

SOKYO
ATSUMI



John Mason, *Triangles*, 1984, Ceramic, H82.6 × W213.4 × D213.4 cm/ H32.5 × W84 × D84 inches

John Mason

Wednesday, December 15, 2021 – Saturday, April 2, 2022

SOKYO ATSUMI
TERRADA ART COMPLEX II 3F, Suite #304
1-32-8 Higashi-shinagawa, Shinagawa-Ku, Tokyo 140-0002 JAPAN

Hours: Tuesday – Thursday 11:00 am – 6:00 pm
Friday – Saturday 11:00 am – 7:00 pm

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Press Release

SOKYO ATSUMI is proud to present a solo exhibition by John Mason. This is his second solo exhibition in Japan, following his first exhibition *John Mason: A SURVEY* at Sokyō Gallery (Kyoto) in 2017.

One of the most visionary ceramic artists of the 20th century, Mason produced an innovative body of works that accomplished great leaps forward in the physical and spatial possibilities of clay. Breaking away from conventional thinking about ceramics, he created abstract and inventive works with a unique sense of scale. Through his wall reliefs and richly expressive sculptures, he responded to the abstract expressionist currents of the times.

Mason began his career on the West Coast of the US in the 1950s, exploring the physical properties and plasticity of clay while sharing a studio space with Peter Voukos from 1957 to 1965. After 1970, Mason established his own world of spatial experience, visual illusion, and architectural spectacle. The concept and organization of Mason's oeuvre shifted, as fusions of color and geometric forms ingeniously combining line symmetry, rotation, and mass became the distinguishing features of his work.

In the past decade, there has been a resurgence of interest in Mason's work, as evidenced by exhibition *Pacific Standard Time: Crosscurrents in L.A. Painting and Sculpture, 1950-1970* at the Getty Center in 2011–12 and at *the Whitney Biennial* in 2014. As well, numerous contemporary artists have cited Mason as a key influence in recent years, including Shio Kusaka, Sterling Ruby, Ed Ruscha, and Jonas Wood.

In Japan, Mason's exhibitions include, *Collection Chronicle*, Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu, Japan (2017); *Current Trends in Ceramics*, Aichi Prefectural Ceramic Museum, Seto, Aichi, Japan (1994); *The Eloquent Object: The Evolution of American Art in Craft Media Since 1945*, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo and Kyoto, Japan (1989); *Contemporary Ceramic Art: The United States, Canada, Mexico and Japan*, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo and Kyoto, Japan (1971); *International Ceramic Exhibition*, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo and Kyoto, Japan (1964), thereby significantly impacting Japanese artists.

This exhibition features 13 important works from *Triangles* (1984) up to the twilight of his life, *Cross, Folded, Jadeite* in 2016, showcasing Mason's innovation and experimentation in clay. This is a wonderful opportunity to see Mason's groundbreaking artistic output, which fascinatingly blends elements of Western and Eastern influences.

John Mason (1927-2019) was born in 1927 in Madrid, Nebraska, U.S.A. He graduated from Chouinard Art Institute, Los Angeles, CA, U.S.A. in 1954 and Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles, CA, USA in 1956. He has worked in Los Angeles.

His main exhibitions include *2014 Whitney Biennial*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, U.S.A. (2014); *Pacific Standard Time: Cross Currents in L.A. 1950-1970*, The Getty Center, Los Angeles, CA, U.S.A. (2011); *Otis: Nine Decades of Los Angeles Art*, Los

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Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Barnsdall Park, Los Angeles, CA, U.S.A. (2006); *KPMG Peat Marwick Collection of American Craft*, Renwick Gallery, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. U.S.A. (1994); *Current Trends in Ceramics*, Aichi Prefectural Ceramic Museum, Seto, Aichi, Japan (1994); *The Eloquent Object: The Evolution of American Art in Craft Media Since 1945*, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan, The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan (1989); *Ceramic Sculpture: Six Artists*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, U.S.A., San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA, U.S.A. (1981); *1973 Biennial Exhibition: Contemporary American Art*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, U.S.A. (1973); *Contemporary Ceramic Art: The United States, Canada, Mexico and Japan*, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan, The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan (1971); *International Ceramic Exhibition*, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan, The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan (1964), and more.

Collections include Aichi Prefectural Ceramic Museum, Seto, Aichi, Japan; The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan; National Museum of History, Taipei, Taiwan; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA, U.S.A.; Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL, U.S.A.; Renwick Gallery, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., U.S.A.; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA, U.S.A.; Museum of Arts and Design, New York, NY, U.S.A.; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, U.S.A.; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA, U.S.A.; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, U.S.A., and more.

We would be very grateful if you could kindly consider this new innovative exhibition in your publication.

If you have any questions, please contact the following:

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