

TADASHI KAWAMATA UNDER THE WATER

10 December 2011 – 18 January 2012

Kamel Mennour is pleased to present “Under the Water”, Tadashi Kawamata’s second solo exhibition at the gallery.

Made, in part, using reclaimed timber, the Japanese artist Tadashi Kawamata’s works sometimes give the impression of pouring forth like a river bursting its banks. This is true, most notably, for the *Gandamaison* project at the Maréchalerie art center in Versailles in 2008, for which the artist assembled more than 5000 wooden crates that appear to be tumbling down from the roof of the Jules Hardouin Mansart building.

For his second solo exhibition at galerie kamel mennour, Tadashi Kawamata is putting together a project destined to unsettle. Walking into the courtyard of no. 47 rue Saint-André des arts, visitors will be startled to see the sky blotted out by a kind of perforated ceiling, made up of pieces of wood put together in anarchic fashion. Throughout their journey around the gallery’s three ground-floor spaces, they will be towered over by this strange and disturbing hanging pergola, which appears to be animated in places by a slight swell.

The artist has already created environments similar in form, one of them being at Munich’s Haus der Kunst in 1998. However, this new Tadashi Kawamata sculpture marks a departure from his previous works due to its dramatic dimension. Affected by the catastrophes that have wreaked havoc in Japan this year, the artist has conceived of his structure as a motionless and deadly wave, in a reference to all those bits of broken wood carried along by the receding tsunami, which saturated the ocean surface with their sheer quantity. These remains of coastal houses and villages, which are faintly reminiscent of votive offerings, are also fragments of broken lives – departed souls destined to roam the edges of the Pacific Ocean forever. Which is why, in this new installation entitled *Under the Water*, the artist turns the world upside down, so that the surface of the water becomes, very simply, a sky.

Born in 1953 in Hokkaido, Japan, Tadashi Kawamata lives and works in Tokyo and Paris.

His work has been exhibited all over the world, at institutions including the Pompidou Center in Paris, the HKW in Berlin, the Art Tower Mito in Mito, the Serpentine Gallery in London, the Art Pace Foundation for Contemporary Art in San Antonio and the MACBA in Barcelona; it also has featured at numerous biennials, such as that of Venice (1982), documenta VIII and IX (1987-1992), the São Paulo Art Biennial (1987), the Lyon Biennale of Contemporary Art (1993), the Münster Skulptur Projekte (1997), the Biennale of Sydney (1998), Art Focus in Jerusalem (1999), the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale in Niigata (2000), the Shanghai Biennale, the Busan Biennale (2002), the Valencia Biennale (2004), the Melle Biennale (2009) and the Evento Biennale in Bordeaux (2009).

Tadashi Kawamata “Under the Water” is on show at galerie kamel mennour from Tuesday to Saturday, 11am to 7pm.

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