

## **ARTIST STATEMENT**

I work like a handyman cobbling together drawings and sculptures from elements found, borrowed, imagined and stolen. I use a wide range of materials from encaustic to clay, pastel to steel. The drawings and sculptures, often made in tandem, resonate between one another, the ideas in one reinforcing the themes of the other.

All of my pieces share a thematic thread. Sexless and goofy my figures live in a dream world, cower in relationships or stand tall in the face of adversity. They are at once dark and funny, expressive of the absurd world around us. The work is rooted in childhood memory. These memories are both funny and scary, child-like but quite serious. We are shaped by childhood and these memories chase us throughout our lives.

Each work is a fragment of a story rather than its full text. I never "write" the endings; each viewer completes the script, bringing their own history, memories and feelings to finish the piece.

Melissa Stern 2008