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Atmosphere of Inquiry

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ATMOSPHERE OF INQUIRY

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Master of Fine Arts

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The works of my thesis exhibition entitled *Atmosphere of Inquiry* focus on the ideas of investigation, discovery, intimacy, and the interchangeability between aquatic and terrestrial life forms, through transformation of materials and presentation. The installation format creates a framework that allows me to reassemble shapes, attributes, qualities, and quantities on a much larger scale suggesting an essential connection to our physical space. Installation provides a strategy to engage the viewers with microscopic objects in relation to the macroscopic installation space. Hybrid artworks made from porcelain ceramics, commonplace objects, and prefabricated materials, which convert the familiar into imitations of exotic botanical life forms.

The ways of discovery within a specific space engulfed the viewers, inviting them to become intimate with the work in order to view all its elements in detail. This body of work combines the meticulous investigation of materials and its ability to transcend its materialistic appearance into something reminiscent of nature. As a result, my work aspires to instill curiosity about our natural world and portrays beauty as transformed objects that once lived in nature.

The role of investigation and discovery of the viewer is vital in these works, challenging their perceptions about nature and environment, and further drawing associations between the human and natural world. Introducing the element of interior

space through the removal of natural objects and forms from their original contexts renovated them into fragile porcelain pieces. This action of removal and renovation engages the viewers to experience the objects that would be otherwise passed by without a second glance.

This thesis examines the issues in my sculptural ceramic works including the various aspects of investigation and discovery. Environmental philosophies on nature, Taoism's reflections of the environment will also be reviewed. Philosophers, writers, and thinkers Alexander Blok, Erika Suderburg, Robert Morris, Ilya Kabakov, Henry Thoreau, and Ernst Haeckel support the underlying theories of the exhibition.