

## **MY FRIENDS**

The sculptures in this body of work are about my friends, both real and imaginary. They are not literal portraits, but composites of people I know, imagine, or see on the street. The figures are meant to portray a spectrum of characters, from the humorous to the strange. It is about the passing parade of humanity that I see every day. NYC is a paradise for people watching. I am an inveterate and incurable people watcher. I like to think that all of these people are my friends.

The sculptures are made of carved and fired clay. Because of the way that I work with clay the sculptures appear to be carved out of stone or wood. The surfaces are rich and varied. . I use a large array of materials, including encaustic, paint pastel and collage to create surfaces that are layered and subtle, much like the people they depict.

Melissa Stern 2004