
Miya Ando

Mugetsu (Invisible Moon)

Artist | Miya Ando
Exhibition Title | *Mugetsu (Invisible Moon)*
Dates | September 15 (Wed.) – October 13 (Wed.), 2021
Location | MAKI Gallery / Tennoz II, Tokyo



Miya Ando, *Unkai (Sea Of Clouds) May 22 2021 5:47 AM NYC*, 2021, ink on aluminum composite, 121.9 x 121.9 cm

MAKI Gallery is pleased to present *Mugetsu (Invisible Moon)*, New York-based artist Miya Ando's second solo exhibition at Tennoz II, Tokyo. Almost one year prior, Ando held MAKI Gallery's largest exhibition to date—spanning across both Tennoz I and II—which featured several bodies of work including paintings, sculptures, and installations. For this exhibition, the focus turns to the artist's signature *Kumo (Cloud)* and *Unkai (Sea of Clouds)* series, as well as her *Shou Sugi Ban* sculptures.

Through research of Japanese literature and historical texts, Ando locates poetic and multilayered Japanese expressions describing the varied qualities of moonlight, rain, clouds, and other phenomena found in nature. Ando is drawn to historic, mostly obsolete language expressing a philosophy of existence and a relationship to nature which she seeks to preserve and translate into visual form through her art. The Japanese expressions the artist locates, frequently appear in the multilingual titles (Japanese and English) she selects for her artworks. By offering an approximate English translation of these Japanese expressions, Ando reveals the variations in thought and perception between the two cultures that have informed her identity and experience. These Japanese words describing nature which inspire Ando's work, often convey nuanced sentiments not usually present in Western thought.

One such expression is *Mugetsu*, the title of this exhibition, which describes the phenomenon of clouds fully obscuring *Chushu no Meigetsu*, or mid-autumn moon—the brightest full moon of the year which falls on August 15th of the lunar calendar. When the viewer steps into the quiet and contemplative exhibition space, they are immediately surrounded by a sea of clouds devoid of the moon. The clouds appear to shift and stir due to the refractive quality of the aluminum composite substrate, which softly reflects transitory light. Many of the new works feature distinct hues which allude to a certain time of day, season, or geographic location. Clouds frequent the artist's oeuvre, as she believes they epitomize the impermanence of nature. Intrinsic to the lexicon of Zen Buddhism, the prefix *mu*—roughly translating to “nothingness”—plays a key role in Ando's practice, as she deems “it contains an awareness of the fundamental nature of reality—that all constituent forms comprising the universe are temporary.”

Ando's sculptures are a continuation of this thought, using reclaimed wood and silver nitrate to further explore the cycles of nature and the passage of time. *Matsu*, or pine, which has a long history in Japanese culture, is cut into a simple, geometric form and partially coated with silver nitrate or charred in the traditional style of *shou sugi ban*. The parts left raw display the wood's individual characteristics, particularly the *mokume*, or wood grain. In contrast, the naturally reflective silver nitrate finish has a mirrored effect that reflects its surroundings, much like the artist's aluminum composite paintings. Sculptures that are half charred and half applied with silver nitrate present two opposing states: one reflecting light and one absorbing light. Each iteration is a preservation of time, with the *nenrin*—or growth rings—exposed, revealing the tree's long and storied history. Ando solidifies time and transforms what was once a living thing into a catalyst for meditation. Simultaneously working with organic and inorganic materials, she actively explores the fragility and temporality of both nature and the human experience.

—Miya Ando



Born in 1973, in Los Angeles, California, Miya Ando uses a variety of materials including steel, aluminum, and wood to create abstract paintings, sculptures, and installations. Ando skillfully fuses the traditional and the contemporary, the industrial and the natural, East and West, reflecting the essence of nature in her work with refinement and sensitivity.

Ando's work has been the subject of recent solo exhibitions at The Asia Society Museum, Houston; The Noguchi Museum, New York; Savannah College of Art and Design Museum, Savannah; The Nassau County Museum, Roslyn Harbor; and The American University Museum, Washington DC. Her work has also been included in recent group exhibitions at The Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville; The Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Haus Der Kunst, Munich; The Bronx Museum; and The Queens Museum of Art, NY. Ando's work is included in the public collections of LACMA; The Nassau County Museum; The Corning Museum of Glass; The Detroit Institute of Arts; The Luft Museum; Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art; The Santa Barbara Museum of Art; The Museum of Art and History; among other public institutions as well as in numerous private collections. Ando has been the recipient of several grants and awards including the Pollock-Krasner Foundation

Grant Award, and has produced numerous public commissions, most notably a thirty-foot-tall sculpture built from World Trade Center steel installed in Olympic Park in London to mark the ten-year anniversary of 9/11, for which she was nominated for a DARC Award in Best Light Art Installation. Ando was also commissioned to create artwork for the historic Philip Johnson Glass House, New Canaan, CT. The artist holds a bachelor's degree in East Asian Studies from the University of California, Berkeley, studied East Asian Studies at Yale University and Stanford University, and apprenticed with a Master Metalsmith in Japan.



Miya Ando
January 1-28 2021 Kumo (Cloud) Grid NYC
 2021
 Ink on aluminum composite
 134.6 x 235.6 cm

Miya Ando
January 8 2021 Matsu Pine Silver
 2021
 Reclaimed pine, silver nitrate
 27.9 x 27.9 x 27.9 cm

MAKI Gallery / Tennoz, Tokyo

MAKI Gallery / Tennoz I

1-33-10 Higashi-Shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku,
 Tokyo 140-0002 JAPAN
 Tel: +81-3-6810-4850
 Fax: +81-3-6810-4851
 E-mail: info@makigallery.com
 Opening hours: 11:00 - 18:00 (Fri./ 12:30 - 20:00)
 Closed on Sundays and Mondays

MAKI Gallery / Tennoz II

1-32-8 Higashi-Shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku,
 Tokyo 140-0002 JAPAN

*For further inquiries, please contact