

Hara Museum of Contemporary Art

Press Release November 22, 2011

Jean-Michel Othoniel, *My Way* January 7 (Saturday) – March 11 (Sunday), 2012

The first solo exhibition in Japan of the renowned French artist Jean-Michel Othoniel
A retrospective featuring his large-scale jewelry-like glass sculptural works, with approximately 60 pieces on view,
including examples from early in his career



Lacan's Knot (Le Nœud de Lacan) 2009 (detail) mirrored glass, metal 150 x 135 x 50 cm

©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012 Collection François Odermatt Photo by Guillaume Ziccarelli Courtesy of Galerie Perrotin, Paris

The Hara Museum of Contemporary Art is pleased to present the first solo exhibition in Japan of the French artist Jean-Michel Othoniel. Reconstructed within the unique space of the Hara Museum, formerly a private residence, is the artist's retrospective exhibition that was first launched at the Centre Pompidou in Paris where it proved to be one of the most popular shows in the history of the museum.

As one of France's most prominent contemporary artists, Jean-Michel Othoniel is known for his large-scale glass sculptures, such as the sculptural piece *Le Kiosque des Noctambules* (2000) which adorns the entrance of the Palais-Royal–Musée du Louvre metro station in the center of Paris. He has also held exhibitions at major museums around the world. In Japan, the artist installed a large outdoor sculpture entitled *Kokoro* (2009) at Hara Museum ARC, the Hara Museum's annex in Shibukawa, Gunma prefecture. This permanent installation, a unique heart-shaped work made of red-colored glass globes, now provides a warm welcome to every visitor to the museum.

The present exhibition showcases works spanning 25 years of the artist's career. Numbering some 60 pieces, they range from early works made with sulfur and beeswax to his most recent large-scale sculptures made with colorful Murano glass from Italy. The title of the exhibition is taken from the song made famous by Frank Sinatra, "My Way," which is symbolic of a unique vision unswayed by popular trends.

We invite you to experience life and death, freedom and suffering, beauty and sensuality through the work that comprises Othoniel's world.

Exhibition Details

Title: *Jean-Michel Othoniel, My Way*

Dates: Saturday, January 7 – Sunday, March 11, 2012

Place: Hara Museum of Contemporary Art 4-7-25 Kitashinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 140-0001

Tel: +81 3-3445-0651 E-mail: info@haramuseum.or.jp

Museum website: <http://www.haramuseum.or.jp> Mobile site: <http://mobile.haramuseum.or.jp>

<http://www.art-it.asia/u/HaraMuseum/> (blog)

Twitter <http://twitter.com/haramuseum> (in Japanese only/ Account name: @haramuseum)

Organized by: Hara Museum of Contemporary Art

Co-organized by: Centre Pompidou

Special cooperation provided by: Embassy of France in Japan, Atout France

Supported by: Institut Français

Sponsored by: Bonpoint Japon K.K., Saint-Just

Place: Hara Museum of Contemporary Art

Hours: 11:00 am–5:00 pm, Wednesdays until 8:00 pm (last entry 30 minutes before closing)

Closed: Mondays (open on January 9), January 10

Admission: General 1,000 yen; Students 700 yen (high school and university) or 500 yen (elementary and junior high); Free for Hara Museum members, students through high school every Saturday during the school term; 100 yen discount per person for groups of 20 or more.

Directions: 5 minutes by taxi or 15 minutes on foot from JR Shinagawa Station (Takanawa exit); or from the same station take the No.96 bus, get off at the first stop (Gotenyama), and walk 3 minutes.

Related event: During the exhibition, *Enchanted Reality*, (*Le Reel Merveilleux*), a workshop for children, will be held in The Hall at the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art (organized by Bonpoint Japon and Hara Museum of Contemporary Art; curated by La Boite).

* A guided tour will be given by a museum curator on Sundays and national holidays (30 minutes; from 2:30 pm).

The exhibition *Jean-Michel Othoniel, My Way* has been designed by the Centre Pompidou in close collaboration with Jean-Michel Othoniel, and was presented at the Centre Pompidou, Paris, from March 2 to May 23, 2011.

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Overview

Jean-Michel Othoniel, My Way is the long-awaited solo exhibition of the artist. First launched at the Centre Pompidou in Paris in March 2011, the exhibition travels to three other cities—Seoul, New York and Tokyo. Ranging from early works made with sulphur and beeswax to his most recent large-scale sculptures made with glass, the exhibition assembles together some 60 pieces that provide an overview of a 25-year career distinguished by a unique vision unswayed by popular trends. Filled with Othoniel's innumerable beads, the space of the Hara Museum will truly be transformed into a labyrinth of gems. A large-scale outdoor glass sculpture is scheduled to be displayed.

Kiosk for the Night walkers (Le Kiosque des Noctambules) 2000
Murano glass, steel, aluminium, ceramics 560 x 600 x 200 cm
©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012 ©RATP-DGC
Photo by Jean-François Mauboussin



Who Is Jean-Michel Othoniel?

A Paris-based artist, Othoniel has received widespread recognition for his sparkling, jewelry-like artworks made with glass globes crafted on the Venetian island of Murano. Among these is the much-beloved sculptural piece *Le Kiosque des Noctambules* that he created in 2000 for the entrance to the Palais-Royal–Musée du Louvre metro station in Paris, a work that glitters vividly under the daylight sun and mysteriously under the street lights at night, conjuring up an entrance to another dimension.



Artist Profile

Jean-Michel Othoniel was born in 1964 in Saint-Etienne, France.

From the 1980s, he made art with materials of a mutable nature such as sulfur, lead, and beeswax, and from 1993, he began using glass. Distinguished by the decorative and sensual aspects of his art, he has had solo exhibitions at such venues as the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain (2003) and Centre Pompidou (2011) and has participated in international exhibitions that include Documenta IX (1992), Kwangju Biennale (2000) and 10th Istanbul Biennial (2007). In 1991, he participated in a group exhibition at Hara Museum ARC called *Too French*. At that time, he stayed for three weeks and created his artwork on-site. In 2006, his work was introduced at the *Collection of the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain* exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo. He currently lives in Paris. <http://www.galerieperrotin.com/> www.othoniel.fr

Jean-Michel Othoniel and the Hara Museum

The Hara Museum's association with Othoniel has deepened over a span of 20 years, starting in 1991 when the young artist resided in Japan for three weeks to create on-site a work of art for the exhibition *Too French* at Hara Museum ARC, our annex museum in Shibukawa, Gunma prefecture. In 2009, he installed a large-scale outdoor sculpture entitled *Kokoro* in the garden of ARC which now provides a warm welcome to every visitor to the museum. This work is distinguished by its shape, which looks abstract from one perspective and like a large heart from another, and also as an outdoor sculptural work made of glass—a fragile and ephemeral material.



Kokoro 2009 Murano glass, steel 300 x 280 x 135cm
©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012 Photo by Yuichi Shiraku
Permanent installation at Hara Museum ARC, Gunma

Featured Works:

The Soul Molded in the Bottom (L'Âme moulée au cul) 1989

sulfur, silver 8 x 20 x 20 cm

This piece is made with sulfur, a characteristic material in Othoniel's early work. At a time when Othoniel was mainly interested in photographic expression, he discovered sulfur while experimenting with photosensitive materials. In addition to the image of human waste that its smell and color evoked, Othoniel was drawn to sulfur's mutable nature and its associations with other words such as *souffrir* (to suffer) and *souffreteux* (sickly). He saw sulphur as an ideal material by which to grapple with and express the various conflicts within him. Sulphur is corrosive to silver, and thus the dome-shaped mound of sulphur alters the silver base over time.

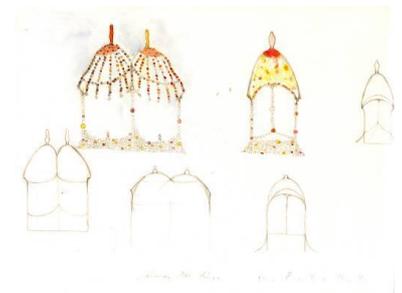


©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012 Artist Collection Photo by Guillaume Ziccarelli

Drawings Series (Aquarelle) 1996-2000

watercolor on paper 26 x 36 cm each without frame (17 in total)

These detailed sketches depict a bed, a dome and other things which were later realized in a large-scale glass sculpture. With color washes, the motifs are rendered in a lovable fashion and are embodiments of Othoniel's dreams.



Aimer tes héros (M.É.T.R.O.) 1997

©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012 Artist Collection Photo by Jean-Michel Othoniel

Untitled (Sans titre) 1997 flabbergasted Murano glass 30 x 12 x 12 cm

Othoniel started using glass from around 1993. While continuing an interest in mutable materials such as sulphur and beeswax, he came to include glass as another material of the same category. Malleable when heated and rigid in form when cooled. The flaccid shape of this work makes it look like a glass blower's failed attempt at a vase. The useless lump of glass looks like a human body part, the warm red and orange colors adding emphasis as the glistening form droops in mid air.



©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012 Artist Collection Photo by Guillaume Ziccarelli

Black is Beautiful 2003 Murano glass 320 x 80 x 15 cm

This work comprises a double stranded necklace of black-colored glass beads. The beauty of glass lies in its unmuddled transparency; Othoniel, however, purposely uses glass of opaque black to emphasize the beauty of black as a color. The title draws a connection with the cultural movement launched by African-Americans in the 1960s, the aim of which was to destroy preconceptions about Black skin color, hair and facial features as being inferior to those of Whites. In this work, one senses Othoniel's gaze as it seeks to discover the unique beauty in every object or person.



©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012 Collection Cathy Vedovi Photo by André Morin Courtesy of Galerie Perrotin, Paris

Lacan's Knot (Le Nœud de Lacan) 2009 mirrored glass, steel 150 x 135 x 50 cm

In recent years, Othoniel's forms have become more abstract and less overtly sensual than before. In *Lacan's Knot*, he uses mirrored glass which adds a metallic sheen to the transparent quality of glass, producing an image that is quite futuristic. This form evokes the three Borromean rings that provided Jacques Lacan inspiration for his theory of human subjectivity.



©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012

Collection François Odermatt Photo by Guillaume Ziccarelli Courtesy of Galerie Perrotin, Paris

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[1] *Lacan's Knot (Le Nœud de Lacan)* (detail) 2009 mirrored glass, steel 150x135x50 cm

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[2] *Lacan's Knot (Le Nœud de Lacan)* 2009 mirrored glass, steel 150x135x50 cm

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[3] *Diary of Happiness* 2008 Murano glass, wood 206 x 348 x 33 cm

©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012 Private Collection Photo by Mariano C. Peuser Courtesy of Galerie Perrotin, Paris

[4] *Tears (Lagrimas)* 2002 glass, water, table 140 x 500 x 70 cm

©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012 Private Collection Photo by Guillaume Ziccarelli Courtesy of Galerie Perrotin, Paris

[5] *My Bed (Mon Lit)* 2002 Murano glass, steel, aluminum, soft-furnishings, felt 290 x 240 x 190 cm

©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012 Collection François Odermatt Photo by Patrick Gries Courtesy of Galerie Perrotin, Paris

[6] *Self-Portrait in Priest's Robe (Autportrait en robe de prêtre)* 1986 black and white photograph 4.6 x 6.7 cm (framed 33 x 43 x 3 cm)

©Jean-Michel Othoniel/Adagp, Paris 2012 Artist Collection Photo by Jean-Michel Othoniel

For publicity materials please contact the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art (Watanabe, Kajita) by telephone or email.

Tel: +81-3-3280-0679 Fax: +81-3-5791-7630 E-mail: press@haramuseum.or.jp

4-7-25 Kitashinagawa, Shinagawa-ku Tokyo 140-0001