

Virtebrae

Sylvia Netzer

June 28 – July 29, 2018

Opening Reception: Thursday, June 28, 6-8PM

A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to announce *Virtebrae*; an exhibition of new ceramic sculptures by the New York artist, Sylvia Netzer.

The word *Virtebrae* refers to a group of bones that form a spinal column. For the creation of the series that composes her latest exhibition, Netzer revisited techniques and methodologies similar to the ones she explored early in her career by taking a singular bio-morphic piece and converting it into a multiple unit that is repeated through the space of the exhibition.

Each piece found in the installation is a labor intensive and hand built module. Although the sculptures are similar to one another, each 'vertebra' is unique and extremely haptic: the pieces rise to the viewers attention.

The installation contains pieces composed with high-fire sculpture clay, spliced rope and pink Spalding High-Bounce Balls that reference the images of ladders, DNA and spinal columns evoked in the exhibition's name. As critic Ann Rothman noted about Netzer's previous body of work, "life is very much present."

Netzer's thoughtful attention the architecture of the gallery allows her soft, sensitive, organic forms to generate different kinds of spaces, which ultimately provide a more dynamic, intimate experience, for the viewer. By including drawings that hold shapes related to her three dimensional forms, *Virtebrae* offers viewers the opportunity to delve into the artist's creative process. As the artist herself explains, clay is the chosen "material for most of her projects because of its implied fragility and because so much of our built environment is brick, terra cotta and earth." The material of life itself.

Sylvia Netzer received her M.F.A. in sculpture from Columbia University School of Arts. She is the director of the ceramics program at The City College of New York. In addition to writing numerous pieces on glass and ceramic works, Netzer's work has been included in many publications, such as in *Three Dimensions: Women Sculptors of the '90's* by Charlotte Streifer-Rubenstein, *Ceramics: Mastering the Craft* by Richard Zakin, *Encaustic Painting: Contemporary Expressions in the Ancient Medium of Pigmented Wax* by Joanne Mattera, *Confrontational Ceramics: The Artist as Social Critic* by Judith S. Schwartz, and *Encaustic: The Complete Guide to Creating Fine Art With Wax* by Lissa Rankin. Netzer has served as a curator for exhibitions at A.I.R. Gallery, Gallery 128, and elsewhere. Her artwork has been exhibited internationally in Sweden and Japan, and it is held in several permanent collections.



Sylvia Netzer, *Virtebrae*, high fired glazed stoneware

The gallery is wheelchair accessible



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