



Taka Ishii

Gallery

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Kohei Yamada “Strikethrough”

Dates: Jul 1 – 29, 2023

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery (complex665)

Opening reception: Saturday, Jul 1, 18:00 – 20:00

Taka Ishii Gallery is pleased to present “Strikethrough,” an exhibition of Kohei Yamada's works, from July 1 through July 29. The exhibition, Yamada's first at the gallery, will showcase a variety of his oil paintings on canvases of varying sizes, alongside smaller pieces executed on Arches paper.

The term “painting” does not quite resonate with me. Though it's technically what I'm doing, I tend to find words like “covering” and “concealing” to be a better fit when I contemplate my own work. My recent work is mostly done with flat brushes, the movements of which evoke the rhythmic back-and-forth of waves in the sea. With the sea, you often can't tell from outside the water how deep or cold it is, and only find out when you step in. For me, those sensations serve as reminders that the sea is not there for our sake. In producing my work, I strive not just to pay attention to the surface, but also to remember that something lies behind it.

Kohei Yamada, May 2023

Kohei Yamada's paintings project a palpable impression of the brushes sweeping across the canvas with exhilarating momentum. His repeated, broad, and swift strokes meticulously coat the canvas' surface with color, producing a beautiful array of brushmarks and giving rise to gradations where neighboring colors overlap.

Yamada begins his artistic process by generously saturating the canvas or paper with oil. He draws black lines as starting points and contours, places in the upper left corner a spot of yellow representing light, then proceeds to cover the whole surface with vibrant colors in decisive strokes. The paints blend with the oil suffusing the canvas and with neighboring shades, often producing unexpected hues in the process of composing the color planes. Further brushwork lends the surface more smoothness and amplifies hues where planes intersect, and the accumulated layers of paint foster a sense of depth that is peculiar to Yamada's work.

The exhibition title, “Strikethrough,” has the dual meaning of a line that crosses out text, and the phenomenon in printing where the ink's oil component bleeds through to the back of the paper. In the context of Yamada's work, this might refer to the way in which the colors cover up the canvas and mix with one another, or to the oil permeating the canvas. Yamada infuses his works and creative processes, as well as the words he

speaks or writes, with multiple layers of meaning, ever conscious that they have dimensions unseen from the surface.

The abstract spaces he creates, rich in depth and composed of colors and planes, are rooted in scenes from the depths of his memories and in the phenomena of the world around him. These elements gradually manifest themselves through Yamada's brushwork as figures and symbols, transforming into color fields and throwing light on the unseen depths hidden beneath the surface. The resulting pictorial spaces encapsulate Yamada's personal insights into the significance and essence of his subjects.

Kohei Yamada (b. 1997, Osaka) graduated with a major in oil painting from Musashino Art University in 2020 and completed his master's degree in the same field at Kyoto University of the Arts in 2022. He is currently active in Tokyo. His solo exhibitions include "As If to Hide It" at the biscuit gallery (Tokyo, 2022); "The Way the Lines Come In" at MtK Contemporary Art and Kyoto Okazaki Tsutaya Books (Kyoto, 2022); "road" at the Daikanyama Hillside Terrace Annex-A (Tokyo, 2021); and "Going Up, then Down" at the Gallery binosha (Tokyo, 2020). Yamada has also participated in group exhibitions such as "nine colors XVI" at Seibu Shibuya (Tokyo, 2022), "biscuit gallery Opening Exhibition II" at biscuit gallery (Tokyo, 2021), and "Up_01" in the Ginza Atrium of Ginza Tsutaya Books (Tokyo, 2021), as well as in "ARTISTS' FAIR KYOTO" in the Museum of Kyoto Annex (Kyoto, 2020 and 2021). He was a Contemporary Art Foundation (CAF) Award finalist in 2020.

For further information, please contact:

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



Kohei Yamada
"Untitled", 2022
Oil on canvas
91 x 72.7 cm

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