

*'Superficially my work appears to be quiet in white. It does not show the rawness of Mother Nature directly. A symbolic figure always looks more perfect than the actual person he/she is. Imagination and fantasy always reinforce the imperfection and achieve the perfection with its own originality.*

*Therefore, the completion of my work is done by the viewer. My work is a creation on its own.'*



The Moon Jar 'Agitation', 2020. Ceramic – Reduction Fired Stoneware, 63 H x 60 W x 60 D cm

January 2023

**Taste Contemporary**

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## Akiko Hirai Japan b. 1970

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Akiko Hirai originally studied cognitive psychology in Japan before moving to London in 1999 to study ceramics. Her practice centres on the Japanese tradition of allowing the clay to show how it wants to be fired while her work focuses on the interaction between object and viewer, allowing the viewer to interpret the language of the work in their own way.

Over the years, Akiko Hirai has received international acclaim for her interpretation of the Moon Jar. In 2013, she was one of just five artists invited to create work for an exhibition at the Korean Cultural Centre that explored the contemporary response to this celebrated object. In 2019 her piece, The Moon Jar "The life of..." was shortlisted for the LOEWE Craft Prize. It was described by the judges as 'an expressive and energised gestural interpretation of the iconic form of the moon jar' and a work that 'shows an understanding and respect for the heritage of ceramics further reimagined with a highly personal approach.' Moon Jars by Akiko Hirai are now in a number of prestigious collections including the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

Taste Contemporary is proud to work with Akiko Hirai.  
- Monique Deul, 2020

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### Education

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| 2011        | Post Graduate Certificate in Education, Canterbury Christ Church University, England  |
| 2002 - 2003 | BA (Hons) Ceramic Design London; London Institute Central Saint Martins School of Graphics and Industrial Design (University Arts London), England            |
| 2000 - 2002 | BA (Hons) Ceramics [1st and 2nd year] University of Westminster, Harrow, England  |
| 1989 - 1993 | Bachelor of Letters [equivalent to B. Phil], Aichi Gakuin University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Psychology, Major: Cognitive Psychology, Aichi, Japan |

### Selected Public Collections

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| 2021 | Hepworth Wakefield Collection, England   |
| 2020 | Everson Museum, Syracuse, New York, USA  |
| 2019 | Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England<br>National Museum of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland |
| 2018 | The Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge, England  |
| 2014 | Keramikmuseum Westerwald [Westerwald Ceramic Museum], Germany                              |

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**Selected Exhibitions | Solo & Two Person**

2023	<b>From Light to Dark, Taste Contemporary, Geneva, Switzerland</b>
2022	New Craftsman St. Ives, UK Hauser and Wirth, Bruton, UK Slader's Yard, UK Flow Gallery, UK Contemporary Ceramics Gallery, London, UK
2021	Roman and Williams Guild, New York USA Artisans, Hong Kong The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland Beaux Arts, Bath, England Goldmark, Uppingham, UK
2020	New Craftsman, St. Ives, UK (Celebrating anniversary of Leach Pottery) Flow, London, UK CPA Gallery, London, UK
2019	Beaux Arts, Bath, UK Trace of Scent, Maud and Mabel, London, UK Sladers Yard, Bridport
2018	New Craftsman, St. Ives, UK
2017	Solo Show, Beaux Arts, Bath, England Solo Exhibition, Sladers Yard, Bridport, England <i>In Praise of Shadow</i> , The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland
2016	<i>Getemona</i> , Craft Potters Association, London, England Solo Show, Lynne Stover Gallery, Cambridge, England Solo Exhibition, New Craftsman, St. Ives, England
2015	Solo Show, Beaux Arts Bath, Bath, England Solo Exhibition, Sladers Yard, Bridport, England Solo Exhibition, Oxford Ceramics, Oxford [with talk at Ashmolean Museum] Solo Exhibition, New Ashgate Gallery, Furnham, England
2013	<i>Akiko Hirai Still Life</i> , The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland Solo Exhibition, Mr. Ketley, Brunswick, Australia Akiko Hirai 10 Years On, Craft Potters Association Gallery, London, England

**Selected Exhibitions | Group**

2023	<b>artgenève [represented by Taste Contemporary], Geneva, Switzerland</b> Collect (with Flow Gallery), Somerset House, London, UK
2022	<b>Cast Aside: Discarding the Domestic and the Everyday, presented by Taste Contemporary, La Fonderie Kugler, Geneva, Switzerland</b> Collect (with Flow Gallery), Somerset House, London, UK
2021	<i>Pioneering Women</i> , Oxford Ceramics Gallery, England Hauser and Wirth, Bruton

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- 2020 **Harvest Moon, Taste Contemporary, Geneva, Switzerland**  
**artgenève [represented by Taste Contemporary], Geneva, Switzerland**  
*Make*, Hauser and Wirth, Bruton
- 2019 Collect (with Flow Gallery), Somerset House, London, UK  
Mess - The Future Perfect, New York, San Francisco, LA, USA  
Hauser and Wirth, London, UK  
Loewe Craft Prize exhibition, Loewe Craft Foundation, Tokyo, Japan  
Under the Cherry Tree, The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
- 2018 New Craftsman, St. Ives, England  
Onomatopoeia, Contemporary Applied Arts, London, UK  
Flow Gallery, London, UK  
Urchfont, Sculpture show, Urch Front Manor, Wiltshire, UK  
Sound of Silence, St. Peter's Church (Kettles Yard), Cambridge, UK  
Things of Beauty Growing, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, England
- 2017 *Things of Beauty Growing*, The British Art Centre, Yale, USA  
Group Show, Maud and Mabel, London, England  
*Home from Home*, Contemporary Applied Arts, London, England  
**TRESOR, [represented by Taste Contemporary Craft], Basel, Switzerland**  
*Ceramic In the City*, Gyeffrye Museum, London, England  
**Moonstruck, Taste Contemporary, Geneva, Switzerland**  
*Earth and Fire*, The Harley Gallery, Nottingham, England
- 2016 *Vase: Function Reviewed*, National Craft Gallery, Kilkenny, Ireland  
*Kisaragi*, Flow Gallery, London, England  
Collaboration Project, Toast, London, England
- 2015 Galerie du don, France  
Celebration of British Studio Pottery, The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland
- 2013 *Moon Jar*, Korean Cultural Centre, London, England  
*Young Clay*, Keramiekcentrum Tiendschuur, Holland
- 2012 *Broken ceramic pieces mended*, Charity Now and Future, London [presented by Yoko Ono]
- 2011 *Through 50*, Craft Potters Association Gallery [50th anniversary of Craft Potters Association Gallery; artists represented 2000-2010], London, England
- 2009 *Insight Beauty*, Japanese Embassy, London, England
- 2006 Art from Japan, The Hill House [National Trust for Scotland], Scotland
- 2005 Exhibition with Karin Schosser, Rufford Craft Centre, Nottingham, England

## Fairs

- 2017 COLLECT, Saatchi Gallery, London, England [represented by Flow London]
- 2016 COLLECT, Saatchi Gallery, London, England [represented by Flow London]
- 2015 COLLECT, Saatchi Gallery, London, England [represented by Flow London]

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	SOFA Chicago, USA
2014	SOFA Chicago, USA [represented by Flow London]
2012	SOFA Chicago, USA [represented by Flow London]
2012	The Salon NY, New York, USA [represented by Modern Gallery]

### Selected Awards

2014	Sake Ware Competition Selected, Tamba Craft Museum, Japan
2005	Development Award, Craft Potters Charitable Trust

### Selected Publications

2014	<i>Glaze; the ultimate ceramic artist's guide to glaze and colour</i> by Brian Taylor and Kate Foody
	<i>Clay Book</i> by Amber Creswell, Bell Thames & Hudson
2011	<i>Advanced Pottery, Colour in Glazes</i> by Linda Bloomfield
	<i>Colours in Glazes</i> by Linda Bloomfield
	<i>Contemporary Ceramic Practices</i> by Louisa Taylor
	<i>Ceramic Bible</i> by Louisa Taylor

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