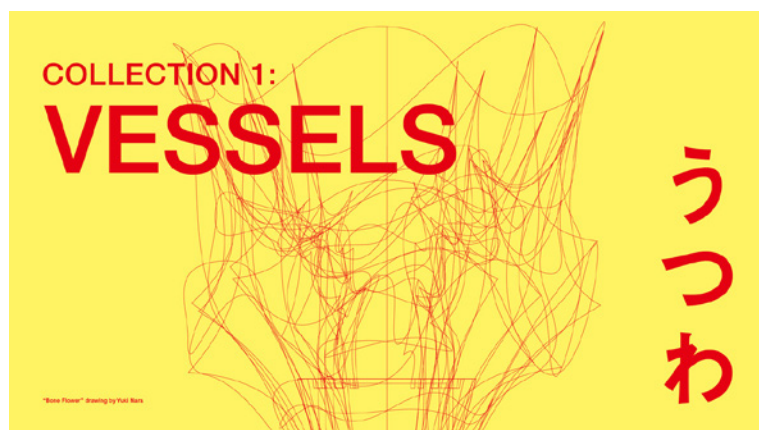


21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

PRESS RELEASE

2022.6.14



Collection Exhibition 1: VESSELS

2022.5.21(Sat) -
10.16(Sun)

Exhibition Title	Collection Exhibition 1: VESSELS
Period	May 21 (Sat), 2022 – October 16 (Sun), 2022
Hours	10:00-18:00 (until 20:00 on Fridays and Saturdays) *Ticket sales end 30 minutes before closing
Venue	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Gallery 1, 3 to 5, 13 *Gallery 5 is until September 11
Closed	Mondays (except July 18, August 15, September 19, October 10), July 19, August 16, September 20, October 11
Admission	Adults: ¥450 (¥360) / Students: ¥310 (¥240) / 18 and under: Free / 65 and over: ¥360 *Fees in parentheses are for groups of 20 or more *Admission free for Kanazawa Citizens on Promote the Arts Day (second Saturday of each month). Proof of residency required. *Tickets also include admission (same-day only) to "Special Exhibition: Matthew Barney" (May 21 to September 11).
Organized by	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (Kanazawa Art Promotion and Development Foundation)
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About the Exhibition

This exhibition will focus on the theme of *utsuwa* (vessels) in contemporary art, drawing mainly on works from the museum's collection including those newly acquired in fiscal 2021. The word *utsuwa* has a wide range of implications, from containers with specific functions, to utensils of various kinds, to people's tolerance and generosity, indicating the importance of the concept in both practical and conceptual terms. Looking back over the history of vessels, Japan's prehistoric Jōmon pottery was highly prized especially in collective living environments such as villages, and was used for everyday purposes such as storing gathered nuts, plants, and animals and cooking food. At the same time, many of these pieces of pottery feature vibrant ornamentation and patterns that seem to represent the ancient rhythms of life, and they are recognized not only for their practicality but also for their extraordinary decorative qualities. It is easy to see that vessels, which have served people in daily life and religious faith since ancient times, have played vital roles in connecting the human and the natural world, both as everyday items and as sacred implements indispensable for rituals and ceremonies. The human body, too, is sometimes referred to as the vessel of the soul, based on the idea that in the cycle of reincarnation, the soul endures and is repeatedly transferred into a new body-as-vessel with each rebirth. If we think of the body as a vessel, we can see an image of the soul residing in that vessel connecting with the natural world and the realm of the sacred through the body's five senses, and the body as the vehicle for sensations that awaken memories from long ago. By examining *utsuwa*, so central to our lives, from various angles, this exhibition seeks to provide an opportunity to ponder their meaning and value.

Exhibiting artists (in alphabetical order)

AOKI Chie, HAYAMA Yuki, KAPOOR Anish, KUNO Ayako, LEE Bul, MITSUKE Masayasu, NAKAMURA Takuo, NAKASHIMA Harumi, NAKATA Mayu, NARA Yuki, Pinaree SANPITAK, SATOH Taku, TASHIMA Etsuko, TOMIMOTO Kenkichi, Michael ROWE and others

Features of the Exhibition

Expanded Concept of Vessels Explored Through Diverse Works from the Collection

This exhibition focuses on the diverse functions and concepts of vessels, which contain or mediate a variety of things both visible and invisible, and deciphers various vessel-related metaphors in works from the collection. These include Ayako Kuno's brass sculpture *transition*, which depicts a vessel as a "living megalopolis" that enfolds the cities of the Earth and the data and human desire that fill them, and Etsuko Tashima's ceramic *Cornucopia* series, which presents vessels for sacred "offering" of the ephemeral lives of fruits and vegetation.

New Perspectives, Defying Designations Such as Fine Art, Crafts, Design, or Architecture

Among the works on view is NAKAMURA Takuo C-unit SATOH Taku's *Chabako Project: Verification of Choice and Uses in Shape and Proportion*, which hints at the importance of questioning conventional thinking and shifting one's viewpoint, whereby a simple change in perspective can strip objects of their conventional functions and roles and generate new ways of seeing and using them. This exhibition transcends boundaries between fields such as fine arts, crafts, design, and architecture, and offers opportunities for new ways of seeing and interpreting things by re-examining individual works within the framework of the vessel.

Works Newly Acquired by the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa in 2021

This exhibition presents works by contemporary artists newly acquired by the museum in fiscal 2021. These include the newest works from 2021 in the series Bone Flower, in which the ceramicist and architect Yuki Nara (born 1989 in Kanazawa, Ishikawa) employs both CAD (computer-aided design) and traditional techniques to solidify waveforms embodying the climate, terrain, and ancient life rhythms of Kanazawa, and the painting *Brilliant Blue* (2008) by Pinaree Sanpitak (born 1961 in Bangkok, Thailand), whose subject is the female body as a vessel for various experiences and perceptions.

Major Works Exhibited

The Vessel as Living Megalopolis

KUNO Ayako, *transition*, 2016

Kuno works primarily with lost-wax casting, and in this work the world's cities, bird's-eye views of which are available from Google Earth, are represented by precision-cast surfaces and lines depicting the contours of railroads, highways, and buildings, with a hemispherical vessel form as a base. In *transition*, Kuno views the complex intertwining of human society, the data inundating our world, and humanity's repeated acts of building, demolishing, and rebuilding in a positive light, as organic energy that will endure into the future.



KUNO Ayako, *transition*, 2016
Brass, 52×65×69cm
photo: KIOKU Keizo

The Vessel as Body

Anish KAPOOR, *L'Origine du monde*, 2004 (on permanent view)

Kapoor's installation references Gustave Courbet's 1866 oil painting *L'Origine du monde* (The Origin of the World). Courbet was dedicated to the pursuit of truth in painting, and with its stark close-up of a female abdomen and genitalia, the painting can be seen even today as a shocking challenge to moral values. Is the origin of the world a black hole? Darkness? Or is it the interior of the body? If *L'Origine du monde* is viewed as a vessel for the beginning of life, new aspects of the work may be encountered.

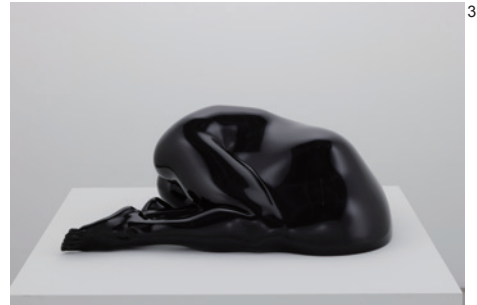


Anish KAPOOR, *L' Origine du monde*, 2004
©Anish KAPOOR

Vessels of the Body

AOKI Chie, *BODY 21-2*, 2021

The life-sized human figures in Aoki Chie's works represent the artist herself, and the initial works in her *BODY* series, launched in 2004, were given jet-black coatings forming hard surfaces that "shut the body off from others." In recent years she has been addressing the subject of "the melting body," and forging into new territory that capitalizes on the distinctive characteristics of lacquer, applying her sculptural powers to creation of forms with mirror-like textures that reflect the surrounding environment including the viewer. *BODY 21-2*, shown here, presents a small, curled-up body evoking an embryo, and while exerting magnetism with tactile sensation as if the viewer were stroking its smooth surface, it conveys a sense of pulsating and merging with the life energy of the mother's womb.



AOKI Chie, *BODY21-2*, 2021
photo: KIOKU Keizo

NAKATA Mayu, *Mirage*, 2021

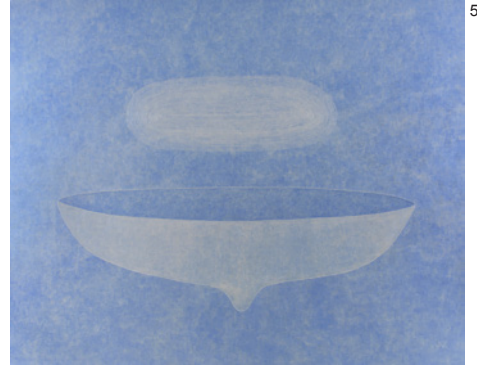
Mirage is a work inspired by the mirages that are sometimes seen in the Hokuriku region, and Nakata produced it with strong feelings of longing for a scene she herself has not yet seen. Its deep greenish tone is beautifully brought forth by the painstaking polishing process, which entails more than 50 repetitions beginning with the lacquer undercoat, and combined with the flowing carved lines, it produces a powerful decorative effect. Nakata describes the traditional techniques of dry lacquer and *kinma*, handed down over the centuries, as sustainable, and sees new possibilities in a realm between traditional techniques and a contemporary practice in which movements of the body endeavoring to capture the object are directly translated into carved lines and forms.



NAKATA Mayu, *Mirage*, 2021
photo: KIOKU Keizo

Pinaree SANPITAK, *Brilliant Blue*, 2008
2021 Acquisition

Sanpitak, who is from Bangkok, Thailand, focuses on the female body as a vessel for various perceptions and experiences, using the female breast as a motif that evokes the origins of life and our primal connection to the natural world. This work, which draws associations between the breast and the forms of vessels and mountains, evokes images and narratives of the cycles of organic memory and natural plenty.



Pinaree SANPITAK, *Brilliant Blue*, 2008
 ©Pinaree Sanpitak
 acrylic, canvas 198×250cm
 courtesy of Tyler Rollins Fine Art

Vessels for Sacred Offerings

TASHIMA Etsuko, *Cornucopia 02-XII*, 2002 / *Cornucopia 00-I*, 2000

The title of this work means “horn of plenty,” and in the Greek mythological tradition it referred to a horn-shaped cup filled with plants and fruits. In this work the form is freshly expressed in ceramic and glass, conveying the sense of overflowing life energy. Differently textured materials resonate with one another, presenting a multilayered, seemingly organic form imbued with generative energy and rhythm.



TASHIMA Etsuko
 Left: *Cornucopia 02-XII*, 2002 H70×W85×D58cm
 Right: *Cornucopia 00-I*, 2000 H37×W60×D55cm
 ceramic, glass
 photo: SAIKI Taku

Vessels in Architecture and Craft

NARA Yuki, *Frozen Flowers*, 2022 installation

2021 Acquisitions: *Bone Flower Jōmon* and *Bone Flower Yayoi*, 2021, etc.

The ceramicist and architect Yuki Nara works with the concept of “ceramics as architectural design,” and reflects the unique climate and terrain of Kanazawa, employing CAD and programming to design waveforms embodying the region’s distinctive shadows and the ancient rhythms of life, capturing the experience of flame in 3D space. In the *Bone Flower* series, first exhibited in 2016, resonance with the flame’s vital energy seems to negate spatial and temporal boundaries between ancient times and the present. Here, in addition to the newly acquired *Bone Flower Jōmon* (2021), a new installation entitled *Frozen Flowers*, which freezes an instant of life in fluctuation, is presented in the all-glass gallery of the museum’s Light Court.



NARA Yuki, *Bone Flower_Jōmon*, 2021
photo: KIOKU Keizo



NARA Yuki, *Frozen Flowers*, 2022
© Yuki Nara
photo: HAYASHI Shugo

Vessel Size: Enlargement and Reduction

NAKAMURA Takuo C-unit SATOH Taku, *Chabako Project: Verification of Choice and Uses in Shape and Proportion*, 2010

This project is a new take on the traditional form of the *chabako* (tea box), bringing together seven artists who ordinarily work with different materials including metal, bamboo, wood, and glass. Designer Taku Satoh did not design the forms of each item, but only specified five sets of size ratios. This was due to Satoh's concept that form is closely tied to material and technique, and that these relationships should not be violated. This simple designation of size alterations removes the traditional function from the utensil, and utensils created by each artist were recontextualized as *chabako* that can be freely combined in new ways. The implication is that familiar vessels and tools can take on new functions and roles with just a slight change in perspective.



NAKAMURA Takuo C-unit SATOH Taku, *Chabako Project: Verification of Choice and Uses in Shape and Proportion*, 2010

tin, bamboo, pottery, Japanese lacquer, wood, glass
SAKAI Shinobu, MOTOE Kazumi, OOMURA Shuichi,
YOSHIDA Yasuki, NAKAMURA Takuo, TAKEMURA Yuri,
AOKI Yuriko
photo: ©amana inc.

Free days for Kanazawa citizens

Promote the Arts Day (*2nd Saturdays each month during the period): June 11, July 9, August 13, September 10, October 8

*Admission on the above days is free for Kanazawa citizens. (Proof of residency required.)

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