

Kohei Nawa: Cosmic Sensibility

November 22, 2023 – January 20, 2024
267 Itaewon-ro
Seoul



Kohei Nawa, *Spark#6* (detail), 2023 © Kohei Nawa

Seoul—Pace is pleased to present an exhibition of new works by Kohei Nawa at its Seoul gallery. On view from November 22, 2023 to January 20, 2024, the presentation, titled *Cosmic Sensibility*, marks the artist's first solo show at Pace's gallery in the Korean capital. Bringing together paintings and sculptures from five bodies of work—including the new Spark series—this exhibition will showcase Nawa's deep and enduring interest in the perceptual, sensorial, and phenomenological possibilities of art.

Nawa often examines scientific and digital subjects through his multidisciplinary practice. Making use of various traditional and unconventional materials—and drawing out their unique properties—for his work across painting, sculpture, and installation, the artist explores the nuanced relationships between physical and virtual spaces; synthetic and natural forces; and the individual and the collective. Visual distortions and transformations cut across Nawa's works, encouraging viewers to consider the ways that digital technologies impact their relationship to and experience of the physical world.

The five bodies of works the artist will show in his forthcoming exhibition speak to his longstanding interest in visual distortions and paradoxes. With *Cosmic Sensibility*, Nawa invites viewers to immerse in the wonders and mysteries of the vast universe. The exhibition's central concept—the ways that our individual lives are entwined in the fabric of the cosmos—pays homage to artist Hitoshi Nomura, who died in October 2023 and is known for his deeply experimental, process-based work. A teacher and mentor of Nawa, Nomura remains an enduring and profound influence on the artist's work across mediums.

Nawa's show will begin on the ground floor of the gallery, where the visitors will encounter a new sculpture from his iconic PixCell series along with the mixed-media installation *Biomatrix (W)* (2023), which traces the generation and flow of cellular forms within a canvas of flowing silicone oil, and works from the artist's Ether sculpture series, based on 3D modeling of a highly viscous liquid in various stages of descent. Exhibited in conversation with one another, these artworks reflect the abstract, textural qualities of individual and aggregated cells.

On the gallery's second floor, the exhibition will transport viewers into a world of proliferating cells, spotlighting a group of new sculptures from the PixCell series. These sculptures feature transparent spheres, or cells, covering their surfaces. The cells transform and distort viewers' perceptions of the forms beneath—a visual phenomenon that speaks to the impact of digital technologies on individuals' relationships to the world around them. The new PixCell sculptures that Nawa will exhibit in *Cosmic Sensibility* feature strange combinations of antique furniture and other miscellaneous objects.

While referencing the international history of Surrealism, these works also engage with issues of the present moment—particularly the ways that innovations in virtual reality and artificial intelligence blur the boundary between the physical and virtual worlds.

Other highlights in the exhibition include bold, enigmatic sculptures from the artist's new, never-before-exhibited Spark series, which are finished entirely in solid black. With these works—each composed of velvet, and a carbon fiber rod—Nawa meditates on a rift in the fabric of reality caused by the energy of agitated cells. The presentation will also spotlight his Rhythm series, which features combinations of variously sized shapes covered in velvet and situated atop two-dimensional planes. Reflecting the aesthetic concerns of his PixCell sculptures, Nawa's mesmeric Rhythm works explore the cyclical, energetic complexities of the natural world.

Kohei Nawa (b. 1975, Osaka, Japan) is a multidisciplinary sculptor whose diverse practice explores the perception of virtual and physical space and probes the borders between nature and artificiality. He examines relationships between the individual and the whole, illustrating how parts aggregate together, like cells, to create complex and dynamic structures. His work spans painting, drawing, sculpture, and installation, as well as various facets of design and collaborative projects through his Kyoto-based studio, Sandwich. Nawa's use of synthetic compounds underscores a recurring theme wherein materials such as polyurethane foam, translucent beads, ink, paint, glue, and silicone oil become devices that prompt an awareness of our mediated environment.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.





Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon.

Today, Pace has seven locations worldwide, including European footholds in London and Geneva as well as Berlin, where the gallery established an office in 2023. Pace maintains two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace's long and pioneering history in California includes a gallery in Palo Alto, which was open from 2016 to 2022. Pace's engagement with Silicon Valley's technology industry has had a lasting impact on the gallery at a global level, accelerating its initiatives connecting art and technology as well as its work with experiential artists. Pace consolidated its West Coast activity through its flagship in Los Angeles, which opened in 2022. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, along with an office and viewing room in Beijing. In spring 2024, Pace will open its first gallery space in Japan in Tokyo's new Azabudai Hills development.

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