

GALERIE JAEGER BUCHER

5 & 7 rue Saintonge 75003 Paris

PRESS PACK



# Susumu Shingu

*Planet of Wind and Water* exhibition

From May 15 until September 26, 2009



“A message of movement and a breath of hope for humanity”

**PRESS CONTACT**

JULIE BARANES / COMMUNIC'ART / T : + 33 1 43 20 12 10 / JAEGERBUCHER@COMMUNICART.FR

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# Susumu Shingu

*Planet of Wind and Water* exhibition

Galerie Jaeger Bucher

From May 15 to September 26, 2009

Susumu Shingu is a complete artist who is famous in Japan, but still relatively unknown in France. A **sculptor, researcher and philosopher of nature**, he creates sculptures that are often monumental, with movements generated by the forces and flows of nature – wind, water, sunlight and gravity. He also works regularly in other **artistic disciplines with well-known architects** such as Renzo Piano or Tadao Ando, as well as with designers like Issey Miyake and choreographer like Jiri Kylian.

Starting out from scientific research on movement, based on observation of the nature of the human body and of nature, Susumu Shingu has created and installed **several hundred wind and water sculptures around the world**, all of them mobile, dancing, polyphonic, playful, sometimes kites, birds, flowers, trees, clouds... One noteworthy project is **Wind Caravan**, an exceptional group of 21 sculptures that he took on tour for a year to six isolated locations on the planet representative of their pure state, a variety of windblown climates without electricity. The new exhibition displays a **dozen mobile sculptures designed for indoor locations**, together with drawings and sketches.

*“Richard Serra has shown us how far monumentality can go. Anselm Kiefer shows us the decay of a world. Susumu Shingu offers us a message of movement and a breath of hope for humanity”*, explains Véronique Jaeger, Director of the Jaeger Bucher Gallery.

The exhibition will also include a **preview of the diorama *Breathing Earth***, a self-sufficient village project relying on the natural energy of wind, water and sunlight.

Produced by the gallery for the exhibition, a **33 minute film by the German director Thomas Riedelsheimer** (author of *Rivers and Tides*, *Andy Goldsworthy*, *Working with Time*), shows the artist talking about his work and his research while unveiling his sculptures in their natural settings.

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*“When our spirit becomes able to match the movement of nature, our vision will be enlarged and infinitely deepened. We will come to an understanding of universal truths and we will even experience profound emotions and spiritual pleasures through our contact with nature. Air, water and gravity, those three unique elements of our planet Earth, are the source of all energy and life (..)”*

Susumu Shingu

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# The artist

Sumusu Shingu, sculptor, poet,  
researcher and philosopher of nature

## Sculptor and researcher

Born in 1937 in Osaka, Susumu Shingu – whose very name evokes the wind – creates animated sculptures whose movements are generated by the forces and flows of nature, like wind, water, sunlight and gravity.

While his **motion studies** are based as much on a very precise observation of the elements present in Nature and of the human body and its functions as – in particular the dynamics of water and air – they also draw on **learned technology with scientific use of the most contemporary materials.**

## Seeking harmony between being and nature

His profound understanding of nature brings Susumu Shingu into harmony with what he considers to be the **two fundamental rhythms of life**: the powerful and mysterious, penetrating and unpredictable, grandiose and inexpressible, rhythm of **Nature** that surrounds us, and the rhythm that moves and breathes, that varies with **our inner development** and the stimuli of the outside world, which animates us in the depths of our spirit, but which we are losing through the distractions and stresses of modern urban life.

In all his work, Shingu emphasises the need to submit to these rhythms in order to rediscover the **accord between our innermost being and the planet** and to ensure that they both retain their vitality. Shingu's life is entirely based on this principle and his works are its outer manifestation. In fact, it is fascinating to note the extent to which the movement of these sculptures in space is almost always accompanied by **the observer's sudden realisation** that he himself is governed by and linked to the same forces as those of the sculpture.



## Throughout the planet

Shingu's creations are fundamentally embedded in life and **our planet is his exhibition space**. He has created and installed several hundred wind and water sculptures around the world, all of them mobile, dancing, polyphonic, playful, sometimes kites, birds, flowers, trees, clouds...

His sculptures simultaneously **echo the infinite beauty of the myriad forms present on our planet**, whether plant, animal or human, and at the same time invariably point to space, which we are in the process of discovering, by evoking the shapes of stars as if to remind us constantly that we are not alone in the cosmos!

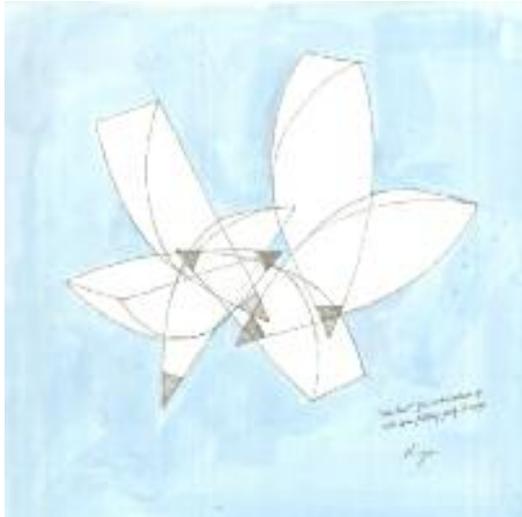
One exceptional project that illustrates this idea is **Wind Caravan**: between 2000 and 2001, the artist took 21 sculptures to six isolated spots on the earth that represent their *pure state*, with a variety of windy climates and no electricity: from Japan to New Zealand, then to the far north of Finland, in the Moroccan desert and in Mongolia, ending one year later in Brazil. This experiment revealed the **intrinsic function of the sculptures in the environment and within the local populations.**

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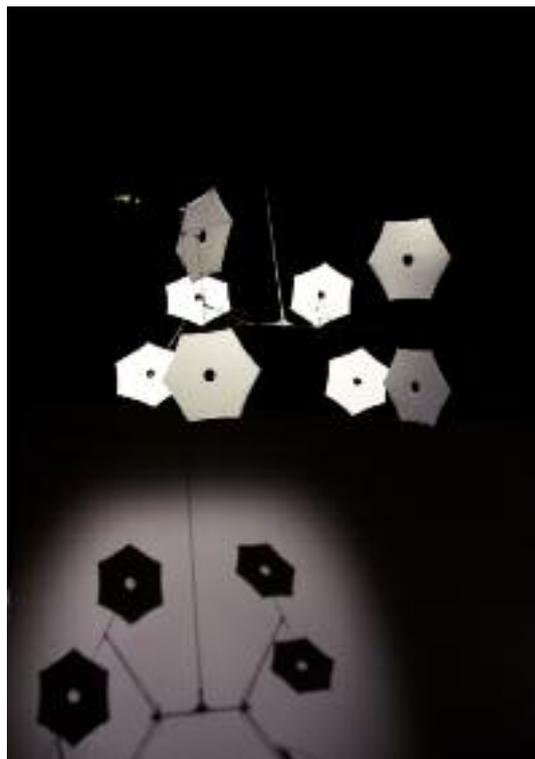
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4



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- 1 - *Luminous river*, 2009 - Carbon fibre, aluminium, stainless steel and polyester - 307,6 x 360 cm  
 2 - *Moon Boat*, 2008 - Ink on paper - 40 x 42,2 cm  
 3 - *Floating Tree*, 2006 - Fibre de carbone, aluminium, acier inoxydable et polyester - 135 x 156 cm  
 4 - *Whisper*, 2008 - Aluminium and stainless steel - 60 x 206 x 206 cm - Partie haute - 22 x 230 x 230 cm  
 5 - *Diorama Night - Breathing Earth*, 2009 - Steel, wood, glass fibre, aluminium and plastic - 109 x 354 x 243 cm

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# The exhibition

*Planet of Wind and Water*

From May 15 to September 26, 2009

## The artist's second exhibition at the Jaeger Bucher Gallery

After the success of the first presentation of *Breathing Sculptures* in 2006, the Jaeger Bucher Gallery is putting on a second Shingu exhibition consisting of a dozen animated indoor sculptures, whose movements are generated by the forces and flows of nature, such as wind and water. The sculptures are accompanied by ink and paper drawings and sketches.

## En avant-première, le diorama de *Breathing Earth*

*Breathing Earth*, a self-sufficient village that lives on the natural energy of wind, water and sunlight, where Shingu will apply all the knowledge he has acquired on these natural phenomena in almost 40 years, is presented at the Gallery.



## A film on Shingu produced by the Gallery

The Jaeger Bucher Gallery has produced a 33 minute film entitled *Susumu Shingu* to mark the exhibition.

The German director Thomas Riedelsheimer, born in 1963, is an independent author, director, cameraman and producer. His best-known film today is *Rivers and Tides* on the artist Andy Goldsworthy.

In the film, which is in Japanese and English, we hear the artist talk about his work and his research, while unveiling his sculptures in their natural settings.



## A catalogue for the exhibition

Entitled *Susumu Shingu, Planet of Wind and Water*, the exhibition catalogue will be available from June 26.

With contributions by Susumu Shingu, Véronique Jaeger and Bernard Noël, the bilingual French/English catalogue covers some twenty works and the *Breathing Earth* project.

In 25.5 x 30 cm format, the 48 page catalogue includes a DVD.

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**Logo designed by  
Studio Cerri & Associati**

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# Breathing Earth

The project for a self-sufficient village with an environmental and planetary scope

## The *Breathing Earth* village, a commitment to the environment and to art

Susumu Shingu describes the goal of his major *Breathing Earth* project:

*"I dream of creating a **self-sustaining village that operates with the natural energies of wind and sunlight**. I would like to apply all my knowledge and all the experience I have acquired in creating sculptures animated by wind and water.*

*I would like to create an environment where people can live on the energy produced by wind-mills. **I have the utopic vision of a world where scientists and technicians** with expertise in agriculture, oceanography, astronomy and mechanical engineering would **come together to discuss and implement ways of minimising the damage that is currently being wreaked on the natural environment** of our planet, which has reached a critical state.*

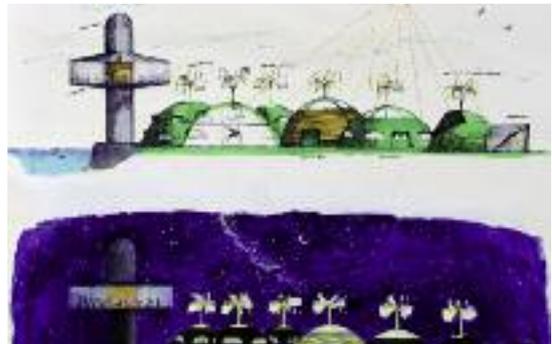
*The children of the village and other guests from all around the world would follow **open-air classes and workshops on subjects such as land observation, painting and the plastic arts**. I would like to teach the children who will be the builders of our planet's future. The original works created in this place would be displayed all around the world at exhibitions and shows."*

## A travelling exhibition of wind structures

Displayed around the world, an exhibition of Shingu's sculptures would **create awareness of the activities associated with the project** and would help decide on the **best site for the village's permanent location**.

At this exhibition, three full size wind turbines (7m in diameter) will be attached to tent structures to demonstrate the energy they produce for each structure. The feature of these wind-structures, for which an international patent is pending, is that they **naturally control the speed of their rotations in response to different wind speeds**.

Shingu will conduct seminars and discussions with the local population, including children, to explore ways of **living in harmony with nature by minimising damage to the environment**.



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# Other activities

Shingu or the art of breaking down barriers  
between different artistic spheres

## Bridges between art and architecture, art and design, art and dance/theatre



Over the years, Shingu has worked with many well-known figures from different artistic domains: architecture, design, dance ...

The artist, who wishes to remove the barrier between art and architecture, has worked on several projects with well-known architects like **Renzo Piano and Tadao Ando**.

He designed the scenery for **Issey Miyake's** 1999 spring-summer collection in Paris.

In 2005-2006, he collaborated with the choreographer **Jiri Kylian** on the extraordinary dance show *Toss of a Dice*. This show, toured worldwide, includes a gigantic sculpture placed amongst the dancers. (photo opposite © Franco Mammana).

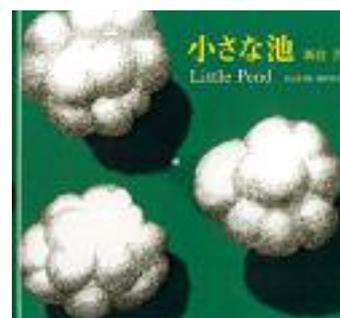
His other contributions include **theatre productions in Japan**, such as *Journey to the Five Planets*.



## Graphic books for children and adults

Shingu has designed numerous graphic books for children and adults. Some have been translated into French and English: *Strawberries, Spider, Whale Shark, Kippis and his Friends, Little Pond, Wind Planet, When You Turn on the Tap and Little Birds*.

These books reveal an infinite wisdom and the breadth of Shingu's knowledge, opening the way to an artistic renaissance.



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# Interview with Susumu Shingu

**1/ Different paths meet in your work. The influence is Japanese, the message both spiritual and political. Can you explain its source and genesis?**

I don't think there is anything political in my message. In the 40 years I have been working, I have always expressed through my sculptures, my exhibitions, my books of illustrations and my theatre, what a magnificent and precious planet the Earth is. At a time when the damage caused to our Earth is so critical, I feel that it is even more necessary to address my simple message to all the inhabitants of this planet, that is the message of how marvellous nature is on this earth.

**2/ Even more now than in the past, your work is rooted in the need to be aware of the environment for the survival of the planet. Do you see yourself as an activist artist?**

As an artist who has always worked with this planet's natural forces of wind, water and gravity, I would like to make my contribution to minimising the damage to our natural environment. That is why I would like to build this project for a self-sufficient village, which I have called *Breathing Earth*.

**3/ For you, would a world like Breathing Earth be a perfect world?**

I don't think so. We have been talking about environmental degradation for a long time, but no effective solution has been proposed. The project for a self-sufficient village that I am putting forward is a concept that should start a debate and would need to be adjusted to the environment where it is located. I don't claim to have found the solution. I am trying to propose a realistic concept for an ecosystem that would be in harmony with the forces of nature. *Breathing Earth*, a utopia? I wouldn't like it to remain a utopia! I want to see this project become a reality!



“At a time when the damage caused to our Earth is so critical, I feel that it is even more necessary to address my simple message to all the inhabitants of this planet.”

**4/ Your work is embedded in a cosmic vision of the universe. What are your deepest beliefs?**

I believe in the goodness of human beings. And I also believe in the power of art. Because the future we can see is that of our children, I would like my message to be aimed at them.

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# Interview with Véronique Jaeger

Co-director of the Jeanne Bucher Gallery  
and the Jaeger Bucher Gallery

**1/ Shingu's aerial sculptures resemble mobiles. They respond to the wind. Should we see them as alive and adapting to their location rather than the reverse?**

Susumu Shingu creates wind and water sculptures in constant motion that usually pivot around their central axis. His wind sculptures are like antennae that capture the slightest breeze, whether indoors or outside. In the water sculptures, the liquid can come from outside or inside, and circulates like blood in the human body.

The rhythm and motion of the sculptures is completely natural, fluid, and generates an extraordinary freedom and a profusion of shapes. It is fascinating to see how observers are affected in the depths of their being when they realise that the energies that animate these sculptures are the same as those operating in each of us.

As you say, they are fully alive and adapt to their environment: whether outdoors or inside, they reveal the invisible breeze and the energy generated by water.

There are so many examples. One I think of is the sculpture *Wings of the Waves* which since 1991 has stood on a rock out at sea, near Ikuchi Island in Japan, in an area known for its typhoons. The local fishermen observe it every day to find out the mood of the wind and the sea.

Another I think of is *Wind Caravan*, a one-year project for which Shingu took 21 sculptures to six remote places on the planet, from arid desert to frozen lake, in order to express the link between nature and human life. In the same way, the artist adapts each indoor sculpture to its host location to create a perfect match between sculpture and space. In fact, most of the collectors eventually send us drawings of the sculpture's planned location, because the work and the space are undoubtedly in symbiosis. It's magical to see it every time!

**2/ This is a multifaceted exhibition. It plays on several registers, including emotion and contemplation, but it also has a certain didactic dimension. How would you describe Susumu Shingu's work in a few words and encourage people to experience it?**

Shingu's sculptures reveal the living forces that surround us. They act like sensors, giving the invisible an armature. I am often amazed to see how much these sculptures evoke all the things that surround us in nature (a flower moving in the wind, a bird in flight, clouds floating in the atmosphere, planets hanging in the universe, sometimes with a humanoid aspect, as if Shingu was constantly reminding us that, like us, they are moved entirely by natural forces). These works are sculpted and placed in a setting, but they also sculpt new landscapes in that environment by creating an interactivity and a game with the watcher.

This was true of *Wind Caravan*, which managed not only to fit into the natural landscapes of six locations on the planet, but also to give visible form to the surrounding natural forces for the indigenous local people. In Mongolia or in Brazil, dozens of nomads travelled great distances to see these sculptures in situ, since the appearance of the sand dunes had suddenly changed with the installation of the sculptures. These people live day-to-day with water, wind, sunlight and gravity, without questioning these natural forces. By intervening in their natural landscape, Shingu gives these phenomena a structure by making them visible.

This is part of the true vocation of art, to be visionary and prophetic, rather than simply to reflect the surrounding gloom and decay.

These sculptures bring people together, encourage interactivity and communication, movement and a complete liberty of form, and send a message of hope for the future of the planet. Their essential function is to reveal the relationship between nature and human beings and to teach us a new way of experiencing our nature. They are both totally embedded in the tradition and sources of art and representative of the technological developments of our era. As Susumu Shingu explains, they are "*a means to translate the messages of nature into movements that are perceptible to the eye*".

**3/ Isn't this work is something that children also ought to see? There is something "wondrous" in them, like a magical link between art and nature...**

You couldn't say anything that Shingu would like more to hear. Children love Shingu's work and it's not surprising, given the artist's authenticity and spontaneity. He often says that it is better "*not to think too much with your head but rather to communicate directly with your heart*".

Shingu always includes children in his projects, by devising activities especially for them, by producing multiple graphic books for children full of wisdom and poetical understanding of the world, and by creating plays for them.

The world of childhood, of freshness and spontaneity, is inherent to his work and he is perhaps one of the world's only artists to have created a Children's Museum, built by Tadao Ando in Hyogo in Japan. It stages a drawing competition every year and the winner's drawing is faithfully reproduced by Shingu in a sculpture, which is then exhibited alongside the drawing. There is undoubtedly a magical link with Nature, because Shingu's sculptures make us aware of our own nature.



"This work is part of the true vocation of art, to be visionary and prophetic, rather than simply to reflect the surrounding gloom and decay. These sculptures bring people together, encourage interactivity and communication, movement and a complete liberty of form."

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# Images available for publication

All images © Susumu Shingu,  
Courtesy Galerie Jaeger Bucher



Susumu Shingu  
*Resonance*, 2008  
Aluminum and  
stainless steel  
207 x 207 cm



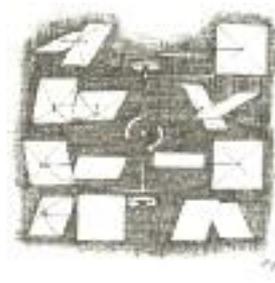
Susumu Shingu  
*Small Forest*, 2006  
Carbon fibre, aluminium,  
stainless steel and  
polyester  
210 x 348 x 178 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Floating Tree*, 2006  
Carbon fibre, aluminium,  
stainless steel and  
polyester  
135 x 156 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Snowflakes*, 2009  
Carbon fibre, aluminium,  
stainless steel  
and polyester  
192 x 192 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Snowflakes*, 2008  
Ink on paper  
41 x 49,2 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Sea and Clouds (detail)*,  
2008  
Carbon fibre, aluminium,  
stainless steel and  
polyester  
200 x 504 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Flower*, 2006  
Carbon fibre, aluminium,  
stainless steel and  
polyester  
220 x 218 cm



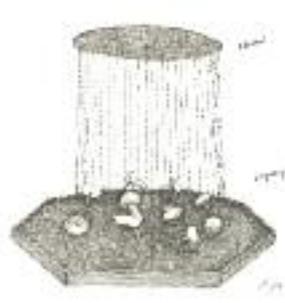
Susumu Shingu  
*Whisper*, 2008  
Aluminum and  
stainless steel  
60 x 206 x 206 cm  
High part  
22 x 230 x 230 cm

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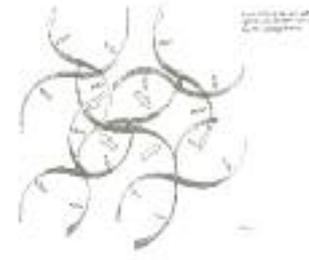
Portrait of Shingu



Susumu Shingu  
*Whisper*  
2008  
Ink on paper  
40 x 45,5 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Luminous river*, 2009  
Carbon fibre, aluminium,  
stainless steel and  
polyester  
307,6 x 360 cm



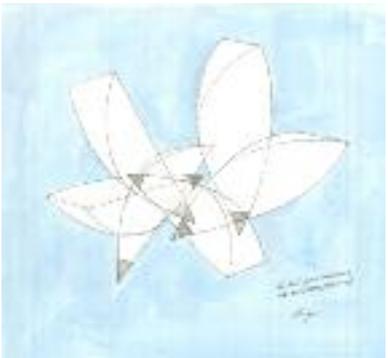
Susumu Shingu  
*Luminous river*  
2008  
Ink on paper  
43 x 50,5 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Diorama Night - Breathing Earth*, 2009  
Steel, wood, fiberglass,  
aluminum and plastic  
109 x 354 x 243 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Diorama Day - Breathing Earth*, 2009  
Steel, wood, fiberglass,  
aluminum and plastic  
109 x 354 x 243 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Moon Boat*, 2008  
Ink on paper  
40 x 42,2 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Diorama 1 - Breathing Earth*, 2009  
Steel, wood, fiberglass,  
aluminum and plastic  
109 x 354 x 243 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Moon Boat*, 2009  
Carbon fibre, aluminium,  
stainless steel and  
polyester  
307,6 x 136 cm



Susumu Shingu  
*Breathing Earth*, 2009  
Ink on paper  
95 x 114 cm

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# Informations Pratiques

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*PLANET OF WIND AND WATER*  
EXHIBITION

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Opening times :  
Tuesda - Saturday  
11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Galerie Jaeger Bucher  
From May 15 to September 26, 2009

The artist is available for  
interviews until July 18.

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