

Shigeru Hasegawa: *painting*

October 29 – December 3, 2022

Opening Reception:  
Saturday, October 29, 6-8pm



Shigeru Hasegawa  
, 2022  
oil on cotton  
53x45.5cm

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To paint a picture is to confront one's self thoroughly.

— Shigeru Hasegawa

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At our Melrose Avenue gallery, Nonaka-Hill is delighted to present *painting*, selected work by Shigeru Hasegawa (Japan, b. 1963), marking his first solo exhibition outside of Japan. Latently informed by Japanese ukiyo-e, manga, and various Western painting traditions, Hasegawa's idiosyncratic works feature a recurring cast of fruits, vegetables, fish, and other objects. Arranging them into formations against the picture plane, Hasegawa makes playfully concentrated paintings, executing each one with formal economy.

Receiving his art training in Japan, Germany, and Holland in the 1980s and 1990s, Hasegawa was exposed to a wide range of formative influences, which for the past two decades, he has diffused into his unusually fresh paint handling and surfaces. His orchestration of objects in stacks and patterns thus take on a provisional and animated appearance, as if they could fall apart or rearrange themselves at will. In two paintings on view, vegetables and fish assume the shapes of various Kanji, Chinese-derived characters in the Japanese writing system, one of which features two swollen eggplants aligned to signify "person." In several other paintings, his formations resemble a schematic figure, somewhat similar to how 16th century artist Giuseppe Arcimboldo's rendered human subjects as combinations of fruits and vegetables. Such allusions to the transience of life, as *memento mori* and *vanitas*, abound in Hasegawa's work. But in the same spirit as Arcimboldo, his work possesses a whimsical obscurity as to what each part distinctly symbolizes. That a kindred use of vegetables can be found in Itō Jakuchū's 18th century painting, *Scene of Buddha's Nirvana by Vegetables*, has not been lost on Hasegawa either. He knows that even the Buddha can be represented by a radish. Yet, his paintings are not limited to such readings because his symbols are fugitive, and his means of their articulation in as few brushstrokes as possible, is his focus beyond motifs.

This provisional nature also finds itself in how Hasegawa refers to the beginning of a painting, conceptualizing it as a confrontation with a screen or mirror. In his approach to distill his ideas into paint, it is similar to the Zen discipline of *Zazen*, a practice whose objective is its own process, beyond it being seen by the public. In one of his paintings in the exhibition, one sees a grey-blue expanse in its center framed by many overlapping cucumbers. The expanse is vaguely in the shape of a human head, in which one can maybe discern facial features. It could be a suggestion for the way one looks, or Hasegawa looks, at the inner-self—an attempt to become nothing, like *Zazen*.

Shigeru Hasegawa's solo exhibitions include Satoko Oe Gallery, Tokyo, Japan (2022 – 2019); *memento mori-kun*, Shouonji-temple, Tokyo (2021); Galleria Fienarte, Aichi, Japan (2020); *Open Studio 49—What is the motif?!* Fuchu Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan (2010); and group

exhibitions at Museum Haus Kasuya, Kanagawa, Japan (2022); Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi, Japan (2019); Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, Aichi, Japan (2019); Okazaki Mindscape Museum, Aichi, Japan (2013); The National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan (2010); National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, India (2005)

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6917 Melrose Ave, Los Angeles, CA, 90038.

Hours: Tuesday- Saturday, 12noon – 7pm or by appointment

#nonakahill #shigeruhasegawa

## Shigeru Hasegawa

### Biography

- 1963 Born in Shiga, Japan  
Lives and works in Kanagawa
- 1988 Aichi University of the Arts, M.A.
- 1992 Kunstakademie Dusseldorf, M.A.
- 1992-1994 Stayed at De Ateliers in Amsterdam, the Netherland

### Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2022 *pot*, Satoko Oe Contemporary, Tokyo
- 2021 *The sower*, Satoko Oe Contemporary, Tokyo  
*Snack Shi-geru*, former snack-yuka, Aichi  
*memento mori-kun*, Shouonji-temple, Tokyo
- 2020 *2003-2004*, Satoko Oe Contemporary, Tokyo  
*Shigeru HASEGAWA*, Galleria Finarte, Aichi
- 2019 *PAINTING*, Satoko Oe Contemporary, Tokyo  
634 Tenjishitsu, Tokyo
- 2010 *Open Studio 49 – What is the motif?!*, Fuchu Art Museum, Tokyo  
Galleria Finarte, Aichi
- 2008 *ABSTRACT*, void+, Tokyo  
Galleria Finarte, Aichi
- 2007 T&S gallery, Tokyo
- 2006 *appel*, Tokyo  
Galleria Finarte, Aichi
- 2005 Galerie Tokyo Humanite
- 2003 ON Gallery, Osaka
- 2002 Gallery MAKI, Tokyo  
Gallery NAF, Aichi
- 1999 MUSEUM HAUS KASUYA, Kanagawa
- 1997 ON Gallery, Osaka
- 1996 *Workshop = Exhibition*, Yamaguchi Prefectural Art Museum  
SCAI THE BATHHOUSE, Tokyo
- 1994 Aki-Ex Gallery, Tokyo

### Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2022 *paint-TENGU – Shigeru Hasegawa, O JUN*, Museum Haus Kasuya, Kanagawa
- 2019 *Shigeru HASEGAWA and Yoshinori NIWA*, Satoko Oe Contemporary, Tokyo  
*Who opens up the world?*, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi  
*Grand Reopening Exhibition: Aichi Art Chronicle 1919-2019*, Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, Aichi  
*What was the New Figurative? In regard to the New Figurative Painting in 90s*, Parplume Gallery, Kanagawa  
*beyond the reasons*, Komagome SOKO, Tokyo

- Selected Group Exhibition
- 2013 *HUMOR and LEAP of THOUGHT – Far beyond our recognizable world*, Okazaki Mindscape Museum, Aichi
  - 2011 *Jumbo Suzuki X Shigeru Hasegawa*, See Saw Gallery, Aichi  
*Deep Dig Dug – Prisma!*, Maximilians Forum, Munich
  - 2010 *Tora, Tora, Tora*, Galerie Clemens Thimmme, Karlsruhe  
*GARDEN OF PAINTING – Japanese Art of the 00s*, The National Museum of Art, Osaka
  - 2009 *In the Little Playground: Hitsuda Nobuya and his surrounding students*, Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, Aichi  
*The 1st Tokorozawa Biennial of Contemporary Art, SIDING RAIL ROAD*, Seibu Railway Old Tokorozawa Car Factory, Saitama
  - 2008 *LVRFI 2*, T&S gallery, Tokyo  
*drawings – thinking hands*, Gallery Yada, Aichi  
*Painting Today 2*, MUSEUM HAUS KASUYA, Kanagawa
  - 2007 *Art Move 2007 Iwakuni*, Symphonia Iwakuni, Yamaguchi
  - 2006 *LVRFI*, Studio ONO, Kanagawa
  - 2005 *11th Triennale-India*, National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi  
*Artificial Dream*, Gallery Yada, Aichi
  - 2003 *ZONE – Clairvoyants in this threatening age*, Fuchu Art Museum, Tokyo  
*Painting Today*, MUSEUM HAUS KASUYA, Kanagawa
  - 1998 *VOCA'98*, The Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo  
*MORPHE'98: Beyond the Horizon*, Former Factory, Mie
  - 1997 *Passing Beauty*, Gallery ART SOKO, Tokyo
  - 1996 *TAMA VIVANT'96*, Tama Art University, Tokyo

Public collections

Aichi University of the Arts  
Yamaguchi Prefectural Art Museum  
Fuchu Art Museum  
The National Museum of Art, Osaka  
Toyota Municipal Museum of Art  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo