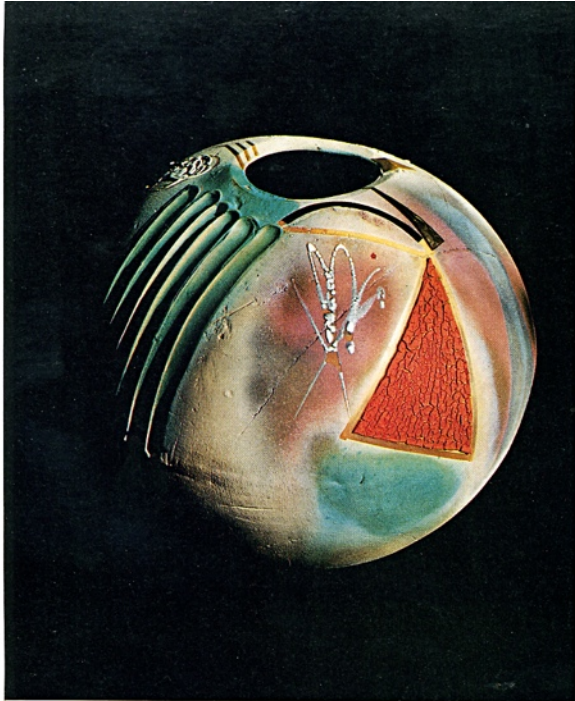
"Let's invite an overseas expert."

"Isn't that a drip under pressure?"



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- Have you ever noticed how often people say, "What NZ needs is Let's just try to imagine that NZ already has all it needs. All it needs is already in existence all you have to do is listen. (A nice little digression, eh?)
- Back to the monster - it begins to expand; there is landscape design, design for living, pictorial design, statistical design, architectural, interior, graphic and industrial. There is decorative design and of course, exhibition design. And then it becomes a verb as well as a noun. The other day in my local library, the computer pencil insisted on 'erro ring'.



"What?" I said.

She said, "It's Erroring!" and a new noun-verb entered my world.

So over the years I have collected quite a complex i~ea of design. When it was just shape line colour tone texture, it seemed to be easy and I certainly felt I was good at it. However, as someone said, "If complexity doesn't beat you, then paradox will."

- It was Michael who started me thinking. "All those bits and parts", he said, "it's just a model, remember, it's just a model." "Mmmm." I said. (I'm very slow at times.) "It's not the real thing, Brian." he said.

• And when you come to think of it, he's right. All these categories, names, lists; all that analysis, all that splitting things into sections, are only describing things. It's actually all mixed in together and all happening at once.

• Design, Art, Craft, Administration, Writing, Eating, Drinking, Breathing, Awakening - these are all descriptions, models, not what is actually happening. At times things also appear not to happen in sequences, but all jumbled together and at the same time.

• These are photographs of what I have been making. Is it any wonder that they are confusing?- colourful though!and if you look closely they contain just about everything.

"Why not the doughnut and the hole?"

"Both!"

"Why not everything?"

"Erroring?" "Yes, that too!"