

Crow Collection of Asian Art Presents Bamboo Works from the Clark Center and the Art of Motoko Maio

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Uematsu Chikuyu, Village, 2007. Clark Center, Hanford, California.

DALLAS, TX.- Pairing the traditional arts of basket making and screen making, Modern Twist, Bamboo Works from the Clark Center and the Art of Motoko Maio debuted at [the Crow Collection of Asian Art](#) in Dallas. For centuries, bamboo baskets and folding screens have played important roles in everyday life, embodying the principle that the fusion of utility and beauty permeates all Japanese art. The dual exhibition features a selection of bamboo works by various artists from the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture in Hanford, California, and exquisite folding screens by artist Motoko Maio. Free and open to the public, the Modern Twist exhibition will run through Sunday, September 5.

“Modern Twist is really two exhibitions in one presentation, with the hope of ‘value added.’ Screens and baskets are quintessential Japanese art forms: both play important roles in ceremonies as well

as daily life; both serve functional and artistic purposes; both are steeped in disciplines of craft. And both continue to inspire gifted artists to test boundaries and bring the past forward into the future,” notes Caron Smith, Crow Collection curator.

Bamboo works remained utilitarian in nature until the mid-20th century when a small number of artists left the traditional path and experimented with sculptural forms. This departure into new forms impacted the traditional, utilitarian baskets which today are very sculptural in nature. The exhibition will include 20 bamboo baskets from the mid-1940s to 2008 with a strong emphasis on works from the 21st century. Some of the works have never been exhibited including the “Composition through lines” series by visionary artist Uematsu Chikuyu, an experiment with forms that have openings which appear unfinished.

A solid technical grasp of bamboo is essential to the craftsmanship and artistry of basket making. Yet to gain recognition in the bamboo art world, an artist must also have an innovative artistic edge, the development of which can take a lifetime. Bamboo artists rarely come into their own before the age of 60, after which most remain active for several decades. Even artists in their 40s and 50s are regarded as part of the up-and-coming “younger generation.”

The folding screen of Japan has many facets in addition to the physical attributes of its multiple panels. At the same time, it is fine art, decorative art, furniture and symbolic object. With historical reincarnations over 400 years, the folding screen remains an emblematic representation of Japanese cultural artistry. The Crow Collection will present the most contemporary expression of this traditional form in the works of Motoko Maio, with three multi-fold screens featured in the Modern Twist exhibition. Using traditional techniques and materials in dramatically innovative ways, as well as playing with form, Motoko pays tribute to this stately art while totally transforming it and placing it securely in a 21st century social and artistic context.

While folding screens are conventionally six-fold or 12-fold, Motoko’s signature work is the unique 13-fold screen. Intrigued by the idea of gradually increasing fold-sections, Motoko created a screen that looks like a graduated cube when folded and when opened extends more than 16 feet, resembling a large serpent. Born in 1948 in Tokyo, Motoko has been reinventing the art of byobu (folding screens) for more than 20 years, using traditional techniques and materials to express contemporary themes. In her words, “It is both a painting and an object – a bewitchingly ambivalent form.”