

Elisa D'Arrigo
Out of Hand: New Ceramic Sculpture
January 9 - February 14, 2026

George Adams Gallery is pleased to present *Out of Hand: New Ceramic Sculpture*, an exhibition of new sculptures by Elisa D'Arrigo. The presentation highlights D'Arrigo's singular approach to clay, showcasing works whose animated presence emerges directly from the improvisational process by which they are made. D'Arrigo was last presented by the Gallery in a pop-up two-person show at Minnesota Street Projects, San Francisco (with Lynda Dann) and at the ADAA Art Show (with M. Louise Stanley), both in 2024. This exhibition marks D'Arrigo's first solo show with the Gallery in New York and features eight new works completed within the past year. There will be an opening reception at the gallery on January 16 from 6pm to 8pm.

D'Arrigo's practice begins with her acute sensitivity to the physical and expressive capacities of her materials. Under her hand, clay becomes a responsive substance—capable of suggestion, gesture, and humor. The artist describes her method as “a dialogue with the piece, a dialogue with myself,” through which unexpected images surface and are absorbed into the final form. In *Pileup*, she notes that once she cut “a smile-like slit” to release trapped air, “it was as if a gleeful, rebellious personality was also released, demanding my immediate attention.”

Hunched, twisting, and caught mid-motion, D'Arrigo's forms take on an anthropomorphic charge, evoking the awkward, vulnerable ways bodies occupy space. As John Yau observed in *Hyperallergic* (April 21, 2019), the sculptures “can be swollen or scrunched, ultimately becoming personifications of vulnerability, clumsiness, and inelegance... all the aspects of our body and behavior that call attention to our fallibilities.” It is this ability to tap into the more fragile corners of human consciousness, he writes, that lends the works their “unaccountable presence.”

D'Arrigo's layered glazing technique further amplifies the sculptures' vitality. Her surfaces—built from combinations of color, pattern, and texture—function almost as skin, subtly shifting the emotional tenor of each piece. The result is a series of small yet dynamic ceramic forms, organic in appearance and rich in tactile detail, whose contorted stances suggest creatures buoyed and burdened by gravity alike. In her essay, Princenthal characterized them as “alarmingly potent little ceramic figures that engage our propensities for reverie, humor, and perhaps most satisfying, deep human recognition.”

Elisa D'Arrigo has exhibited widely across the United States, and her work is represented in numerous public collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Everson Museum of Art, the Mint Museum of Craft and Design, the Weatherspoon Art Museum, the High Museum of Art, and the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art. D'Arrigo lives and works in New York City.

Out of Hand will be on view at George Adams Gallery from January 9 to February 14, 2026. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For further information, please contact the gallery at info@georgeadamsgallery.com.