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For Immediate Release:

Shinro Ohtake

貼 (Shell & Occupy)

May 14 through June 14, 2008

Take Ninagawa is proud to announce the opening of “貼 (Shell and Occupy),” the first in a series of solo exhibitions for mid-career artist Shinro Ohtake that will continue at the gallery through August 2008. Presenting never-displayed collages from the 1990s and recent minimal wall-mounted objects made from hundreds of pasted sheets of paper, “貼 (Shell and Occupy)” examines Shinro Ohtake’s use of “stickering” as the foundation for a visual language that intuitively responds to the mechanical reproduction of information, experience and desire driving contemporary society. Throughout his career, Ohtake has made paintings, sculptures, installations and works in other media by pasting together found and original images, materials and even pieces of neon signs he has picked up from the street. He finds a parallel for this creative process in the habits of Japanese youth who use scores of miniature “Print Club” keepsake photos to turn notebooks, compact mirrors, cell phones and other everyday surfaces into glossy, yet ephemeral artifacts.

The exhibition centerpiece is one of the artist’s signature scrapbooks, from a series of oversize artist books that Ohtake has been making continuously since 1977. Comprised of roughly-bound sheets of paper encased in a unique hard-cover shell, *#56: 1996-97, Uwajima* is a kaleidoscopic delirium built up through dense applications of material torn from product packaging, advertising, newspapers, cartoons, pornography and subculture magazines, pulp fiction, currency, ticket stamps and other sources. Page after page, images of naked women in seductive poses overlap with promo-cards for Turkish pop-stars, wrestling snapshots and anatomical charts. In some cases, Ohtake overlays these images with paper cut-outs and dark washes of ink to create turbid formal studies. Elsewhere, booklets within the book interrupt linear progression, revealing hidden vistas of neon paint or unexpected detours into grids of vintage photographs and disembodied mementoes.

Ohtake’s two-dimensional collages on paper and paperboard from the 1990s with colorful names such as *Hawaii Hiho-Kan*, *New Myanmar Okubo*, *Atlanta Beijing* and *India* take viewers on actual and imaginary journeys to far-off locations. Featuring heroines lifted from kitsch movie posters, *Hawaii Hiho-Kan* (1998), for example, turns dramatic gestures of fear, shock and seduction into almost abstract patterns. Eschewing images altogether, works in the recent series of wall-mounted objects, “Hari-Kei” (2004), function as compositional exercises. These odd-shaped bricks made from hundreds of stacked sheets of colored construction paper, white printer paper or yellowing book paper underscore the artist’s abiding interest in using processes of assemblage and collage to create form, depth and structure. For more information and images please contact the gallery.

Born in Tokyo in 1955, Shinro Ohtake is regarded as one of the most influential Japanese artists of the past 30 years. Public collections include the Museum of Contemporary Art and Hara Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo, and Naoshima Benesse House, Naoshima. Recent exhibitions include “New Universe on the Road,” at the Fukuoka Art Museum and Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art in 2007, and the groundbreaking “Shinro Ohtake Zen-Kei Retrospective: 1955-2006,” at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, in 2006. This is the artist’s first exhibition with the gallery.