

Marlborough

PRESS RELEASE

For press inquiries please contact
Angela Suh at (212) 541-4900
or press@marlboroughgallery.com

MICHELE OKA DONER

APRIL 16 - MAY 23, 2015

OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 6-8PM

NEW YORK, NEW YORK: The Directors of Marlborough Gallery are pleased to announce an exhibition of new works by Michele Oka Doner, curated by Todd Levin. The exhibition entitled *Feasting on Bark* will open on April 16 and continue through May 23, 2015. An internationally acclaimed artist whose prolific career spans four decades, Oka Doner is inspired by a lifelong study and appreciation of the natural world from which she derives her formal vocabulary.

The exhibition includes life-sized bronze and wax figures, blown glass balls in varying sizes that are hand-etched with the forms of pollen seeds or distant planets, anthropomorphic terracotta figures, bronze bees—as Gregory Volk has written in the catalogue essay, “...sculptures that resemble plants, plants that resemble sculptures, rock shards that look human, bronze or wax forms that look to be growing, fossils that look magical, and bodies that look vegetal...” This body of work is influenced by the artist’s knowledge of botany and entomology. Prominently featured among these works is *Hominin Relic*, a fossil-like, monumental figure made of tree bark and wax hanging from a scaffold; a work that appears at once animated and fossilized.

Oka Doner’s works on paper explore yet another facet of her art derived from nature. *Corpus Origin*, which is featured in the exhibition, is a seven-foot high shrouded figure composed with the roots of a banyan tree laid upon abacà paper. Beyond the apparent figure, there is the inextricable history of its medium: Oka Doner made the work from the tree roots of a particular banyan tree in Miami Beach that has captivated her since her childhood in the 1950s. A further series of nineteen works on paper illustrate the artist’s usage of paper inlaid with bark and other organic materials, which also allude to the central theme of the exhibition, *Feasting on Bark*. Each of these works is imbued with a personal sense of history and significance to the artist; these are works composed of objects that Oka Doner has collected over many years in her travels. Centrally displayed in the exhibition is a 16-foot table that holds a selection of the artist’s hand-made books bound with lead, wood or paper covers, containing the artist’s evocative drawings of flora and fauna on soft, tissue-like paper.

Committed to art at an early age, Oka Doner studied at the University of Michigan School of Art and Design. There she was introduced to the design-oriented philosophies of the Bauhaus and the Arts and Crafts movement and began her exploration of the ceramic medium. In 1966 she received a Bachelor of Science and Design from the university followed by a Master of Fine Arts in 1968. Oka Doner soon began exhibiting in commercial galleries and gained recognition for her art from collectors and curators. In the 1980s, Oka Doner’s primary medium shifted from clay to metal, and she continues to work in the lost wax method creating wax forms that are later cast in bronze or silver. A masterful metalworker, Oka Doner has developed the ability to cast the most delicate materials such as palm fronds or moss. For this exhibition, Oka Doner cast a number of sizeable bronze figures, finished with rich earth-toned patinas.

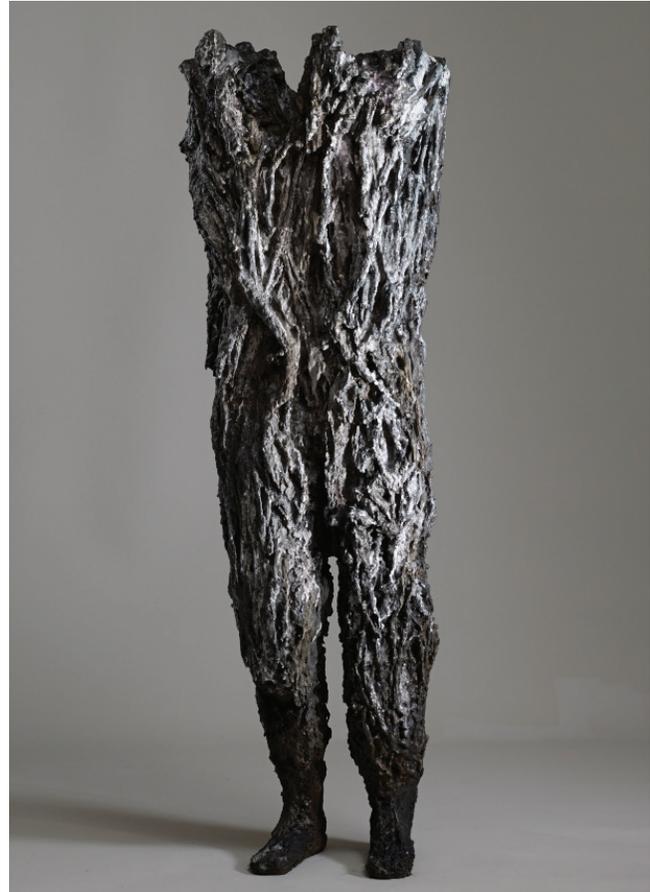


IMAGE: *Purana*, 2015, cast bronze
67 x 22 x 16 in., 170.2 x 55.9 x 40.6 cm

CONTINUED >>

MARLBOROUGH GALLERY, INC.

40 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019
t. (212) 541-4900 / f. (212) 541-4948
www.marlboroughgallery.com

NEW YORK | LONDON | MONACO | MADRID

Most recently, Michele Oka Doner has been commissioned by the Miami City Ballet to design the sets and costumes for the 2016 production of *A Midsummer's Night Dream*. The Perez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) will hold a simultaneous solo exhibition of Oka Doner's work titled, *How I Caught a Swallow in Mid Air*. The exhibition will be on view from March 25th to September 9th of 2015.

Michele Oka Doner is widely recognized for her numerous public art installations, which include *A Walk on the Beach* at the Miami International Airport (1995-2009), a mile-long concourse of dark terrazzo inlaid with bronze and mother-of-pearl. Other installations include *Radiant Site* at the Herald Square subway station in New York City; *Flight* at the Ronald Reagan International Airport, Arlington, Virginia; and three United States courthouses in Greeneville, Tennessee. Oka Doner's work is included in the collections of numerous museums and private collections in the United States and Europe such as: The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago; Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, New York; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris.



IMAGE: *The Wounded Healer*, 2013
organic material in abaca paper
39 7/8 x 28 7/8 in., 101.3 x 73.3 cm



IMAGE: *Hominin, Burnt*, 2015, burned wood and wax, steel base
44 x 14 1/2 x 4 3/8 in., 111.8 x 36.8 x 11.1 cm

Oka Doner has received numerous awards and grants which include the Legends Award, Pratt Institute; the Award of Excellence from the United Nations Society of Writers and Artists; a Kress Foundation grant; and a grant from the New York State Council of the Arts, among others. She has a Bachelor of Science and Design and a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Michigan, where she has given many lectures and workshops and serves on the Advisory Committee for The University of Michigan Museum of Art. She is a Trustee of the Wolfsonian-Florida International University Museum in Miami Beach and has served on the board of directors of Pratt Institute. Recent publications of Oka Doner's work include *Natural Seduction*, published by Hudson Hills Press (2003), and *Workbook*, published by Oka Press (2004), featuring blueprints of cast bronzes for her public art projects.

PRESS RELEASE

For press inquiries please contact
Angela Suh at (212) 541-4900
or press@marlboroughgallery.com

MARLBOROUGH GALLERY, INC.

40 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019
t. (212) 541-4900 / f. (212) 541-4948
www.marlboroughgallery.com