

Press release February / March 2019

Maurer Zilioli guest at kunstbüro reillplast  
Amalienstr. 21  
80333 München

MARI IWAMOTO  
DESPO SOPHOCLEOUS  
5541 km



Despo Sophocleous



Mari Iwamoto

13 – 17 March 2019  
Opening: 12 March 2019, 7 p.m.

Opening hours: 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

For many years now, we at the project space Kunstbüro Reillplast have been showing recent stances and experimental approaches in an installation specially created for Munich Jewellery Week. In 2019 two more outstanding protagonists will present their current works: Mari Iwamoto (b. 1987 in Tokyo) and Despo Sophocleous (b. 1977 in Nova Scotia). Both artists underwent comprehensive training and ultimately studied at the Munich Academy before enjoying success in various exhibitions. They are both united by the fundamental belief in treating jewellery as an artistic phenomenon and cultivating it as a medium to explore different subject matter. Occasionally Iwamoto will branch out into a sculptural dimension, Sophocleous with paper, drawing and photography. Yet jewellery forms the mainstay of their work.

In her latest series Iwamoto deals with unexploded shells. Her pendants were inspired by bombs, thought to be inactive, from past wars. Threatening yet appealing, they illustrate the aesthetic of horror, which can very quickly turn into dark seduction. Design, concept, content and subject matter come together to form a unique alliance. Sophocleous is dedicated to the constructive visualisation of experiences in the widest sense. Paths once taken, experienced urban spaces, complex emotional processes, structural and architectural studies are all part of this and are united and adopted into the jewellery object. Her preferred material, wood, lends a poetic note, which helps to visualise the – almost seemingly melancholic – ‘chronicles’ of these cognitive journeys.

Jewellery serves both artists as a metaphorical casing, one which contains multilayered reflections and approaches of an only seemingly subjective-personal nature, for historical references and socio-political stances also leave their mark here. Functioning as jewellery, references and intentions condense to become a vessel, an object of multifaceted form.



MARI IWAMOTO

\*1987 in Tokyo / Japan

#### Education

2006 –2010 Hiko Mizuno College of Jewelry in Tokyo (JP)  
2010 –2014 Akademie der Bildenden Künste München (Prof. Otto Künzli)  
2015 –2017 Akademie der Bildenden Künste München (Prof. Karen Pontoppidan)

#### Prizes and Acknowledgments

2017 Graduation / Diplom (Class Prof. Karen Pontoppidan) Prize  
2017 Senator–Bernhard–Borst–Preis (Graduation Prize) at Diplom exhibition  
Akademie der Bildenden Künste München Prizes (Nomination)  
2008 JAPAN JEWELLERY ART COMPETITION (JP)  
2013 SCHMUCK (DE)  
2018 BKV-Preis (DE)  
2018 Talente München (DE)

DESPO SOPHOCLEOUS

\*1977 in Nuova Scotia / Canada

#### Education

2008- 2015 Akademie der Bildenden Künste München, professor Otto Künzli, DE  
2004-2008 BFA, Major in Jewellery Design and Metalsmithing, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design  
University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, CA  
2006-2007 Hochschule Pforzheim, Fakultät für Gestaltung, Exchange Study, DE  
1995-2000 BA, Major in Philosophy, Minor in Anthropology, University College of Cape Breton, Sydney,  
Nova Scotia, CA

#### Awards | Scholarships | Grants (Selection)

2017 Arts Across Canada, Travel Grant, Canada Council for the Arts  
2013 STIBET-Programm des Deutschen Akademischen Austauschdienstes  
2012 Herbert Hofmann Preis, Handwerkskammer für München und Oberbayern  
Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst Scholarship  
2010 DAAD, Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst Graduate Scholarship  
2009 DAAD, Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst Graduate Scholarship  
Governor General's Silver Medal Award, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University  
2008 Charlotte Wilson-Hammond/Visual Arts Nova Scotia Award, Nova Scotia Talent Trust  
2007 Robert Pope Foundation Undergraduate Award, Nova Scotia College of Art and  
Design University