

Exhibition of forty new works by Kondo Takahiro opens at Joan B Mirviss Ltd



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NEW YORK, NY.- More than two and a half years in the making, the upcoming exhibition of the ceramic art of Kondo Takahiro has already captured the attention of important collectors and curators nationwide. Nearly forty new works, from captivating tea bowls to towering glistening monoliths, were selected in the course of several trips to the artist's ancestral home in Kyoto. Reinventing an ancient technique, Kondo has transformed the art of marbled clay (neriage), to produce painterly waves of black, gray and white marbled porcelain upon which shimmering beads of metallic glaze splash over the swirling surfaces. An artistic break-through, this series marries his long-standing passion for painting with his mastery of the porcelain medium in sculpture.

Kondo Takahiro (b 1958) began his career in ceramics in 1985 after devoting his early years to sport, attaining national success in table tennis. His grandfather and father were masters of blue and white-glazed porcelain (sometsume) and Takahiro learned much from them. However, he quickly discovered his own style and has continued to evolve, continually challenging himself, incorporating new media while remaining conscious of his sometsume roots. Water has been his principal theme for many years and he has explored not only its physical forms such as rain, ice, steam, and mist, but also its conceptual aspects as a source of life, purifier, natural resource, and, most currently, as a critical environmental issue in regards to the nuclear disaster in Fukushima. These many manifestations of water culminate in Kondo's patented silver mist overglaze, comprised of an amalgam of metals and glass frit, which ranges in appearance from a subtle shimmer to a stream of molten drops that are dazzling to behold.

Kondo's recent neriage works reflect his lifelong interest in painting. The application of his unique metallic glaze to monochromatic slabs creates the illusory appearance of "splashed ink" in the form of silver mist overglaze droplets. Although the patterns are abstract, the surfaces are intentionally reminiscent of seascapes in the tradition of Japanese ink painting (suiboku-ga). These surfaces are equally evocative on both his large sculptures and hand-held teabowls. They work in harmony with the pools of "ink" and suspended air bubbles in the cast glass covers of his "objets" and in the joining glass sections of his tall monoliths. For Kondo, whether it is through flowing of ink, drops of silver, or icy glass, his ceramics not only represent the ever-changing state of water as it travels through sky and earth, but also capture the fleeting nature of all things. The artist explains:

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Kondo has received several international awards and been featured in exhibitions on four continents. Joan B Mirviss has represented Kondo Takahiro for over fifteen years and has placed his work in important international collections. Among major museums owning his works are the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; Brooklyn Museum, NY; National Museum of Scotland; Paramita Museum, Mie; National Gallery, Victoria, Australia; and São Paulo Museum, Brazil.

Joan B Mirviss is the leading western dealer in the field of modern and contemporary Japanese ceramics, and from her New York gallery on Madison Avenue, Joan B Mirviss LTD exclusively represents top Japanese clay artists. As a widely published and highly respected specialist in her field for over thirty-five years, Mirviss has advised and built collections for many museums, major private collectors, and corporations.