



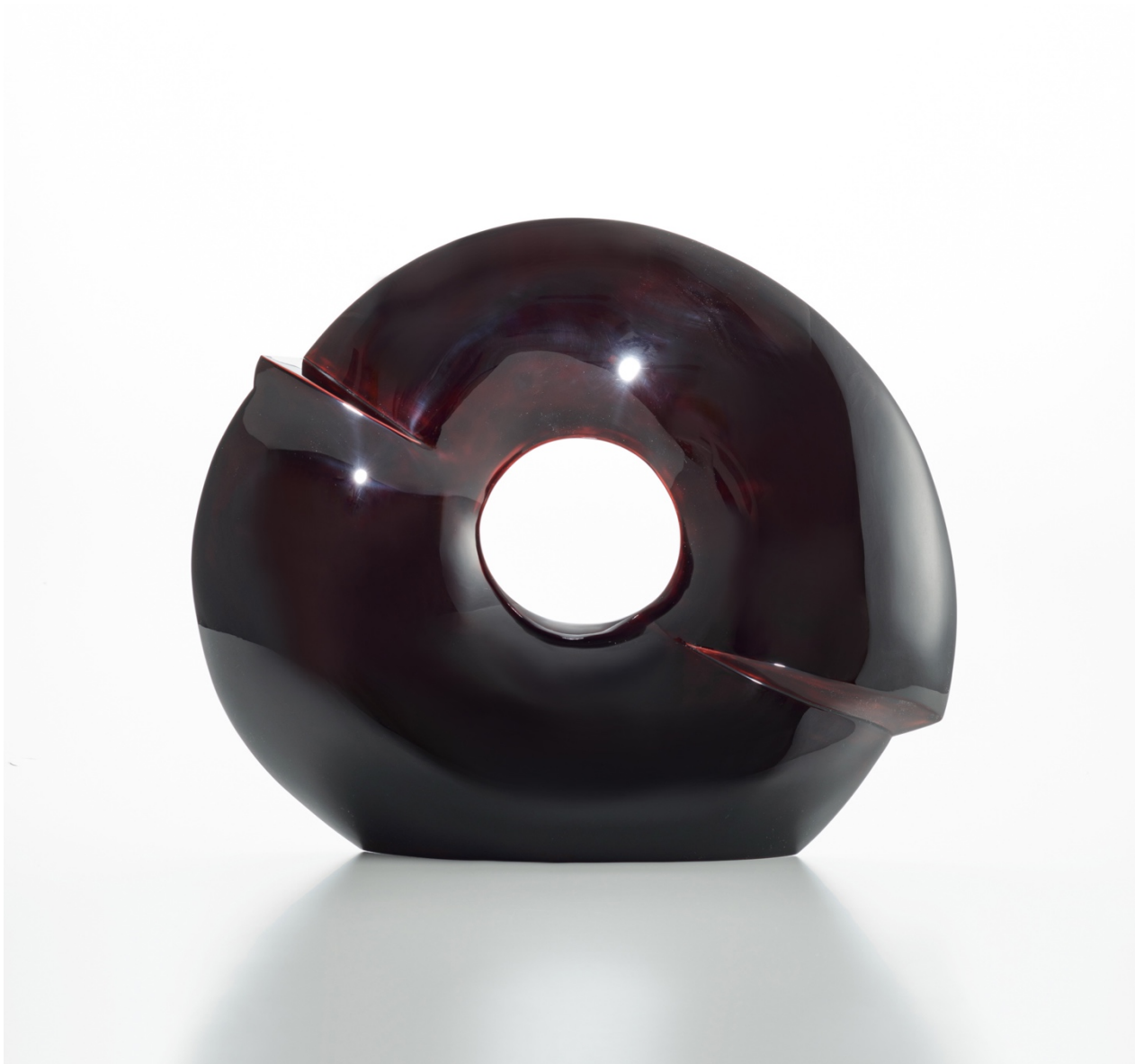
Natsuki Kurimoto, Fumie Sasai, Takeshi Igawa
- Challenge - Three Urushi Sculptors

Sat. April 4 - Fri. June 26, 2020



栗本 夏樹/ Natsuki Kurimoto, 宙/ Sora C, 2020, 乾漆に色漆・螺鈿/ Mother-of-pearl inlay on colored lacquer on kanshitsu, H39×W39×D60 cm/ H15.3×W15.3×D2.3 in.

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笹井 史恵/ Fumie Sasai, 日輪/ The Sun, 2020, 乾漆に朱溜塗/ Japanese lacquer
(Urushi), hemp cloth, foam polystyrene, H32.5 × W40 × D9.5 cm/ H12.7 × W15.7 × D3.7 in.



井川 健 / Takeshi Igawa, 転生 / Reincarnation, 2020, 漆、ヤシの葉柄 / Japanese lacquer (Urushi), leafstalk of desert fan palm, W17×D18×H94.5 cm / W37.2×D6.6×H7.0 in.

Sokyo Gallery

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Press release

Sokyo Gallery is pleased to present a three-person exhibition, *Challenge*, featuring Urushi sculptures by Natsuki Kurimoto, Fumie Sasai and Takeshi Igawa. Following the past exhibition held in 2015, this is an exhibition by these lacquer masters who have always been exploring new possibilities of lacquer today. We will show the insatiable exploration and new development of each artists of the three having one's own way in lacquer making.

Kurimoto first encountered lacquerware in an era when international movements in the fields of dyeing and weaving were on the rise, and many artists explored new expressions. The artist, who was a freshman in a university at that time, felt lacquer work seemed to have untouched potential. Since then, he has focused on the nature of lacquer that is collected sap from living trees and uses it as a material, he uses the Nature as a theme of his creation. Under the theme of "regeneration of "Lacquer/ life", he applies lacquer on to unconventional materials, such as cardboard paper, paper tubes, driftwood, fallen trees, gourds and brings new life that is different from the traditional use. This exhibition will present the new possibilities of lacquer in novel, the contemporary understanding of three-dimensional sculpting while using traditional techniques such as mother-of-pearl inlay, dried lacquer, and Maki-e.

Sasai's works features a unique rounded shape that allows the viewer to enjoy the smoothness of surface that is enhanced to give the impression of texture. She has created works with the motif of flowers, fruits and child in order to express fresh texture and shape like a newborn. Since 2014, she has gotten inspirations by layered collars and a knot of Kimono and has created soft lacquer texture and beautiful ridge lines. The artist often uses vermilion because it is a color that feels vital and also, it's complements shapes. This time, she takes up the moon and the sun, which she has been paying attention to recently as new motifs and is trying to make uses of lacquering technique that uses a blue or green colored-lacquer undercoating and transparent-lacquer topcoat.

Igawa advocates expression using only lacquer as a major theme. He intends to create uneven surface, as oppose to a ground surface with a sharpened base. In recent years, palm leaf patterns have been used as the base material. Seeking new developments in his creation, the artist challenged to use the base of the petiole that he has not used much so far. While compensating for the brittleness of the material by combining multiple petioles, he utilizes the original form and creates the work with undulating and complex shape.



Natsuki Kurimoto was born 1961 in Osaka, Japan and lives and works in Kyoto, Japan. He received M.A. Kyoto City University of Arts Department of Crafts in 1987. Currently a professor at the Kyoto City University of Arts. Collections include Victoria & Albert Museum, London; Boston Museum, Massachusetts; National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo; Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art. Awards include Sakuya Konohana Award (1993); Rookie Award Kyoto City Art (1995); 26th The Kyoto Prefecture Prize Kyoto Craft Artists Association Exhibition (2003), Encouragement Award 35th Kyoto Prefecture Cultural Prize Encouragement Prize (2017).

Fumie Sasai was born 1973 in Osaka, and lives and works in Kyoto, Japan. She received M.F.A. Kyoto City University of Arts. Currently an assistant professor at Kyoto City University of Arts Department of Crafts. Collections include Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Philadelphia Museum, Philadelphia, USA. National Museum Guimet, France. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo. Awards include the 30th Memorial Award the Kyoto Craft Artists Association Exhibition (2008); Rookie Award Kyoto City Artists Prize (2014); Encouragement Award, Kyoto Prefecture Cultural Prize (2015); Takashimaya Charitable Trust of Art and Cultural Prize.

Takeshi Igawa was born 1980 in Hyogo, and lives and works in Saga, Japan. He received Ph.D. Kyoto City University of Arts. Currently Assistant Professor at Saga University of Faculty of Arts and Regional Design. Collection includes Minneapolis Museum, Minnesota, U.S.A. Awards include Rookie Award Kyoto City Artists Prize (2009); Silver Prize, Cheongju International Craft biennale (2011); Minister of Economy Prize (2012); 52th Japan Craft Exhibition. Grand Prize, Japan Craft Prize (2005, 2016).

We would be very grateful if you could kindly consider this new innovative exhibition on your publications. If you have any questions, please contact the following;

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