



Hiroshi Sugito 「apples and lemon」

2024.11.2- 12.7 11am-7pm CLOSED: Sun, Mon, National Holidays

Tomio Koyama Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of “Tomio Koyama Gallery Kyobashi” on Wednesday, November 2, 2024, in TODA BUILDING, as its third gallery space following Roppongi and Tennoz. The first exhibition at Tomio Koyama Gallery Kyobashi will be “apples and lemon,” a solo show by Hiroshi Sugito.

Hiroshi Sugito is recognized as one of the most important artists in Japanese contemporary art. Such as three-dimensional works and paintings rendered in fresh colors that feature motifs of dots, lines, circles, triangles and other forms and objects which are at once figurative and abstract, Sugito's art, which is unbound by established concepts, has received high acclaim both in Japan and abroad.

Sugito's approach to production is particularly unique in that it involves interpreting the exhibition space through his five senses and physicality. By means of meticulous research, processes of trial-and-error, and time, he continues to create a freely extensible artistic universe in which the works and the spaces they inhabit act in concert and transform one another.

This exhibition, which marks the artist's ninth solo presentation at the gallery and the first in five years, will present new three-dimensional works and paintings together with works produced in the 1990s during the early years of his career. How does Sugito currently perceive the world and space, and how does he express it in his works? In light of this new space that has yet to be completed, Sugito himself comments, “I'm not going to think about the space beforehand, but instead, hope to just bring everything in and then think about it. I am looking forward to seeing myself how everything unfolds.”

**【About Hiroshi Sugito, the exhibition, and the new works: The combination of apples and lemons, a multilayered and fluid world represented by a timeless relationship】**

Hiroshi Sugito was born in 1970 in Aichi Prefecture, Japan, and spent his childhood in New York. After graduating from the Department of Japanese Painting, Faculty of Arts, Aichi Prefectural College in 1992, he spent several years living in the mountains cutting trees and cultivating fields before commencing his career as an artist in 1996. He has participated in numerous exhibitions in Japan and overseas, and has presented a series of solo museum exhibitions at the Miyagi Museum of Art and Bernard Buffet Museum, Shizuoka in 2015, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi in 2016 and Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum in 2017. He received the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Award for Fine Arts in 2017, and currently serves as Professor of the Department of Painting, Faculty of Fine Art, Tokyo University of the Arts.

The motifs of Sugito's works include everything that exists in the world, from small things such as raindrops, to familiar fruit, the home that is the cornerstone of life, and the vast universe at large, paying equal attention to, or more so cherishing even the smallest details of daily life.

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The title of this exhibition, “apples and lemon,” refers to two familiar fruit which while both spherical, are different in color and shape. It reflects Sugito’s desire to consider what can be seen by combining motifs rather than comparing them. Peeled apples are preserved in better condition when drizzled with lemon juice, and lemon juice is also an important secret ingredient when making apple pie. Sensing the way their compatibility influences each other, Sugito continues to earnestly examine the relationship between the two, whether that be by thoroughly exploring their combination, or by analyzing the individual characteristics of apples and lemons, carefully expressing his own perceptions in his work.

In addition, inspired by his experience of presenting some of his previously unreleased works from the 1990s at a certain exhibition, Sugito, on this occasion, combines his latest works with his own paintings from the 1990s, and also takes on the challenge of creating a three-dimensional works with the material of FRP which he had used at the time.

The paintings which he created after graduating from university while tilling the fields deep in the mountains, were painted on large canvases despite him having lacked both art supplies and money. Although the attitude and mindset by which he approached his practice back then was different to now, the works from the time seemed interesting and compatible with his current oeuvre, bringing about the realization of the potential to do something through a change in perspective.

Sugito also recalls how hard yet fulfilling his life had been back then, working part-time during the day making FRP molded products, painting at night, and tending to the fields in between. He also reflects on his memory of “being so moved by the experience of digging up a sweet potato by its roots from the ground, that when compared it to the excitement felt with one’s own paintings, was so stunned and could no longer paint.” Inspired by these recollections, Sugito came up with the idea of remolding fruit motifs using FRP, a material that is symbolic of the 90s, in an effort to experiment with how to combine them with paintings.

The freshness and new perspectives found when looking at the same thing again after a period of time, or through juxtaposing familiar things with those that are similar yet different, are sensations that we can all relate to.

Differences, commonalities, and new situations emerge precisely because of the distinctiveness of things, the time and experiences that flow through us, and their respective ways of being.

The combination of apples and lemons that Sugito explores from various angles, as well as their timeless relationship, will give rise to a rich shift in the way we perceive familiar scenery, filling us with the joy, pleasure, and freedom of realizing that the world we live in is in fact more multilayered and fluid than we have ourselves believe.

We welcome viewers to take this opportunity to witness Sugito’s latest artistic endeavors.