

En Iwamura: *Mask*  
Ross + Kramer | New York

Exhibition Dates: January 30 - March 22, 2025

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Ross + Kramer is pleased to present “Mask”, En Iwamura’s sixth solo exhibition with the gallery, opening January 30, 2025 at Ross + Kramer New York. The exhibition features over 20 ceramic sculptures, including some of Iwamura’s first wall-hanging sculptures.

This latest body of work references the cultural and symbolic significance of the mask. As a child growing up in Osaka, the artist recalls being enamored by the global mask display at the city’s National Museum of Ethnology, showcasing masks from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. In creating these works, Iwamura drew from the deep sense of mystery that he felt upon viewing the museum’s collection and his curiosity about their origins and variety. While recognizing the historical significance of the mask as a tool for religious, artistic, or ritualistic expression, this body of work reflects on their importance in our contemporary, post-pandemic world.

A driving force behind this collection of work is a reconnection to child-like senses of curiosity, wonderment, and creativity. In addition to Iwamura’s Mask series, the exhibition includes works from the artists “Neo Jomon: Stacking Neighbor” series. This series was born from observing his son getting to know the world through play. Much like stacked toys, these ceramic sculptures consist of two parts that fit together in dynamic ways to create a whole. This body of work, with its diverse array of shapes, colors, and expressions, retains the distinct vibrancy of glaze, softness of form, and coarseness of texture for which the artist is best known. 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 (10,500 BCE to 300 BCE). While serving as a meditation on parenthood, this series is also an encouragement to reunite with one’s inner child.

Iwamura 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. Most recently, Iwamura was commissioned to create a public art installation at Sha Tau Kok Pier in Hong Kong, alongside Vivian Ho and Louis To Wun.

Iwamura’s work has been featured in solo and two-person exhibitions at Ross+Kramer (New York and East Hampton, NY; Miami, FL); Almine Rech (Shanghai, China); Gallery Anthony (Chicago, IL); WOAW Gallery (Hong Kong, China); The American Museum of Ceramic Art (Pomona, CA); the Gallery of Contemporary Art (St. Louis, MO); and The Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art (Nagoya, Aichi, Japan), among others.

“Mask” will be on view January 30 through March 22, 2025 at Ross + Kramer New York. The gallery is located at 515 W 27th Street, New York, NY and is open to the public Tuesday–Saturday, 11am–6pm. For more information and images, please contact [cielle@rkgallery.com](mailto:cielle@rkgallery.com).