

PENLAND GALLERY

PAUL S BRIGGS

Lawrence, MA

CLAY | Pinched-formed vessels and slab-built sculptural forms

Penland Affiliation | Penland Instructor 2018, 2023

Artist Information | Studio artist; education: MFA Massachusetts College of Art and Design, PhD Penn State, MEd Alfred University, MA Oral Roberts University, BSEd The City College of New York; teaching: Penland School of Craft (NC), Harvard University (MA), Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MA), St. Olaf College (MN), University of Minnesota (MN); select exhibitions: Lucy Lacoste Gallery (MA), Friedman Benda Gallery (NYC), The Clay Studio (PA), San Angelo Museum of Art (TX), Design Miami (FL), Eutectic Gallery (OR), List Gallery at Swarthmore College (PA), *Calling to Who We Are*, NCECA Concurrent Exhibition (OH), *Color Network*, Mindy Solomon Gallery (FL), *Constructed ClayScapes*, San Angelo Museum of Art (TX); collections: Fuller Craft Museum (MA), Columbus Museum of Art (OH), San Angelo Museum of Art (TX), Alfred Ceramic Art Museum (NY)

Artist Statement | *I am engaged in a process I call “pure pinching,” that is, making the goal of my practice to be present to the largely intuitive process of growing a form, most often, out of one piece of clay—it becomes a mindful practice. My process is neither additive nor subtractive but expansive. In one sitting I develop the form, intuitively sculpt it, and the moment ends as a vessel-like contemplative object due to the visual mystery of the process. While not the initial impetus for the work I increasingly reference nature. Currently, I’m taking inspiration from the distinctive vessels of the Jomon period of ancient Japan.*

My first ceramics class was taken in high school in the Hudson Valley region in upstate New York. It was primarily a wheel-throwing class, but I also began hand-building. After those days, slab-building was my primary method of expression—pinch-forming was what I did while my clay slabs were becoming firm. I have studied educational theory and policy, art education, and theology, but I never ceased to pinch-form regardless of my path. After a circuitous and fortuitous journey, I am an artist-teacher at The Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston, MA. My partner and I share the evenings discussing life, art, sewing and quilting, ceramics and sculpture, and how far away our three children live.

Technical Information | Soda-fired stoneware, pinched from a single ball of clay