

VAN DOREN WAXTER

Brian Rochefort
The Hunter
January 11–March 2, 2024



Untitled, 2023, Ceramic, glaze, glass fragments 23 ½ x 17 ½ x 19 ½ in.

Van Doren Waxter is very pleased to announce **Brian Rochefort: *The Hunter***, a striking exhibition of new, never before shown ceramic sculptures covered in optically charged glazes and finishes at the gallery's 1907 townhouse at 23 East 73rd Street from January 11 to March 2, 2024. The presentation is noteworthy for a marked progression in scale of his celebrated "craters," and are the artist's largest to date, or as he says, "as much as I can carry." In a 2019 interview in *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*, the artist—who has been aligned and shown alongside Ron Nagle, Ken Price, and Kathy Butterly—told Janelle Zara his sculptures continue to grow in scale, remarking: "They're starting to get bigger and bigger...I feel like the material can be seriously pushed." The exhibition also highlights a return for the artist to his wall-based objects—experiments with sand-like texture and color gradients, evoking imprints made on washed over beach or riverbed.

A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, Rochefort (b. 1985) lives and works in Los Angeles. Noted for his interest in the natural world ranging from the Amazon to Africa, he regularly travels to remote and fragile ecosystems, including the tropical rainforests, volcanoes, and coral reefs to inform works suggesting organic forms like tropical bird feathers or the crackling shells of rock formations. In an adventurous and ecologically concerned art practice, his physical, tactile art also evinces a high skill in colorants and airbrushing cultivated when he was introduced in the late 2000s to technicians and colorists from DuPont. Abstractionists such as Julie Mehretu, Joan Mitchell, Jackson Pollock, Ken Price and Franz West are also constant sources of inspiration.



Untitled, 2023, Ceramic, glaze, glass fragments, 21 ½ x 20 x 19 ½ in.

A total of 9 “craters,” all 2023, will greet the viewer on the gallery’s second floor. *Untitled*, measuring nearly two feet tall, is an iridescent work of tropical green, lilac, and pink oozing with glowing glazes and finishes and touches of molten glass. The astonishing work is built up of layers of mud and slip clay, which the artist repeatedly breaks and builds back meticulously over a period of time, and then fires, airbrushes, and glazes. A similarly scaled, vertical production—a spewing, gurgling equatorial green vessel—is the result of the artist repeatedly “drying, cracking, and spraying” the mottled surface.

The exhibition includes 3 fauna hued textured wall works that range from conjuring chromatic imprints in the sand to oozing ecosystems. Artist and art critic David Rhodes asserts Rochefort has contributed to “the expanded field of ceramic sculpture and painting, currently such a vital tendency in contemporary art” and that his “wall-based relief paintings engage visually with the possibilities of painting.”

About the artist

Brian Rochefort (b. 1985) lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. He holds a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design (2007) and participated in the Lillian Fellowship Residency at the Archie Bray Foundation (2009). Rochefort's first solo museum exhibition, *Absorption by the Sun*, was exhibited at Santa Barbara Museum of Art, CA (2019). Solo gallery exhibitions include Van Doren Waxter and 11R, New York, NY; Massimo De Carlo, London and Milan; Caterina Tognon, Venice, Italy; Sorry We're Closed, Brussels, Belgium; and Bernier Eliades, Athens. Group exhibitions include: The Cabin, Los Angeles, CA; Sorry We're Closed, Brussels; Retrospective Gallery, Hudson, NY; and Steve Turner, Los Angeles, CA. Rochefort was included in the museum exhibitions *Artifices Instables, Stories of Ceramics* at Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, Monte Carlo, Monaco; *Cool Clay* at Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA; *Regarding George Ohr* at Boca Raton Museum of Art, FL; and *From Funk to Punk* at Everson Museum of Art, NY.

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