

DEVALS

NOBUO SEKINE



Nobuo Sekine was a Japanese sculptor who resided in both Tokyo, Japan, and L.A., California.

Born in 19 September 1942 in Saitama Prefecture, Japan; died 13 May 2019 in L.A., California.

Born in 1942 in Saitama, Japan, Sekine Nobuo has become a seminal figure in the Mono-ha movement—a pivotal force in shaping postwar Japanese modern art. He earned his B.F.A. in Painting from Tama Art University in 1968, where he studied under renowned mentors such as Yoshishige Saito and Jiro Takamatsu. Almost immediately after graduating, Sekine began to play a central role in international exhibitions, helping to define the “School of Things” movement.

In 1968, he created *Phase-Mother Earth*, a work now regarded as a cornerstone of the movement. This groundbreaking piece not only set the stage for the future of earth, installation, and minimalist art in Asia but also reflected his deep engagement with Zen philosophy and his exploration of spatial properties—a nod to the principles of topology. Sekine’s international recognition continued to grow when he represented Japan at the 35th Venice Biennale in 1970 with his *Phase of Nothingness* series. Over the decades, he has participated in major biennials in France, Japan, and Korea, further solidifying his impact on contemporary art. In 2001, his contributions were honored at Tate Modern during the *Century City* exhibition.

His work has been featured in numerous landmark exhibitions, including *Parallel Views: Italian and Japanese Art from the 1950s, 60s, and 70s* at The Warehouse in Dallas (2013), *Prima Materia* at Punta Della Dogana in Venice (2013), and *Tokyo 1955-1970: A New Avant-Garde* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (2012). Retrospectives such as *Reconsidering Mono-ha* at the National Museum of Art in Osaka (2005) and the touring show *Phase of Nothingness—Black* in Germany (Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf), in Denmark (Louisiana Museum), in the Netherlands (Kröller-Müller Museum), and in Norway (Henie-Onstad Art Center in Høvikodden) (1978-1979).

Today, Sekine Nobuo’s work is held in prestigious public collections worldwide, including institutions such as the Hara Museum in Tokyo, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Kawagoe City Art Museum, National Museum of Art in Osaka, the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Gwacheon, the Louisiana Museum in Denmark, the Kröller-Müller Museum in the Netherlands, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter in Norway, and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in the United States.

2014

Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

2013

Parallel Views: Italian and Japanese Art from the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, The Warehouse, Dallas, USA.

Prima Materia, Punta della Dogana, Venice, Italy.

2012

Tokyo 1955-1970: A New Avant-Garde, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA.

2011

Re-creations 1970/2011, Kamakura Gallery, Kamakura, Japan.

Monogatari, Shanghai Sculpture Space, Shanghai, China.

2010

BE-UP-ART, Tokyo, Japan.

Nobuo Sekine : The Void in Contemporary Art, Chiba City Museum of Art, Chiba, Japan.

2009

Center Gallery, Yokohama, Japan.

Kawagoe Gallery, Kawagoe, Japan.

2008

Gallery Bijutsu Sekai, Tokyo, Japan.

Gallery Art Composition, Tokyo, Japan.

PYO Gallery, Seoul, South Korea.

2007

Center Gallery, Yokohama, Japan Gallery Bijutsu Sekai, Tokyo, Japan.

Gallery Bijutsu Sekai, Tokyo, Japan.

Shina Gallery, Kyoto, Japan.

2006

Saint Paul Gallery, Maebashi, Japan.

Gallery Bijutsu Sekai, Tokyo, Japan.

2005

Reconsidering Mono-ha, National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan.

MANIF 11! '05 SEOUL, Seoul Art Center, Seoul, South Korea.

2001

Mono-ha : The Art of the Real, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France.

1999

Mono-ha – The Awakening of Modern Art in Japan, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, USA.

1997

Nobuo Sekine : Phase of Nothingness, Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art, Kitakyushu, Japan.

1978 - 1979

Phase of Nothingness—Black, Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany.

Phase of Nothingness—Black, Louisiana Museum, Humlebæk, Denmark.

Phase of Nothingness—Black, Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, Netherlands.

Phase of Nothingness—Black, Henie-Onstad Art Center, Høvikodden, Norway.