



Proliferating Forms – 2023, 2020, Porcelain,
H28.7 × W24.4 × D20 in.

Harumi Nakashima: A survey of the last 50 years

Friday, 2 October - Saturday, 21 November, 2020

Sokyo Gallery

381-2 Motomachi, Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto 605-0089 Japan

Tuesday – Saturday 10:00AM–6:00PM

Sokyo Annex

SSS Building 3F, 375 Ichinofunairi-cho, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto 604-0924 Japan

Tuesday – Saturday 1:00 - 6:30 PM

現代美術 艸居 〒605-0089 京都市東山区元町 381-2

Sokyo Gallery 381-2 Motomachi, Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto, Japan 605-0089
T: 075-746-4456 F: 075-746-4457 info@gallery-sokyo.jp www.gallery-sokyo.jp



Press Release

In the spring of the third year of university, I was shocked by the exhibition of Sodeisha at the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, which determined my way of life. After that, I was captured by the three-dimensional work of ceramic, and my everyday production is nothing but "looking into the depth of my heart". Sometimes I felt like I was leaning and relying on the plasticity and firing of clay. Sometimes, I struggled to hold down their fight back. Time flies. After 50 years of crafting, I started to realize that it is also necessary to contain the "ideal", which is under the control of rationality, into the works. My attitude towards the material that I used to repel is also loosened. "The clay was innocently made into one piece. The movement of instinct and unconscious nature are being pulled out." I am thinking of counting such organicism and charm of pottery on the works of young artists who are "living in the present", but on the other hand, going for "splendid works" myself.

— Harumi Nakashima

Sokyo Gallery is pleased to represent a solo exhibition, Harumi Nakashima: A survey of the last 50 years. This is an unprecedented solo exhibition that looks back on the 50 years of Nakashima's artistic careers, and works ranging from the ones that were executed in his university period to the most recent pieces will be displayed. A work, *Soul* (1971), is the trigger for him to study under Mr. Junkichi Kumakura and the starting point of his works. To practice the teacher's words that "creating his own modeling theory that nobody else has is what makes an artist an artist", he made conversation with the clay and incorporated himself into his work. He confirmed the existence of himself by touching the clay and impregnating with his soul. Starting from this work, *Pure Culture* (1980), *Ufufu*. (1984), *Birds with Cosmos Colored Feathers* (1986), etc. were released. When Nakashima was invited to the European Ceramic Work Center (EKWC) in the Netherlands in 2002, he changed the material from ceramic to porcelain and began to work on hand twisting of porcelain. In this exhibition, his porcelain works of *WORK - 0506* (2005), which is crafted in the 2000s, the great turning point for Nakashima, along with the latest porcelain works, will be displayed. Confronting the fictile of clay, Nakashima keeps expressing just as leading his heart towards the sound of his soul. He has been evolving continuously, and the world he has created is enormous. Conflict and clear decision can be felt. Not flirting with anyone, Nakashima keeps asking himself "What do you make by creating a ceramic?" and has established an organic character of himself. Through this exhibition, Nakashima's soul and his way of life, which is instinctively, physically, and meditatively entrusted to the nature of the soil, can be experienced.



Harumi Nakashima was born 1950 in Gifu, Japan. He lives and works in Ena, Gifu, Japan. He received B.A., Ceramic from Osaka University of Arts Design in 1973. He moved to Shigaraki, Shiga, Japan and started his career as a ceramic artist. In 1976 he started to work at Tajimi City Pottery Design and Technical Center. From 2003 to 2014, he was a professor at Aichi University of Education. Currently a director of Tajimi City Pottery Design and Technical Center.

Collections include National Crafts Museum, Kanazawa, Japan; Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu, Japan; 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan; Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY, U.S.A.; The International Museum of Ceramics in Faenza, Italy; European Ceramic Work Centre, Oisterwijk, The Netherlands; Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK; Shangyu Celadon Modern International Ceramic Art Center, Shangyu, China; Tsinghua University, Beijing, China, and more. Awards include The Japan Ceramics Society Award (2010), Gold Award, International Ceramics Competition Mino '95, Gifu, Japan (1995), Bronze Award, International Ceramic Competition Mino '89, Gifu, Japan (1989), The Second Award, Mainichi ID Award (1980).

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

Press Contact

<Main Contact> Kumiko Motobayashi: motobayashi@gallery-sokyo.jp

<U.S.A.> Hitoshi Fukuoka: sale@gallery-sokyo.jp

Tel: 81.75.746.4456/ Fax: 81.75.746.4457

381-2 Motomachi, Fruonzen-dori, Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto 605-0089 Japan

Continue to next page:



Selected List of Work



Soul, 1971, Ceramic, H16.5 × W15.7 × D9.8 in.

In the spring of my third year of university, I made this very first object, which was inspired by an exhibition of Sodeisha. At that time, art education was all about Western art. However, I was resonated with Japanese aesthetic sense in the works of Sodeisha.



Pure Culture, 1980, Ceramic,
H17.7 × W11.8 × D16.5 in.

Firing ceramic forms that are made from malleable clay is organic. It will grow and proliferate, and finally transform. This essence could be seen if excess things are removed and pure culture is conducted.



Ufufu, 1984, Ceramic, H15.3 × W16.5 × D16.9 in.

The "Yang" object of the work "Ufufu".

This is one of a dozen pieces of individual works including Yin and Yang.

Influenced by Junkichi Kumakura's works and words, I tried to look into the "inner me" that I didn't even know. I thought I was bright and optimistic, but on the other hand, I might be a little gloomy. Yang and Yin. Positive and negative. + and-. The sun and the moon.



Birds with Cosmos Colored Feathers, 1986, Ceramic, H33 × W23.6 × D23 in.

My house was dilapidated, while cosmoses were fully blooming in the garden.



Bag of Mr. Duke, Ceramic, H31.4 × W28.7 × D17.7 in.

Inspired by Hemingway's novel "The Sun Also Rises." I stopped making four pieces although the bag series were much appreciated.

It is something that can be expressed by forms other than pottery. In other words, I have made up my mind not to make things in which I could not find the meaning of using one specific material.



Inner Myself, 1992, Ceramic, H24.4 × W28.7 × D31.1 in.

A critic commented that the artists from Sodeisha made an object by closing the mouth of the pottery on a wheel.

Originally the pottery should be a bowl.

Even though there is a hollow inside, it is unnatural to present the mass as a sculpture.

I wonder if the work that seems to be solid even though the inside is not solid is not ceramic sculpture.

I made my works into open-mouthed forms during that period. Since then, I stopped closing the mouths of my works. For me, this work is a monumental work.



WORK-0506, 2005, Porcelain, H24 × W16.5 × D27.5 in.

Exhibited at the 30th anniversary exhibition of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, "Power of Crafts: Outlook for the 21st Century". In the catalog, I commented on myself as "Coward" the reason of changing the material to porcelain.

Coward.

It has been 5 years since I changed the material to porcelain. Since I entered the world of ceramic, I have been insisting on hand-building three-dimensional works. However, I became admired porcelain one day. The motive was in my experience of making ceramic. It is

like tracing the history of firing and producing from the earthenware to the ceramic and porcelain, which is more forged and vitrified.

The white that I am seeking is not the superficial white from engobe. I want the structural white that goes from the core to the surface. To achieve the dignified texture I want, the firing has to be well conducted until it becomes hard enough to let through light. The longing for such porcelain was beyond control.

Those five years have been a struggle. The forming and firing technology acquired from ceramic making did not work. It is indispensable to accept the inconvenience and listen to the sound of the material in the forming of ceramic, which is limited to one specific material. However, the memory phenomenon of porcelain is rather tough. The process of string stacking is deeply reflected in the form. No matter how well finished, suppressed or soothed, it always comes out along with the firing.

It will become meaningless unless I squash myself in and conquer the stubborn memory phenomenon together with the charm of the material that I never flirt with. The protagonist is me. However, with the idea that "you should not craft aimlessly against the charm of the material," I have deeply questioned myself "isn't porcelain the proof that the warm blood is flowing?" and fell in love.

Don't just to hold it down. Try to behave as a grown up and make good use of the charm of porcelain.

In the distance, the voice of "coward" can be heard.



Forms Containing Absurdities - 1211, 2012, Porcelain,
H20.8 × W16.1 × D25.5 in.

The absurdity overflows no matter how much hard I tried to clarify.



Internal Forms - 02, 2020, Porcelain,
H25.5 × W11 × D11 in.

The plasticity of clay creates the form of growth and proliferation, and then transform. This links to the extraction of human being's instinct. However, I wish to insert my ideal into it.

In other words, I want to form the inner me in the conflict between instinct and rationality.



Proliferating Forms - 2023, 2020, Porcelain,
H28.7 × W24.4 × D20 in.

The *Proliferating Forms* series.

These works are created for a solo exhibition at Sokyo Gallery. In the spring of the third year of university, I was shocked by the exhibition of Sodeisha at the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, which determined my way of life. After that, I was captured by the three-dimensional work in ceramics, and my everyday creation is nothing but "looking into the depth of my heart". Sometimes I felt like I was leaning and relying on the plasticity and firing of clay. Sometimes, I struggled to hold down their fight back. Time flies. After 50 years of my career, I started to realize that it is also necessary to contain the "ideal", which is under the control of rationality, into the works. My attitude

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