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PRESS RELEASE

SOKYO GALLERY

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KYOTO 605-0089

HOURS: WED - SUN 10:00AM-6:30PM

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JENNIFER LEE: *Ceramics made in Shigaraki and London*

Friday, October 16 – Sunday, November 8

Opening reception: Friday, October 16 6:00PM – 7:30PM

Sokyo Gallery is pleased to present *Ceramics made in Shigaraki and London* by the British potter, Jennifer Lee. This is her first major one-person exhibition in Japan. The exhibition features eighteen works, twelve of which were made during her recent residency at the Shigaraki Cultural Ceramic Park (SCCP), 2014 and 2015. The other works in the exhibition were made in London between visits to Japan.

The Sokyo Gallery is situated in Gion, an unspoilt, historic district of old Kyoto and has a close relationship with SCCP. It is the perfect location to exhibit such contemplative and beautiful works.

The two slab-like pieces on show are technically difficult to make and were only fully realized during her residency using equipment and expertise at SCCP. Jennifer has made smaller two-dimensional clay pieces in the past. These new larger flat works are more resolved and imposing.

Jennifer first visited Japan in 1994. Other travels have been important to her work, in particular

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the South West and West Coast of North America (1979), Egypt (1980) and India (1993). Such experiences filter into her work in an unconscious, abstract way. A more tangible source of inspiration from travelling is collecting oxides. On her first visit to Kyoto, unable to speak Japanese in a ceramics supplies shop, she realized she had the shared language of chemical formula names, such as MnO, so she came away with a suitcase of Japanese oxides.

These oxides are made into her characteristic ceramic coloured-clay test tiles that hang in her studio, building up a palette over many years. Some oxides are further aged in clay for up to 30 years. In the studio she is working purely in form and colour, each new work referencing and changing gradually from the previous work. Writers on her work have noted that they seem to capture the flow of time, visualizing it and giving it form.

In her studios in London and Shigaraki are many found objects. On her studio bench in London sit a stone she picked up in Kyoto in 1994. Part of the exhibition is an installation of collected objects she has gathered in Spring and Autumn this year in Shigaraki and Kyoto. Collecting for artists is a form of visual editing. What they decide not to pick up is just as important as what they keep. Being drawn to one object rather than another is an unconscious act of compulsion.

Jennifer Lee is born in 1956 in Aberdeenshire in North East Scotland. She completed her postgraduate degree from the Royal College of Art. Public collections include Victoria and Albert Museum, London; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Crafts Council Collection, London; Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Royal Museum, Edinburgh; Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg; National Museum, Stockholm; Musée Bellerive, Zurich; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, Tochigi; Mashiko Museum of Ceramic Art, Tochigi; The Museum of Contemporary Ceramic Art, Shigaraki.

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