

CHAPTER NY

For immediate release

Yutaka Nozawa

RIVER, river

March 6 – April 18, 2026

Chapter NY is thrilled to present Yutaka Nozawa's first solo exhibition in the New York.

Yutaka Nozawa's practice transforms ordinary objects and spaces with minimal, almost matter-of-fact gestures to produce an uncanny, often dreamlike effect. This exhibition presents a series of diptychs, each pairing a small photograph with a painting of equal size, which take the object of a canvas itself as primary subject. Deeply engrained in histories of photography and painting—and in how each medium's tools and techniques have shaped the way we see and perceive reality—these works offer a cunning "bait-and-switch."

Each begins with a staged photograph of a blank canvas hanging in a seemingly anonymous yet specific location, whether in the artist's studio in Shizuoka, Japan, the gallery in New York, or outdoors among built and natural forms. Nozawa paints the canvas and its surroundings with studied nuance, then returns to the original site to re-photograph the finished painting in situ. The diptych presented in the gallery pairs the hand-painted canvas with its re-photographed image, creating a poetic and deadpan interplay. The works tease with a one-liner nod to modernism's favorite subject and tempt ironic repetition, but they offer a radically concise gesture that multiplies threefold: from photo to painting and back again, with poetry and subtle wit that distills the complexity of perception.

Light and color are central to this experience. Pale greens drift toward pinks or blues in subtle shifts that never fully settle. These sunset hues are bordered by graphic silhouettes and architectural edges, recalling the precision of Josef Albers's color studies, Monet's iridescent serial *Haystacks*, or the glow of a backlit screen. Against the velocity and dissociation of contemporary media, Nozawa's works compress and extend the act of seeing, inviting viewers to slow down and register both painterly touch and photographic mediation as our composite mode of perception. In turn, the works' compressed narrative of painting's evolution (internally and relative to the photograph), is not a matter of nihilistic irony or moral hierarchy between mediums but a humble meditation on their entanglement and perpetual incompleteness: the world of images exists as both material and apparition, both constructed and undeniably real.

All of painting's tropes of a more "real" reality are coyly referenced: perspectival rendering's "window onto the outside world" doubles as the self-reflexive modernist grid; the grid is the rectangle; the rectangle is the canvas as painting's defining support; the canvas is an ordinary object that can be endlessly copied. Rules of "truthful" representation, in other words, might constantly be shifting, but the artist's attention and agency are enduring. Nozawa's process gives us proof: the work's "original" is the form of the blank canvas and the image of it, never seen by the viewer, but always embedded in his methodical translation.

The exhibition concludes with the video *Moon* (2026), in which a canvas floats on a river, gently nudged by drifting kumquat fruits. At one point, a kumquat touches the corner of the canvas, subtly alters its course, and flows out of frame. Its sensibility rhymes with the diptychs, which remind that painting and photography are both technologies for recording what can never be fully held. In his hands, "still life" is both the genre and a coy play on words, articulating a desire to attend to the fleeting, however possible in a moment when speed dominates.

Yutaka Nozawa (b. 1983, Shizuoka, JP) has received his MFA from Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music (2011), his European Master of Contemporary Photography degree from Istituto Europeo di Design Madrid (2014), and his BFA from Tokyo Zokei University (2008). Solo presentations include Chapter NY, New York, NY; KAYOKOYUKI, Tokyo, JP; void+, Tokyo, JP; Hirado Dutch Trading Post, Nagasaki, JP; Intercambiador ACART, Madrid, ES; among others. Select group exhibitions include Chapter NY, New York, NY; Sadie Coles HQ, London, UK; Galería Santa Fe, Bogotá, CO; The University Art Museum, Tokyo, JP; and Shizuoka Prefectural Museum of Art, Shizuoka, JP.