



Taka Ishii

Maebashi

Gallery

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Kei Takemura “Catch and Release”

Dates: Sep 19 – Oct 26, 2025

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery Maebashi

Opening reception: Friday, Sep 19, 16:00 – 18:00

Taka Ishii Gallery Maebashi is pleased to present “Catch and Release,” a solo exhibition of works by Kei Takemura, from Friday, September 19, to Sunday, October 26, 2025. Takemura has long explored the layering of time, memories inhabiting the body, and elusive sensations that emerge at the threshold between interior and exterior. Highlighting subtle changes and minor dislocations in both the body and space, her practice invites reconsideration of how we perceive the world. This exhibition presents new works in which she engages with fragments of memory that usually escape awareness and with the margins of ambiguous sensation, gently illuminating the texture of everyday perception.

Last year at the Marugame Museum of Art, I watched a female performer, with a soccer ball strapped to her stomach, reenact the moment when my pregnant friend K accidentally pushed a glass off the table with her belly and broke it. This reminded me of how long it had been since I had met a pregnant woman in person. Later, I was happy to read on Facebook that a Ukrainian friend in Berlin had given birth. I was reminded of the days right after my own son was born, when we still felt connected even after he had entered the world. That was when I decided to sew portraits of pregnant women and mothers who had recently given birth.

Prompted by my husband’s vague remark that our mutual friend N had probably just had a baby, or was about to, I contacted her and learned that the baby had been born two weeks earlier. I had never even met her first child, born a year earlier, and now N was the mother of two. With a cheerful, matter-of-fact smile, she said that after giving birth she felt like an empty shell.

On July 7, I met S, who was pregnant, at Shinjuku Takashimaya. S, who was introduced to me by K, spoke about her relationship with her mother, and said that at age 35, she finally felt able to do what she truly wanted. Unfazed by the relentless rain, the weeds have been taking over the garden without my even noticing. Most of the fig tree’s broad leaves have withered and fallen under the alternating onslaught of scorching sun and heavy downpours. Looking closely, I see that this year an unfamiliar plant resembling a beanstalk is growing unchecked, while the once-numerous poppies have almost vanished.

My mother, who lives next door, brought me a Danish cheese plate she had broken. On close examination, it was decorated with an image of a pregnant woman sewing socks for her unborn baby. As I set about mending it, she remembered other things she had broken and began bringing over one damaged item after another. The paulownia chest of drawers my grandmother gave my mother when she married, later passed on to my husband when we moved, finally had the bottom of a drawer give way, so we decided to dismantle and dispose

of it. When we pulled out the drawers, we discovered they were made of plywood with paper-thin slices of paulownia glued on, and only the fronts were solid paulownia boards.

It reminded me of the performer with the soccer ball strapped to her stomach.

Kei Takemura

Takemura's works layer personal memories and fragmentary events, evoking links to a universal world that lurks within our everyday surroundings. The new works in this exhibition transcend specific themes such as art-historical imagery, motherhood, and family, presenting us with relationships in which people remain close yet never fully converge, and showing both the obverse and the reverse of worlds that exist side by side. Together, the works speak with a quiet yet insistent resonance about how our perceptions and memories take shape within endlessly unfolding layers of time, and how, in the intervals between moments, each of our worlds comes into being.

[Related Exhibition]

Title "GHOST: When the Invisible Visible"
Dates Sep 20 – Dec 21, 2025
Venue Arts Maebashi, Gallery 1 + Underground Gallery
Hours 10:00 – 18:00
Closed Wednesdays

For further information, please contact:

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Wed – Sun 11:00 – 19:00 Closed on Mon, Tue and National Holidays



Kei Takemura

"Renovated: H.T.'s Danish Cheese plate "November Optimism"", 2025

Japanese silk thread, Japanese silk organdy, synthetic thread and H.T.'s

Danish Cheese plate, November Optimism

16.7 x 15.5 x 1.5 cm

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Photo: Kei Takemura