



Hard Bodies

Contemporary Japanese
Lacquer Sculpture

TRAVELING EXHIBITION SERVICE

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1



2



3



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“These sculptures are one-of-a-kind, the artists bold and brilliant, and it became our goal to assemble a compelling collection...and present them to the public, which has not been done before.”

Dr. Andreas Marks, Curator

FRONT Kurimoto Natsuki, *The Dual Sun II*, 2008, lacquer and mother-of-pearl on automobile hood. 29 1/2 x 49 1/2 x 2 1/4 in. Minneapolis Institute of Art, Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Arts & Culture, 2013.29.1291. Photo: Minneapolis Institute of Art. 1 Sano Akira, *Bear: Glittering*, 2010, lacquer, hemp cloth, mother-of-pearl, gold on polyurethane foam. Minneapolis Institute of Art, Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Arts & Culture; formerly given to the center by the artist with the assistance of Keiko Gallery, 2013.29.1296. Photo: Minneapolis Institute of Art. 2 Aoki Kōdo (Yōsuke), *Protection Box “Snails”*, 2011, lacquer, hemp cloth, gold powder, and opal. Minneapolis Institute of Art, The John R. Van Derlip Fund; purchase from the collection of Elizabeth and Willard Clark, 2013.31.189a,b. Photo: Minneapolis Institute of Art. 3 Matsushima Sakurako, *Undercurrents 2009-II*, 2009, lacquer, hemp cloth, bamboo, gold powder, gold leaf, silver leaf, and seashell (Turbo marmoratus). Minneapolis Institute of Art, Gift of Elizabeth and Willard Clark in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2015.36.1. Photo: Minneapolis Institute of Art. 4 Aoki Chie, *BODY 09-1 “Impact”*, 2009, lacquer and hemp cloth on polystyrene foam. Minneapolis Institute of Art, Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Arts & Culture, 2013.29.1339. Photo: Minneapolis Institute of Art.

International Arts & Artists

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It’s a tradition nearly as old as civilization itself. Since the Neolithic era, artisans in East Asia have coated bowls, cups, boxes, baskets, and other utilitarian objects with a natural polymer distilled from the sap of the lacquer tree. Lacquerware was—and still is—prized for its sheen: a lustrous beauty that artists learned to accentuate over the centuries with inlaid gold, silver, mother-of-pearl, and other precious materials.

However, since the late 1980s, this tradition has been challenged. A small but enterprising circle of lacquer artists have pushed the medium in entirely new and dynamic directions by creating large-scale sculptures, works that are both conceptually innovative and superbly exploitative of lacquer’s natural virtues.

To create these new forms and shapes, artists bend tradition to their needs. Creating lacquer art continues to challenge contemporary artists, who must master the medium’s demanding techniques and also choose whether to continue established traditions or pursue new forms of expression. In the latter category are a number of individuals who have successfully altered the age-old perception of lacquer by expanding boundaries and defying expectations. These 33 works by 16 artists constitute the first-ever comprehensive exhibition of contemporary Japanese lacquer sculpture, and range from the playful to the sublimely elegant to the fantastic.

EXHIBITION SPECIFICATIONS

Number of Works

33 lacquer sculptures

Organized by

Minneapolis Institute of Art,
Minneapolis, MN

Curator

Andreas Marks, PhD, the Mary
Griggs Burke Curator of Japanese
and Korean Art

Requirements

High security; approximately 2,500
square feet

Shipping

IA&A makes all arrangements;
exhibitors pay outgoing shipping
costs within the contiguous US

Booking Period

12 weeks

Tour

Begins Fall 2020

Publication

*Hard Bodies: Contemporary
Japanese Lacquer Sculpture* by
Andreas Marks