



gaze and pointing
Anna Yamanishi Solo Exhibition

2026.02.01 (sun.) - 02.28 (sat.)
open on fri., sat., and sun. 12:00-18:00
appointments are available on weekdays
free admission

Pointing—directing a finger at something—is often described as the first form of communication infants use before language. Neither a direct bodily action such as touching or grasping, nor an objective verbal expression, pointing exists in between. I am drawn to the particular distance it creates between the self and the world.

When making work, I closely observe what I am trying to perceive in an object and how my chosen form shapes the way I see the world. Through this careful observation, different layers of reality come into view. Perhaps this is the pleasure of rediscovering, from the outside, the transparent contours of the world once seen during the infant “pointing” stage.

I studied lacquerware in the crafts department at university. Because lacquer is a liquid, it requires a form, and I began by working with wood, a material I loved. However, applying a coating to the surface never felt quite right to me. Looking back, I understand this as a difficulty in prioritizing either form or surface—two inseparable aspects.

This experience led to my ongoing interest in the relationship between form and surface. Through my practice, I consider the fact that we can only ever see surfaces, and the questions of presence and absence that inevitably accompany them.

Anna Yamanishi

“Gaze and Pointing” is a solo exhibition by Anna Yamanishi that focuses on an early, formative stage of our relationship with the world around us - one that cannot be fully reduced to direct physical contact or verbal explanation. Rather than presenting the works as mere sculptural objects, the exhibition establishes them as a site for reconsidering perception itself.

The careful examination of what is brought into focus and through what kind of form the world is framed resembles less an act of shaping toward a predetermined result than an attempt to subtly shift the conditions of perception, one by one. The works that emerge from this process do not assert clear meanings or symbols. Instead, they remain suspended at a stage prior to the formation of understanding on the part of the viewer.

With a background studying in the field of traditional Japanese lacquerware craftsmanship, Yamanishi encountered early on the difficulty of treating structure and surface as separable entities. Her commitment to engaging “form” and “surface” on equal terms marks a deliberate distance from conventional methodologies that define sculpture as a self-contained, autonomous mass. Rather, her practice can be understood as an effort to reframe sculptural form as a perceptual phenomenon.

Yamanishi’s works exist simultaneously as wood carvings - objects with a tangible material presence - and as unstable states that incorporate a sense of openness and indeterminacy. They function as mediating devices that call into question not only the viewer’s assumptions and habits of perception, but also the reliance on outward appearance through which we habitually make sense of the world.

This exhibition invites viewers to reflect on the point at which seeing begins and to experience the repeated acts of “gazing and pointing” as acts that unsettle the distance we unconsciously assume between ourselves and objects, as well as the presumed transparency of perception itself.

Naomi Rowe | eN arts