

Yuko Shiraishi: *Magnetic Day*

Opening: 01. September 2016, from 7:00 pm

Runs until: October 2016

Galerie Hans Mayer is pleased to present a new series of works 'Magnetic Day' by the Japanese artist Yuko Shiraishi. With this new body of work the gallery celebrates its second collaboration with the London based artist. Shiraishi is known for making abstract paintings with a remarkable but balanced use of colour. Whereas most of Shiraishi's earlier paintings incorporate lines and geometrical shapes, some of her more recent works have a much freer quality, and are especially gestural. The exhibition will show six of her most recent oil paintings and two larger room installations. The first installation, 'Confession Show, Peep Box x Peep Show, Confession Box', (2010 -2011) is a reproduction of a confession box, allowing two people from each side to kneel down and look into an opening, as if they are confessing to their priest, or looking at a peep show. The second installation, 'Magnetic Wave', (2016) which is being shown for the first time, is a poetic visualization of electro-magnetism. The work will be presented in front of the gallery's main wall, covering the full length of it with colourful painted stainless steel tube ribbons that will be hanging from the ceiling, which the viewer can walk through.

Shiraishi is also known for working on several architectural projects and curating exhibitions and biennales. In the last few years she has worked together with musicians, and in 2011 made a square vinyl record entitled 'Specimen'. She has also created room installations, such as 'Space Elevator Tea House' (2009) and 'Netherworld' (2013).

Yuko Shiraishi was born in Tokyo in 1956. She completed her BA at the Chelsea School of Art in 1981 and continued with her MA at the same school in 1982. She lives and works in London. Shiraishi's work has been exhibited in numerous galleries and museums, including one-person exhibitions at Tate Gallery St Ives, and Museum Wiesbaden. Her work is collected by prestigious institutions and private collections such as the Arts Council of Great Britain, the British Council, London; the British Museum, London; Daimler Benz, Stuttgart, Germany; Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna, Austria; Ludwig Muzeum, Budapest, Hungary; Max Bill – George Vantongerloo Foundation, Zumikon, Switzerland; McCrory Corporation, New York, USA; The National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan; Ohara Museum, Kurashiki, Japan; Seibu Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan; Weishaupt Forum, Ulm, Germany; Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen, Germany; Kunsthalle Würth, Germany.

Magnetic Day

The human body and the senses are a very important theme for me. We are surrounded by all kinds of space, each exciting in its different way – space defined by the size of the human body, space determined by the senses and then space as it stretches outwards into the universe.

My installations 'Space Elevator Tea House' (2009), 'Netherworld' (2013), and 'Confession Show, Peep Box x Peep Show, Confession Box' (2010-2011) were poetic explorations of architectural spaces, determined by and confining the human body – tea rooms, tombs and confession boxes.

An artist whose work reflected an interest in the human body and its physical size was the American minimalist painter Agnes Martin. At first her canvases measured 72 by 72 inches, but later she reduced them to 60 by 60 inches, explaining that this was because her body had shrunk. This strikes me as very interesting.

'Confession Show, Peep Box x Peep Show, Confession Box' is an exploration of what is not only an architectural structure determined by the size of the human body, but also a psychological space charged with secrecy, guilt, sin and inhibition. I am fascinated by the way the act of confessing in a confined space is similar to the voyeurism of a sex show. The confession box of my work functions as a window through which to peep into the world within, the intention being to draw attention to human fascination with peeping into dark and hidden secret worlds.

In 'Netherworld', which was inspired by the Egyptian Book of the Dead, I looked at the relationship between life and death, and how the death of one star leads to the birth of another, which is to say how the energy of life and that of death co-exist in a world of nothingness

In my new work, shown for the first time in this exhibition, I look at electricity, magnetism and electro-magnetic waves. 'Magnetic Wave' (2016) is a poetic visualisation of electro-magnetism, which is both invisible and intangible. In the past my interest in electricity, magnetism and electro-magnetic waves has sometimes been reflected in my paintings, particularly those of my 'Signal' series in which I explore cells, sounds, marks, points, dots and stars. 'I See You See Me' is another abstract work that reflects my interest in how, like electro-magnetism, there is an energy that attracts people to each other, or how there are spaces that make one feel uneasy and others that make one feel good. I am fascinated by the inexplicable forces, both simple and complex, that cause the push and pull of space-time, and the instinctive interactions between people.

Yuko Shiraishi, July 2016