



*The Moon Jar 'Agitation', 2020*  
Ceramic – Reduction Fired Stoneware, 63 H x 60 W x 60 D cm

‘Superficially my work appears to be quiet in white. It does not show the rawness of Mother Nature directly. A symbolic figure always looks more perfect than the actual person he/she is. Imagination and fantasy always reinforce the imperfection and achieve the perfection with its own originality. Therefore, the completion of my work is done by the viewer. My work is a creation on its own.’

## Akiko Hirai

Japan b. 1970

Akiko Hirai originally studied cognitive psychology in Japan before moving to London in 1999 to study ceramics. Her practice centres on the Japanese tradition of allowing the clay to show how it wants to be fired while her work focuses on the interaction between object and viewer, allowing the viewer to interpret the language of the work in their own way.

Over the years, Akiko Hirai has received international acclaim for her interpretation of the Moon Jar. In 2013, she was one of just five artists invited to create work for an exhibition at the Korean Cultural Centre that explored the contemporary response to this celebrated object. In 2019 her piece, *The Moon Jar "The life of..."* was shortlisted for the LOEWE Craft Prize. It was described by the judges as ‘an expressive and energised gestural interpretation of the iconic form of the moon jar’ and a work that ‘shows an understanding and respect for the heritage of ceramics further reimagined with a highly personal approach.’ Moon Jars by Akiko Hirai are now in a number of prestigious collections including the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

Taste Contemporary is proud to work with Akiko Hirai.  
- *Monique Deul, 2020*

## Education

- 2011 Post Graduate Certificate in Education, Canterbury Christ Church University, England
- 2002 - 2003 BA (Hons) Ceramic Design London; London Institute Central Saint Martins  
School of Graphics and Industrial Design (University Arts London), England
- 2000 - 2002 BA (Hons) Ceramics [1st and 2nd year] University of Westminster, Harrow, England
- 1989 – 1993 Bachelor of Letters [equivalent to B. Phil], Aichi Gakuin University, Faculty of Letters,  
Department of Psychology, Major: Cognitive Psychology, Aichi, Japan

## Selected Public Collections

- 2021 Hepworth Wakefield Collection, England
- 2020 Everson Museum, Syracuse, New York, USA
- 2019 Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England  
National Museum of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland
- 2018 The Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge, England
- 2014 Keramikmuseum Westerwald [Westerwald Ceramic Museum], Germany

## Selected Exhibitions | Solo

- 2023 **Taste Contemporary, Geneva, Switzerland**
- 2022 New Craftsman St. Ives, UK  
Hauser and Wirth, Bruton, UK  
Slader's Yard, UK  
Flow Gallery, UK  
Contemporary Ceramics Gallery, London, UK
- 2021 Roman and Williams Guild, New York USA  
Artisans, Hong Kong  
The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland  
Beaux Arts, Bath, England  
Goldmark, Uppingham, UK
- 2020 New Craftsman, St. Ives, UK (Celebrating anniversary of Leach Pottery)  
Flow, London, UK  
CPA Gallery, London, UK
- 2019 Beaux Arts, Bath, UK  
Trace of Scent, Maud and Mabel, London, UK  
Sladers Yard, Bridport
- 2018 New Craftsman, St. Ives, UK
- 2017 Solo Show, Beaux Arts, Bath, England  
Solo Exhibition, Sladers Yard, Bridport, England  
*In Praise of Shadow*, The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland
- 2016 *Getemono*, Craft Potters Association, London, England  
Solo Show, Lynne Strover Gallery, Cambridge, England

- 2015 Solo Exhibition, New Craftsman, St. Ives, England
- 2015 Solo Show, Beaux Arts Bath, Bath, England
- 2015 Solo Exhibition, Sladers Yard, Bridport, England
- 2015 Solo Exhibition, Oxford Ceramics, Oxford [with talk at Ashmolean Museum]
- 2013 Solo Exhibition, New Ashgate Gallery, Furnham, England
- 2013 *Akiko Hirai Still Life*, The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland
- 2013 Solo Exhibition, Mr. Ketley, Brunswick, Australia
- 2013 Akiko Hirai 10 Years On, Craft Potters Association Gallery, London, England

### Selected Exhibitions | Group

- 2023 **artgenève [represented by Taste Contemporary], Geneva, Switzerland**
- 2023 Collect (with Flow Gallery), Somerset House, London, UK
- 2022 ***Cast Aside: Discarding the Domestic and the Everyday*, presented by Taste Contemporary, La Fonderie Kugler, Geneva, Switzerland**
- 2022 Collect (with Flow Gallery), Somerset House, London, UK
- 2021 *Pioneering Women*, Oxford Ceramics Gallery, England
- 2021 Hauser and Wirth, Bruton
- 2020 ***Harvest Moon*, Taste Contemporary, Geneva, Switzerland**
- 2020 **artgenève [represented by Taste Contemporary], Geneva, Switzerland**
- 2020 *Make*, Hauser and Wirth, Bruton
- 2020 Collect (with Flow Gallery), Somerset House, London, UK
- 2019 Mess - The Future Perfect, New York, San Francisco, LA, USA
- 2019 Hauser and Wirth, London, UK
- 2019 Loewe Craft Prize exhibition, Loewe Craft Foundation, Tokyo, Japan
- 2018 Under the Cherry Tree, The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
- 2018 New Craftsman, St. Ives, England
- 2018 Onomatopoeia, Contemporary Applied Arts, London, UK
- 2018 Flow Gallery, London, UK
- 2018 Urchfont, Sculpture show, Urch Front Manor, Wiltshire, UK
- 2018 Sound of Silence, St. Peter's Church (Kettles Yard), Cambridge, UK
- 2018 Things of Beauty Growing, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, England
- 2017 *Things of Beauty Growing*, The British Art Centre, Yale, USA
- 2017 Group Show, Maud and Mabel, London, England
- 2017 *Home from Home*, Contemporary Applied Arts, London, England
- 2017 **TRESOR, [represented by Taste Contemporary Craft], Basel, Switzerland**
- 2017 *Ceramic In the City*, Gyeongrye Museum, London, England
- 2017 ***Moonstruck*, Taste Contemporary, Geneva, Switzerland**
- 2017 *Earth and Fire*, The Harley Gallery, Nottingham, England
- 2016 *Vase: Function Reviewed*, National Craft Gallery, Kilkenny, Ireland
- 2016 *Kisaragi*, Flow Gallery, London, England
- 2016 Collaboration Project, Toast, London, England
- 2015 Galerie du don, France

- 2013 Celebration of British Studio Pottery, The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland  
*Moon Jar*, Korean Cultural Centre, London, England  
*Young Clay*, Keramiekcentrum Tiendschuur, Holland
- 2012 *Broken ceramic pieces mended*, Charity Now and Future, London [presented by Yoko Ono]
- 2011 *Through 50*, Craft Potters Association Gallery [50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Craft Potters Association Gallery; artists represented 2000-2010], London, England
- 2009 *Insight Beauty*, Japanese Embassy, London, England
- 2006 Art from Japan, The Hill House [National Trust for Scotland], Scotland
- 2005 Exhibition with Karin Schosser, Rufford Craft Centre, Nottingham, England

#### Fairs

- 2017 COLLECT, Saatchi Gallery, London, England [represented by Flow London]
- 2016 COLLECT, Saatchi Gallery, London, England [represented by Flow London]
- 2015 COLLECT, Saatchi Gallery, London, England [represented by Flow London]  
 SOFA Chicago, USA
- 2014 SOFA Chicago, USA [represented by Flow London]
- 2012 SOFA Chicago, USA [represented by Flow London]
- 2012 The Salon NY, New York, USA [represented by Modern Gallery]

#### Selected Awards

- 2014 Sake Ware Competition Selected, Tamba Craft Museum, Japan
- 2005 Development Award, Craft Potters Charitable Trust

#### Selected Publications

- 2014 *Glaze; the ultimate ceramic artist's guide to glaze and colour* by Brian Taylor and Kate Foody  
*Clay Book* by Amber Creswell, Bell Thames & Hudson
- 2011 *Advanced Pottery, Colour in Glazes* by Linda Bloomfield  
*Colours in Glazes* by Linda Bloomfield  
*Contemporary Ceramic Practices* by Louisa Taylor  
*Ceramic Bible* by Louisa Taylor

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