

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Koichiro Isezaki: Clay in Flow

September 11 - October 11, 2025 | Opening Reception: September 11, 5–8PM *with candle-lit vigil in remembrance.*

New York, NY — Ippodo Gallery presents the second New York solo exhibition by ceramicist Koichiro Isezaki. ***Koichiro Isezaki: Clay in Flow*** features 50 of the Bizen artist's sculptures—including his iconic Yō ('conception') series—*chawan* (tea bowls), *mizusashi* (water jars), and *hanaire* (flower vases) from **September 11 to October 11, 2025**. Hailing from generations of Bizen artists who preserved stores of the precious regional Okayama clay, Isezaki creates work that flows along the currents of tradition with a contemporary language entirely his own. Following his debut New York exhibition during the pandemic, the artist will finally travel from Japan to celebrate the long-awaited opening reception

**Koichiro Isezaki (b. 1974)** contemplates the origins of *tsuchi* ('earth') as the distinctly wet, fine, and *nebarike* ('viscous') clay comes into his hands. *Bizen-yaki*, one of Japan's Six Ancient Kilns, is cultivated by centuries of masters, among them the artist's grandfather Yozan—a leading 20th century sculptor—and his father Jun, the current Living National Treasure.



Koichiro Isezaki, *Yō 孕* (2025), Ceramic, H14 5/8 x W11 3/4 x D11 3/4 in, H37 x W30 x D30 cm (C29414)



Koichiro Isezaki, *Black Water Container 黒水指* (2025), Ceramic, H7 7/8 x W6 7/8 x D6 7/8 in, H20 x W17.5 x D17.5 cm (C29406)

Though Bizen styles vary, all ceramics from the region are fired in the anagama tunnel-kiln for 10-day periods, which is fed with cut logs every quarter hour to maintain an intense fire. Koichiro Isezaki's perspective is an accumulation of history left behind in the clay by his forebearers. He cares deeply for the local history of the earth and its unique properties therein.

Isezaki begins a new creation by pulverizing blocks of hardened clay from the family cache, which he then reconstitutes as mud blocks. Once he pugs the clay to refine its impurities, he takes the shape produced by the machine as his starting point to slump, shape, or otherwise manipulate. Isezaki has established signature and distinct forms: he throws the *damon* and pulse vases against ridged stone to cast shapes in the surface of the clay. He molds tea bowls by hand and then cuts them with wire to create sharp, bold faces that recapitulate the classic bowl.

Finally, he models the *Yō* sculptures—inspired by the appearance of a pregnant woman—from large clay cylinders into rolls and folds as if sculpted by the rise and fall of a gentle breath.

The merit of Isezaki's works was recognized in 2022 when he was awarded the prestigious top prize by the Japan Ceramic Society, and his work is in the public collection of the National Crafts Museum, Kanazawa. Glenn Adamson—curator, writer and historian who previously served as Director of the Museum of Arts and Design and Head of Research at the V&A—contributed his essay, “Slow Dance: Kōichiro Isezaki” to commemorate the exhibition. Isezaki will join the ceramicist Jeff Shapiro of upstate New York, who trained as an apprentice to Jun Isezaki and who in turn trained Koichiro Isezaki in America from 2000–2002, for an artist talk.



Koichiro Isezaki at his studio in Imbe, Japan, Okayama Prefecture.



Koichiro Isezaki, *Hidasuki Tea Bowl* 火燗茶盃 (2025), Ceramic, H4 x W6 1/8 x D5 7/8 in, H10 x W15.5 x D15 cm (C29410)

### About the Gallery

**Ippodo Gallery** is a cultural bridge to Japan's living master artists. Founded in Tokyo (1996-), the New York gallery (2008-) presents fine handcrafted and rare works created using traditional materials and methods. Each piece selected embodies Japanese aesthetic sensitivity that is born of a spiritual bond with nature. Ippodo's exhibition program features unique objects — fine ceramics, lacquerware, metal crafts, sculpture, paintings, and works on paper — that celebrate human invention, the natural world, and sublime beauty.

For artwork and press inquiries, please contact Churou Wang and Jesse Gross at [mail@ippodogallery.com](mailto:mail@ippodogallery.com) or (212) 967-4899.