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Joan B. Mirviss To Show Akiyama Yo's Clay Works

NEW YORK CITY — Joan B. Mirviss, Ltd, will present a major solo show of internationally acclaimed artist Akiyama Yo (b 1953) who lives, works and teaches in Kyoto, Japan. This exhibition, on view April 18–May 20, will be Japan's highly acclaimed artist's second in the United States.

"Tension and Transition" includes more than ten sculptural clay works created for this presentation. Though using a basic stoneware clay, Akiyama's aesthetic pushes past any traditional concepts for ceramics; his art has much more in common with the work of contemporary sculptors like Richard Serra than the utilitarian ceramics for which Kyoto is historically known.

Inspired by his teacher Yagi Kazuo (1919–1979), cofounder of the Sodeisha ceramic movement and best known for pioneering the avant-garde aesthetic in postwar Japan, Akiyama's major concerns revolve around the physical properties of clay as a material. His exploration focuses on the tension between surface and form, between the ordered and the organic.

The third generation of a family of artists, Akiyama's personally developed unique visual language is clearly present in this latest oeuvre. The deep fissures in his surfaces — which are created by treating wheel-thrown forms with an open



Akiyama Yo (b 1953), untitled (MV-1015), 2010, 16¼ by 27¼ by 19¼ inches, stoneware with iron filings. —Fukunaga Kazuo photo

flame before turning them inside out — juxtaposed against the clean, modern lines of the sculptural form creates a visual tension inviting both close inspection and quiet contemplation.

These sculptures, with surfaces sometimes mimicking naturally occurring forms such as volcanic rock or a dried riverbed, seduced the viewer with the rich browns and blacks Akiyama attains using a surface treatment involving vinegar and iron filings.

Last year, Akiyama received the 17th MOA Okada Mokichi Award, one of the most prestigious grand prizes on the

Japanese art calendar. His works are in many important collections and museums, including Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu; National Museum of Art, Osaka; National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo; Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo; Contemporary Museum, Honolulu; Faenza International Ceramic Museum, Italy; Minneapolis Institute of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Joan B. Mirviss Ltd is at 39 East 78th Street, fourth floor. For information, 212-799-4021 or www.Mirviss.com.