



BRADLEY SABIN

Bradley Sabin's second solo exhibition at Callan Contemporary continues his complex dialogue with nature and the human form through the medium of clay: in Sabin's hands, it rises, breathes, blooms, floats, soars. Lush and fecund blossoms cling to walls precariously, about to flutter through the air, their shadows soft as wings. Flowers ascend from the mind of a dreaming boy, attaching themselves to the wall as they drift away, like dream images fade when we try to attach them to words.

The volumetric forms so riddled with holes, he calls cages: they begin hollowed-out and heavy, and are transformed into delicate networks nourishing new growth. With a visceral bodily origin inspired by a human ribcage, its sinuous planes cradling heart and lungs, here those organs are replaced by leaves, fruits, and buds which themselves pump and swell with life, their presence as mysteriously enclosed as a ship in a bottle.

Sabin's strikingly unusual surfaces demonstrate an absolute mastery of the magical alchemy of layers of glaze and fire. Alternately referencing roots, antlers, or bones, his forms have cloudy, muted surfaces implying time and wear, but never weakness. Quicksilver textures congeal, pausing in their centrifugal journey to glow like moonlight. Their tinted tactility suggests sap rising or blood flowing under skin. The edges of some of the organic components making up Sabin's complex work may be sharp as a century plant's leaves, but their flesh retains the softness created by the tenderness of hands and fingers: clay takes on gender and identity, bodies referencing the artist's own, or memories of others. Like a living being, clay remembers touch, follows the intuition of your hands. Its weight gives it a life of its own: the artist's touch lifts and smooths, and the clay responds with gentle shifts, like a tree bough sinking softly beneath Spanish moss and cemetery fern. In Sabin's hands this dialogue breathes life into earth, creating hybrid beings, both flora and fauna, a reminder that we ourselves come from and depend on the same earth.

Sabin earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Art Institute of Chicago, and his Master of Fine Arts in Ceramics from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. His work is in numerous private and public collections including the Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation collection. He has exhibited throughout the United States, including a recent show at the Bradbury Art Museum at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, AK. His work has been published in numerous journals including *House Beautiful*, *Interiors*, *US Weekly* and *Architectural Digest*.

Elizabeth Howie

Front Cover: *Floral Wall*, ceramic, glaze; dimension variable



*Yellow and Orange Quartz Floral Wall*, ceramic, glaze; dimensions variable





*Floral Wall (detail), ceramic glaze; dimensions variable*





Bradley Sabin in collaboration with Karoline Schleh, *Leaning into the Afternoons*, 2017  
ceramic, oil, charcoal, fumage on panel; 30 x 80"





Bradley Sabin New Work 2018 gallery view

CALLAN CONTEMPORARY

518 Julia Street | New Orleans, LA 70130



*Nurture Nature, 2017, ceramic, glaze, 44.5" x 24" x 6"*

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