

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

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7/F PEDDER BUILDING
12 PEDDER STREET
CENTRAL HONG KONG
HOURS:

T. +852.2151.0555
E. hongkong@gagosian.com
Tue–Sat 11:00am–7:00pm



JONAS WOOD and SHIO KUSAKA: *Blackwelder*

Thursday, 15 January–Saturday, 28 February 2015

Opening reception: Thursday, January 15th, from 6:00 to 8:00pm

Gagosian Hong Kong is pleased to present recent work by Jonas Wood and Shio Kusaka. This will be the first exhibition of the artists' work in Hong Kong.

Wood and Kusaka draw from each other's work as painter and potter to probe the tensions between representation and expression; precision and chance; influences from art history and life. Kusaka's porcelain vessels play muse to Wood's drawn and painted interiors, while conversely their idiosyncratic forms and glazes owe something to his impulsive line. They draw from personal memory and their shared existence as a married couple, his half-objective, half-fictional Los Angeles landscapes and still lifes set in their studio on Blackwelder Street; and her painted patterns that allude to their young daughter's fascination with dinosaurs.

Wood's paintings and works on paper display overlapping textures and disorienting compressions of space; the intimate settings invoke the work of forebears such as Matisse and Hockney, yet his distorted verdant rooms possess an affectless cut-out appearance that is all his own. In drawings, collages, watercolors, and paintings, outlines of pots and vases frame landscape and interior imagery. Drawn and painted vessels set against neutral backgrounds contain a sprawling green golf course; a coral reef with exotic fish; a lush garden; a painter's studio, all scenes that end abruptly at the parameters of the object. Progressions can be traced between exploratory works on paper and final paintings: in *Fish Pot and Geranium* (2008), Wood incorporates a photograph of swimming koi as the pattern of one vessel; a second is crudely drawn in pencil. He transposes the objects onto canvas in *Blue Pot Still Life* (2014), in which the highly decorated pots clash with a patterned tablecloth, stacked rolls of masking tape, and multicolored desert plants, a persistent living motif.

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Kusaka's recent vessels take traditions of Japanese stoneware and porcelain as a foundation for historical fusions inspired by Iron Age ceramics, Minimalist repetitions, and the silt pottery of Ancient Egypt. These quotations merge with the subtle dimples, pinches, and other surface impressions of her haptic approach, as well as eccentric touches such as long handles in the shape of brontosauri, or blue streaks suggestive of rainfall. Several works are glazed with imprecise grids—Kusaka softens hard geometries by allowing her lines to waver and overlap—while on tall glazed vessels colors ebb from dark green to white. Wood and Kusaka share influences and imagery but embark on autonomous explorations of their respective media; exhibited together, these symbiotic works reveal the autobiographical roots and layers of cross-pollination that inspire their creation.

A fully illustrated catalogue produced with KARMA, New York and including a new text by Chris Wiley is forthcoming.

Jonas Wood was born in Boston in 1977, and lives and works in Los Angeles. Selected solo exhibitions include Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2010); "Jonas Wood: Clippings," Lever House, New York (2013–14); "Jonas Wood: Shelf Still Life," High Line Art (2014); and LAXART Facade (2014).

Shio Kusaka was born in Japan in 1972, and lives and works in Los Angeles. Her work was included in the 2014 Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2014), and has been exhibited throughout the world.

For further information please contact the gallery at hongkong@gagosian.com or at +852.2151.0555. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

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Image: JONAS WOOD, *WKS4*, 2013, colored pencil on paper, 6 1/2 x 4 1/2 inches (16.5 x 11.4 cm). Photo by Brian Forrest

Gagosian Gallery was established in 1980 by Larry Gagosian.