

The Box is pleased to announce an exhibition by Japanese-born, New York-based artist E'wao Kagoshima. The show features an eclectic selection of recent two-dimensional work that merges painting, drawing and collage. Kagoshima was first featured at The Box in the 2014 exhibition *Painters of Modern Life*, curated by Mitchell Albus. This is Kagoshima's first solo show at the gallery.

Working in Japan until 1976, Kagoshima's early works pull from autobiography, as an artist coming of age in post-war Japan. Paraphrasing an interview with Robin Dodds about his solo show at the New Museum in 1983, Kagoshima asserts "...the present [is rendered] a meaningless impasse. Contemporary 'culture is useless,' he contends, as a tool of understanding this new environment; our society is a maze, and its culture a deception." Kagoshima describes the piece *Platonic Love*, depicting a woman reading a book amidst the violent destruction of her surrounding landscape, as "peaceful but dangerous." His sense of juxtaposition is less rooted in irony than in personal experience and bearing witness. In *0036*, exhibited at The Box, Kagoshima depicts himself as a Japanese warrior deity using a fractured technique of collage and meticulous linework; the figure is constructed using disparate imagery including pornography and illustrations on how to use butane lighters. Kagoshima's name, printed with personalized a rubber stamp on a scrap of paper, is affixed to the heart of the figure.

Kagoshima's evocative, complex visual language straddles the purviews of both New York pop, Japanese cartoons and the intuitive practice of the Surrealists. Collecting found objects from his Brooklyn neighborhood and inserting them into fantastically circuitous, humorous and horrific drawings, Kagoshima layers vivid imaginary worlds with odd physical referent: the strangeness of day-to-day detritus. In *Summer Treat*, 2016, red and blue 3-D glasses are placed on a highly-rendered drawing of a woman's face amidst a bright, fluorescent ground; she confronts the viewer with blank white orbs for eyes. Surrounding her, a tongue sticks out of disembodied lips and a row of teeth rest atop the aforementioned 3-D glasses. The glasses, the only straight line within the entire composition, substitute for the horizon, while the blue and red lenses function as a guidepost for the comically phantasmagoric imagery beneath them. In *Saving Diaspora*, also 2016, Kagoshima's skillful drawing and playful logic meet in muted trompe l'oeil as fleshy, quasi-architectural tubes feed into globular objects. From this, Kagoshima creates a massive, bloated creature, its peaceful face referencing an ancient stone statue and bleeding red string from the eyes; multiple translucent, shadowy busts of vague figures rest atop its head. Jutting out from a pool of water, the creature is propped up on large bricks that shoot off at different angles, while fluid pouring from the creature's eyes pollutes the water. An aluminum can, partially submerged, floats

by. Kagoshima's deep dives invite viewers into a cultural subconscious. They are at once playful and haunting, complex narratives created by the strangeness of what's left on the street.

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