

AKI KURODA

FEBRUARY 7 - APRIL 26, 2020

Happy Boy In Manhattan

CURATED BY YOYO MAEGHT



Darkness in Paradise, 2012, Mixed Media on canvas, 63 x 63 in. (160 x 160 cm.)

RICHARD TAITTINGER GALLERY is proud to announce the U.S. representation of the world-renowned Japanese artist, Aki Kuroda (b. 1944), and to present his first NYC solo exhibition, *Happy Boy in Manhattan*. His works are in collections such as The National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo, the City of Paris Collection, and the Marguerite and Aimé Maeght Foundation in France. Bucking traditional hierarchy Kuroda was also the youngest artist to have solo exhibition at Tokyo's National Museum of Modern Art in 1993. *Happy Boy in Manhattan* is curated by Yoyo Maeght whose friendship with Kuroda has lasted 40 years since the time of Kuroda's first exhibition in France, *Les tenebres*, at Galerie Maeght in 1980.

Kuroda is an artist who embraces chaos. He works in diverse media and from a variety of perspectives. Kuroda is not limited to the two dimensional; he works in performance, literature, and ballet set design. He intentionally seeks out individuals from different disciplines and with different points of view. He is deeply interested in the cosmos and nurtures relationships with scientists such as Hubert Reeves who feed his imagination. He plays with space and time, blending the notion of past, present and future. His works demonstrate an intersection of modernism, contemporary art, mythology, cosmology, the body, and the interplay between East and West.

In many of his works Kuroda employs repeating imagery including a bunny character, faces, a white caryatid figure, flowers. For Kuroda the face becomes a symbol. His faces become geometric. Much of Kuroda's work is about bringing the inside out and the outside in. He becomes a part of the city and the city becomes a part of him. In a similar way his caryatid occasionally morphs into a robotic looking figure or even a portal or opening to another world.

Despite the depth and gravity of his themes, Kuroda's works preserve a lightness of expression. The bright

and expressive use of color create a sense of whimsy that is balanced by his anarchic faces and composition. His diversity of expression follows in the tradition of important artists such as video artist Toshio Matsumoto and minimal sculptor Yoshishige Saito. Kuroda's works are characterised by the "Kuroda Stroke." His lines are deliberate and strong, yet they also quiver. While the Kuroda Blue, for many, is reminiscent of Klein or Matisse, for Kuroda his blue was something else. It was deeper and contained a kind of darkness and eroticism. The bright yellow in Kuroda's other works creates luminosity and brightness.

Happy Boy in Manhattan takes its name partially from Kuroda's work *Happy Boy* which features a small, furry creature with bunny like ears. In part, *Happy Boy in Manhattan* refers to Kuroda himself. This is his first gallery show in New York City, and his sense of adventure and humor make him a character in his own right. One of the largest influences on Kuroda's work are the passers-by that he encounters in Paris. Manhattan provides a new set of passers-by, who now have the opportunity to enter into Kuroda's cosmic world. Each of his canvases contains a universe. As the canvases are hung and displayed alongside each other these universes come into conversation and morph into something entirely new.

Happy Boy in Manhattan is on view through April 26, 2020.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in Kyoto in 1944, **Aki Kuroda** expressed interest in art his entire life and painted his first work at the age of four. His family was a significant influence on Kuroda as a young boy; his father brought him magazines such as "Le Minotaure" from Paris. Through these magazines Kuroda discovered the work of painters like Picasso and Dali, which inspired him at this early stage in his artistic career. These resources were extremely valuable to the self-taught artist, and in the 1960s Kuroda traveled in Europe and he eventually elected to settle in Paris in 1970. Kuroda struggled during his early years in Paris but a chance encounter with Marguerite Duras, and Andrien Maeght reversed his fortunes shortly before he had planned to give up and return to Japan. Through Galerie Maeght Kuroda was invited to show in the 11th Paris Biennial in 1980, launching his career in a meaningful way.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Yoyo Maeght (b. 1959) is French gallerist, editor, and curator. She is the granddaughter of Aimé Maeght, the founder of The Maeght Foundation and Maeght Gallery. After the death of her grandfather she devoted herself to her family's passion for art. She is the author of the books *The Maeght Family, A passion for Modern Art* and *La Saga Maeght*. Maeght, herself, has curated many museum shows at important institutions worldwide. She was awarded the *Chevalier de 'ordre national du Mérite* (Knight of the National Order of Merit) in 2008 and the *Médaille de la Ville de Paris* (Medal of the City of Paris) in 2018.

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#AkiKuroda #HappyBoyInManhattan #RTG

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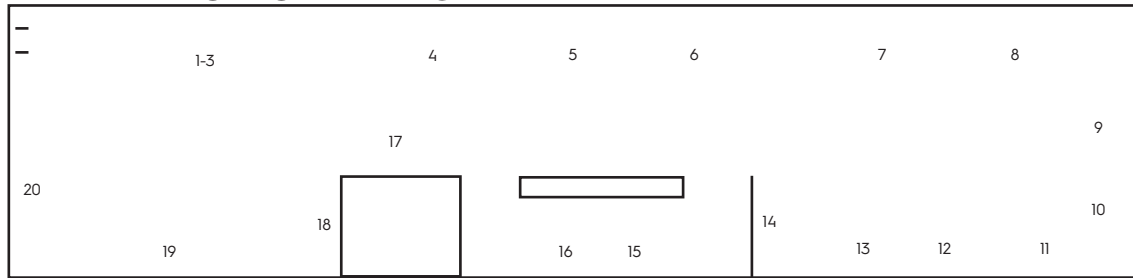
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**AKI KURODA: HAPPY BOY IN
MANHATTAN
FEBRUARY 7 - APRIL 26, 2020
CURATED BY YOYO MAEGHT**



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|---|--|----|--|----|---|
| 1 | Blue Magic 2
2019
Acrylic on canvas
118.1 x 78.7 in. (300 x 200 cm.) | 8 | Happy Boy
2019
Acrylic on canvas
44.9 x 39.4 in. (114 x 100 cm.) | 15 | Yellow Papers
2017
Mixed on paper
41.7 x 30 in. (106 x 76 cm.) |
| 2 | Cosmogarden
2019
Acrylic on canvas
118.1 x 78.7 in. (300 x 200 cm.) | 9 | Minosideral VIII
2008
Acrylic on canvas
118.1 x 78.7 in. (300 x 200 cm.) | 16 | Yellow Papers
2017
Mixed on paper
41.7 x 30 in. (106 x 76 cm.) |
| 3 | Last Love
2019
Acrylic on canvas
118.1 x 78.7 in. (300 x 200 cm.) | 10 | Happy Boy
2019
Acrylic on canvas
139.4 x 31.9 in. (100 x 81 cm.) | 17 | Self Portrait
2019
Acrylic on canvas
55.1 x 39.4 in. (140 x 100 cm.) |
| 4 | H face
2019
Acrylic on canvas
44.9 x 39.4 in. (114 x 100 cm.) | 11 | Self Portrait
2019
Acrylic on canvas
118.1 x 78.7 in. (300 x 200 cm.) | 18 | Darkness in Paradise
2012
Mixed on paper
63 x 63 in. (160 x 160 cm.) |
| 5 | Space Magic
2019
Acrylic on canvas
50 x 98.4 in. (127 x 250 cm.) | 12 | Suite Rabbit XV
2007
Acrylic and oil on canvas
59 x 59 in. (150 x 150 cm.) | 19 | Untitled
2012
Mixed on paper
106.3 x 189 in. (270 x 480 cm.) |
| 6 | Love (chat)
2019
Acrylic on canvas
44.5 x 57.5 in. (113 x 146 cm.) | 13 | Suite Rabbit XIV
2007
Acrylic and oil on canvas
59 x 59 in. (150 x 150 cm.) | 20 | Untitled
2012
Mixed on canvas
25.6 x 39.2 in. (65 x 99.5 cm.) |
| 7 | Self Portrait
2019
Acrylic on canvas
118.1 x 78.7 in. (300 x 200 cm.) | 14 | Medusa
2019
Acrylic on canvas
39.4 x 31.9 in. (100 x 81 cm.) | | |