

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kishio Suga

Blum & Poe, Los Angeles

February 25 – April 22, 2017

Opening reception: Saturday, February 25, 6 – 8pm

Blum & Poe is pleased to present a solo exhibition of Kishio Suga. One of the most influential artists in Japan, Suga has been central to the history of site-specific installation since the late 1960s. This is his third solo exhibition with the gallery.

Suga gained early recognition for arranging natural and manmade materials in unprecedented installations such as *Parallel Strata* (1969), a totemic enclosure made of paraffin wax, and *Soft Concrete* (1970), four vertical steel plates arranged into a square and shored up with a mound of oil-infused concrete. These works situated him as part of a short-lived movement that came to be known as Mono-ha, whose artists took natural and industrial materials and arranged them in mostly unaltered, ephemeral states.

Almost none of the original site-specific installations exist; typically they were discarded at the close of each exhibition. However, Suga has remade them on numerous occasions since the mid-1980s, when Mono-ha began to receive institutional recognition in Europe. While his recreations are always based on an original core concept, they are not intended as exact replicas; Suga adapts their scale and constituent parts to the characteristics of each site. At Blum & Poe, he will continue the decades-long evolution of his installations, re-making several major works from the 1970s to the 1990s. Such works include *Units of Dependency* (1974), a layered, barrier-like structure of open-core cinder blocks and protruding grass.

Furthermore, this will be the first exhibition outside of Japan to present an extensive overview of his early works on paper. During the mid-1970s, Suga made several series of minimal geometric collages, alternately creating linear forms with tape while tearing, folding, and marking the paper. As with his installations, in his works on paper he constructs a set of relationships only to deconstruct them. This exhibition will provide a unique opportunity to examine the conceptual connections between these two areas of his practice. On occasion, Suga made paper works on a similar scale to his installations. *Layered Dependence* (1977), which measures three feet by twenty-six feet, will be on display for the first time in forty years.

This presentation follows three important exhibitions at museums in Europe and the United States. The Pirelli HangarBicocca in Milan held his first European retrospective, featuring twenty-three major installations. The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh presented *Karla Black and Kishio Suga: A New Order*, a comparison of two artists' explorations of site-specific ephemerality. Dia: Chelsea in New York commissioned a solo project that encompasses recreations of historical work and a new installation made specially for the space at 541 West 22nd Street. This is his first solo show at a US museum, and is on view until July 29. Several major installations from the surveys in Milan and Edinburgh are being re-created for this solo exhibition at Blum & Poe, Los Angeles. Suga has also been selected for the 57th Venice Biennale, *Viva Art Viva*, opening this May 2017.

Kishio Suga was born in Morioka, Iwate Prefecture, in 1944, and currently lives and works in Ito, Shizuoka Prefecture. He received a BFA in oil painting at Tama Art University, Tokyo, in 1968. Since then, he has had numerous solo exhibitions in Japan, including at the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Tokyo (2015), the Yokohama Museum of Art, Yokohama (1999), and the Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima (1997). Suga's work has also been featured in recent landmark surveys, such as *Prima Materia*, Punta della Dogana,

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Venice (2013); *Parallel Views: Italian and Japanese Art from the 1950s, 60s, and 70s*, The Warehouse, Dallas, TX (2013); and *Tokyo 1955-1970: A New Avant-Garde*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY (2012). His work is featured in many institutional collections, including the Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX; Glenstone Foundation, Potomac, MD; Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi; Long Museum, Shanghai; M+, Hong Kong; Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; National Museum of Art, Osaka; National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo; Pinault Collection, Venice; Tate Modern, London; Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, Tokyo; and the Yokohama Museum of Art, Yokohama.