



Masaomi Yasunaga

石拾いからの発見 / discoveries from picking up stones

April 8 - May 20, 2023

Opening Reception: April 8, 6-8 PM

720 N Highland Avenue Los Angeles CA 90038

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Nonaka-Hill is pleased to present recent sculptures by Japanese artist Masaomi Yasunaga in his third exhibition with the gallery. 石拾いからの発見 / *discoveries from picking up stones*, includes nearly seventy recent works and introduces the Mosaic Vessels series wherein compositions of handmade tiles are embedded into the artist's characteristic glaze-bodied forms, a gesture which further aligns the artworks with a fantasy of Antiquity. The exhibition opens on April 8th and continues through May 20, 2023.

Masaomi Yasunaga (b. 1982; Osaka, Japan; lives and works in Iga, Japan) has become one of the most pivotal artists working in the medium of ceramics today. To achieve his unprecedented use of glaze, rather than clay, as the primary material for sculptures, Yasunaga invents techniques to completely invert the customary materials of the ceramic discipline, reaching beyond the assumed limits of the discipline.

Yasunaga's process has an alchemical and metaphysical dimension: he views fire as a filter and the kiln as a time machine; the fire filters out his ego's intentions while the kiln advances (or restores) his sculptures to their primal, immanent state. This lends them a paradoxically archaic and futuristic quality, an estrangement from how we perceive organic materials in relation to geologic time. In this way, Yasunaga sees his practice as a way to create psychic distance between us and the object; of using the appearances of ancient relics and artifacts to see into what he calls "the other side of the mountain," that mysterious landscape we know exists, but cannot see externally. It is here that the object is perceived ambiguously, where we fill gaps in our understanding with our feelings and imagination.

Raised in a devout Catholic family in Japan, Yasunaga's aesthetic lexicon was formed within the metaphors and rituals of the Mediterranean religion. His range of vessel types appear familiar, as if archeological or shipwrecked relics. These global vessel forms evoke the Japanese concept of *Mono no aware*, the embrace of a gentle melancholia about transience being a reality of life.

Yasunaga's practice developed under tutelage of Satoru Hoshino (1945-), a second generation proponent of Sodeisha (Crawling through Mud Society), the experimental ceramics group founded in 1948 in Kyoto which sought to liberate ceramics from a utilitarian product mandate into the realm of artistic sculpture. With his radical innovations in non-functional, expressive ceramics, Yasunaga fulfills his pedagogical Sodeisha ethos, extending its influence into the 21st century towards a significant collective reconsideration of what ceramic sculpture has been throughout its history and what it can become.

Masaomi Yasunaga

Biography

Born in Osaka Prefecture in 1982.

Lives & works in Iga-shi, Mie Prefecture

While at University, Yasunaga established his creative direction at the laboratory of Satoru Hoshino, a coterie of the avant-garde ceramic group “*Sodeisha*”. While pottery is often made of clay and baked in a kiln, Yasunaga takes the form of pottery using glaze for his creations instead. Yasunaga masters creativity by combining unique raw materials such as feldspars, glass and metal powders, with his own methods such as creating glazed vessels with increased viscosity which are then pit fired in sand.

- 1982 Born in Osaka
- 1988 Moves to Nabari, Mie Prefecture
- 2000 Admission to the Osaka Sangyo University Department of Environmental Design
- 2003 Start a pottery to enter the Satoru Hoshino laboratory
- 2006 Receives Masters Degree in Environmental Design from Osaka Sangyo University
- 2007 Establishes a pottery studio in Iga
- 2010 Becomes a creative resident at The Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park 2020
- 2011 Newly builds a firewood kiln
- 2013 Becomes a creative resident at ARCTICLAY 3rd SYMPOSIUM in Posio, Finland
- 2014 Becomes a creative resident at National Tainan University of the Arts
- 2020 Artist-in-residence at the Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2023 石拾いからの発見 / *discoveries from picking up stones*, Nonaka-Hill, Los Angeles
Masaomi Yasunaga: In Holding Close, Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, Auburn, Alabama
- 2022 *Intersection of Dreams*, Palomar, Pognana Lario
Looking Afar, Lisson Gallery, New York
- 2021 *Masaomi Yasunaga*, Lisson Gallery, East Hampton
Masaomi Yasunaga, Piao Piao Gallery, Tiwan
- 2020 *Empty Parade*, wad Cafe, Osaka
SODA, ocoge, Okayama
To things that exist, to things that don't exist, gallery YDS, Kyoto
Yasunaga Masaomi: Contemporary Artifacts, Utsuwa Note, Saitama
Empty Landscape, Libby Leshgold Gallery, Vancouver
- 2019 *Empty Things*, complete Works, Geneva
Masaomi Yasunaga: A Shadow of the Eternity, Utsuwakan, Kyoto
Masaomi Yasunaga, Nonaka-Hill, Los Angeles
- 2018 *Memory of Orient*, Gallery Utsuwa Note, Kawagoe, Saitama

- Selected Solo Exhibitions
- 2017 *Masaomi Yasunaga Exhibition*, Garb Domingo, Okinawa
arid landscapes, pragmata, Tokyo
 - 2017 *Ceramics of Masaomi Yasunaga*, Utsuwa Kyoto Yamahon, Kyoto
Masaomi Yasunaga Exhibition, Gallery uchiumi, Tokyo
 - 2016 *Ceramics of Masaomi Yasunaga*, Utsuwa Kyoto Yamahon, Kyoto
Masaomi Yasunaga: Ceramics, Art Salon Yamagi, Osaka
 - 2015 *Ceramics of Masaomi Yasunaga*, Utsuwa Kyoto Yamahon, Kyoto
Masaomi Yasunaga: Ceramics, Art Salon Yamagi, Osaka
 - 2015 *Masaomi Yasunaga Exhibition: Production at Yaso and Daily Work*”, wad, Osaka
Masaomi Yasunaga Exhibition, Gallery Uchiumi, Tokyo
 - 2014 *Masaomi Yasunaga Exhibition*, Gallery Utsuwakan, Kyoto
Masaomi Ysunaga: Pottery Trilogy, Gallery Yamahon, Mie Prefecture
Masaomi Yasunaga: Ceramics, Art Salon Yamagi, Osaka
sand dunes, pragmata, Tokyo
Hollow, Piao Piao Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan
The corpse, National Tainan University of the Arts, Tainan, Taiwan
 - 2013 *Ceramics of Masaomi Yasunaga*, Utsuwa Kyoto Yamahon, Kyoto
Masaomi Yasunaga: Pottery Exhibition – Yakimono Biyori, TRI Gallery Ochanomizu, Tokyo
Masaomi Yasunaga: Ceramics, Art Salon Yamagi, Osaka
Masaomi Yasunaga Pottery Exhibition – Work by sand mold, and then”, Gallery uchiumi, Tokyo
- Selected group Exhibitions
- 2023 *Keramik – Seyni Awa Camara, Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon, Martin Disler, Bettina Pousttchi, Rosemarie Trockel, Masaomi Yasunaga*, Buchmann Galerie, Belrin
Nobuya Hoki and Masaomi Yasunaga, Ratio 3, San Francisco
 - 2022 *Romantic Progress*, Museum of Moden Ceramic Art Gifu, Tajimi
not titled (not “Untitled”), Nonaka-Hill, Los Angeles
 - 2021 *SIZED*, Los Angeles
Sea Change, Ratio 3, San Francisco
 - 2020 *OBJECT&THINGS* at The Noyes House, Connecticut
Sterling Ruby and Masaomi Yasunaga, Nonaka-Hill, Los Angeles
- Permanent Installations,
Museum and Public Collections
- The Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art
 - Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu
 - Ariana Museum, Geneva, Switzerland
 - The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA