

Leiko Ikemura

Artist Statement and Biography

Artist Statement

Memento Mori, Leiko Ikemura's ceramic sculpture made in 2012, shows a lying figure with an ambiguous identity. The age or gender is uncertain, and human features are combined with non-human ones. The lower part of his or her body is shaped like a chrysalis or a flower bud. The figure's face presents a visible sign of decay, with one eye lost, and the remaining other eye about to roll out any moment. A large hole that gapes open in the figure's back may suggest a departure of a new life, leaving behind an empty shell. But, despite all the signs of death, the figure does not convey a sense of total loss; instead, its calm expression indicates the serenity of someone who has accepted death as a necessary stage in the process of perpetual transformation to which every living being is subject.

Showing the end of an individual life and its involvement in the larger process that includes all the living things, the sculpture conveys the feeling that death is not something abject nor abhorrent, but is a vital part of life, just as an empty hole in the body contains a room for the energy beyond the fixed identity of an individual person, which can flow in and make a passage for imagination, or a new relationship with the world outside. Such a vision of death as a force inseparable from, and sustaining of, life, can reclaim Ikemura's spiritual tie with the Japanese, or Asian, attitude toward death as a new beginning, while embodying Ikemura's own personal resolution to come face to face with the thought of mortality, which takes her beyond the suffocating effects of modern materialism and rationalization.

Artist Biography

Leiko Ikemura
Japan

b. 1951, Mie, Japan
Lives and works in Cologne and Berlin

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2013 "LEIKO IKEMURA. i-migration" Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe, Karlsruhe
- 2012 "Silver flame" ShugoArts, Tokyo
- 2011 "Transfiguration"
The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo/ Mie Prefectural Art Museum, Mie
- 2009 "ME ZA ME" ShugoArts, Tokyo
"Leiko Ikemura" JIRI SVESTKA GALLERY, Prague
- 2008 "Leiko Ikemura" Galerie Haas und Fuchs, Berlin
"La Notte" Galerie Tony Wuethrich, Basel
"Tag, Nacht, Halbmond" Museum zu Allerheiligen, Schaffhausen
"Leiko Ikemura" Galerie Karsten Greve, St.Moritz
- 2007 "Iserlohner Kunstpreis" Villa Wessel, Iserlohn
"Neue Arbeiten" Galerie Karsten Greve, Cologne
- 2006 "u mi no ko" The Vange Sculpture Garden Museum, Shizuoka
"pacific" ShugoArts, Tokyo
"Andalusienbilder" Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn
"leiko ikemura" The Lowe Gallery, Atlanta
- 2005 "Sculptures, Paintings, Works on Paper"
KOLUMBA Kunstmuseum des Erzbistums Koln, Cologne
"Remember Little Boys" Galerie Haas und Fuchs, Berlin
"Mars Mother" Kunst-Station St. Peter, Cologne
"Leiko Ikemura" Galerie Karsten Greve, Paris
"Skulptur-Malerei-Zeichnung"
Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern, Ulmer Museum
- 2004 "Madre Mare" ShugoArts, Tokyo
- 2003 "Madre Mare" Galeria Luis Serpa, Lisbon
- 2002 "OZEAN Ein Projekt" Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz

- "Vern Ozean" Galerie Karsten Greve, Cologne
- 2001 "Leiko Ikemura" Rice Gallery by G2, Tokyo
"Les annees lumiere- Lichtjahre" Musee cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausann
"Leiko Ikemura" Galerie Tony Wuethrich, Basel
"Leiko Ikemura" Galerie Haas und Fuchs, Berlin
- 2000 "Beyond the horizon" Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Toyota
"Le Rire Silencieux de Miko" Galerie Karsten Greve, Paris
"The memory of innocense" Moral- Institut, Freiburg
"mikomania" Gallery HAM, Nagoya
- 1999 "Yet there is light on the horizon" Melbourne International Biennial, Japan Pavilion, Melbourne
"Migration. Sculpture and Paintings" The Haggerty Museum of Art, Milwaukee
"Yet there is light on the horizon" Galerie Karsten Greve, Cologne
- 1998 "Black Noon" Satani Gallery, Tokyo
"Leiko Ikemura" Galerie am Dorfplatz, Stans
"Did you know, I have two invisible wings" Van Laere Contemporary Art, Antwerpen
"Reveil en couleur" Galerie Karsten Greve, Paris
- 1997 "Leiko Ikemura" Galerie Karsten Greve, Cologne
"Painting, Sculpture" Gallery HAM, Nagoya
"Leiko Ikemura" Ausstellungsgesellschaft fur zeitgenossische Kunst Zollverein, Essen
- 1996 "Leiko Ikemura" Galerie Karsten Greve, Paris
- 1994 "Leiko Ikemura" Galerie Karsten Greve, Paris
- 1992 "Leiko Ikemura" Kunstverein Salzburg, Salzburg
- 1991 "Hase und PaprikaJ Galerie Karsten Greve, Cologne
- 1990 "Aipen Indianer" Satani Gallery, Tokyo
- 1989 Kunstmuseum Ulm, Ulm
Kunstverein Saarbrucken, Saarbrucken
- 1988 Musee Cantonal des Beaux Arts, Lausanne
Kunstverein Lingen
Wolfgang-Gurlitt-Museum, Linz
Galerie Skulima, Berlin
- 1987 Galerie Karsten Greve, Cologne

Galerie Dany Keller, Munchen
Museum fur Gegenwartskunst, Basel
Forum Kunst, Rottweil

1985 Kunsthalle Waaghaus, Winterthur

1984 Kunsthalle Nurnberg, Nurnberg
Kunstverein St. Gallen, St. Gallen

1983 Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2013 "All Kinds of Ceramics -20 Years of the Artist in Residence Program"
The Museum of Contemporary Ceramic Art, Shiga
"Schone Landschaft- Bedrohte Natur"
SOR Rusche Sammlung, Kunsthalle Osnabruck, Osnabruck
"20 Jahre Tony Wuethrich Galerie" Tony Wuethrich Galerie, Basel
"Back to Earth. Die Wiederentdeckung der Keramik in der Kunst"
HERBERT GERISCH STIFTUNG, Neumunster
"DOKI DOKI. The Fascination of Ceramics, the Excitement of Art"
Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu
"Koelnskulptur #7" Skulpturenpark Koln, Cologne
"Vom Japonismus zu Zen. Klee und der Ferne Osten" Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern
- 2012 "To Wander a Garden" Vangi Sculpture Garden Museum, Shizuoka
"Carpe Diem -Seize the day" Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi
2011 "Double Sun" ShugoArts, Tokyo
- 2010 "INNOCENCE -ART towards LIFE" Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts,
Tochigi
- 2009 "12 Horizons -perspectives of Contemporary Painting" Tokyo Station Gallery, Tokyo
"Interdependent echoes" The Vange Sculpture Garden Museum, Shizuoka
"Lying, Standing, and Leaning" The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
- 2008 "A Perspective of Contemporary Art 6" The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
- 2007 "Fiction for the Real" The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
"The Spaces Between" Langen Foundation, Neuss
- 2006 "Made of Earth. Position in contemporary figural clay sculpture" Stadtmuseum im
Spital Crailsheim, Crailsheim
"Berlin-Tokyo" Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin
"The Child" Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi

- 2005 "Ausstellung der Professoren der Universität der Künste" Berlinische Galerie, Berlin
 "Asian Potential. Art Nursed by Sea and Islands" Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, Aichi
 "Die obere Halite. Die Buste seit Rodin" Stadtische Museen Heilbronn, Heilbronn
 "The Subjective Figure" Robert Miller Gallery, New York
 "The World is A Stage: Stories Behind Pictures" Mori Art Museum, Tokyo
 "Life Actually" Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Tokyo
 "from east and west" ShugoArts, Tokyo
- 2004 "biennale der zeichnungen-zeichnung entdecken" Kunstverein Eislingen, Eislingen
 "durchleuchtet" Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Liechtenstein
 "Die Sammlung Hanck" Museum Kunstpalast, Dusseldorf
 2003 "Himmel Falden" Kunsthallen Brandts Klaedefabrik, Odense, Danemark
 "Himmelschwe~· Kulturzentrum bei den Minoriten, Graz
 "Arche Noah" Galerie Gabriele Rivet, Cologne
 "Heintz - s Wonderland. Aspects de la sculpture contemporaine"
 Dexia Banque, Luxemburg
- 2002 "Schweigen" Oberlandesgericht, Cologne
 "As heavy as the heavens" Kunsthallen Brandts Klaedefabrik, Odense
- 2001 "VISION" Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi
 "Terra! Terra!" Centro Sperimentale d - Arte Contemporanea, Caraglio
 "Melancholia" Luz Neumann, Cologne
- 2000 "Visage: Painting and the Human Face in 20th-Century Art" The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo | The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto
- 1999 "Von einem Punkt zu Licht und Raum" Haus der Kultur, Waldkraiburg
 "Noontime Meditation" Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, Tochigi, Japan
 "Les fleurs du mal" Galerie Seitz! von Werder, Berlin
 "Köln Skulptur 2" Skulpturenpark Köln, Cologne
 "La razon para la impresion" Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellin
- 1998 "White and Black" Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo
 "Der unendliche Raum dehnt sich aus"
 Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Baden-Baden
 "Tora Tora Tora - Drei mal Tiger oder Tres Tristes Tigres Tragaban Trigo en un Trigal" Haus am Lutzowplatz, Berlin

Award

2008 August-Macke-Prize