

PRESS RELEASE**Mamiko Otsubo***Sky Lobby*

31 August – 27 October 2013

Opening reception: Friday, 30 August 2013, from 6 to 8pm

„Standing in a subway car at the very middle of the Manhattan bridge I punched this phrase into my phone: *installed sculpture is indentured too*. I looked around the car and through the windows up and down the river. A woman sat and read the Times folded into long quarters. A man, headed for midtown, stood with his back against the door. Everyone was listening to different music and in the precious silence I hung a little off the center pole.

It should come as no surprise to those who have ridden the B train that we were not bounding across bridge but stopped, waiting for instructions from the train's dispatcher. In fact we were suspended there for fifteen minutes and no one seemed to mind, by which I mean no one's father, friend, child, co-worker, spouse or significant other had a total solo meltdown.

I remembered this moment on the train when Mamiko told me her title, *Sky Lobby*. I pictured my stop on the bridge as if it were a place: A place embedded not in the landscape but in the motion of the train, or in this case its immobility. Below the phrase above, I wrote as well: *not to change the rules but to change the play – this is Mamiko's style*.

In the lead up to this show Mamiko spent months moving giant works around a scale model of the gallery, lifting them from above and taping them to one spot or another in the manner of one composing a painting or decorating an interior. After some time and much frustration she realized that this was exactly what she was trying to avoid in making sculpture, having started as a painter a long time ago. In working to install her work she was once again thinking in the language of composition, a dead-end language as far as her practice is concerned.

Sky Lobby thus references and serves as a counterpoint to late Minimalist works such as Carl Andre's *Eight Cuts* and Walter De Maria's *The Broken Kilometer*, which deal with the problem of part by part composition¹ by addressing the entire floorplan of the exhibition space as if it were itself a frame. The 7 high polished brass poles with patina burger buns, *BP I - VII*, which strike down at evenly spaced intervals throughout the gallery and into the office, are designed to be adjustable in height, in order to accommodate different kinds of spaces and ceiling heights. The distance between the poles, however, is predefined by a 12' x 12' matrix that extends past the present floor plan in all directions. Thus the relationship between the poles remains constant, in humorous obliviousness to the exhibition as a frame that demands individualized attention.

The paired concrete and mirror stainless *polka dot* "paintings" play upon this dynamic as well; The spacing of the dots remains constant between the works, thereby including the surrounding unframed space within their rhythm. In this sense, each work is merely a slice of an infinitely continuing pattern of dots that cannot really be contained within any sized singular frame. Theoretically, these works are infinitely reproduceable and can be made in any size as they are always accompanied by the proposition of their expansion.

¹ Glaser, Bruce. "New Nihilism or New Art." Interview with Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, and Frank Stella. New York, N.Y., February 15, 1964. (Transcribed and Edited as: "Questions to Stella and Judd," ed. Lucy R. Lippard. In Gregory Battcock, ed. *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*. New York: Dutton, 1968.)

In the way that the *polka dot* paintings bring Piet Mondrian to mind, the 6 stone wall pieces with burger names conjure Gordon Matta-Clark's excised residential interiors. These references, however, are demonstrative of how the works pivot and how they play, for their main interest is not the exploration of the frame as a border but as an artificial meeting place.

In the stone wall pieces the combination of the kind of stone and the kind of lettering is meant to call to mind common pairings of materials in skyscraper facades. *¾ LB TRIPLE* has a specific reference (the Seagrams Building by Mies van der Rohe) but in general, none of them are meant to be building specific. They are meant to be specifically general. In working toward this uneasy negotiation of reference and affect, Mamiko interlocks shifts in scale with subtle shifts in materials and in the layout of text.

The specific text in these works are commercial hamburger names chosen for their sculptural qualities. Reminiscent of Gertrude Stein's evocation of the double life of objects, and most notably words, Mamiko treats these names as if they were both descriptions and sculptural materials. They speak of sizes, forms, and weights while also embodying these elements in sculptural relief.

The resultant works are strangely authoritative absurdities. Architectural paradoxes whose divergent parts seem to make sense grammatically while at the same time failing to combine, to disappear into the whole. When I add them up I find no sum, no possibility of wholeness, but instead the same relationship with the same parts now rearranged."

Robert Rhee, artist and writer who lives and works out of Seattle and New York

We are delighted to show this body of new works by Mamiko Otsubo (*1974 in Nishinomiya City, Japan, lives and works in Brooklyn, NYC) in her first solo exhibition in the gallery. This amazing new works allow many cross references and associations. Mamiko Otsubo studied art, after having accomplished a BA in Economics at the University of California, San Diego. She received her BFA from Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, and MFA from Yale University. Her work has been show in many group and solo exhibitions in the US and in Europe.

Mamiko Otsubo would like to thank the Danish Art Workshop, especially Frederik Hardvendel, for the support of the exhibition. Also she addresses her thank to Andreas Henningsen, Copenhagen, and the artist Robert Rhee for his thoughtful text.

The opening reception takes place in the presence of the artist Friday, 30 August 2013 from 6 to 8pm. For further information and images please contact the gallery, Lullin + Ferrari, Limmatstrasse 214, CH-8005 Zürich, t. +41 43 205 26 07, f. +41 43 205 26 08, info@lullinferrari.com, www.lullinferrari.com
Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6pm, Saturday 11am to 5pm, and by appointment.