

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 31 – June 30, 2019

## AYA MIYATAKE Alabaster



Alabaster boulder before carving



Aya Miyatake, *Midori*, 2019  
alabaster, 5 1/4 x 8 x 8 inches

The Drawing Room is pleased to announce an exhibition of new alabaster sculpture by East Hampton artist Aya Miyatake, on view from May 31 through June 30. In this reflective body of work Miyatake reveals the movement and extracts hidden color of the ancient alabaster. Focused on the stone's characteristic translucency and glow, Miyatake uncovers new dynamism within each form. The installation will present the sculptures on old farm tables, with individual works elevated on small bases of driftwood and crisp blocks of mahogany and cedar.

When selecting her raw material, the color and character held within each rough stone is a mystery. "Not knowing provides me surprise and excitement and I cherish the moment of discovery." Transforming the coarse boulder into a geode that can be carved takes time as does exploring its inherent characteristics. Miyatake's greenhouse studio provides long daylight hours in an environment where she chisels and files in the round on a revolving tripod, observing and balancing nuances of emerging color and fractured veins of minerals.

Only after she has chiseled away the entire uneven surface does Miyatake begin to find the dormant luminosity within the opaque stone. Especially surprising is the graphic activity of the veining -- streaks of gold, coral and white minerals -- that permeate and enliven the interior. This dynamic evidence of the compression caused by the evaporation of seawater over millennia offers an image of motion Miyatake accentuates as she carves. Cloudy iron formations move across the surfaces like passing weather. Miyatake notes, "At this moment perpetual movement is fundamental to my idea of form and resolution." While some of her quiet abstract forms seem to be hibernating in an ice-white glow, others radiate rich verdant greens, amber yellow and translucent peach hues.

The forms in this body of work are animate - suggesting marine life, human heads or ancient figurines. *Boshi (mother and child)* presents two low-lying sculptures that comprise one work. Their smaller and longer curved shapes echo one another on respective driftwood bases. Sand-colored veining falls over their polished contours recalling seals on rocks. *Kiretsu* the largest work in the show and *A*, the most modest,

each present as upright steles reflecting clouds. *Hakuhyou*, which means “thin ice” in Japanese, is a dramatic slice of chalk-white alabaster that cuts an arc in the space around it.

Miyatake finds unique ways to carve refined abstract shapes. In *Midori*, the active white and green graphic surface of the ovoid shape holds its power in a final resting position on a circular mahogany base. By contrast, a coral pink sculpture titled *Sango-Iro* sits like a newborn with its face to the moon. In *Small Pond*, Miyatake creates a clamshell shape with a dense, earthy mix of sediment. Miyatake’s sculptures capture primordial flecks of green, gold and white, securing earth’s precious ingredients in transcendent alabaster forms.

Aya Miyatake grew up in Takamatsu, on the island of Shikoku, Japan. Surrounded by the unique traditional forms in Japanese culture, she pursued a degree in art at Kyoto University of Art and Design in 1998. Eager to study abroad, she moved to the East End of Long Island to attend Southampton College. By chance, she enrolled in a stone carving course and began to make sculpture in alabaster, marble and sandstone. Miyatake acknowledges that stone carving suits her temperament because she enjoys the parameters of reduction as an aesthetic principle.



The artist’s greenhouse studio in East Hampton

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Spring gallery hours: Friday through Monday, 11–5 & by appointment