

Kouichi Tabata + Hirofumi Isoya, *To design the misalignment*

June 28 – July 27, 2024

Kouichi Tabata brings irregular elements to his paintings, chief among them misalignments in his surfaces and support structures, which open up various interpretations for the viewer. Hirofumi Isoya uses a wide variety of media such as sculpture, photography, and drawing to raise considerations surrounding the pathways of cognition. This exhibition, *To design the misalignment*, brings together Tabata's paintings and Isoya's framed photographs. Taking the sky as a thematic center, both artists conceived and composed the new work for this show by using Isoya's photographs as a starting point, and then creating work which referenced the material approaches of the other. The viewer is invited into a tautological structure supported by the absence of the original. A new individual painting by Tabata will also be on display during this exhibition.

Four sky scenes painted on two surfaces line the walls. The work for this show is based entirely on sepia-toned photographs of the sky taken by Isoya, and follows a material approach found in one way or another, a series Tabata has been working on since 2016. Isoya captures scenes such as clouds hanging over a mountain top, a plane flying through the sky, or the halo of sun, and sends these images to Germany where Tabata expresses them as paintings through his unique perspective. Tabata's paintings, which seem to suspend the viewer in midair while tempting them to supplement or reconstruct the image, function not only in the two-dimensional space of the painting, but also extend into a dimensional space where time and awareness are misaligned, presenting a perspective that leads to other ways of being and moving in time and space. What is depicted in these paintings is not a static image, but rather a dynamic situation, a landscape of a unique experience that arises in the mind of each viewer.

Alongside these works are four similarly arranged photographs of Tabata's paintings taken by Isoya in Japan. These photographs were made using an approach that Isoya has used in his other work where he reduces the tone of the photograph to sepia, and paints the extracted color onto one side of the frame in order to evoke the original coloring. By drawing attention to the frame as a device, this work presents the extracted photographic image alongside its vividness as an object. While the color applied to the frame evokes the original landscape, the structure is such that the original image can never be traced and must be recreated by the viewer in the moment. This element of presentness in Isoya's work is something shared in Tabata's artistic approach as well. Furthermore, Isoya's photographs, which served as the basis for Tabata's painted skylines, remain absent. In other words, here, the colors and imagery of the original do not exist. By photographing the colors and iconography of the sky assembled from Tabata's imagination, Isoya produces a further misalignment in the extracted color and makes it even more difficult to trace the path back to the original image. The absence of the original in this exhibition holds the viewer in a space of unrecoverability regarding each of the images in these works, and therefore creates new pathways that emphasize the originality of each experience.

Based on a tautological structure where one artist's idea becomes the other's, *To design the misalignment* invites the viewer into a system that gradually becomes more and more misaligned. The images and colors that arise in each person's mind are left to the uniqueness of each individual moment, perhaps allowing this exhibition to take on the characteristic of an event. Kouichi Tabata and Hirofumi Isoya share common ground in their engagement with image cognition. This is a bold undertaking by two internationally active artists, one you won't want to miss.