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OGAWA MACHIKO

Fire and Ice: The Dynamic Clay Art of Ogawa Machiko

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NEW YORK - Joan B. Mirviss Ltd, one of the world's leading dealers in modern and contemporary Japanese ceramics, is honored to present the first American solo show of celebrated Japanese ceramic artist **OGAWA MACHIKO**. Titled *Fire and Ice: The Dynamic Clay Art of Ogawa Machiko*, the show will feature nearly 30 works created specifically for this exhibition.

Since her arrival on the ceramic scene in 1985, Ogawa Machiko (b. 1946) has been a vital influence on the dialogue of contemporary clay. Influenced by her teachers - both Living National Treasures - while at Tokyo National University of Fine Arts & Music, Ogawa also drew inspiration from her travels which included living and studying in Paris at the École d'Arts et Métiers and accompanying her anthropologist husband to Burkina Faso in West Africa for nearly a decade. At each juncture Ogawa absorbed her surrounding environment and channeled her experiences directly into her work. The resulting spherical vessels with torn mouths reference Ogawa's perennial interest in creation, destruction and the effects of time. Other vivid orange-red work, due to the added iron oxide, reflect the aesthetics of neolithic Jomon and ancient Yayoi ceramics. Charcoal gray and platinum-glazed vessels are often patterned with carved, softly geometric designs either on the interior or exterior.

JAPANESE ART *By Appointment*

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"It is my passion for the earth that drives my continual search for the essential in art. The vessel form, with both interior and exterior space, enables me to best pursue this quest—it is not about making vases. Rather, I am inspired by the concept of emptiness within the whole. It is in the dialogue between form and void that I find artistic freedom."

To many, her works appear spontaneous, as if pulled from the earth. In fact, Ogawa relies upon the technical abilities she developed by trial and error while searching for the perfect tension between glaze and form. One approach involves changing the temperature of the kiln mid-firing to control the rate of shrinkage of the clay in relation to the contraction of the glaze. This tightly controlled method produces the brilliant crackling of the clear and aqua glass glazes, so integral to her work, that contrast with the white sand-colored textured forms that enfold it.

While her travels have inspired her aesthetic, Ogawa remains bound to her Japanese heritage. Her pieces, which bridge Eastern and Western sensibilities, have earned her international acclaim and led to her being only the fourth woman ever to be awarded the prestigious Japan Ceramics Society Prize in 2001. Last year, Ogawa was honored with the highly sought-after Art Encouragement Prize from the Japanese Ministry of Education and Culture.

Roughly-hewn, powerful yet elegant, Ogawa Machiko's work engages the viewer by encouraging consideration of the element of emptiness within her vessels and to intellectually fill these voids. This dialogue between viewer and object links the work to the ancient tradition of Japanese ceramics, the African landscape and the earth.



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