

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GALLERY II **Mayumi Sarai**

May 29 – June 28, 2014

Lori Bookstein Fine Art is pleased to announce an exhibition of recent sculpture by Mayumi Sarai. This is the artist's first solo-show with the gallery.

Sarai's process is incredibly labor-intensive. She has always been drawn to sculpture and the personal effort that is a necessary part of the craft. Beginning with a piece of found wood, she collects discarded branches and limbs that she herself, using Japanese chisels and tools, carves into massive numbers of smaller elements. Those elements are then built into much greater forms that are at once reflective of nature and at the same time, highly personal.

Despite the hardness of the wood, the artist's work is incredibly dynamic. In *Portrait of My Hair*, Sarai's hundreds of small orbs reflect the fluid movement of long hair, while the twisted lines and "active transliteration of a human gesture" found in *Knot #2* show the dynamism of form. In *Beginning*, the three-dimensionality of Sarai's works is even more emphatic, as the molecular-like elements seem to burst forth from the wall into the realm of the viewer.

While the artist's continued interest in Japanese Buddhist sculpture and African tribal fetish and fertility sculpture are readily apparent in this body of work, there is also a strong utilitarian element to the work. Sarai's forms suggest activities such as braiding hair, weaving baskets or sewing quilts. Once combined, Sarai's naturalistic, biomorphic pieces achieve a spiritual quality and meditative emotional resonance that belie their laborious and methodical execution.

Mayumi Sarai (b. 1966, Aichi, Japan) received her BFA in Sculpture from the Nihon University College of Art in Tokyo, with additional studies at the New York Studio School. Previous museum exhibitions include the New Jersey State Museum, University of Maine Museum of Art and The National Academy Museum. Her work is also featured in several public collections, including the Montclair Art Museum, Noyes Museum of Art, and the Mint Museum. Past awards include the Asahi Shinbun Foundation Grant, a Pollack-Krasner Foundation Grant, the George and Helen Segal Foundation Grant, and the J. Sanford Saltus Award and Medal for Sculpture. The artist currently lives and works in Colchester, New York, and Bayonne, New Jersey.

Mayumi Sarai will be on view from May 29 – June 28, 2014 in Gallery II. An opening reception will be held on Thursday, May 29th from 6-8 pm. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:30 am to 6:00 pm. For additional information and/or visual materials, please contact Joseph Bunge at (212) 750-0949 or by email at joseph@loribooksteinfineart.com.