

WASHI TALES: WORKS BY KYOKO IBE
AT HEATHER JAMES FINE ART, PALM DESERT, CA



Kyoko Ibe, *Curved Horizon Hogoshō with blue and gold*, 2009, old gampi paper, mica, sumi ink, old document, 24 x 55 in.

December 5, 2011 - Palm Desert, CA - Heather James Fine Art is pleased to present *Washi Tales: Works by Kyoko Ibe*. The exhibition is on view December 16, 2011 - January 2012 with an opening reception on Saturday December 17, 6-8 pm. For more information, please contact Jim Carona at jim@heatherjames.com.

Washi Tales: Works by Kyoko Ibe presents paper sculptures and wall pieces as remarkable examples of papermaking, integrating scale, material, and content. Recently exhibited at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, *Washi Tales* will be reconfigured by the artist for this special exhibition at Heather James Fine Art. Kyoko Ibe's art making process is one of reflection and meditation in an effort to slow and transcend time. Her art communicates an inherent tranquility which slowly reveals itself through patient observation. Installed within the walls of the gallery space, Ibe's art transforms the environment into a sanctuary against the world outside and acts as an antidote to the fast-paced consumption of imagery and life.

Kyoko Ibe has earned a reputation as one of Japan's leading artists with her large-scale installations of *washi*, or traditional Japanese paper. Combining conventional materials with modern techniques, Ibe's work has brought washi from the sphere of arts and crafts to that of contemporary art. Though in keeping with Japanese custom, the sanctity of the paper itself is fundamental to her work. The ancient Japanese believed divine spirits resided in the paper and Ibe maintains such veneration, stating that while the functional role of paper has diminished, the aesthetic role of paper as a spiritual medium is more apparent and has succeeded today in reemerging as an art media. Appropriating old handmade paper and handwritten documents, Ibe recycles them into new forms of washi. The ink of the original sources remains embedded in the fibers of the paper, such that the new paper is uniquely variegated with shades of gray and intrinsically connected to the past. Ibe's radical new approach to paper combines a respect for tradition with technological experimentation. Ibe states, "I attempt to evoke the feeling of [washi] through my own techniques, while at the same time visualizing the rebirth of a past era. In this way, old paper and documents, asleep for years; secure a place along the axis of time for perpetual life of art."

Kyoko Ibe's recent exhibitions include an installation at the Japan Society, New York, the Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, and the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC. She has received many national and international awards and was chosen as a Special Advisor for Cultural Exchange for 2009 by the Agency of Cultural Affairs of Japan.

Heather James Fine Art is located at 45188 Portola Avenue in Palm Desert and features a wide array of art ranging from Impressionist and Modern art to Post-War and Contemporary, American, Latin American, Old Master, Photography and Design. For more information about the gallery and upcoming exhibitions, please visit our website www.heatherjames.com or contact the gallery at 760-346-8926.