

## ***Takahiro Iwasaki's Reflection Model (Itsukushima)***

NGV International | 5 December 2014 – 6 April 2015 | Free entry



Japanese sculptor and artist Takahiro Iwasaki, renowned for his awe-inspiring, large-scale miniatures of ancient Japanese buildings and architecture, will unveil the latest epic work in his *Reflection Model* series at NGV International from 5 December 2014.

The *Reflection Model* series recreates ornate buildings and their inverse image, as seen reflected on the water that surrounds them.

With a footprint roughly 8m x 8m, *Reflection Model (Itsukushima)*, commissioned by NGV, reimagines the Shinto shrine of Itsukushima, most famous for its 'floating' *Torii* gate on the tidal flats of Japan's Inland Sea.

'Takahiro Iwasaki is recognised as one of the leaders of Japan's new generation of young artists,' said Tony Ellwood, Director, NGV. 'We are thrilled to be unveiling the third in Iwasaki's breath-taking and intricate *Reflection Model* series with *Itsukushima*, a spiritually rich and culturally significant Japanese building.'

Iwasaki and highly skilled assistants produced *Reflection Model (Itsukushima)* over a three-month artist-in-residence period at the Aomori Contemporary Art Centre. The sculpture is primarily constructed from the traditional building material of Japanese cypress wood, and the roofs of the central pavilions have been coated with a basswood veneer. In the tradition of Japanese architecture, Iwasaki has maintained the timber's natural finish with no treatment or coatings.

*Reflection Model (Itsukushima)* is constructed from fourteen interlocking sections that utilise the age-old Japanese concept of 'durability found in flexibility' that has been a key to creating earthquake-resistant buildings in Japan.

In recent years Takahiro Iwasaki has exhibited at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung; Palais De Tokyo, Paris; Hong Kong Arts Centre; Gallery C24, New York; and at the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo.

Curator Wayne Crothers will present a free talk at 12.30pm on Friday 5 December, providing insights into Iwasaki's intricate model.

Takahiro Iwasaki's *Reflection Model (Itsukushima)* will be on display at NGV International from 5 December 2014 to 6 April 2015. This acquisition is supported by the Felton Bequest, 2014.

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## About the Itsukushima Shrine, Japan

Itsukushima Shrine and its famed 'floating' *Torii* gateway is one of Japan's most revered and spiritual sights. Established in the year 593 in the city of Hatsukaichi in Hiroshima Prefecture, Japan, the shrine was rebuilt and expanded to its current configuration by Taira Kiyomori (a military ruler of the twelfth century) in 1168.

The entire shrine, including its many corridors, sacred buildings and historic Noh theatre, are constructed over tidal flats that allow the entire shrine complex to float and reflect on the water's surface as the tide rises. The building serves to enshrine sacred objects, facilitate ceremonies and house traditional performances.

During the sixteenth century Itsukushima became widely known as one of Japan's *Nihon Sankei* (three most celebrated sights) and was the subject of luxurious golden screen paintings and woodblock prints.

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Image caption:

### Takahiro Iwasaki

*Reflection Model (Itsukushima)* 2013–14

Installation view at Aomori Contemporary Art Centre (ACAC)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Felton Bequest, 2014

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