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Press release

10 November 2022

CHIHARU SHIOTA

SIGNS OF LIFE

19 January – 9 March 2023

Opening: Thursday 19 January, 5pm to 8 pm



State of Being (Photo Album), 2022 (detail)

After nearly a decade's absence from the New York contemporary art scene, Japanese artist Chiharu Shiota is returning with *Signs of Life*, a new exhibition featuring a spectacular site-specific installation and a series of previously unseen sculptures and drawings.

After a foundation degree in painting at Seika University in Kyoto, Chiharu Shiota chose to pursue her artistic studies in Berlin, focusing on performance. Her practice soon shifted towards site-specific installations. She skilfully weaves knotted threads to create fantastical scenes combining salvaged window frames, a piano, suitcases, books and used clothes. Bordering on drawing and sculpture, her fabulous ephemeral, immersive

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installations have become her signature. Since her impressive installation for the Japanese Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2015, she has become one of the key figures on the international art scene and is regularly invited to show her work at museums worldwide.

In a hyper-connected world, Chiharu Shiota's new exhibition questions the notion of the "web", a living organism similar to the structures that make up the universe or the neurons our brains are built on. Created on-site over two weeks, a large-scale installation made of red threads symbolizes this permanent connection of information, collective memory and the world's knowledge which cuts across cultures and continents. At the heart of the work are two arms, her own, placed on the ground. They are cast in bronze, palms facing up to the sky. "I always thought that if death took my body, I wouldn't exist anymore," explains the artist. "I'm now convinced that my spirit will continue to exist because there is more to me than a body. My consciousness is connected to everything around me and my art unfolds by way of people's memory."

The installation is followed by a series of sculptures. Enfolded at the centre of each one, as though frozen in place by the intertwined threads, are objects from daily life. "I feel that the objects we possess are like a third skin," she says. "We accumulate these things and transpose our presence and our memory to them." Often obsolete, weighed down by impenetrable histories, these objects -- old suitcases, stained dolls, miniature pieces of furniture and tiny bottles -- represent the treasures offered up by memory, to be seen but not touched.

Born in Osaka, Japan, in 1972, Chiharu Shiota has been living and working in Berlin since 1999. Her work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions including: in 2018 at the Museum of Kyoto (Japan), Gothenburg Museum of Art, Gothenburg (Sweden), Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (Australia) and Le Bon Marché, Paris (France); in 2019 at Gropius Bau, Berlin (Germany) and Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (Japan), and in 2020 at Fondazione Merz (Italy), Musia, Rome (Italy), and Muzeum śląskie w Katowicach (Poland). In 2021 her work was also shown at the 13th Gwangju Biennale Foundation in South Korea and the group exhibition *STILL ALIVE, Werke aus der Schenkung Sammlung Hoffmann* at Albertinum (Germany), Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), Zentrum für Kunst und Medien, Karlsruhe (Germany), Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington (New Zealand), Towada Art Center, Aomori (Japan), Domaine de Chaumont-sur-Loire (France), Kenj Taki Gallery, Nagoya (Japan), and Tapei Fine Arts Museum (Taiwan). In 2022, her work has been shown at the Aichi Arts Center in Japan, Manifesta 14, Kosovo, Musée National des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet, Paris and Planta Project, Complejo Industrial La Plana del Corb, Balaguer, Lleida, Spain. The Schauwerk Sindelfingen in Germany is also showing a solo exhibition of her work until 8 October 2023.

Chiharu Shiota has been represented by Galerie Templon since 2011.