

Emily Willis

Over the past few years, I have been reframing my relationship with the vessel. We use parallel language in describing pots and the human body: foot, lip, belly, shoulder, neck. I have been thinking, how can I respond to a clay vessel in the same manner I respond to a human vessel? Often times, clay vessels are ascribed the attribute of "intimate" by nature of their tactility, the way our lips touch a rim, our fingers grasp a handle. I am looking for new ways to reframe the idea of intimacy with the vessel.

Also, I have been creating a series of ceramic shields. These pieces are loosely based on Japanese haniwa which were hollow clay forms surrounding ancient tombs. Their exact use is unknown, but they are thought to be tomb guardians, protectors of the dead from evil spirits. These forms are meant to be symbols of protection from change and chaos. These shields are about trying to create safe spaces between the idealized landscape and the reality of my landscape.