



Lamont Gallery Exhibition Archive

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Generations: Works by Jun Kaneko & Toshiko Takaezu

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According to Lamont Gallery Director Karen Burgess Smith, ***Generations: Works by Jun Kaneko & Toshiko Takaezu***, featuring works by two ceramics icons, came about because of Fontaine. "Curtis contacted me during his junior year at Skidmore College to let me know that he was apprenticing with noted ceramic artist Toshiko Takaezu, and that she was interested in showing here. She also hoped that her dear friend Jun Kaneko would include works in the Lamont Gallery as well. Needless to say, having works here by both of these extraordinary artists will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience," says Smith.

Known by many for his large, hand-built ceramic forms, **Jun Kaneko** was born in Nagoya, Japan, in 1942.

He studied painting with Satoshi Ogawa during the day, and completed his high school requirements by attending night school. Kaneko first came to the United States in 1963 to continue his studies at the Chouinard Institute of Art in Los Angeles. He was influenced by the sculptural ceramics collected by Fred Marer, and studied with Peter Voulkos, Paul Soldner and Jerry Rothman in what is now called the "contemporary ceramics movement." During the following decade, Kaneko taught at several leading art institutions, such as the Rhode Island School of Design and the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield, MI.

Since 1986, Kaneko has been based in Omaha, NE, and created his current studio there in 1990. During his artistic career, he has worked in several experimental studios around the world, and is regarded a highly prolific artist who works not only in ceramics, but bronze, glass, drawings and paintings as well.

Kaneko's works feature bold glazes and dramatic patterns, often with a rounded, monolithic form he calls "dango," derived from the Japanese word for "dumpling." These abstract forms are made with large amounts of clay, slowly built by hand using the slab technique. He builds them in groups of six to 10 at one time, drying each for many months before firing.

Kaneko's works are in the collections of close to 50 museums and numerous public art commissions around the world, including the June to November 2008 "Kaneko on Park Avenue" installation, supported by the New York City Parks Public Arts Program. He is also the recipient of numerous national, state and organization fellowships and awards, including an honorary doctorate from the Royal Academy of Art in London. He and his wife, Ree, are now preparing to open KANEKO, a non-profit, scholarly and exhibiting organization for the exploration of creativity in the arts, sciences and philosophy.



Jun Kaneko, *Untitled Dango*, 2007



Toshiko Takaezu

Toshiko Takaezu was born in Pepeekeo, HI, in 1922, to Japanese immigrant parents. After moving to Honolulu, she worked for the Hawaii Potters' Guild, and then studied with Claude Horan in 1948, at the University of Hawaii. Her studies continued at the Cranbrook Academy of Art, where she met her mentor and friend, Maija Grotell.

In 1955, Takaezu spent eight months in Japan studying its culture, traditional pottery and Buddhism. She returned to the United States, and joined the ceramics faculty of the Cleveland Institute of Art. There, she began experimenting with traditional functional forms and slowly began to close these vessels—a signature component of many of her works.

Takaezu received a Tiffany Foundation grant in 1964, which allowed her to move to Clinton, NJ, and open a studio. In 1967, she was invited to teach ceramics at Princeton University, where she taught and created art for 25 years. She retired in 1992, and later moved her studio to Quakertown, NJ, where she works today.

Takaezu's works are in numerous collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian and the Philadelphia Museum, among others. She has been the recipient of a variety of awards, including the Gold Medal of the American Craft Council and several honorary doctorate degrees, and was designated a Living Treasure of Hawaii. She returns to her home state each winter, for two months.

Guest Curator Fontaine was a top student of ceramic artist and former art faculty member Ron Burke while at Phillips Exeter Academy. Presently a senior at Skidmore College, he has studied with artists Regis Brodie, Leslie Ferst and Jill Kovachick. From 2007-08, Fontaine served as Takaezu's apprentice.



Toshiko Takaezu



Jun Kaneko, *Untitled Drawing*, 1998