

Kohei Nawa: *PixCell_Moment*

May 13 – July 1, 2022
229 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto

Opening Reception: May 12, 5–6:30 PM



Kohei Nawa, *Moment Photography (2021:05:15 14:06:14)*, 2022 © Kohei Nawa, courtesy Pace Gallery

Palo Alto – Pace is pleased to present an exhibition of work by Kohei Nawa at its Palo Alto gallery, marking the artist’s first solo show in the Bay Area since his gallery exhibition at Pace in 2018. Titled *PixCell_Moment* and featuring photography, painting, and sculpture, the exhibition will run from May 13 to July 1.

Nawa is known internationally for his multidisciplinary practice exploring scientific and digital phenomena through sensory and perceptual experiences. While he considers himself primarily a sculptor, the artist also works in photography, painting, and installation. His latest exhibition with Pace focuses on the ways humans perceive and understand objects and images in the fast-paced age of social media, where information and disinformation spread rapidly.

The show at Pace’s Palo Alto gallery will bring together Nawa’s *Moment* series of photographs and paintings and his *PixCell* sculpture series. In the photographs and sculptures on view, the artist creates magnified, distorted, and blurred images in which the “surface” functions as an interface to grasp the physical perception of reality.

Four new sculptures from Nawa’s *PixCell* series figure prominently in the exhibition. For these works, all of which were created in 2022, the artist situates transparent spheres atop the surfaces of readymade objects, including a 1963 Sony micro television and a telephone from 1984. Nawa acquires these objects through online auctions, and he covers them with orbs to produce a pixelated effect, magnifying and distorting their exterior features. The *PixCell* sculptures reflect the artist’s ongoing investigations of fragmentation and transfiguration in his practice.

Nawa captures his black-and-white *Moment* photographs—another highlight of the exhibition—at a high speed, creating stretched, vertiginous images of landscapes with a digital camera that are produced as Lambda c-type prints, combining digital and silver printing processes. Featuring obscured, almost indiscernible scenes, the photographs in this body of work simulate the effect of viewing a fast-moving target from a fixed point. These semi-abstract works, which exemplify Nawa’s deep interest in visual ambiguity and multiplicity, challenge photographic conventions. Having started creating the series during the pandemic, the *Moment* images can be understood as part of Nawa’s recent return to photography, a medium he explored prior to the start of his career. These works will be presented alongside cameras, telephones, and an old vintage television, which resonate with Palo Alto’s history of technological innovation.

Also included in Nawa's exhibition with Pace in Palo Alto are abstract works from his Moment painting series, which he began in 2014. In these works, the artist uses pressurized tanks of ink to create spontaneous abstractions on canvases. Through a mechanized process, parallel lines of ink run across Nawa's canvases, producing surprising variations in weight and form depending on the air pressure in the tanks and their nozzle size. "By subtly reducing the pressure in the tank, the lines are occasionally interrupted by fine, irregular rhythms, and controlling the coarseness and density of the line accumulation creates a spatial-temporal depth," Nawa has said.

Opening June 18, Nawa's forthcoming solo exhibition at the Towada Art Center in Japan will coincide with his presentation at Pace in Palo Alto. The artist's *VESSEL* performance, a collaboration with choreographer Damien Jalet, will be staged at the Torinodanza Festival in Turin, Italy, in September 2022 and at La Filature in Mulhouse, France, in January 2023.

Kohei Nawa (b. 1975, Osaka, Japan) is a multidisciplinary artist 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 President and 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.

The gallery has also spearheaded explorations into the intersection of art and technology through its new business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists cultivating advanced studio practices. Pace's presence in Silicon Valley since 2016 has bolstered its longstanding support of experimental practices and digital artmaking. As part of its commitment to technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace launched a hub for its Web3 activity, Pace Verso, in November 2021.

Today, Pace has ten locations worldwide including a European foothold in London and Geneva, and 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 was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing. In 2020, Pace opened satellite exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach, with continued programming on a seasonal basis. In 2022, the gallery opened its West Coast flagship in Los Angeles, and continues to operate its gallery in Palo Alto.



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