

September 6, 2023

Press Release

Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art 2023 Exhibition [Autumn/Winter]

MATSUYAMA Tomokazu: Fictional Landscape

Date: October 27 (FRI), 2023 - March 17 (SAT), 2024

Venue : Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art

The Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art will present an exhibition by contemporary artist MATSUYAMA Tomokazu as its Autumn/Winter program for 2023, from Friday, October 27, 2023, to Sunday, March 17, 2024. The exhibition will be the artist's first large-scale solo showing in Japan.

MATSUYAMA Tomokazu (1976 -) is a New York-based artist known for blending boldness with delicacy. This unique fusion is evident in his vibrant paintings marked by intricate lines, as well as in the large-scale public art sculptures he creates. Drawing inspiration from a plethora of sources, Matsuyama incorporates elements from traditional Japanese, Chinese, and European paintings, snippets from fashion magazines, everyday consumer products, and recognizable logos. Though these images permeate modern society and might feel familiar, they aren't typically associated with one another. However, when integrated into Matsuyama's artwork, they evoke deep-seated memories, as if disparate fragments from the recesses of the mind have converged to form a coherent whole.

Matsuyama's diverse life experiences have deeply informed and enriched his work. Born in Gifu, an area renowned for its rich nature and historical heritage, he was exposed to West Coast street culture in the United States during his boyhood. Upon returning to Japan, he pursued studies in economics. In his twenties, he initially followed an athletic path before pivoting to design. Throughout his journey, Matsuyama has consistently engaged with the world's multifaceted diversity, often viewed through the lens of opposites, spanning from traditional culture to contemporary counterculture.

The exhibition, "*MATSUYAMA Tomokazu: Fictional Landscape*," showcases Matsuyama's artistic evolution and sophistication. It places a spotlight on his recent works, produced during the COVID-19 pandemic, and introduces new pieces to the public for the first time. This event in Hirosaki, a city known for embracing new cultures, offers a unique opportunity to see the artist in a fresh perspective.



MATSUYAMA Tomokazu, *Hello Open Arms*, 2023
Private Collection
Acrylic and mixed media on canvas 257×216cm

Press Contact Information

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Exhibition Highlights

1. Tomokazu Matsuyama's Landmark Solo Exhibition: “*Fictional Landscape*”

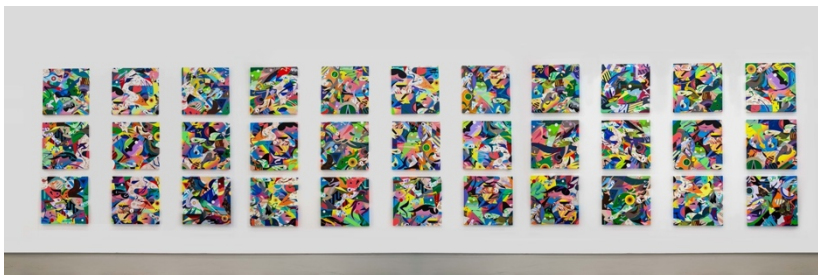
This marks fourteen years since Matsuyama, an avid producer consistently expanding his artistic reach, showcased his debut solo exhibition in a New York gallery in 2009. “*Fictional Landscape*” is not only his inaugural solo exhibition in Japan but also his first in a museum with an expansive exhibition area exceeding 1,200 m². Pre-COVID-19, Matsuyama collaborated closely with a substantial team in his New York studio. However, the pandemic led him to innovate, resulting in remote collaborations like *Cluster 2020* (2020). The exhibition will also spotlight recent pieces, such as *Broken Train Pick Me* (2020), conceived by Matsuyama in solitude during the pandemic, and *People With People* (2021), a collaboration piece with the musical duo YUZU.

2. Unveiling New Works and Introducing Pieces to Japan for the First Time

The exhibition will feature 23 artworks debuting in Japan, nine of which are entirely new unveilings, complemented by approximately 30 recent paintings and sculptures. Signature Matsuyama pieces, including intricate paintings derived from diverse image collages and robust stainless-steel sculptures common in public art, will be on display. Additionally, vibrantly colored sculptures—*Mother Other* and *This is What It Feels Like ED.2* (both 2023)—will make their Japanese debut. These are masterpieces where Matsuyama melds ancient artistry, like *kangyokugan* and *kirikane* patterns, with modern techniques, overlaying polyurethane on fiber-reinforced plastic (FRP).

3. A Glimpse Behind the Artistic Process

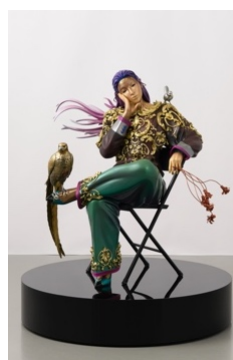
Matsuyama realizes his masterpieces by fusing traditional art studies with his ever-growing image repository. A typical artwork draws inspiration from 10 to 20 varied images, both contemporary and historic, from the East and West. This exhibition offers a rare insight into Matsuyama's creative journey by showcasing materials and sketches, usually concealed from public view.



MATSUYAMA Tomokazu, *Cluster 2020*, 2020
Private Collection
Acrylic and mixed media on canvas
Dimension Variable 33 panels: 60x60cm



MATSUYAMA Tomokazu, *People With People*, 2021
Collection of Senya & Company Co., Ltd.
Acrylic and mixed media on canvas 213.3x426.7cm



MATSUYAMA Tomokazu, *This is What It Feels Like ED.2*, 2023
Private Collection
FRP, wood, steel, epoxy, polyurethane, acrylic, plastic and gold leaf
120x110x110cm

About the Exhibition's Title

The Japanese title of the exhibition, "*Setsugetsuka no Toki*," translates to "times of snow, moon, and flowers." This is derived from a poem by Bai Juyi (also known as Bai Letian, 772-846), a notable mid-Tang Dynasty Chinese poet. Throughout his tenure as a government official, Bai Juyi penned verses from various locations, expressing his deep affection for his friend and former subordinate, Yin Xielu, despite their physical distance. His poem beautifully articulates how emotions remain steadfast amidst the changing seasons.

The sentiments expressed in this poem deeply align with Matsuyama's perspective. Based in New York, a modern city where various cultures and people intertwine, he equally engages with the cultural influences of his roots in Japan and the US. Furthermore, he resonates with the rich legacies of regions like China and Europe, which have significantly shaped the history of visual arts. Matsuyama's vast artistic engagement spans from high art to both counterculture and pop culture.

The English title, "*Fictional Landscape*," draws from a signature series in Matsuyama's portfolio. It encapsulates the idea of an imaginative, otherworldly realm—a place that feels familiar, yet remains elusive and "somewhere else."



MATSUYAMA Tomokazu, *20 Dollar Cold Cold Heart*, 2019
Private Collection
Acrylic and mixed media on canvas 267×172cm



MATSUYAMA Tomokazu, *Wheels of Fortune*, 2020
Private Collection
Steel 257×400×105cm

Artist

MATSUYAMA Tomokazu

Born in Gifu Prefecture in 1976, MATSUYAMA Tomokazu now resides and creates in Brooklyn, New York. While he predominantly focuses on paintings, his artistic endeavors also span sculptures and installations. In his work, Matsuyama seamlessly interweaves contrasting elements—like Asia and Europe, the ancient and the contemporary, and the figurative with the abstract. This synthesis is emblematic of his unique cross-cultural experiences and a reflection of the fluid nature of modern society in this information-driven age.

Matsuyama's commitment to the arts extends to large-scale public art projects. Notable works include a mural on the Bowery Wall (New York, USA, 2019), *Hanao-San* (Shinjuku East Square, Tokyo, 2020), and *Wheels of Fortune* (The Meiji Jingu Forest Festival of Art in Tokyo, Meiji Jungu, 2020). His recent solo showcases feature the "*Accountable Nature*" exhibition at the Long Museum (Shanghai, China, 2020; Chongqing, China, 2021).



Photo: Akira Yamada

General Information

Exhibition Title:	<i>MATSUYAMA Tomokazu: Fictional Landscape</i>
Date:	Fri., October 27, 2023 – Sun., March 17, 2024
Venue:	Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art 2-1 Yoshino-cho, Hirosaki City, Aomori, Japan 036 – 8188
Opening Hours:	9:00–17:00 (Last admission 30 minutes before closing)
Closed:	Tuesdays (except on Jan. 2) and from Dec. 25, 2023 to Jan. 1, 2024
Exhibition Title:	Adults 1,300 yen (1,200 yen) University Students 1,000 yen (900 yen) *() Price for a group over 20 people *Free of charge for high school students and under; international students staying in Hirosaki; Hirosaki citizens over 65; and visitors with disabilities and one attendant
Organizer:	Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art
Special Cooperation:	KOTARO NUKAGA, MATSUYAMA STUDIO
Special Sponsor:	Starts Corporation Inc.
Sponsor:	OBAYASHI CORPORATION, NTT FACILITIES, INC.
Supported by:	The To-o Nippo Press, THE DAILY TOHOKU SHIMBUN, THE MUTSU SHIMPO Press, Aomori Broadcasting Corporation, Aomori Television Broadcasting Co., Ltd., Asahi Broadcasting Aomori Co., Ltd., Aomori Fm Broadcasting, FM APPLE WAVE, and the Hirosaki City Board of Education
Tel:	+81-172-32-8950
Access:	From JR Hirosaki Station - Take the Konan Bus to the Horai-Bashi stop (app. 9 min.) and walk 5 minutes - 20 minutes on foot - taxi 7 minutes
Website:	http://www.hirosaki-moca.jp
SNS:	Instagram @hirosaki_moca X(Twitter) @hirosaki_moca Facebook @hirosaki.moca

About the Museum

Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art opened in 2020, after renovating the Yoshino-cho Brick Warehouse, a piece of modern industrial heritage and iconic landmark of Hirosaki City constructed in the late 19th and early 20th century. Its buildings were renovated by architect Tane Tsuyoshi.

The goal is to connect the region and the world through contemporary art, offering opportunities to engage with diverse and abundant visions and ideas, and serving as a dynamic cultural hub that stimulates new creativity connected to the past, present and future.



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