

Bio:

Paul F. Morris is a full time studio ceramicist and ceramics faculty at Front Range Community College, Larimer Campus (Fort Collins). His graduate degree is in ceramics (University of Northern Colorado) and holds a BFA (*summa cum laude*) from Colorado State University where he completed a double concentration in Pottery and Sculpture. Morris' ceramics have been shown nationally and internationally in venues from museums to art centers to academic and commercial galleries. Morris resides and maintains a studio near Laporte, CO with his wife, fibers artist Paula Giovanini-Morris.

Statement:

On solo adventures each summer season I scramble up high peaks in Rocky Mountain National Park. Piles of rocks, “trail cairns”, are encountered on the way up obscure, tricky sections as keys to these summits. These simple rock stacks got me thinking about what else human made stone configurations might mean. Indeed, humans have been piling up rocks for a very long time from the pyramids to contemporary arctic people's *Inuksuk*. Other architectural stone piles (think Parthenon, San Pietro in Rome, or the US Capitol building as elaborate examples) have sheltering volumes within. *Inuksuk*, stone human surrogates in the far North, represent *body* that serves to indicate a path, a sacred site, or cache to help in the survival of the peoples in this region.

These ceramic boxes therefore bridge the concepts of containment/concealment and the representation of the body and all that the body is heir to. Certainly some of these works in this series suggest little bodies and as configurations of organic, curvilinear shapes echo the contours of our physicality, with surfaces as clothing or body modifications. I have sworn allegiance to the ancient aesthetic strategy of *horror vacui* (meaning literally “fear of emptiness”) and these more or less obsessive graphic surfaces are a way of enriching the voluminous shapes, concentrating the evidence of the hand. I want the viewer to experience a resonance with their own embodiment from these forms. I want the viewer to imagine how they might use these objects were they come into their possession. Not just décor, these are meant to be used as containers.