

SOFA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF ART AND DESIGN SCULPTURE OBJECTS & FUNCTIONAL ART FAIR APRIL 16-19 AT THE PARK AVENUE ARMORY

FIFTY-EIGHT INTERNATIONAL DEALERS PRESENT THE BEST IN CONTEMPORARY DECORATIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

New York: Contemporary decorative art and design in all its unique forms and manifestations takes front and center stage at the annual Sculpture Objects & Functional Art Fair (SOFA NEW YORK) on Friday, April 16 - Monday, April 19 at the Park Avenue Armory, between 66th and 67th Streets in Manhattan. The fair opens with a public preview the evening of Thursday, April 15. Now in its 13th year, SOFA NEW YORK continues to present artists who push the boundaries of "art" through the use of innovative forms, materials and processes. It compels the viewer to confront the age-old adage of 'what is art?'

Here are some of the dealer's personal picks of artists to watch:



Ritzi Jacobi
Floating Matter, 2009
browngrotta arts, Wilton, CT

browngrotta arts, (Wilton, Connecticut) will present two recent works by art textile pioneer Ritzi Jacobi. Since the late 1960s, Jacobi's work, first created with Peter Jacobi, and since the 80s alone, has produced large tapestry reliefs that underscore the sculptural possibilities of fiber. Jacobi's individual and collaborative works are found in museums around the world. "We are privileged to exhibit two quite different, yet representative, works by Ritzi Jacobi at SOFA NEW YORK," says gallerist Tom Grotta. "The tension and tactility in her work is always exciting for viewers. In *Blue Zone* myriad shades and tones of a single color create additional intensity. In *Floating Matter* there is a complexity of surface and structure -- by summarizing cable elements in various techniques, the single particles generate a vivid, pulsating pattern. In either case, technique becomes secondary to overall composition."

London dealer **Clare Beck at Adrian Sassoon** will offer work by Felicity Aylieff who worked with a team of experts at The Pottery Workshop Experimental Factory in Jingdezhen, China. To throw the porcelain for these colossal vases, she relied on a two-man team working simultaneously on either side of the same wheel. By working together the team provided support and stability for each other as they threw each porcelain section upwards. These separate sections were then joined together and kiln-fired complete. She then executed the glazing, decoration and transfer application. Aware of the long tradition of Chinese blue and white decoration, Aylieff felt free to borrow the technique but use it in her own innovative way.



Felicity Aylieff
*Xia KunChong-Summer
Insects II & III*, 2008
Clare Beck at Adrian
Sassoon, London UK



Jaehyo Lee
0121-1110-1091213, 2009
CRFA, New York, NY

Media Inquiries

Marilyn White Public Relations
Marilyn White: (973) 783-3649
MWhitePR@aol.com

Online Press Room:
www.sofaexpo.com/epress/



David Hicks
December Frost
cross mackenzie gallery

New to SOFA NEW YORK, cross mackenzie gallery (Washington DC) will feature the work of two outstanding ceramic artists, Walter McConnell and David Hicks. David Hicks' *December Frost* is smaller than the large-scale wall installation shown in the SOFA NEW YORK catalogue. According to Rebecca Cross, this piece demonstrates the artist's signature style of suspending multiple, bizarre and beautiful gourd-like shapes by steel cables in layers to build a rich and textured still life composition. The power of Hicks' raw clay works contrast with McConnell's exquisite and refined surfaces of crystalline-glazed porcelain kitsch figurines stacked into a graceful stupa-like tower across the booth.

Also new to SOFA is **CRFA** (New York). Dealer Cynthia Reeves presents the functional art of Jaehyo Lee, a Korean artist, who works in natural materials and steel, as his primary media. Reeves says Lee's most spectacular works incorporate highly burnished, bent steel nails that form complex, articulated patterns against the velvet black of charred wood. This astoundingly difficult process results in works of a sinuous, elegant line and intricate detail--some of which are wall-based and some of which are objects intended for use as functional art. He continues this inquiry in his wood sculptures: wooden spheres and conical pillars that are often monumental in scale.



Jaehyo Lee
0121-1110-109121, 2009
CRFA, New York, NY



Gordon Chandler
Shorty Red/Rusty, 2009
Ferrin Gallery, Pittsfield, MA

The work of Gordon Chandler stands out at **Ferrin Gallery** (Pittsfield, Massachusetts). Chandler works with found and salvaged scrap metal that he uses to create recognizable objects. The Kimono is one of his signature artworks that is made from a single steel drum. His current solo show in Shanghai, China features 12 produced in the US and several new ones he was able to fabricate in a short term artist residency in China. His work is exhibited and collected throughout the United States, and is in numerous prominent private collections. Says Chandler: "I like the elements in my work to not be so recognizable, yet obvious from some other utility and not without some history...The sculptures that are the most successful for me are the ones that look the most like they just fell together; which may not be exactly the case."

Here from London is **Joanna Bird of Joanna Bird Pottery** who presents a unique work called *King's Canyon*, by Pippin Drysdale. Drysdale is an internationally acclaimed artist and one of only a few to have been honored with a Master of Australian Craft award. Her works are in Museums in Scotland, Germany, Japan, Italy, Korea, Russia, New Zealand, and USA to mention a few, plus in numerous private collections including the Devonshire Collection. She has just had a major show at the Australian Embassy in Washington DC. "This group is a quintessential expression of the Australian landscape," says Bird. "It evokes mountains and the rhythm and palette of the landscape in Drysdale's unique style of incised porcelain."



Pippin Drysdale
King's Crayon, 2009
Joanna Bird Pottery, London, UK



Koike Shoko
Joan B. Mirviss Ltd., New York, NY

Contemporary Japanese ceramics, by Koike Shoko, will be offered at **Joan B Mirviss Ltd.** (New York). Recognized as one of the leading women ceramicists to come out of the postwar artistic wave in Japan, Koike Shoko takes the sea as her point of departure and creates shell-inspired spiral forms out of Shigaraki clay. Wheel-thrown then modified by hand, covered with an opaque clay and glazed to emphasize surface and texture, Koike's stunning sculptures convey her passion and intimate understanding of nature.

Lyons Wier Gallery (New York) features the work of bead artist Jan Huling's three-dimensional collages, which combine found objects with surface design, sometimes touching on narrative themes. Inspired by a continuing fascination with indigenous and popular culture and world religions, the artist juxtaposes these icons with an eclectic assortment of objects, challenging the viewer to consider common images within an altered context. Seed beads adorn objects in colorful patterns, camouflaging their original circumstance, allowing the viewer to see them as pure form without their usual connotations. The process is slow and meticulous, Zen-like, with the choice of forms motivating color schemes and iconography. Her showpiece entitled *QeeSahib*, utilizes the popular modern urban vinyl toy "Qee" and infuses it with patterns and icons inspired by a recent trip to India, combining western graffiti culture with classic eastern spirituality.



Jan Huling
Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY



Kait Rhoads
Sideweed, 2009
Chappell Gallery, New York, NY

Alice Chappell of Chappell Gallery (New York) will present the work of Kait Rhoads, a prominent American working in glass who is represented in museums in the U.S., Europe and Asia. Rhoads began her career in painting, but as she studied ancient glass techniques, she came to see the transparency and vibrant colors of glass as a means to create more compelling work. Her commitment to the medium of glass was reinforced by a Fulbright Fellowship in Murano, Italy where she had the opportunity to study and learn a variety of ancient glass techniques. Chappell notes Rhoads employs *zanfirico* and *murrine* in an innovative way, creating highly refined, painterly sculptures that bring new life and direction to ancient traditions in glass. Her initial fused *murrine* glass "Peacock vessels" have grown into abstract organic sculptures of woven *murrine* in which combinations of opaque and transparent color alternately highlight the architecture of the form as a whole and the perforated topography of the surface.

At **Ornamentum** (Hudson, New York), Dutch artist Ruudt Peters' provocative jewellery is featured, which straddles the line between body adornment and object art. According to the artist, his ANIMA collection will be shown in an installation that connects the content of his work in a spatial context. "For my installation I have chosen the mirror, first of all, because it is an attribute of the feminine, of Venus. However, it is more than that. A reflection is also elusive, like that of Narcissus in the water, like the wax that solidifies in the water. With this, for me things come full circle," says Peters. According to the artist, fifteen round mirrors hang randomly in space on long steel rods. The jewellery is mounted on the mirrors, and their reflections produce a bewildering and poetic image.



Ruudt Peters
ANIMA "eva", 2009
Ornamentum, Hudson, NY



Fujinuma Noboru
Gentle, 2008
TAI Gallery, Santa Fe, NM

TAI Gallery (Santa Fe, New Mexico) will feature baskets by Japanese artist Ueno Masao. Gallerist Rob Coffland notes that the integrity of the bamboo is very important to how Masao thinks about his sculpture. Each strip of bamboo is numbered as it is split, then when sculpting with the bamboo he reconstructs the plant in that same order. He opens up the bamboo into a sculpture releasing it into a new form. TAI will also present bamboo artist Fujinuma Noboru who apprenticed with the respected bamboo basket maker Yagisawa Keizo. Coffland says that for half-a-dozen years, he struggled to execute his design ideas because he lacked confidence in his technique. This changed by 1992 when, his reputation growing, he received the Tokyo Governor's Prize at the 39th Traditional Craft Arts Exhibition. His winning piece was purchased by the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo.

Fujinuma Noboru muses, "For me, art is not just about the surface. It's something invisible that speaks to the viewer."

Listing Information SOFA NEW YORK 2010:

Location: Park Avenue Armory // 643 Park Avenue at East 67th Street, New York City 10065
Subway: 6 Train to 68th Street/Hunter College; Bus: M101, M102, or M103 to Lexington Ave & 68th Street.

Opening Night: Thursday, April 15: Invitation-only 5:30 – 7 pm, Public Preview: 7 – 9 pm, Tickets: \$100.00. Available in advance at sofaexpo.com and at the door beginning at 5:30 pm. Opening Night attendees may also support New York's **Museum of Arts and Design (MAD)** by purchasing a ticket to attend a private cocktail event in the Armory's Tiffany Room. To purchase tickets call Stephanie Lang at 212-299-7729.

Exposition hours: Friday, April 16: 11 – 7 pm; Saturday, April 17: 11 – 7 pm; Sunday, April 18: noon – 6 pm; Monday, April 19: 11 – 5 pm.

Tickets: \$25 for a single day of general admission and \$40 for a four-day pass; both include catalog, quantity permitting. Advance ticket sales at sofaexpo.com.

General information: Visit www.sofaexpo.com; call 800-563-SOFA (7632) or 773-506-8860; or email info@sofaexpo.com