

Christopher Adams's Biomorphic Creations Breathe Life into Ceramics

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Entering Christopher Adams's "Primordial Garden" at Garvey | Simon Art Access is akin to entering a botanical cabinet of curiosities. Adams's uncanny, ceramic specimen are hard to place; their tentacular leaves lend them an alien-like quality, but after close inspection, it becomes clear that the wonder of nature is the main subject.



Installation view of Garvey|Simon Art Access's "Primordial Garden," 2015. Courtesy Garvey|Simon Art Access and the artist.

Adams approaches his ceramic practice with a perspective informed by his background in science—his resume includes degrees in organismic and evolutionary biology and he is a practicing dermatologist by day. He conceives of his entire body of work as a whole, in which each work is a member of a “family,” united by their physical characteristics. Every

piece is made out of 18 appendages, attached in the same, symmetrical order. But there's a sci-fi twist. Adams's biomorphic figures play on biological concepts, and more specifically, on the idea of adaptive radiation—a process in which organisms are placed in a new environment and must rapidly diversify in order to survive. For Adams, his work encapsulates this process in action. Each piece he creates is conceived of as an individual, with a life force. And they convey a sense of evolution, as the sculptures seem to riff on one another; for instance, two works might share a similar form but differing colors.



Christopher Adams
Primordial Garden A5, 2015
 Garvey | Simon Art Access
 \$950



Christopher Adams
Primordial Garden D7, 2015
 Garvey | Simon Art Access
 \$950



Christopher Adams
Primordial Garden D5, 2015
 Garvey | Simon Art Access
 \$950

The gallery walls are crawling with Adams's works, mounted in the two main rooms according to size and relative form. Most of the pieces are arranged in grids, a neutral hierarchy that allows the viewer's eyes to dart between each one and observe their unique characteristics. Color is built up on the paper-thin fronds through multiple layers of glazes, often resulting in velvety textures that tend toward muted tones. In some of the smaller pieces, black glaze is heavily applied on top creating embossed or crackling textures.



Christopher Adams
Primordial Garden 13, 2015
 Garvey | Simon Art Access



Christopher Adams
Primordial Garden 18, 2015
 Garvey | Simon Art Access

Each work emerges from the wall with distinctive personalities; some have writhing, tangled tendrils that reach out in multiple directions and others have lush petals that droop downward. Undeniably, the work speaks in the language of nature, yet it is decidedly exotic

and divergent. As you find yourself immersed in the blooming world Adams has created, it's not so much about identifying what is natural or what is alien, but rather, recognizing that endless variation is a part of, well, everything.

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