

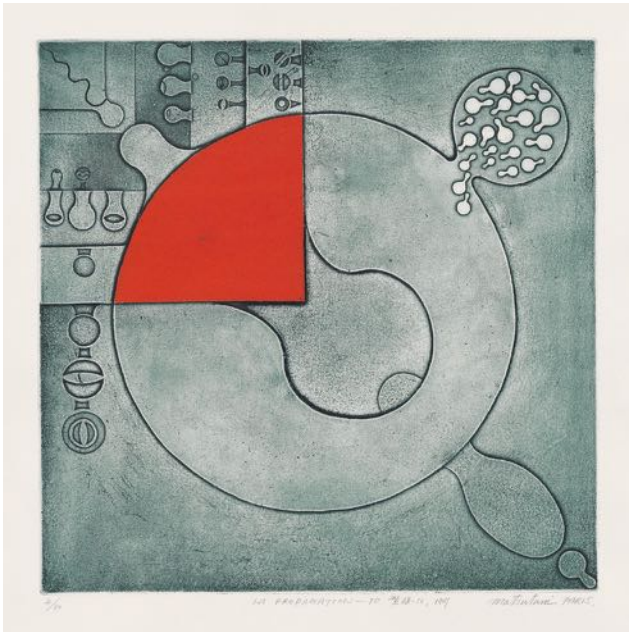
Press Release

Takesada Matsutani / Kate Van Houten. Paris Prints 1967-1978

Part One: 25 Jan – 9 March, 2024

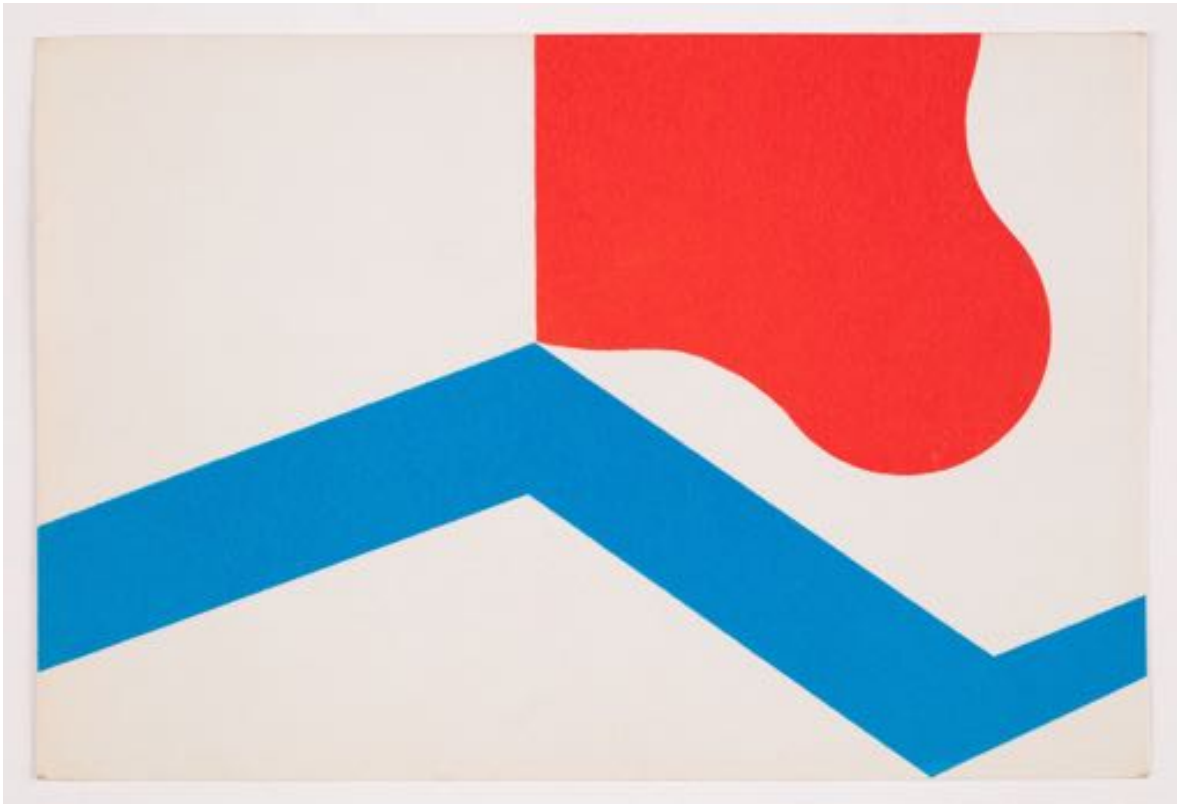
Part Two: 12 March – 20 April, 2024

Hauser & Wirth New York, 18th Street



New York...Lifelong partners in art and life, Takesada Matsutani and Kate Van Houten first met in 1967 while working at Atelier 17, the celebrated print studio established in Paris by Stanley William Hayter. Beginning 25 January 2024, Hauser & Wirth New York will present a two-part exhibition exploring the couple's overlapping oeuvres and deep involvement with printmaking over the years through a selection of etchings, screenprints, photography, painting, sculpture and various ephemera on view at the gallery's 18th Street location in New York City. The first installment of this presentation will focus on works made using intaglio techniques, while the second will foreground hard-edge silkscreens in vibrant color. Through these works and related public programs, 'Paris Prints 1967-1978' will draw visitors into the intimate creative dialogue that has unfolded over half a century between two remarkable individuals in love with both artistic innovation and one another.

One of the youngest members of the radical Japanese avant-garde art collective Gutai, Matsutani left Japan for Paris in November of 1966 after receiving first prize at the First Mainichi Art Competition and a six-month scholarship from the French government to study abroad. Having never left Japan before, his journey to France would ultimately transform both his artistic career and personal life: while the teachings and ethos of Gutai have exerted an enduring influence upon him, nearly 50 years later Matsutani still calls Paris home.



Shortly after arriving in Paris, Matsutani began to work at Atelier 17 print studio, where the guiding principle was to challenge the medium's reputation as a 'reproductive' art. Stanley William Hayter's workshop was a nexus of creative exchange and collaboration, both in Paris and New York, and exerted profound influence upon such artists as Louise Bourgeois, Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, Joan Miró and Joan Mitchell. Through the exceptional capabilities of Atelier 17, American abstraction and the New York School collided and mingled with the European avant garde; it was there that Matsutani devoted himself to the techniques of printmaking. Atelier 17 and its cohort of artists inspired him to explore new forms of artistic experimentation and move away from the three-dimensional paintings he had been making in Japan to investigate flatness through engraving. Atelier 17 is also where Matsutani would meet the woman who would become his lifelong artistic compatriot and romantic partner: Kate Van Houten.

Van Houten arrived in Paris and began working at Atelier 17 shortly before Matsutani. Having recently studied sculpture and painting in Italy, she was unfamiliar with the print world but devoted to becoming a working artist. 'The only stipulation Bill [Hayter] had for involvement was that you had to have the serious intention of being a professional artist,' Van Houten has said. 'And the only other rule he had, probably because this was the late 1960s in Paris and we all know what came along by 1968, was: No politics. The internationality of the studio was really extraordinary and there were many women involved, which you couldn't say about other parts of the art world in those days, especially the United States.'

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Matsutani's unique way of working immediately impressed Van Houten, particularly his intense concentration. And while many artists working at the studio were focused upon experimenting with the color viscosity method pioneered by Hayter, Matsutani wanted to do something totally different by exploring the potential of using only black. Eventually, Van Houten turned her attention away from etching and toward screen printing. She was so enchanted by the rich quality of silkscreen colors that she decided to leave Atelier 17 and open her own studio space with a friend in the 14th arrondissement. At the same time, her relationship with Matsutani was evolving and he would join her at her studio while remaining engaged with Atelier 17, where he had become Hayter's assistant.

Having access to these two very different workspaces inspired Matsutani to begin mixing mediums on the same sheet, making etchings on top of screen prints and using both studios to create a single work of art. For silkscreen, the paper had to be dry, for etching it had to be humid. So, Matsutani would make a screen print at Van Houten's, then soak it and do the etching on top at Hayter's—a radical and highly experimental technique for that time.

Matsutani and Van Houten continued to work with Hayter until the late 1970s, when the nature of their projects organically shifted to other mediums. To this day, these two artists continue to collaborate with each other, making books of poetry and various works of art together, drawing on their shared experiences and affinities as well as their many differences for inspiration. In a recent interview Matsutani said, 'You know, we're very different. American and Japanese, from very different backgrounds, sometimes like oil and water. That's why it's always been so interesting with this lady. I've learned a lot from her. I don't know if she's learned a lot from me. But maybe she has. We've been together a lot of years.'



About Takesada Matsutani

Takesada Matsutani was born in Osaka in 1937. He began exhibiting with the Gutai Group in 1960, along with Shūji Mukai and Tsuyoshi Maekawa, and officially joined the group in 1963. In 1966, he received a grant from the French government after winning first prize in the 1st Mainichi Art Competition, and subsequently moved to Paris where he continues to live and work today. His work can be found in many public institutions including Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France; the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan and the City Museum of Art and History, Ashiya city, Japan. Matsutani was most recently the subject of a major retrospective spanning 60 years of his career at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. In the fall of 2024 he will be the subject of a retrospective exhibition at Tokyo Opera City Gallery.

About Kate Van Houten

Van Houten studied at Western College for Women in Ohio and at the Art Students League in New York before moving to Milan and later Paris. In 1967, she joined the Paris-based Atelier 17 printmaking workshop. With friends, she later set up a silkscreen studio. Her prints were first shown at the Galerie Zunini in 1968 and later alongside her paintings at the Galerie Haut-Pave. Van Houten has participated in printmaking biennales in Kraków, Poland; Brooklyn, New York; Conde-Bonsecours, Belgium; Bradford, England; Bhopal, India and Chamaliere, France, along with solo exhibitions in France, Japan and the U.S. Her work is represented in public and private collections throughout the world.

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Caption and courtesy information:

Takesada Matsutani

La Propagation-10

1967

Etching on BFK paper

64.5 x 49.5 cm / 25 3/8 x 19 1/2 in

Photo: Alex Delfanne

© Takesada Matsutani

Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Kate Van Houten

The Owl and the pussycat went... (variation)

1968

Etching from Zinc on BFK paper

64.5 x 49.8 cm / 25 3/8 x 19 5/8 in

© Kate Van Houten

Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Photo: Thomas Barratt

Takesada Matsutani and Kate Van Houten

Untitled

1969

Silkscreen on offset paper

10 x 15 cm / 4 x 6 in

© Takesada Matsutani and Kate Van Houten

Courtesy the artists

Takesada Matsutani

Sun Rise

1971

Silkscreen on offset paper

65.1 x 49.8 cm / 25 5/8 x 19 5/8 in

© Takesada Matsutani

Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Photo: Stefan Altenburger Photography Zürich

Kate Van Houten

Orpheus I

1971

Silkscreen on offset

paper

56 x 64 cm / 22 x 25 1/4 in

© Kate Van Houten

Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Photo: Sarah Muehlbauer

Atelier 17 Studio Portrait

(Left to right): Irene Whittome, Isolde Von Gart, Claire Crossley, Matsutani, Van Houten, Jean Lodge, unidentified person, Dupak Benargis, ca. 1968.

Photographer unknown