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PRESS RELEASE

NUKAGA GALLERY

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Exhibition

Demythifying Japanese Women Artists

Yuki Katsura Yayoi Kusama Atsuko Tanaka Yuko Nasaka



Yuki Katsura Work 1961 Oil and paper on canvas 186.0 x 151.5 cm

NUKAGA GALLERY is pleased to present “Demythifying Japanese Women Artists: Yuki Katsura, Yayoi Kusama, Atsuko Tanaka, Yuko Nasaka,” an exhibition spotlighting four of Japanese post-war women artists. As implied by *demythify*, the exhibition aims to re-examine the essential value of Yayoi Kusama, Atsuko Tanaka, and Yuko Nasaka at a time when they are going from strength to strength in an area of the art market that is heating up. Exhibiting these artists alongside works by Yuki Katsura, a unique, pioneering artist from a generation two decades earlier, provides the opportunity to rediscover the diversity and abundance of creative activity by Japan’s avant-garde women artists. In preparation for this exhibition, we have brought together a selection of significant works by these artists, including a work by Yuki Katsura of a size rarely seen in the market, early works by Yayoi Kusama, previously unseen works by Atsuko Tanaka, and works by Yuko Nasaka that have been exhibited outside Japan.

Exhibition

- Title: Demythifying Japanese Women Artists
Yuki Katsura, Yayoi Kusama, Atsuko Tanaka, Yuko Nasaka
- Dates: October 12 (Wed) – November 2, 2016 (Wed)
NUKAGA GALLERY (Tokyo)
November 24 (Thu) – December 15, 2016 (Thu)
NUKAGA GALLERY OSAKA (Osaka)
- Open: 10:00 – 18:00 (Closed Sundays)
- Admission: Free
- Artist: Yuki Katsura (4 works) Yayoi Kusama (8)
 Atsuko Tanaka (3) Yuko Nasaka (5)
- Curatorial supervision: Reiko Kokatsu (Modern and Contemporary Art
Historian/Art Critic, former Chief Curator at Tochigi
Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts)
- Curatorial cooperation: Mizuho Kato (Modern and Contemporary Art Historian,
Visiting Associate Professor at the Museum of Osaka
University)
- Events: Opening Receptions (admission free)
Tokyo @NUKAGA GALLERY
October 12, 2016 (Wed) 17:00~
Osaka @NUKAGA GALLERY OSAKA
November 24, 2016 (Thu) 17:00~
- Catalogue: A catalogue depicting all exhibited works, with commentary in English
will be published along with this exhibition.

<TOKYO Exhibition> NUKAGA GALLERY

Venue: 3F, 2-3-2 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104-0061 | Tel: +81 (0)3-5524-5544

Access:

JR	Yurakucho sta.	(Central Exit) 5 min. walk
	Tokyo sta.	(Yaesu South Exit) 10 min. walk
Metro	Yurakucho Line	Ginza-itcho (Y19) (Exit 3) 1 min. walk
	Marunouchi Line	Ginza sta. (M16) (C6.C8.C9 Exit) 4 min. walk
	Ginza Line	Ginza sta. (G9) (C6.C8.C9 Exit) 4 min. walk
	Hibiya Line	Ginza sta. (H8) (C6.C8.C9 Exit) 4 min. walk
	Ginza Line	Kyobashi station (G10) (Exit 2.3) 5 min. walk

<OSAKA Exhibition> NUKAGA GALLERY OSAKA

Venue: 2F 5-8-8 Nishi-Tenma, Kita-ku, Osaka-shi 530-0047 | Tel: +81(0)6 6362 1038

Access:

JR	Osakatemmangu sta.	5 min. walk
Subway	Tanimachi Line	Minami-morimachi sta. (1 Exit) 3 min. walk

Artists

Yuki Katsura (1913–1991)

Born in Hongo (present-day Bunkyo-ku), Tokyo as Yukiko Katsura. From pre-war times until the mid-1970s, she signed her works with the phonetic characters for the first part of her name instead of with the character for snow (*yuki*). As a child living in a house with a large garden, she was fond of wildlife and plants, and took to collecting familiar objects such as tree bark and lace. Graduating from girls' high school in 1931, she studied under oil painter Kenichi Nakamura. She received guidance in life drawing from Saburosukeye Okada, but, tiring of the academic approach to western-style painting, also attended the Avant-garde Research Group. In 1938, she was a founding member of the Kyushitsukai (Ninth Room Association). Postwar, she gained a substantial reputation as an avant-garde painter for her ironical and satirical style depicting human comedies from an everyday-life perspective. In 1956, she left Japan for close to six years, living first in France, then spending time elsewhere in Europe and in the U.S., and traveling in Africa. Her travelogue *Onna Hitori Genshiburaku ni Hairu*, published after her return to Japan, was a bestseller. Retrospectives were held at the Yamaguchi Prefectural Museum of Art in 1980, and the Shimonoseki City Art Museum in 1991. The first major retrospective of her work in Tokyo was held in 2013 at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo to mark her centennial, precipitating further reassessment of her art.

Yayoi Kusama (1929–)

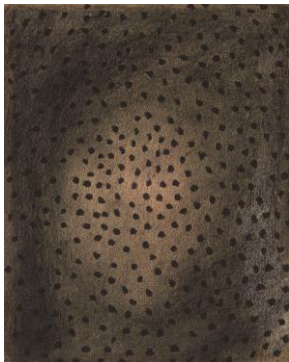
Born in Matsumoto, Nagano. Rooted in pictures drawn to capture the hallucinatory images and sounds that troubled her since childhood, Kusama's career began by drawing pictures with polka dots and nets as motifs. Moving to the U.S. in 1957, she became a darling of the 1960s New York art scene with unconventional art that included giant net paintings, soft sculpture, and happenings. Returning to Japan in 1973, she was highly acclaimed for the many novels and collections of poetry that she published. In 1998, she held a large-scale solo exhibition at MoMA, New York. In 2009, she was recognized by Japan as a Person of Cultural Merit. A major retrospective of her work launched in May 2011 at Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid) toured to Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), Tate Modern (London), and the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York). As a standard-bearer of contemporary art, the whole world is her stage.

Atsuko Tanaka (1932–2005)

Born in Osaka City. In 1950, she entered the Art Institute of Osaka Municipal Museum of Art. Fellow students included Akira Kanayama, who she later married, and Kazuo Shiraga, who were both members of Zero Society, along with avant-garde artists such as Saburo Murakami. In 1955, she joined the Gutai Art Association together with these three artists, and became one of the key members of Gutai. The same year, at the 1st Gutai Art Exhibition she exhibited *Work (Bell)*, a work that set off a sequence of 20 electric bells arranged on the floor around the gallery wall at two-meter intervals. Then, in 1956, she presented *Electric Dress*, a costume that incorporated live, flashing light bulbs and fluorescent lights. Exploring how to express the same concepts in two-dimensions, she embarked on a series of paintings. In 1965, MoMA (New York) acquired one of her works. This was the year she left Gutai. In 1972, she moved to Asuka-mura in Nara Prefecture, where she established a studio. In 2011–12, the major retrospective "Atsuko Tanaka. The Art of Connecting" was shown in the U.K. and Spain, then at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo. With growing international appreciation of Gutai, Tanaka is currently attracting great interest in the global art market.

Yuko Nasaka (1938–)

Born in Osaka City. In 1959, she married Senkichiro Nasaka, who would later partner her in joining the Gutai Art Association. In 1962, a large work with countless holes drilled in cardboard exhibited in the 15th “Ashiya City Exhibition” wins both the Mayor’s Award and the Fifteenth Anniversary Prize. Also winning recognition from Jiro Yoshihara, she joined Gutai the next year, becoming one of the key second-generation members. Much of her subsequent art consisted of repetition of circular forms, assembling modules with a consistent pattern into works suggestive of the infinite space of the cosmos. In 1964, she held her first solo exhibition at the Gutai Pinacotheca. In 1970 she exhibited in the Gutai Group exhibition at Expo ‘70 Midori Pavilion. After a two-decade interval, she began creating artwork again, holding solo exhibitions in Tokyo in 2014, and Antwerp, Belgium, in 2015.



© Yayoi Kusama

Yayoi Kusama
Dots 1952
Pastel on paper
37.8 × 29.8 cm



© Kanayama Akira and Tanaka Atsuko Association

Atsuko Tanaka
Untitled 1974
Vinyl paint on canvas
130.0 × 96.5 cm



Yuko Nasaka
Untitled 1967
Synthetic paint, plaster and glue on cotton,
mounted on vinyl
61.5 × 75.0 cm

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