

# Melissa Woodburn Artist Statement

I am inspired by using a variety of media to express statements about the rhythms and cycles of living. The creative nature of the universe excites me and I filter this through my lens of female experience.

I grew up in the Midwest and spent many days observing the rhythms of nature as I explored around our country home on horseback. I always knew I wanted to be an artist and after graduating from university with a BFA, worked as a graphic designer for fifteen years.

After I moved to California, I became interested in the meditative world, how meditation unlocks visualization, and how that in turn unlocks female power. When my husband and I wanted to start a family, I helped found and run a freestanding birth center in San Rafael, California, and taught meditation techniques to pregnant moms to open their sense of feminine power in labor. This profound experience still influences my art today and can be seen in the many vessel shapes and family groupings which I create.

When my youngest child entered kindergarten, I returned to fine art full time. After the violence of 9/11, I felt the need to add clay back into my mix of media, healing myself by literally sticking my hands into the earth. Since that time, I have concentrated on working in combinations of clay, fiber and mixed media.

I prefer to work in series, allowing fertile territory for me to explore concept, building techniques and finishes. In this case, a chance encounter with a large jack rabbit nibbling my newly installed pollinators' garden started me on a multi-year sculptural study of hares. The three-dimensional hares, while life size and sculpted with a certain realism, are all glazed in the same metallic finishes, pushing them into the realm of totemic sentinel animals, solemn and grave.

To see more of the *Drove of Hares*, visit my website: [www.melissawoodburn.com](http://www.melissawoodburn.com)