

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## *Layers of Time: Spatial Ceramic Works by Yukiya Izumita*

January 13 - February 17, 2022

Opening Reception, Thursday, January 13, 5-8 pm



*Sekisoh Layers, 2021 (Ceramic - Clay), H12 1/2 x W20 x D7 in, H31.8 x W50.8 x D17.8 cm*

“When I decide to express something through clay, I look for my answer in its roughness or fragility, its ephemerality, and its tension or lightness.” – Yukiya Izumita

The 25 ceramic wares in the Yukiya Izumita exhibition are in perpetual tension. His inventive use of layered clay is as sophisticated as it is attuned to the earth, with the folds of mud suggestive of the toil they require. Each work reflects the interior and exterior journey that led to their creation. Izumita relies on the salt-rich clay of the Iwate prefecture in the Tohoku region of Northeast Japan, known for its harsh weather. This coastal enclave is among the most severe in Japan, but because the artist lost his Rikuzentakata home in the tsunami of 2011, he finds solace in the laborious processes required to produce each piece. Over and over, pound by pound, Izumita carries the sands from outside his windy Noda Village studio, allowing the catharsis of the arduous journey to give way to harmony and insight. From the white-capped waves of snowy Iwate, the rocky seaside sands give way to yellow-, red-, and black-toned glazes. Trusting the sensory intuition of his hands, Izumita folds the regular, used pieces of paper freely, his spirit transcendent in the motion. He smooths with his hands, embracing only the quiet sound of washi paper spreading across the table as he meditates on his creation. The paper is then molded wet against the tea bowl, finishing with a magnum glaze to add the smooth metallic slip coating, punctuated with light texture. The dry result is a multi-dimensional surface full of possibilities, aligned with the natural landscape of the earth. “Paper and soil represent a synergy,” the artist explained from his studio. “Paper gives me infinite shapes, and clay shows me an abundance of forms.” The title of the exhibition derives from the method used for the signature folds of the ceramics. Layer by layer, coastline driftwood grounds the artist with a sense of rootedness and balance. And yet, we can never be sure of our footing. In the chaos of an environmentally unstable world, the only thing that is truly permanent is the centrifugal motion of change as time soldiers on.

Izumita has shown with Ippodo Gallery since immediately following the loss of his home, and this most recent selection of works addresses a similar but new pain. As we collectively soldier the COVID-19 pandemic, the spirituality of at once embracing and re-narrating the pain is ever more relevant. A broader lesson is revealed: we can all learn resilience and strength from Izumita's artistic journey. Now more than ever, the tactility of the works speaks to our need to reconnect—to the earth and to one another. An emphasis on environmental embrace has always been central to Ippodo Gallery's mission, and its pertinence echoes through each work of art.



*Lidded Sekisoh, 2021 (Ceramic - Clay)*  
H8 1/8 x W12 3/4 x D6 1/2 in, H20.5 x W32.5 x D16.5 cm



*Sekisoh tea bowl, 2021 (Ceramic - Clay)*  
H3 3/4 x W4 7/8 x D4 in, H9.5 x W12.5 x D10 cm

#### About the Artist

Izumita trained in Kokuji-ware under Gakuho Shimodake in 1992, opening his own workshop in Noda Village, Iwate Prefecture, on the border with the northern ceramic production area of Aomori Prefecture in 1995. In Japan, Izumita has been the recipient of numerous accolades, including the Grand Prix at the Asahi Ceramic Exhibitions of 2000 and 2002 and the Excellence Award at the 20th Biennial Japan Ceramic Art Exhibition in 2009. His international acclaim began when he participated in SOFA New York in 2005, then exhibited in New Mexico and at Ippodo in 2012. His work is held in American public collections such as Yale University Art Gallery, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

#### About the Gallery

Ippodo Gallery's mission is to share empathy with the world and create global conversations through the experience of Japanese culture. We continue to showcase Izumita's work as a testament to our mission in pursuit of the beauty of nature, with a sense of global consciousness for the fragility of the environment and the strength of quiet serenity. Ippodo expresses gratitude for nature and the quiet honor of daily life, marrying the worlds of Japanese reverence and contemporary sensibility. As a result, Ippodo Gallery has worked directly with over 200 artists and has held thousands of exhibitions over the decades. Ippodo Gallery Tokyo was founded by Keiko Aono in 1996, with two locations in the heart of Ginza and the residential area of Gotenyama. Gallery spaces include tea ceremony rooms where many artists and friends to gather together, fostering connections. Second-generation Shoko Aono opened Ippodo Gallery in New York in 2008, continuing and expanding upon this belief overseas, and has since continued to witness the impact of Japanese Kogei art in a western landscape. The result is a timeless cross-culturalism and a love for art that transcends language.

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