

At the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (Modern One) – Karla Black and Kishio Suga



For the first time the work of two renowned artists one from Scotland and one from Japan will be combined into a new exhibition at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art this autumn.

[*Karla Black and Kishio Suga: A New Order*](#) will showcase one of Scotland's leading contemporary artists, **Karla Black**, and one of the most highly regarded artists to emerge in Japan in the last 50 years, **Kishio Suga**.

Glasgow-based [Black](#) (b.1972), who is known for her large-scale abstract sculptures, represented Scotland at the 2011 Venice Biennale, the world's largest and most prestigious showcase for contemporary visual art. She was nominated for the Turner Prize in the same year, and her work was a highlight of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art's [GENERATION](#) exhibition in 2014, a nationwide celebration of 25 years of contemporary art in Scotland.

Kishio Suga was born in Morioka in Northern Japan in 1944, and first came to notice as part of the Mono-ha movement in the late 1960s, a group of artists whose work has had a profound impact on art in Japan and beyond. Suga represented his country at the Venice Biennale in 1978, and is increasingly recognised internationally as being one of the most innovative and original artists of his generation. *Karla Black and Kishio Suga: A New Order* is his first major showing in the UK, and has been planned to coincide with Suga's first large-scale

retrospective exhibition in Europe, at the Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan, and a solo show at the Dia Foundation, New York.

While these two artists work on opposite sides of the world and were unaware of each other's art until this exhibition was conceived, they are united by their use of everyday materials to create sculptural works of sublime beauty, complexity and originality, which they make in response to specific spaces. For this exhibition, Black will make an entirely new body of work in the Gallery, and Suga will re-create some of his most celebrated works, as well as an entirely new piece conceived especially for the show.

Karla Black's works are often composed of ephemeral materials, and range from delicate cellophane, paper and polythene hanging pieces suspended with ribbon or tape, to large-scale floor-based sculptures made from plaster, chalk powder and soil. At times her sculptures appear as though on the point of breakdown, or conversely, as if they are floating unaided. Her great skill is in drawing out and playing with the physical properties of the materials she chooses – which in previous works have included soap, eye shadow, cotton wool, petroleum jelly, toothpaste and lip gloss – and altering our usual understanding of them.

Black's ambitious new body of work for *A New Order* will include a stunning room-sized sculpture made from cotton wool – her largest work to date using this material. Alongside this, she will be making a range of works with sugar paper, cellophane, balsa wood, PVA glue and polythene. Black selects her materials based on their physical qualities – their texture, colour and feel – rather than any cultural connotations or associations. Similarly, her regular use of pale pastel colours, in particular baby blues and pinks, is not intended as a comment on gender.

Kishio Suga was a key member of Mono-ha ("School of Things"),

a pioneering artistic movement which emerged in Japan in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and whose work continues to have a profound impact on Japanese art today. Though they were never a formal group, they shared an experimental and radical approach to materials, adopting simple, 'everyday' things, both natural and manufactured, such as stone, glass, iron, wire and earth. Rejecting representation, they explored instead the relationship between these materials and their impact on the space they occupied. Suga's use of rocks, timber, sand, zinc and paraffin in temporary, site-specific sculptural arrangements, which he calls 'situations', places him as one of the most thought-provoking and original artists working today, anticipating many of the concerns that are being addressed in contemporary sculpture.

Amongst the works that will be recreated for this exhibition is the spectacular *Left-Behind Situation* (1972) which consists of a single steel wire criss-crossing a room at two levels, upon which blocks of wood or stone are placed in precarious balance where the wire intersects. The work occupies the entire room, with the walls serving as the frame of the installation, and is a superb example of the way Suga brings diverse materials together in often apparently arbitrary configurations, and of the artist's ability to make manifest, in the most elemental form, often contradictory and intangible qualities.

Although Suga enjoys a growing international reputation and is a pivotal figure in contemporary Japanese art, he is little known in the UK. *A New Order* will be a unique opportunity for British audiences to discover his work, alongside that of one of the most ground-breaking artists of her generation, Karla Black. The title of the exhibition is taken from a 2005 essay by Suga, *Between 'being' and 'nothingness'*, in which he says, "...my final point in making artworks is to introduce ways to see and learn about things, to perceive an existing space differently so that viewers can experience a new kind of

order. If they can apply their experience with art into their daily life, the new order may find settlement there. I would like to introduce a new way of reacting (to situations) in all viewers."

This will be the first in a proposed series of free exhibitions that will seek to place a contemporary Scottish artist in a wider context, and bring the very best international art to Scotland.

Simon Groom, Director of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, commented: *"The bringing together of these two highly distinctive artists, like their practice of bringing together very different materials, promises to result in something utterly surprising, original and thought-provoking. Their works push at the limits of what sculpture can be and consistently challenge the qualities of their chosen materials, inspiring the viewer to see things afresh."*

KARLA BLACK AND KISHIO SUGA: A NEW ORDER

22 October 2016 – 19 February 2017

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (Modern One)

75 Belford Road, Edinburgh EH4 3DR

Admission FREE | 0131 624 6200

#BlackandSuga