

Press Release (First Announcement)
Kikuchi Kanjitsu Memorial Tomo Museum
4-1-35, Toranomom, Minato-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN
www.musee-tomo.or.jp

Sekijima Hisako

Visualization of Concepts (Working Title)

On display from November 14th, 2026 to March 22nd, 2027

Part I on display from November 14th to January 11th

Part II on display from January 19th to March 22nd



《Re-cord II》 2007

First Press Release Announcing the Sekijima Hisako Exhibition

We are pleased to share this preliminary press release to provide advance notice for our upcoming exhibition. We would greatly appreciate your consideration and support in keeping this exhibition in mind for future coverage. Please note that a second press release containing finalized information, including the official exhibition title, will be distributed at a later date. We sincerely thank you in advance for your cooperation in helping us publicize this exhibition.

Kikuchi Kanjitsu Memorial Tomo Museum, Tokyo, Japan

About the Exhibition:

SEKIJIMA Hisako (b. 1944) creates baskets as textile art. Basketry refers both to the technique of constructing baskets and to objects made using that method. However, while her works may resemble baskets, they are not intended to hold things. Sekijima focuses on the underlying principles of interlacing, bringing her thinking into being through a close engagement with the structures and properties of the materials, in questions and hypotheses concerning construction methods, as well as in discoveries that arise through processes of trial and error. In her practice, thought itself becomes the artwork, and her technical mastery enables its direct visualization.

In the field of crafts, many create their works by exploring traditional techniques and materials, and transferring this knowledge to their individual ways of expression. Sekijima does not seek to invent an entirely new method of interlacing or of the material use. Rather, she investigates and systematizes the principle underlying woven structures, then, situates herself so that her works sit outside the system she has already structured. Because her approach is grounded in the structural principles, her works move beyond the conventional basket as a container and arrive at abstraction as a way of expression.

Created with an analytical approach, Sekijima's works are filled with the sense of wonder that accompanies discovery and allows us to witness the joy of thinking. This exhibition traces the development of thought and practice in her interlacing forms, from the 1980s to her most recent works.

Rather than becoming absorbed in the form itself, I am moved by the principles—

The process by which form emerges is certainly mysterious. Yet, instead of emotionally surrendering to that mystery, I want to keep my eyes open and understand why it occurs.

I think about where I can insert myself into the reality that the relationship between material and the construction method determines form.

I seek to discover how the transcendent structural principles of basket-making come into contact with the self.

-Sekijima Hisako

from *Basketry's Formulas* (Japanese Original Title: Basketry no Teishiki),
Heibon-sha Publishing Company

Key Points of the Exhibition:

- An original exploration of the structural principles of interlacing, which she made visible through the sculptural form
- An analytical approach that foregrounds process of thought, rather than form itself
- A methodology that systematizes the relationship of “Material × Construction Method × Form”, while positioning Sekijima's work beyond that very framework

Learn More About Sekijima Hisako's Thoughts and Her Works

Baskets About Baskets

For many years, I have assembled bark, vines, and other materials into small three-dimensional forms resembling baskets. I am fascinated by how various ideas and concepts are embedded within the form and function of baskets, almost like a puzzle. I translate the excitement of rediscovery into my own coded language and reshape it once again into form. This is my way of making baskets. What I might call "baskets about baskets".

The crossing of fibers, that is, the over-and-under intersections of lines is the entirety of the structural principle. Methods, such as plaiting and weaving are generally based on right angles or fixed angles. But I wanted to create forms that deliberately disrupt those conventions through random intersections.
-from the artist's text on the work, *Intersection*.



《Intersection V》 2007, w42.0cm

Sekijima Hisako classifies the construction techniques into six primary methods: looping, loop-knotting, plaiting, coiling, weaving, and twining. Decorative patterns may look different on the outside, but she looks at the structural principles and categorizes them. The materials she uses are bark, stalks, and a foliage from familiar plants—mulberry, cypress, willow, paper mulberry—often grown in home gardens. Each is understood and selected for its characteristics, with construction techniques chosen in direct response to these qualities. From the interplay of material, method, and form. This triadic relationship forms a conceptual framework that underpins her thinking.



《Re-cord II》 2007, h29.0cm

A Historical Perspective Clarifies the Act of Making

The techniques such as braiding rope and twisting thread, which are methods for thickening or lengthening fibers, form the basis of basketry and textile creation. Rope and thread are beautiful in themselves because they directly reflect the force and continuity of twisting. Since developing a particular fascination with the act of braiding fibers, I have continued producing the Re-cord series. In Re-cord II (pictured left), I inserted red cloth in regular time intervals while braiding the rope. The braided structure records the passage of time.



《Re-cord III》 2007, w39.0cm

In Re-cord III (pictured left), I repeatedly twisted fibers a fixed number of times before picking up stitches from the previous row, gradually constructing a three-dimensional form while consciously engaging in the counting processes characteristic of knitting and weaving.

After reading a book called, “Women’s Work”, which addresses the prehistory and ancient history of fiber technologies, I learned that the beginnings of twisted fibers, thread, and rope were estimated to date back approximately 25,000 years, and that this development was described as the “String Revolution”. I was excited by the idea, sensing a connection to the technological innovations in the textile industry that symbolized the nineteenth-century Industrial

Revolution. Before that, twisting fibers had merely been a preparatory step for making materials. Afterward, however, I began considering ways to create “forms that directly express the morphological fascination and structural role of twisting.” I find it fascinating that historical perspectives can clarify one’s awareness of making. Basket-making contains, in simple form, the various prototypes of techniques originating in prehistoric times: ways of utilizing the properties of materials to construct objects and fulfill practical purposes. Because of this, such techniques are easily grasped as concepts effective for sculptural expression. I then reclaim these concepts as the core of my own forms. For me, this is one of the great attractions of basket-making.

-from the artist’s text on the work, Re-cord.



《Wood Almost II》 2010, w39.0cm

The turning point that led her to approach her work with an analytical mindset came in the late 1970s, when she encountered American craft. She was struck by the attitude she saw in the craft center classes, exhibitions at the American Craft Museum (now the Museum of Arts and Design), and the works of basketry artists such as Ed Rossbach and John McQueen: an attitude of re-examining traditional techniques and transforming them into expressive tools. Inspired, Sekijima began to view baskets as a form of textile art. Yet her practice extends far beyond this influence. Grounded in her cultural identity, she turned to Japanese folk tools and various traditional plaited objects from around the world. By combining existing research with her own structural inquiries, she developed a universal perspective that continues to shape her work.

Rather than accepting technique unquestioningly, I reinterpret each method in my own way—



《Four Boxes》 1996, w22.0cm

The reason why such methods appear simple is not because they are introductory, but because they are close to the roots of the technique itself.

If creation is not simply the combination of existing techniques, then the further an artist advances, the more the techniques are broken down and simplified according to their own way of thinking.



《Untitled Basket》 1994, h27.0cm



《Untitled Basket》 2000, h52.0cm

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- Exhibition Title:** Sekijima Hisako Visualization of Concepts (Working Title)
Exhibition Period: November 14th (Saturday), 2026 to March 22nd (Monday), 2027
Part I on display from November 14th to January 11th
Part II on display from January 19th to March 22nd
Organized by: Kikuchi Foundation
Supported by: Nanyushosha Co., Ltd.
Location: Kikuchi Kanjitsu Memorial Tomo Museum
Hours: 11:00–18:00 (Last Admission at 17:30)
Museum Closure: • Closed regularly on Mondays (Except open on November 23rd, January 11th, 2027, March 22nd, 2027)
• The following Tuesday: November 24th
Exhibition List: Approximately 110 works from the 1980s to the present.
The exhibition will be temporarily closed during the reinstallation and rotation of the works.



Studio in Yokohama, Japan

Biography of Sekijima Hisako (1944-)

- 1944** Born in Taiwan
- 1966** Graduated from Tsuda College, Tokyo, Japan (present-day Tsuda University) with a B.A. in English Literature
- 1975** Lived in New York City, USA (until '79), began basket-making
- 1976** Studied native basketry of America with Sandra Newman
- 1978** Studied contemporary basketry approach with John McQueen
- 1984** Solo Exhibition, "Nature Transformed", Wave Hill House Gallery, NY, USA
Thereafter, solo exhibitions at Masuda Studio Gallery (Tokyo, Japan), Miharudo Gallery, (Tokyo, Japan), Gallery Maronie (Kyoto, Japan), Sembikiya Gallery (Tokyo, Japan), Gallery Isogaya (Tokyo, Japan), Kandori Gallery (Tokyo, Japan), Nakacho-Konishi Gallery (Tokyo, Japan), t-gallery (Tokyo, Japan), gallery nichinichi (Tokyo & Kyoto, Japan), Brownrotta Arts (CT, USA), and more.
- 1986** Author of "Basketry", published by Kodansha International, Tokyo, Japan
- 1988** Author of "Basketry no Teishiki" (Basketry's Formulas), published by Sumaino-toshokann Shuppan-kyoku, Tokyo, Japan
- 1991** Featured in "Sozai no tsukuru katachi" (The Form Materials make: Hisako Sekijima), an NHK Video program broadcast in a series of craft studio visits
- 1994** Exhibited in "Sozai no ryobun" (The Domain of the Medium), The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan
- 1995** Exhibited in "Japanese Studio Crafts", Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK
- 1998** Exhibited in "Gensou shokubutsuen" (Botanical Garden in Illusion), Hiratsuka-shi Museum of Art, Japan
- 1999** Exhibited in "Nature As Designer", Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
- 2002** Solo Exhibition, "Elegant kukan" (The Elegant Space), Tokyo International Forum, Japan
- 2005** Exhibited in "Asian Potentials: Art Nurtured by Sea and Island", Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, Nagoya, Japan
- 2011** Exhibited in "Fiber Futures: Japan's Textile Pioneers" (Tama Art University, Art Gallery, Tokyo, Japan, Japan Society in New York, and traveled to other places in Europe)
- 2012** Exhibited in "Beyond Threads", Prefectural Museum of Art, Fukuoka, Japan
Exhibited in "New Footings: 11 Approaches to Contemporary Crafts", National Crafts Museum, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan
- 2014** Exhibited in "Tounokukan kusakinokukan – Kawasaki Tsuyoshi to Sekijima Hisako" (Spaces in Clay/ Spaces in Plants, with Kawasaki Tsuyoshi and Sekijima Hisako), Kikuchi Kanjitsu Memorial Tomo Museum, Tokyo, Japan

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- 2016** Exhibited in “Box Project: Uncommon Threads”, Fowler Museum, UCLA, Curated and Commissioned by Lloyd Cotsen Academic Research
- 2017** Exhibited in “Binding Threads/Expanding Threads: The Art of Between-ness”, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Japan
- 2018** Exhibited in “From Nature: Contemporary Artists and Organic Materials”, Racine Art Museum, WI, USA
- 2024** Exhibited in “KO+GEI 2024”, Tokyo Art Club, Japan
Author of the new edition of, “Basketry no Teishiki” (Basketry’s Formulas), reissued by Heibon-sha

Present: Visiting Professor of Textile Department at Tama Art University, Tokyo, Japan,
Part-time lecturer at Kanazawa College of Arts and Crafts, Ishikawa, Japan

Public Collections:

The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan / The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama, Japan / Yokohama Museum of Art, Japan / Kikuchi Kanjitsu Memorial Tomo Museum, Tokyo, Japan / Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK / The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX, USA / Racine Art Museum, WI, USA / Erie Art Museum, PA, USA / The Long Beach Museum of Art, CA, USA / The Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia / Arkansas Arts Center, AR, USA / LongHouse Reserve, Easthampton, NY, USA / Hawai’i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, Honolulu, HI, USA / Llyod Cotsen Collection, etc.