

FRIEDMAN BENDA  
515 W 26TH STREET  
NEW YORK NY 10001

**MISHA KAHN**  
**STYLE WITHOUT SUBSTANCE**  
**JUNE 2 – JULY 1 2022**



Misha Kahn, "Shapes for Potato, Potential, and Actual", 2022

**New York** – In his fourth solo-show at Friedman Benda, **Style Without Substance**, Misha Kahn sets out to “look into the essence of a material and help to style its ‘thingness’ to be apparent to humans.” Rather than using an object to tell a story or express himself, Kahn seeks to tap into the independent spirit of matter, process, and form.

Set off by a psychedelic vision and followed by a two-year quest, Kahn’s exhibition explores making the invisible visible. Aside from semiotics and ascribed meanings, Kahn theorizes that objects and materials have energy, and that if one devises the right circumstances, it can be experienced.

Unique cast aluminum and glass tondos which Kahn calls “portals” set the tone for the show. Glad in multi-color stretch velvet, a sofa and its accompanying oversized chair *Bucatini Shortage of 2021* cheekily acknowledge an expanded take on the two-year interim since Kahn’s last major show. *Windswept*, a round dining table rendered in seemingly malleable stainless-steel inset with colored glass gems, is a prime example of the fluidity between technology and handcraft that defines Kahn’s practice.

First out of necessity—in the spring of 2020 removed from his Brooklyn studio—Kahn playfully dabbled in virtual reality, eventually gaining technological fluency. Today, his studio assistants are no longer limited to the human variety. A retrofitted auto-industry robot and squad of 3D printers receive neural feedback from their anthropoid counterparts. That objects are intelligent, emotive, and self-directed is not hard to imagine when surveying the inanimate-animate interconnectedness Kahn has tapped into over the course of his career.

#### **About Misha Kahn**

Misha Kahn has emerged as one of the leading creative voices of his generation. Through a wildly imaginative approach that embraces spontaneity and non-conformity, Kahn allows the illogical and the irreverent to take over his process. He employs an entire spectrum from lo-fi and ad hoc techniques—such as improvisational molds and collage—to virtual reality.

Born in Duluth, Minnesota in 1989, Kahn graduated from Rhode Island School of Design in 2011 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Furniture Design. Early in his career, he gained recognition when he was featured in the Museum of Arts and Design’s Biennial (2014).

Unafraid to push boundaries, Kahn is driven to self-invent, adapt, and further processes in a myriad of mediums including metalwork, glass, wood, textiles, ceramic, casting, fiberglass, resin, and cement. Embracing an unorthodox result, he seeks the opportunity to learn from masters in their respective crafts. For example, Kahn’s acclaimed woven *Scrappy* series (since 2015) is the result of a collaboration with *Gone Rural*, a female group of

traditional weavers based in Eswatini. He has also produced several woven tapestries and rugs with Stephens Tapestry Studio of South Africa. Other meaningful practitioners whom Kahn has worked with include artist Alma Allen's studio in Mexico, glass sculptor Deborah Czeresko in Brooklyn, and the famed late Italian jewelry designer GianCarlo Montebello.

In April 2022 Museum Villa Stuck will host Kahn's first institutional solo show titled *Wobble Moon: Objects from the Capricious Age*. His work has been exhibited internationally and is in the permanent collection of museums such as the Corning Museum of Glass, NY; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX and Speed Museum of Art, Louisville, KY. Kahn lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

#### **About Friedman Benda**

Friedman Benda identifies and advances key narratives that intersect contemporary design, craft, architecture, fine art, and cutting-edge technological research. The gallery promotes synthesis between leading creative thinkers and makers by creating opportunities to advance new connections within the global design community. Friedman Benda is committed to a critical view of design history. We aim to expand the design dialogue from its established sources, exploring perspectives that have previously been marginalized. Spanning five continents and four generations, Friedman Benda represents a roster of seminal established and emerging designers, as well as historically significant estates. With locations in New York and Los Angeles, the gallery's exhibitions, publications and collaborations with institutions have played a vital role in the development of the contemporary design market and scholarship since 2007. For further information please visit [www.friedmanbenda.com](http://www.friedmanbenda.com) and the gallery's Instagram [@friedman\\_benda](https://www.instagram.com/friedman_benda) and YouTube channel.

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