

Kazuyuki Takezaki: Marugame, Milwaukee

The Green Gallery is pleased to announce Kazuyuki Takezaki's exhibition *Marugame, Milwaukee*. This will be Takezaki's first show in America and his second international solo exhibition outside of Japan.

Takezaki will be showing works from three series describing a recent evolution in his practice. Each painting utilizes landscape as a motif. Becoming a structure to hang marks on and/or a way to ground his painterly strokes; these works teeter between abstract pictures, lush environments and simple still lifes, that direct us back to nature. Takezaki's paintings rely on traditions of *plein air* as well as generative, process-based approaches to making.

The catalyst for this strategy is first apparent in Takezaki's "Board/Table" works. Here we find the artist setting up a specific scenario to generate landscape paintings. The approach is matter-of-fact and practical. The artist begins with a panel. This object becomes both a literal work table as well as an eventual support structure for the painting. The top and bottom edge of the board are painted with black and white as a way to later denote orientation when the painting resolves itself. A sheet of loosely cut canvas is then stretched over most of the surface. Takezaki responds to the surrounding space with a sense of urgency and vigor. Here, observing *en plein air* and generative actions merge. As instantaneous marks build, the painting is rotated without a clear orientation. Color and the accumulation of various strokes direct us to nature while more emboldened marks keep the picture from resting easy. Eventually, Takezaki determines the work is finished, an orientation is deduced, and the landscape is grounded.

We next zoom out and witness Takezaki turning directly to observation. In these paintings our direction toward nature feels more controlled. Canvas no longer butts up against a wooden substrate, the surface is consistent, and traditional conventions of the rectangle apply. Perhaps in these works, the viewer senses a close affinity with the past. A history of Japanese landscape begins to emerge by way of Utagawa Hiroshige and Katsushika Hokusai as well as the Western impressionist and post-impressionist painters they influenced. These works feel clear and concise in their examination of the past and how various histories inform our perspective of landscape today.

Rounding out the exhibition are a selection of recent "Leaf" paintings. These seemingly simple still lifes allow Takezaki the opportunity to hone his relationship to abstraction and the landscape. The leaf becomes *abstracted* via a decisive application of marks on the surface. Painted leaves are scaled 1:1 per Takezaki's observation. The works are direct and immediate, yet highly considered. They bring together tendencies within the artist's oeuvre, while offering a succinct outlook on how we determine our relationship to exterior environments.