

Press release of 8 August 2014

Motoko Watanabe: «Paintings»

Motoko Watanabe's paintings reflect her innermost thoughts and the two worlds in which the Swiss-Japanese artist moves. Trained in the Japanese literati school of painting, she combines the subtle nuances of black and expressive lines of ink painting with intense acrylic tones in works that are individual and full of vitality and sensuality.

Motoko Watanabe spent her childhood and youth near Tokyo. Her first encounter with art took place in her father's studio, he himself also being an artist. After studying economics she went to Singapore where she devoted herself entirely to art. She studied Nanga – Japanese literati painting – for more than twelve years, most particularly at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA). Watanabe spent the following years in Singapore, Korea, Japan and Switzerland, and has lived in Lausanne since 1998. She has exhibited her paintings regularly in Asia and Europe for more than 20 years.

The artist lives for her painting, which also expresses her journey between Asia and Europe. Over the years her paintings have become more and more abstract and acrylic and watercolour painting has increasingly taken the place of ink painting. Nevertheless, her long study of literati painting continues to influence her work today. She consistently chooses traditional subjects, such as landscape, bamboo and cherry blossom, alongside many others, and rather than reproducing the visible she makes the essence of her subjects tangible.

Based on her thoughts and feelings and in a state of meditative concentration, Watanabe builds her paintings using richly textured layers of colour, often accentuated with shimmering pigment. The eye loses itself in the depth of works that surprise with their ever-changing colour combinations and effects. The artist often contrasts colour with subtly nuanced black tones. Black, along with the use of expressive lines and brush strokes perfected over many years, reflects the art of Watanabe's native Japan, which she skilfully combines with the artistic techniques of her adoptive home. Through her very personal union of East and West the artist creates vivid and expressive paintings that captivate and move.

You and your friends are warmly invited to the exhibition preview on Thursday 21 August 2014, from 17.00 to 20.00. Motoko Watanabe will be present.

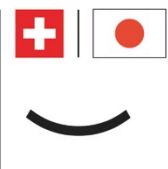
The exhibition runs from 22 August 2014 to 4 October 2014.

There will be drinks with the artist on Sunday 14 September from 13.00. Registration would be appreciated by 10 September.

Opening hours: Wednesday to Friday 12.30 to 18.00, Saturday 11.00 to 14.00, or by appointment.

Further information available from:
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150
Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations
between Switzerland and Japan
日本・スイス国交樹立記念



Motoko Watanabe

Career

- 1984 – 1994 Studies with the Nanga artist Chew Choon in Singapore (SG)
 1982 – 1984 Nanga studies at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), Singapore (SG)

Selected solo exhibitions

- 2012 Galerie du Pressoir, Ecublens (CH)
 2009 Orié Gallery, Tokyo (JP)
 Galerie de Grancy, Lausanne (CH)
 2008 Nestlé, Orbe (CH)
 Tenri Japanisch-Deutsche Kulturwerkstatt, Cologne (DE)
 2007 Galerie du Pressoir, Ecublens (CH)
 Galerie Yves Callet-Molin, Vevey (CH)
 2006 Galerie de Grancy, Lausanne (CH)
 2005 Galerie Giovanetti, Lausanne (CH)
 2004 Ferrier, Lullin & Cie SA, Lausanne (CH)
 Galerie du Pressoir, Ecublens (CH)
 Human Talents, Lausanne (CH)
 2003 Galerie Florimont, Lausanne (CH)
 Consulate of Japan, Geneva (CH)

Selected group exhibitions

- 2014 Salle Corto Maltese, Grandvaux (CH)
 2009 Salon d'automne, Carrousel du Louvre, Paris (FR)
 2007 Montreux Art Forum, Montreux (CH)
 France–Japon, L'Art Actuel, Tokyo (JP)
 2006 Artistes Contemporains, Noga Hilton, Geneva (CH)
 Tianjin National Museum, Tianjin (CN)
 Galerie de Grancy, Lausanne (CH)
 Villa Dutoit, Geneva (CH)
 2005 United Nations, Geneva (CH)
 Japan Information and Cultural Center (JICC), Japanese Embassy, Bern (CH)
 Galerie du Pressoir, Ecublens (CH)
 2004 PALEXPO, Geneva (CH)
 2003 Japan Information and Cultural Center (JICC), Japanese Embassy, Bern (CH)
 PALEXPO, Geneva (CH)
 1998 Gallery J. Smith, Singapore (SG)
 1997 Family Resource and Training Center, Singapore (SG)
 Gallery J. Smith, Singapore (SG)
 Decor Arts International Gallery, Singapore (SG)
 1996 Lasalle-SIA College of the Arts, Singapore (SG)
 Decor Arts International Gallery, Singapore (SG)
 1995 Life Arts Society Exposition, Singapore (SG)

Prizes

2007: First prize of Jury, Tianjin National Museum, Tianjin (CN); 2006: First prize of Jury, Grandvaux (CH).

Collections

Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co., Geneva (CH); United Nations, Geneva (CH); Delta Gestion SA, Lausanne (CH); Orix Corporation, Tokyo (JP); Bain Capital, Tokyo (JP); New City Corporation, Tokyo (JP); Istana, Singapore (SG); Winterthur Insurance Co., Singapore (SG).

Selected works

1. Motoko Watanabe, *Spring*, 2012, acrylic and pigments on canvas, 80 x 80 cm.
2. Motoko Watanabe, *Fantasy*, 2012, acrylic and pigments on canvas, 80 x 60 cm.
3. Motoko Watanabe, *Cherry blossom*, 2010, acrylic and pigments on canvas, 80 x 100 cm.
4. Motoko Watanabe, *Bamboo*, 2010, acrylic and pigments on canvas, 80 x 100 cm.