

Chiharu Shiota's labyrinth of yarn invites visitors on a journey into personal memories and hidden depths. The world-famous artist created her installation site-specifically for EMMA

Tracing Boundaries by **Chiharu Shiota** (b. 1972) transforms EMMA's open concrete gallery space into an immersive labyrinth of red yarn. Commissioned by the Saastamoinen Foundation, the piece is being featured in a special series of exhibitions hosted in collaboration with EMMA. After the exhibition, the installation will become a permanent addition to the foundation's art collection. The tangled red yarn generates "spaces within space", a signature hallmark of Shiota's art, inviting visitors on a journey into inner worlds and personal memories. *Tracing Boundaries* will be on display at EMMA from October 27, 2021 to November 27, 2022.

Chiharu Shiota is a Berlin-based Japanese artist renowned internationally for her large-scale, immersive yarn installations. Created especially for EMMA, *Tracing Boundaries* is an installation consisting of tangled webs of crisscrossing red string. Embedded in this maze are old doors that create pathways through the work. There is no right path or entrance to take – every visitor is free to follow the route of their choice.

"Shiota's yarn installations are often based on the artist's personal experiences and memories, but every visitor's interpretations and experiences are an inseparable part of the work. Shiota describes the tautly stretched, knotted, tangled, and entwined threads as symbolizing the connections between people and the complexity of human relationships," states the exhibition's curator **Arja Miller**. "Shiota's captivating art offers a vehicle for processing feelings and memories that might not otherwise be accessible on a conscious level."

"Chiharu Shiota carries on the legacy of performance artists. I would go so far as to say that her installation transforms each visitor's experience into a unique performance that no outsider can see or judge. Not only are we free to choose our own route through Shiota's art, but we are also free to travel within ourselves," describes **Päivi Karttunen**, Chair of the Saastamoinen Foundation Arts Committee.

Using an intricate, self-styled weaving technique, Shiota has been creating yarn installations since her student days. She initially studied painting but found the canvas and paper too limiting. Searching for a more physical, holistic way to make art, she gradually began creating the immersive spatial works for which she is known today. Shiota has been in the international spotlight ever since she represented Japan at the 2015 Venice Biennale. She has exhibited in numerous museums around the world and at art biennials in Europe, South America, South-East Asia, and the Pacific region.

Tracing Boundaries forms part of an annual collaboration between EMMA and the Saastamoinen Foundation through which a new work is commissioned from a topically relevant contemporary artist. Shiota's installation is so vast in scale that it will be displayed as a one-work exhibition. EMMA's theme for 2021 is the power of art. *Tracing*

Boundaries engages in an unprecedented dialogue with the museum's concrete architecture, offering visitors a unique experience of the gallery space.

MORE INFORMATION

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