

Susumu KAMIJO

Juxtapoz,

The Poodle in Abstract: Susumu Kamijo's I'll Tell You Later

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The Poodle in Abstract: Susumu Kamijo's "I'll Tell You Later"

Stems Gallery // February 24, 2022 - April 23, 2022

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Color and shape is essential in the works of [Susumu Kamijo](#), which seems like a no shit thing to say. But if you think about it, you could see the artist's work as an ode to Ellsworth Kelly or as the artist notes, Francis Bacon, and both of those artists were minimal and maximal stars of color choice. For Kamijo, it's important that you see the poodle but it's just as important to see how he got there, what the eye identifies as familiar, how shape and color can seem so unintentional and yet form so much.

In his new show, *I'll Tell You Later*, on view at [Stems in Brussels](#), feels like a sum of all his parts, the boldest work to date, both raw and textured. The homage to Bacon is interesting, considering Bacon used animals often in his work and morphed them with a sense of abstraction. The gallery notes, "Kamijo credits the influence of Francis Bacon for the spareness of his compositions in which a single figure is set against a schematic background. As is true of Bacon, by deemphasizing the background and foregrounding the figure, the psychological tenor of the work is highlighted."

It is also true of Bacon that what you see is often needed to be seen again, where the artist's hand is so clear but the way space and backgrounds are used is so damn smart. Kamijo is so talented with space and color, where huge swaths of reds and yellows draw you in but take on new meanings as you meander over a canvas. The Japanese artist continues to grow from a Cubist aesthetic into something even more abstract, where the figure is harder to see and yet more vital than ever. A beautiful show. —*Evan Pricco*