

En Iwamura

Yama-Asobi



Ross + Kramer is pleased to present En Iwamura's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery, entitled *Yama-Asobi*, opening February 15, 2024 at the gallery's Miami Beach location.

The exhibition includes 40 new ceramic sculptures and 8 works on paper. *Yama-Asobi*—meaning “play in the mountain” in Japanese—expands upon Iwamura's “Neo-Jomon: Mountain Fantôme” series, first exhibited at Ross + Kramer East Hampton in 2020. Throughout Iwamura's practice, the term “Neo-Jomon”, which he coined to title his ceramic works that feature raked striations on the surface of the clay, has evolved into somewhat of a taxonomic classification. To achieve these intricate surfaces, the artist allows his hand-built forms to air dry slightly before drawing various tools across the surface of the clay. The resulting rake-like patterns recall Buddhist Zen gardens as well as the cord-marked pottery that characterizes Jōmon culture—the earliest major culture of prehistoric Japan.

Originating in Iwamura's birthplace of Kyoto, Japan, Buddhist Zen gardens and concepts related to their construction and care inform much of the artist's work. When describing the placement and scale of his works, Iwamura references the Japanese philosophy of “Ma”. Ma alludes to concepts such as a pause in time, an interval, or an emptiness of space. While it is commonly used in reference to physical spatial relationships between objects, Ma does not rely solely on physical components. Rather, the philosophy is primarily concerned with one's perception of such space. It's said that individuals constantly measure and interpret different Ma in relation to themselves and other people, places, and objects. Finding the proper, or comfortable Ma can incite unique emotions and allow for the formation of new connections and relationships within a given moment. Through his site-responsive installations, Iwamura intends to provide viewers with the opportunity to recognize Ma themselves, within both their physical and mental landscapes.

En Iwamura (b. 1988, Kyoto, Japan) lives and works in Kyoto, Japan. He earned his BFA and MFA from the Kanazawa College of Art and Craft (Kanazawa, Japan), and later earned a second MFA from Clemson University (Clemson, South Carolina). He was awarded residencies at the Archie Bray Foundation (Helena, Montana), The Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute (Jingdezhen, China), and The Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park (Shigaraki, Japan) among others. He has presented guest lectures at prominent institutions such as Harvard University, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute. Iwamura's work has been featured in solo and two-person exhibitions at Ross+Kramer (New York and East Hampton, NY); Gallery Anthony (Chicago, IL); Wow Gallery (Hong Kong, China); The American Museum of Ceramic Art (Pomona, CA) and Gallery of Contemporary Art (St. Louis, MO).

Yama-Asobi will be on view through March 9, 2024 at Ross + Kramer Miami Beach. The gallery is located at 1910 Alton Road, Miami Beach, FL 33139 and is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 11am to 6pm. For more information or images, please contact cielle@rkgallery.com.