



Flash 1979/1988

October 6 (Saturday), 2018 – January 14 (Sunday/national holiday), 2019
Galleries A, B and C at Hara Museum ARC



[1] Shinro Ohtake, *Retina #2*
(*Purple Shadows*), 1988-90
©Shinro Ohtake

This exhibition looks back at two seminal years: 1979, the year the Hara Museum was born in Tokyo ahead of a nationwide boom in art museums, and 1988, the year Hara Museum ARC was born in Gunma, a year before Japan transitioned from the Showa period to the Heisei period. It does this by shining a spotlight on works from the Hara Collection that were created in each of those years.

Featured Artists: Anselm Kiefer / Leiko Ikemura / Toshinobu Onosato / Shinro Ohtake / Kazumi Kurigami / Christo / Tom Wesselmann / Yuji Noda / Flavio Shiro / Tomoko Maki / Tatsuo Miyajima / Lai Chi-Man / Lee UFan / Louise Nevelson and others

Semi-permanent Installations by: Yayoi Kusama / Tabaimo

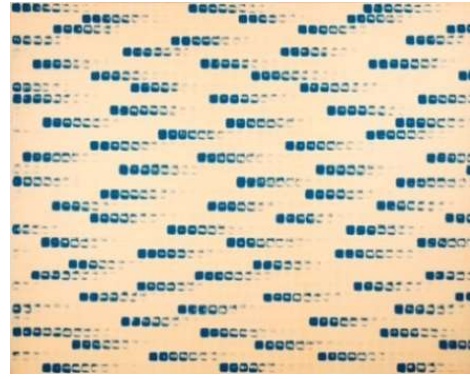
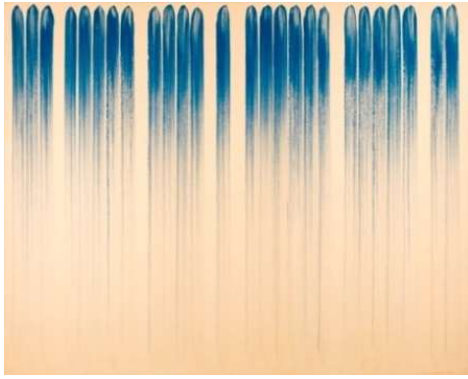
Number of featured works (approximate): 40 works by 30 artists (not including semi-permanent and permanent installations)

The Hara Museum and Art of Its Times

When the Hara Museum opened in the quiet residential area of Shinagawa, Tokyo in 1979, it was a rarity in Japan: a private museum specializing in contemporary art. Originally a private residence designed by Jin Watanabe and built in 1938, the museum building was a rare example of early 20th century Modernist architecture. Reborn as a museum, it has provided a setting in which to experience cutting-edge contemporary art through exhibitions, events and educational programs aimed at the promotion of international exchange.

The opening of the museum coincided with the second oil shock and the end of Japan's period of high economic growth. It was a transition period during which values shifted from material wealth to spiritual affluence. In the field of art, the '70s saw a stronger trend towards the conceptual, with minimalist art, which rose during the '60s, and the Mono-ha (object) school led by Lee Ufan reaching their peak during the 1970s and giving way to developments that came to be known as Post-modernism or New Wave.

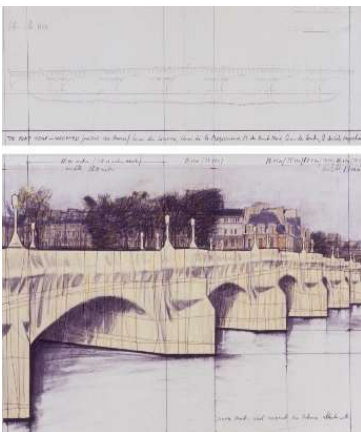
It was a time in which concepts surrounding painting and sculpture expanded and combined with a concern for environmental problems. The result was the birth of large-scale outdoor installation works by such artists as Christo and Jeanne-Claude who engaged in successive large-scale projects in which they covered natural places such as coastlines and public structures such as bridges with cloth.



[2] Lee Ufan, *From Line*, 1979 ©Lee Ufan [3] Lee Ufan, *From Point*, 1979 ©Lee Ufan

[2] [3] Lee Ufan

a major figure in the Mono-ha (Object) school, has been enjoying wider acclaim abroad as one of the major figures of the Mono-ha (Object) school in Japan. This show features two of his early masterworks, *From Line* and *From Point*, both made in 1979. Consisting purely of brush marks that repeat on the canvas surface with much white space, these images show very little modification by the artist. They are invitations to the viewer to enter into thoughtful meditation about the image and its meaning. At the time of the museum's opening, the chairman Toshio Hara paid a visit to the artist's studio, negotiated with the artist and obtained these two works for the collection on the spot. In 1991, the exhibition *Lee Ufan* was held at Hara Museum ARC.



[4] Christo, *STUDY FOR PROJECT PONT-NEUF, PARIS*, 1979 ©Christo

[4] Christo and Jeanne-Claude

Christo met Jeanne-Claude in Paris just as he was embarking on his art career in the 1950s. From then on, they were inseparable as a team both publicly and privately, going on to complete many projects together. They attracted initial attention for work consisting of bottles, cans and other ordinary everyday objects that they would wrap, as well as other works such as their stacked steel drum series. In 1964, they moved to New York and thereafter pursued their "wrapped art" on a grander scale which included buildings and nature. Successive projects included *Wrapped Walk Ways* (1977, USA), *Surrounded Islands* (1983, USA) and *The Pont Neuf Wrapped, Paris, 1975-85* which took nine years and many negotiations to complete. The exhibition *Christo - Wrapped Walk Ways, Kansas City, Missouri, 1977-78* was held in 1982 at the Hara Museum, and the exhibition *Surrounded Islands, Biscayne Bay, Greater Miami, Florida, 1980-83* in 1990 at Hara Museum ARC.

Works Created in the Year Hara Museum ARC Opened

Hara Museum ARC (architect: Arata Isozaki) opened in Shibukawa, Gunma in 1988 as a venue for large-scale exhibitions and Hara Collection shows, and in response to the diversification of expression that accompanied the changing of eras. The Kankai Pavilion was added in 2008, a special venue that juxtaposes classical art with contemporary art to allow the exploration of new aesthetic possibilities.

Thirty years ago, while at the height of its economic bubble, Japan entered a period of drastic change starting from the next year as the nation transitioned from the Showa era to the Heisei era in 1989. Other events during this period, such as the collapse of the Berlin Wall, greatly impacted the world. Such turmoil in social conditions on one hand was accompanied by an economic boom on the other, and in the art world a Neo-expressionism rose in opposition to the austere conceptualism that had until then been the mainstream. A representative of the Neo-expressionism was the artist Anselm Kiefer who tackled

such subjects as ancient myths, religion and historical themes related to his native Germany such as Nazism.

Another artist, Louise Nevelson, initially studied painting but later turned to relief sculptures that she assembled from pieces of waste wood and painted entirely in monochrome black or gold. Like the revival of realistic paintings rich in colors and emotion, the movement towards greater diversity of expression simultaneously arose in and spread to many countries, transcending national and cultural differences.



[5] Anselm Kiefer, *Melancholia*, 1988 © Anselm Kiefer

[5] Anselm Kiefer

As a representative of the new expressionism, Anselm Kiefer has created many symbolic works that take as their subject ancient myths, religion and the history of his native Germany. This show includes his work *Melancholia*, which was inspired by a work of the same name by the German painter Albrecht Dürer. Kiefer's works encompass various mediums including painting, photography, sculpture and performance, but are all characterized by the creation of powerful impressions through rich and powerful invocation using motifs such as language fragments, lead, straw, sand and hair.

[6] Louise Nevelson

Although Nevelson studied painting in the 1920's, during the latter half of that decade she would turn her attention to three-dimensional relief works that incorporated scrap wood materials. These works were painted entirely in a single color such as black or gold, which transformed the textural impression of the wood.



[6] Louise Nevelson, *Mirror - Shadow XXXX1X*, 1988 © Louise Nevelson

[1] Shinro Ohtake (on page 1)

Since the 1980s, Shinro Ohtake (1955 -) has been known for artwork made with materials gathered from a variety of sources. In his "Retina" series, the artist shifted his focus from "things outside of himself" to the "accumulation of after-images" that arise when the eyes are closed. This work is now recognized as an important example from early in his career. It consists of a large, colorful substrate consisting of a haphazardly exposed photographic sheet, on top of which are layered pieces of film, drawings and cloth tape, and finally a coating of plastic over the entire surface that seems to capture and enclose everything within, even the reflection of stray rays of light.

Like *Melancholia* by Anselm Kiefer (also included in this show), this work crosses the borders between the plastic arts, painting and photography. We invite visitors to compare these two artworks made in different places in the same year.



[7] Jean-Michel Othoniel, Kokoro, 2009
Photo: Yuichi Shiraku

Hara Museum ARC (Gunma)

Hara Museum ARC opened in 1988 in Shibukawa, Gunma prefecture as an annex to the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo. Situated in the foothills of the Mt. Haruna, one of the so-called *Jomosanzan* or "Three Peaks of Jomo" (the old name of Gunma), the museum's large-scale wooden buildings with their sleek black exteriors (designed by Arata Isozaki) stand in stark contrast to rich greens of the surrounding highland scenery. In addition to exhibitions centered on the museum's permanent collection, Hara Museum ARC holds events, workshops and various art education programs. In 2008, an Open-view Storage and Kankai Pavilion were added as part of an expansion that has enabled Hara Museum ARC to serve as a capacious setting for art that transcends the boundaries of time and place.

The Kankai Pavilion

The Kankai Pavilion was built in 2008 as part of an expansion of Hara Museum's annex, Hara Museum ARC, that took place to mark the 20th anniversary of its founding in 1988. Its purpose is to provide a showcase for the Hara Rokuro Collection of traditional East Asian art mainly comprised of early-modern Japanese painting of the Kano school collected by the Meiji-era industrialist and great-grandfather of chairman Toshio Hara. The design of the Kankai Pavilion (by Arata Isozaki who also designed Hara Museum ARC) incorporates features of the Japanese *shoin* (drawing room). It thus offers the viewer a new spatial experience that lies at the intersection between the traditional and the modern.



[8] Interior view of Kankai Pavilion



[9] Interior view of Open-view storage

Open-view Storage (reservation required)

A part of the Hara Collection is stored in a unique open-view storage. During an exhibition, a guided tour lasting about one hour is given of this space every Sunday from 2:30 pm. Access is also provided to researchers and specialists by special request.

Booking for the Sunday Guided Tour of the Open-View Storage

Advance booking for the Sunday tour is required (limited to visitors of high school age or above). Please call the museum at 0279-24-6585. The tour is given in Japanese. Please inquire if English assistance is needed.

Exhibition Details

Title: *Flash 1979 / 1988*

Dates: October 6 (Saturday), 2018 – January 4 (Sunday/national holiday), 2019

Venue: Gallery A, B and C at Hara Museum ARC

2855-1 Kanai, Shibukawa-shi, Gunma 377-0027

Tel 0279-24-6585 Fax 0279-24-0449 E-mail arc@haramuseum.or.jp

<http://www.haramuseum.or.jp> (official website) <http://mobile.haramuseum.or.jp> (mobile site)

<http://www.art-it.asia/u/HaraMuseum> (blog) <http://twitter.com/HaraMuseumARC> (Twitter)

Hours: 9:30 am - 4:30 pm (last entry at 4:00 pm)

Organized by: Hara Museum of Contemporary Art

Closed: Thursdays (except January 3), December 4-7, 11-14 and January 1 *Subject to temporary closure in the event of severe weather.

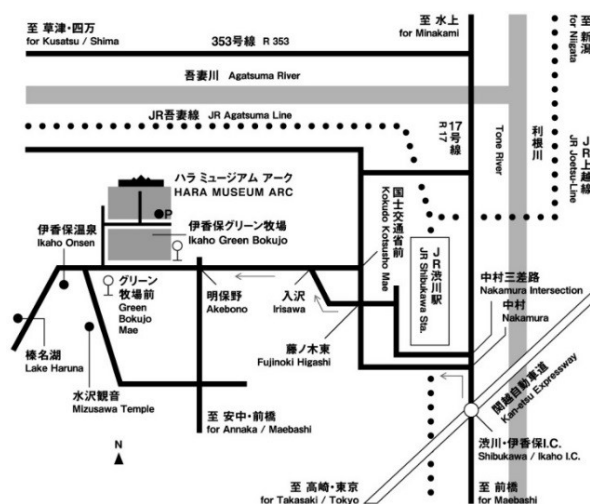
Admission: General 1,100 yen, Students 700 yen (high school and university) or 500 yen (elementary and junior high), Free for Hara Museum members, 10% discount for a group of 20 or more, Combination ticket for Hara Museum ARC and Ikaho Green Bokujo (except during Golden Week): General 1,800 yen; Students 1,500 yen (high school and university) or 1,400 yen (junior high), 800 yen (elementary), half price for those over 70, discount for groups of 20 or more

*Children must be accompanied by an adult.

*For residents of Gunma Prefecture: Free admission for elementary and junior high school children every Saturday during the school term/200-yen-discount on admission for up to five persons upon presentation of the Guchoki Passport.

Directions: By train: Take the Joetsu Shinkansen to Takasaki, change to the Joetsu Line, and disembark at Shibukawa. From Shibukawa, ARC is 10 minutes away by taxi or 15 minutes by bus (take the Ikaho Onsen bus to "Green Bokujo Mae"). By car: 8 kilometers (about 15 minutes) from the Kan-etsu Expressway Shibukawa Ikaho Interchange (in the direction of Ikaho Onsen).

*Visitors can view the on-going exhibitions *Dynamism and Stillness* (Kankai Pavilion) as well.



Concurrent Exhibition

Praises and Prayers—Selections from the Hara Rokuro Collection

Part I: October 6 (Saturday) to November 21 (Wednesday), 2018

Part II: November 23 (Wednesday) to January 14 (Monday/National Holiday), 2019

Images for Publication

*Please include the credit along with the respective caption.

*Please do not trim or alter the images. Putting text over the images is prohibited.

Press Enquiries

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