

KIMIYO MISHIMA: Paintings and Sculptures

June 8 – July 13, 2018

Vernissage in the presence of the artist, Thursday, June 7th (6 – 8 pm)

Basel Gallery Open House, Monday, June 11th (6 – 9 PM)

Since 1960 Japanese artist Kimiyo Mishima (b. 1932, Osaka, JP) has been preoccupied by the internal digestion of increasing information and the arrival and consequences of the consumer age. Using collage in her paintings early in her career, as of the 1970s she started working with ceramics and incorporated silkscreens of newspapers and flyers on this support. She worked independently of and parallel to Kansai area Gutai group.

Mishima is first known for her large format oil paintings of the 1960s in which she incorporated Ready-made, Art Informel, Op Art and Abstract Expressionism. Early on, she embraced mixing various images and articles from American and European magazines as well as materials whose initial purpose or message is no longer able to be fulfilled yet is now ingrained in our memory or relegated to trash. These include old indigo kimono material, nets and information flyers. The 8 paintings are on view for the first time in Switzerland.

Printed matter (newspapers, magazine) become waste. Past news is dated yet important for our future. By transferring it on a structure such as canvas, ceramic, clay or fiber-reinforced plastic, Mishima makes it a solid part of our environment and awareness. Important once current events are referenced through clippings. Although eschewing femininity and portraiture she used traces as their icons. Her paintings incorporate luxury items, pharmaceutical and musical references to remind us of our actions and priorities, or lack thereof.

By creating sculptures of everyday consumer culture, she reminds us of the hazards of wastefulness, overloading information, ecological dangers and the need for reflection. The ceramic replicated soda and beer cans in a wire mesh basket reflect our propensity to consume and discard with little attention paid to our health, the environment, short and long term effects of our actions. The colorful stacked iconic Japanese manga comic books beg to be opened. One individual book whose well worn pages partially open up to give us a peak inside is reminiscent of our insatiable curiosity and need for fast action adventure, the page-turning effect of popular comics and serial novels.

Kimiyo Mishima was the recipient of a Rockefeller Asia Cultural Council Scholarship in 1986, Faenza International Ceramic Exhibition (Gold Medal), 1974, and the Yamaguchi Prefecture Prize and the Citizen Prize, 2001. Significant exhibitions include Contemporary Japanese Art, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva, CH (1983); Institut de Cultura de la Ciutat d'Olot, Olot, ES (1986); Contemporary Japanese Ceramic, Itinerant International Exhibition, Japan-Brazil, Art Museum of Sao Paulo, BR (1998); Contemporary Art Museum, Ise, Mie, JP (2004); Contemporary Ceramics of Japan, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA, USA (2005); Ancient to Modern – Japanese Contemporary Ceramics and their Sources, San Antonio Museum of Art, TX, USA (2015); CERAMIX, Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht, NL, La Maison Rouge, Paris, Cité de la Céramique-Sèvres, FR (2016). Large installations are on view at Benesse Art Site, Naoshima, as well as ART FACTORY Jonanjima, Japan.

Her works are in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, IL; Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY; The First National Bank of Chicago; The Korean Culture & Arts Foundation, Seoul; The Museum of Art Olot, Spain; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; The National Museum of Art, Osaka; Benesse Art Site Naoshima; and The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, JP as well as other museums and private collections.

The catalog for this exhibition includes a short text by Koichi Kawasaki, the former Director of Ashiya City Museum of Art & History, Japan, and Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art, Kobe, Japan.



KIMIYO MISHIMA (*1932), Comic Book 17-S7, 2017, dimensions variable, Printed and painted ceramic

Gallery hours: Wednesday – Friday: 1 – 6 PM, Saturday: 11 AM – 4 PM and by appointment.