

Chiharu Shiota

Uncertain Journey



Chiharu Shiota, *Uncertain Journey*, 2016, Installation View
Courtesy the artist and Blain|Southern, Photo: Christian Glaeser

Blain|Southern
Potsdamer Straße 77-87
10785 Berlin

17 September – 12 November 2016

Private View:

Friday 16 September, 6pm - 9pm

Opening hours:

Tuesday to Saturday, 11am - 6pm

abc weekend hours:

17 September, 11am – 7pm

18 September, 11am – 6pm

For her first exhibition with Blain|Southern, Chiharu Shiota will create a new site-specific monumental installation in the Berlin gallery, eight years after she last exhibited in her home city.

Shiota is primarily known for her immersive installations, such as *The Key in the Hand*, with which she represented Japan at the Venice Biennale in 2015. Weaving intricate networks of yarn, the artist creates new visual planes as if she were painting in mid-air.

The installation *Uncertain Journey* fills the gallery's vast central atrium with dense webs of red yarn – seemingly growing from above, reaching down towards the skeletal hulls of boats which rest on the gallery floor below. The colour of blood, the nexus of yarn is laden with symbolism, for the artist it alludes to the interior of the body and the complex network of neural

connections in the brain. Enclosed by the canopy overhead, the boat carcasses raise existential questions of fate and belonging, evoking ideas that can be as complex as the tangled yarn itself.

The gallery's second floor mezzanine offers an alternative perspective, a bird's eye view, several steps removed from the psychological weight of the entanglement below. On this floor in the Long Gallery, new two dimensional thread-on-canvas works further explore the ideas used in the main space. Shiota studied painting early in her education but restricted by the use of canvas and paint, she proceeded to push against the definitions of the medium. At first using her own body in performance pieces, she later began to use thread as a mode for formal and conceptual expression; it allowed her to remove her physical presence yet still address the corporeal ideas that are central to her practice. Her canvases can be viewed as this journey coming full circle.

Her explorations of space, objects, material and scale continue with a series of new works where networks of yarn, thread and occasionally found objects, connect within frames reminiscent of scaled down buildings or doll's houses.

Shiota has been commissioned for set design and artistic direction for many opera and theatre productions. This includes several productions with Theater Kiel including forthcoming productions of Shakespeare's, *The Winter's Tale* in October 2016 and Wagner's *Siegfried* in March 2017.

Press Enquiries:

For further information on the exhibition, please contact Laura Callendar at Blain|Southern.

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Notes to Editors:

About Chiharu Shiota

Born in Osaka, Japan, in 1972, Chiharu Shiota has been living and working in Berlin since 1996. Current and recent solo exhibitions include: *A Long Day*, K21, Kunstsammlung NRW, Düsseldorf, DE, *Rain of Memories*, Ferenczy Múzeumi Centrum, Szentendre, HU, *The Key in the Hand* at the Japan Pavillon, 56th Biennale di Venezia, Venice, IT, *Seven Dresses*, Stadtgalerie Saarbrücken, Saarbrücken, DE, *In the Beginning Was...*, Fundació Sorigué, Lleida, ES, *Searching for the Destination*, SESC, São Paulo, BR, *Letters of Thanks*, Eacc Espai D'Art Contemporani de Castelló, Castelló, ES, *Over the Continents*, Smithsonian Institution Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Washington D.C., US and *Dialogues*, New Art Gallery Walsall, Walsall, UK

About Blain|Southern

Blain|Southern is a contemporary and modern art gallery based in London and Berlin. The gallery represents an international roster of contemporary artists and is the world-wide

representative of The Estate of Lynn Chadwick. The gallery's recent exhibitions include; Wim Wenders, Kishio Suga, Bill Viola, Michael Joo, Bosco Sodi, Harland Miller and Carlo Carrà. Blain|Southern Berlin opened in 2011 with an exhibition by Tim Noble and Sue Webster in collaboration with the British architect David Adjaye. The 1,300 square metre space, formerly the printing presses of the daily newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel*, is located on Potsdamer Strasse and hosts four exhibitions per year.

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