

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Jiro Takamatsu

A central figure in post-war Japanese art, Jiro Takamatsu expanded points into volume, brought sculptural actions into the daily city life of Tokyo, made shadows and perspective tangible and mined the particular properties of sculptural materials.

Jiro Takamatsu was born in 1936, Tokyo, Japan. He died in 1998.

Takamatsu was an influential artist, theorist, and teacher in 1960s and 1970s Japan. His work combined subversive and playful aspects of Dada and Surrealism with an idiosyncratic use of Minimalism's refined visual language. After finishing studies in oil painting at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music in 1958, Takamatsu worked in a range of media, including sculpture, photography, painting, drawing, and performance.

Like Japan's Gutai Bijutsu Kyokai (Gutai Art Association, 1954–72), a group that sought to move away from museums, galleries and other institutional settings, Takamatsu created public interventions or activities outside the confines of exhibition spaces. With artists Genpei Akasegawa and Natsuyuki Nakanishi, Takamatsu formed the collective Hi Red Center (1963–64), which carried out actions in Tokyo to call attention to issues faced in the post-war urban climate. Takamatsu is also widely associated with the movement 'Mono-Ha' ('School of Things', 1967–79). Seeking to "reveal the world as it is", 'Mono-Ha' engaged the world through gesture, action, process and experimentation, rather than formal studio-art methods or finished artworks.

The artist's third solo exhibition at Stephen Friedman Gallery opened in September 2021, alongside a group presentation of Takamatsu and his contemporaries at Frieze Masters. This exhibition examined a fertile period of the artist's practice from the '70s and early '80s, focusing on a selection of paintings and drawings from his celebrated 'Space in Two Dimensions' series.

Takamatsu's work featured prominently in the exhibition 'Jiro Takamatsu, Hi Red Center, Hirata Minoru, Kim Ku Lim' at David Roberts Art Foundation, London, England in 2018. He was the subject of the major solo exhibition 'The Temperature of Sculpture' at Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, England in 2017 and a retrospective at the National Museum of Art Osaka in Japan in 2015.

Other notable solo exhibitions include 'Jiro Takamatsu and Keiji Uematsu in Conversation', Royal Society of Sculptors, London, England (2019); 'Jiro Takamatsu' at Stephen Friedman Gallery, London, England (2015); 'Mysteries', National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan (2014); 'Jiro Takamatsu', Stephen Friedman Gallery, London, England (2013); 'Words and Things, Refinement and Tautology', NADiff Gallery, Tokyo, Japan (2011); 'Point Line, Form of Absence', Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima, Japan (2009); 'Photograph of Photograph', Yumiko Chiba Associates/ Viewing Room Ginza, Tokyo, Japan (2008); 'Universe of His Thoughts, Fuchu Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan (2004); '1970s Three- dimensional Works and Others', Chiba City Museum of Art, Japan (2000).

Takamatsu's works are included in prominent collections internationally, including the Iwaki City Art Museum, Iwaki, Japan; Mie Prefectural Art Museum, Tsu City, Japan; Shizuoka Prefectural Museum of Art, Shizuoka, Japan; Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Toyota Aichi, Japan; The National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan; The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan; Dallas Museum of Art, USA; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA; Le Musée de l'Objet, Blois, France and Tate, London, England.