

SOKYO
ATSUMI



Osamu Kojima, Nostalgia22-01, 2022, Ceramic and glass, H80 × W92 × D101 cm

Photo by Yuji Imamura

Osamu Kojima: Works 2008 - 2022

Saturday, August 6, 2022 – Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Closed for Summer Holidays: August 14–August 22

SOKYO ATSUMI

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Open: 11:00 – 18:00 (Tue - Thu) 11:00 – 19:00 (Fri • Sat) Close: Sun • Mon

SOKYO ATSUMI is pleased to present “Osamu Kojima: Works 2008 - 2022”. Kojima has regularly exhibited in the United States and Taiwan where he studied and worked before returning to Japan. He had exhibitions at Sokyo(Kyoto) in 2019 and 2020. In this first solo Tokyo exhibition in nearly 15 years, we are pleased to show works made in Shigaraki and, most recently, his studio in Mie, Japan. But to give the full range of his art, included here is the large Ceramic Panel from 2008, and one of his most impressive and representative works in the “Nostalgia Series.” Besides two recent works also in his “Nostalgia Series,” there are many smaller ceramic pieces showing his latest artistic initiative.

Kojima builds powerful forms manipulating and firing raw clay, or piling up and fusing ceramic blocks or materials like building tiles. Often his glazes pool to create the effects of springs or flowing streams, in creations that look like dynamic natural landscapes.

However, Kojima has this to say about his art work:

In my works the ceramic blocks, clay or materials like tiles bring to mind the stones and bricks of castles and walls found throughout the world that are symbols of humanity’s technology or civilization itself. Yet inevitably with the passage of time, forgotten and abandoned, buildings decay and fall into ruins. Often evidence or traces remain, just as people are caught prisoners of memories of the past. Nations and societies will inevitably collapse. Cracks and distortions will inevitably appear in the flourishing prosperity of human communities. In other words the rise and fall of civilizations. But that does not mean that in my art I am trying to show an imminent danger or in my life I feel a huge crisis unfolding that my art must warn against. I am not preaching anti-war or anti-nuclear positions. I do not despair about the future. Rather in the decay and ruins of human built endeavors, in that impermanence, we can find beauty. My “Nostalgia Series” in particular calls up memories of the past to create landscapes of the present.”

The largest object on exhibit is “Nostalgia 17-TWt-01” from 2017, when Kojima was at Tainan National Arts University, Taiwan. The work is made from traditional Taiwanese ceramic roof tiles that were used for farmer’s houses. Kojima managed to secure roof tiles from the last tile maker in Tainan just as Taiwanese domestic architecture sifted from traditional materials to concrete. By stacking and fusing bundles of deformed and broken tiles that only hint at the buildings that once existed, Kojima created a massive work that weighs nearly one ton.

Kojima found inspiration for his “Nostalgia Series” of sculptures in the 1983 film “Nostalgia” by the legendary Russian film director, Andrei Tarkovsky. The film, set in Italy, is known for Tarkovsky’s typically elegant scene compositions. Old villa and stone church interiors and dilapidated buildings appear repeatedly, and play an important role. These aging buildings are paradoxically reminiscent of glorious and happier days of the past. Like the film where the passage of time and memories of the past are important, Kojima’s artworks evoke the idea that nothing in this world will last forever. In the history often contained in his materials and in our imaginative experience when viewing his work, we can feel the changes and decay that come with the unfolding of time.

With Kojima's sculptures we see in his technique of piling up blocks and fusing forms similarities to humanity's widespread building of walls and castles. One of humanity's most basic materials is earth or clay, and indeed desires to make this material more useful and enduring is at the heart of what we call civilization. And out of civilization's strivings and history has come beauty. Today we hope in this exhibit you will find Kojima grappling in his artwork directly within that continuum.

Osamu KOJIMA was born in Fukui Prefecture in 1973 in Japan. Currently lives and works in Mie, Japan. Received M.F.A. at Tainan National University of the Arts, Taiwan in 2016. Invited to artist in residence programs such as Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park, Shiga, Japan; Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts, Helena, MT, U.S.A. and Tainan National University of the Arts, Taiwan. Recent exhibitions include New Taipei City Yingge Ceramics Museum, Taiwan, and Jason Jacques Gallery, New York, NY, U.S.A., in addition to solo exhibitions in Japan. Awards include the Bronze medal at the 7th International Ceramics Festival MINO in 2005 (and again in 2014), the 17th Shumei Cultural Foundation Prize in 2006, and the Gold Medal at the Taiwan Ceramics Biennale in 2012. He also won the Biennale's Grand Prize in 2016. Collections holding his works include: Kyocera Museum of Art, Kyoto, Japan; Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park, Shiga, Japan; Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts, Helena, MT, U.S.A.; Yingge Ceramics Museum, New Taipei City, Taiwan; and Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, FL, U.S.A.



Osamu Kojima, Nostalgia17-TWt-01, 2017
Ceramic and glass, H129 × W149 × D95 cm



Osamu Kojima, Purple- Navy blue 22-06, 2022
Ceramic and glass, H47 × W58 × D27 cm