

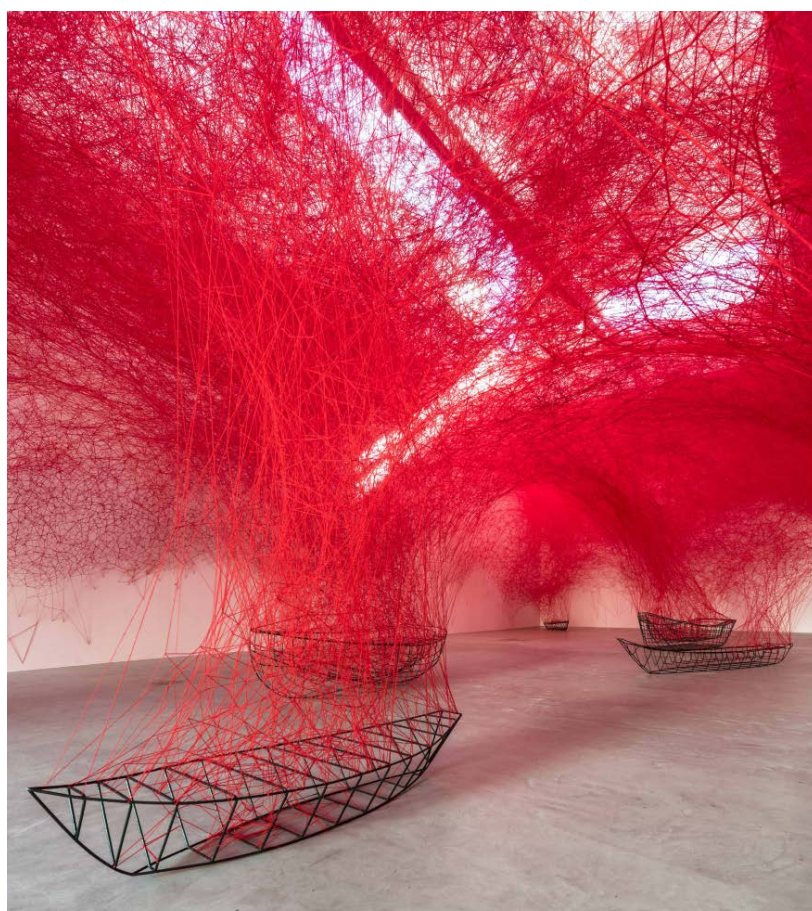
SHIOTA CHIHARU: THE SOUL TREMBLES

JUNE 20 [THU] - OCTOBER 27 [SUN], 2019 MORI ART MUSEUM [53F, ROPPONGI HILLS MORI TOWER]

THE LARGEST AND MOST COMPREHENSIVE EXHIBITION EVER DEVOTED TO THE WORK OF SHIOTA CHIHARU, ILLUMINATING THE ARTIST'S ENTIRE OEUVRE

The Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, is proud to present *Shiota Chiharu: The Soul Trembles* from Thursday, June 20 to Sunday, October 27, 2019. Berlin-based international artist Shiota Chiharu is known for performances and installations that express the intangible: memories, anxiety, dreams, silence and more. Often arising out of personal experience, her works have enthralled people all over the world and from all walks of life by questioning universal concepts such as identity, boundaries, and existence. Particularly well-known is her series of powerful installations consisting of threads primarily in red and black strung across entire spaces.

This will be the largest-ever solo exhibition by Shiota Chiharu. The subtitle "The Soul Trembles" references the artist's earnest hope to deliver to others soul-trembling experiences derived from nameless emotions. This will be the first opportunity to experience in detail twenty years of Shiota's oeuvre; primarily in six large installations, plus sculptural works, video footage of performances, photographs, drawings, performing arts-related material, etc. Through this exhibition epitomizing the "presence in absence" that Shiota has explored throughout her career, visitors will doubtless gain a sense for themselves of the meaning of living and journey of life, and the inner workings of the soul.



Uncertain Journey
2016
Metal frame, red wool
Installation view: *Uncertain Journey*, Blain | Southern, Berlin,
2016
Photo: Christian Glaeser

PRESS RELEASE

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EXHIBITION FEATURES

■ The Largest, Most Comprehensive Exhibition Ever of Shiota Chiharu's Work

Actively presenting her work all across the globe, Shiota Chiharu has taken part in over 250 exhibitions at museums, galleries and international art shows, recently averaging around twenty a year in the process acquiring a significant international profile. In Japan, she first came to attention in 2001 with *Memory of Skin* at the inaugural Yokohama Triennale, and has since staged several solo exhibitions including *Breath of the Spirit* at the National Museum of Art, Osaka in 2008; *Where Are We Going?* at the MIMOCA Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art (Kagawa) in 2012; and *Letters of Thanks* at the Museum of Art, Kochi in 2013. Among the most notable, nonetheless, is her representation of Japan at the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015 with her installation, *The Key in the Hand*.

This will be the largest-ever exhibition devoted entirely to Shiota's career, from her early works of the 1990s and documentation of her performances, to major installations, and most recent offerings.

■ Large Immersive Installations

In a practice spanning twenty-plus years, Shiota Chiharu's output is typified most obviously by her immersive installations, in which an entire space is strung with thread, usually red or black. Spectators walking through these spaces strung with thread are made aware, experientially and visually, of the intangible: invisible connections, memories, unease, dreams, and silence. Regarding the color of the thread, Shiota has said that the black can be interpreted as the night sky or cosmos, and the red as blood, or alternatively, the "red thread of fate" that in East Asian belief binds people together.

This exhibition will feature immersive installations, combining objects such as boats and suitcases evocative of movement and travel, and a burned piano, suggesting silence.

■ "Presence in Absence," New Work Pondering the Soul and the Meaning of Life

Taking as her theme "presence in absence," Shiota Chiharu has consistently given shape to the auras and energies of things that possess no physical presence, existing only in memories and dreams. Shiota sees her own soma and her works as inseparable entities, and the fact that her body has not featured in her works – apart from a limited number of videos – since her early performances, is also perhaps designed to draw our attention to "presence in absence."

However, when Shiota was informed the year before last that her cancer had returned and started mechanically embarking on the process of hospital treatment, she says she started to wonder about the location of the soul. Through it all, gripped by a sensation akin to her body fragmenting, she started to collect parts of broken dolls, and make bronze casts of her hands and feet once more. In her new installation for this exhibition, body fragments are threaded together, posing questions of the soul and the meaning of life.

■ Archive Displays Tracking the Development and Consistency of Shiota's Work Since Her Early Career

Shiota Chiharu majored in painting at Kyoto Seika University, but by the time of her exchange at Australian National University in 1993-94 was also already producing large drawings consisting entirely of parallel lines, going by the title *One Line*, and works in which thread was extended across spaces "like drawing a picture." During the same period, prompted by a "dream of self inside a painting," Shiota painted her body and used a sheet to conduct the *Becoming Painting* performance. Moving next to Germany to study, Shiota embarked on bodily performances in earnest, and has based herself in Berlin ever since, experimenting with numerous forms of expression.

The archive display at *The Soul Trembles* will trace the development and underlying consistency of Shiota's practice, from early drawings to documentation of her installations and performances.

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■ Display of Material Related to the Artist's Work in Stage Design

Shiota Chiharu has been involved in stage design for numerous dance and opera productions since *all A lone* (directed by Kaseki Yuko) at the Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art (Warsaw) in 2003. In Germany, this includes Wagnerian operas *Tristan und Isolde*, (2014), *Siegfried* (2017) and *Götterdämmerung* (2018) for Opernhaus (Theater) Kiel. Projects in Japan include *Tattoo* (2009, New National Theatre, Tokyo) directed by Okada Toshiki; and the opera *Matsukaze* (2018, New National Theatre, Tokyo), first staged in 2011 and directed by Sasha Waltz with music by Hosokawa Toshio.*

The Soul Trembles will employ means such as documentary footage and scale models to reproduce the ways in which Shiota's spatial art been connected to and utilized in stage productions.

* Since its debut at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie (Brussels), the opera *Matsukaze* has also been staged at Staatsoper Berlin (Berlin State Opera); Teatr Wielki Opera Narodowa (Polish National Opera), Warsaw; and Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg.



Stage design of *Matsukaze*
Berlin State Opera, 2011
Photo: Bernd Uhlig

MAIN WORKS ON SHOW

Where Are We Going?

The motif of the boat features frequently in Shiota Chiharu's works, conjuring up visions of uncertain lives and futures akin to tiny boats bobbing in vast oceans. These 100 boats suspended from an 11-meter-high ceiling will greet visitors as they enter the museum, inviting them to embark on the journey of the exhibition.



Where Are We Going? 2017 White wool, wire, rope
Installation view: *Where Are We Going?*, Le Bon Marché, Paris, 2017
Photo: Gabriel de la Chapelle

Uncertain Journey

The first installation encountered upon entering the galleries, *Uncertain Journey* consists of the bare frames of boats arranged in a space covered in bright red threads. In her work for the Japanese Pavilion at the 2015 Venice Biennale, Shiota hung a mass of keys from the top of an old traditional Venetian boat, but in *Uncertain Journey*, the boats are more abstract, and the space filled with red thread seems to suggest the many encounters awaiting at the end of this uncertain journey.



Uncertain Journey 2016 Metal frame, red wool
Installation view: *Uncertain Journey*, Blain | Southern, Berlin, 2016
Photo: Christian Glaeser

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In Silence

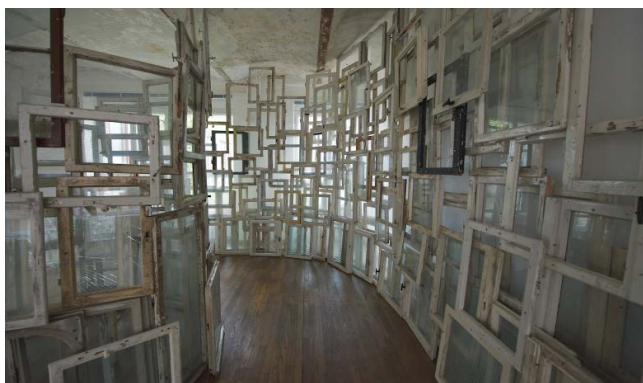
In Silence was born out of a memory of the next-door house burning down in the middle of the night when Shiota was a child. A burned piano and audience seating are covered, with the entire space, in black thread. While symbolizing silence, the soundless piano plays visual music.



In Silence 2008 Burnt piano, burnt chair, black wool
Installation view: *State of Being*, Art Centre Pasquart, Biel/Bienne, Switzerland, 2008
Photo: Sunhi Mang

Inside - Outside

Around 2004, fifteen years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Shiota Chiharu who moved to Germany in 1996 and is currently based in Berlin started making works using windows. At the time, Berlin was undergoing extensive redevelopment that included demolition of many buildings, and Shiota went around gathering up discarded windows. Windows exist as a boundary between the inside and outside of private spaces, but also call to mind the wall that separated East and West Germany. The work *Inside - Outside* to be presented in this exhibition was first made in 2009, and there are several versions, this one using 250-300 window frames.



Inside - Outside 2009 Old wooden window, chair
Installation view: Hoffmann Collection, Berlin, 2009
Photo: Sunhi Mang

Reflection of Space and Time

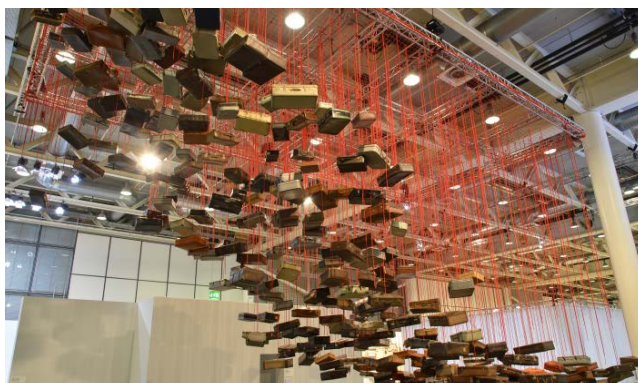
Like skin covering the body, dresses symbolize the boundary between one's personal interior and exterior. Suspending such a dress in a space filled with black thread imparts a sensation of presence in absence. By hanging dresses on either side of a mirror dividing a space enclosed by a steel frame, *Reflection of Space and Time* blends in the mind of the viewer the illusory dress in the mirror, and the actual dress in the space opposite.



Reflection of Space and Time 2018 White dress, mirror, metal frame
Collection: Alcantra S.p.A.
Installation view: *Nine Journeys through Time*, Palazzo Reale Milano, Milan, 2018
Photo: Sunhi Mang

Accumulation - Searching for the Destination

Final work in *The Soul Trembles*, the installation *Accumulation - Searching for the Destination* is made up of around 400 oscillating suitcases. Shiota was inspired to create the installation by the discovery of old newspapers in a suitcase she found in Berlin. All things have their own, innate memories, and in this case, the suitcases seem to suggest the memories, movement and migration of strangers; or the refugee's journey in search of a fixed abode; that is, the very journeys of people's lives.



Accumulation - Searching for the Destination 2016 Suitcase, motor, red rope
Installation view: *Art Unlimited*, Art Basel, Switzerland, 2016
Courtesy: Galerie Templon Photo: Atelier Chiharu Shiota

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition Title: *Shiota Chiharu: The Soul Trembles*

Organizer: Mori Art Museum

Curated by: Kataoka Mami (Deputy Director and Chief Curator, Mori Art Museum)

Exhibition Period: June 20 [Thu] – October 27 [Sun], 2019

Venue: Mori Art Museum [53F, Roppongi Hills Mori Tower, 6-10-1 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo]

Open Hours: 10:00-22:00 | Tue: 10:00-17:00 | * Admission 30 minutes before closing. | * Open everyday.

Admission: Adult: ¥1,800 / University/highschool student: ¥1,200 / Child (age 4 up to junior highschool student): ¥600 /

Senior (ages 65 and over): ¥1,500 | * All prices include tax. | * Ticket also valid for Tokyo City View observation deck (excludes Sky Deck). | * Additional entrance fee to the Sky Deck is required.

General Inquiries: +81-(0)3-5777-8600 (Hello Dial) www.mori.art.museum/en

SHIOTA CHIHARU

Born 1972 in Osaka Prefecture, currently based in Berlin. In 2008, Shiota received the Art Encouragement Prize from the Japanese Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. In addition to solo exhibitions held across the world including Art Gallery of South Australia (2018), Yorkshire Sculpture Park (2018), Smithsonian Institution Arthur M. Sackler Gallery (2014), the Museum of Art, Kochi (2013), MIMOCA Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art (2012), and the National Museum of Art, Osaka (2008), she has participated in numerous international exhibitions such as the Biennale of Sydney (2016), the Kiev Biennale (2012), and the Yokohama Triennale (2001). In 2015, she represented Japan at the 56th Venice Biennale International Art Exhibition.

From the Artist

I have always been creating works out of my passion and love for exhibitions, and it was the only thing that I could live for. Helpless conflicts of minds, uncommunicable emotions and my inexplicable existence; these feelings give all my works form and shape. The year before last, I was diagnosed with cancer again after twelve years, but it struck me that perhaps the painful treatment along with the confrontation with death is a tribulation to create honest works. This exhibition will present works from the past twenty years. It is a dialogue with my unveiled, naked soul.

– Shiota Chiharu



Photo: Sunhi Mang

The latest exhibition press images are available on our website for downloads:

<https://mam-media.com/en/press-img>

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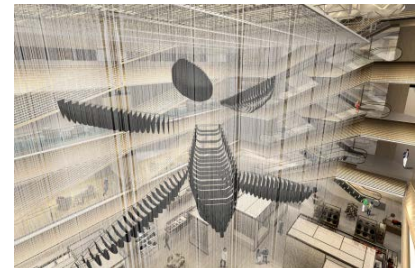
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RELATED INFORMATION

■ Shiota Chiharu's New Installation Also to Appear at GINZA SIX

From Wednesday, February 27, 2019, *Six Boats*, a new installation by Shiota Chiharu, will appear in GINZA SIX's open ceiling space.

Presented will be a newly-commissioned work showing how six boats sail and go forward on the "sea of memories" of Ginza, area that has overcome many difficulties post-war and revived over time. As these boats, hung by white threads stretching over the entire space, are all positioned at different heights and orientations, visitors looking at those boats visible from different floors and angles can imagine a trip to a completely different dimension.



* perspective drawing

Period: February 27 [Wed] - October 31 [Wed], 2019 (TBD)

Location: Central Open Ceiling, GINZA SIX [6-10-1 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104-0061]

Details: <https://ginza6.tokyo.e.abf.hp.transer.com/art-en>

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