

JOAN B MIRVISS LTD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Marilyn White
973 783-3649
MWhitePR@aol.com

*FIRST EXHIBITION OF LEADING JAPANESE WOMEN CERAMISTS TO BE HELD AT
JOAN B MIRVISS LTD, 39 EAST 78TH STREET*

BREAKING THE MOLD / KATA O YABURU ON VIEW NOVEMBER 8 - DECEMBER 15, 2007

NEW YORK: JOAN B MIRVISS LTD will present *BREAKING THE MOLD / KATA O YABURU* – the first American show featuring the remarkable work of today's leading Japanese women ceramists – on view at JOAN B MIRVISS LTD, 39 East 78th Street, commencing November 8 through December 15, 2007. "We are very honored to introduce this body of work from Japanese women ceramists to the American public " said Joan Mirviss, who recently opened her gallery after thirty years as a private dealer. "Now for the first time, many of these groundbreaking ceramists stand on the world stage, with their work entering major museum collections across the globe." Despite Japan's long history in clay, women have traditionally played only a minor role in its development—relegated primarily to production ware or as administrators in large family workshops. It is only with the current generation that they have been able to surmount the various social barriers that hampered their efforts to emerge as independent artists.

Of the eleven ceramists selected to participate in this show, each has emerged from a distinct background, traveling diverse roads through their training and artistic development that has often circumvented the more traditional routes open to their male counterparts. As a result, these artists have sought creative inspiration from wide-ranging and often unexpected sources. Some like **Futamura Yoshimi**, **Katsumata Chieko**, **Koike Shôko**, **Sakurai Yasuko** and **Tashima Etsuko** take their inspiration from nature—the sea, water, light, plants, and flowers. While others, including **Hoshino Kayoko**, have derived much of their aesthetic from ancient traditions. **Kitamura Junko** and **Kishi Eiko** have looked to traditional Japanese arts such as textiles and the Nô theatre. Emerging artist **Fujino Sachiko** draws her ideas from an exploration of inner emotions turning them into expressions in clay. **Mishima Kimiyo**, a pioneer in the field, parodies mundane elements of contemporary life through her own pop-art style interpretations. The powerful sculptural forms of **Ogawa Machiko** simultaneously embody many of these themes while resisting any clear associations.

All these women are masters of their medium, exploiting its flexibility and suppleness in arresting ways. Perhaps because they are women artists in the overtly masculine world of Japanese clay, they have been able to shed the particularly heavy mantle of tradition and explore the art of clay in startling new and independent ways, with a special eloquence and strength, dramatically and uniquely their own.

JAPANESE ART *By Appointment*

39 East 78th Street, 4th floor | New York NY 10075

Telephone 212 799 4021 | Facsimile 212 721 5148

joan@mirviss.com | www.mirviss.com

ARTISTS:



FUJINO SACHIKO (b. 1950) began her career as a fashion designer and fabric dyer after graduating from design school in Kyoto. Soon thereafter, she developed an interest in ceramics and studied under the gifted and pioneering woman artist, Asuka Tsuboi (b. 1929). Fujino's work often includes subtle textured application of color to the surface of her clay sculptures achieved by spraying slip or stains using a special airbrush device that enables her to control the color density of her surfaces. Interested in exploring the full range of human emotions as manifested in clay, her non-functional sculptures are simultaneously sensuous, biomorphic, and powerful.

FUTAMURA YOSHIMI (b. 1959), who resides just outside of Paris, invariably draws her inspiration from nature having created several series of work over the past decade with titles such as "Racines (roots)," "Rhizomes," and "Vagues de Terre (Earthen Waves)." Her sculptural forms are intended to be reflections of nature and are infused with a vibrant living essence. She uses a blend of stoneware and a mixture of fired and raw granulated porcelain to create her collapsed rounded forms that appear both vegetal and geological in origin. These forms are encrusted with feldspar, and enhanced with cobalt and iron oxide glazes that are sometimes iridescent. While her work is well known throughout northern Europe, the current show will be the first time she has exhibited in the United States.



HOSHINO KAYOKO (b. 1949) moved from Kyushu to Kyoto to study before finally relocating to live and work in nearby Shiga. Her medium is an unusual blend of several types clay, most predominantly the pebbly material from Shigaraki. Cut from wedges, her forms are deceptively simple, with an air of ancient ceramics but upon closer scrutiny, actually quite modern and asymmetrically balanced. The surfaces are impressed with straw and metal implements to create linear patterning that is punctuated by the crystallizations in the clay body. Occasionally Hoshino applies a silver or dusty pink glaze to accentuate the curved surface of her sculptural vessels. She has enjoyed great renown among European collectors with repeated solo exhibitions.

KATSUMATA CHIEKO (b. 1950) was first drawn to architecture and then oil painting before traveling to Paris where she studied under well-known ceramist Fance Franck (b. 1931) at the national school for the arts. Upon returning to Kyoto, with mentoring by Yanagihara Mutsuo (b. 1934) and her predilection for painting, she began to focus on the application of color to clay. Since that time, she has developed her own painterly glazing techniques using a cloth through which the colored glaze is applied leaving no trace of the brush. Through an extended process of repeated firings and glazing, her biomorphic flowery forms have a naturalistic animated sensibility. Katsumata has been showing her works in both solo and group exhibitions in and outside of Japan including France, Holland and the United States.





KISHI EIKO (b. 1948) received her art training at Kyoto Arts University. She has shown her work throughout Japan and has consistently won awards since 1984 in both Japan and Europe. In 2000, she had the rare honor of having a solo show at the Minneapolis Institute of Art while teaching at the Northern Clay Center. Her work is meticulously carved and tooled, with inlays of colored clays applied in a highly time-consuming mosaic-like fashion (*saiseki zogan*). The end result resembles a stone-like surface until closely examined, when the painstaking technique can be easily appreciated. JOAN B. MIRVISS LTD is delighted to announce that her third solo show will be held in New York in March 2008.

KITAMURA JUNKO (b. 1956) was trained in ceramics by leaders of the Sodeisha group, Suzuki Osamu (1926-2001) and Kondô Yutaka (1932-83). Kitamura creates modern forms that reflect her upbringing in traditional Kyoto. It is through her meticulous process evoking images such as lace or snowflakes, that her aesthetic is revealed. After impressing miniscule geometric shapes into distinctive patterns reflective of textile, lacquer and other craft motifs, she covers the work in black-brown slip before bisque firing. After which, a creamy white slip is painstakingly applied to each indentation before the stoneware body is fired once again. The overall effect is one of elegance that compliments her dazzling technique. She has previously had two solo shows in New York.



KOIKE SHÔKO (b. 1943) takes the sea as her point of departure creating shell-inspired forms in stoneware with irregular, undulating and pointy edges that protrude from her hand-built bodies. Made from Shigaraki clay, her wheel-thrown bodies are then manipulated and adorned with ruffled edges and projections. A creamy white opaque clay covers her forms and the edges are further defined with iron brown glaze and sometimes supplemented with metallic, iridescent or turquoise glazes. The best of her work always conveys her passionate and intimate understanding of nature. Koike is already a celebrated artist in the West with works in important museum collections throughout this country and Europe. A major solo show at the Musée Tomo, Tokyo, just concluded this past summer.

MISHIMA KIMIYO (b. 1932) is one of the most prominent and widely exhibited woman ceramists whose work has been shown at museums throughout the world for the past forty years. Like several of the other artists in this exhibition, she began as a painter, using clay as her canvas for implementing silk-screen renderings of newspapers and posters. Since then she has honed her techniques and aesthetic to create monuments to popular culture, continuing to focus on the theme of printed information in a comical, political, and often didactic fashion. Ever sensitive to the current state of the environment and the overwhelming flow of information in today's world, Mishima hopes that through her work, viewers' might feel compelled to take notice and even action.





OGAWA MACHIKO (b. 1946) has been an influential potter in the contemporary Japanese ceramic scene winning the Japan Ceramic Society Award as well as honored with solo exhibitions at major galleries and museums throughout Japan. Born in Sapporo, Ogawa graduated from the prestigious Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music while studying under two Living National Treasures. Thereafter she lived and worked in Paris and West Africa. She burst on the ceramic scene in Japan in 1985 and has had a lasting impact ever since. Some of her work resembles cracked ice, while other vessels have a

volcanic, scorched earth appearance. While Japanese in origin, Ogawa's work transcends national characterization, resonating with universal sensibility. JOAN B. MIRVISS LTD will host her first solo show in the United States in 2009.

SAKURAI YASUKO (b. 1969) is the youngest artist selected for this exhibition and in many ways possesses the most independent vision. Her youthful talent was recognized early and she received several prestigious grants to be artist-in residence at important institutions both in Japan and France. Her perforated porcelain forms are created with great delicacy and technical savvy using tubing to pierce the porcelain clay bodies and then distorting the apertures. These dramatic *objets* engage the viewer, affecting their perception of light and shadow, as well as interior and exterior spaces. Sakurai's stark white porcelain forms are the embodiment of the theme of light via the shadows and silhouettes cast through her punctuated sculptures.



TASHIMA ETSUKO (b. 1959), a graduate of Osaka University of Art, has been exhibiting regularly since the mid 1980s. Her sculptures are consistently drawn from nature as seen in her earlier, large colorful biomorphic forms. This broad polychrome array of glazes was, in part, a reflection of the aesthetics of her teacher Yanagihara Mutsuo (b. 1934) at Osaka Art University (where she now teaches). For the past decade, she has refined her palette and stream-lined her forms by combining pastel colored glass elements with porcelain bodies to make elegant and dazzling flower-like "cornucopia" sculptures that have captivated both critics and collectors, while garnering her prestigious awards.

Exhibition hours:
Tuesday - Friday 2 - 5 pm
Saturday noon - 4 pm
and by appointment

For additional photographs or high-resolution images for publication, please contact rie@mirviss.com.