

PRESS RELEASE

**Akiko Mashima** 空間の音 *Sound of Space (Kūkan no oto)*

September 8 - October 20, 2017

Maus Contemporary is honored to announce **Akiko Mashima** 空間の音 *Sound of Space (Kūkan no oto)*, the artist's first solo exhibition at the gallery.



*"When I first stood in the city of New York, I felt that there was something different, I might have been overwhelmed with the high-rise buildings and the dynamism of the material resources of those buildings. I might have also felt both fear and magnetism toward the spaces that were created between the buildings rising straight upward from the ground to the sky. I think I gradually understood that the sense of existence created by the amount of materials is what can create spaces. It was very new to me to see the spaces that were created in between buildings that abruptly rose upward in straight lines from the ground. As I walked on and on between those buildings, I felt as if the small 'me' was sinking to the bottom of somewhere. It felt as if my own existence and the existence of objects had merged into one... My insatiable desire wants to constantly reconfirm that feeling. I am definitely attracted to 'objects;' that is, towards massiveness. My interest lies in the angles and planes that are created in the objects. I am also surprised by the silent nature possessed by objects. I will always be intrigued by forms that are woven out of planes and masses."*

- Akiko Mashima

These artist's words of recollection were written in 1995. People, not only today but in any era, have identified their mental connections with the world through the surprises and anxieties they feel by existing in the world. In order to transform these feelings into forms, they have sung, painted, and created physical representations. Anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss clarified the structure of human thoughts that are common to tribes living in remote regions and environments, via his collaging of the fragments of myths passed down among different natives who live in North and South America. Present-day cities seem to exist on the opposite sides of the African and Amazonian jungles (architect Rem Koolhaas metaphorically wrote that Manhattan is 'the 20th century's Rosetta Stone'). But if a city is seen as one environment within a given era, then the 'objects' that people have created out of their actions and necessary conditions for living (that is, those 'products' that were manually processed using the limited materials that an individual can handle) should allow one to perceive the elements and possibilities that can be linked to the fragments of myths and forms that have been the subjects of study for anthropologists and archeologists.

Mashima experienced 'one of the jungles' just as the transitional period shifted into a new century. Since that time, our minds have been focused on the crises of the entire human race that is in a state of constant opposition and confusion. In such a state, my expectation toward Mashima is that she will show us a profound creativity that is on a humanity-wide scale, as if to demonstrate the state of the polyphonic world that refuses to settle into a certain rationality, allowing her to produce works along the lines of potsherds or passages from ancient handed-down stories.

**Akiko Mashima** (born 1952 in Saga, Japan) studied sculpture at the Musashino Art University in 1976. She moved to New York in the late 1970s, attending the Brooklyn Museum Art School in 1978-1979, and the Art Students League 1979-1980, and based her artistic activity in New York for the next twenty years, until 2000. Mashima's artistic career was thus developed in New York in the early 1980s to the end of the 1990s. She now lives in Kanagawa, Japan.

Mashima is the recipient of a **Robert Smithson Memorial Scholarship in Sculpture** (1978-1979), and received a **Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant** in 1988. Her work has been included in solo exhibitions in New York as well as in her native Japan since 1977, and she was successfully represented since the mid-90's by well known New York gallery *OK Harris*, founded by longtime art dealer Ivan Karp after leaving Leo Castelli's gallery in October of 1969.

*Sound of Space* opens at Maus Contemporary on September 8, and runs through October 20, 2017.

The opening reception will be hosted at the gallery from 6:00-8:00 pm on Friday, September 8, with Akiko Mashima in attendance. High resolution images of the exhibition are available through the gallery.

Maus Contemporary is a contemporary art gallery and space dedicated to supporting creativity with a focus on experimental and issue driven works. Through representing emerging, established, and internationally recognized artists, the gallery is committed to bringing a global perspective to contemporary issues and practices across the visual arts. The program consists of exhibitions, print publications, and media outreach.

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