

# Grounding; Grounded; Ground

## New works by Ara Koh

On view October 28, 2023–December 2, 2023

### Opening Reception:

Saturday, October 28, 2023, 5–7pm  
1353 U St NW, Washington, DC 20009



*Ground Cast Water (detail), 2023*

*“Clay is a common language and common ground.  
Clay never needs translation.”*

- Ara Koh

**Washington, DC:** Hamiltonian Artists is pleased to present *Grounding; Grounded; Ground*, a solo exhibition of new works by Ara Koh, 2021–2023 Hamiltonian Fellow. In this presentation, Koh centers clay as a protagonist, Earthly and human in nature. The exhibition considers how similar to both the body and the landscape, clay remembers. It is able to record and recall the pressure of hands and fingers, the presence of moisture, it surrenders to heat.

Koh utilizes clay excavated and shaped with her own hands to create sculpted works that suggest new definitions of “landscape painting.” This line of inquiry informs her studio practice’s wide range of outcomes, from fired clay vessels to unfired clay on unstretched canvas, freestanding forms to draping, wall hung terrains. Together, the works on view explore ideas of fullness and emptiness, tactility and memory, stillness and motion, representation and abstraction, flatness and volume.

The artist states, “I question how humans interact with earth, how earth is us and how we are earth. Thinking about my body contained in spaces, my body as a container, and the space being contained in the larger body of humanity. This new body of work is painted with layers of strata, time. It demands labor, repetition. It is me trying to understand earth, humanness.”

**A virtual artist talk will be presented on Thursday, November 16th, 6pm–7pm. Link to register [here](#).** Visit Hamiltonian Artists’ website and follow [@hamiltonian\\_artists](#) on Instagram for more information about corresponding public programs, details to be announced.

**ABOUT THE ARTIST:**

**Ara Koh** was born in Seoul, South Korea, to a fashion designer mother and an industrial designer father. She received her BFA in Ceramics and Glass from Hongik University, Seoul, in 2018, and was an exchange student at California State University, Long Beach, in 2016. Koh graduated with an MFA in Ceramic Art at New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University in 2020. She currently lives and works in the greater Washington, DC, area.

Koh's work has been exhibited in numerous museums and galleries, including the Kreeger Museum, the Phillips Collection, and Korea Culture Center. Koh was an artist in residence at Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, Arrowmont School of Crafts, and Alfred Summer Ceramic Workshops. She has received numerous awards, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs Honor by the Korean government. Her works have been collected by Alfred Ceramic Art Museum, Daekyo Culture Foundation, Winell Corporation, and many private collections. Koh actively holds teaching positions at Maryland Institute College of Art and American University. Ara Koh is a 2021–2023 Hamiltonian Artists Fellow.

**ABOUT HAMILTONIAN ARTISTS:**

Hamiltonian Artists' mission is to build a dynamic community of innovative artists and effective visual art leaders by providing professional development opportunities to early-career artists and by advancing their entrepreneurial success. In 2007, Paul So, an avid painter and a physics professor at George Mason University, founded Hamiltonian Artists and Hamiltonian Gallery with the vision of creating an innovative career incubator program for emerging visual artists. In 2019, the Board of Directors of Hamiltonian Artists chose to merge the two organizations into a single 501c3 nonprofit to better serve the mission.

Today, Hamiltonian Artists is a dynamic catalyst for DC's creative economy and a vibrant center for contemporary art in Washington, DC. Through its unique investment into the next generation of cutting-edge artists, Hamiltonian helps artists to develop important business skills, professional experiences, and visibility to support and sustain their art career. Through a two-year artist fellowship, artist talks, public events and its membership program, the organization contributes to the vitality of DC's burgeoning arts scene by deepening the appreciation for contemporary art and culture throughout Washington, DC, and beyond.



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**October 20, 2023**

**HOW TO VISIT:**

The exhibition is on view at Hamiltonian Artists, 1353 U Street NW, Washington, DC 20009.  
**Gallery open Thursday through Saturday 11am–6pm.** Masks are strongly suggested.  
For more information visit [hamiltonianartists.org](https://www.hamiltonianartists.org).

**CONTACT:**

**For press inquiries and additional info contact Anisa Olufemi, fellowship manager,**  
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