

## Leigh Taylor Mickelson



### Artist's Statement

My ceramic sculpture explores the different components of self, sexuality and family, and how these components relate and conflict with one another. I use forms from nature, especially ones found in plant life, as a means of expressing these components. Being full of dichotomy, the elements of natural forms act as a metaphor for the spiritual, emotional and physical extremes that exist within our selves, our love relationships and our family units. In the work, I juxtapose one abstract organic form against another in a horizontal or vertical format. The "gathering" and "kin" wall pieces are essentially conceptual snapshots - moments in time that reveal a hint of an emotion, a vulnerability, or a triumph. The vertically stacking "pulse" pieces are in a sense life lines or totems, rhythmic visual heartbeats evoking reminiscences of human interactions present, past or imagined.

All of the work is handbuilt using a combination of slab construction, coil building pinching methods, and sometimes throwing. Working rather intuitively and loosely with form and surface, I use a variety of clays to achieve different surfaces and colors. Most of the work is multi-fired to cone 5, and I use a layering of stains, glazes, slips, terrasilattas, and sometimes waxes and paints used to achieve rich inviting surfaces.