

CHRIS GAROFALO:

PRECIOUS FRAGMENTS exquisite longing
December 15, 2017 – January 27, 2018

Reception for the Artist:

Friday, December 15, 2017
5:00 – 7:30 pm



Chris Garofalo, *setas de piñero rizado*, 2017

Rhona Hoffman Gallery is delighted to present *PRECIOUS FRAGMENTS exquisite longing*, Chris Garofalo's sixth solo exhibition at the gallery. For over thirty years, she has worked with clay to create ceramic sculptures inspired by the flora and fauna of the world's oceans, deserts, and jungles. Garofalo applies multiple glazes to render authentic-looking skins or shells, so distinct that they appear to have grown themselves. The forms and patterns might recall creatures that exist in life, but all of the sculptures are born out of Garofalo's imagination and transcend standard scientific classification. Theories of evolution and metamorphosis are fundamental to Garofalo's practice, and as such, the sculptures come alive in their environments, breathing, stirring, and continuing to grow.

PRECIOUS FRAGMENTS exquisite longing features over 50 forms displayed in apothecarial jars and glass cases reminiscent of natural history museums, recalling the vast collections of objects found as early as the 16th century in the cabinets of curiosities or *Wunderkammer* of rulers, aristocrats, members of the merchant class, and the early practitioners of science in Europe. A precursor to the modern museum, these bodies of specimens and oddities attempted to tell stories about the natural world through categorization, describing microcosms as a "theatre of the world, and a memory theater."¹ This historical, scientific, artistic, and cultural reenactment offers a future past designed to help us recognize our own present, where human arrogance and folly have put our most precious fragments at the very brink of extinction, evoking an exquisite longing for a paradise still in the process of being lost.

Chris Garofalo (b, Springfield, Illinois) earned a BFA from Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. She has exhibited her ceramic sculptures since 1991, holding exhibitions at galleries and institutions internationally including the Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, Monaco; Garfield Park Conservatory, Chicago; Fondazione Mazzullo, Taormino, Sicily; Elmhurst Art Museum, Elmhurst, Illinois; Muskegon Museum of Art, Muskegon; R & Company, New York; Bureau Gallery, New York; Mathew Marks Gallery, New York; and Three Rivers Arts Festival, Pittsburgh, among others. In 2007, she received the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painter and Sculptor Award. Chris Garofalo has lived and worked in Chicago since 1980.

¹ Francesca Firoani, "The Lure of Antiquity and the Cult of the Machine: The Kunstkammer and the Evolution of Nature, Art and Tehcnology: Horst Bredekamp and Allison Brown," *Renaissance Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (1998): 268 – 270.