

# Chris Garofalo

## falling <sup>up</sup>

becoming from undoing

"A fallen blossom

returning to the bough, I thought –

But no, a butterfly."

*–Arakida Moritake, Traditional Japanese Poetry: An Anthology*

Whether blossom or human being, life is fragile and temporary. When in Moritake's poem a butterfly appears to fall up, retaking its position on the branch, death, birth, and the living beauty of the blossoming tree coincide, rendering the distinction between fallen blossom and butterfly irrelevant.

*The artistic relevance of an encounter between the chemistry of ceramic materials and the creative genius of organic life can be found in returning to the primitive atmosphere of early Earth, where clay crosses boundaries between living and non-living, all organisms to come already contained within it. Falling up invites us to undo conventional notions of human primacy and separation from nature, to embrace the profound porosity between categories of living beings, becoming more empathetic members of the entire biological community.*

*I'm indebted to Jean-Charles Hameau and Kimberley Harthoorn for this elegant phrase.*