

Seiichiro Osa “LILIUMSPHERE”

Yutaka Kikutake Gallery is pleased to present “LILIUMSPHERE,” a solo exhibition with Seiichiro Osa from February 18 to March 25, 2023.

One fine day I came across a colony of white lilies at the edge of a beach where I often visit. It was a wilderness so serene, a life so fierce. After savoring the scene that extended before my eyes for a while, I captured it to preserve within my mind. From that day on, I have lived with that beautiful yet vivid experience, and a few years later it came to manifest as part of the painting “Lilium.”

The abstract paintings of Seiichiro Osa, whose practice centers on simple motifs of ○△□, or unique concepts such as “UPO (Unidentified Painting Object), has at times conveyed a strong sense of physicality, as exemplified by the way the artist refers to his time engaging with the canvas as a “bout.” The artist’s third solo exhibition at Yutaka Kikutake Gallery titled “LILIUMSPHERE” presents a selection of new paintings created using several types of masking tape. As reflected in his own words, “the thickness of the applied paint instills the world with texture and substance,” Osa’s focus has shifted from the act of “painting (depiction)” to “application (of paint),” illustrating a significant development in his painterly expression that takes on an increased level of abstraction,

The exhibition features several works with the title “Lilium,” which served as the starting point for his new series. Although Osa recalled the colony of lilies he had once seen while gazing upon the canvases as he worked, he explicitly states that these eponymous paintings are by no means abstracted landscapes. This eminently reflects the artist’s mode of thought, that such title was given due to him having been able to -as he describes himself- capture the scene and preserve it within his mind, and not vice versa.

The production of these works begins by enclosing the divided canvas with masking tape and applying paint to the spaces within. Each square is not completely painted, with the edges blurred and color overrunning here and there. This is the result of using pre-used masking tape, with the lack of adhesiveness and the unevenness of the canvas drawing out the arbitrariness of the paint material. Sticking, applying paint, and peeling away -as the artist defines the entire series of processes as “application,” there is no end to the combination of color planes created by the

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culmination of these actions, and in the strict sense of the word, they are never complete. The simple and limited technique of painting square surfaces surrounded by tape one after another with colors increases the degree of freedom of expression, and seems to be the factor that brings about the infinite expansion of the painting space.

The title "LILIUMSPHERE," was devised by Osa himself through combining the a kanji character with a "radical enclosure" that entails writing the enclosing square first and then the strokes inside, with the word "Lilium" which served as a guiding element in the overall composition of the exhibition. This title in itself vividly conveys the artist's ideas and inspiration for challenging himself to engage in the production of these new works. Furthermore, since 2019 Osa has been immersed in "haiku," which poetically depicts scenes and landscapes in a limited number of words and syllables, and this too has undoubtedly had a considerable influence on his thoughts towards painting. Osa states, "I aim to create paintings that forever appear as if being a work-in-progress." We invite viewers to take this opportunity to bear witness to Seiichiro Osa's new endeavors, which while based on his efforts and artistic experiences thus far, integrate his unshaken determination towards his practice and his uniquely unparalleled techniques.