



Kazunori Hamana, *Untitled*, 2020, Ceramic, H65 × W72 × D63 cm/ H25.5 × W28.3 × D24.8 inches

White

Chikako Inaba, Tadaaki Kuwayama, Kozo Takeuchi, Eri Dewa, Kazunori Hamana,
Sara Flynn, Yoon Heechang, Lee Ufan

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Public View: Saturday, May 8 – Saturday, July 10, 20212

Sokyo Annex

SSS Building 3F, 357 Ichinofunairi-cho, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto 604-0924 JAPAN

Tuesday – Saturday 1:00 pm – 6:30pm

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

Sokyo Annex is pleased to present a new exhibition, *White*. Composed of different materials and construction methods, the works on display will explore the sense of infinity created by the color white in space as well as different relationships to the concept of “white.” Eight artists will be exhibited: Chikako Inaba, Tadaaki Kuwayama, Kozo Takeuchi, Eri Dewa, Kazunori Hamana, Sara Flynn, Heechang Yoon and Lee Ufan.

Since ancient times, the color white has held special meaning to the Japanese: a sacred color for confronting the gods, openly, without falsity. The origins of this belief harken to the ancient cult of Japanese sun worshippers. Supposedly, white came to be regarded as sacred when Amaterasu, goddess of the sun, created Japan, because the light of the heavens was white. Throughout the ages ever since, the idea that white is the most sacred of colors has persisted.

The symbolic power of white is still very much alive in the culture today. White is the color used to ward off evil spirits and impurities, as in the blonde, unvarnished wood used for building Shinto shrines, in the costumes of Shinto priests, and in the paper streamers of the *gohei* (wooden wands) used in Shinto rituals. White denotes purity and innocence, as in the use of white attire to symbolize life and death and the custom of wearing white clothes for mourning, as well as in the dressing of newborn babies in white. White represents the loftiest level of the aesthetic sensibility of the Japanese, and signifies both austerity and extreme beauty.

White is also the purest color for expressing the experimental and the infinite. It is said that the great kabuki actor Danjuro Ichikawa started to paint his face in white because he wanted to convey the most delicate possible shades of expression in dark lighting.

The concept of white varies between countries and cultures. In the West, white signifies purity, elegance, peace, and hygiene. In pre-modern Japan and Korea, the concept of color and the theory of the five elements held great sway across the whole of society. According to the theory of the five elements, which originated in China during the Warring States period, everything is composed of only five elements—wood, fire, earth, metal, and water. Colors too are incorporated into the five elements, with metal corresponding to white, which is said to be “the color of the end, when nature returns to the earth with coolness and clarity.”

This exhibition builds on this concept of white with the aim of exploring the creative possibilities of whiteness in space. Firstly, we have Kazunori Hamana, who uses natural Shigaraki clay for his visual expression in the form of a massive white pot. Chikako Inaba portrays the force and dignity of life through the flowing “veins” and winding lines of her white-glazed ceramics. Yoon Heechang’s abstract ceramic powder pictures depict landscapes that seem to signal backwards in human civilization, as if unchanged since ancient times. Pigments made from collected river sand are carefully positioned on a flat surface, yielding countless subtle variations of color and density. Consistently creating reductivist works, Tadaaki Kuwayama explores the materials of his works with an experimental spirit, enabling viewers to experience pure art. This exhibition features his acrylic paintings from 1961 to 1978, on panels wrapped in *torinoko* (vellum) paper, as well as works from 1975 in metallic paint.

The show also features porcelain works by four artists: Lee Ufan, Sarah Flynn, Kouzo Takeuchi, and Eri Dewa. Porcelain is a translucent, hard, and high shape-memory material that is organically transformed by drying and firing. In Sèvres, France, Lee Ufan used local porcelain with a higher degree of whiteness to express the mysterious, transformative power of fire in the kiln firing process. The serene forms that Sarah Flynn turns out on her potter’s wheel and her pure spirit and consistency of approach to art are manifestations of a refined and selective worldview. Kozo Takeuchi gives expression to an aesthetic sensibility that arises somewhere between construction and destruction, while Eri Dewa captures the mystical beauty of porcelain in its permeability to light.



It is our hope that through this exhibition you can enjoy and appreciate a rich variety of shades woven from different materials and explore the pure and limitless worlds created out of whiteness in space.

Chikako INABA

Chikako Inaba was born in Yokohama, Japan in 1974. She opened her personal studio in Shiga in 2007. She graduated from Musashino Art University Junior College of Art and Design in 1996 and completed a course from Tajimi City Pottery Design and Technical Center in 2001. Since then, she has frequently taken part in solo and group exhibitions in Japan and abroad, including participation in *Texture*, the group exhibition of three female artists in Sokyo Gallery in 2019. She won the silver award and honorable award of the Taiwan International Gold Teapot Prizes (Yingge ceramic museum, Taiwan) in 2016 and 2018 respectively.

Tadaaki KUWAYAMA

Tadaaki Kuwayama was born in Nagoya, Aichi, Japan in 1932, and has lived and worked in New York since 1958. He graduated from the Department of Japanese painting of Tokyo University of the Arts in 1956. His solo exhibitions include Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art (Kitakyushu, Fukuoka) in 1985, Kawamura Memorial DIC Museum of Art (Sakura, Chiba) and Chiba City Museum of Art (Chiba) in 1996, Museum der Moderne Salzburg, Rupertinum (Salzburg, Austria) in 2000, Nagoya City Art Museum (Nagoya) in 2010, the National Museum of Art (Osaka) and 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (Ishikawa) in 2011, the Museum of Modern Art, Hayama (Miura, Kanagawa) in 2012, etc. He has earned awards including the Art in America New Talent in 1964, and from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1969 and Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation in 1986. His works are collected in the Guggenheim Museum (New York City, NY, USA), the Museum of Modern Art, New York (New York City, NY, USA), Albright-Knox Art Gallery (Buffalo, NY, USA), Nationalgalerie Berlin (Berlin, Germany), Stiftung für Konstruktive und Konkrete Kunst (Zurich, Switzerland), the National Museum of Modern Art (Tokyo, Japan), the National Museum of Art (Osaka, Japan), etc.

Kozo TAKEUCHI

Kozo Takeuchi was born in Hyogo, Japan in 1977. He currently lives and works in Hyogo. He graduated from the Ceramics course of Osaka University of Arts in 2001, and completed a course from Tajimi City Pottery Design and Technical Center in 2003. He has started to participate in various solo and group exhibitions in Japan and abroad since 2001, and has held a solo exhibition *Discover* in Sokyo Gallery in 2016. He has won the Incentive Award, Avant-garde section, the 27th Choza Award Contemporary Ceramic Exhibition (Japan) in 2005, Incentive Award in KOBE Biennale 2015 Contemporary Ceramic competition in 2016. His works are collected in Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (USA), Victoria and Albert Museum (London, UK), Cernuschi Museum (Paris, France), Museum of Anadolu University (Turkey), The Museum of Ceramic Art, Hyogo (Japan), INAX Tile Museum (Aichi, Japan), Ibaraki Ceramic Art Museum (Kasama, Ibaraki), etc.

Eri DEWA

Eri Dewa was born in Ishikawa, Japan in 1983. She currently lives and works in Kanazawa, Ishikawa, Japan. She got MFA degree from Kanazawa College of Art, Ishikawa, Japan in 2008 and finished Ph.D. program from the Kanazawa College of Art, Ishikawa, Japan in 2016. She has held solo and group exhibitions in various cities in Japan and Korea. She won the Faenza Prize in International Competition of Contemporary Ceramic Art in Faenza in 2010. Her works are collected in Kanazawa College of Art (Ishikawa, Japan), The International Museum of Ceramics in Faenza (Faenza, Italy), etc.

Kazunori HAMANA

Kazunori Hamana was born in Osaka, Japan in 1969. He currently lives and works in Chiba, Japan. He studied abroad in Santiago, California, US after graduating from agriculture high school in 1988. He has run a sneaker shop and restaurant since returning to Japan. While making pottery, he also grows rice by natural cultivation and manufactures and sells anchovy sauce. He has held solo exhibitions at Curator's Cube (Tokyo) in 2018 and 2020, Blue Projects and Blue Mountain School (London) in 2019, etc. Besides, he also participated in the exhibition curated by Takashi Murakami in 2015 and group exhibitions in Yokohama Museum of Art in 2016 and Towada Art Center in 2017, etc.



Sara FLYNN

Sara Flynn was born in County Cork, Ireland in 1971. She currently lives and works in Belfast, Northern Ireland. She graduated from Crawford College of Art & Design (Cork, Ireland) in 1992, and held a solo exhibition at Sokyo Gallery in 2019. She has won awards of D.C.C.I., Research and Development Award in 2005, D.C.C.I., Travel Bursary Award in 2006 and 2007 respectively, Ceramics Ireland, Peter Brennan Pioneering Potter Award in 2010, Golden Fleece Award in 2016, and Golden Fleece Award, Shortlist in 2019. Her works are being collected in the Victoria and Albert Museum (London, U.K.), the Gardiner Museum (Toronto, Canada), the Hunt Museum (Limerick, Ireland), the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge, U.K.), the Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago, Illinois, US), National Museum of Ireland (Dublin, Ireland), Crawford Art Gallery (Cork, Ireland), etc.

Heechang YOON

Heechang Yoon was born in Hyogo, Japan in 1963. He currently lives and works in Tokyo. He got an M.A. degree from Tama Art University, Tokyo in 1988. He attended the Overseas Program of Artists of Agency for the Cultural Affairs of Japan and resided in London, U.K. for a one-year artist-in-residence program for one year in 1995 and for research at the British Museum in 2010. He is currently a professor at the Department of Crafts, Faculty of Fine Arts, Tama Art University. He held a solo exhibition in Sokyo Gallery in 2018. His works are collected by Terada Collection (Tokyo), Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery (Tokyo), Ibaraki Ceramic Art Museum (Kasama, Ibaraki), Tokoname City (Tokoname, Aichi), Cruise Ship “guntū”, Building No.4 of Hyogo University (Hyogo), Shizuoka Cancer Center (Shizuoka), etc.

LEE Ufan

Lee Ufan was born in Gyeongsangnam-do, Korea in 1936. He currently lives and works in Kanagawa, Japan. He interrupted studies at Seoul National University to come to Japan in 1956, and graduated from Nihon University, Department of Philosophy, Tokyo, Japan in 1961. He became an invited professor at Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris, France in 1997, and is currently an Emeritus professor of Tama Art University, Tokyo, Japan. Since the latter half of the 1960s, he has been active and leading Mono-ha in both production and theory, and has been highly evaluated both in Japan and overseas. He has held solo exhibitions in Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (Washington D.C., U.S.A.), Dia Beacon (Beacon, New York), Centre Pompidou Metz (Metz, France), Serpentine Galleries (London, U.K.), Couvent de La Tourette (Éveux, France), Hermitage Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Château de Versailles (Versailles, France), Guggenheim Museum (New York, U.S.A.), etc. Sokyo Gallery presented a solo exhibition of his work in 2018, and a group exhibition *MINGEI NOW* in 2019. He won the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo Prize in 13th Contemporary Japanese Art Exhibition, Tokyo, Japan in 1977, Excellence Award of 1st Henry Moore Prize Exhibition (Hakone, Kanagawa, Japan) and National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto Prize in 11th Tokyo International Printing Biennale (Tokyo, Japan) in 1979, received the Chevalier Arts and Culture Medal from the French Ministry of Culture in 1991, UNESCO Prize in Shanghai Biennale (Shanghai, China) in 2000, 13th Premium Imperial Prize (Painting) in Tokyo, Japan in 2001, received the Medal with Purple Ribbon in 2002, etc.

The Lee Ufan Museum opened in Naoshima, Kagawa Prefecture in 2010. His works are being collected by Lee Ufan Museum (Naoshima, Kagawa), National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Tokyo), National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto (Kyoto), The National Museum of Art (Osaka), Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art (Sapporo, Hokkaido), Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (Tokyo), Mori Art Museum (Tokyo), Hara Museum (Tokyo), The Niigata Prefectural Museum of Modern Art (Niigata), The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga (Otsu, Shiga), The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama (Wakayama), Ohara Museum of Art (Okayama), Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art (Hiroshima), Fukuoka Art Museum (Fukuoka), Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (Fukuoka), the Museum of Modern Art, New York (New York, U.S.A.), Brooklyn Museum (Brooklyn, U.S.A.), Guggenheim Museum (New York, U.S.A.), Tate Modern Gallery (London, U.K.), Centre Pompidou (Paris, France), Nationalgalerie (Berlin, Germany), Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Dresden, Germany), Kunsthaus Zurich (Zurich, Switzerland), Galerie Nationale de Prague (Prague, Czech Republic), Hermitage Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), M+ Museum (Hong Kong), Seoul Municipal Museum of Art (Seoul, Korea), National Museum of Modern and



Contemporary Art, Korea (Seoul, Korea), Busan Municipal Museum of Art (Busan, Korea), Art Gallery of New South Wales (Sydney, Australia), the Queensland National Art Gallery (Brisbane, Australia), etc.

Note: We at Sokyo Annex recognize the worldwide social justice movement, Black Lives Matter, which we fully support. This exhibition is not intended to be understood in racial terms, but purely in terms of the formal attributes of the color white.

Press

Kumiko Motobayashi
motobayashi@gallery-sokyo.jp
info@gallery-sokyo.jp

Sokyo Gallery
381-2 Motomachi, Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto 605-0089 Japan
www.gallery-sokyo.jp

As part of the Kyoto Prefecture Government's measures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus, Sokyo Gallery regrets to inform you that we are open by appointment only. Please contact us for appointments by email at least one day in advance.