

For immediate release

December 20th, 2013



YUKO MURATA 村田有子
Snow Beauty 白雪公主, 2012
Oil on Canvas 布面油画
8 5/8 x 10 5/8 inches; 22.0 x 27.3 cm

YUKO MURATA

from morning

FUMITO URABE

a passage of ancient red rice

January 11 through March 2, 2014

Opening Reception: January 11, Saturday, 6 to 8 pm

Venue: James Cohan Gallery Shanghai

Address: 1F, Building 1, No.170 Yueyang Rd, by Yongjia Rd

James Cohan Gallery Shanghai is pleased to present two solo exhibitions by two of Japan's most widely admired and dynamic young artists, **Yuko Murata** and **Fumito Urabe**. Opening on Saturday, January 11th, 2014 with a special reception for the artists from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., the exhibitions continue through March 2nd.

For her second exhibition at the gallery, *from morning*, **Yuko Murata's** paintings continue the artist's distinctive signature motifs of animals and landscapes. On view will be recent paintings of birds, barren, leafless trees, squirrels and other creatures, meek and mild, who rule over the deceptive powers of innocence. Much of Murata's source material for her paintings come from found photographs, postcards, wildlife guidebooks or encyclopedias. Though relatively modest in scale, her works have considerable material presence by way of nuanced, layered brushwork and often playful compositions. In *A Short Trip* a tree-dwelling possum traverses the painting's edges, like a tightrope walker on a single arching branch. In the work *Mint*, more in Murata's 'portrait style' of animal imagery, a chipmunk poses in profile with its lush brown and white stripes emphasizing both curvature and break between an austere gray and brown background. These are a few notable examples of the subtle compositional shifts in Murata's new works. In her recent landscape paintings such as *Sweet Home*, the viewer is situated inside the trunk of a tree, looking upward through a hole to the sky toward distant bare treetops. In this work, as in several others, (*Mirror, In Water, Here and There*), all rational perspective is flattened, leveled and effortlessly displaced, creating a feeling of disorientation.



YUKO MURATA 村田有子
Sweet Home 甜蜜的家, 2012
Oil on Canvas 布面油画
13 1/8 x 9 1/2 inches; 33.3 x 24.2 cm

JAMES COHAN GALLERY SHANGHAI

Fumito Urabe's *a passage of ancient red rice* suggests an epic historical journey. Using found or discarded materials, Urabe constructs small boats made out bits of driftwood and creates map-like mixed media works on paper of imaginary islands drawn with mineral pigments. Featured in this exhibition will be two of Urabe's small-scale dioramas of shanty huts accompanied by miniature ceramic pots. Also on view will be a group of crude driftwood sail boats suspended in mid-air. Commenting on his own work Urabe says, "I depict the places and subjects that belong to no one . . . the world without the owner is also a place that everyone holds. Things are owned only momentarily by human beings—the land, objects, even our own bodies: nothing belongs to us forever. The found objects I collect indicate this truth; I live a moment of forever when I relate to those mediums." *Sekihan* (赤飯 or red rice) is ceremonial rice. The rice



FUMITO URABE 占部史人
A Passage of Ancient Red Rice 古代赤米之旅程 2013
Driftwood, ceramic 漂流木, 陶土
Dimension variable 尺寸可变

of ancient Japan had a naturally reddish color and was intimately connected to spiritual beliefs long ago, often given as an offering to the gods. While Urabe's title for his exhibition might reference these ideas, his *passage of ancient red rice* might well serve as a metaphor for Buddhist tales he learned as a child. "Buddha's teachings seem far from me," says Urabe, who is the son of a Buddhist monk. "Living in contemporary society it is not possible to live without trying to possess or to take. Making work is an act of self observation. As in Buddhist scripture, where a mirror is often compared to the mind, my work is also a reflection in a mirror."

Yuko Murata (b. 1973, Kanagawa, Japan) has been the subject of many prominent solo exhibitions since 2000. Her works were featured in the 2006 Taipei Biennial "*Dirty Yoga*" curated by Dan Cameron at the Taipei Fine Arts Museum. She has had solo exhibitions in New York at Casey Kaplan Gallery (2009) as well as in Houston, Texas at Inman Gallery, and Alberto Peola, Turin, in 2009. Her works are in distinguished private and public collections including Daiwa Radiator Factory, Hiroshima; Takahashi Collection, Tokyo; The Obayashi Collection, Tokyo; The Sander Collection, Damstadt; Poligrapha, Barcelona, among numerous private collections in the United States and Europe. She lives and works in Tokyo.

Fumito Urabe (b. 1984, Aichi, Japan) has been featured recently in "*Re:emerge, Towards a New Cultural Cartography*" curated by Yuko Hasegawa for the Sharjah Biennial 11, 2013, at Sharjah Art Foundation UAE, as well as his installation "*The sky blue island*" at the 2013 Aichi Triennale. His works are included in private and public collections, including the Sharjah Art Foundation, UAE; Takahashi Collection, Tokyo; Map Office, Hong Kong; and the Fiorucci Art Trust, London. This is his first exhibition with James Cohan Gallery Shanghai. He lives and works in Aichi, Japan.

For further information, please contact Ms. Ivy Zhou at izhou@jamescohan.com or +86 21 54660825*602. Hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10:00 to 6:00 p.m.; Sunday 12:00 to 6:00 p.m.; and Monday by appointment.