

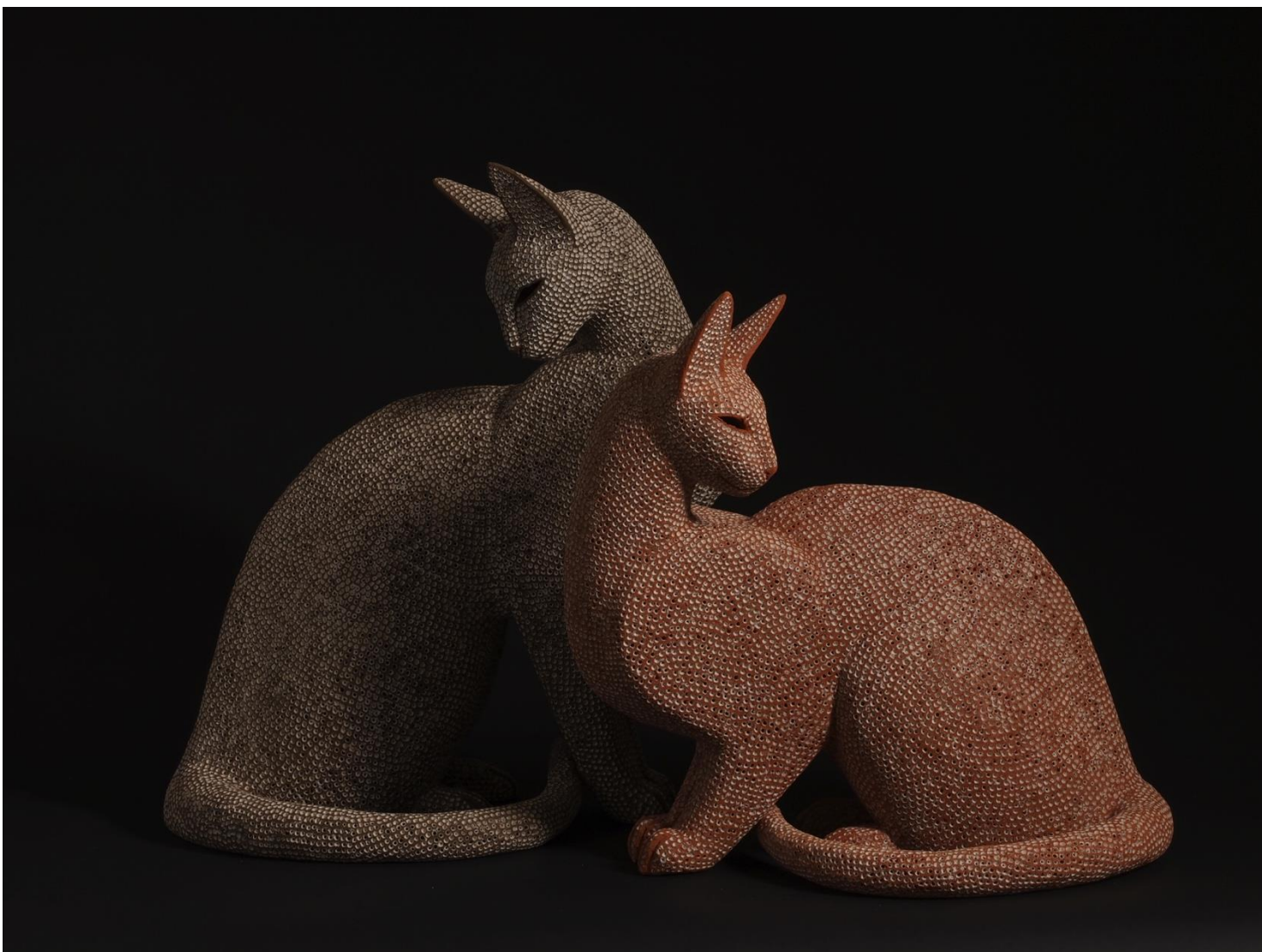
For Immediate Release

Ippodo Gallery New York

Between Forms : The Terracotta Cosmos by Mokichi Otsuka

Ippodo New York : September 6 – 28, 2018

*Opening Reception with artist : Thursday, September 6, 6 – 8 p.m.



Pair of Cats, 2018
Right: H15 3/4 W15 3/4 D10 in (H40 W40 D25 cm)
Left: H18 3/4 W15 3/4 D9 1/4 in (H48.1 W40 D23 cm)

NEW YORK, NY, July 11th, 2018 — Ippodo Gallery is pleased to present terracotta works by Mokichi Otsuka (b. 1956), displayed from September 6 to 28, 2018.

Explorations of form take shape with two recurrent motifs—predominately women and cats. Female heads, busts and hands bear reference to the Greco-Roman tradition of seeking an idealized womanly figure in a three-dimensional world, and the terracotta medium to the history of pottery and its life-bearing properties. Under the tutelage of Italian sculptor Aldo Rontini in Faenza, Italy, Otsuka was encouraged to harness the power of ancient traditions through ceramic tiles. Following five years of illness, a chance encounter with the ancient Greek goddess Kore solidified his interest in the seemingly inexpressible vitality of humanity, and eternal fascination with Western heritage.

And yet, Otsuka's work takes on a contemporary relevance in its homage to Eastern traditions, in that it looks inward. Particularly in the new cat works, sharp, long eyes bear reference at once to the hollowed and unattainable women of Modigliani paintings, Egyptian and Nepalese deities, and even the Noh masks of Japanese theater. Their ability to transcend art historical moments means that their fluidity succeeds in achieving its distance, personifying the value of life in Western antiquity while also encapsulating the unknowable inner life prevalent in Buddhist teachings.



Etrurian Woman, 2017
H12 3/4 W6 D11 1/4 in (H32 W14.7 D28.2 cm)



Butterfly in open palm, 2018
H7 1/2 W11 1/2 D5 3/4 in (H19 W29 D14 cm)

As they bridge the worlds of Greco-Roman and Japanese art, Otsuka's terracotta wares are unique. Even as the concepts endure, the artist deviates from prehistoric Japanese ceramic aesthetics and their contemporary experimental counterparts. Pieces are fired at 1060° Celsius (1940° Fahrenheit), in an entirely unique process he continues to innovate. Most recently, he has developed a deeply symbolic and significant perforation technique.



Sphinx, 2017
H13 2/4 W8 3/4 D21 3/4 in (H34 W21.6 D65 cm)

What began as red clay inlaid with white dots has evolved to perforations in white clay. Naturally occurring cracks are left as part of the work to reveal its soul. These holes are a window to the cosmos, undulating in patterns and creating a passage between worlds. They symbolize nature's energy, encapsulating the inexpressible theories crescendoing in each work of art.

Otsuka has found solace in the expression of mind and body through his works. He pursued extensive education to expand his universe, first in Japanese painting at the graduate school of Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music (present- day Tokyo University of Art) in 1981, and later at the Istituto Statale d'Arte per la Ceramica Gaetano, in Faenza, Italy in 1994, where he has continued to exhibit annually since 2006.

As such, Otsuka's unique fusion of cultural influences has been exhibited namely in the regions where he has drawn inspiration: his home country of Japan, and his beloved Italy. He has held solo exhibitions throughout Japan and Italy, as well as at the 4th Ceramics Biennale in Cairo, Egypt, in 1998. Ippodo is happy to announce that this is the first Mokichi Otsuka show in New York City.

This exhibition also marks a transformation in the ethos of Ippodo Gallery. The message of the gallery has always been in sync with the natural world, but increasing diplomatic engagements are solidifying its place in the canon of cross-culturalism. May this exhibition be a continue culmination of exchange of Japanese culture with the Western world.



Tea bowl, 2018
H 3 3/4 Φ4 3/4 in (H 9.4 Φ12 cm)



Tea bowl, 2018
H 4 2/4 Φ5 1/4 in (H11 Φ13.2 cm)



Tea bowl, 2018
H 3 2/4 Φ5 2/4 in (8.3 Φ13.6 cm)



Tea bowl, 2018
H 4 Φ5 in (H9.7 Φ12.7 cm)

Mokichi Otsuka

- 1956 Born in Tokyo, Japan
1979 Graduated from the Department of Japanese Painting, Tokyo University of Art, Japan
1981 Completed postgraduate studies of Japanese Painting, Tokyo University of Art, Japan
1996 Graduated from National Institute of Art and Ceramics, G.Ballardini, Faenza Italy
- 1994 Solo Exhibition, Gallery Awaji-Cho (Tokyo)
1997 Solo Exhibition, Loggetta del 39 (Faenza, Italy) Exhibition, Ceramic Virtuality of Variable and Variant Pots, Palazzo Cisi (Milano, Italy)
1998 50th Ceramics Biennale, International Museum of Ceramics (Faenza, Italy)
4th Ceramics Biennale (Cairo, Egypt)
38th Castellamonte Ceramics Art and Industry Exhibition, Palazzo Comunale (Turin, Italy)
1999 Solo Exhibition, Studio Cavaliere (Bologna, Italy) Exhibition, *Terracotta from Italy –Aldo Rontini and Otsuka Mokichi*, Sogetsu Art Museum (Tokyo)
2000 Solo Exhibition, Tobi Art Fair, Tokyo Art Club (Tokyo)
2002 Solo Exhibition, *Terracotta of Otsuka Mokichi*, Art Salon Mitsukoshi (Tokyo)
2003 Solo Exhibition, *Terracotta of Otsuka Mokichi*, Art Gallery Onuma (Yamagata)
Solo Exhibition, Tobi Art Fair, Tokyo Art Club (Tokyo)
2004 4th The 21st Century Exhibition of Japanese Art, Tokyo Art Club (Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, and Kanazawa), annually exhibited to 2015 Exhibition, *Creatures: Modern Crafts and Design from the Museum Collection*, The National Museum of Modern Art Tokyo (Tokyo)
2005 Solo Exhibition, *Terracotta of Otsuka Mokichi*, Signature Gallery Mitsukoshi (Tokyo)
2006 Exhibition, *inner smile*, Loggetta del 39 (Faenza, Italy)
Exhibition, *Human From in Clay-the Minds Eyes*, The Museum of Contemporary Art, The Shigaraki Ceramics Cultural Park (Shiga), The Museum of Ceramic Art, Hyogo (Hyogo), Shizuoka Art Gallery (Shizuoka) Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park (Shiga) / Musée Tomo (Tokyo)
- 2007 Solo Exhibition, Salon Fontanone (Faenza, Italy)
2008 Solo Exhibition, *inner smile*, Foundation Tito Balestra Museum of modern-contemporary Art (Longiano, Italy)
2009 Solo Exhibition, *inner smile*, niArt Gallery (Ravenna, Italy)
2010 Solo Exhibition, *inner smile*, Signature Gallery Mitsukoshi (Tokyo)
2011 Solo Exhibition, *inner smile*, The International Museum of Ceramics (Faenza, Italy)
2012 Solo Exhibition, *Goddess and Cat*, Gallery Burari (Yamanashi)
Solo Exhibition, *inner smile*, Palazzo Esposizioni (Faenza, Italy)
2013 Solo Exhibition, Gallery Yoshii (Paris, France) Exhibition, *The form of clay*, Mashiko Museum of Ceramic Art (Tochigi)
2014 Solo Exhibition, *inner smile*, Signature Gallery (Mitsukoshi, Tokyo)
2015 Solo Exhibition, *Otsuka Mokichi 'Encounter' 2015* Manyoudou (Tokyo)
2016 Solo Exhibition, *Vibrant of Silence*, niArt Gallery (Ravenna, Italy)
Exhibition, *Find novel dreams, and raise those to be real*, Tokyo Art Club (Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka and Kanazawa)
2017 Art fair, Collective Design 2017 in New York (Ippodo Gallery)

Public Collections :

Victoria and Albert Museum (U.K.) / Foundation Tito Balestra Museum of modern-contemporary Art (Italy) / The National Museum of Modern Art (Tokyo) / The Museum of Ceramic Art, Hyogo / Takasaki Art Center College / Takamastu City Museum of Art / The Museum of Contemporary Art; The Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park (Shiga) / Musée Tomo (Tokyo)

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Mon. – Fri. : 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. | Saturdays by Appointment

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