

Aki Sasamoto
Point Reflection

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QUEENS MUSEUM

Aki Sasamoto

Point Reflection

Aki Sasamoto: Point Reflection presents a selection of recent works and premieres a new performance by New York-based artist Aki Sasamoto. A unique synthesis of visual art and theatrical performance, Sasamoto's work engages the banal and universal in human behavior through her kinetic installation and eccentric acts and monologues.

Sasamoto's practice revolves around the idea of changes and phases, predictability and unpredictability in life with wide ranging topics including cravings, laundry, romance, and aging. The exhibition title "point reflection" refers to a flipped mirror image of a condition in geometry, and a reflection point is the mirror point on the opposite side of the axis. This exhibition includes works in which these abstract concepts are "performed" by animated objects serving as stand-ins for the artist: groups of snail shells or whisky tumblers that are

air-driven into a frantic spinning motion. Sasamoto meticulously produces and choreographs physical elements and their movements in her installations, weaving layers of meaning through scientific, visual, and linguistic wordplay: what are the connections between the counterclockwise coiling of snail shells and left-handed boxers?; how does a weeklong tornado forecast mirror the ailments in a human body and mind?

With her fascination in evolutionary biology and meteorology, Sasamoto's work acts as an experimental system of improvisation and repetition. Here, the unsuspected normalities in everyday life undergo rigorous testing giving rise to unlikely metaphors and associations in a structured chaos where familiar turns unfamiliar, and vice versa.

Aki Sasamoto: Point Reflection is organized by Hitomi Iwasaki, Head of Exhibitions / Curator. The installation and the performance *Point Reflection* are produced in collaboration with AlSarah, Madeline Best, Matt Bauder, and Ben Hagari. The exhibition is produced in cooperation with the Queens Museum team: Brian Balderston, Lindsey Berfond, Hayley Blackstone, Sarah Cho, Gianina Enriquez, Catherine Grau, Mayisha Hassan, Lauren Haynes, Adrienne Koteen, Amari-Grey Johnson, Lynn Maliszewski, Gabriela Peralta, Aaron Strauss, Heryte T. Tequame, Tiffany Tong, and Maria Fernanda Zambrano; Queens Museum fabricators and preparators: Max Bell, Noemi Bilger, Jackson Denahy, Mark Dwinell, Magnus Gitt Henderson, Brittany Hayden, Taly Kornblum Laudi, Clare Koury, Martin Kramer, Ajay Kurian, Samantha Lasko, Juyon Lee, Erik Nilson, Jetaime Nkiru, Mallie Sanford, and Claude Viaud Peralta; and Eco Management LLC: Max Bell, Sam Branden, Dilan Cheavacci, Mark Power, and Chad Stayrook.

Aki Sasamoto wishes to thank her collaborators, as well as ongoing support from Bortolami, New York, and Take Ninagawa, Tokyo. Special thanks to Soyka Sheetmetal and UrbanGlass.

An audio description narrated by Sarah Cho, Assistant Curator, can be found on the Queens Museum Digital Guide, available for free on the Bloomberg Connects App.

Aki Sasamoto

b. Kanagawa, Japan, 1980

Sink or Float, 2022

Mixed media installation including snail shell, sugar packet, sponge, feather, plastic wall-hook, coffee cup lid, magnifier, altered industrial kitchen sink and appliance with LED light, HVAC duct, centrifugal fan, and illustrated whiteboard

Courtesy of the artist and Bortolami, New York, and Take Ninagawa, Tokyo

Sasamoto adapted the airflow mechanism to “float” assorted everyday objects—some are sculpturally altered—inside the kitchen “sinks,” setting them off to the chaotic whirl of spinning and gliding. These objects including snail shells (some with feathers attached to reverse their spinning direction), cubed sponges, plastic hooks, coffee cup lids, and sugar packets are grouped variously among the sinks. Fluctuating between collective and individual, predictable and unpredictable, their movement

deviates from scientific predictions. They scatter onto the whiteboards to join the marker drawings and scripts, as well as the inside of the refrigerator and the rotisserie oven bathed in colored LED light. Mysterious and playful at once, the objects in motion prompt analogies and analysis that extend beyond their unexpected universe in the commercial kitchen setting.



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Aki Sasamoto

b. Kanagawa, Japan, 1980

Point Reflection, 2023

Performance/Installation

HDPE plastic, wood, blowers, hardware, LED lights, electronics, ducts, and various objects

Lighting Design: Madeline Best

Original Music: AlSarah and Matt Bauder

Courtesy of the artist and Bortolami, New York, and Take Ninagawa, Tokyo

Point Reflection (Video), 2023

Single channel video with sound

Video Soundtrack: Matt Bauder

Cinematography: Ben Hagari

Courtesy of the artist and Bortolami, New York, and Take Ninagawa, Tokyo



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Aki Sasamoto

b. Kanagawa, Japan, 1980

Past in a future tense, 2019

Past in a future tense, Bar end: hand-blown glass, whiskey glass, HVAC duct, electric fan, speed control, red oak, foot rail, coat hook, umbrella; *Past in a future tense, Table 1* and *Past in a future tense, Table 2*: hand-blown glass, whiskey glass, HVAC duct, centrifugal fan, speed control, red oak, and iron table base

Courtesy of the artist and Bortolami, New York, and Take Ninagawa, Tokyo

Sasamoto puts an unexpected twist on subjects that she pulls from her everyday life such as breakups, doing laundry, and craving. In this bar-style installation, a shot of air is served as a “drink” that puts a whiskey glass into spinning motion. The artist learned the unpredictable laws governing this air-driven mechanism while skillfully crafting and calibrating these glass sculptures to

perform the spinning. The rapid spinning can slow to a complete stillness, only to resume spinning without a discernible pattern of the cycle, as if echoing the complex tension between the desire for control (both of science and of humans) and the untamable human nature.



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Aki Sasamoto

b. Kanagawa, Japan, 1980

Weather Bar #1, 2019

Single channel video with sound

4 min 47 sec

Weather Bar #2, 2019

Single channel video with sound

3 min 35 sec

Courtesy of the artist and Bortolami, New York, and
Take Ninagawa, Tokyo

Weather Bar #1 and *#2* feature TV monitors that showcase weather forecasts performed by Sasamoto at a bar counter. While demonstrating the weather conditions in a manner that is a cross between that of a bartender and a high-school science teacher, the artist translates planet-wide extreme weather events into a “local” one, a disastrous gastronomic turmoil inside a human body. In these videos, she methodically

demonstrates a week-long daily tornado warning with a countertop vortex of fire.

Sasamoto's forecast performance is a cross-section of meteorology, health consultation, and fortune-telling. It serves as a satirical metaphor for the recent extraordinary world events and climate changes, as well as sudden shifts and treacherous transitions in life that often assert themselves independent of human control.



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