

PRESS TEXT

FU NAGASAWA
SHIGAN

SEPTEMBER 19–OCTOBER 24, 2026

Gallery Vacancy is pleased to announce *Shigan*, the first solo exhibition at the gallery by Kyoto-based artist Fu Nagasawa, on view from September 19 to October 24, 2026. The exhibition brings together nine new oil paintings created for this presentation.

Shigan refers to this shore, or this side of a river. A river separates its two banks while continuing to flow between them. For Nagasawa, the distance from which we look toward a time that has passed or a place we have yet to reach carries a distinct sense of reality. Painting can be understood as a similar act of looking: rather than reconstructing the past in a fixed form, it begins in the present and approaches the traces that remain within objects and images.

Nagasawa's work often begins at a monthly flea market near his studio in Kyoto. Ceramics, folk objects and household tools are placed alongside one another, selected anew and passed from one user to the next. Images of plants, waterfowl, flowers, fish and animals painted on their surfaces were frequently made by unnamed artisans. The intentions of their makers may no longer be recoverable, yet the images remain with the objects, gathering further layers of time through use, repair and exchange.

The works in *Shigan* continue Nagasawa's attention to images embedded in folk craft. Motifs such as waterfowl, plants, animals and scrollwork have long appeared across East Asian ceramics, textiles and everyday objects, changing through movement and repeated making. Elements are omitted, condensed and rearranged until a recognizable form begins to approach an abstract line. Nagasawa loosens these images from their original objects, allowing them to continue changing through new relationships of colour, surface and scale.

Departing from his earlier use of woodblocks and exposed cotton grounds, the new paintings are built through repeated layers of small, restrained strokes and limited amounts of pigment. Slight differences produced each time colours are mixed combine with bleeding, dry brushwork and scraped passages. These variations do not directly imitate a craft effect; they register the time of painting itself. Soft pinks, mineral greens, ochres and reds form subtly uneven grounds from which birds and plants emerge and recede, keeping the relationship between image and ground in continual movement.

Shigan does not attempt to rebuild a vanished past. Instead, it considers how an image might carry traces of earlier lives while continuing to change in the present. Between the visible object and the absent maker, inherited form and the artist's present gesture, the exhibition preserves a distance that remains deliberately unfilled. Within this distance, historical images cease to be fragments of the past and become forms through which painting can continue to unfold.

VACANCY

Fu Nagasawa, born in 1999 in Kochi, Japan, now lives and works in Kyoto. He received a BA in Oil Painting from Musashino Art University in 2022 and completed his MFA in the same field at Kyoto University of the Arts in 2025. Nagasawa's practice revisits the visual and symbolic language of Japanese folk art and craftsmanship, drawing on motifs such as birds, plants, and ornamental patterns found in ceramics, dyed fabrics, and everyday objects. Working with both oil painting and woodblock printing, he reinterprets these inherited forms through layered compositions that oscillate between intention and accident. Irregular textures, misaligned imprints, and gestural brushstrokes echo the tactile nature of traditional techniques, where each variation, like the unpredictable results of kiln-fired glazes, resists standardization. Through this process, Nagasawa shifts attention from decorative imagery to material resonance, proposing a renewed pictorial space in which forms rooted in secular culture are neither quoted nor rejected, but recontextualized and quietly transformed.

Recent solo and duo exhibitions include: *Shigan*, Gallery Vacancy, Shanghai, 2026; *Folk Fog*, Chiso Gallery, Kyoto, 2026; *Zankyu*, Taka Ishii Gallery, Maebashi, 2026; ☆ (*Book Mark*), COHJU Contemporary Art, Kyoto, 2026; *Mark Making*, with Takuma Oue, Taka Ishii Gallery, Maebashi, 2025; *Artificial-Natural*, with Kurumi Onishi, COHJU Contemporary Art, Kyoto, 2024. Recent group exhibitions include: *PAINTING*, LURF GALLERY, Tokyo, 2026; *Mirrors Within Mirrors*, Gallery Vacancy at Derosia, New York, 2026; *Future Fossils*, Gallery Vacancy at Paris Internationale, Paris, 2025; (*subliminal*) *pre-player*, Paichyu, Tokyo, 2025; *ART OSAKA 2025*, COHJU at ART OSAKA, Osaka, 2025; *grid4*, biscuit gallery, Tokyo, 2025; *SHIBUYA STYLE* vol.17, Seibu Shibuya Art Gallery and Alternative Space, Tokyo, 2023; *HOP Exhibition*, Galerie Aube, Kyoto University of the Arts, Kyoto, 2023.