

TAKASHI MURAKAMI MONONOKE KYOTO

村上隆ものものけ京都

2024年2月3日(土)–9月1日(日) FEBRUARY 3 (SAT)–SEPTEMBER 1 (SUN), 2024

京都市京セラ美術館 新館 東山キューブ Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art Higashiyama Cube

Kyoto City Museum of Art 90th Anniversary Exhibition

Takashi Murakami Mononoke Kyoto

The theme and content of Takashi Murakami's first large-scale solo exhibition in Japan outside of Tokyo.

The exhibition's theme and works are finally revealed!

Exhibition Period: February 3 – September 1, 2024

A large-scale solo exhibition of works by Takashi Murakami (b. 1962), an artist at the forefront of contemporary art, will be held at Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art as it celebrates its 90th anniversary. For Murakami, who has developed his career primarily overseas, this will be his first large-scale solo exhibition in Japan in about eight years and his first outside of Tokyo.

The exhibition "Superflat" curated and organized by Takashi Murakami toured Japan and the U.S. from 2000 to 2001, and together with the Superflat Manifesto that accompanied it, had a significant impact on the contemporary art scene. The concept not only linked traditional Japanese pictorial expressions with popular contemporary culture represented by anime, manga, and video games, but also considered the sensibility and social aspects of the Japanese people in the postwar period, as well as the capitalist economy, politics, and religion on a flattened plane. By using diverse methods to incorporate this concept into his overall creative process, Murakami has come to create a wide range of works that question the value and essential meaning of art. His career can be seen as an ongoing effort to challenge the international art scene, in which the Western values have become the accepted norm, providing new stimulus from a uniquely Japanese perspective.

The exhibition takes place in Kyoto, the city that was a center of activity for Edo period painters in which Murakami has deeply been interested since the beginning of his career, a place where diverse forms of art and performing arts are still very much alive and intermingle. Please look forward to encountering a new world of Murakami in "Takashi Murakami Mononoke Kyoto," an exhibition comprising around 170 predominantly new works including newly painted masterpieces, representative series, and works that will be exhibited for the first time in Japan.

© Exhibition Outline

Title: Kyoto City Museum of Art 90th Anniversary Exhibition

Takashi Murakami Mononoke Kyoto

Organizers: City of Kyoto, The Asahi Shimbun, The Kyoto Shimbun, NHK Kyoto Station, NHK Enterprises Inc. Osaka Branch Office

Creative Partner: Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) Inc.

Production Support: NHK Promotions Inc.

Special Support: Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd., Perrotin, Gagolian

Major Sponsor: LOUIS VUITTON

Sponsors: MELCO Group Inc., Daimaru Matsuzakaya Department Stores Co. Ltd.,

KOEKISHA Co., Ltd., Hibiki FA Co., Ltd.

Support: Kyoto Pharmaceutical Industries, Ltd., Takamura Co., Ltd., Branco Inc.,

YAMATO TRANSPORT CO., LTD.

Curated by Takahashi Shinya (Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art)

Curatorial Cooperation: Miki Akiko

Period: February 3 (Sat.) – September 1 (Sun.), 2024

Opening Hours: 10:00-18:00 (Last admission: 17:30)

Museum closed on Mondays, except public holidays
Venue: Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art Higashiyama Cube

Admission: Adult ¥2,200 (Advance/Group ¥2,000), University student ¥1,500 (Advance/Group ¥1,300), High school student ¥1,000 (Advance/Group ¥800), Free admission for Junior high school students and younger

*Free admission for persons with disability certificate and one attendant (please bring your student ID, disability certificate, or other proof of identification)

*Other special tickets are available

Advanced tickets will be on sale starting at 10:00 am on January 5 (Fri.), 2024

Website: <https://takashimurakami-kyoto.exhibit.jp>

Inquiries: +81-75-771-4334 (Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art)

© **Exhibition Highlights: A showcase of new and premiere works by Takashi Murakami, who confronts the theme of “Kyoto” head-on!**

Murakami, who majored in *nihonga* (Japanese-style painting) at university, has been greatly influenced by the painters of the Edo period and has incorporated them into his own work. It is no exaggeration to say that this is the origin of “Superflat,” evident not only in his pictorial expression but also in his production methods and the Kaikai Kiki studio system.

This exhibition features a large number of new works shown for the first time in Japan, in which Murakami uniquely interprets, references, and reconstructs exemplary works by painters who were active in Kyoto during the Edo period.

- 1 **13-meter-long Murakami version of masterpiece *Rakuchu Rakugai Zu* welcomes visitors**
Rakuchu Rakugai Zu Byobu or “*Scenes In and Around Kyoto*” (*Funaki Version*) (Edo period, 17th century) by Iwasa Matabei depicts various scenes of Kyoto, including shrines and temples, festivals and entertainment districts, and people enjoying Kabuki and Joruri (traditional Japanese puppet plays). A thirteen-meter-long contemporary *Rakuchu Rakugai Zu*, painted by Murakami while referencing the original, will welcome visitors to the exhibition.
- 2 **Murakami’s version of *The Wind and Thunder Gods* and *Dragon and Clouds* challenge the most unorthodox of painters of the Edo period!**
In addition to the above-mentioned *Rakuchu Rakugai Zu*, this exhibition features the eighteen-meter-long *Dragon in Clouds - Red Mutation: The version I painted myself in annoyance after Professor Nobuo Tsuji told me, “Why don’t you paint something yourself for once?”* (illustration 1) shown for the first time in Japan in which Murakami took on Soga Shohaku’s *Dragon and Clouds* (18th century), a work that had a deep impact on him. In addition, the new Murakami version of Tawaraya Sotatsu’s *The Wind and Thunder Gods* (National Treasure, 17th century), a representative work of the Rimpa school, will surprise viewers with its humor! (Illustrations 2, 3, and 4 *Reference images)
- 3 **The origin of Heian-kyo—Murakami’s depiction of divine beasts of antiquity and the *Rokkaku Rasendo* bell tower**
Surrounded by mountains, rivers, and ponds and protected by the Four Deities (Blue Dragon, White Tiger, Vermillion Bird, and Black Tortoise) that symbolize the four cardinal directions, Heian-kyo—a former name given to Kyoto—was considered an ideal place. In this exhibition, a new work by Murakami with these divine beasts as its motif will be shown on four walls surrounding Murakami’s version of Heian-kyo. The *Rokkaku Rasendo* (tentative English title) bell tower rises in the center of the space to ward off the disturbing presence of wandering *mononoke*, or evil spirits. (Illustrations 5 and 6)
- 4 **The comings and goings of Mr. DOB and the evolution and amplification of Murakami’s characters**
Murakami’s signature character Mr. DOB first appeared in 1994. With manga and video game characters as its motif, Mr. DOB is an ever-changing figure that has plugged into various contexts. (Illustration 7) Morphing into the monster Tan Tan Bo, then into an extreme form of Murakami self-portrait, Gero Tan, and then back again into Mr. DOB—while tracing the comings and goings

of Mr. DOB, a character that has embodied Murakami's concept of "Superflat," this exhibition will also showcase new characters depicted on shaped canvases, as well as various new works that reference popular culture, such as Murakami's animated films and trading cards. Are they the *mononoke* of our time!?

5 The essence of Kyoto that attracts people from all over the world

Kyoto is a serene city with a history of more than 1,000 years that is colored with traditional events throughout the changing seasons. The exhibition features numerous works shown for the first time that take inspiration from Kyoto's traditional culture, such as the Gion Festival, Gozan Okuribi bonfires, tea ceremony, and ikebana flower arrangement, as well as literary works themed around Kyoto. Takashi Murakami will guide visitors to this ancient capital!

© NEWS

Presenting of the original artwork for the *iwai-maku*, a stage curtain that caused a sensation at the name succession production of Ichikawa Danjuro XIII, Hakuen!

The *iwai-maku*, a special celebration curtain that adorned the stage to announce Ichikawa Ebizo's name succession to Ichikawa Danjuro XIII, Hakuen, garnered much attention at the name succession production held in 2022 at Kabukiza Theatre in Tokyo. The *iwai-maku* was realized at the request of film director Miike Takashi, who asked Murakami, while shooting a documentary film about Ichikawa Danjuro XIII, to "create a portrait of a contemporary Kabuki actor by a contemporary painter." It is scheduled to be unveiled in Kyoto at the Minamiza Theatre in Kyoto from December 1 to 24 this year.

This exhibition will feature the original painting for the said *iwai-maku* titled *2020 The Name Succession of Ichikawa Danjūrō XIII, Hakuen, Kabuki Jūhachiban*, a lively and vivid depiction of "The Eighteen Kabuki Masterpieces." (Illustration 8)



[Illustration 1]

Takashi Murakami, *Dragon in Clouds - Red Mutation*:

The version I painted myself in annoyance after Professor Nobuo Tsuji told me, "Why don't you paint something yourself for once?",

2010, Acrylic on canvas, 363 x 1800cm, Collection of the Artist

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[Illustration 2]

Takashi Murakami, *Summer Flower Field under the Golden Sky*,

2023, Design data, 300 x 1000 cm (Reference image)

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Left) [Illustration 3]

Takashi Murakami, *Ogata Kōrin's Flowers*, 2023, Design data, Φ120 cm (Reference image)

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Right) [Illustration 4]

Takashi Murakami, *Kōrin's Flowers and Abstract Imagery*, 2023, Design data, Φ150 cm (Reference image)

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Left) [Illustration 5]

Takashi Murakami, *Dragon Heads – Gold*,

2015, Gold leaf on carbon fiber and glass fiber, 130.8 x 84 x 84.2 cm,

Collection of the Artist, Courtesy of Galerie Perrotin

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Right) [Illustration 6]

Takashi Murakami, *Invoking the Vitality of a Universe Beyond Imagination*,

2018, Platinum leaf on carbon fiber, 200 x 82 x 94 cm, Collection of the Artist

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[Illustration 7]
 Takashi Murakami, *DOB in the Strange Forest, Under the Radiation Falls*, 1999, Installation view, FRP, resin, fiberglass, acrylic and iron, 152.4 x 304.8 x 304.8 cm, Collection of the Artist
 Photo: Alexey Narodizkiy
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[Illustration 8]
 Takashi Murakami, 2020 *The Name Succession of Ichikawa Danjūrō XIII, Hakuen, Kabuki Jūhachiban*, 2020, Acrylic on canvas mounted on aluminum frame, 102.8 x 480 x 5.8 cm, Collection of the Artist
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© **Takashi Murakami Profile**

Born in Tokyo in 1962, Takashi Murakami completed his doctorate at Tokyo University of the Arts in 1993. His doctoral dissertation was titled “The Meaning of the Nonsense of the Meaning.” In 2000, he proposed the concept of “Superflat” as a form of contemporary culture that makes reference to the state of Japanese society by linking traditional Japanese art with the flatness of anime and manga. In 2001, he founded Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. and serves as its representative. In 2005, his exhibition *Little Boy* (Japan Society, New York) was awarded the Best Thematic Museum Show by the American branch of the International Association of Art Critics. In 2015, he received the 66th Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Award for Fine Arts from the Agency for Cultural Affairs. Recent solo exhibitions include *Stepping on the Tail of a Rainbow* (The Broad, LA, 2022), *MurakamiZombie* (Busan Museum of Art, Busan, 2023), *Understanding the New Cognitive Domain* (Gagosian, Le Bourget, 2023), and *Takashi Murakami: Unfamiliar People – Swelling of Monsterized Human Ego* (Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, 2023).



Photo: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
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© **Related Programs**

Throughout the seven-month period of the exhibition, which extends from around *Setsubun* (traditional the end of winter) in early February to the coming of spring and into summer, various special programs related to traditional seasonal events and festivals in Japan and Kyoto are planned, in addition to related programs such as lectures and gallery talks. Further details will be announced on the exhibition website as soon as they are confirmed.

© **Catalog**

Heibonsha will publish a catalog of this exhibition that condenses its appeal into a single book. In addition to the exhibition venue, it will also be available at general bookstores. The catalog is scheduled to be published around the end of March 2024 to allow inclusion of photographs of the exhibition. Details will be announced on the exhibition website and other media as soon as they are finalized.

Work Descriptions: Takashi Murakami

Essays: Miki Akiko (curator), Hashimoto Mari (writer, editor, manager of the Enoura Observatory new museum project), Takahashi Shinya (Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art)

Language: Japanese, English

Price: TBD

Published by: Heibonsha Ltd.

Release date: End of March 2024 (tentative)

© **Exhibition Original Merchandise**

A special store for the “Takashi Murakami Mononoke Kyoto” exhibition will appear in the exhibition space. The shop will offer a variety of original exhibition merchandise featuring designs of Takashi Murakami’s works from the show, in addition to a wide range of limited-edition items available only at the venue.

For inquiries, please contact: “Takashi Murakami Mononoke Kyoto” Publicity Office (Kyodo PR, Attn: Mitsui)

E-mail: takashimurakami-kyoto-pr@kyodo-pr.co.jp TEL: 03-6264-2382

*For more information about the unveiling of the *iwai-maku* at Minamiza Theater, please contact

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