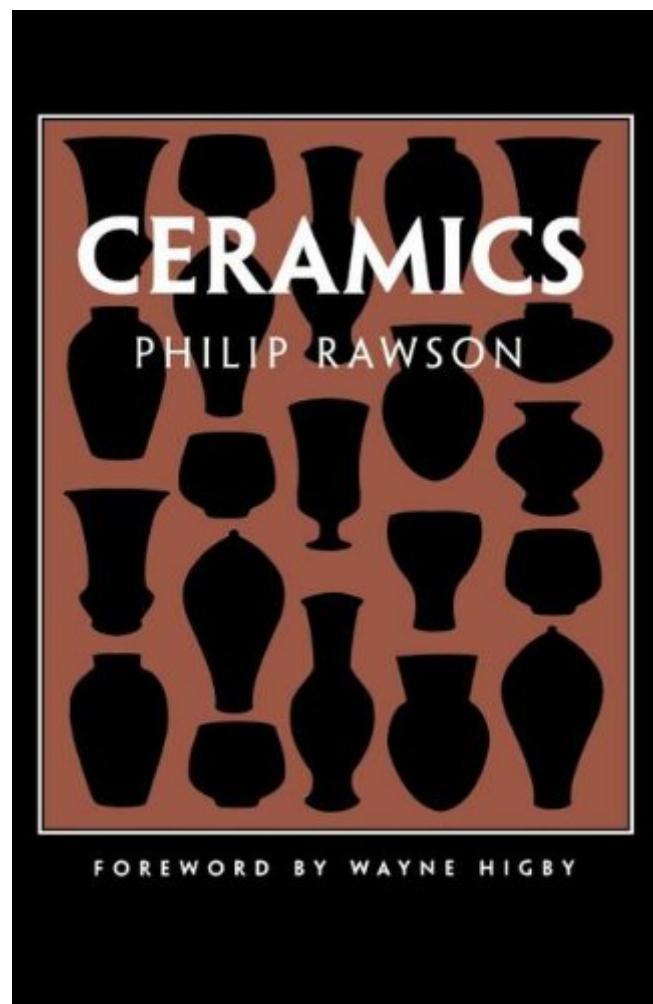


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Ceramics



Synopsis

"It is rare to find a book on art that presents complex aesthetic principles in clear readable form. Ceramics, by Philip Rawson, is such a book. I discovered it ten years ago, and today my well-worn copy has scarcely a page on which some statement is not underlined and starred."â "Wayne Higby, from the Foreword

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Customer Reviews

Every potter and vessel maker, every student and teacher of ceramics, every person interested in ceramics should read CERAMICS by Philip Rawson. In fact, you will want to own a copy of this book so you can re-read it and loan it to other people. (I received no compensation for that statement.) CERAMICS is an exceptional source for expanding your knowledge of and vocabulary for critically viewing, appreciating, discussing, and writing about ceramics. In CERAMICS, Philip Rawson, a prolific writer and art critic, gives a fascinating and lucid examination of the evolution and aesthetics of ceramic form. He states, "One of the prime reasons why ceramics is such an interesting art is that it fills the gap which now yawns between art and life as most people

understand their relationship."(6) Rawson then introduces ideas critical to looking at and fully understanding ceramics such as the relationship of function to the origins of most ceramic forms and how that relationship affects our experience of ceramic objects. He also addresses the inherent attraction of a recognizable material transformed by the human hand into a new object with symbolic or metaphorical value. Following a comprehensive but concise overview of the techniques and processes involved in making ceramics, Rawson gives an in-depth discussion of how form, surface and design, combined with the ideas of transformation and forms' residual relationships to function, create meaning in pottery. Well-chosen photographs, illustrations, and vessel profiles accompany the text.

This book is not a glossy full-color presentation of the world's spectacular ceramic pieces. It does contain a hundred or so black and white illustrations of ceramics from almost all cultures; ancient and modern. Philip Rawson writes about the general concept of ceramics, the techniques, and the philosophy and symbolism. I found this book to be very helpful in that it gives an overview of all types of ceramics and allows the interested potter or sculptor to survey Rawson's intriguing perceptions. This book promotes ideas and facilitates their coming to the reader through discussions of his seemingly infinite observations. Rawson was a brilliant art professor and brings amazing viewpoints to his readers. Ideas, after all, are the most important factor in creating works of art.

This is not a how-to or design book. Rather, the author takes a step back to consider fundamental aspect of ceramics, historically and aesthetically. I found it super helpful as a potter in keeping my eye on the big picture.

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