

The Metamorphic Ornament: Re-Thinking Granulation. A study of the transformation possibilities of granulation towards sculptural silverwork

David Huycke Translated by Cao Cheng

掌握传统的材料和技巧是否还有必要，对这一点的质疑早已有之，而且数十年来愈演愈烈。尽管如此，大批当代工艺人还是一心扑在传统媒介上，不仅为旧技法寻找新用途，还努力从旧材料中挖掘新品质和新寓意，寻找新思路、新阐释和新表达。新的视觉语言也应运而生，迥异的语汇弥补了旧有的不足，使隐没其中的成分得以显现。由于语汇增加，复杂有趣的故事也明显多了起来。

在这样一个问题丛生的环境中，德国哈瑙金匠艺术协会举办了名为“缀珠96”的大奖赛和展览。缀珠 (granulation) 是一项金器装饰技术，就是在不用焊接的情况下将小金属球 (也称缀珠) 热熔到金属表面，形成具有装饰效果的布局。这项技术发端于公元前三千年的中

东，公元前四世纪至七世纪时在意大利古国埃特鲁里亚达到技术和艺术的巅峰。它被看作金艺史上最为重要、也最为神奇的技术之一；从古至今基本上都用于装饰小型金器 (通常为首饰)。金匠艺术协会向艺术家提出的问题是：能否从古老的缀珠技术中找到新的出路，既要独立于传统，又不能丧失原有的经典思想。这样做当然是想要改造革新，摆脱因循守旧，使这项技术在当代首饰、器物中得到新的运用。

那次展览除了我的作品外，其他人提交的几乎全是首饰制品，体现出大家对缀珠技术的一种务实态度。我提交了作于同时期的一组作品，其中名为《珍珠球》(1996) 的两件均是明确的容器，有单纯的几何造型，免去了各种装饰。

我的灵感和意图是要纯用缀珠制成一个碗，让小球在形成结构的同时具备艺术表现力。后来发现缀珠在银器中的这种结构性运用确实是一次重要的创举。几年前我与比利时的林堡省立学院和属天主教的卢汶大学合作开展了一项视觉艺术的博士研究，其动因正是我的那次创新。

这个项目名为“变形的装饰：对缀珠技术的再思考”，是以缀珠技术作为研究案例，从传统的工艺过程和媒介中发掘新意义、新隐喻以及新的可能性，并将其运用到“金工雕塑”这门新学科中，使缀珠从二维构图技术“转变”为三维雕塑技术。项目研究的主要目标就是这个“转变”过程，而非具体的缀珠技术。

变形主要体现在两个层面，这两个

变形的装饰：对缀珠技术的再思考

——关于缀珠转变为银器雕塑之可能性的研究

大卫·胡克 翻译：曹程

Despite growing scepticism regarding the idea of obligatory knowledge of traditional materials and techniques - a phenomenon that has already been in existence for several decades - there are still a large number of contemporary craft artists who concentrate exclusively on traditional media. These artists search for new ways of using traditional techniques, they look for other qualities in their materials, for new approaches aimed at unlocking new metaphors, alternative interpretations and new methods of expression. This results in a new visual language with a different kind of artistic vocabulary; one that can make the invisible visible when the language we know is no longer sufficient. It is obvious that more words will result in more complex and interesting stories.

Within this problematic context, the Gesellschaft für Goldschmiedekunst in Hanau, Germany, organized in 1996 a competition and exhibition called Granulation '96. Granulation is an ornamental technique in the

goldsmiths' art in which tiny metal spheres, also called granules, are heat-fused to a metal surface without the use of solder, generally in an ornamental or figurative arrangement. It is considered to be one of the most important and magical techniques in the history of



大卫·胡克近照 摄影：滕晓铂

goldsmithing. The technique originated in the 3rd millennium B.C. in the Middle East, but reached its technical and artistic peak in Etruria, between the 7th and 4th century B.C. From the moment of its conception to the present day, granulation was almost entirely used for decorative purposes, mainly in gold and on small objects, most often on jewellery. The question the Gesellschaft für Goldschmiedekunst put to the artists was whether they could formulate a new approach to the very old technique of granulation, independent of traditions but without losing the classical idea of granulation. The major goal was clearly not to imitate the traditional technique, but to reinvent it and apply it to contemporary jewellery or objects.

With the exception of my own submission, almost all entries were jewellery, which gives a realistic idea of the use of granulation. I submitted two objects (Pearl Sphere, 1996) in line with other works I had made during the same period: clear vessels, in simple

层面都密切关系到原有饰品如何被转变。与此变形相对应，由这一框架产生的作品也可以分为两大类：一类是由缀珠形成物体的结构，一类是内嵌有缀珠的作品，或不如说，是以缀珠为主题的作品。

缀珠作为物体的建构材料

缀珠以前基本上都用于装饰，罕有结构性用途。鉴于这一点，我们项目的首要目标是挑战缀珠的装饰地位，要将注意力集中在缀珠本身，不再涉及支撑表面。在这个意义上，原本只是装饰的缀珠失去了养眼悦目的首要功能，它从小颗粒变成了小球，成为建构物体的材料。这种饰品脱离了它原有的基础，既形成结构，又独立支撑作品。

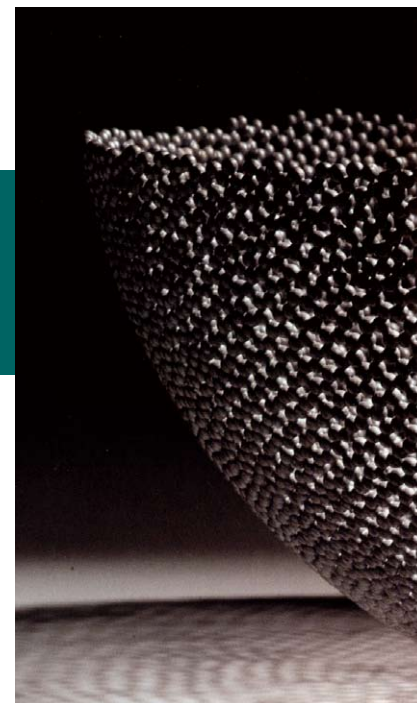
在传统缀珠技术的语境中，“量”是

与“重”相悖的，因为附有缀珠的制品通常是小而轻的。“量”只能是指“大量缀珠”，意在数量，用法类似于“大量人口”。不过，两种理解在这个项目中都是成立的，既可以是“重量大”，也可以是“数量大”，最形象的证明就是《分形—物体》(2007)。这件作品由20000颗直径3.0毫米的银缀珠制成，整体重量超过4.5千克。它是一个球状物，由球体构成，球体又由更小的缀珠构成。这样一来，物体的整体和大局部中都能看出小局部。整体反映局部的性质，这样的例子在自然界中数不胜数，如蕨类植物就被公认体现了分形现象。法籍波兰科学家曼德勃罗发展了“分形理论”，1977年他发表了《自然界的分形几何》，于是在欧几里德几何学中被视为一团混沌的

形态在他的新理论中呈现出了秩序。

缀珠作为主题

第二类物体的构建不必经由缀珠，甚至都不会用到它。它们要寻找缀珠世界中潜在的观念和隐喻，例如工艺过程或者缀珠中的几何学。在这里，缀珠已进化为观念主题，它超越了技术层面，到达了诗意之维。这种理念框架中的作品放大了缀珠的微观世界，用隐喻的方式展现出它的技术特征、功能特征、形式特征和观念特征，具有普遍意义。缀



珍珠球（局部），1996，氧化银。
16.5×7厘米

geometrical forms and freed from any kind of ornamentation. The Pearl Spheres arose in that spirit and the goal was to create a bowl constructed solely from granules, so the little spheres would form structure and artistic impression at the same time. In hindsight, this structural use of granulation within silverwork at large was an important innovation which formed the impetus for a doctoral research project in the visual arts I began some years ago in collaboration with the PHL University College in Hasselt and the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, both in Belgium.

This project, The Metamorphic Ornament: Re_Thinking Granulation aims to discover, with the technique of granulation as a case study, new possibilities, meanings and metaphors in traditional processes and media with a view to implementing them in another discipline, namely sculptural metalwork. As a consequence, granulation is transformed from a two dimensional, pictorial and graphic technique into a three dimensional sculptural

technique. Rather than the actual technique of granulation, the main object of this research is the process of transformation itself.

The metamorphosis takes place at two levels, both of which impinge on how the original ornament was transformed. Parallel with this metamorphosis, the works produced within this framework can be divided into two main categories: first there are the objects where granulation forms the construction of the object and second, there are the objects where granulation is situated in, or actually is the subject matter of the object itself.

Granulation as the building blocks of the object

Considering the fact that granulation was almost always and entirely used for decoration and seldom for structural purposes, the first aim of this project is to call this ornamental status into question and to concentrate on granulation without reference to a supporting surface. In this sense the small granule -

the original ornament - loses its primary, decorative function of pure visual pleasure. It grows from a grain into a sphere and changes into the essential building blocks of the object. The ornament is detached from its basis; it becomes structure as well as the independent support of the work.

In the context of traditional granulation it is contradictory to speak about mass in the meaning of weight, since granulated artefacts are usually light and small in scale. Mass can only be used in the sense of a mass of granules, in the sense of quantity, as in 'a mass of people'. In this project,



珠技术的关键性时刻是颗粒熔合之时。欧匹·翁特拉赫特在他的代表作《首饰观念和技术》(1982年)中称其为“真理时刻”，作品《亲吻的碗》(2007)对此时刻进行了探索，这里有两个互相推挤的黑色银球，有穿越彼此之势，由此营造出充满活力的新形式。作品中明显的感性意味因为艺术家对工艺可能性的学术探索而变得调和，其形式让人联想起数学书中的“维恩图”和“接吻的球体”之类的插图。

缀珠与仿制品

想想某个物体由成百上千颗小珠子组成，便不难推想缀珠是件多么枯燥费时的活动。一个物体制作完成的速度远不及它的设计构思，不过有模具帮忙的

话问题就解决了。头脑中的想象(观念)和模具造成的图像(视觉)在这里有了互动，一个物体的产生不再依据一个确定的预想，而是形成于原初设计、想象力和新制模具三者之间的对话，创新和幻想由此激发。模具还有一个优点，它可以很方便地绕过平面图和技术的局限，只要拥有原作的模具，仿制就变得顺理成章，这也是金艺史的一个常态。传统技术有时很难掌握，或者很费时，所以人们总要寻求更省钱、更简易、更快捷的方法来获取相同的视觉效果。还会寻找新材料，因为原用材料太昂贵、太稀有或者太难操作。正是基于这一点，作用截然不同的模具和仿制品才有了一定联系。这第三类的物体与前两类有些相符，其特征是寻求仿制品的艺术潜力，

分形—物体，2007

银，4500克

mass can be understood in both ways, mass as weight and mass as quantity. This idea is clearly illustrated by the object Fractal Object (2007) that was constructed from more than 20 000 individual silver granules with a diameter of 3.0 mm. The object has an exceptional weight of more than 4.5 kg. This spherical object is constructed from spheres, which are in turn built up with smaller spheres, the granules. In this way, the smallest parts become recognizable in the larger parts and in the shape of the whole object. In nature there is an endless number of examples where the whole reflects the nature of its parts, e.g. in ferns, a phenomenon that is recognized as fractals. Fractal Theory was developed by the French-Polish scientist, Benoît Mandelbrot and published in the The Fractal Geometry of Nature in 1977. It can be considered a new kind of geometry that allow us to distinguish order where previously, within Euclidian geometry, we could only see chaos.

Granulation as the subject matter

The objects in the second category are not necessarily constructed via or even use granulation. Instead, they search for the conceptual and metaphoric potential of the world of granulation, such as the technical process or the geometry that arises between the granules. Granulation here evolves into the subject matter or concept, one which reaches beyond the technical aspects of the technique towards a more poetic dimension. The objects made within this framework magnify the whole microscopic world of granulation with its technical, functional, formal and conceptual features, and present them as metaphors for more universal ideas.

The crucial moment of granulation when the spheres melt together and fuse - Oppi Untracht calls this “the moment of truth” in his standard work Jewelry. Concepts and Technology (1982) - is explored in the work

Kissing Bowls (2007) in which two black silver spheres push against and appear to pass through one another to create a new dynamic form. The evident sensuality of the piece, emphasised by the title, is balanced by the intellectual enquiry into the possibilities of the process: the form also recalls mathematical illustrations such as the Venn diagram and the Kissing Spheres.

Granulation and simulation

Given that some objects consist of tens of thousands of individual granules it is not hard to imagine that granulation is a very time consuming, sometimes boring, activity. Consequently, it is much quicker to conceive and designing new objects than to actually realize them. Working with models can solve this problem. Here an interaction takes place between the imagination (the concept) and the image that arises in the model (the visual). The execution of the object therefore no longer occurs according to a certain preconceived plan, but is the result of a dialogue between

它们没有银的材质，也不由缀珠制成。相反，它们体现了一种更有内涵的材料运用，其形态与传统银器毫无关系，不锈钢焊接品《分形的混沌》(2007)就是一个好例子。

这项研究的关键一步是要让人们认可这些不同类别的物体以及它们的视觉类型。发现和命名这些类别诚非一日之功，需要制作物体，同时与它拉开或实际或象征的距离，还要不断调整两者的关系。这种图示类型学的分类，其视觉观念有两层意旨：首先，它是一种交流工具，用来阐明和反思设计过程，堪比语言论述；其次，这种类型学是具有功能性的不断进化的工具，它已成为这个研究项目的主要方法框架。对作品有“进”有“出”，有做有想，

如是往复，艺术家才能获得反思自己作品的有利位置。只有与作品保持精神性和实质性的距离，艺术家才能恒久评估自己的作品，才能最终形成和明确自己的方法理论。

艺术“空间”在这种研究中得以拓展，艺术的维度和可能性逐渐增多，催生出富于表现力的见识和更多的艺术参量，如色彩、形状、材料、技术、意义、历史内容等等，于是我们在新信息和原有信息之间建立起意想不到的新联系。善于钻研的艺术家，有满腹的实践和理论知识，有广泛的兴趣和灵感，他是整个故事中不可或缺的角色，他又是信息的采集者，兼容自己和他人的艺术实践。基于这种态度，他不仅创造出属于自己的艺术语境，还能与其他艺术家、其它

学科和其它领域保持联系和对话。

比利时林堡省立学院的硕士生培养计划

上述态度也是比利时林堡省立学院研究生培养计划的基本信条之一。首饰和金工研究生项目分为两部分：艺术实践和硕士生工作室创作。参加研讨、投身工作室、研读理论、参观展览、聆听讲座、开展主题讨论以及进行小规模的实践，这些都是努力的方向，其目的就是要找到理论与实践结合的沃土，要让学习者心手相连。讨论的主题包括材料



亲吻的碗，2007

925银，直径11厘米/件，长21厘米，580克

the initial design, the imagination and the newly made model, which stimulates creativity and fantasy. Another advantage is that a model can quite easily bypass the limitations of a two dimensional drawings and the limitations of techniques. If we can find the model on one side of the original, then on the other there is the imitation, a phenomenon that is present throughout the history of goldsmithing. People often sought cheaper, easier and faster methods to achieve the same visual results as traditional techniques that were sometimes too difficult or too time-consuming. They also looked for new materials because the ones to which they were accustomed were too expensive or too scarce or simply too difficult to manipulate. Even though both model and imitation have totally different intentions, according to this rationale the model and the imitation are not so distant from each other. This third category of objects is partly congruous with the previous two and is characterized by a search

for the artistic potential of simulation. The objects in this category are not made of silver or built up via granulation. Instead they exhibit a much less inhibited use of materials and adopt shapes that bear no relationships with traditional silverware. A good example is the welded stainless steel object, Fractal Chaos (2007).

A critical step in this research project was the recognition of these different categories of objects and their visualization within a typology. The discovery and the ability to name this classification is the result of a constant alternation between the act of making and taking distance from the object, literally as well as figuratively. The intention of this visual conception of the classification in a schematic typology is twofold: first it is a communicator, which aims to clarify the design process and reflection on it, comparable with the verbal thesis. Secondly, this typology is a functional, ever-evolving tool that has developed into the major methodological framework of this

project. The continuous oscillation between being 'in' and being 'out' of the work, by simultaneously doing and thinking, offers the artist a privileged position for reflection on his own work. Allowing himself to take mental and physical distance, the artist will be able to permanently evaluate his work and eventually develop and make explicit his own methodologies.

Through this kind of research, the artistic 'space' can grow: artistic dimensions and possibilities can be augmented, leading to the discovery of new expressive insights and parameters, such as colour, shape, material, technique, meaning, historical content, etc. Consequently, new and unexpected connections can be forged between the new information and the information we already possess. The role of the researching artist, as owner of an amalgam of practical and theoretical knowledge, wide interests and sensitivities, is integral to this story. He is a gatherer of information, about his own artistic

和技术的重要性、功能的创造性潜能、观念的重要意义以及触觉和色彩等等，一律围绕学生或他人的作品展开。广泛探讨的还有观众、穿戴者、展览环境（博物馆、美术馆、身体、公共空间等）以及社会功能等环境因素。

学生要反思和讨论自己或他人的作品，将新的艺术见识运用到自己的作品中，新见识也相应得到反馈。我们一方面鼓励学生通过自己的艺术实践在元层面上积累新知识，另一方面也鼓励他们实践一些与其作品有直接或间接关系的理论，例如要他们对自己的作品进行精神性和艺术性的思考，或者按照一定的话语和理论框架公开论述自己的作品。这种双管齐下的操练方式对研究生极有用处，特别能提升他们的学习研究水平。

我们深信这种研究态度对当前的硕士研究生是一种本质需要。广义的工艺也好，具体的金属工艺也好，都与技术和材料有

密切关系，然而，运用它们若不加反省和批判，其价值势必大打折扣。

大卫·胡克

生于1967年，比利时金属艺术家，比利时林堡省立学院博士/讲师

2008 个展，奥地利维也纳：Slavik画廊

“超越：国际金属工艺展”，英国苏格兰爱丁堡Dovecot工艺美术革新协会

银雕，比利时布鲁塞尔：塔什-雷威画廊

2007 个展，比利时泰尔罗德：苏菲·拉切特画廊

“银霾”个展，比利时圣尼古拉斯：城市艺术大学（SASK）

2006 个展，荷兰奈梅亨：Marzee画廊

个展，卢森堡：Orfèò画廊

2004 个展，丹麦哥本哈根：装饰艺术博物馆

2004 个展，比利时泰尔罗德：苏菲·拉切特画廊

2001 个展，法国巴黎：Carlin画廊

practice and the practice of others. Through this attitude, he creates his own context and the possibility to position himself in relation to and in dialogue with other artists, disciplines and fields.

The Master Programme at the PHL University College in Hasselt, Belgium

This is one of the principle convictions behind the Master programme at the PHL University College in Hasselt, Belgium. The Master programme for jewellery and metalsmithing is divided into two parts: artistic practice and the Master Studio Art/Object. During these seminars/workshops, we search for fertile ground between theoretical knowledge and artistic practice, between head and hand, via the careful reading and analysing of theoretical texts, visits to exhibitions and lectures, and via small practical exercises, related to the theme under discussion. Among the themes discussed are the importance

of material and technique, the creative potential of function, the significance of concept, tactility and colour, etc. These concepts are discussed in relation to the work of the students and to other artists' work. Contextual factors such as spectator, wearer, exhibition context (museum, gallery, body, public space, etc.) and social function are also treated extensively.

These newly shaped insights are fed back into the students' own artistic practice through reflection and discussions of their own or other people's work or by immediately applying these insights in their own artistic work. On the one hand, we stimulate the integration of the 'new' knowledge, at a meta-level, in their own artistic practice. On the other hand, we encourage the practising of a number of skills with direct or indirect relevance for the students' own artistic work, such as mental/ artistic reflection on their own work, or appropriating a vocabulary and

theoretical framework to speak and write about their own work for a public. This dual exercise can be extremely useful for Master students, particularly for the development of their Master's project and the focus of their artistic choices.

We are convinced that this kind of attitude to research is essential for the contemporary Master's student. Crafts in general and metalsmithing in particular have a very strong connection with technical skills and materials. However, they lose a lot of their value when they are applied without critical reflection.

David Huycke, 2009.Belgian Metal Artist, Lecturer & PhD researcher at PHL University College, Hasselt, Belgium