

For immediate **release**

YAYOI KUSAMA: RECENT PAINTINGS

16 January – 06 March 2021

Ota Fine Arts Singapore is delighted to present “YAYOI KUSAMA: RECENT PAINTINGS”, a solo exhibition featuring 15 monochrome paintings from the artist’s *My Eternal Soul* series made in 2019–2020, and *CLOUDS* (2019), a sculpture installation consisting of pieces of mirror-finished stainless-steel forms. This will be Kusama’s first solo presentation in Singapore since her last large retrospective at the National Gallery Singapore in 2017. All works in this exhibition will be shown for the first time in Southeast Asia.

In 2018, Kusama started working intensively on a series of 100 x 100 cm paintings. Subsequently in 2019, she began making these paintings in monochrome. Unlike other paintings of the same series which are usually covered in bright, vibrant colours, these works feature bold black lines that envelop the canvas together with her wealth of varied motifs: eyes, faces, biomorphic shapes, nets and dots.



Yayoi Kusama, *YAYOI KUSAMA TO MICHELLE OBAMA*, 2019, Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm

These recent paintings synthesize contrasting concepts and forms of positive and negative spaces, figuration and abstraction, microscopic and macroscopic views of the universe. Non-uniformed brushstrokes have left some parts of the canvas untouched by black paint and the resulting white spaces create a shifting movement and flow. Unknowingly, viewers are swept up in a dynamic and voluminous energy. With titles such as *ALL OF MY LOVE FOR HUMANITY* (2019) and *LOOKING INTO THE UNIVERSE FROM MY HEART* (2019), these paintings provide a glimpse into Kusama’s current state of mind. Her works are infused with reflections on love, death, humanity and her relationship with the universe and beyond.

As Kusama delved into the aesthetic potential of the monochrome, her restraint use of a limited palette brings to focus the form that she depicts and the strength of the motifs that has continuously appeared in her work over the past decade. Created at the tenth year mark of her *My Eternal Soul* series, they force a review on the way we look at and approach this series.



Yayoi Kusama, *CLOUDS*, 2019, Stainless steel with patina and wax in ninety (90) parts, Overall dimensions variable, Edition 2 of 3 + 1 A.P.

In *CLOUDS* (2019), stainless steel cloud-like shapes surround the floors of the gallery. They echo, reflect, and complement the lines in Kusama’s paintings, creating at once an expansive yet immersive atmosphere that allows for imagination beyond the walls of the gallery. Here, Kusama’s interest in reflection, repetition and accumulation is exemplified.

As Yayoi Kusama continues to expand her creative vocabulary, this exhibition in Ota Fine Arts Singapore is exemplary of her continuous innovation, uncompromising vision and compelling charm that captivates people all around the world.

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About the Artist

Yayoi Kusama was born in Matsumoto, Japan in 1929. From her childhood experiences with visual hallucination and auditory hallucination, she started to produce drawings and paintings of nets and polka dots, which are now known as representative motifs of the artist. Through various obsessions, she developed her art philosophy of self-obliteration through compulsive repetition and proliferation of the single motif.

Kusama went to the United States in 1957 and developed various works. They include Infinity Net paintings that cover large scale canvases with multiple strokes of whirls, soft sculptures whose motifs are derived from genitalia, installations that are made using mirrors and illuminations and happenings, firmly establishing herself as an avant-garde artist. After her return to Japan in 1973, she created literary works such as novels and poems which led to a Yasei Jidai award in 1983.

Since the early 90's, she has created outdoor sculptures and inflatable large room presentations, expanding her prolific world. She has held numerous solo exhibitions and retrospectives throughout the world at venues such as Tate Modern (UK), Centre Pompidou (France) and Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia (Spain). In 2016, she was bestowed the prestigious "Order of Culture" award in Japan.

In 2017, the Yayoi Kusama Museum opened its doors in Tokyo while she continues to hold exhibitions in prestigious museums all over the world, winning favorable reception. In spring 2021, a major solo exhibition of the artist's work will open at the Gropius Bau, Berlin coinciding with the exhibition "Yayoi Kusama: Cosmic Nature" at the New York Botanical Garden. Yayoi Kusama's widespread popularity across the globe points to her increasing influence and solidified place in international art history.

About Ota Fine Arts

Ota Fine Arts was established in 1994 in Tokyo. For over 20 years, the gallery has defined itself as being a pioneer of Japanese contemporary art. Since its inception, Ota Fine Arts has promoted various Japanese artists, including internationally-acclaimed Yayoi Kusama, and has been expanding the variety of its artists and their works. In 2012, Ota Fine Arts opened a gallery space in Gillman Barracks, Singapore, to expand its programs in the region. One of the main goals of Ota Fine Arts is to support and showcase more regional character, originality and commonality of the Asian cultural belt. The gallery hopes to continue its commitment to East Asian artists, and moreover to organize various collaborations with artists from South Eastern Asia to the Middle East region to convey the new aspect of contemporary art today. The gallery opened a new space in Shanghai in November 2017 to extend its programs further in the region.

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Tues - Sat. 11.00 - 19.00
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Closed on Mon. & Public Holidays

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