

“A Touchy Critique of “Timing Chain”  
Reginald Pointer

A critique of Jason Walker’s “Timing Chain” has one major obstacle attached to it. It’s a ‘*touchy*’ subject indeed but I will do my best to get my ‘*hands*’ around it. In my menial 30 years of dealing with ceramics I have all too often felt the need to touch the clay. This tactile reality has resulted in both breakage and enlightenment. More recently my time spent teaching a Three Dimensional Concept class has necessitated 360° inspections and appreciation of various forms. The root of this being an education molded around an understanding of form follows function. This all being said where does one begin when confronted with the task of critiquing this work? Can we simply look at the craftsmanship, or the creativity that this piece clearly embodies? And what if anything is this piece trying to do? Is it a teapot, or is it art for art’s sake? Without touching it or viewing it from various sides can it really obtain a just and fair endorsement of praise? Don’t get me wrong I feel this is a rather strong piece, yet this shallow assessment is mired in a flat two-dimensional black & white rendering. If viewed online, the highly detailed B/W porcelain form is seen to have blue and red markings as well. But what does all of this add up to, and is there something more that I am missing? I believe a large amount of thought went into the making of this piece, which only furthers my appreciation, and warrants my praise. The inherent symbolism and realistic renderings of birds and foliage on the surface give rise to further questions. Is this piece making a statement about nature, evolution, industry, or mankind? The artist has indeed taken liberty to infuse a juxtaposition of lines, shapes, and forms, with machine-like precision. When viewing this work I am brought back to an inescapable feeling of wonderment. And like the gauge on top of the piece, I am not getting a clear reading. I wonder if the objective is to promote questions or encourage some kind of dialog about the meaning of it all? In the end I am left with the feeling that I must be missing something. That something is the inability to reach out and touch something, and that something is called **clay**.