

Tomokazu Matsuyama

Harmless Charm



Installation view, Tomokazu Matsuyama, *Harmless Charm*, 2022. Courtesy of Sotheby's Hong Kong.

June 14 - June 21, 2022

Opening Reception June 14, 2022

Following the success of *The Best Part About Us*, Tomokazu Matsuyama's critically acclaimed, Chicago debut exhibition at Kavi Gupta, Matsuyama's solo exhibition *Harmless Charm* at Sotheby's Hong Kong represents the artist's inaugural foray into the medium of NFTs.

Matsu is renowned for his ability to create harmony out of contradiction. His intercultural visual language seamlessly amalgamates seemingly disparate references such as figures borrowed from fashion magazines; clothing reminiscent of historic Japanese garments; backgrounds evocative of Shogun-era screens and panels; curved canvases that simultaneously recollect mid-century Modernist Minimalism and the far more ancient history of shaped tea platters; and elements such as junkyard tires, plastic CVS bags, and candy bars that embody mass produced commodity culture and situate Matsu's works starkly in the present.

Harmless Charm extends Matsuyama's interest in the unity of opposites by exhibiting the artist's NFTs directly alongside his paintings.

All of the works share the same formal visual

vocabulary and intercultural references. The NFTs incorporate movement and sound, whereas the paintings epitomize stillness and quietude. Matsuyama, however, asks us to contemplate what stillness and quietude mean in a living world. Can we locate ourselves, or perhaps even achieve transcendence, as easily through contemplation of a virtual dreamscape as a painted surface? Are there definitive differences between the ways our psyche experiences the mediums of the past and the mediums of the future?

Harmless Charm creates a space in which viewers can contemplate these questions for themselves and make their own determination about the potential each medium has to serve our ever more interconnected contemporary culture.

By activating his images within a digital space and exhibiting NFTs alongside paintings Matsuyama stakes out his own position in the conversation, announcing unabashedly that he has a hopeful perspective on the meaning, value, and conceptual potential of crypto art. He invites people to experience the totality of his vision while also elucidating the harmonious future these seemingly contradictory mediums share.