

Caterina Tognon and Van Doren Waxter  
are proud to present in Venice:

**Brian Rochefort: *Collapse***

May 8th | July 27th, 2019

Opening reception: May 7th, 7.00|9:00pm

Tuesday | Saturday 10.00am | 7.00pm

Caterina Tognon arte contemporanea

Corte Barozzi San Marco 2158

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www.caterinatognon.com

The gallery is a two minute walk  
from San Marco Square  
on the side street Calle XXII Marzo,  
next to The Westin Europa and Regina Hotel.  
The closest *Vaporetto*, or public boat station is  
San Marco - Calle Vallaresso line 1 or 2  
(approx. three minute walk).



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Venice, Italy and New York, USA, April 2019—Caterina Tognon and Van Doren Waxter are delighted to present a new exhibition by Los Angeles artist Brian Rochefort (b. 1985) of his visually arresting and highly activated glazed stoneware and glass works suggesting forms or phenomena in the natural world, on view from May 8 to July 27, 2019 at Caterina Tognon in Venice.

The exhibition, *Collapse*, reflects a friendship between the two galleries and a shared desire to present the artist's work that pushes the formal and technical confines of the medium into new territories of freedom, invention, and play. This special presentation in Italy anticipates Brian Rochefort's first solo museum exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (MCASB), CA from August 1 to September 8, 2019, organized by curator Alexandra Terry. The artist's works have been included in recent museum survey exhibitions such as *From Funk to Punk: Left Coast Ceramics* at the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse, NY and *Regarding George Ohr* at Boca Raton Museum of Art, FL, where his productions were shown alongside pioneering artists working in ceramics such as Ron Nagle, Ken Price, and Kathy Butterly artists whom Rochefort names as prominent influences in his own practice.

"Brian Rochefort will present his large works in ceramic elaborated with numerous glazes and molten glass," said Caterina Tognon, founder, who since 1994 has introduced to the Italian public works by a range of international artists who mediate creative thinking through the use of materials and techniques of established artisanal traditions, like mainly glass or ceramics, gold, stone, and painting. "These represent massive 'craters,' as if erupting with the energy of a volcanic explosion, suddenly active, with all the colors of exemplary American painting of the 20th century."

"We are very pleased to show Brian Rochefort at Caterina Tognon," said partner Dorsey Waxter, who noted that the artist's first exhibition at the gallery, *Hotspots* (2017), included Rochefort's large vessel-like sculptures inspired by volcanic landscapes, earthen depressions, remote tropical rainforests, protected barrier reefs, and exotic animals distinguished by rich in colors and highly varied surface structure and finish. "The artist's deep interest in nature and the environment continues to stimulate his evolving practice". Brian Rochefort was most recently on view this year in the United States at Van Doren Waxter at 23 East 73rd Street in New York City. 2030 was the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery and featured recent ceramic sculptures and a new group of wall-based works.

His newest efforts highlighted his technical experiments in color and texture revealing a progression towards a larger scale. Each crater 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—over multiple firings, or as the artist enthuses, "as many glazes as possible until I can't fire anymore". *Nightcrawler* (2019), for instance, and measuring 20 x 18 x 18 inches (50.8 x 45.7 x 45.7 cm), is a striking ceramic and glaze production that evinces an intensely physical and tactile studio process and high skill in colorants and gradients.

Added Tognon: "Whereas in Italy in the second half of the 20th century works in clay were still considered an intermediate step to bronze sculpture, in the U.S., important artists like Paul Soldner (b.1921–d. 2011), Peter Voulkos (b.1924–d. 2002), Betty Woodman (b.1930–d. 2018), Ron Nagel (b.1939), among others, embarking from the concepts of abstraction, dedicated themselves to the study of ceramics with freedom and sophistication, creating new languages and archetypes, writing a new page in the history of art."

The Venice exhibition will include craters, cups, and wall-based objects that, according to the artist, are experiments with sand-like texture and color gradients evoking imprints made on washed over beach or riverbed. Art critic and writer David Rhodes asserts that Brian 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.” “Humans, who from the very beginning built to defend themselves against nature’s hostility, no sooner to ‘get to the roof’ (as is said in building jargon) than they immediately feel the urgency to ‘bring in’ to these new spaces images and symbols of the same nature that they want to keep at bay.

The works of Brian Rochefort perform precisely this function: They are a marvelous piece of nature to bring into our own caves,” enthused Tognon. “Besides this, they are indispensable artifacts for our living spaces—despite how they contradict any functionality whatsoever”. Added Tognon: “This exhibition, organized to coincide with the 58th Biennale Internazionale d’Arte, aims to highlight the role of the city of Venice as a window on international art, which it has played for more than a century in the area of visual art, in a rare and positive example of constructive globalization.”

#### **About the artist**

Brian Rochefort (b.1985) was educated at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) and currently lives and works in Los Angeles. In January 2019, he participated in The Mistake Room artist residency and project in Guadalajara, Mexico. Rochefort recently had a solo exhibition at Sorry We’re Closed in Brussels, Belgium. Recent group exhibitions include The Cabin, Los Angeles; Steve Turner Gallery, Los Angeles; and Retrospective Gallery, Hudson, NY.

#### **About Caterina Tognon arte contemporanea**

Caterina Tognon is interested in the cross section of fine art and applied arts. The gallery retains a strong reputation and recognizable style that has earned it a loyal following. Caterina Tognon represents international artists and designers primarily working with glass. The gallery represents the most influential artists of the International Studio Glass movement and is one of the leading European galleries dedicated to this medium. Since its founding in 1994 in the town of Bergamo, the gallery’s exhibition program has favored solo shows and participates in international art fairs. In 2004 the gallery moved to Venice, due to the influence of the island of Murano on glass as artistic medium. Caterina Tognon has also organized major exhibitions in collaboration with cultural institutions and museums in Venice, including Museum Fortuny, Museo Correr, Ca’ Rezzonico, Ca’ Pesaro, Istituto Veneto di Scienze lettere e Arti; and around the world, including the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, PA, USA.

#### **About Van Doren Waxter**

Van Doren Waxter cultivates a visually compelling post war and contemporary art program, informed by a commitment to the act of looking. Reflecting the shared vision of John Van Doren, Dorsey Waxter, Augusto Arbizo, and Liz Sagedhi to present formally rigorous historical and contemporary exhibitions, collectors are welcomed into a 1907 townhouse encompassing three floors of intimately scaled exhibition space. A considered schedule of conversations, scholarship, and publications offer a deeper understanding of materials and processes in the context of modern and contemporary art. Introducing innovative and international contemporary artists, juxtaposed alongside significant American Abstractionists, continues to distinguish Van Doren Waxter since its founding 20 years ago. The gallery is privileged to serve as the custodian of vital artistic legacies, including the Richard Diebenkorn Foundation, the James Brooks Foundation, the Harvey Quaytman Trust, the Alan Shields Estate, and the Hedda Sterne Foundation, and for presenting the work of daring emerging and mid-career artists Caetano de Almeida, Marsha Cottrell, TM Davy, Jeronimo Elespe, Volker Huller, Gareth Nyandoro, Sarah Peters, Mariah Robertson, Brian Rochefort, and Jackie Saccoccio. The gallery also handles secondary market post war work.

Van Doren Waxter is located at 23 East 73<sup>rd</sup> Street, New York, NY, tel: +1 (212) 445-0444, vandorenwaxter.com.

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