

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE GREAT EXHIBITION

4 June – 17 July 2016

Solo exhibition by Ken + Julia Yonetani

Ken + Julia Yonetani are not unfamiliar names to the international audience. Having represented Australia at the Venice Biennale in 2009 and shown in Singapore Biennale 2013, this two-person artists' unit translates the nearby environs and current political issues into works filled with aesthetic and humour. The duo work largely overseas and have shown internationally, from group exhibitions in Australia, Germany, UK, France, Israel, and Canada, to solo exhibitions in UK, France, Japan, and Australia, including the recent presentation at the NGA Contemporary, National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. They have also undertaken artists-in-residence programmes in Finland, Portugal, Germany, France, Japan, and Australia. This solo exhibition will be their first in Singapore.

For this exhibition, the artists will be presenting a survey of their recent works. The central piece will be *The Last Supper* (2014) which shows a nine-meter table made of over one tonne of groundwater salt sourced from the Murray-Darling basin. It features a variety of foodstuffs in the form of an exquisite banquet. To quote the artists: "The work points to concerns arising from increasing salinity levels in Australia and unsustainable agricultural practices. In the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster, the massive banquet of luxurious foodstuffs also becomes a larger visualisation of the problems of food security and safety in an increasingly toxic world."

Ken + Julia Yonetani will also showcase a chandelier from *Crystal Palace: The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nuclear Nations*. The chandeliers are produced using the now rarely-employed material of uranium glass, which when exposed to a UV black light emits a uniquely marvelous green light. Another similar piece is the *Grape Chandelier* (2011) made of groundwater salt, which was actually their first chandelier-inspired work made before the Crystal Palace series.

Last but not least, we have *Three Wishes* (2014), a small and illuminated figure of the Disney character Tinkerbell which turns to the melody of "It's a Small World". In contrast to its charming exterior, this piece is fraught with the threat of nuclear power. It was created taking inspiration from the 1957 Disney animated TV program "Our Friend the Atom". As we approach closer to the work, we realize that Tinkerbell's wings are those of the Pale Grass Blue species of butterfly (*zizeeria maha*, also known as *Yamato-shijimi* in Japan), the bodies of which are now frequently malformed due to the effect of radioactive contamination from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant disaster.

Artist Talk

Saturday, 4 June 2016, 4 – 6 pm

Moderated by Melanie Pocock (Assistant Curator, Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, LASALLE College of the Arts)

Opening Reception

Saturday, 4 June 2016, 6 – 9 pm

Exhibition Dates

Saturday, 4 June 2016 – Sunday, 17 July 2016

Gallery Profile

Mizuma Gallery was established in 1994 in Tokyo by director Suelo Mizuma, and since its opening in Singapore in September 2012, aims for the promotion of Japanese artists in the region as well as the introduction of new and promising young talents from South East Asia to the international art scene. The gallery creates a new vector of dialogue within Asia by exchanging art projects between East Asia and South East Asia. Mizuma Gallery has featured the works of Japanese artists including Aida Makoto, Amano Yoshitaka, Tenmyouya Hisashi, and Yamaguchi Akira. It has also showcased the works of renown East Asian artists such as Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba, Ai Weiwei, He Yunchang, Li Mingzhu, Xia Xing, and Zhao Zhao. The gallery also organises exhibitions featuring the works of Indonesia's forerunner artists including Heri Dono, Nasirun, Made Wianta, Indiegueillas, Albert Yonathan Setyawan and Angki Purbandono. Mizuma Gallery also participates yearly in Art Stage Singapore and Art Basel Hong Kong.

About Gillman Barracks

Gillman Barracks (GB) is Asia's up-and-coming destination for contemporary art. It is distinguished as a vibrant centre in Asia for the creation, exhibition and discussion of contemporary art. Named after the late British general Sir Webb Gillman, GB is now home to 11 international art galleries, three restaurants, as well as the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) Singapore. For more information, please visit www.gillmanbarracks.com

Contact

For further inquiries and high resolution images, please contact the following:

Jane Koh: janekoh@mizuma.sg

Theresia Irma: theresia@mizuma.sg

Mizuma Gallery

22 Lock Road #01-34

Gillman Barracks

Singapore 108939, Singapore

T. +65 6570 2505

F. +65 6570 2506

www.mizuma.sg

info@mizuma.sg

Hours: Tue-Sat 11-7 Sun 11-6

Closed on Mondays & Public Holidays



Ken + Julia Yonetani



Three Wishes

2014

glass figurine, butterfly specimen, glass dome, music box
15 cm x d. 9 cm

© Ken + Julia Yonetani,
Courtesy of Mizuma Art Gallery

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The Last Supper
2014
salt
900 x 75 x 125 cm

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Courtesy of Mizuma Art Gallery