

Hidetoshi Nagasawa

(Tonei, Manchuria, 1940 – Milan 2018)

In an almost legendary journey, Hidetoshi Nagasawa travelled by bicycle from Asia to Italy. Settling in Milan in 1968, the artist was in touch with the new language of Arte Povera, although his approach and resulting work remain autonomous and independent. The theme of the journey, understood both as a physical act and as a path to spiritual awareness, continues to be an important area of research for the artist, who identifies the form of the boat as an iconographic archetype that contains a wealth of ideas. In continuous dialogue with his personal cultural identity and that of his adopted country, Nagasawa establishes a point of ideal contact between East and West in his work, drawing upon the principles of Zen philosophy as well as Greco-Roman myths and stories from the Old Testament.

In *Hera*, 1986, he uses brass mesh to construct a sort of tent hung in the space from a series of braces attached to the wall. Circumscribing a portion of space, the structure shelters some blocks of wood arranged on top of each other. Presenting a situation of delicate equilibrium, the work reveals an interior/exterior duality that can also be interpreted as a reference to the tension between masculine and feminine. The work's title refers to the wife of Zeus, the goddess who represents the union between man and woman in the bridal chamber.

Nagasawa's exploration of the artistic idea takes place in a realm close to a half-waking state, which he defines as "the zero moment," a condition where the moment and eternity coexist, which can lead to the visualization of the work. On numerous occasions the artist cites *The Vision of Ezekiel*, referring to the prophet whose book in the Bible is characterized by dreamlike moments, close to delirium, which correspond to contact with the divine. In this work from 1993 the artist superimposes two sheets of glass of similar size but placed on a different axis. The transparency of the glass establishes a relationship with the idea of vision, the potential of which is accentuated by the absence of marks or signs. The work appears as a field open to the potential of the image. (MB)