

7 Surface Design

Key Terms

bisqueware
carbonates
flux
greenware
oxides
relief
sprigging



Fig. 7-1. **Artist Morel Doucet explores cultures, history, and the environment through tactile surfaces and shimmering forms. How does the surface treatment contribute to the message this sculpture conveys?**

Morel Doucet, *Royal Black Madonna: Gold Laced with Beauty*, 2020. Porcelain ceramics, slip-cast and hand-altered forms, gold luster, 11" x 7" x 4 1/2" (27.9 x 17.8 x 11.4 cm). Image courtesy artist Morel Doucet and Galerie Myrtis. Photographer: David Gary Lloyd.

*“To make pottery is an adventure to me,
every new work is a new beginning.
Indeed, I shall never cease to be a pupil.”*

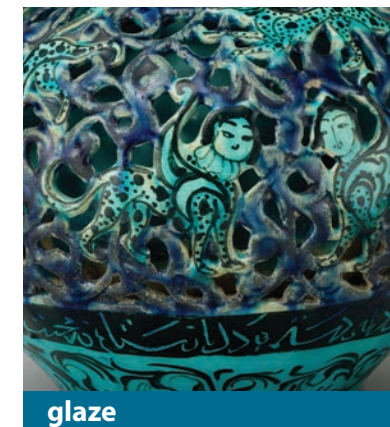
Lucie Rie

What makes a ceramic object beautiful or striking? Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish the effect of the object’s shape or function from its surface appearance. Is it the deep and full body of a mug that we find so appealing, or is it the mug’s warm and welcoming color? Would a sacred object made of clay appear as powerful and mysterious without ornamentation?

Since ancient times, potters have used a variety of techniques to decorate the surfaces of their clay pieces—**from carving or incising grooves in moist clay to burnishing the surface of leather-hard clay, and from painting with liquid slip of a different-colored clay to glazing or underglazing**. Ideally, decisions about surface design should relate to a work’s shape and form, and the whole piece is enhanced as a result.

In this chapter, you will:

- discover ways to create texture and color on clay surfaces.
- explore glazes and underglazes.
- create an original ceramic vessel with rhythm and unity in the surface design.



glaze



texture



color