



Untitled, 2015. Soft vinyl, wood, acrylic
50 x 130 x 90 cm / 19 11/16 x 51 3/16 x 35 7/16 inches
Photo: Ikuhiro Watanabe



Untitled, 2015. Oil on canvas
194 x 130.3 cm / 76 3/8 x 51 5/16 inches
Photo: Ikuhiro Watanabe

Izumi KATO

January 7 – February 27, 2016

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 7, 6-8pm

Izumi Kato is an artist who began painting after laying down his brush. Eschewing tools, as if to reject any reliance on the flightiness of brushwork, he applies layer upon layer of somber-hued pigment directly with his hands, not so much to paint as to rub the color onto the canvas. In this way, he depicts creatures with human contours, two staring eyes, a head, hands and feet. Those bold, forceful curves, throwing into relief the human shape, those organic lines, that distortion and simplifying of form, are inevitable products of painting with the hands, and as a result, Kato's works possess a powerful presence that seems to illuminate the core of the human body.

Kato was a relative latecomer to the art world, making his debut at the age of thirty. He had worked as a manual laborer for some years, which left him with the sense of being at one with the world that comes with corporeal achievement, and a humble appreciation of his place as just another creature of this earth.

From here he set out on a new journey of engagement with the vast realm of painting. An artist who began with the abstract, he now depicts nothing but human figures. All Kato's recent works are untitled, and he does not set up any specific model to paint; nor does he draft or sketch. These paintings have no narrative element. They are dialogues, creations arising from a direct, barely suppressible physical urge to touch, a trait given play by humans since the days of prehistoric cave murals. The figures sealed within the frame of the canvas seem to radiate an enigmatic aura, their undifferentiated bodies encased in thin membranes reminiscent of a budding life form in the embrace of its mother's amniotic fluid. Kato's is the act of capturing life through his body.

In 2005 Kato also turned to sculpture. Deliberately avoiding materials that are easy to mould such as clay and resin, he works only in wood, carving directly. Once again he focuses consistently on human figures, chisel marks and cracks left like idiosyncrasies of the flesh. That he always colors these roughly hewn bodies indicates that for Kato, they are in extension in his painting. Some of his works are equipped with legs or castors resembling those on desks and chairs.

Echoing Brancusi perhaps, through the pursuit of the substance of things he has arrived at the simplification of form. He also attempts to explore the possibilities of form in different materials and textures. Through the classical techniques of painting and sculpture, Kato reflects physicality, practicing an unrefined yet direct, shareable, real artistic expression in a contemporary world where virtual elements proliferate.

Izumi Kato was born in 1969, in Shimane, Japan. He graduated from the Department of Oil Painting at Musashino University in 1992. He now lives and works in Tokyo. Since the 2000's, Kato has garnered attention as an innovative artist with his totemic creations through exhibitions held in Japan and across the world. In 2007, he was invited to the 52nd Venice Biennale International Exhibition, curated by Robert Storr.

Text by Yukie Kamiya, Gallery Director, Japan Society, New York, initially written for *Creamier-Contemporary Art in Culture* (Phaidon).

On the occasion of Izumi Kato's exhibition, Galerie Perrotin will release a monograph including a text by Ryutaro Takahashi.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS (Selection)

- 2014** Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong & Paris; "Soft Vinyl Sculptures" CAPSULE / SUNDAY, Tokyo, Japan
2012 "SOUL UNION DELUXE" Kirishima Open – Air Museum, Kagoshima, Japan
2011 "The View from After", COMME des GARÇONS OSAKA (Six), Osaka, Japan; "Paintings and Sculptures", ARATANIURANO, Tokyo, Japan;
2010 "Izumi Kato - Journeying into Each Day", The Hakone Open-Air Museum, Kanagawa, Japan; "SOUL UNION" ARATANIURANO, Tokyo, Japan
2008 "The Riverhead" The Ueno Royal Museum Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
2007 "Dear Humans" ARATANIURANO, Tokyo, Japan; "MOKU" Takahashi Collection, Tokyo, Japan
2006 Murata & Friends Berlin, Germany ('04,'01)
2005 "HADAKA NO HITO" SCAI THE BATHHOUSE, Tokyo, Japan; Galleria Enrico Astuni, Pietrasanta, Italy
2004 "aM PROJECT Vol.5" ASK? Art space kimura, Tokyo, Japan
2003 Ai Gallery, Tokyo, Japan ('01,'00,'95); 23GALLERY, Tokyo, Japan ('01,'00)
2002 Galleria Chimera, Tokyo, Japan
2001 "Criterium 46 – Izumi Kato" Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki, Japan
1999 "SAMAZAMA NA ME 98 Izumi Kato" IBM-KAWASAKI City Gallery, Kanagawa, Japan
1996 GALLERY LE DECO, Tokyo, Japan ('97, '98)

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (Selection)

- 2015** "COSMOS / INTIME - La collection Takahashi" Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris, France; "Messages - TAKAHASHI COLLECTION" Towada Art Center, Aomori, Japan; "Stance or Distance? - Connecting Myself to the World" Contemporary Art Museum Kumamoto, Kumamoto, Japan; "TAKAHASHI COLLECTION : Mirror Neuron" Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
2014 "MOT Collection Special Exhibition for the 20th Anniversary of Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo" Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan; "Rokko Meets Art 2014" Mount Rokko National Park, Hyogo, Japan; "Taguchi Art Collection : TAG – TEN" Matsumoto City Museum of Art, Nagano, Japan; "Mindfulness! – Takahashi Collection 2014" Nagoya City Museum, Aichi, Japan
2013 "VISCERAL SENSATION – Voices So Far, So Near" Museum of Art, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Ishikawa, Japan; "Wonderful My Art – Selected aerists from Takahashi Collection" Kawaguchiko Museum of Art, Yamanashi, Japan; "Re:Quest – Japanese Contemporary Art since the 1970s" Museum of Art, Seoul National University, Seoul, Korea; "MISUGOSHITEKITAMONO" Sendai Mediatheque, Miyagi, Japan
2012 "Parallel Japanese Worlds" A4 Contemporary Arts Center, Chengdu, China; "Rokko Meets Art 2012" Mount Rokko National Park, Hyogo, Japan; "the Allure of the Collection" The National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan; "Double Vision : Contemporary Art from Japan" Municipal Museum of Modern Art, Moscow, Russia (traveled to Haifa Museum of Art, Tikotin Museum of Japanese Art, Israel)
2011 "JARAPAGOS" Mitsubishi-jisho ARTIUM, Fukuoka, Japan; "MOT Collection Silent narrator : on plural stories" Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan; "Taguchi Art Collection GLOBAL NEW ART" SOMPO JAPAN MUSEUM OF ART, Tokyo, Japan; "The Most Requested Top 30/10 Years of Takahashi Collection Hinode" TABLOID GALLERY, Tokyo, Japan; "Be Alive – Selections from the Hara Museum Collection" Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan; "Art in an Office – from Impressionism, Modern Japanese Art to Contemporary Art" Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi, Japan
2010 "Living With Art – Contemporary Art From Japan and Taiwan", Yi&C.Contemporary Art, Taiwan; "New Kore Shizuoka – New and Previous Collections and Art Closely Connected to Shizuoka" Shizuoka Prefectural Museum of Art, Shizuoka, Japan; "Garden of Painting / Japanese Art of the 00s" The National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan
2009 "Being Seeing Feeling – Selection from the Hara Museum Collection" Hara Museum ARC, Gunma, Japan; "Dorodoro, Doron – The Uncanny World in Folk and Contemporary Art in Asia" Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima, Japan; "Long Season" Michael Ku Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan; "TOYOTA ART COLLECTION 2008" Kuragaike Art Salon, Kuragaike Commemorative Hall, Aichi, Japan
2008 "FORWARDS 08 – Daimler Awards for Contemporary Art from Germany, Japan, South Africa and the USA" Daimler Contemporary, Berlin, Germany; "Kankai Pavilion Opening Exhibition – Beyond Time, Beyond Space" (supervised by Arata ISOZAKI), Hara Museum ARC, Gunma, Japan; "neoteny japan – From TAKAHASHI Collection" Kirishima Open- Air Museum, Kagoshima, Japan (traveled to Museum of Contemporary Art, Sapporo, Hokkaido ; '09 Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo ; Niigata Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, Niigata ; Akita Museum of Modern Art, Akita ; Yonago City Museum of Art, Tottori ; '10 The Museum of Art Ehime, Ehime, Japan) ; "Art Scope 2007/2008 – Faces of Existence" Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan; "Selection from the Hara Museum's Permanent Collection" Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan
2007 "Venice Biennale 52nd International Art Exhibition "Think with the Senses – Feel with the Mind. Art in the Present Tense" Italian Pavilion at Giardini Venezia, Italy; "Painting as Forest : Artist as Thinker" Okazaki Mindscape Museum, Aichi, Japan; "MOT Anneal 2007 – From a World as Lange as Life" Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Japan
2006 "The Child" Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi, Japan
2005 "GLOBAL PLAYERS – Deutsche und japanische Kunst der Gegenwart" BankART1929, Yokohama, Japan ('06 traveled to Ludwig Forum Aachen, Germany); "Little Boy, Japan Society" New York, U.S.A. ; "Izumi KATO, Junya SATO, Yuken TERUYA" Galerie 14-1, Stuttgart, Germany
2004 Galleria Enrico Astuni, Pietrasanta, Italy; "lonely planet" Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki, Japan; "Body" Galerie Robert Dress, Hannover, Germany
2003 "ZONE – Clairvoyants in this threatening age" Fuchu Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan; "The 1st Magical Art Exhibition" Magic Room, PROJECT ROOM, Tokyo, Japan
2002 "Pro Tsubo, Zeitgenassische junge Kunst aus Japan" Theodor-Zink-Museum, Kaiserslautern, Germany ('04 traveled to Neue Galerie Landshut, Germany); "VOCA 2002", Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo, Japan
2000 "Four Emaerging Artists" Theatres des SENS, Tokyo, Japan
1997 "'Bi' and 'Jutsu'" Ai Gallery, Tokyo, Japan