

Ross + Kramer Gallery is delighted to announce a presentation of new works by En Iwamura to open in East Hampton on November 20, 2020 and run through December 13, 2020. The exhibition includes twenty ceramic sculptures, two installation groupings of ceramic sculptures, and four paintings by the Japanese artist.

The centerpiece of the exhibition are two installations made up of several hand-built and fired ceramic forms. Part of Iwamura's *Neo-Jomon: Mountain Fantôme* series, the two installations are new embodiments of his signature visual language and historical references. Along with other works including "fantôme" (French for "phantom") in the title, the individual mountains that comprise each installation, or mountain range, are personified with eyes peering out from a mask. However, the ghostly mountains stare back, or in Iwamura's own words, "No matter what you see or don't see. Something is watching you from somewhere."

The Neo-Jomon series is also further developed throughout the rest of the exhibition. "Neo-Jomon" is used in the titles of Iwamura's works with raked striations in the surface of the clay, as in the mountain series and others like *Neo-Jomon: Ancient Face* (2019). These lines deposit a sense of calm upon the viewer, recalling Buddhist Zen gardens, which originated in the artist's birthplace of Kyoto, Japan. The term is a reference to Jōmon culture, the earliest major culture of prehistoric Japan, characterized by cord-patterned pottery. This ancient cord pattern establishes a context for Iwamura's raked surface, setting him up as a successor in the historical tradition of Japanese ceramicists.

Iwamura, forever interested in creating modern day relics, also introduces a new term to his personal mythology with this exhibition. "Obake", as referenced by *Neo-Jomon: Kaku-Kaku Obake* (2020) or *Neo-Jomon: Orange Obake* (2020), among others, refers to a class of shapeshifting supernatural creatures in Japanese folklore. The figures Iwamura refers to as "obake" possess a fluidity and transformative nature. Their forms are rounded and evocative of bubbles (*Neo-Jomon: Bubble Obake*, 2020) or clouds, creating a fleeting, temporary presence that contrasts sharply with the permanent nature of ceramics. According to Iwamura, "Ceramics last longer than human life, and we will communicate with future people with ceramics as an important information system."

En Iwamura was born in Kyoto, Japan in 1988, where he continues to live and work today. He earned his BFA and first MFA from the Kanazawa College of Art and Craft in Kanazawa, Japan in 2011 and 2013, respectively, and earned a second MFA from Clemson University in 2016. Iwamura has completed residencies at the Archie Bray Foundation in Montana (2016-2018), and the Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute in China (2018), among others. Most notably he has been exhibited in the American Museum of Ceramic Art, in Pomona, CA (2019) as well as being the subject of 2018 and 2019 solo presentations by Ross + Kramer Gallery in East Hampton and at UNTITLED, ART. Fair in Miami.

For more information, please contact Kaytlin Nodine, kaytlin@rkgallery.com, or call (917) 675-7293.