

# *Raw*

## Summer Hills-Bonczyk

In its raw, wet state, clay is a plastic and impressionable material of tremendous beauty and potential. Modeling in clay is a tradition that is over 16,500 years old, yet is still familiar to anyone who has pinched and squeezed it between their fingers. Wet clay records human movement and gesture. Every fingerprint, action and motion impressed upon the surface serves as a visual memory of the interaction between hand and material.

The performance element of *Raw* addresses the relationship between artist's body and artist's material. Through movement, I enact the intuitive and sensual process of working with clay. The raw, visceral quality of clay lends itself to impulsive expression and spontaneous creativity. Using my own body I create a temporary, meditative experience. The environment is suggestive of a Paleolithic cave, evoking the age and history of the clay tradition and the primal nature of raw earth.

*Raw* presents craft as a conceptual idea, approach or action to be performed. This piece explores the poetry of the craft process. My own journey and experience with art and clay has inspired my interest in material and process not just as a means to an end, but an end in itself. Borrowing Tony Smith's cube form is a nod to the Minimalist Art movement, which addressed the theatrical relationship between sculpture and person. Referring to artist Janine Antoni's *Gnaw*, also connects me to a tradition of process-based performance art that deals with the female body.