

PRESSBOOK

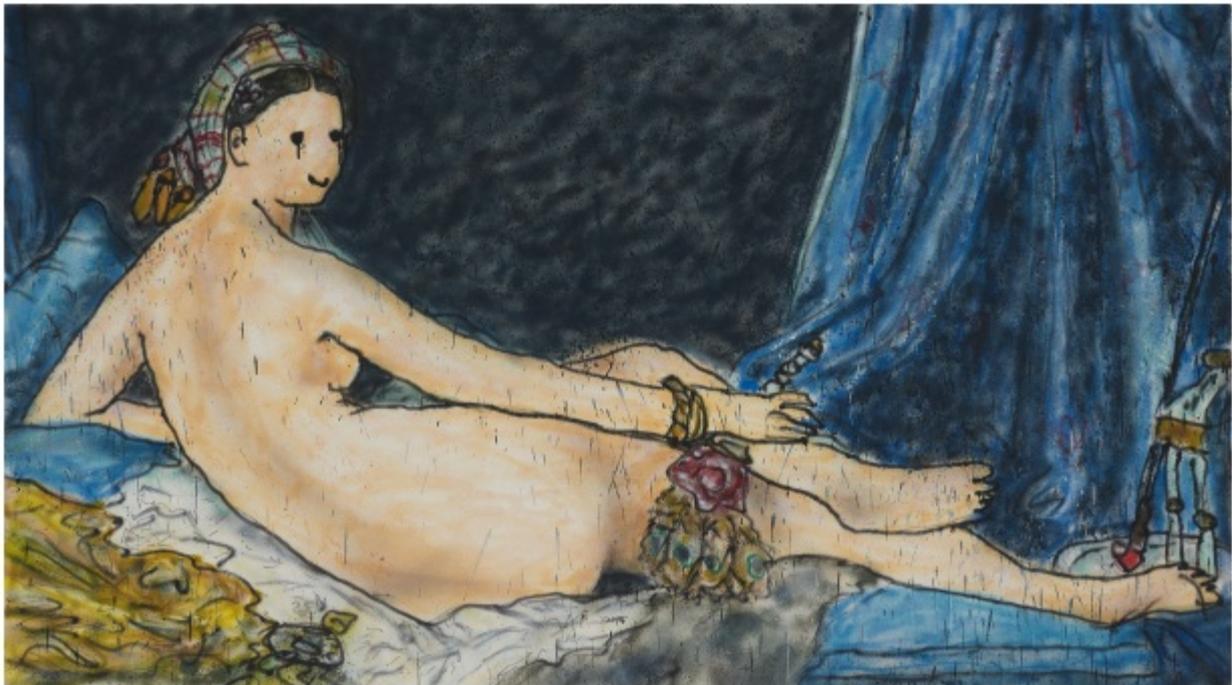
MADSAKI

Juxtapoz

September 2018

French Fries with Mayo: The Remixing of History As We Know It by Madsaki

On the surface, it appears that no other artist is fucking around with art history quite like [Madsaki](#). The Tokyo-based artist's most recent bodies of work have been reinterpretations of some of the most iconic works in art history, the pieces of art we are told are important, appear in every history book and become part of our collective visual language in the West. But Madsaki's newest solo show, *French Fries with Mayo*, on view at [Perrotin in Paris](#) through September 22, speak to a larger conversation of the artist's career of being born in Japan, having grown up in suburban New Jersey and return back to adulthood in Japan.



What *French Fries with Mayo* speaks to is a larger conversation across cultures surrounding art history, where a displacement of meaning or personal historical significance can allow the artist to alter and reimagine art with humor and satire. Madsaki's Wannabe series, which are satirical depictions of the old masters, which is presented as well here in Paris, critiques art culture but also the way we are supposed to revere such "monumental" moments in Western art. Madsaki having a deep relationship with both the West and East, a childhood of influences in America and then trying to re-establish himself in the East, gives him an unique perspective on how that perception plays out in Japan.

"Despite my Japanese appearance, I used to think that I was American on the inside, only to face at this very early age the fundamental gap between cultures," Madsaki has said. "Yet I kept wondering: What are countries really, and how do they relate to cultures? I

eventually went to Parsons, an art school in New York, out of a desire to understand each other beyond languages. Then I returned to Japan in 2004 at the age of 30 when my visa expired."

"This solo exhibition in Paris means a lot to me," Madsaki explains. "Mr. Perrotin enjoys my Wannabe pieces and suggested that I revisit French classic painting through this new series. So, I went ahead and picked masterpieces by great artists found in French museums, including Gauguin, Monet, Manet, Delacroix, Ingres and so on. I can usually work rather quickly, but not always. For example, Napoleon Crossing the Alps by Jacques-Louis David took a lot of freaking time! I can't just fake it! I've got to really dig into each composition and put a lot of layers of colors. I use the nozzles of various spray cans to get different effects and also make my own customized caps. When the canvas is relatively small, I sometimes use both hands. I actually made The Cardplayers by Cézanne by spraying two cans at the same time."

All images courtesy of Kaikai Kiki and Perrotin.