



MARK WALNOCK

Mark Walnock graduated from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, PA earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, with honors, in ceramics. He has worked as an instructor and studio manager for various arts organizations including Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina, Thompson Park Craft Center, Burlington County Community College, and the non-profit center Long Beach Island Foundation of the Arts and Sciences in N.J. Mark has been an artist in residence at the Long Beach Island Foundation as well as the Vermont Studio Center. He has exhibited his work nationwide and at invitational shows in London and Japan. Mark lives and works in West Palm Beach Florida where he is the Director of Ceramics & Sculpture Department at the Armory Art Center.

ARTIST STATEMENT:

My work is based on different growth processes in nature. The pieces depict imagined developing scenarios in which extensions are formed or are in the process of being formed off of a stationary host. These living hosts can be protected by spikes or scales. Some hosts take shape as root systems or animal parts from land or the sea.

The idea of protection through clustering and the persistence for survival in nature are my main themes. I personally connect with the determined, relentless qualities that I find in nature. I admire nature's ability to grow under any harsh conditions and to rarely be held back. Quiet but powerful, my pieces begin to reflect a self-portrait as the growth inside them is silent, subtle, and ongoing.

The pieces I display have the characteristics of these growth systems detached from their natural environment. I attempt to direct the viewer to focus on these generally unnoticed events in order for them to contemplate their own personal growth scenarios. The surfaces are treated not necessarily to imitate nature but to enhance the idea of protection. Metal or bronze as an outer layer places a protective "shell" over the piece and avoids a too immediate recognition.