

Tokyo International Gallery

Solo Exhibition

Midori Arai

“AVOWAL”

Opening Reception : 2024. 6. 1. Sat 5pm – 8pm

Exhibition Period : 2024. 6. 1. Sat – 6. 29. Sat



Tokyo International Gallery presents a Solo Exhibition

“AVOWAL” by Midori Arai

Tokyo International Gallery (Shinagawa, Tennoz) is pleased to announce “AVOWAL” a solo exhibition by emerging artist, Midori Arai.

Arai creates paintings through the accumulation of unconscious strokes. Through this process, she believes that the traces contain the essence of her own bodily time. We are equipped with unconscious functions like breathing and the pulsating rhythm of the heart, sustaining us beyond conscious awareness. Reflecting on the relationship between the body, driven by mechanisms outside of our awareness, and art, prompts us to contemplate life, its finitude, and the deeper nature of time that lies beneath. In this exhibition, a series of new works focusing more on the functions of the body will be presented. In the solo exhibition format, allows for the display of multiple pieces from this new series, enabling viewers to sense the changes from existing ones. Follow Arai's traces and expand your imagination, and please do experience the embedded time within them.

Art critic Harold Rosenberg, who held considerable influence in post-war America, argued in a series of works including "Action and the Actor" (1970) that the image in painting is a trace of tense events that occur on the battleground where the artist sincerely grapples with materials through their own body. The images crafted by Midori Arai similarly emerge through the semi-unconscious expression of memories and desires housed within her body, manifested through a thorough repetition and accumulation of diverse strokes as a record of continuous acts. Arai's works serve as reminders of the finite nature inherent in the human body, etched onto the canvas, a plane theoretically allowing infinite possibilities. Additionally, she consciously challenges various "hierarchical structures" intrinsic to the realm of painting, irrespective of whether they are representational or abstract, such as the interplay between "figure and ground" on the composition, the "center and periphery" guiding the viewer's gaze, or the hierarchy among different painting materials.

While Rosenberg's assertions sparked intense debates, establishing theories of Action Painting to interpret abstract expressionist paintings and leading the discourse of modernist art criticism primarily in the West, when viewed from the perspective of New Art History that emerged in the 1970s, aiming to refresh the narrative of art history, Arai's artistic practice critically examines the modernism that has conventionally assumed white men as the "natural" subjects of action and aspires to renew its painting structures. By employing a female body, one that is not necessarily "powerful," in her creation process, diverging from the "universal" body often depicted in normative art criticism discourse, Arai dismantles the Western, male-centric chains of modernism gradually. Thus, her paintings, born through a creative process that sincerely confronts her own body, promise to reveal new images before us—echoes of the bodily unconscious and enacted events, challenging the constraints imposed by traditional Western-centric modernism.

Cultural Researcher Hiroki Yamamoto

Midori Arai

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Midori Arai, born in 1992, graduated from the Department of Fine Arts, Painting Course, at Tokyo Zokei University in 2015. In 2022, she completed her master's degree in Oil Painting at the Graduate School of Arts and Crafts, Kyoto University of the Arts. She focuses on traces of unconscious movements and the finite nature of the body. Using techniques that physically evoke and re-experience the act of drawing for viewers, she questions the essence of life and time.



< Main Solo Show >

- 2023 “Sustained Line” FOAM CONTEMPORARY, Ginza SIX, Tokyo
- 2022 “Blinking Synonyms” biscuit gallery, Tokyo

< Main Group Show >

- 2024 “ART ONE&ONLY” GALLERY HAYASHI+ART BRIDGE booth, SETEC, Seoul
- 2024 “Silent Resonancel” Galerie Lulla (Los Angeles)
- 2024 “TAIWA vol.1 -Proiect to smelt utopia-” blend studio (Osaka)
- 2023 “Vagueness / Waving Rhythms” GALLERY HAYASHI+ART BRIDGE (Tokyo)
- 2023 “Contraction and Removal” HIRO OKAMOTO GALLERY (Tokyo, Japan)

< Main Awards >

- 2022 Excellent Prize, Graduate School Completion Exhibition, Kyoto University of Arts
- 2020 Selected, TURNER AWARD



Tokyo International Gallery
Press Release
May 2024

【 Outline of the Event 】

- Title : “AVOWAL”
- Venue : Tokyo International Gallery
- Address : TERRADA ART COMPLEX II 2F,
1-32-8 Higashi-Shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, Japan
- Period : Saturday, June 1, 2024 - Saturday, June 29, 2024
- Opening : Saturday, June 1, 2024, 17:00 - 20:00
- Gallery Closed : Sunday, Monday, National holiday

【 Contact 】

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