

# CANADIAN CLAY AND GLASS ARTISTS

Serpa Gallery, Old Town Hall  
Newmarket, ON  
May 31 – June 9, 2024

The Art Gallery of Burlington  
Burlington, ON  
June 20 – September 2, 2024

The Clay and Glass Gallery  
Waterloo, ON  
September 14 – January 5, 2025

The Thames Gallery  
Chatham-Kent  
January 24 – March 23, 2025

# FUSION50

CLAY + GLASS ONTARIO

FUSION: The Ontario Clay and Glass Association is the only not-for-profit organization dedicated to clay and glass artists in Canada. FUSION's mission is to encourage and promote excellence and quality in clay and glass, provide opportunities, a sense of community and continuing educational resources for members and people interested in clay and glass through tolerance, caring and acceptance.

*Breakthrough PLUS* is an exhibition for FUSION members at all career stages. Juried by Suzanne Carte, the Senior Curator at the Art Gallery of Burlington and Peter Flannery, the Senior Curator & Collections Manager at the Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery. The work in *Breakthrough PLUS* showcases the diversity of FUSION members and celebrates contemporary Canadian clay and glass.

As a not-for-profit arts organization, FUSION acknowledges the partnerships of the following organizations, be it in terms of funding support, sponsorships, donations or resource-sharing to plan, execute and manage events, programs and community outreach efforts. FUSION gratefully acknowledges support from:



# BREAKTHROUGH

CLAY AND GLASS PLUS

As FUSION celebrates 50 years in 2024, we invited members at all career stages to submit work that reflects memory and the connection between art and personal recollections. The exhibition will offer a thought-provoking exploration of the power of memory and its influence on artistic expression.

## Featuring:

Annika Hoefs	Karen Franzen
Barbara Banfield	Keenan O'Toole
Bram Locknick	Layne Verbeek
Carolynn Bloomer	Leslie Putnam
Charlie Larouche-Potvin	Lisa Gwen Robbins
Cory-Lynn Styles	Maja Padrov
Cynthia O'Brien	Marita Manson
Debra Sloan	Nikola Wojewoda
Evan Ting Kwok Leung	Peidi Wang
Ekta Trienekens	Queenie Xu
Geordie Shepherd	Sandra Ledingham
Hannah Faas	Shayne Berlin
Heidi McKenzie	Silvia Tagusagawa
Jane Garcia	Sydni Weatherson
Jocelyn Jenkins	Vanesa Trillia
Jonah Strub	Wei Cheng
	Zara Gardener

**Suzanne Carte**  
**Senior Curator**  
**Art Gallery of Burlington**

I was so grateful to be a part of FUSION's anniversary exhibition and witness such an impressive array of artistic talent, representing the vibrant and dynamic creative clay and glass community within the province. I was struck by the innovative approaches and diverse perspectives evident in the submissions, reflecting the richness of Ontario's artistic scene.

All entries exhibited exceptional technical proficiency, with many artists demonstrating an adept understanding of form, texture, and colour. Whether through intricate ceramic vessels or luminous glass installations, each piece highlights a high level of skill and attention to detail.

There was a strong emphasis on storytelling and narrative, with many artists using clay and glass as a means of exploring complex themes and experiences. From intimate reflections on identity and memory to broader social and environmental concerns, the exhibition offers a thought-provoking exploration of the human condition and material culture.

In addition to its artistic merits, the exhibition serves as a testament to the resilience and creativity of Ontario's arts community. 50 years strong! That is a huge feat! It is heart-warming to see so many artists continuing to produce work of exceptional quality and significance, underscoring the vital role of the arts in fostering connection, healing, and resilience. Overall, the FUSION exhibition showcases the talent, diversity, and innovation of Ontario's clay and glass artists, who offer audiences a compelling glimpse into the vibrant creative landscape of the province.



Image by Marianne Ibrahim, 2023



**Peter Flannery, MA**  
**Senior Curator and Collections Manager**  
**The Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo**

It was a pleasure to participate in the jury for FUSION's 50th-anniversary exhibition and see the incredible talent of ceramic and glass artists across Ontario and abroad. This is such a creative community, and the work shows the unique approaches to these mediums and the impressive range of techniques and narratives explored by the members. As FUSION celebrates this milestone, the work of its artists demonstrates the role of art in creating new connections, telling our stories, and impacting our daily lives.

With such strong technique and use of each medium, all of the submissions reflect the vigor of this community and made for very difficult decisions. In diverse points of view and a wide range of form, colour, and narrative, the selected works highlight the varied approaches to ceramics and glass, and the ways in which we can connect to human experience, memory, and a wide range of social issues. I am so excited by the works and artists represented in this exhibition and commend all who submitted their work.

Many congratulations to FUSION on this anniversary and to all of the artists!

# Annika Hoefs



## *Blooming Tall in Violet Indigo #1*

Living in the northern hemisphere, the yearly cycle of darkness and light is embedded in our psyche and dictates how we act and what we create in each season. During the short days and long cold nights in winter, I escape into my memories of warmer times. Objects are informed by the remembered smell of wet earth and the inevitable unfurling of leaves and new petals; the earth's annual celebration of new life.

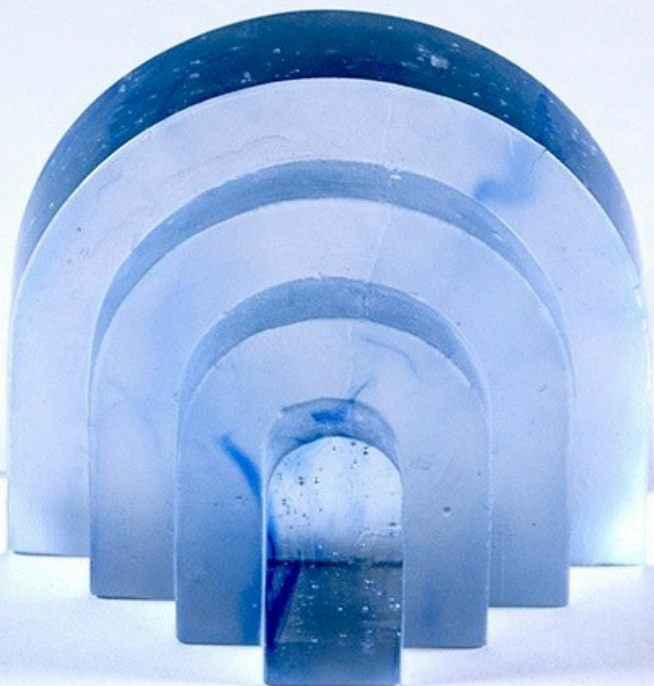
# Barbara Banfield



## *Take Out*

Making a mark or leaving a trace can capture a moment in time and a memory forever. Historically clay has documented human lives longer than we can imagine. In my entire lifetime of work the use of line has been fundamental in defining shapes and played a vital role in expressing emotion. Pottery that celebrates daily life, serving and receiving can play an integral part in creating memories that can last a lifetime.

# Bram Locknick



## *Staggered Arch*

Bram Locknick is an emerging artist and designer who specializes in blown and kiln formed glass. Originally from Windsor Ontario he was inspired by the towering Detroit skyline, the horizons which he used to see everyday continue to inspire him. His memory provides part of a foundation for identity while making art is a means of expressing that identity. In this respect he considers both his memory and process for making to be intimately linked.



# Carolynn Bloomer



*Burl #4* I see the beauty in decay, and the story it tells about time. Since childhood I've been interested in nature; moss, bark, lichen, rotting wood, fungi, even rusty metal (once mined, refined, and fabricated into a useful object, now returning to its origins). Here, I'm reliving my earliest discoveries of the natural world through clay and discarded metal – poking my fingers into a bark-textured stoneware “growth” to express the idea of human incursion.

# Charlie Larouche-Potvin



## *Le temps des cerises*

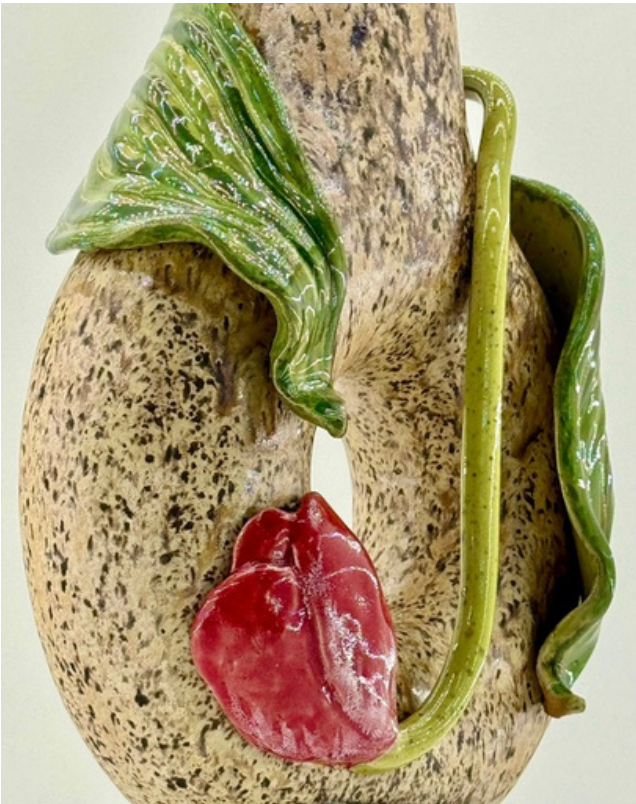
*«...J'aimerai toujours le temps des cerises*

*Et le souvenir que je garde au cœur!»*

–Jean-Baptiste Clément, *Le temps des cerises*, 1866

Magella Potvin, from whom I inherited my hands, my sensibility and my passion for hard work loved to sing this song to his grandchildren. As I could not be there to join my sister, who sang it for him during his final moments, I immortalized it through what ended up connecting us, craft. By revisiting my fondest memories with my grandfather, I search to pay homage to all the generations of craftsmen us makers inherited so much from.

# Cory-Lynn Styles



## *Flower Memory of Longtime Love*

The red flash and burn of new love shifts over time to soft comfort and kindness. Tulips, like fortunate longtime partners, continue to grow once cut and placed in water. This flower droops as it grows taller, saturated colours dim and striate, yet persist. It drapes itself protectively, lovingly around its torus foundation, an earned warmth and ease in its purpose through shared history and collected memories.

# Cynthia O'Brien



## *Volition*

Small gardens represent the beauty and strength of the women I met during the pandemic, while working the front line in Long Term Care. A time of fear and great stress my residents invited me into their lives, taught me to slow down and opened my heart. In memory of these women; Yellow Rose of friendship - Dandelion for clarity - Rowan Tree, the tree of life - Orchid for admiration - Centaury flower for personal will.

# Debra Sloan



## *The Waiting Game*

There is a theatrical fluency in clay, alongside its attributes for relaying commentary and historical associations. I have my own form of representational imagery to address human uncertainty. The baby-figure acts as an allegory for emotion, the form is considered an expressivity, particularly expression and gesture. I use materials as needed. Intentional objects mark the importance of making, and can act as containers, demonstrate individualism, and point to contemporary values.

# Eekta Trienekens



## *Generations*

In my figurative clay work I am influenced by shards of memories in every piece. Clay is such a great medium for recollecting and re-creating memories as it holds our gestures so well; brush strokes solidify and fingerprints are left for eternity. I use elements from my mixed background in almost everything I make. I love adding a little too much detail and exploring colour palettes. I combine these things to evoke different worlds.

# Evan Ting Kwok Leung



## *Mixed Emotions - Dim Sum*

This work is inspired by my personal experiences and memories of being hospitalized due to illness. I tried to express some complex feelings such as confusion, disappointment, vague, fear and desire, importantly is hunger. I altered press molding pieces and transferred it into my favourite food and make it look appetizing. I try to change my attitude and use humour to taste all the flavours of life, no matter they are sweet, bitter or astringent.

# Geordie Shepherd



## *Camo Mom*

Though I didn't witness the bombing of the Ukrainian Maternity ward in Mariupol on March 9, 2022, I remember seeing the images, recalling memories of when my own children were born. But I couldn't reconcile the images with my memories, though similar, they were very different, which opened a void, a space of unanswered questions, of nothing, the echo of conjecture and opinion, a space filled with Art, just not yet seen.



# Hannah Faas



## *Fence Sitter*

My work explores themes of sweetness and frivolity and challenges the perception that sweet and frivolous things are submissive, naive, unprofessional, and overall lacking value. My work confidently embraces notions of frivolity and sweetness as a means to undermine and challenge these stereotypes through the use of unapologetic conviction tempered with a sense of humour. I want the work to inhabit seemingly opposing identities simultaneously, such as joyful and melancholic, confident and gauche, and beautiful and off-putting.

# Heidi McKenzie



## *Crescent Moon*

I reclaim my father's Indo-Caribbean heritage through my sculptural practice, memorializing the little-known stories of his ancestors who worked the sugar plantations in the Caribbean post-slavery. The crescent moon is a significant symbol for Muslims. This work centres around my great-great grandparents who sailed from Calcutta to Guyana. They were untouchables, and converted to Islam to escape their caste in a new land. I build my memories of my bloodline through archival evidence and stories, recollections reimagined.

# Jane Garcia



## *Strong Will*

Some said Old Soul.  
I heard Strong Will.  
Also Deep.  
And Introspective.  
Crazy flawed, to be sure,  
aren't we all,  
but quirky, absolutely.  
Nimble humour tied to easy joy,  
so obvious,  
and a way with words,  
to charm me. Beguile me.  
Still... honestly sweet.  
Genuinely considerate.  
Such a passion for life  
while simply crowd surfing through it.  
Ahhh, that irresistible sparkle...  
Own wheels, will fly!  
Inspiring all who knew him.



# Jocelyn Jenkins



## *Teeming – Large Platter*

Memories cling to the places we move through drawing snippets of our past into our present. This piece is a tribute to a day, a place and the company I kept. The day and the company are long gone. But the place with its overlay of memory endures. It is a nostalgic piece with simplified imagery, in vivid colour, echoing the way that memory burnishes the things that are important to us.

# Jonah Strub



*Shayna Punim*

Jonah Strub is a Toronto-based gay, Jewish ceramicist. Jonah's artwork is a visual love letter to the aesthetics of camp, kitsch, Yiddish humour, and drag. His practice explores the humour of his lived queer Jewish experience through his love of strong Jewish women. From the beginning, these women from his family and greater community shaped his perception of the world and his own femininity through their effortless embodiment of a culturally rooted flamboyance.

# Karen Franzen



## *Spring Sprang Sprung Blue and Watering Can*

I began exploring watering cans 35 years ago, when I was an artist-in-residence at Harbourfront Centre. They have served to decant water and wine, and to display beautiful flowers. To me they celebrate springtime and new beginnings.

This series pays tribute to the long history of blue and white ceramics. I have loaded them with personal symbols, patterns, and doodles from my library of sketchbooks. They say "clay records time" and I believe that to be true.

# Keenan O'Toole



## *Turn Table*

I explore the relationships between individual elements, such as shapes, lines, and spaces, considering how they interact to create visual compositions of questionable composure. Sometimes, I focus on the forms themselves and the spaces between, while other times it's about emphasizing a singular plane or line. I use traditional ceramic building methods playing with vertical and horizontal planes to separate space and time manipulating traditional pictorial landscapes.

# Layne Verbeek



## *Death Grip*

Layne Verbeek is an award-winning Toronto glass artist and sculptor. Layne operates Verbeek Glass Studio, a full kiln glass studio and gift shop where he and his team teach fused and kiln glass workshops to all ages. Layne's work focuses on colour and movement in cast or kiln-formed sculpture. He often employs atypical glass effects (matt, textured, reactivities and or swarf vs high gloss transparency) as key storytelling elements in his sculptures.



# Leslie Putnam



## *rulesofthegame*

There is a jump back in time for me when I look at old board games, particularly the game of Snakes and Ladders. What appears as a simple dice game is loaded with imagery that holds moral implications on the choices you make in life. In each cube small beads create sound rattles. As the cubes are turned, images form to create different puzzles. These pieces are both functional and sculptural in their intention.

# Lisa Gwen Robbins



*Mom's Apple Pie*

My ceramic sculptures explore the intersection of biology, memory, and consciousness. Each piece embodies the organic essence of memory and the mechanical aspects of our neural networks, capturing the intricate interplay between biological connections and the formation, storage and recall of memories. I invite viewers to contemplate the biological underpinnings of their own consciousness, and the profound role that memory plays in shaping our perceptions of the world and our sense of self within it.

# Maja Padrov



## *Consecutiveness#7*

Inspired by functional pottery and domestic objects, my recent work consists of numbers of lidded jars or small bowls of different geometric shapes, connected by their bodies or lids. I am interested in composition's intuitive, impermanent nature, suggestion of function that might not exist, random connections, different views from different angles and details that might or might not contribute to the perception of the whole piece. Just like memories.

# Marita Manson



## *Psychedelic Sun Chips*

I am interested in the undulating, plastic quality of memory. As I age I notice my memories fading and becoming skewed. Drawing back the curtain on the colours, themes and patterns that populate my memories of childhood, I gather source material that is as much historical as it is imagined. I am left questioning whether what I thought was there was truly there, or if my mind has filled in the gaps for me.

# Nikola Wojewoda



## *Family Portrait*

Our bodies record the moment, the experience; this imprinting becomes a ghost we will call Memory. But memory is malleable, intangible and psychological – it merges and bends. The 'recalled' is a scaffold on which we can only 'imagine'. This is where we reconstruct our fleeting selves, our history. Past and present collide, reframing childhood, uncanny déjà vu, and more. Memories, they are selective, nostalgic, fading and dream-like, a rich distorted multiplicity, forever artfully creating us.

# Peidi Wang



## *Crown*

In the liminal space where memory and dream converge, Peidi's sculpture emerges as an artifact of the subconscious. Here, surrealism bends reality, transforming personal narratives into tactile experiences. This piece illustrates the chaos and beauty of recollection, a tangible rendition of memories distorted over time. It beckons viewers to delve into their own abstracted memories, to embrace the strange familiarity within the contours of the ceramic form.

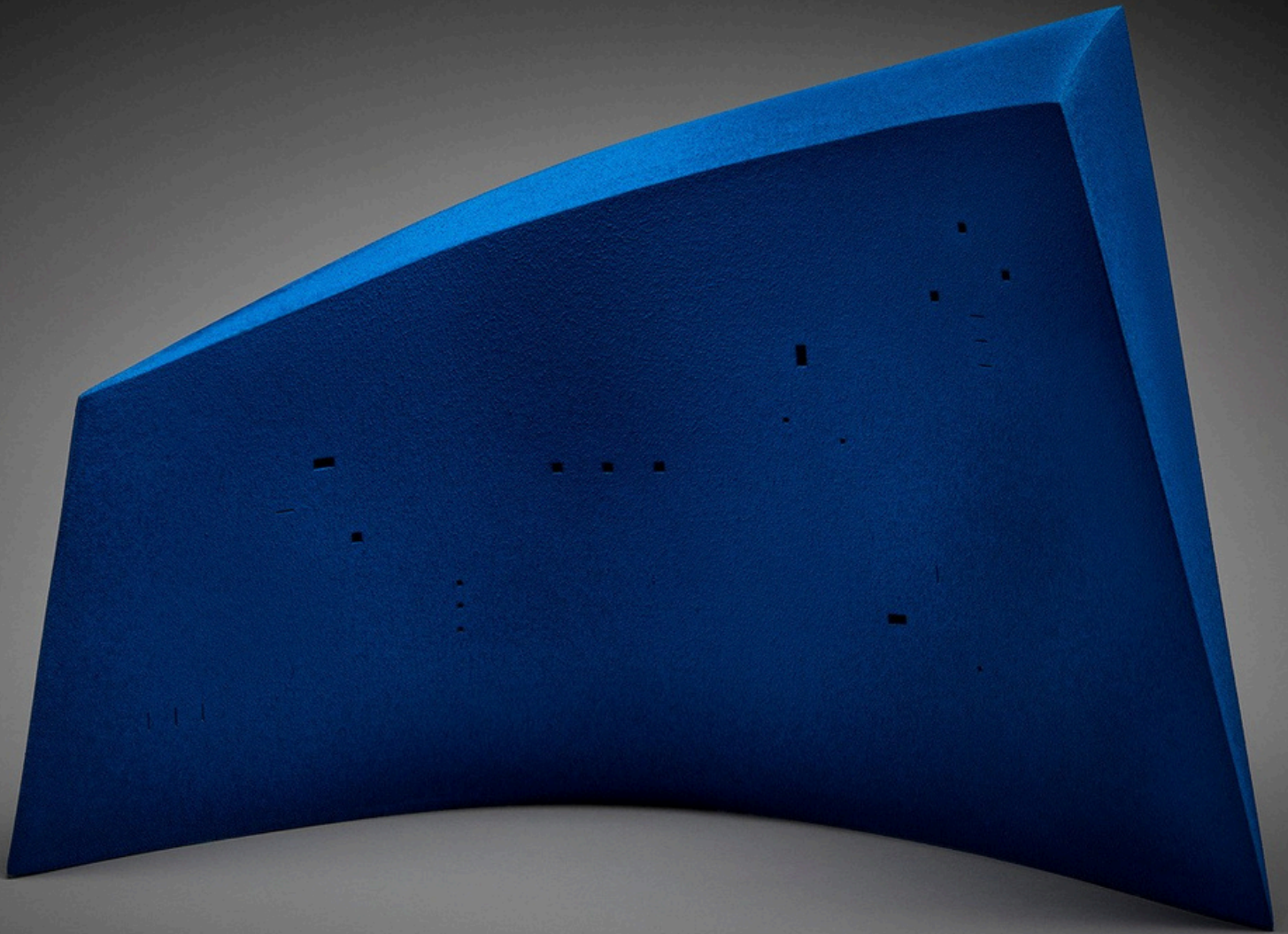
# Queenie Xu



## *Prototype (Bone)*

Exploring the fusion of collective nature memories and personal experiences, my work delves into how objects become repositories for cherished recollections. Brush strokes on ceramics and organic forms evoke layers of memory, illuminating the intricate dance between our shared natural heritage and the narratives we weave around everyday objects, prompting reflection on the intertwined tapestry of memory and identity.

# Sandra Ledingham



*Ronchamp VI - Cathedra of Light*

While the Minimalist Movement wanted to completely remove themselves from their Art, Abstract Expressionists embraced personal emotion". To the point of 'Untitled' being Minimalism's only valid information. I value the above statement greatly as I wrestle often with where my work sits, since pared down formalism interests me greatly! But layered message and Titles act as windows into the work which I believe strongly invites the viewer in, instead of isolating them.



# Shayne Berlin



## *Black Velvet Folds Vase*

As a child I remember feeling happy as I marvelled at beautiful things - Scandinavian furniture or Lily of the Valley!

Today, I try to recreate that feeling for others through my art. I try to push the boundaries of how clay can be molded to elicit a sense of curiosity and surprise in people and hopefully, well being.

## Silvia Tagusagawa



### *Desire*

Through ceramics, I seek to immortalize life's fond memories, drawing inspiration from Baroque art and the natural beauty of Canada. I incorporate floral and organic elements to symbolize these fleeting experiences. My sculptures contemplate the transient beauty of special moments and reflect on the fragility of human existence.

# Sydni Weatherson



*Chrome Prototype No. 1*



*First Frost*

Sydni Weatherson is a multidisciplinary artist currently working out of Harbourfront Centre in Toronto, Ontario. Her work as a glass artist revolves around the themes of organic movement and open spaces with a focus on carefully selected colour palettes. Her current work looks to capture the fluidity of the glass during the making process, exploring colour, texture, and movement frozen in time through the excavation of layers.

# Vanesa Trillia



## *Lean in*

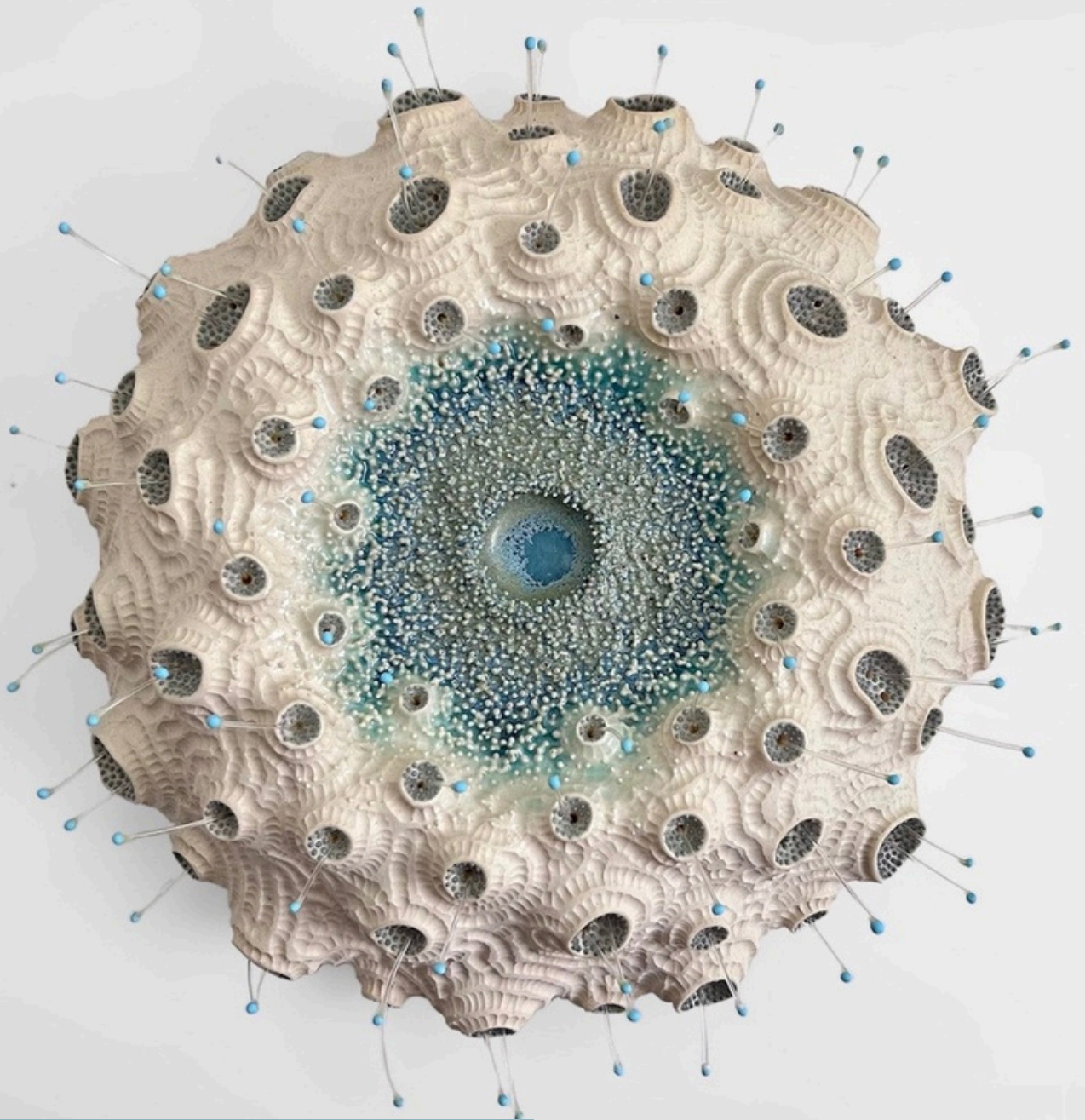
In the series "Expressions from the land within" Trillia's sculptures, like characters of an undeciphered alphabet, have a life of their own and are open to multiple interpretations. "Lean In" explores memories past and future, combining known and unknown, offering glimpses of insight as it evolved from concept to actual piece.

# Wei Cheng



*Bon appétit* Wei, Vancouver based Ceramic Artist, discovered her passion at Langara College and Emily Carr University, where she not only honed skills but also developed a profound appreciation for this medium. Her mastery of ceramics and fusion with found objects create intricate, thought-provoking pieces. Exhibiting globally, from the Yixing Pottery Center to Chester Beatty Museum and back to Vancouver's Lipont Centre, Wei's work explores life's ephemeral essence. Wei's journey reflects a relentless pursuit of innovation and a deep connection to the human experience.

# Zara Gardener



## *The Expulsion (Bleached Coral Series)*

Zara's 'Bleached Coral Series' serves as a reflection on the stark reality of dying coral reefs as they undergo bleaching events. She explores the haunting beauty of these once vibrant corals as they fade to ghostly white, evoking a poignant reflection on loss and the fragility of our natural world. Faint traces of colour give us hope as this series prompts the viewer to confront the urgency of preserving our natural heritage and the memories they hold.