



Taka Ishii

Gallery

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Makoto Saito “sight”

Dates: Nov 5 – Dec 13, 2025

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery Roppongi

Opening reception: Wednesday, Nov 5, 17:00 – 19:00

Taka Ishii Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of the work of Makoto Saito, on view from Wednesday, November 5, to Saturday, December 13. This will be the artist's third solo show at the gallery and will feature four new large-scale works from among the abstract paintings he has been producing in recent years.

Saito is known for portraits, including of Lucian Freud, Francis Bacon, and Antonin Artaud, in which the subjects' faces appear haunted by insanity. These are made by transferring computer images onto canvas with a brush as if breathing life into digital data, in a process that involves dissecting and reconstructing faces on the computer to create intricate dot-matrix blueprints.

The new works in this exhibition were produced by combining fragments of data from numerous portraits, assembled through a process of digital deconstruction and reconstruction. Saito describes the process of arriving at the final image by superimposing multiple strata on a monitor as “a journey in search of landscape.” This act of seeing lies at the core of his art, extending beyond his digital practice to encompass his discernment of faces and forms that stir his creative drive. Rendered in countless red, yellow, and blue halftone dots, and based on his digital blueprints, Saito's paintings can be understood as a transplantation of his own retina, composed of innumerable cone cells, onto the canvas. Viewers are not simply looking at a painting, but are gazing into the very retina through which Saito sought out and discovered his landscapes.

The works on view incorporate layers of Saito's pencil drawings. The ambiguous black lines and shapes appear to be representational, yet stealthily evade connection to any definite meaning. For the first time, Saito has brought the physical act of drawing into the landscapes his retina has long observed.

Saito's series of portraits, reminiscent of self-destructing cells, seems to hint at the endgame of a contemporary society in which the speed and volume of information, driven by desire, continue to grow without limit. As is clearly evident in the Troll series exhibited last year, Saito has increasingly distanced himself from the real world, opting for more primal themes, which he describes in terms of the soul's salvation. His creative process, which has received the mood of the times like a finely tuned antenna and translated it into his work, is now approaching a turning point.

Makoto Saito was born in 1952 in the Fukuoka Prefecture and currently lives and works in Tokyo. His major solo exhibitions include “Makoto Saito —Criticality—,” Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art, Fukuoka, (2019), and “MAKOTO SAITO: SCENE [0],” 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (2008). His works are housed in the collections of numerous museums in Japan and overseas including San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa; Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art; and the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

For further information, please contact:

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Tue-Sat 12:00 – 19:00 Closed on Sun, Mon, and National Holidays



Makoto Saito

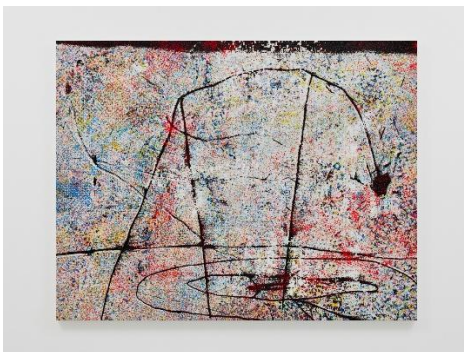
“fence [2025-1]” , 2022-2025

Oil and acrylic on canvas

163 x 210 cm

© Makoto Saito / Photo: Kenji Takahashi

Courtesy of Taka Ishii Gallery



Makoto Saito

“[2025-1]”, 2022-2025

Oil and acrylic on canvas

163 x 210 cm

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