

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 13 – July 21, 2019

Shin Fujihira: Ethereal Clay



Cinnabar Water Dropper, 1990s, 3 x 5 x 3 ½ in.

NEW YORK, NY – As a legend in the field of ceramic art, Shin Fujihira’s impact on Japanese ceramics was profound. His whimsical works lived in an imaginative world of their own and, since his death in 2012, only a very small number of exhibitions have showcased them. Therefore, it is Ippodo Gallery’s immense honor to present “Shin Fujihira: Ethereal Clay,” a solo exhibition of over 50 pieces by Shin Fujihira, ranging from the early 1980s to the late 2000s, on view June 13 until July 21 in New York.

Fujihira’s legacy was shaped early on by a few key, formative circumstances. His family owned a studio in the well-known ceramic area of Kyoto, Gojozaka, where ceramicists often shared kilns. In fact, Fujihira’s family rented space in the kiln of *mingei* master Kanjiro Kawai (1890 – 1966) who gave Fujihira his name “Shin.” Growing up, Fujihira and his brother frequently visited Kawai at his home to watch him work. When the time came, Fujihira began studying art at the Kyoto Institute of Technology, but his studies were postponed when he became ill and was hospitalized for four years. It was during this time that Fujihira began sketching the world around him, honing his distinctive eye for the figures he would later incorporate into his ceramic works.

After regaining his health, Fujihira left the hospital with a newfound appreciation for the preciousness of life. His work became a celebration of life itself, filling it with the energy of light, happiness and heavenly spirit. Rather than throwing pieces on a wheel like many of his peers, Fujihira created both ornamental and functional pottery by pinching. This technique gave Fujihira the flexibility to explore the fanciful abstractions of his imagination and translate them into clay.

This upcoming exhibition of Shin Fujihira’s works is a testament to the success of this technique in portraying his vision—a woman throws her arms open to the heavens, balancing upon stairs leading nowhere in particular; a pair of squat owls rests atop an incense burner; a water dropper arcs, caves, distends. The fantasy is only heightened by Fujihira’s masterful use of dream-like, pale celadon and cinnabar glazes. It is easy to get lost in the ethereal pinks, blues and greens that deliciously coat each piece. More than just ceramics, Shin Fujihira created pure magic, which continues to spark a sense of wonder in all who get a glimpse into his world.

ABOUT IPPODO GALLERY

Ippodo Gallery has remained devoted to the important of nature's majesty since its inception in 1996, marrying the worlds of Japanese reverence with the New York lifeblood of impactful and high-quality works. The New York gallery space opened in 2008 and continues to bring distinct and meaningful Japanese art to a Western audience on the Upper East Side.

For more information and images, please contact:

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See more of Shin Fujihira's works [here](#).

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Box with Fish Motif, 2002, 6 ¼ x 8 ½ x 3 in.



Cinnabar Chawan, 1993, 4 x 5 ½ in.



Incense Burner "Spring Tower," 1990s, 3 ½ x 5 x 4 ½ in.



Cinnabar Decorated Box, 1990s, 3 x 6 x 3 in.



Silver Handled Box, 1997, 3 ¾ x 11 ¼ x 2 ½ in.



Cobalt Oxide Incense Burner, Late 1998, 7 ½ x 3 ¾ in.

Shin Fujihira Biography

1922 Born in Kyoto (Gojozaka, Higashiyama)
1944 Kyoto Kogei High school (Kyoto Institute of Technology) dropped out due to illness
1953 9th Nitten Exhibit/ First selected and continue to exhibit until 1999
1957 Awarded Japan Fine Arts Exhibition (Nitten) Grand Prize, Hokuto Prize
1960 International Ceramics Exhibition, Florence, Italy
1962 First Solo Exhibition in Takashimaya, Nihonbashi
1963 Awarded Chrysanthemum Prize at the Nitten
1970 Contemporary Ceramic Art - Japan and Europe
1973 Awarded Japan Ceramic Society Award
1974 Traveling Exhibit/ Central and South America
1978 Traveling Exhibit/ West Germany: Masterworks of Japanese Ceramics
1982 Traveling Exhibit/ America and Canada
1984 Finished the ceramic mural in Kyoto University (Agriculture Department Hall)
1988 Accepted as Honorary Professor in Kyoto City University of Arts
1990 Awarded the Kyoto Art and Culture Award
1991 Received the Kyoto City Cultural Order Award
1993 Awarded the Mainichi Art Award
1994 Awarded the Prime Minister's Prize of the Japan Crafts Society and the Fujiwara Kei Memorial Award
1996 Awarded the Kyoto Prefecture Cultural Award
1998 Awarded Japan Ceramic Society Gold Prize
2002 50th Anniversary of Ceramic Work in Tokyo and Kyoto
2004 Poetic Ceramic Sculpture – Shin Fujihira show in Pramita Museum, Mie
2012 Died at age of 89
2015 Dream Composer: The World of Shin Fujihira in Musée Tomo, Kyoto
2018 Poetic Ceramist; Playful Tea-ware by Shin Fhujihira, Shoka-do Museum, Kyoto

Public Collections

The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto
The Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art
The Museum of Kyoto
Gifuken Gendaitoge Museum
Aichi Prefectural Ceramic Museum
The Museum of Ceramic Art, Hyogo
Suwashi Museum
The Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum
Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park
Musée Tomo
Paramita Museum
Chado Research Center Galleries