



april, dragon dance, look, there are mysterious clouds, 2021. Oil on canvas | 布面油畫. 80 x 100 cm. ©2021 Aya Takano/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy of Perrotin. | 圖片提供: 貝浩登

## AYA TAKANO

*beginning, liminal, ego*

June 26 - July 24, 2021

Perrotin Hong Kong is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Japanese artist Aya Takano, marking the artist's second presentation at the Hong Kong space, since her debut in 2012. In these series of ten paintings and twenty-four drawings, Aya Takano has created an ode to Hong Kong like no other, capturing its landscapes, its culture and its quirks, in a happy and colourful tribute that puts on display the artist's intimate affection for the city.

The defiantly ethereal characters that have come to represent her *Superflat* approach to painting and illustration come to life on her canvas and under her pencils, with their huge eyes and endless limbs. Here, though, they are not intent on a space mission or busy floating in a dreamy Tokyo/outerspace scenery (Takano is a renowned Science Fiction writer, like English readers can see in her *Spaceship EE*). They are right in Hong Kong, playing with kites and dragons; selecting the best gold fish from little plastic bags filled with water next to Prince Edward's Flower Market; sitting nonchalantly in a *chaa chaan teng*; or all wrapped up in a plastic raincoat as the monsoon rains wash over the territory. In the paintings – mostly large compositions that detail both the actions performed by the characters and the precise backgrounds against which they move – we can see the mountainous profile of the city, with its lush greenery, countless birds, waterfalls and natural pools contrasted with the high-density buildings that dot the landscape, the sea in Victoria Harbour, and the ever changing subtropical sky, with fluffy clouds in white, grey and pink.

## 高野綾

《起、境界域、ego》

2021年6月26日至7月24日

貝浩登（香港）榮幸呈現日本藝術家高野綾的個展，為藝術家繼2012年首展後再度回歸香港空間。在是次展出的10幅油畫與24張紙本中，高野綾為香港譜繪了與眾不同的人間煙火。自然風景、人文軼事躍然在歡樂明快的筆觸中，流露著藝術家對這座城市的由衷喜愛。

在高野超扁平風格的油彩和鉛畫中，輕盈散漫的人物往往有著碩大的眼睛、飄忽的四肢。藝術家的另一身份是知名的科幻作家，曾出版英文科幻畫本《Spaceship EE》，但本次創作的人物並不是在太空中執行任務，也不是浮游於東京或外太空的夢幻場景，而是身處香港，舞龍、放紙鳶；在太子花墟附近挑選喜歡的金魚，裝入灌水的小膠袋；閒坐在茶餐廳裏放空；梅雨季時裹著塑膠雨衣徐行等。在油畫中，人物的動作與背景細節都詳盡描繪，我們可以看到香港丘陵綿延的地貌，郁郁蔥蔥的綠意，品種繁多的禽鳥，天然的瀑布與水塘，鱗次櫛比的高樓，維多利亞港的海波，變化多端的亞熱帶天空中白色、灰色、粉色的大朵雲彩。

在這些特色鮮明的背景前，高野筆下俏皮的人物似乎都專注於自己的遊玩和消遣，我行我素，直接抓住了觀者的目光。她們對自己所處的空間有絕對的掌控力，像是生活在我們的平行宇宙，沒有交集；又像是在這座城市裏，日常中會和我們擦肩而過的路人：一個男孩或者一個女孩在郊外忙著排練農曆新年的舞獅，或是打扮時尚地喝凍飲；盂蘭節期間，有人坐在供品旁，把它們投入燃燒的金屬罐裏祭祖。



mom and dad, alone, enjoying dim sum, 2021. Pen and watercolor on paper | 紙上鋼筆及水彩. Framed | 連框: 29.5 x 38.2 x 3.8 cm. ©2021 Aya Takano/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy of Perrotin. | 圖片提供: 貝浩登



how to ride the tram using foreign coins, 2021. Pen and watercolor on paper | 紙上鋼筆及水彩. Framed | 連框: 29.5 x 38.2 x 3.8 cm. ©2021 Aya Takano/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy of Perrotin. | 圖片提供: 貝浩登

Against this perfectly recognizable backdrop, Takano positions her intriguing characters, as they move about engaged in games and occupations of their own, little concerned with what anyone is thinking. They stare out of their world in a direct way, and hold the viewer's gaze fully and unapologetically. They move in front of our eyes in total control of their space, just like creatures from a parallel universe who have no compulsion to explain themselves. And yet, in this new Hong Kong incarnation, each of them reminds us of someone we may have seen in the street, a boy or a girl busy preparing a Lunar New Year lion dance in one of the rural districts of the territory, or again dressed in their fashion forward best, as they consume an iced drink, or someone sitting alongside the offerings for the Hungry Ghost Festival, as they slowly burn inside their metal bins.

In this colorful homage to Hong Kong, Takano has chosen to highlight some aspects of this high density urban/subtropical green rural environment selecting some details that are both immediately identifiable as from here, but skipping superficial and banal identifiers: she zooms in on the food of the territory, its transport system – the drawing in which three kids on the top deck of a tram are counting their coins to pay the ride's fare, for example, is particularly touching for its abundance of detail and its lively palette – and its numerous festivals, a mixture of religious recurrences and celebratory occasions, mixing the everyday detail with the excitement of games and ritualized special occurrences.

Takano's characters, even in this fresh incarnation as Hong Kong people, are creatures from a dreamy universe: their hair and clothes – never too much of those – flap in the breeze, and they seem to hang in a liminal space that is neither entirely terrestrial nor completely imaginary. Their flatness and tell-tale backgrounds puts them in a straight line of descent from ukiyo-e's prints that continue to influence artists in Japan and abroad: woodblock images produced from the seventeenth and nineteenth century depicting scenes from the *floating world* – the literal translation of ukiyo-e, homophonous with a Buddhist term to indicate impermanence of earthly experiences – or pleasure quarters of Edo and Kyoto, representing famous actors, courtesans, entertainers, and vignettes from farmers and fisherman's lives that would be witnessed by traveling artists and pilgrims intent on visiting the famous scenic spots in the country. While Hokusai and Utamaro have become household names all over the world, the ukiyo-e tradition has influenced the progressive erasing of depth in order to present images that re striking for their immediacy. Ukiyo-e is present in the contemporary manga and anime aesthetic, and here too, in Takano's subtle take both on flatness, impermanence, and on the centrality of characters, even when they are enigmatic creatures that interrogate us as much as communicate with us. A thin, quick line describes their contours, and the economy of facial expressions make

高野在色調絢爛的香港印象中，著重刻畫了高密度市區環境與自然郊野結合的特質，意象能立即映射這座城市，又不落刻板俗套。她捕捉當地的美食，觀察交通工具，其中一張紙本就描繪了三個孩子在電車上層的車頭數硬幣準備下車投幣，場景細膩生動。她對香港的節慶也很著迷，在創作中融入了宗教慶典的元素，畫面交錯著日常的點滴和民俗賽事。

這次的人物即使都與香港有關，仍帶著夢幻世界的氣息，輕飄飄的髮絲與衣襖搖曳在微風中，彷彿在一個架空的境域，不沾陸地又未至太虛。扁平的勾勒和意有所指的背景令人聯想到至今啟發著日本及海外藝術家的浮世繪。浮世繪木版畫流行於17至19世紀，「浮世」由佛教詞彙音譯而來，表達現世的漂浮不定，創作主題多與此相關，此外也會展現江戶、京都等地的歡樂榮景，描繪著名的歌舞伎演員、遊女、賣藝人，遊歷或朝聖路上遇見的農民漁夫的生活戲畫。葛飾北齋和喜多川歌麿已經是舉世聞名的浮世繪代名詞，浮世繪的風格影響了之後諸多藝術創作中圖像去深度化的視覺演變，當代漫畫、動畫審美也有它的痕跡。從高野創作中平滑又隨性的筆觸，以及對人物中心性的描繪亦可見一斑。畫中的角色帶著神秘感，似乎打量著我們；人物輪廓由細線一揮而就，並無過多的面部表情，主要由色彩的細微變化傳達著她們的情緒。

高野在本次畫作中集合了所有她癡迷的元素，隨著時間的洗練越發成熟，富有表現力：奇想的構圖顛覆了現實風景的樣子，大眼睛的輕柔生物存在於變幻莫測的世界裏，在這裏生活的大多數都是女孩子，對地心引力毫不在意，有人泰然自若地聽音樂、娛樂消遣，有人嘴裡叨著煙就像寫作業時自然地叨著筆，有人玩著香港的舊式玩具。看著她一如既往營造的景象，我們仿佛也進入了一個漂浮的世界，在過去、現在和未來的夾縫中，只有通過高野的眼睛才能到達的維度。

香港近年屢面困境，全球疫情影響生活的當下，高野筆下超扁平人物的日常瑣事把我們帶回了寧靜美好的生活。作品中呈現的本土情懷和多面的文化，等待我們駐足欣賞，慢慢發現藝術家的小心思。

Takano's chromatic choices one of the main conveyers of meaning, feeling and nuance.

All Takano's favorite obsessions are here, getting more accomplished and expressive with time: the fantastical perspective that subverts the landscape isn't intended to give a realistic scale, but puts the dreamy, big-eyed creatures in the middle of an impermanent world. It is a universe populated mostly by girls, very comfortable with themselves and their own bodies as they listen to music, play with items of consumeristic entertainment, or smoke a cigarette with the same spontaneity with which they would put a pen into their mouth as while writing their school assignments, or play with old-fashioned Hong Kong toys – rather indifferent to the laws of gravity throughout. And as it is customary with her work, we are indeed in a *floating world* ourselves as we look at her creations, somewhere in between past, present and future, in a different dimension that we can access only through her eyes.

As Hong Kong has been rocked by years of hardship and the pandemic that has been affecting the whole world, the *Superflat* creatures that populate Takano's paintings and drawings carry in their hands countless homages to local daily life that brings us back to more normal days. Her endearing attention to Hong Kong's vernacular and its numerous cultural hybridities requires attention, as detail after detail she keeps surprising the viewer with yet another specific observation.

### About the artist

Born in Saitama, in the outskirts of the Tokyo area, in 1976, Takano grew up immersed in the intense visual culture of post-war Japan made of manga, anime, science fiction, to which she added a persisting curiosity and interest for natural sciences and the juxtaposition between nature landscapes and urban landscapes – a duality that comes to perfect fruition in her observations of a place like Hong Kong. She then went on to receive a formal training as an artist at Tokyo's Tama Art University, from where she graduated in 2000, and soon thereafter started to work together with Murakami Takashi, and became part of Kaikai Kiki Co. The years in which Takano developed her artistic sensitivities were the ones in which Japan had already established itself as an economic powerhouse, after the destruction of World War II, and in which consumer culture had started to add both a dreamlike and playful quality to daily life, but also a disquieting insistence on sexualizing young women and girls and turning them into the target of consumption. Takano subverts this commercial operation by turning her characters into irreverent participant in this dynamic: they float, they enjoy themselves, they love, eat, drink and play, and are very much their own masters, taking from a commercialized world only what suits them, and disregarding the attempt at turning them into objects.

The way in which Takano turns the table on the fetishization of young women and girls adds yet another layer to this *Superflat* universe, which, in spite of its insistence on just two dimensions, keeps showing new ways of looking at our world. In the Hong Kong series everything is delicately intertwined, bringing together the Japanese artistic tradition of vignettes of mundane moments with a photographic quality, with the Buddhist attention to the transient, illusionary quality of all earthly human experience, and a special appreciation for Hong Kong's most enduring aesthetic, untouched by a time of strife and uncertainty.

– Ilaria Maria Sala

### **More information>>>**



*we often went to that secret base, the waterfall, 2021. Oil on canvas | 布面油畫. 145.5 x 112 cm. ©2021 Aya Takano/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy of Perrotin. | 圖片提供: 貝浩登*

### 有關藝術家

高野綾於1976年出生於東京外圍的埼玉縣，成長中正值日本戰後動漫、科幻文化視覺傳播的興盛時期，一直對自然科學、自然與城市景觀共存很有興趣，通過觀察香港這樣一個兼併的地方，她對此有了更深入的見解。高野2000年於多摩美術大學藝術專業畢業，其後跟隨村上隆創作，並加入Kaikai Kiki藝術工作室。日本當時已在二戰後重新成為經濟強國，消費文化在日常中開始湧現夢幻遊戲的傾向，年輕女孩們因此淪為物質消費的標靶。高野在這樣的環境中有意識地形成自己的創作風格，用自己筆下叛逆的人物反對這種商業操作：她們隨意漂浮，自得其樂，自主去吃喝玩愛，在充斥消費的世界裏只選擇適合自己的東西，不屑變成被人擺佈的物件。

高野通過畫作反對物化年輕女孩，賦予了這個超扁平世界另一層含義——在二維中關注著現實世界，從此傳遞自己的想法。本次展陳的所有作品微妙地互相關聯，以頗具鏡頭感的日式美學刻畫種種日常，注入佛家轉瞬即逝的世人感觸，以及對香港歷久彌堅的城市風貌的喜愛。

Ilaria Maria Sala 撰寫

### **更多資料>>>**