



**Chiharu  
Shiota**

**Who am I  
Tomorrow?**

**kunstraum** *uniqurop*

Media information

# Chiharu Shiota *Who am I Tomorrow?*

## Facts

Chiharu Shiota at  
Kunstraum Dornbirn

Press preview Wednesday, 5 July 2023, 10:30 am (*the artist is not present*)

Opening Thursday, 6 July 2023, 7 pm

Exhibition duration 7 July – 12 November 2023

Download press images → [kunstraumdornbirn.at](http://kunstraumdornbirn.at)

Curator Thomas Häusle, Director Kunstraum Dornbirn

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Programme at  
Kunstraum Dornbirn

Artist Talk

Chiharu Shiota in conversation with Thomas Häusle

Friday, 7 July 2023, 2 pm

Kids summer programme: “Kindersommer im Stadtgarten”

17 – 28 July 2023 at Stadtgarten Dornbirn

A cooperation with inatura – Erlebnis Naturschau Dornbirn,

vai Vorarlberger Architektur Institut and Stadtmuseum Dornbirn

After-Work-Tours

thursdays, 6 pm, in German, free admission

3 August, 7 September and 19 October 2023

Family programme: Reiseziel Museum

6 August + 3 September 2023

→ [reiseziel-museum.com](http://reiseziel-museum.com)

Tip

Chiharu Shiota: “Eye to Eye” at Museum Haus Konstruktiv in Zurich

on view until 10 September 2023 (120 km from Dornbirn)

→ [hauskonstruktiv.ch](http://hauskonstruktiv.ch)

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## Press release

In the former assembly hall, a red, entwined labyrinthine mesh hangs overhead. It takes up the entire exhibition space and as soon as we enter, we are right in the middle of it. As we look more and more closely, we recognise intertwined tubes. Suspended from the 11-metre-high ceiling on more than 5,000 red threads, the material seems not static at all, but rather in motion: through 2,500 metre-long paths in countless coils flows a red liquid. At some points, tubes break away from the compound and lead downwards, via a medical pump, into an Erlenmeyer flask.

The installation with the evocative title “Who am I Tomorrow?” by Chiharu Shiota unfolds the fascinating impression of a living, oversized and independent organism. It seems to hover above the visitors, precisely fitted into the protective historical architecture, connected to it by an uncountable number of red connecting lines.

Shiota here turns the inside out. We all live, work, sleep, love and suffer physically driven by a constantly functioning cardiovascular system. With a heartbeat of about 70 beats per minute, approximately 10,000 litres of blood are pumped into around 100,000 kilometres of blood vessels every day. Shiota isolates this blood circulation from the systemic whole, enlarges it and inserts it site-specifically into the hall structure. The function of the heart is taken over by the pumps, which move apparent blood through the veins. For a short time, the blood is even completely removed from the circulation in the Erlenmeyer flask and kept in the vessel to be fed back into the flow through the next open vein with the help of the pump. This process is similar in medicine to the out-of-body circulation accomplished with the help of a heart-lung machine and used in open-heart surgery.

In the exhibition, the absence of the corresponding body reflects the exact opposite, namely the conscious presence of the body. For without the body, the circuit simply does not exist. It is interwoven into a sophisticated system in which a loss of function of one part affects all the others. This interior as the core of physical existence, as depicted here, finds its repeated representation in Shiota's entire oeuvre. The direct connection of the inside with the outside corresponds to a layering in the artistic work: the inner organism surrounded by the skin, protected by clothing, sheltered in the bed, the room, the flat/house, located in the city, the country, the continent, the world. Just that world in a universe where only on planet earth we can coexist with all other living beings and are responsible for keeping this community in balance and securing our living space. In this universal context, blood stands not only allegorically but factually for the individual's

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information about origin, nation, family, health and illness. In the best case, blood is invisibly hidden, imperceptible, absent to the senses and thus fascinating and frightening, or its visibility is associated with injury, loss and other extreme situations and blows of fate.

The analogy of the artistic intervention to the circulation of the blood is not limited to humans. It is equally valid for other living beings and so formulates the connection of human being with its entire environment as a central theme in Shiota's work. The representability of the inner, of psychological states – experiences, traumas, fears, blows of fate or moments of happiness, a sense of security or social mortification – finds its correspondence in the giving of artistic form. In this, the personal, the intimate, intertwines with the public. For Shiota, her art is a home, a medium of communication with the world. And she constantly creates this sense from within herself, taking her own experiences as her impetus and subject. For almost three decades, she has been developing a consistent, highly aesthetic and internationally successful formal language. In it, she negotiates her own history, her identity and the cultures in which she grew up and lived/lives. She works with the connotative attributions she experiences as a Japanese woman, as a daughter, as a mother, as a wife, as someone who has recovered from cancer, as someone traumatised by a miscarriage, as a sister and an artist taking part in an international business. Shiota does this in expansive installations, such as her now iconic thread tangles, but also in drawings, videos, performances and objects. In her work, her own experiences become a point of reference for the recipients; the individual is merged into the collective experience.

The very title of the Dornbirn exhibition shows: it is about me, that is, about an individual, the smallest unit of a community: "Who am I Tomorrow?" No less than the question of identity is posed here in all its complexity, with all its possible dissonances – in biographical and biological experiences, in behaviour and habit, in social and cultural context, in the consciously addressable and unconsciously effective, in the zeitgeist and across generations. Reading the question, we automatically think about what could happen by tomorrow, proceeding from the current overall state, so that we are someone else, can never again be or want to be that someone of today. How much influence do we have on that? How much power does our environment have? And how much responsibility do we have for this environment in a constantly reciprocal relationship? "Tomorrow" is a concrete temporal specification, relatively little time passes until then.

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So how big can our own transformation be? What does tomorrow's version of me look like? And what will it change?

In "Who am I Tomorrow?" Shiota asks these questions and many more in a catchy semantic setting. In its pure size and harmonious beauty, the installation is such an intense experience that we become aware of our own connectedness with this large world in a special way. The artistic language can be grasped intuitively, and it is impressive how globally understandable and valid it is. The amount of responsibility that falls to our lot in today's globalised world is constantly growing and its recognition is hindered by invisibility, which is due, among other reasons, to great distances and media mediation. But human beings are capable of compassion, and so of changing perspectives and raising their awareness. To this end, Shiota's installations create imaginary spaces of real stories. They provide us with identity-forming narratives whose feedback to the reality of life is palpable and full of hope.

### CV Chiharu Siota

Chiharu Shiota was born in 1972 in the Osaka Prefecture, Japan, and has lived in Berlin since 1998. She studied at Seika University in Kyoto from 1992 to 1996 and attended the University of the Fine Arts in Hamburg from 1996-1997. She then studied at the University of Art in Brunswick until 1999 and subsequently at the University of Arts in Berlin until 2003. Her work has been presented in numerous solo and group exhibitions worldwide and represented Japan at the Venice Biennale in 2015.

### Catalogue

A catalogue will be published on occasion of the exhibition "Who am I Tomorrow?" by Chiharu Shiota, with a preface by Thomas Häusle, an interview with the artist and a text by Sina Wagner.

Published by Verlag für modern Kunst, Vienna, German / English, in Fall 2023.

### Download

→<https://www.kunstraumdornbirn.at/en/exhibition/chiharu-shiota>

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Chiharu Shiota: „Who am I Tomorrow?“, Kunstraum Dornbirn 2023, Photo Günter Richard Wett, © the artist / Bildrecht Vienna 2023



Chiharu Shiota: „Who am I Tomorrow?“, Kunstraum Dornbirn 2023, Photo Günter Richard Wett, © the artist / Bildrecht Vienna 2023



Chiharu Shiota, Berlin 2020, Photo Sunhi Mang, © the artist / Bildrecht Vienna 2023



Chiharu Shiota: „Who am I Tomorrow?“, Kunstraum Dornbirn 2023, Photo Günter Richard Wett, © the artist / Bildrecht Vienna 2023



Chiharu Shiota: „Who am I Tomorrow?“, Kunstraum Dornbirn 2023, Photo Günter Richard Wett, © the artist / Bildrecht Vienna 2023



Chiharu Shiota: „Wall“, 2010, Video still, © the artist / Bildrecht Vienna 2023



Kunstraum Dornbirn, interior view, Photo © Darko Todorovic

Kunstraum Dornbirn was founded in 1987 as a non-profit association with the aim of presenting and communicating contemporary art. Since 2003, the exhibitions have found ideal conditions for the showing of large-scale installations in the historic assembly hall of the former Rüscher-Werke, a machine factory in Dornbirn's Municipal Gardens (Stadtgarten). The quality of the architecture in its original, raw state offers space for the presentation of current trends in international art. We show established, internationally renowned artists and newer positions in about four exhibitions every year.

The exhibition history of Kunstraum Dornbirn is marked by international artists such as Judith Fegerl (2023), Monika Sosnowska and Robert Kuśmirowski (both 2022), Tony Oursler (2021), Atelier Van Lishout and Claudia Comte (both 2020), Hans Op de Beek (2017), Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg (2016), Berlinde de Bruyckere (2015), Not Vital and Tue Greenford (both 2012), Jan Kopp (2010) and Mark Dion (2008), and Austrian artists such as Peter Sandbichler (2021), Bernd Oppl (2019), Thomas Feuerstein (2018) and Roman Signer (2008).

### Location and infrastructure

Vorarlberg is located in the four-country region around Lake Constance, with fast routes to and a lively exchange with Germany, Switzerland and Liechtenstein as well as other parts of Austria. The region is not only scenically attractive for tourism but can also boast the further appeal of the most diverse institutions' dense and high-quality cultural activities in the performing and visual arts.

The large brick assembly hall was built on the grounds of the Rüscher-Werke in 1893. In 1999/2000, the area was redesigned as municipal gardens in an international landscape planning competition. The re-design preserved important buildings of the Rüscher-Werke such as the assembly hall and created an urban recreational and cultural site. With a length of 30 metres and a width of 14 metres, the hall measures a total area of 420 m<sup>2</sup>.

The exhibition programme is realized thanks to the support of our subsidy providers, sponsors and project partners!

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