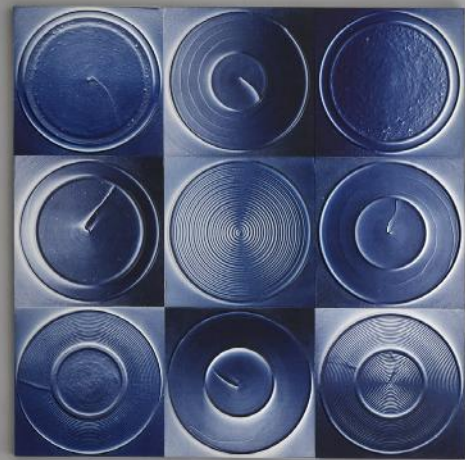


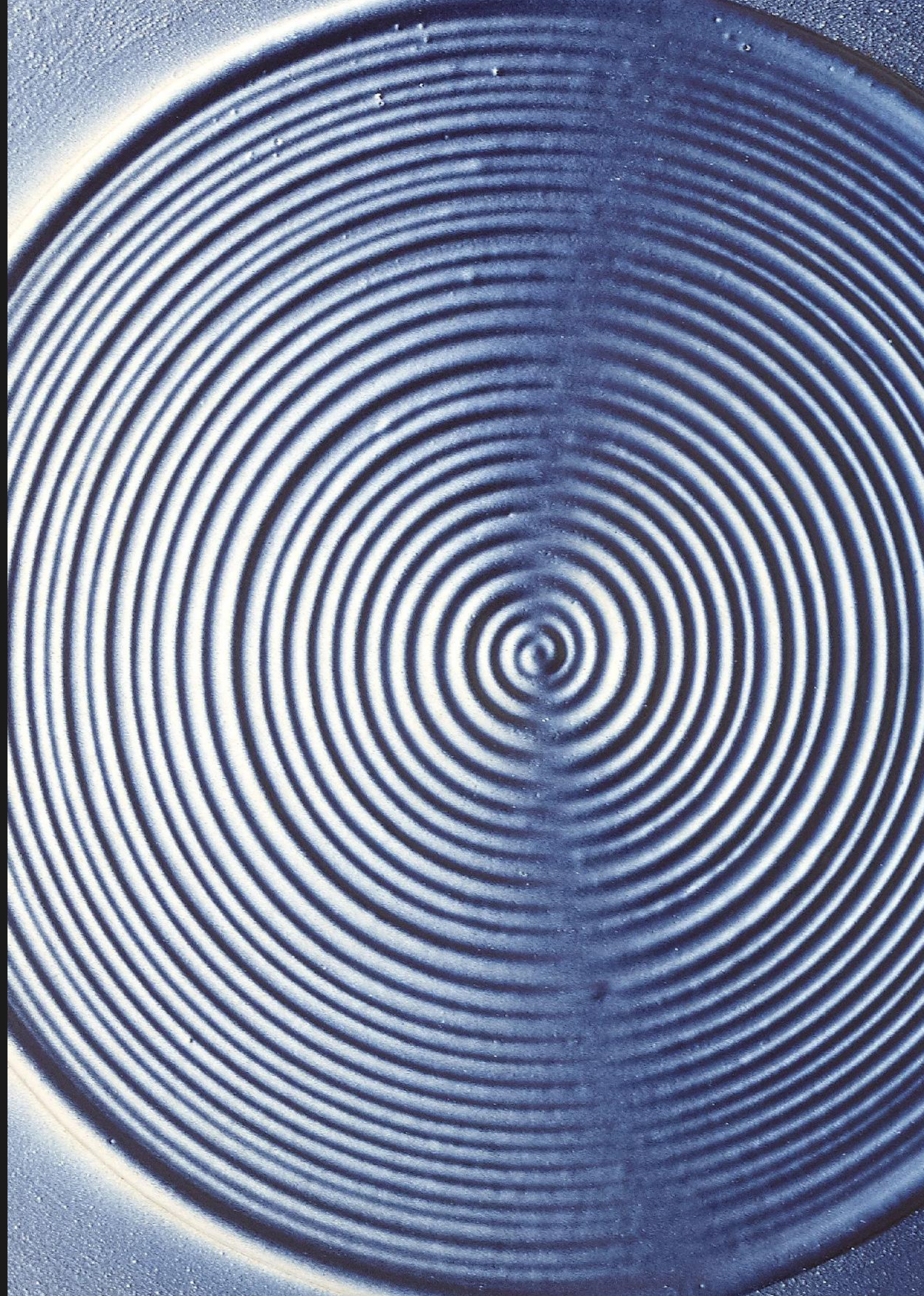
Yuko NASAKA (°Osaka, 1938)
 Untitled
 1964
 Synthetic paint, plaster and glue on cot-
 ton, mounted on wooden board
 135 x 135 cm
 Ref. A0113.346
 € 280.000 + import tax if applicable



Provenance:
Private collection, Japan, until 2013.

Published:
Yuko Nasaka, exh. cat., Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Antwerp (12 March - 25 April 2015): plate 15.

Exhibited:
2019: Yuko Nasaka, Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium (6 June - 31 August)
2015: Yuko Nasaka, Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium (12 March - 25 April)



Text written on the occasion of the exhibition *Yuko Nasaka* at Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium (12 March – 25 April 2015)

With its bright colours, Yuko Nasaka's (°1938, Japan) work is as playful as it is serious. It's a kind of non-art that shows that Nasaka is a child of her time. An artist is always connected to the time they live in, so the *Zeitgeist* always sneaks in. Japan underwent an industrial transformation during the 1960s, which, after the disasters of WWII, spelled out the prospect of a prosperous future for the country. At that time a new generation of artists, including Nasaka, joined the Gutai Art Association and started experimenting with technology and cutting-edge industrial materials. This continued a trend of using non-art materials from early Gutai, but also responded to rapid industrialization and the mechanical proliferation emblematic of 1960s Japan, as well as to the artistic experiments with new materials in other parts of the world.

This belief also infiltrated Nasaka's art and her use of brightly hued car lacquer is a good example of this. She tapped into that power and energy and made art in the here and now. Her large relief work is a modular series of square wooden panels coated with a thin layer of glue, plaster and clay, and placed on a homemade mechanical turntable. As the panel rotated, she used a palette knife to carve patterns into the material, a gesture she compared to working on a potter's wheel. She finished the panels with a fine spray of car lacquer, misted with an auto-factory air compressor. As if accumulating data or manufactured products, she then displayed the paintings in grids, some as large as the mural she created for her solo show at the Gutai Pinacotheca in 1964.

Though Nasaka underwent a very traditional art education and made work in strong connection with the Japanese tradition of ceramics, her goal was never to restore a tradition—which she greatly respects—but rather to create something new and thus give body to Gutai founder Jiro Yoshihara's credo to “be original and do something that had never been done”.

Her work is perfectly balanced, between the harsh rationality of industrialization and the purity of Japanese tradition and meditation. Like a Japanese philosopher, she is able to express profound thoughts with very simple means. At first glance it may seem slight, but upon deeper reflection, her works are anything but superficial. Nasaka manages to tell a universal story through ordinary things that reflect the moment that is poised on the turnaround of the present.

Nasaka's “moon landscapes” can be seen in that same spirit. They seem to be a direct reference to mankind's attempt to make a first landing on the moon in the 1960s, although it was never her intention to imitate the moon. At around the same time, Yves Klein made his moonlike sponges, also without referring them to any specific moon. Although both artists most likely never met, they seem connected and shared the same fascination that was “in the air”. Klein performed the simple act of colouring ordinary sponges blue and Nasaka made “something” with car lacquer, plaster, glue and a potter's wheel. They both made something that happened to look a lot like the moon; in fact, they made objects that reflected its possibility and with it the possibility of many other objects and thoughts.

Being one of the most prominent voices of Gutai's last generation, Nasaka attached much more importance to the process of making art, then to its final result and meaning. Her work refuses to be penned in by any singular explanation. It can be interpreted in many different ways, whereby one view never dominates over another. It has no precise meaning; at the same time it means everything. It transcends the everyday and—in its openness—is connected to the very fundamentals of being.

Everyone has their own interpretation of the work, based upon his own memories and perspective, but the meaning generated by Nasaka's circles is infinite and open to every possible interpretation. This quality is the essential quality of every true Gutai work. Openness of meaning can only be attained if an artist is able to set aside the ego and can allow the interaction with matter itself to guide the process of creation. A Gutai artist does not have a preconceived idea of what exactly a work is going to look like or what it should “mean”. They let chance and the behaviour of the materials decide. Like every genuine Gutai artist, Nasaka considers herself to be nothing more than the medium that can allow matter to express itself further. She is guided by the essential qualities of the materials she uses and by any number of small coincidences that cross her path.

On the occasion of the exhibition we have published the catalogue *Yuko Nasaka*, containing many unpublished historic photographs of Nasaka in the Gutai period as well as an interview with the artist, conducted by Mizuho Kato and two essays by Gutai specialists Ming Tiampo and Midori Yoshimoto.

Yuko NASAKA (°Osaka, 1938)

Work

1963

Synthetic paint, plaster and glue on cotton, mounted on wooden board

136 x 90 cm

Ref. A0615.063

€ 270.000 + import tax if applicable

Provenance:

Christie's HK, sale 3410, 30-05-15, lot 77;

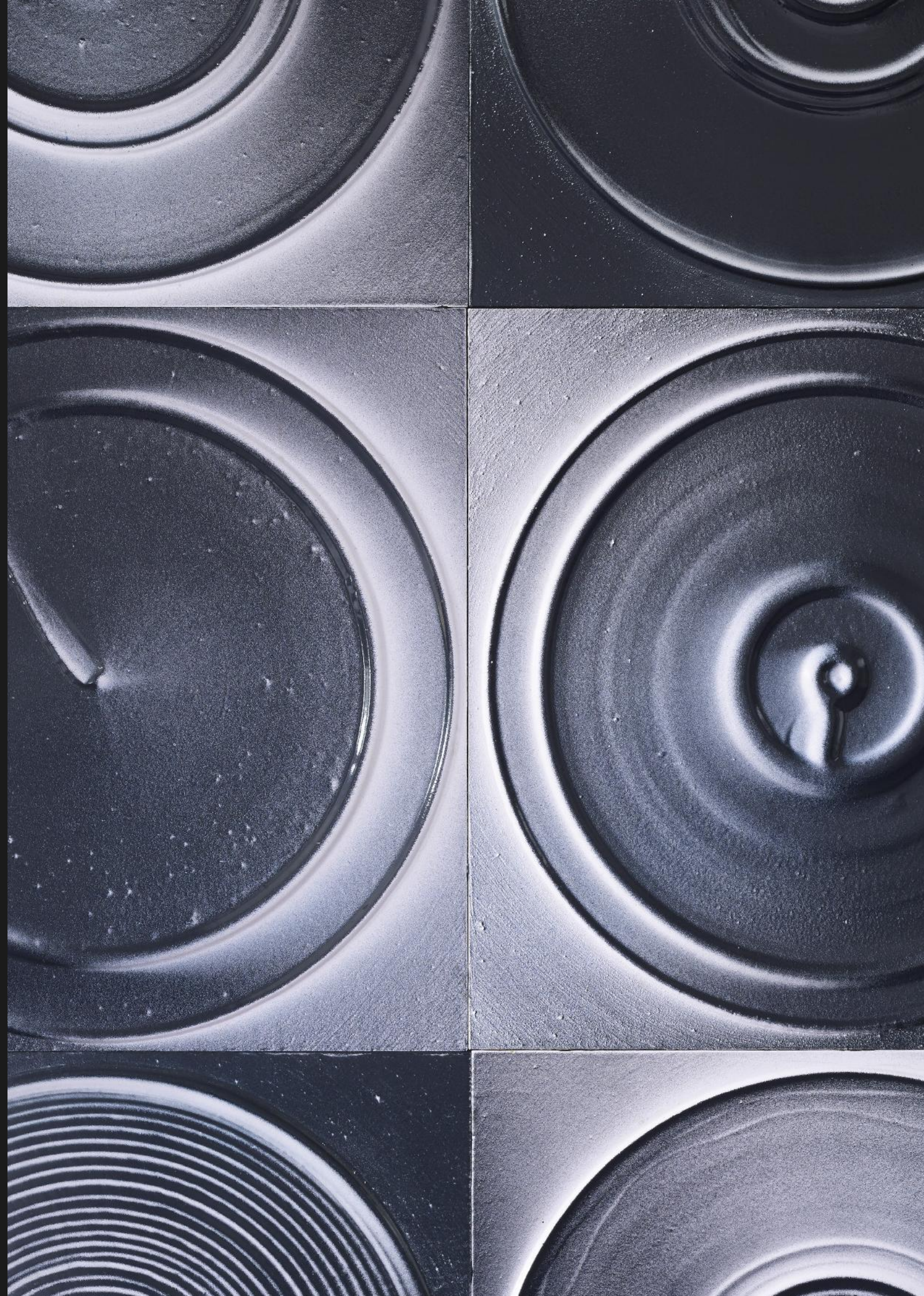
Private Collection, Asia;

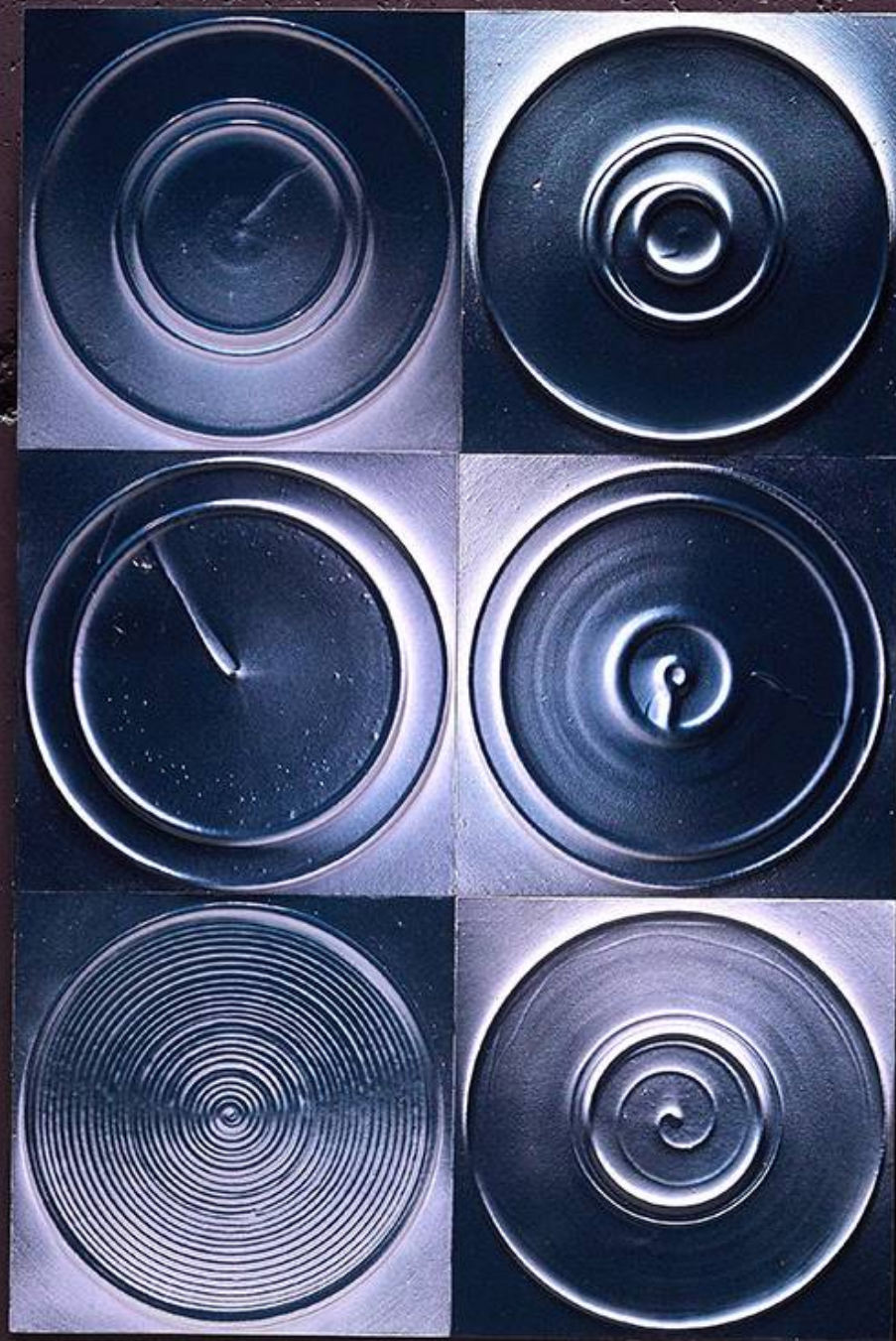
Whitestone Gallery, Tokyo, Japan;

Private Collection, Asia.

Exhibited:

2019: Yuko Nasaka, Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Wijnegem, June 6 - August 31







Yuko NASAKA (°Osaka, 1938)
Untitled
1978
Mixed media on board
(Ø) 120 cm
Ref. A0922.097
€ 120.000 + import tax if applicable





Yuko NASAKA (°Osaka, 1938)
Untitled
1978
Mixed media on board
(Ø) 120 cm
Ref. A0922.098
€ 120.000 + import tax if applicable



Yuko Nasaka

Born in 1938, Osaka, Japan.
Lives and works in Osaka, Japan.

1938
Born in Konohana Ward, the second daughter of six children, to Yogashige Takeda and his wife Matsue.

1944
Evacuates to Takarazuka while in elementary school.

c. 1950
Begins oil painting while attending Osaka Municipal Utashima Junior High School. Greatly inspired by an exhibition of art from the Louvre. Nasaka's father dies.

1953
Enters Osaka Prefectural Ichioka High School, where she joins the art club. As Ichioka was the alma mater of noted Japanese painter Narashige Koide, there is a great emphasis on art. Senkichi Nasaka, whom Yuko would later marry, was also a teacher at the school.

1956
Enrolls in the Daily Life course at Osaka Shoin Women's University.

1959
Graduates from university. Marries Senkichi Nasaka and moves to Ibaraki City.

1960
First daughter born.

c. 1962
Inspired by Kazuo Shiraga, a classmate of Senkichi's at the Kyoto City Specialist School of Painting, Yuko submits her work to the 15th Ashiya City Exhibition. Receives the Mayor's Prize in the 15th Ashiya City Exhibition. Participates in the exhibition every year until Gutai dissolves. Begins submitting work to the Ibaraki City Exhibition on an annual basis and also serves as a judge. Meets Jiro Yoshihara. Shows her 'work with holes' at the 47th Nika Exhibition, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Art. Shows work in the Inaugural exhibition at the Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka.

1963
Joins the Gutai Art Association.

1965
Receives honourable mention at the 9th Shell Art Exhibition.

1966
Second daughter born.

1970
Designs the exterior walls for "Little World," part of the Japan Science and Technology exhibition created for the Japan Pavilion at Expo '70. Helps pay production costs for Garden on Garden, a collaborative work made by the Gutai members for the outdoor art exhibition at the expo.

1972
Yoshihara dies and the Gutai Art Association dissolves.

1986
Nasaka Senkichi and Yuko Exhibition, ABC Gallery, Osaka, Japan.

1987
Wins grand prize in the IBM P.I. Exhibition, ABC Gallery, Osaka, Japan.



Selected solo exhibitions

2019
Yuko Nasaka, Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Wijnegem, Belgium.

2017
Yuko Nasaka, Sl2 Gallery, Sotheby’s, London, United Kingdom.

2015
Yuko Nasaka, Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium.

2014
Yuko Nasaka, Whitestone Gallery, Tokyo, Japan.

1986
Nasaka Senkichiro and Yuko Exhibition, ABC Gallery, Osaka, Japan.

1985
Yuko Nasaka, Osaka Contemporary Art Center, Osaka, Japan.

1984
Yuko Nasaka, Haku Gallery, Osaka, Japan.

1969
Yuko Nasaka, Petite Imabashi Gallery, Osaka, Japan.

1964
Yuko Nasaka, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan.

Selected group exhibitions

2019
Artistic License: Six Takes on the Guggenheim Collection, Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA.

2018
Wonderkamer I. Axel Vervoordt, DIVA I Antwerp Home of Diamonds, Antwerp, Belgium.

2017
INTUITION, Palazzo Fortuny, Venice, Italy.

2015
PROPORTIO, Palazzo Fortuny, Venice, Italy.

2013
Gutai: Splendid Playground, Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA.

2012
Gutai: The Spirit of an Era, The National Art Center, Tokyo, Japan.

2008
Women Artists in Osaka, 20th Century Art from Japanese-style Bijinga Paintings to the Postwar Avant-garde, Shinsaibashi Exhibition Room, Osaka City Museum Planning Office, Osaka, Japan.

2005
Avant-Garde Women 1950-1975, Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Art, Tochigi, Japan.

2004
50th Anniversary Gutai Retrospective, Hyōgo Prefectural Museum of Art, Hyōgo, Japan.

1993
Gutai 1959-1965, Ashiya City Museum of Art & History, Ashiya, Japan.
Osaka Triennale 1993, My Dome, Osaka, Japan.

1992
Gutai, Miyagi Prefectural Art Museum, Miyagi, Japan.

1991
Women’s ‘91, Osaka Contemporary Art Center, Osaka, Japan.

1990
Osaka Triennale 1990, My Dome, Osaka, Japan.

1989
Women’s ‘89, Osaka Contemporary Art Center, Osaka, Japan.

1988
10th Emba Prize Exhibition, Emba Museum of Chinese Modern Art, Ashiya, Japan.

1987
IBM P.I. Exhibition, ABC Gallery, Osaka, Japan.

1985
Jiro Yoshihara and Gutai 1954-1972, Ashiya Civic Center, Ashiya, Japan.

1979
Jiro Yoshihara and Contemporary Aspects of Gutai, Hyōgo Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, Kobe, Hyōgo, Japan.

1976
18 Years of Gutai Art, Osaka Prefectural Gallery of Contemporary Art, Osaka, Japan.

1972
Yoshihara Jiro and His Circle, Fujimi Gallery, Osaka, Japan.

1970
Gutai Japan Expo ‘70, Midori Pavilion, Expo’70, Osaka, Japan.

1968
2nd 100-person Contemporary Art in Osaka Exhibition, Ano Gallery, Shinanobashi Gallery, Osaka, Japan.
Gutai Small Works Exhibition, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan.
Nighttime-Only Gutai Exhibition, Miyazaki Kankō Hotel, Miyazaki, Japan.
21th Gutai Art Exhibition, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan.
20th Gutai Art Exhibition, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan.

1967
Gutai Small Works Exhibition, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan.
19th Gutai Art Exhibition, Central Museum, Tokyo, Japan.
Gutai, Heide Hildebrand Gallery/Wulfengasse Gallery, Klagenfurt, Austria.
18th Gutai Art Exhibition, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan.
4th International Young Artists Exhibition, Seibu Department Store, Tokyo, Japan.

1966
1st Mainichi Art Competition for French Exchange Student Program, Japan.
17th Gutai Art Exhibition, travelling exhibition until October 1966 (Takashimaya Dept. Store, Yokohama; Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan).
2e Salon International des Galeries Pilotes Lausanne, Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts Palais de Rumine, Lausanne, Switzerland.
Gutai Small Work Exhibition, Mickerey Art Gallery, Loenersloot, The Netherlands.
Nul 1966, International Gallery Orez, The Hague, The Netherlands.

1965
16th Gutai Exhibition, Keio Dept. Store, Tokyo, Japan.
15th Gutai Exhibition, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan.
9th Shell Art Exhibition, Gallery Itoh, Tokyo, Japan.
Groupe Gutai, Galerie Stadler, Paris, France.

1964
14th Gutai Art Exhibition, Takashimaya Dept. Store, Osaka, Japan.

1963
13th Gutai Art Exhibition, Takashimaya Dept. Store, Osaka, Japan.
12th Gutai Art Exhibition, Takashimaya Dept. Store, Tokyo, Japan.

1962
Inaugural Exhibition, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan.
47th Nika Exhibition, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan.
Ibaraki City Exhibition, Ibaraki, Japan.
15th Ashiya City Exhibition, Ashiya Seido Elementary School, Ashiya, Japan.

Selected group exhibitions

Ashiya City Museum of Art and History, Hyōgo, Japan
Axel & May Vervoordt Foundation, Antwerp, Belgium
Hyōgo Prefectural Museum of Art, Hyōgo, Japan
Osaka City Museum of Modern Art, Osaka, Japan
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA
Tate Modern, London, UK
The George Economou Collection, Athens, Greece
The Miyagi Museum of Art, Miyagi, Japan