



THE UBIQUITY OF BORDERS : JAPANESE CONTEMPORARY

TOMOO GOKITA, IZUMI KATO, TATSUO MIYAJIMA, DAISUKE OHBA,
MIKA TAJIMA, SOJU TAO, HIROFUMI TOYAMA
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Gallery Baton is pleased to present, '*The Ubiquity of Borders: Japanese Contemporary*,' an exhibition of works by internationally renowned Japanese artists: Tomoo Gokita, Izumi Kato, Tatsuo Miyajima, Daisuke Ohba, Mika Tajima, Soju Tao, and Hirofumi Toyama.

Since the '90s, various groups of Japanese artists have been placed in complex situations as they experienced changes in Japan's social, cultural and economic climate. Artists have been influenced by the diversification of values, the turn toward globalization, the development of new technologies, and the foundation of post-modernism. Also, Japan's retrenchment led artists to seek opportunities overseas. Artists entered into contemporary conversations with the West while continuing to search within for individual spirituality and upholding characteristics of the Japanese culture that they closely identified with.

The exhibition introduces seven artists who explore various media—from painting to digital technology—as new pathways for creation. While maintaining the inherent characteristic of each medium, the artists' works challenge the instrumental limits and conceptually and perceptually traverse between boundaries. If the physical and practical barriers indicate a state of denial and tension, the artists in the exhibition confront reality through transparent and impermanent barriers.

Tomoo Gokita (b. 1969) creates abstract monotone patterns by transforming the faces of figures selected from photographs and magazines of the '60s and '70s. *Izumi Kato* (b. 1969) creates organically configured paintings and sculptures, often applying pigments directly with his hands to layer and heighten the materiality of his work. *Tatsuo Miyajima* (b. 1957) uses digital media to address questions of life, death, and the passage of time. *Daisuke Ohba's* (b. 1981) paintings convey subtle color changes through the use of hologram pigments. *Mika Tajima* (b. 1975) uses digital media, sound, installation, and design to investigate issues of our contemporary era that stems from the transformation of an industrial to an information society. *Soju Tao* (b. 1977) presents paintings paired with texts from self-authored poems and lyrics, and *Hirofumi Toyama* (b. 1967) creates intricate paintings of composed of intersecting lines. Toyama extends the space beyond the edges of the canvas by perceptually connecting the spaces in one painting to another painting.

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Japan has produced many major artists who are active in the contemporary art world today. Embedded with a deep history and cultural background, these seven artists create works that are rich with complex visual narratives. Through this unique exhibition, Gallery Baton hopes to recognize the rising talents that continue to connect and transverse between boundaries. *Tatsuo Miyajima*, one of the participating artists, emphasizes three principles that encapsulate the central message of the exhibition: "*Keep Changing, Connect Everything, Continue Forever.*"

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