

HAINES GALLERY PRESENTS

YOSHITOMO SAITO

ETHOS IN BRONZE

JULY 10 - AUGUST 30, 2014

Opening reception: Thursday, July 10, 5:30pm – 7:30pm

For his tenth exhibition at Haines Gallery, Yoshitomo Saito presents a selection of recent bronze works, ranging from singular, freestanding sculptures to large-scale wall installations. He has spent the last thirty years casting varied and highly intricate forms, with a particular affinity for natural objects. For Saito, the works in *Ethos in Bronze* resonate with the avant-garde sensibility of French composer and pianist Erik Satie. The nuanced tension and eccentric quality exemplified by Satie's groundbreaking compositions *Gymnopédies* (1888) and *Gnossiennes* (1889-1897) are echoed in Saito's ability to shape our perceptions of the familiar through the poetic, almost alchemical approach to his medium.

Organic forms from Saito's native Japan and current environment in Colorado fill the exhibition. He explores this perennial interest with a new approach, grinding all or part of each work's surface to reveal and revel in the natural hue and texture of the bronze. This recent strategy renders the material in a new light, celebrating the medium's ability to appear fresh, clean and contemporary. For instance, the subtle treatment of the bamboo poles and their striking, angular arrangements in *Gymnopédies: Bamboo Gymnast #1 and #2* celebrate this union of material and form. The unusual combination of elements in *Gymnopédies: Golden Stitch* were inspired by the aftermath of a flood in Colorado, and the manner in which disparate elements suddenly became intertwined. The lustrous lines of the entangled reeds operate harmoniously in relation to the rough, highly textured objects – like shells, bark and roots.

After first training as a glassblower in Tokyo, Saito began working in bronze during his time as a graduate student at California College of the Arts. He employs a process known as lost wax or investment mold casting, a laborious technique with a long history from around the world. While many contemporary artists typically outsource bronze casting to commercial foundries, Saito has instead developed a sophisticated studio space that allows him to produce these works independently.



Gymnopédies: Loop, 2013, bronze, unique, 34 x 24 x 4 inches

Saito's work has been exhibited internationally and collected by institutions including the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, Honolulu; de Young Museum, San Francisco; California College of the Arts, Oakland/San Francisco; and Oakland Museum of California. Publications such as *Art in America*, *San Francisco Chronicle* and *Sculpture Magazine* have discussed his work and dynamic practice. Saito lives and works in Denver.

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