

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Yukie Ishikawa**

**Blum & Poe, Tokyo**

**September 1 – October 20, 2018**

**Opening reception: Saturday, September 1, 6 – 8pm**

Blum & Poe is pleased to present a body of work spanning three decades by Tokyo-based artist Yukie Ishikawa. This is Ishikawa's first solo presentation with the gallery.

Yukie Ishikawa began her career in the late 1980s as the Japanese New Painting movement, which developed alongside American and European Neo-Expressionism, gave way to new artistic possibilities. During this time in Japan, artists began to explore subversive artistic languages of simulacra and appropriation that responded to the zeitgeist of design and advertisement culture during the bubble economy. Ishikawa's practice is distinct for its conscientious response against the history of Modernist painting and against the monochromatic space found in Minimalist art. The compositions originate from photographs of miscellaneous subject matter she finds in magazines, advertisements, newspapers, and books, which she enlarges, projects, and traces onto the canvas. Although this tracing of form ostensibly results in two-dimensional planes, in Ishikawa's view one can visually reconstruct three-dimensional space within them. Deliberately composing and coloring the abstractions in order to obfuscate the identity of the original source material, she seeks to create "a pictorial space outside of the three-dimensional space to which those things belonged." In some works, Ishikawa employs her interpretation of *tentai*. Translating literally as "spot and substance," *tentai* is a technique in ink painting that dates back to 9th-century China—a collaborative interplay of meaning and representation—in which trees, rocks, and mountains are depicted through the application of pointillist ink dots, creating a foggy sense of vitality and rhythm. As such, Ishikawa partakes in Postmodernist strategies of deconstructing Modernist abstraction by appropriating the unique collective unconscious of Japanese advertisement culture through a distinctive engagement with traditional techniques of ink landscape painting.

This exhibition features an ongoing series of highly intricate and complex compositions entitled *Impermanence*. This body of work was conceived in 2012, as Ishikawa meditated on the ever-shifting appearance of the landscape outside her large studio windows. She began to alter the pictorial structure of paintings from previous decades, retouching or reworking compositions that had once seemed complete. No longer facing a blank canvas, she responds to the "given conditions" of the existing painted surface, adding new layers of lines and grids, some with sand mixed into the paint, and some incorporating the *tentai* technique. This retouching is not intended to damage, destroy, or deny the given conditions, but to generate a new pictorial meaning within the colors and painted forms on the surface. The lower layer now interacts with the superimposed layer in form, color, and texture. The combination of pigments in the stripes produces an optical color mix. As Ishikawa puts it, "I would like to make paintings that simultaneously contain a variety of unique relationships among disparate elements while the various structural components within the painting exist as independent entities."

Yukie Ishikawa was born in Tokyo in 1961, and graduated from the Department of Oil Painting at Musashino Art University, Tokyo, in 1983. She currently lives and works near Kawagoe, Saitama Prefecture. Since the late 1980s she has held regular solo exhibitions in Japan and her paintings have been featured in prominent group exhibitions, including *The Vision of Contemporary Art*, Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo (1995 and 1999); *Remaking Modernism in Japan 1900–2000*, University Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, and Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (2004); *The Power of Painting—Japanese Painting since 1980*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (2005); *Primary Field: The State of Contemporary Art—Conversation with the 7 Fields*, Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura & Hayama (2007); *Minimal/ Post Minimal—The Contemporary Japanese Art from 1970s*, Utsunomiya Museum of Art, Utsunomiya (2013). Her work is represented in the collections of the Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima; Iwaki City Art Museum, Iwaki; Museum of Modern Art,

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Kamakura & Hayama; National Museum of Art, Osaka; Sezon Museum of Modern Art, Karuizawa; and the Utsunomiya Museum of Art, Utsunomiya.