

Galerie RX, Paris – New York
16 rue des Quatre-Fils
75003 Paris, France
Tel. +33 (0)1 71 19 47 58
www.galerierx.com / info@galerierx.com

« Katsuhiko Matsubara, *Path of the Spirit*. »
Exhibition from March 25th to April 29th

"Path of the Spirit" is the theme of Katsuhiko Matsubara's first solo exhibition at RX Gallery. The series combines large-scale paintings with small sculpture-like, thick images. The tangible physicality of Matsubara's paintings is an important element of his work. Layers of paint are organically interwoven to create vibrant colours and enchanting textures. In his process, the manifold brushstrokes and the different characters of the paint sense the subtleties of human emotions. The foundation of his work builds his pure interest in the relationship between the materiality and the immaterial expressions. The traces of a constant exchange between matter and spirit that unfold in his paintings build this relationship themselves and have the presence of a living entity. The fictional ecosystem on canvas can be seen as a living being, a landscape or a spiritual microcosm, that leaves much room for unique interpretation. The viewer can project their own body and mind into a paradisiacal clearing, to a place where matter and image, abstraction and figuration blend into one another.

His painting series describes the fine relationship between delicacy and boldness wherein the translucent fluidity of the oil paint coexists with its massive and tactual character in a vibrant way. The materiality of the paint intertwines with the artist's vision without completely merging. The state of the material and the state of the image are in a very delicate balance, while pushing each other's qualities to the limit. The artist does not paint a specific image, but uses the image as a starting point to build a relationship with the painting. The accumulation of time in the process itself gradually transformed into elements of his paintings. Matsubara says, "He treats the paintings as living beings. In a way, it is more like growing a painting than the actual image painting as an act itself. It is comparable to observing the great variety of plants and organisms flourishing in a garden. It is about picking up the vision as the voice, that each painting carries within itself and helping it to sprout. "This particular quality of his works is reminiscent of animism, which idea is deeply rooted in the Japanese culture; all things, whether material or immaterial, are interconnected and have a soul. In his painting, each colour element, each brush stroke and each colour area created by hand, knife or spray has their own character. Although all elements are independent, they erode and influence each other while creating a holistic cycle, which resembles the function of the human body and the complex environment of the universe.

The "Cell" series exist as corporeal objects with overwhelming dimensions, in which the paint literally intertwines organically in layers, evoking imaginary flesh and flowers. This is caused not by the abstraction of the image, but by the deformation of texture and mass. Therefore, the primordial energy and vivid colours of the living things are kept fresh and highly pure and the work appeals not only to the sense of sight, but also to the sense of touch. As a contrast to these, the "Daydream" series is flatter and the structure itself extremely simple and light. However, the countless colour gradations and surface undulations that arise incidentally, are as complex as natural phenomena or the cross sections of strata that have been cut out. The diverse forms of the coloured surfaces trigger the image of a landscape, while already being transformed into something else, trying to slip away from a particular interpretation.