

YAYOI KUSAMA

Tuesday 24 May: Press View 11am – 1pm & Private View, 6 – 8pm

Exhibition 25 May to 30 July 2016

16 Wharf Road, London N1 7RW & 14 St George Street, London W1S 1FE



Yayoi Kusama, *MY HEART'S ABODE*, 2016

Victoria Miro is delighted to announce a new exhibition by Yayoi Kusama. Spanning the gallery's three locations and waterside garden, the exhibition features new paintings, pumpkin sculptures, and mirror rooms, all made especially for this presentation. This is the artist's most extensive exhibition at the gallery to date, and it is the first time mirror rooms have gone on view in London since Kusama's major retrospective at Tate Modern in 2012.

Yayoi Kusama's lifelong exploration of the self's relationship to the infinite cosmos has given rise to a highly influential career in which she has continuously innovated and re-invented her style. For the exhibition at the Wharf Road galleries, she has created three mirror rooms: *Pumpkin's Infinity Mirrored Room*, *Chandelier of Grief* and *Where the Lights in My Heart Go*, all of which place the viewer within a universe of varying proliferating reflections.

New paintings displayed alongside these immersive rooms continue an enduring preoccupation with multiplying polka dots and dense scalloped 'infinity net' patterns – Kusama's obsessive repetition of these forms on canvas, which she has described as a form of active self-obliteration, responds to hallucinations first experienced in childhood. The pumpkin, another motif that she has returned to throughout her career, is also present in the form of new polished mirror sculptures.

Victoria Miro Mayfair will present new paintings from the important ongoing series *My Eternal Soul*, which Kusama first began in 2009. Each is a flatly painted monochrome field that abounds with imagery including eyes, faces in profile, and other more indeterminate forms, often in pulsating combinations of colour. Joyfully improvisatory, fluid and highly instinctual, they testify to the indefatigable, paradoxical drive to expression that has unified Kusama's constantly evolving oeuvre over seven decades.

Yayoi Kusama has developed a practice which, though it shares affiliations with Surrealism, Minimalism, Pop art, the Zero and Nul movements, Eccentric Abstraction and Feminist art, resists any singular classification. Born in Matsumoto City, Japan in 1929, she studied painting in Kyoto before moving to New York in the late 1950s, and by the mid-1960s had become well known in the avant-garde world for her provocative happenings and exhibitions. Since this time, Kusama's extraordinary artistic endeavours have spanned painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, performance, film, printmaking, installation, and environmental art as well as literature, fashion (most notably in her 2012 collaboration with Louis Vuitton), and product design.

Yayoi Kusama was recently named the world's most popular artist by various news outlets, based on figures reported by The Art Newspaper for global museum attendance. Her exhibitions were consistently the most visited worldwide last year, with three museum tours simultaneously traveling through Asia, Central and South America and Scandinavia all drawing record-breaking attendances.

Yayoi Kusama is currently the subject of a museum tour throughout Northern Europe, from Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, (2015-2016) to Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo (2016); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2016) and Helsinki Art Museum (2016-2017). Recent survey exhibitions include *Infinite Obsession*, 2013-2015, which was seen by over two million people during its two-year tour in South America; *A Dream I Dreamed* and *Eternity of Eternal Eternity* which travelled to institutions across Asia from 2013-2015 and 2012-2014, respectively. *Yayoi Kusama*, a major retrospective, was presented from 2011 to 2012 at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Tate Modern, London; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Kusama represented Japan at the 45th Venice Biennale in 1993.

Work by the artist is held in museum collections throughout the world, including the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Tate Gallery, London; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; amongst many others. Kusama lives and works in Tokyo and has exhibited with Victoria Miro since 1998.

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