

MASSIMODECARLO

TOMOO GOKITA

Massimo De Carlo is pleased to present Tomoo Gokita's first solo show with the gallery.

Tomoo Gokita's ambitious new selection of paintings is a continuation of his signature style that marries pop-cultural archetypes with surreal, noirish flights of fancy. His artistic vocabulary barrels across illustration, soft pornography, abstraction and calligraphy, with perfect control, velvety surfaces and tonal range transforms ordinary scenes into warped and absurd realities.

Gokita presents a selection of 21 paintings, combining his subject matter of contemporary personae — females and males whose faces reflect the polymorphous nature of mass culture, as well as venturing into minimalist paintings and self-portraiture. *Minor Sweet*, created in a spectrum of grey, depicts a nude woman posing with a small head and a rotund body, posing in a brazen manner with an eerie smile.

His figures, taken from film, television, advertising and eroticism, typically have their faces and parts of their bodies obliterated by twists and smears of paint. Together they represent a global mindscape, one in which the current generation of people have to micromanage reality, self-identity, and a projected image on their devices as well as in their distracted brains. Furthermore, the absurdities combined with the greyscale palette work together to emanate a sense of loneliness, rife in his single portraits. Depicting a grinning lady, *Wanna Laugh*, conveys a sense of irony and farce in the ghoulish way she is smiling. Her smile feels contrived, enhanced by the x-ray quality of white and grey paired together, to create a beautifully melancholic portrait.

The noirish quality of his brushstrokes harks back to a romanticised past, combined with the contemporary subjects and sexual undertones present a visually distinct language that Gokita confidently submerges us within. *Me*, a self-portrait of Gokita, varies in tone with his other works, a lighthearted yet contemplative study of himself, exuding a level of solemnity and honesty in contrast to his other works. In *Tomorrow's Dream*, Gokita's mesmerizing handling of black and white paint creates the glistening, metallic sheen of an unidentifiable creature, incorporating hints of surrealist elements within the work.

Gokita's intuitive touch on the canvas is evident in *Stupidly Happy*, depicting another female with her face concealed by his masterly brushstroke. It is evident that Gokita's plethora of inspirations has informed his visual language to a point in which he can seamlessly bring together a world of dated archetypes and pop-culture pinups, whilst keeping his practice relevant and contemporary, through the brilliance of his style and technical skill.

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Tomoo Gokita was born in 1969 in Tokyo, Japan, where he currently lives and works.

His solo shows include: Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, Tokyo, J (2018); Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo, J (2017; 2012); Mary Boone Gallery, New York, NY, US (2016; 2014); Honor Fraser Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, US (2015); Kawamura Memorial DIC Museum of Art, Chiba, J (2014); Aliceday Gallery, Brussels, BE (2010); ATM Gallery, New York, NY, US (2006). His work was part of group exhibitions at Taguchi Collection of 21st Century Art: From Andy Warhol to Yoshitomo Nara, Hiratsuka Museum of Art, Kanagawa, J (2018); Third Space/Shifting Conversations about Contemporary Art, Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham, AL, US (2017); Shared Space, Newcomb Art Museum, New Orleans, FL, US (2015); Wonderful my Art, Kawaguchiko Museum of Art, Yamanashi, J (2013); The Unseen Relationship: Form and Abstraction, Kawamura Memorial DIC Museum of Art, Chiba, J (2012); VOCA 2009: The Vision of Contemporary Art, The Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo, J (2009); Mail Order Monsters, Deitch Projects, New York, NY, US (2007); Mail Order Monsters, Peres Projects, Berlin, DE (2007).

Hard Facts:

Massimo De Carlo, London
55 South Audley Street, London W1K 2QH
From March 6th until April 13th, 2019
Open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 6pm
Opening: Tuesday March 5th, 2019, 6pm to 8pm

For further information and materials:

Press Office, Massimo De Carlo
T. +39 02 70003987 - T. +44 (0) 20 7287 2005
press@massimodecarlo.com
www.massimodecarlo.com
Instagram: massimodecarlogallery
Twitter: mdcgallery
#massimodecarlogallery

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