

Toya Shigeo: Sculpture

February 25th (Sat) – May 14th (Sun), 2023



POMPEII・79 Part1, 1974/1987 photo: Yamamoto Tadasu © Shigeo Toya Courtesy of ShugoArts

■ Exhibition Overview

Toya Shigeo, a sculptor who exemplifies Japanese contemporary art, began his full-scale work in the 1970s after majoring in sculpture at Aichi University of the Arts. In the midst of a trend in contemporary art for the genre of sculpture to be exposed to criticism and dismantling, Toya continued to explore the origins of sculpture and sculptural expression from all times and places, and to pursue its meaning. Since the 1980s, he has received high acclaim both at home and abroad with the release of his Woods series, in which he carves the surface of wood with a chainsaw. He has also participated in numerous international exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale (1988). He has worked on excellent pieces, such as those in the From 'Borders' and Minimal Baroque series from the 1990s, the Cave series from the 2000s, and the Body of the Gaze series in recent years, continuing his energetic activities.

In this exhibition, we will look back on half a century of practice through about 40 pieces, including representative works such as those in the Woods series. We will also focus on Toya's early exploration leading up to Woods, introducing sculptures of the human body created as a graduation project and related materials, made public for the first time, to examine the origins of Toya Shigeo's creative work.

■ Artist Profile

Toya Shigeo

Born in 1947 in the village of Ogawa, Kamiminouchi District, Nagano Prefecture. In 1975, he completed the sculpture major at Aichi University of the Arts graduate school. Since his first solo exhibition, POMPEII・79 (1974), he has attempted to reconstruct sculpture as a genre, as it had been dismantled amidst trends in contemporary art, and presents pieces which question the fundamental origins and structures of sculpture. His Woods series, which he began producing in 1984, has received high acclaim. Major solo exhibitions have included Forest of Visions (Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, 1995), Toya Shigeo: Folds, Gazes and Anima of the Woods (Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, 2003), Memories in the cave (Vangi Sculpture Garden Museum), and Toya Shigeo – Sculpture to Emerge (Musashino Art University Museum & Library). He has participated in many international exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale (1988) and the Gwangju Biennale (2000/Asia Prize winner). He received the Medal of Honor with Purple Ribbon in 2009, and is a professor emeritus of sculpture at Musashino Art University.

■ Exhibition Highlights

1 First solo exhibition at an art museum in Saitama Prefecture, the artist's creative base

Toya Shigeo established his studio in Chichibu District, Saitama Prefecture in 1998, and his work has been based in this prefecture since. This exhibition, will be his first solo exhibition at a prefectural public art museum in about 20 years, will be jointly held by the artist's home prefecture of Nagano and a prefectural art museum of Saitama Prefecture, his base of creative production.



Death of the Kiln of the Elephant of the Woods, 1989 from the collection of Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo
photo: Yamamoto Tadasu © Shigeo Toya, Courtesy of ShugoArts

2 Encompasses the masterpieces of Toya Shigeo, Japan's leading sculptor

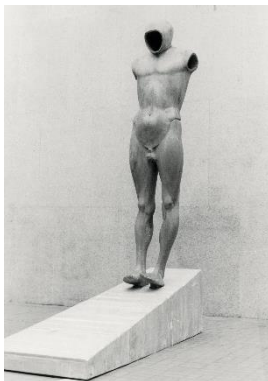
In addition to the reproduction of POMPEII・・・79 Part 1, presented at his first solo exhibition in 1974, other representative series such as Woods, Minimal Baroque, and Body of the Gaze will be introduced together. Approximately 40 pieces will be on display, ranging from sculptures made as a student to his latest series.



Woods IX, 2008 from the collection of the Musee Bernard Buffet,
photo: Yamamoto Tadasu Image courtesy of Musashino Art University Museum and Library

3 Valuable pieces from Toya's early days which can only be seen at the Saitama venue

Toya Shigeo majored in sculpture at Aichi University of the Arts. At the Saitama venue, you can view two sculptures of the human body which were presented as graduation projects, Man I, On a Slope, and Vessel III. In addition, the sculptural piece Underground Room, derived from a performance in 1983 in which Toya burned part of his work, will be public for the first time in about 40 years.



Man I, On a Slope, 1973



Underground Room, 1984,
photo: Yamamoto Tadasu



Going Underground II, 1984
photo: Yamamoto Tadasu

■ Exhibition Structure

1 From University to First Solo Exhibition, POMPEII・・79

After entering Aichi University of the Arts, Toya studied the basics of modern Western sculpture under sculptor Toyochi Yamamoto, who had studied under Maillol. At the Saitama venue, we will exhibit three sculptures of the human body, as well as drawings created during his school days. POMPEII・・79 Part 1, presented at his first solo exhibition, was inspired by an episode in which, after the corpses of citizens of the ancient Italian city of Pompeii had vaporized in the volcanic ash following the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE, gypsum poured into the cavities tens of centuries later resulted in the reappearance of human forms. This is an important piece which set the direction of Toya's subsequent work.

2 Exploration Leading Up to the Representative Woods Series

In the second corner, we follow the evolution of Toya's work from the late 1970s to the early 1980s. The pieces he produced in the period leading up to his representative Woods and Spirit Regions series are diverse in both materials and form, and can be positioned as being part of an exploratory period. In this exhibition, we present the early From 'Carving' and From 'Construction' series, in which Toya attempted to conceptually recapture the idea of sculpture itself.

In 1983, Toya once again reached a major turning point, with a performance in which he burned a part of his past work along the coast. At the Saitama venue, we will introduce the Underground Room series which inspired Toya to revisit the image in his mind, alongside a video recording of the performance.

3 From Minimal Baroque to the Latest Series, Body of the Gaze

The final corner presents what Toya put into practice from the 1990s to the present. Around the year 2000, Toya Shigeo coined the phrase "minimal baroque". This concept combines the contrasting notions of minimalism, which reduces formative elements to the utmost limit, and baroque, which is characterized by complex and dynamic forms. It plainly shows Toya's approach of capturing conflict between differing concepts, such as the self and others, inside and outside, and Japan and the West, and creating expressions from there. Five large-scale sculptures, including representative pieces from the Minimal Baroque series, as well as his latest series Body of the Gaze, will be on display.

■ Exhibition Info

Toya Shigeo: Sculpture

Period: February 25th (Sat) – May 14th (Sun), 2023

Days Closed: Mondays (except May 1st)

Opening hours: 10:00 - 17:30 (Last admission at 17:00)

Admission:

1,200 yen (960 yen)

University and High school students: 960 yen (770 yen)

*Prices in brackets are for groups of 20 or more.

*Admission of junior high school students and younger, and those with a disability certificate (including one attendant) are free of charge.

*You can also visit the MOMAS Collection (Exhibition Room on the first floor).

Organizer:

The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, Toya Shigeo Exhibition Executive Committee

Cooperation: ShugoArts, KENJI TAKI GALLERY

PR Cooperation: JR East Omiya Branch, FM NACK5

■ Related Events

Talk: Toya Shigeo (Sculptor) & Akira Tatehata (Museum Director)

Date: March 12th, 2023 (Sun) 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. (doors open at 1:30 p.m.)

Location: Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, 2nd floor auditorium

Capacity: 60 people (no reservation required, first-come first-served basis)

Price: Free

Artwork Commentary by Head Curator

Date: February 26th, 2023 (Sun) 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (doors open at 1:30 p.m.)

Location: Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, 2nd floor auditorium

Capacity: 60 people (no reservation required, first-come first-served basis)

Price: Free

■ Slide Talk Information

We will guide you through the highlights of the exhibition through a slide presentation for your group on demand (reservation required).

For inquiries and reservations, please contact the department of Education and Public Relations (048-824-0110).

■ Concurrent exhibition

MOMAS Collection

3rd Term: December 3rd (Sat), 2022 – February 26th (Sun), 2023

“Selection” / “Round and Around”

4th Term: March 4th (Sat) – May 7th (Sun), 2023

“Selection” / “Kurata Hakuyo and Morita Tsunetomo” / “Okuhara Seiko / Kikuzawa Buko”

■ Press Conference

Press Conference

February 25th, 2023 (Sat) 4:30 p.m. (reception opens at 4:00 p.m.)

Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, 2nd floor auditorium

Private Viewing for Related Parties

February 25th, 2023 (Sat) 5:15 p.m. (reception opens at 5:00 p.m.)

Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, 2nd floor auditorium

A press conference will be held according to the above schedule.

If you would like to participate, please send an email to kouhou@aria.ocn.ne.jp (Manaka, Head of Public Relations). Please let us know your company name, your name, the number of participants, and whether or not you have a TV camera. Those who attend the press conference may also then participate in the private viewing.

■ Venue/Access

The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama

9-30-1, Tokiwa, Urawa-ku, Saitama-shi, Saitama 330-0061, Japan

Tel: 048-824-0111 Fax: 048-824-0119

<https://pref.spec.ed.jp/momas/>

The museum is located inside Kita-Urawa Park, a 3-minute walk from the West Exit of Kita-Urawa Station on the JR Keihin-Tohoku Line.

JR Kita-Urawa Station is approximately 35 minutes by train from JR Tokyo or JR Shinjuku Station.

Parking is not available at the museum. Please use the coin-operated parking lot named “Mitsui Repark, the Museum of Modern Art, Saitama East,” which can be used at a reduced price (300 yen off for special exhibitions and 100 yen off for the MOMAS Collection). Please contact us prior to your visit if you are planning on coming by chartered bus. Persons with disabilities can use our business-use parking space. However, space is limited.

We ask for your understanding and cooperation regarding measures for preventing the spread of COVID-19. Depending on the circumstances, the museum may be closed, or the

exhibition period may be changed. Please check the latest information on our website before visiting.

■ Contact Us

Please contact the museum regarding the provision of images. The museum will provide the images as data. Please send your request by e-mail to kouhou@aria.ocn.ne.jp (Public Relations Manager, Manaka).



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1 POMPEII・・・79 Part1, 1974/1987 photo: Yamamoto Tadasu © Shigeo Toya Courtesy of ShugoArts

2 Underground Room, 1984 photo: Yamamoto Tadasu ©Toya Shigeo Courtesy of ShugoArts

3 Death of the Kiln of the Elephant of the Woods, 1989, from the collection of Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo
photo: Yamamoto Tadasu © Shigeo Toya, Courtesy of ShugoArts

4 Double Reflected Body II, 2001, from the collection of Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art
photo: Muto Shigeo ©Toya Shigeo Courtesy of ShugoArts

5 CaveIII, 2010 photo: Muto Shigeo ©Toya Shigeo Courtesy of ShugoArts

6 Cave V, 2011 photo: Yamamoto Tadasu Image courtesy of Musashino Art University Museum and Library

7 WoodsIX, 2008, from the collection of the Musee Bernard Buffet

photo: Yamamoto Tadasu Image courtesy of Musashino Art University Museum and Library

8 Body of the Gaze - Linkage, 2020 photo: Ito Tetsuo ©Toya Shigeo Courtesy of KENJI TAKI GALLERY

・ When publishing images, please include the captions. Also, please do not crop the artwork or add text over it.