

# Kelly Akashi

## *Faultline*

November 05 - December 04, 2021



François Ghebaly is proud to present Kelly Akashi's third solo exhibition with the gallery: *Faultline*. The exhibition tracks the continual evolution of Akashi's practice as she incorporates new photographic and craft traditions into her expansive practice.

Originally trained in photography, Akashi's approach to sculpture consistently shows how materials can capture and render not only time, but emotional experience, interiority, and memory. She frequently uses cast bronze, blown glass, melting wax, and other materials that encode the passage of a moment. In *Faultline*, these materials are joined by new additions to her repertoire: carved stone, polished aluminum, and heirloom jewelry worn, loved, and gifted by her and her family. Taken together, the works pose biological and geological materials within a symbolic space of mind and memory.

The exhibition opens with a series of new crystalline photographs, produced through chemical processes of growth and fixity. Akashi grew crystals onto photographic film, then developed them using chemical techniques like silver gelatine, cibachrome, or chromogenic processing, capturing their quasibiotic structures in luminous images that she calls crystallographs. Akashi pairs these works with a gleaming column of polished aluminum, lying prone the length of her body and formed to a visualization of her pulse. Biometrics made physical, the work introduces the idea of the body segmented and diffused into inorganic materials, a dynamic also at play in Akashi's cast hand sculptures. One is suspended in the next hallway, holding aloft an intricate sphere of flame-worked glass, sprouting vines and blossoms from within.

The sparse second gallery of the exhibition contains a single sculpture, a monument depicting the artist's body carved into streaked marble. In this work as in others in her recent practice, Akashi draws on the Japanese notion of *mono no aware*, a gentle sensitivity to the state of impermanence and transience that underlies all things. Akashi heightens this attentiveness to ephemerality by showering the room with flower petals, which desiccate and decay over the course of the exhibition. The colorful scatter suggests a carnival or celebration as much as an untended memorial, emphasizing a sense of aftermath.

Entering the final room of the exhibition one is greeted first by the scent of earth. Four massive earthen forms support an array of new sculptures in a diverse range of materials, from cast crystal and carved stone to flameworked glass and heirloom jewelry. These works divulge a personal past in multiple ways. The heirloom objects speak to intergenerational passage and stand in for lineage and the delivery of familial knowledge. More directly to Akashi's family story are materials that originated in Poston, Arizona, the site of one of the largest internment camps for Japanese Americans during the 1940s. This was the site of the Akashi family's internment. The artist brought physical remnants from the site, including stones, fallen tree branches, and tumbleweeds, which she integrates into a number of sculptures in the exhibition. Throughout the exhibition, these works explore the sedimentation of experience and the layering of passing moments, passing lifetimes, and passing generations.

Kelly Akashi (b. 1983, Los Angeles) lives and works in Los Angeles. Her works are held in the permanent collections of Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Hammer Museum; and the Brooklyn Museum, among others. She has exhibited in solo exhibitions with Tanya Bonakdar, New York; ARCH, Athens; and SculptureCenter, New York; as well as in numerous group exhibitions including at Clark Art Institute; White Cube; Palm Springs Art Museum; the Jewish Museum; and David Roberts Art Foundation, among others. Next year she will present her first institutional solo exhibition in California at the San Jose Museum of Art, curated by Lauren Dickens. *Faultline* is her third solo exhibition with François Ghebaly.