

LIBRAIRIE MARIAN GOODMAN

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MIEKO MEGURO

Manga Dan, Sharaku Moments

7 November 2019 – 11 January 2020

Opening: Thursday 7 November, 5-8 pm



In parallel to Dan Graham's exhibition at the gallery and opening on the same evening, Librairie Marian Goodman is pleased to present an exhibition of the Japanese artist Mieko Meguro. A long-time partner of Graham, Meguro will showcase for the first time in Paris a large selection of her paintings, drawings, as well as artists' books and embroidered pillows, depicting Dan Graham in a variety of playful and intimate moments.

"A few years ago, Meguro made a connection between her portraits, resulting from a remarkable sense of observation, and the tradition of "mie", when Kabuki actors freeze for a moment in a powerful emotional pose, capturing the suddenness of the instant. It takes actors years of practice to perform this perfectly. By the same token, Meguro's works could be compared to the obsession with categorisation, be it in the allegories of Ripa's "Iconology" or the painter Le Brun's exhaustive depiction of the "Expression of the Passions". Like them, her images go beyond the referential nature of gesture and talk about something else. Evoking neither a condition nor an attribute, these portraits whose titles range from the blissful "Beautiful Dan" to the blunt but effective "Fuck Kale II" express those rituals that the philosopher of media Vilém Flusser defined as "not concerned with changing the world or communicating anything but instead to 'act out' a unique way of being in the world". (Alexandra Midal, 2019)

MY PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS OF DAN

Dan has such rich expressions on his face. I love seeing the change in his facial expression at every moment.

Dan's facial expressions remind me of a Japanese artist, Toshusai Sharaku. He was an artist in the Edo era in Japan. He was active as an artist for only ten months between 1794 – 1795, known as a ukiyo-e print designer of kabuki actors and then disappeared.

He left great footprints. I love his work. If you want to know more about Sharaku, I recommend seeing a film by Masabiro Shinoda, Sharaku from 1995.

I saw Sharaku's image before starting elementary school. My mother had a wallet with a painting of his printed on it. She didn't use the wallet often. The wallet was always in one of her drawers.

One day, I asked her, "What is this? Do you like this picture?"

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She said, "Ab-, someone gave me this as a present. But, I never understood this face. It's strange. Do you agree?"

I said, "Indeed, I am fascinated by this face. Don't you like it?"

She said, "Honestly, no. But, I can't say I don't like it. That is why this wallet is still here in my drawer."

I said, "If you don't like this face, may I have it?"

She said, "What? Do you want this?" Then, "Yes, of course, you can have it." and she passed it to me.

After she passed me the precious wallet, I traveled a lot. I don't have it with me right now. However, I have a sense; it is somewhere near me. And I recall the image vividly whenever I think about it.

If you travel to Japan, I hope you have time to visit kabuki theaters; there the actors show their remarkable facial expressions at every moment and they grab your heart.

Dan's facial expressions grab my heart...every day, actually.

Mieko Meguro -September 2019

Mieko Meguro was born in Hokkaido, Japan. She lives and works in New York. Recent solo shows have been held at the A&D Gallery, London; Shoot the Lobster, New York; Asia House, London; Greene Naftali, New York; Galleria Massimo Minini, Project Room, Brescia. Meguro's work has also been included in numerous group shows, at De Markten, Brussels; Musée du Chat, Amsterdam; White Columns, New York; OLD ROOM, New York; Ooga Booga, Los Angeles; Galerie Micheline Sz wajcer, Antwerpen. Mieko Meguro is also the founder and director of 3AGallery in East Village, New York, and the author of various publications, most of which will be available at the bookshop during her show.

Please join us at the reception for the artist on Thursday 7 November from 5 to 8 pm.

For further information, please contact Raphaële Coutant at raphaele@mariangoodman.com/+33 (0)1 48 04 70 52 or visit our website at mariangoodman.com. The gallery and bookshop are open from Tuesday to Saturday, 11 am – 7 pm.

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