

## Artistic Statement

Shiyuan Xu

“Nature is painting for us, day after day, pictures of infinite beauty if only we have the eyes to see them.”  
-John Ruskin

“Thus the minuscule, a narrow gate, opens up an entire world.... Miniature is one of the refuges of greatness.”  
- Gaston Bachelard

I draw inspirations from nature, which has created an inexhaustible wealth of wondrous forms, particularly at the microscopic level. Viewing the world through the microscope lens fascinates me. It is amazing to observe the spectacular diversity of the tiny hidden world. Most micro life forms are too small to be seen by the naked eye, and yet their distinctive existence and beauty is grand.

I reinterpret scientific phenomena into art forms. Working primarily with porcelain paperclay, I hand build structures with slabs and coils from the inside out. I build vastness with thin structures to let the intricacy of nature speak for itself. The skeletal lines of structures create harmonious volume within an intimate scale form, providing a sense of ethereality, fragility and preciousness.

Experimenting with various glazes, either allowing the glaze to run, to drip through or to connect to other parts becomes an integral part of the whole structure, or over spraying the glaze on the surface so that it organically forms a soft layer of skin.

The more closely we look at the world around us, the more we can appreciate and understand our own place in the complex web of life.