

Elizabeth Shriver

Artist Statement

I enjoy creating organic sculptures in clay, all of which are inspired by different elements of the natural world. Ranging from rugged landscapes, fossils and rock formations, to undulating corals and enticing flowers, these inspirations guide my work as I explore the beauty and the fascinating contrasts of nature.

Every piece is constructed by hand, without the use of a potter's wheel. I typically combine hand-building methods as I work, most often using coils and slabs that I alter and refine by pinching and gently smoothing the edges. I have designed many bisque-fired ceramic molds that allow me to form additional shapes to incorporate into a piece.

When a sculpture has taken shape but hasn't yet dried, I can use texturing tools, including clay stamps and rollers that I've made myself, to add tactile interest. Another option is to form a pattern simply by pressing the tips of my fingers into the clay.

I deliberately avoid using glaze on most of my sculptures, because I prefer the natural, earthy color of the clay to come through in the finished piece. Stains, colored slip and a little glaze or melted glass are used sparingly on my work.

The most exciting part of the process is the opening of the kiln, when the finished piece is revealed. I consider my work successful if it entices the viewer to peer inside and examine the sculpture with hands as well as eyes.