



## UNITED

Katsuyuki Shirako | Shingo Tanaka | Keisuke Matsuda

2017.11.03 (fri.) - 2017.12.09 (sat.)

open on fri., sat., & sun. 12:00-18:00

opening reception : 2017.11.03 (fri.) 18:00-20:00

weekday appointments are available

November 2017 marks the 10th anniversary of the opening of the eN arts gallery. All of us at the eN arts would like to take this occasion to thank all those who have visited our gallery, who have supported us in our quest to present wonderful artists, and who have allowed us to present their works. We look forward to your continued support and advice.

To celebrate our 10th anniversary, eN arts will be presenting a group exhibition, "UNITED", to present the works of Katsuyuki Shirako, Shingo Tanaka, and Keisuke Matsuda. We hope that you do not miss this opportunity to see the works of these three artists.

eN arts

## Katsuyuki Shirako



untitled | 2016 | Inkjet Print (Japanese lacquer, hinoki, orchid) | H163 x W205 mm

My works in, of themselves, do not possess particular meaning. Rather, they simply exist, incorporating multiple impressions from my mind.

Katsuyuki Shirako

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Born in 1984 in Shiga Prefecture, Japan. Katsuyuki Shirako graduated from Kyoto City University of Arts with MFA in Japanese Lacquer in 2010.

Shirako uses Japanese cypress (*hinoki*), oak (*nara*), basswood (*shina*) to form sculptures onto which he applies finest pigments and lacquer. His works are generally categorized into five series – ASSEMBLE, CONNECT, SCATTER, SCRIBBLE, and JUGGLE. (Please refer to the descriptions of each series on the next page.)

Shirako never ceases his search for beauty, possessing his own determination in his everyday life that goes beyond the creation of the works in these series. He attempts to crystalize his sense of beauty by using motifs from the natural world into all genres -- Ceramic Arts, Lacquerware, Painting, Sculpture, Photography. Setting all focus on the inherent, natural beauty of his works, he does not incorporate “meaning” into them. He would rather take a neutral stance that allows beauty itself take one’s breath away.



#### 【CONNECT】

In CONNECT series, Shirako expresses, in photography, the beauty of the nature with Japanese lacquer in a unique way. He believes the balance of the nature and human being on this planet should be kept by co-existing in harmony. Instead of recreating a living object with Japanese lacquer, he combines the object in its natural form and his work made of lacquer. He photographs them to capture the transience of living things and the eternity of Japanese lacquer and to take advantages of the beauty in both artificial (in his case, it is Japanese lacquer) and the nature. In CONNECT series, their exquisite harmony is demonstrated in his photographic works.

UNTITLED | KS-WT1-13-006 | 2013 | 450 x 550 mm | Inkjet Print



#### 【SCRIBBLE】

The designs of SCRIBBLE series come from hundreds of the line drawings of Shirako's actual pencil scribbles. He scribbles at random, acting on instinct, more or less, and chooses his favorite ones. Then he presents his natural action, scribbling, in three dimensions by carving them out of blocks of Japanese lime tree or medium density fiberboard (MDF) all by hand. After being carved, each line (amazingly, all the lines are connected merely at one point) is shaved and sanded meticulously. Then he applies Japanese lacquer in different colors. Each piece requires about the applications of 20 layers of lacquer in order to create the depth and the luster of colors to complete the work. The works in SCRIBBLE series are minimalistic yet incredibly articulate.

UNTITLED | KS-WT2-11-001 | 2011 | 1,210 x 1,170 x 110 mm | Japanese lacquer, MDF



#### 【ASSEMBLE】

Originated from the shapes of ferns, thorns of cacti, and flower petals, the designs of ASSEMBLE series are transformed into tiny pieces. Not only each piece but also connecting parts are all hand carved, out of Japanese lime tree and/or oak, and perfectly fitted into each other. Shirako applies different Japanese lacquers in colors and shines to bring out the different textures of each piece. The complete works boast his original designs and architectural beauty.

UNTITLED | KS-WT3-14-002 | 2014 | 38 x 38 x 89 mm | Japanese lacquer, pigments, Japanese lime tree



#### 【SCATTER】

The works in SCATTER series are made of Japanese lime tree. The shapes are derived from the complex images of islands, flowers, moss, butterflies, and clouds... again things he finds fascinating in the natural world. In the SCATTER series, he applies natural pigments such as ground rocks and shells that are typically used in traditional Japanese paintings. The colors that he chooses are so subtle that they show various shades, depending on the surroundings, lighting, and the times of the day. While exhibiting these small works, he realized that their shadows become the part of the works, and began to gather them on the base to create a larger more complex works. By utilizing minimal materials with his maximum techniques, he challenges to express tranquility in the soul and flowing times that we enjoy in a small garden in a Japanese temple.

UNTITLED | KS-WT4-14-001 | 2014 | 62 x 55 x 28 mm | pigments, Japanese lime tree, gelatin glue



#### 【JUGGLE】

Shirako creates a wooden part with wholes where the ends of long rattan are inserted. Depending on the locations of the wholes, the shapes of the wooden part, and the climate (temperature and humidity), the rattan waves, circles, and hangs to become a beautiful sculpture.

UNTITLED | KS-WT5-17-008 | 2017 | 205 x 350 x 320 mm | shell powder, gelatin glue, Japanese cypress, rattan

## Shingo Tanaka



meltrans #027 | 2017 | iron, plastic | H920 x W720 mm

What it means for humans to use fire.

I create works employing the transformations born by applying fire to diverse materials.

One would think that this process is simple and straightforward.

Irrespective of shape or form, I combine various materials and then burn them. In some works I will burn once again the collapsed remnants of the original composite. I will repeat this process over and over again. Paper turns to ash; materials burn to pieces: steel bends and warps; and PVC melts before being reduced to a liquid.

As I continue going through this process, I sometimes lose track of what I am doing.

I cannot figure out if the actions are “destroying” or “creating” or “drawing” or “reducing”.

But as something does take a form, to say that something is “being created or made” is correct even if until that point the underlying actions are always regeneration and destruction until a form is achieved. Destruction is not taking place alone. Nor is creation taking place alone. Both are happening simultaneously.

I must constantly ask myself of my own choices while embracing the contradictions of “destroying while creating” and “creating while destroying”.

Nothing is certain. Nothing can be stated unequivocally. To affirm ambiguity.

I still do not have the appropriate language to describe the final product built up by the repetition of this process, but I know that the works first engage the viewer's imagination to allow the eyes to see something there. Thus, the interaction with such works creates the possibility of expression and discussion.

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Tanaka Shingo was born in 1983 and is a graduate of Kyoto Seika University Graduate School of Arts. From even before entering his studies, Tanaka has continuously focused on the theme of "fire", using flames as a material, a method, and as a tool. As an artist exploring "fire" from different perspectives, he ventures back and forth in the narrow area between the act in which people control fire in "burning" or "melting" and the space "burning" and "melting" in which human guidance does not occur as he creates new works.

The "trans" in Tanaka's first series of works "trans" was the transformation of many layered blocks of paper upon being burned, producing works that far exceeded expectations in beauty as the outer layers burned and transformed to carbon and ashes. From the "trans" series, Tanaka progressed through the "overlap", "HEAT", and "Quivering Boundary" series before circling back to "re:trans". In the "re:trans" series, Tanaka combines dissimilar types of scrap materials and wood wastes before burning the combined forms with open flames in order to lay open the depth of the layers of the various materials and types of combustion and thereby produce works of surprising complexity.

In the "wrap" series, Tanaka employs steel plates, to which he applies flames under identical conditions such as, for example, applying a burner at specific locations for five seconds each, and repeating that process again and again. In this series, despite the reality that Tanaka is putting additional emphasis on his control of the creative process, he is demonstrating that his plans will be bent and warped just as the steel is bent and warped by the natural phenomenon of fire. With this approach, a totally unexpected "strange unbalance" from the phenomenon of applying heat is created that overwhelms completely the artist's expected results.

## Keisuke Matsuda



UNTITLED | 2017 | Oil on canvas | H455 x W333 mm

What appears is only what people want to see; and, as the world changes depending on the language one uses, there must be a world that can be seen as just from the language of paintings. That is what I am trying to put directly on the canvas.

For that reason, I use the existence of everything as a hint. From there, I believe it is possible to use the language of paintings to be aware of the world and in turn create a work.

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Born in 1984, Matsuda graduated from the Kyoto City University of Arts with MA in Painting and lives and works in Kyoto. In 2014, Matsuda was awarded the opportunity to have a solo show at the Tokyo Wonder Site as one of 19 prize-winning artists chosen from among 1,000 young artists.

(<http://www.tokyo-ws.org/english/index.html>) And in 2017, Matsuda was recommended by Hirokazu Tokuyama (the curator of Mori Art Museum) to exhibit three new paintings at VOCA 2017 (the Vision Of Contemporary Art) presented by The Ueno Royal Museum.

Although it is tempting to think of Matsuda's works as simple abstraction, they are actually just the opposite. "I paint the images as they appear before my eyes." In other words, his works are painted as the artist sees them. Matsuda paints, without hesitation in bold strokes and colors, as the images appear in the eye of his mind, as quickly as possible before they fade away.