

# EAST BAY EXPRESS

## PICKS

### Natural Alchemy

When Esther Traugot finds a seedpod on the ground that she likes, she takes it home and carefully crochets around its husk with thin, golden yarn. She covers the pod almost entirely, but leaves a tiny window for the seed's original texture to show through. A fantastic series of these specimens — along with golden-blanketed crab claws, tree stumps, quail eggs, and more — are now on view in the show *Natural Alchemy* at Chandra Cerrito Contemporary (480 23rd St., Oakland).

Because Traugot crochets each piece to fit snugly, the organic form of the object is accentuated rather than obscured. Neatly organized in the white-walled gallery, the naturally ephemeral objects become venerated, archived treasures with striking texture and shape. Her



impeccable execution is equally impressive, as one imagines how gently she must handle her found objects in order to manipulate them. Traugot aims to explore how we idealize nature, and the inevitable

overlap of our attempts to preserve it with acts to control it. — Sarah Burke

*Runs through May 29. 510-260-7494 or [ChandraCerritoContemporary.com](http://ChandraCerritoContemporary.com)*