

# Melinda Laz

## Fine Artist

303.522.9694 • melinda@melindalaz.com • www.melindalaz.com • Instagram @melindalaz

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### Artist Statement

My recent work is the result of contemplating ideas surrounding memory and nostalgia, home, love and loss. Working in printmaking, collage and hand build ceramics, I approach each art medium with a similar style and point of view. My works are highly textured, intimate and precious, requesting the viewer to stop and look closely to decode the layers of meaning. I am equally interested in surface and mark making, as I am in storytelling and narrative. Graphic and linear elements regularly appear in the imagery, which are used in contrast with amorphous and textural surfaces. My color palette is an exploration of contrast and nuance, often using muted tones. My imagery refers to nature, especially trees and tree roots, which I use as symbols of life, stability and identity. Boats, luggage, houses and vintage photographs also appear regularly in my work. A printmaker by training, I began working in ceramics in 2015.

In this series of wall-mounted ceramic portraits, I reinterpret my own family's vintage photographs by transforming them into clay. I knew some of these people personally, while others I never met but heard stories about them from my relatives. It is interesting to imagine what their lives might have been like. My choice to leave the faces blank allows the figures to remain anonymous yet universal, where all viewers can imagine their own family stories and histories.

#### *About the Artist*

Melinda was born in St. Louis, Missouri, but grew up in upstate New York, and now resides in Golden, Colorado. She holds a BFA in printmaking from Washington University in St. Louis, MO; a MA in Arts Administration from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; and a MA in Curriculum & Instruction from the University of Denver. After living in various cities around the country, Melinda moved to Colorado in 2001 and has lived there every since. She has mounted several critically acclaimed solo exhibitions, appeared in numerous national juried shows, and participated in a number of invitational shows including at Valkarie Gallery (Lakewood); Regis University Gallery (Denver); Showings Fine Art (Denver); Dairy Center Gallery (Boulder, CO), Truman State University (Kirksville, MO), and Susan Hensel Gallery (Minneapolis, MN). She teaches elementary visual art to 200 students in the Denver Public Schools. When not teaching or making art, she enjoys exploring the beautiful state of Colorado with her family.