



Taka Ishii

Gallery

Sterling Ruby “Heat. Minthe. Swells.”

Dates: Nov 23 – Dec 23, 2023

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery (TERRADA ART COMPLEX II)

Opening Reception: Thursday, Nov 23, 18:00 – 20:00

Taka Ishii Gallery is pleased to announce “Heat. Minthe. Swells.,” a solo exhibition by Sterling Ruby taking place from November 23rd to December 23rd, 2023. This exhibition is in conjunction with two other solo shows running concurrently at Taka Ishii Gallery Kyoto and at the Sogetsu Plaza in Tokyo, all featuring new work by the artist. This marks Ruby’s fourth solo exhibition at the gallery and will feature works from his TURBINE series.

Sterling Ruby’s TURBINE paintings are a direct extension of the artist’s WIDW series previously exhibited at Taka Ishii Gallery in 2018. An abbreviation of “window,” the WIDW paintings saw intense reds, oranges and cerulean blues obsessively applied to a canvas then bisected by collaged cardboard elements, creating stark horizontal and vertical divisions. Starting in 2021, Ruby’s new series continues to challenge the boundaries between painting and collage. Similar structural elements blast diagonally across the vivid, energetic canvas, evoking not only turbines and windmills, but also hurricanes, war, explosions and fire -- all emitters of “heat.” Referring as well to the swells of Hokusai’s *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* and the nymph of the Cocytus River, the artist sublimates their inherent dynamism into abstraction. Rather than seeing through a window, the viewer instead becomes fully engulfed in the force and kineticism of the work and immerses themselves in a world where natural forces and sensory experiences meld seamlessly.

Known for his cross-media explorations into violence and social change, amongst other issues, Ruby’s thought-provoking series draws on the themes and aesthetics of Russian Constructivism and Futurism, with the artist particularly citing inspiration from the immersive abstractions and multi-layer compositions of El Lissitzky and Giacomo Balla. Although rooted in vastly different political environments, both art movements were concerned with the transformative power of art during a period of social upheaval, and Ruby’s TURBINE paintings tap into a sense of self-destruction and explore the inherent fragility of social and ideological structures.

“Heat. Minthe. Swells.” marks a return to East Asia for the artist, following a cluster of shows in South Korea, Japan and China that took place in 2014, an experience he carefully documented in his travel diary later published in *Crash* magazine.

[Concurrent Exhibitions]

Sterling Ruby "SPECTERS TOKYO"

Dates: November 23 – December 23, 2023

Location: Stone garden "Heaven," The Sogetsu Kaikan 1F

Sterling Ruby "SPECTERS KYOTO"

Dates: November 25, 2023 – January 20, 2024

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery Kyoto

Born in 1972, Sterling Ruby works with a wide range of aesthetic and material strategies from sculptures made of saturated, glossy, poured polyurethane, bronze, and steel, to drawings, collages, richly glazed ceramics, paintings, photography, and video, as well as textile works that include quilts, tapestries, garments, and soft sculptures. His work is a balancing act, maintaining a constant tension between a multitude of elements. It deals with issues related to the violence and pressures within society, and art history, even as it also reflects his personal history. In all of his work, he vacillates between the fluid and static, the minimalist and expressionistic, the pristine and the defaced.

Ruby's solo exhibitions include Galleria Doria Pamphilj, Rome (2021); Museum of Cycladic Art, Athens (2021); the ICA Miami (2019) which traveled to the ICA Boston (2020); Museum of Arts and Design, New York (2018); Winterpalais, Belvedere Museum, Vienna (2016); FRAC Champagne-Ardenne, Reims (2012) which traveled to Centre D'Art Contemporain, Geneva (2012) and to Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rome (2013); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2008). In 2014 he participated in the Gwangju Biennale, Taipei Triennale, and Whitney Biennial.

Ruby's sculpture DOUBLE CANDLE (2018) is installed permanently at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC. His works are included in the collections of Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Tate Modern, London; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Moderna Museet, Stockholm among others.

For further information, please contact:

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Tue – Sat 12:00 – 19:00 Closed on Sun, Mon, and National Holidays



Sterling Ruby

"TURBINE. SWELLS.", 2023

Acrylic, oil, and cardboard on canvas

182.9 x 132.1 cm

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Photo: Robert Wedemeyer