



*Kishio Suga*  
Mar 26 – Jun 4, 2026

Kishio Suga is one of the most important figures of the Japanese contemporary art scene. After studying painting at the Tama Art University, from 1968 he began working with elements drawn from reality, organic or artificial. Through their manipulation, he sought to express the fundamental nature of the world around him and to make visible the relationships between that world and the individual.

The works he developed then were not qualified as installations just yet, but sought nonetheless to move beyond both painting and sculpture. They existed in an unidentified zone of practice and theory, allowing Suga to approach matter outside the constraints imposed by the anthropocentric philosophy inherited from Western thought.

Suga's practice investigates the intrinsic possibilities of matter once it is no longer regarded as inert or passive, but as an interlocutor – if not a subject in its own right. His artistic investigation, alongside that of artists such as Nobuo Sekine, Lee Ufan, Susumu Koshimizu, and Kōji Enokura, was retrospectively associated with an informal movement active primarily between 1968 and 1973 known as *Mono-ha*, or the “School of Things.”

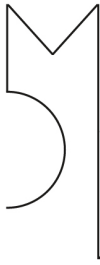
The dual exhibition organized by Mendes Wood DM in Paris and New York City presents two directions in Suga's work: his two-dimensional work and his installations.

The first brings together two types of practice – works on paper and assemblages – each functioning as an investigation into the very notion of space. From the outset, Suga rejects the idea that the two-dimensional nature of a work should imply a conventional relationship to the image. These works are neither representations nor symbolic constructs; rather, they activate the actual dimensions and qualities of a given space. Through the interplay of fullness and emptiness, the alternation of flat, hollow, and relief surfaces, and the relationships formed between forms and the surrounding negative space – often allowing the wall itself to appear – Suga materializes what he calls *kyōkuse* (shared space), in which every element is visibly dependent on the others.

In both his two-dimensional works and his three-dimensional situations, Suga's use of geometry, together with the irregular presence of branches and other organic elements, serves to keep the expression of his own interiority at a distance – an essential principle shared by all artists associated with *Mono-ha*. By diminishing what has defined the identity of the artist in Western modernity since the Renaissance, Suga opens the possibility for another form of interiority to emerge: that of the *mono* (the thing) itself, or of space. Rejecting the term “composition” in favor of “action,” Suga seeks to produce a *jōkyō* (situation): a space in which things appear in their essential condition, beyond both conceptualization and human perception. His installations, always adapted to the sites in which they unfold, highlight the immanent characteristics of space and point to the very place in which the viewer stands. *Contorted Positioning* (1982 – 2026), presented in New York, and *Boundary of Marginal Scenery* (1994 – 2026), installed in Paris, do not replicate their original configurations but instead respond to the specific conditions of the exhibition space. In Suga's practice, the work is never confined to a fixed project; it is conceived as a situation informed by a particular space-time with which the artist actively engages. In seeking to free art from all forms of human fiction, Suga lays the groundwork for an aesthetic that moves beyond the human. Rather than expressing the turmoil of the artist's interior life, his work restores to the things that surround us the full force of their fundamental otherness. By

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revealing the subjecthood of things-in-themselves and allowing their “intentionality” to emerge, Suga lets them exist as agents – as our equivalents. Initiated in 1968 and pursued without interruption ever since, Kishio Suga’s practice stands as one of the most radical transformations of our relationship to matter in recent art history.

– Nicolas-Xavier Ferrand

**Kishio Suga** (1944, Morioka, Japan) lives and works in Itō, Shizuoka Prefecture.

His work is featured in many institutional collections, including the **Centre Pompidou-Metz**, Metz, France; **Dallas Museum of Art**, Dallas; **Dia Art Foundation**, New York; **Glenstone Foundation**, Potomac, MD; **Guggenheim Abu Dhabi**, Abu Dhabi; **He Art Museum**, Foshan; **Iwate Museum of Art**, Morioka; **Long Museum**, Shanghai; **M+**, Hong Kong; **Museum of Contemporary Art**, Tokyo; **National Museum of Art**, Osaka, Japan; **National Museum of Modern Art**, Tokyo; **Pinault Collection**, Paris and Venice; **Rachofsky Collection**, Dallas; **Tate Modern**, London; and the **Yokohama Museum of Art**, Yokohama, Japan.

Suga’s recent solo exhibitions include: **Dia Beacon**, New York; *Where Both Sides Meet*, **Museum Cobra**, Amstelveen, the Netherlands (2025); *Existence Within Definite Contours*, **Tomio Koyama Gallery**, Tokyo (2025); *Corresponding Space*, **He Art Museum**, Foshan, China (2024); **Mendes Wood DM**, São Paulo (2024); **Johyun Gallery**, Busan (2023); **Mendes Wood DM**, Brussels (2022); *Kishio Suga: The Existence of “Things” and the Eternity of “Site”*, **Iwate Museum of Art**, Morioka (2021); *Kishio Suga*, **Tokyo Gallery + BTAP**, Tokyo (2019); **Mendes Wood DM**, São Paulo (2018); **Dia Chelsea**, New York, USA (2016), **Pirelli HangarBicocca**, Milan (2016), and the **Museum of Contemporary Art**, Tokyo (2015).

Recent group shows include: *Minimal*, **Bourse de Commerce**, Paris (2025); *Without Stars 2*, **Museo de Bellas Artes de Caracas** (2024); *Building and Dreaming*, **BY ART MATTERS**, Hangzhou, (2022); *Japanorama: New Vision on Art Since 1970*, **Centre Pompidou-Metz, Metz** (2017) ; *Minimalism: Space Light Object*, **National Gallery Singapore**; *The Emergence of the Contemporary: Avant-Garde Art in Japan 1950–1970*, **Imperial Palace**, Rio de Janeiro (2016); *Karla Black and Kishio Suga: A New Order*, **Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art**, Edinburgh (2016); *Prima Materia*, **Punta della Dogana**, Venice (2013); *Parallel Views: Italian and Japanese Art from the 1950s, 60s, and 70s*, **The Warehouse**, Dallas (2013); and *Tokyo 1955-1970: A New Avant-Garde*, **Museum of Modern Art**, New York (2012).

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