

ABOVE THE BELT

ABOVE THE BELT is a series of sculptures based on classical sculpture and portraiture. In my art history studies I've noticed that classical portraits rarely depict their subjects in full body. I've been particularly interested in classical ceramic portrait busts which - while capturing the image and spirit of real people- are by definition from the waist up. While working within this classical construct, the sculptures in this body of work are "portraits," more imagined than real. They are not actual portraits of people, but rather of my feelings about people I know, experience, or imagine. This tension-between an art form rooted in classical realism and the imagined images I've built, makes for a universe of people who are both funny and a little dark, formal and funky. They are portraits of the people in my head, based on the people I know.

Melissa Stern 2007