

MOMENTS ON THE SURFACE

Jeong Yun Choi

Master Program
Ceramic Craft Department
HDK – The School of Design and Craft
Göteborg University

Tutor – Barbara Häggdahl
Professor – Mia E Göransson

CONTENTS

Tile -----	2
Double-Walled Vessel -----	5
1. Introduction -----	8
2. Inspiration -----	9
3. Process -----	17
3.1 Clay -----	17
3.2. Tile -----	17
3.3. Double - Walled Vessel -----	17
3.4. Engobe -----	18
3.5. Glaze -----	18
3.6. Firing -----	18
4. Conclusion -----	21
5. References -----	22



Untitled (2012). Stoneware. 1235°C Oxidation Fired. Color Stain. Glazed



Untitled (2012). Stoneware. 1235°C Oxidation Fired. Color Stain. Glazed



Untitled (2012). Stoneware. 1235°C Oxidation Fired. Color Stain. Glazed



Untitled (2012). Stoneware. 1235°C Oxidation Fired. Color Stain. Glazed



Untitled (2012). Stoneware. 1235°C Oxidation Fired. Color Stain. Glazed



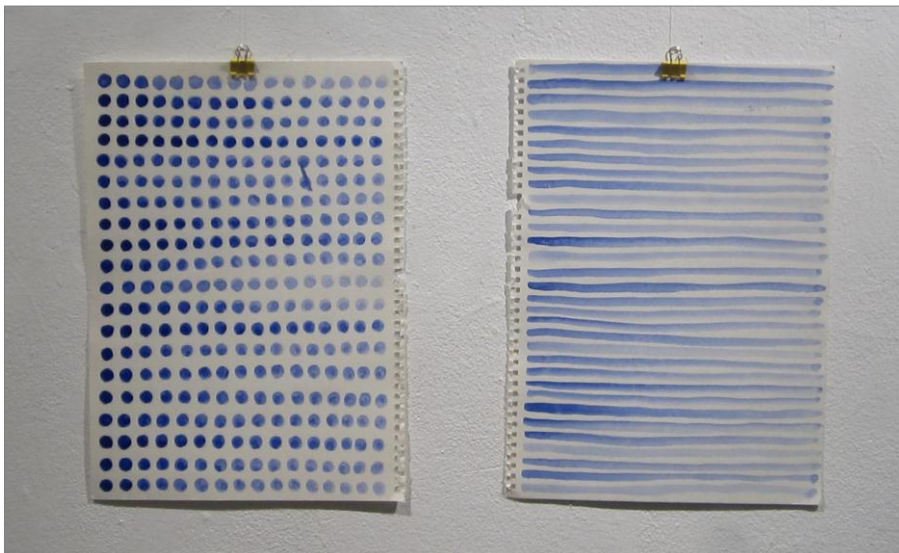
Untitled (2012). Stoneware. 1235°C Oxidation Fired. Glazed

1. Introduction

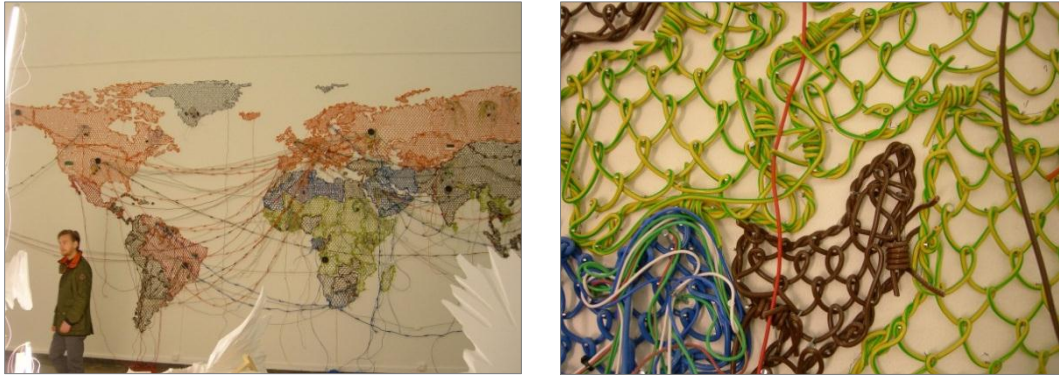
I would like to start the written part of my diploma project by introducing the key words “Blue Dot,” “Blue Stripe,” and “Pattern.” I drew “Blue Dot” and “Blue Stripe” six years ago and they have since served as my inspiration for creating ceramic works.

I have always been asked these questions, “Why do you like the color blue? Why does it have to be a dot? What do you like about making patterns?” So far, however, I have not fully answered or described in words my underlying reasons. Instead, I present my answers through clay.

My diploma project is about drawing patterns on clay. I chose tile and double-walled vessel as media and tried to deliver “Blue Dot” and “Blue Stripe” on clays by experimenting on patterns and glaze with different looks. I started this project feeling responsible for finding answers to the questions and being conscious of the responses to my works in order to get a hint about the answers.



Blue Dot, Blue Stripe (2006). Water Color, Paper



(fig. 1) Reena Saini Kallat. Born 1973 (India). *Untitled (2011)*. Electrical wires, Mixed media. Göteborgs Internationella Konstbiennal. Göteborgs Konsthall. Sweden

2. Inspiration

I started this project by deriving inspiration from Reena Saini Kallat's installation (fig. 1). I made a net on a clay surface (fig. 3) and proceeded to make a library of test samples from different types of clays and drawing patterns with lines, dots, holes and nets, and by making glaze tests (fig. 4). After making a library of test samples, I made bigger tiles in clay in order to see how it looks on a large surface. After firing, I thought that the tiles did not need any net. They looked beautiful and interesting enough with only guide lines and holes, although they were made for net making.

Beside the tiles, I was looking for a form to apply my patterns onto. I tried out patterns on forms that I had been working previously in my earlier works (figs. 5-9). I eventually settled with double-walled vessels to use in completing my project. Making and firing the vessels involved great complexity, but that had been the reason why I was drawn to them and why I chose them.

Double-walled vessels were inspired from Suku Park's works from 1994 to 1995 (fig. 2). Suku Park, like Agnes Martin, is one of my favorite artists. He was my teacher during my bachelor and master years in Korea. Many of my earlier works were inspired by his works. I use my own imagination to develop them in my own way and make them distinctly my own. I enjoy this process. I also started making the vessels by copying his works, developing further the form and applying drawings on the surface which were inspired by Agnes Martin's works.



(fig. 2) Suku Park. Born 1947 (Korea). *Untitled*. Stoneware. Suku Park Ceramic Works 1994-1995.

- Agnes Martin

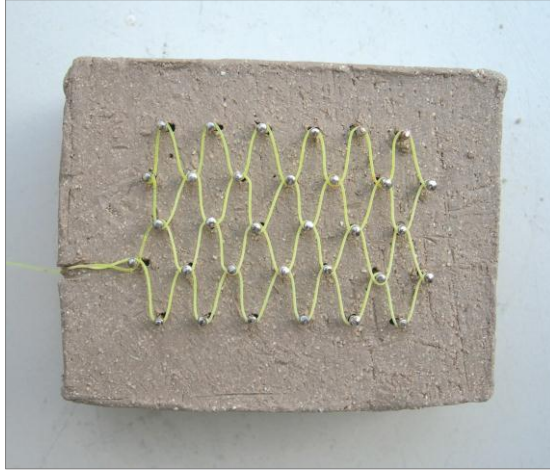
It took me a while to realize where the first two tiles with lines and circles came from. I found some blurry images of beautiful drawings in my photo archive that I had taken on a trip to New York. Only lines, circles and grids. No color but black ink and pencil. You do not need much to make it beautiful. Then I soon realized that my lines and circles on clay came from the drawings. The drawings belong to the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, including some works by Agnes Martin's. (figs. 11-14)

Pattern making became much easier and more enjoyable afterwards. I had more options to choose from: Blue Dot, Blue Stripe, my library and that of Martin's. I would pick one element from each of them and try out on clay. I played around with the chosen elements and combined it with other samples, enjoying the process and experimenting with different looks. This process brought to mind some memories I had - the memories about lines and grids.

Memories

I wanted to be an architect when I was younger. Back then I imagined architects as serious people who worked at their drawing desk with rulers and compasses. When I was in second year in college, I really liked the drawing course. I enjoyed sitting on the drawing desk and pretending to be an architect.

Martins' works and my working process reminded me of these memories and my sketchbook I had in that drawing course (fig. 10). I look back on the past and find things that have influenced me. Such influences are reflected in my works. I am not an architect but my old desire to become one still remains with me and it shows in various ways in my works on clay. Sometimes it shows in the shape of a pattern. Sometimes it appears in preferring architectural shapes. My memories have unconsciously influenced my esthetic preferences, forming the basis for expressing myself in clay.



(fig. 3) Making a Net



(fig. 4) Library of Test Samples



(fig. 5) Room



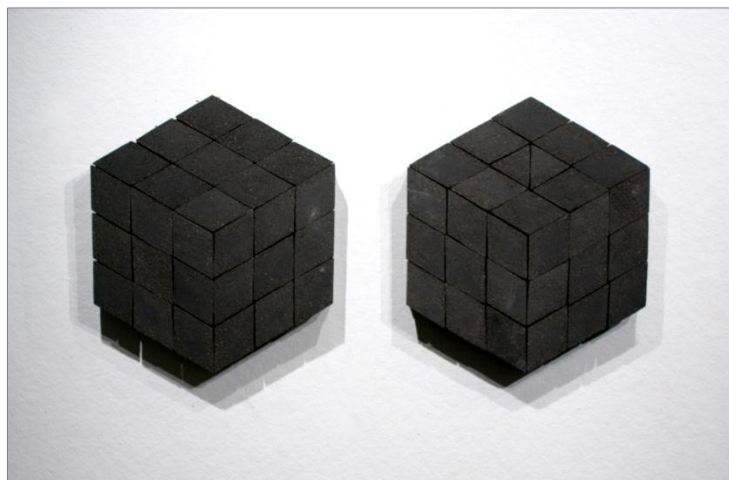
(fig. 6) Cube



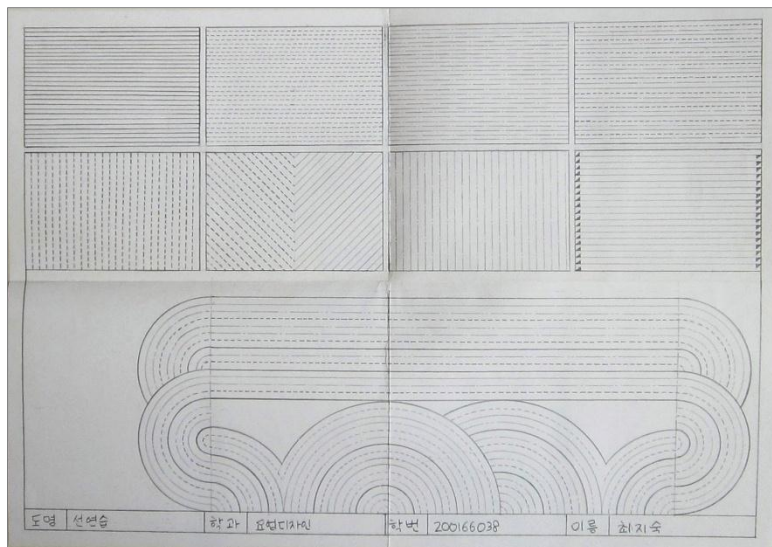
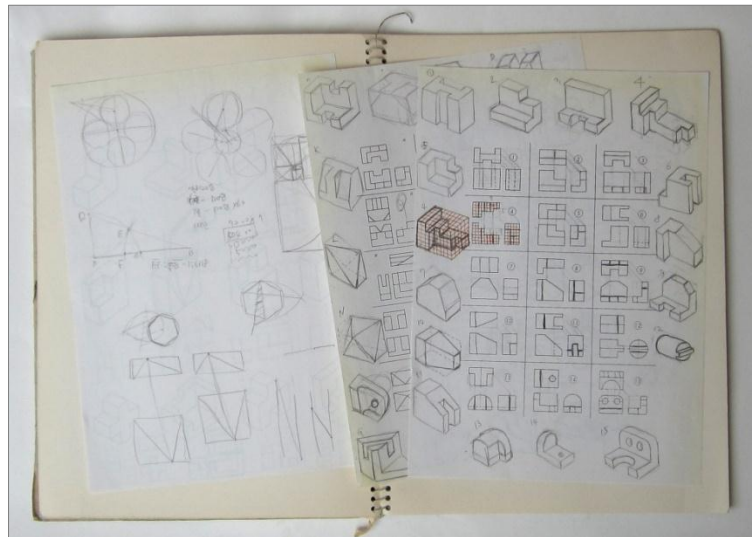
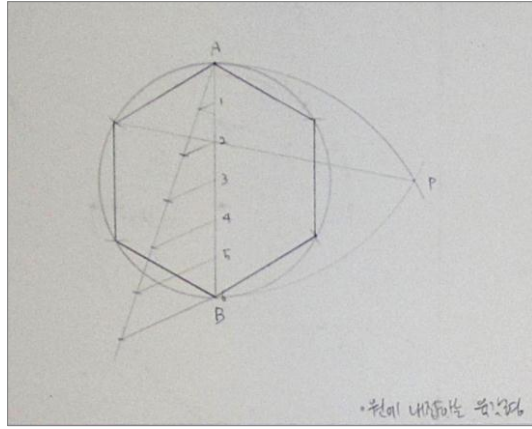
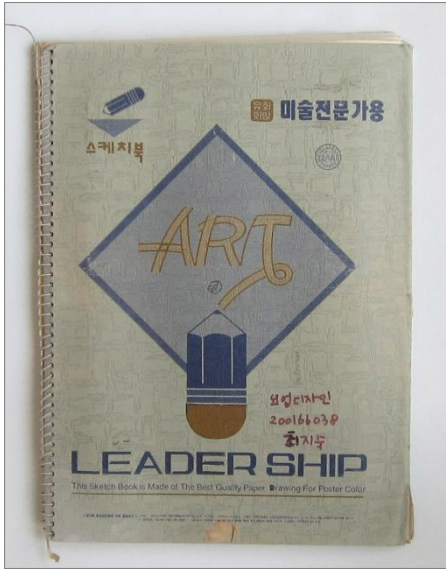
(fig. 7) Cup



(fig. 8) Cup



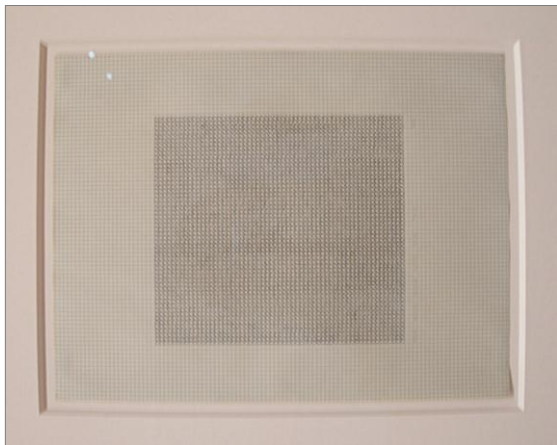
(fig. 9) Full and Empty



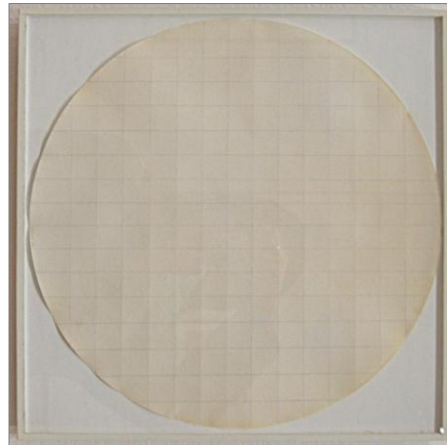
(fig. 10) Sketchbook



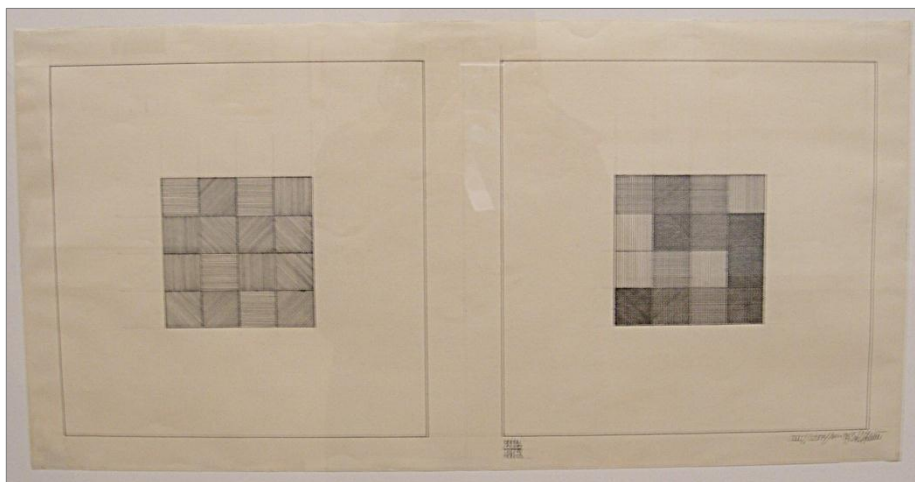
(fig. 11) Agnes Martin. *Mountain* (1960). MoMA Collection. U.S



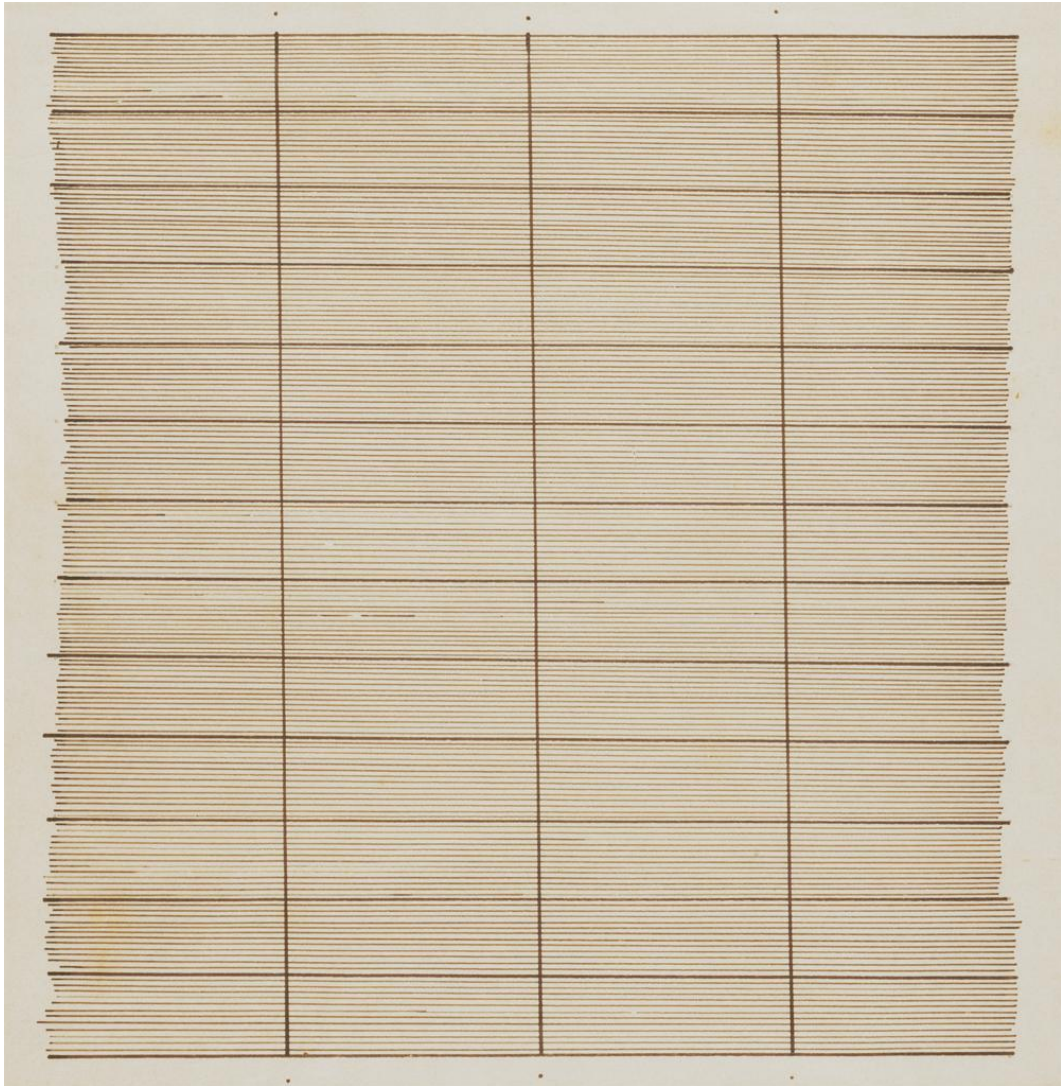
(fig. 12) Eva Hesse. *Untitled* (1967).
MoMA Collection. U.S



(fig. 13) Robert Ryman. *Eagle Turquoise 7H#4* (1966).
MoMA Collection. U.S



(fig. 14) Sol LeWitt. *Drawing Series III/2314/A&B* (1969). MoMA Collection. U.S



(fig. 15) Agnes Martin. *Waters* (1962). ART stor - [http://www. Artstor.org/](http://www.Artstor.org/)



(fig. 16) Agnes Martin. *Untitled Number 5* (1975). ART stor - [http://www. Artstor.org/](http://www.Artstor.org/)

3. Process

3. 1. Clay

I work with K129, a white stoneware clay with 0-0.5mm chamotte, and PRNF, a black stoneware clay with 0-0.5mm chamotte. I use these two clays for their good plasticity, which is very important to reduce warping in tiles and to achieve a strong hold between the walls and the top layer of the double-walled vessel throughout the processes of making, drying and firing.

3. 2. Tile

I use slab-building techniques in making 13mm-thick tiles. I make holes on the back of the tiles so they can be hung on the wall. To make sure that the tiles are perfectly flat, I employ the following methods to reduce the defects that may arise:

- Warping
 - Give enough compression during tile-making. "Plate-like" clay particles tend to array themselves in a "card-pack" arrangement at 90° to the forming pressure. The fewer gaps between particles in the card-pack results in less shrinkage and a more even drying surface than what one may expect from a randomly mixed arrangement. ¹
 - Dry items evenly. Set a condition to dry both sides at the same pace by putting tiles on a plaster plate. Evaporation and absorption take place on the front and back of the tiles, respectively.
- Cracking
 - Let items dry evenly. This part is very important to avoid warping and cracking. Cracks are usually caused by uneven dryness on the edge of tiles. Avoid rapid drying by covering tile edges with plastic sheets.

3. 3. Double-Walled Vessel

The vessel consists of four different parts: the inner wall, outer wall, top layer and bottom. Cracks often appear at the points where these parts meet.

- Cracks after firing ²
 - Exploding during bisque firing can occur due to steam pressure when clay ware is too damp in the kiln. Make sure that the items have been dried thoroughly and fire slowly with good ventilation. (fig. 18)
 - Sometimes cracks would not appear in bisque ware but would only occur after glaze firing due to various reasons, such as thermal stress. The cracks in my works arise due to each part being not put together properly. (fig. 20)

¹ *Ceramic faults and their remedies*. Harry Fraser. London : A&C Black, 1986. P 19.

² *Ceramic faults and their remedies*. Harry Fraser. London : A&C Black, 1986. P 82.

3. 4. Engobes

The main stoneware problems that usually occur during firing include the stoneware's tendency to "eat up" the glaze, pigments or materials applied on it or that it does not hold such surface treatments properly. This tendency results to either an exceedingly dark color or the total absence of color or glaze. As a remedy, I found that it is best to mix engobes (80%) with porcelain (20%) then daub the mixture on the surface of the clay work before bisque firing. This mixture coats clay surfaces and gives a white ground that ensures a better expression of color and glaze.

3. 5. Glaze

After bisque firing, I add manganate and cobalt to shade in scratches or cuts. This black color gives the patterns a sense of depth and distinction. I use ceramic crayon to add color to the bisque wares, then they are sprayed with transparent glaze.

Using a transparent glaze recipe, I spend an hour grinding its components in a mill with 70ml of water.

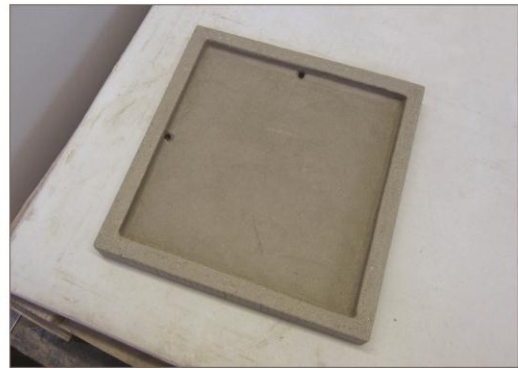
· Glaze Recipe ³

Kalifältspat	Dolomite	Cornish Stone	Kaolin	Aluminum	Kvarts
40.3	8.8	14.5	11.7	9.2	15.4 (%)

3. 6. Firing

I set the kiln temperature at 850°C for bisque firing and 1235°C for glaze firing. Some objects are added more color or glaze and fired one more time at high temperature. The temperature was approximately 20-30°C higher than it was set according to cone. (fig. 21)

³ Glaze Experiment Course (2006). by Kwankgsung Park. Sangmyung University. Korea



(fig. 17) Process of making a tile



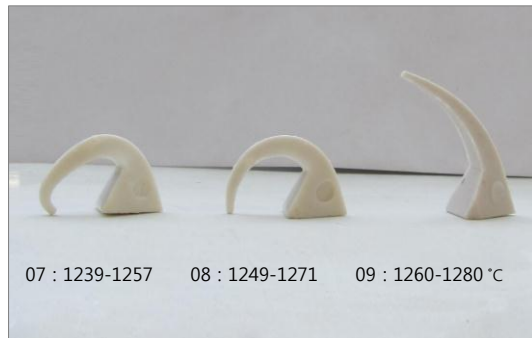
(fig. 18) Exploding during bisque firing



(fig. 19) Process of making a vessel



(fig. 20) Cracking after glaze firing



(fig. 21) Cone no. 07-09

4. Conclusion

“Why do you like the color blue? Why does it have to be a dot? What do you like about making patterns?”

I used to answer these questions like that: “I have my own stories behind my works that I want to share with others. My stories are brimming with emotion but I think there is so much emotion that it cannot be put into words. And I do not think myself to be a good storyteller.”

I started this project as an attempt to find more exact answers for those questions. My answers now might still be the same as they were before, though I deepened by insight where those answers came from and what they represent for me. I have found the beauty in the simplicity of patterns with lines and dots and beauty in slowness of drawing them in my works.

I am glad that I am still on my way toward finding the answers, which allows me to get new inspiration and bring back some memories that I have forgot. I feel that my journey’s reward lies in the search for the answer rather than in the answer itself.

5. References

Books

- *Agnes Martin*. New York: Dia Art Foundation, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011
- *Agnes Martin - The Nineties and Beyond*. Ostfildern-Ruit, German : Hatje Cantz, 2002
- *Agnes Martin - writings*. Stuttgart: Cantz, cop., 1991
- *Ann Jansson - Cylinders*. Utställda på dunkers Kulturhus, 2006
- Harry Fraser. *Ceramic Faults and Their Remedies*. London: A&C Black, 1986
- *3 x Abstraction – New Methods of Drawing*. New York: Drawing Center, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005

Catalog

- Suku Park – Ceramic works 1994-1995.

Websites

- ART stor - <http://www.Artstor.org/>
- Göteborgs Internationella Konstbiennial - <http://www.goteborg.biennial.org/>
- Göteborgs Konsthall - <http://www.konsthallen.goteborg.se/>
- The Museum of Modern Art - <http://www.moma.org/>

Course

- Kwankgsung Park. *Glaze Experiment Course*. Korea: Sangmyung University, 2006