KOTARO NUKAGA is pleased to announce the group exhibition *Gaze and Distance*, which will primarily feature paintings on the theme of the nude, and offer an overview of representations of the body from the early 20th century to the present day.

The show will present paintings, watercolors, and drawings by nine artists: Paul Cézanne, Pablo Picasso, Tsuguharu Foujita, Egon Schiele, Tom Wesselmann, Marlene Dumas, Makoto Saito, Keith Haring, and Yukimasa Ida. During the 20th century, art was freed from the constraints of academicism and diverse depictions of the body were explored. To trace the evolution of how the body, the most familiar of subjects for all of us, including artists, viewers, and models, is to trace the evolution of art as a whole and the discourse surrounding it from the 20th century to the present. The artists selected for this exhibition vary in terms of generation, place of origin, and gender, but the nude serves as a common theme that enables us to gauge the artists’ distance from the bodies being represented.

Representations of the nude have been produced by all sorts of artists in diverse media, and widely distributed and consumed since the advent of modernist art in the mid-19th century, in which lie the roots of the contemporary art surrounding us today. Throughout the 20th century, understanding of the nude as a mode of body representation underwent continual fluctuations and renewals, along with various new art movements and the changing social roles and history of art from the birth of postmodernism to today. In artists’ rendering of nude figures, the relationship between painter and painted, viewer and viewed, frequently illuminates a structure of power relationships based on gender inequality, with the fundamental premise of woman’s role as muse, i.e. as inspiration and material for men’s creation of cultural products (including innovative depictions of female subjects) that trumpet their creators’ self-perceived greatness. By dismantling this mechanism, representations of the body with an unconscious male bias shifted to representations that intentionally manipulate the gaze, reveal the fictionality of the idealized body, and blur and disrupt gender and sexual boundaries.

Looking back over the history of Western art, which derived ideals of physical beauty from the ancient Greeks and Romans, representations of the body became increasingly normative, idealized, and highly stylized under the hegemony of academism from the Renaissance into the 19th century. It was the modernist painters emerging in the 19th century that allowed blood to pass through human skin, previously rendered like smooth porcelain devoid of warmth. In particular, Cézanne treated the body as a pictorial element of the composition, as in his extensive series of bathers, and opened up whole new worlds of possibilities for depicting the body. Afterward, 20th-century avant-garde painters’ representations of the body, especially the female body, became a stage for the development of stylistic innovations, a stage on which various art movements such as Fauvism, Cubism, Futurism, Dada, and Surrealism unfolded.
After World War II, with New York as the new center of the art world, a range of new styles and movements emerged, including Pop Art, which turned the body into a signifier endlessly replicated, mass-produced, and consumed as part of popular culture. Wessellmann’s nudes, while based on earlier representations of the body, more directly reveal the primal male sexual desire underlying these representations with figures that lack eyes (and thus lack a gaze of their own) and have vividly emphasized nipples. During these years, the amplification of body representations from a heterosexual male viewpoint had the effect of marginalizing the activities of female artists, and of confining the represented body to a system of conventions defined by the male gaze. Meanwhile, the unadorned women’s bodies depicted by female artist Dumas freed women from these confines. This exhibition features male nudes by Dumas with contorted forms reminiscent of Saint Sebastian, the nude male figure most frequently rendered during the Renaissance period, painted so that the watercolor paint bleeds, concisely conveying a powerful but fragile body.

In contrast to Dumas’s male figures, those of Egon Schiele are stripped down to skin and bone, their limbs elongated like tree branches. Far from beautified representations, they deconstruct the idealized body through pain (e.g., Saint Sebastian shown pierced with arrows), stripping away of flesh, or exposing weakness, thereby evoking a sense of protective pity toward one’s own body.

Makoto Saito, who became famous as a graphic designer, employs agglomerations of small dots, resembling halftone dots derived from printing technology, producing paintings in which the details construct the whole and the whole is reduced to details once more. Saito’s paintings exhibited here, with an innovative style that employs picture resolution rather than pictorial deconstruction, depicts only the lower half and genital area of a woman’s body. The images, created by computer processing of photos taken during his own sexual activity, render the distance from the body ambiguous. Meanwhile, the exciting emerging painter Ida Yukimasa rapidly executes portraits with thick impasto paint, ranging from historical and art-historical figures to everyday people, choosing as his subjects the people he has “encountered” in the course of life. In this exhibition, with the theme of the nude which Ida has not addressed before, we can expect to get an intriguing glimpse of the artist exploring new territory.

This show will also feature five nudes from Tsuguharu Foujita: Nude, an exhibition of Foujita’s work previously held at NUKAGA GALLERY. Did Foujita’s nudes, rendered with delicate ink contours against his signature “milky-white backgrounds,” reveal new possibilities for representation of the body? Here we hope to re-examine Foujita’s depictions of the body in a new context by exhibiting them along with those of various others, from Cézanne to contemporary artists.

Exhibition Outline
Title: Gaze and Distance
Artists: Paul Cézanne, Pablo Picasso, Tsuguharu Foujita, Egon Schiele, Tom Wessellmann, Makoto Saito, Marlene Dumas, Keith Haring, Yukimasa Ida

Date: October 19 Sat – December 7 Sat, 2019
Open Hours: 11:00~18:00 (Tue, Wed, Thu + Sat)  11:00~20:00 (Fri)※Closed on Sun, Mon and Public Holidays
Opening Reception: October 19 Sat, 2019  17:00~

Venue
KOTARO NUKAGA  TERRADA Art Complex 3F, 1-33-10 Higashi-Shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, 140-0002. Japan

Access: 8 - minutes walk from Tokyo Waterfront Area Rapid Transit Rinkai Line “Tennōz Isle Station” B Exit
10 - minutes walk from Tokyo Monorail Haneda Airport Line “Tennōz Isle Station” South Exit
8 - minutes walk from Keikyu Line “Shinbanba Station” North Exit
3 - minutes walk from Toei bus “Tennōzu bashi bus stop”
(Take the Toei bus “91 or 98” from “Shinagawa Station” Konan Exit)
**Featured Key Works**

**Paul Cézanne**  
*Group de Baigneurs*  
Pencil and watercolor on paper (front)  
Circa 1880  
12.0 x 19.0 cm

**Egon Schiele**  
*SEATED MALE NUDE WITH LOWERED HEAD*  
Black crayon, watercolor and gouache on paper  
1910  
44.0 x 29.8 cm

**Tsuguharu Foujita**  
*Femme nue couchée*  
Oil on canvas  
1924  
54.0 x 73.0 cm

**Makoto Saito**  
*Brix = 16*  
Oil on canvas w/ supported panel  
2010 - 2011  
146.0 x 220.0 cm

**Yukimasa Ida**  
*Her Majesty*  
Bronze  
2019  
21.0 x 22.0 x 39.0 cm

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**About KOTARO NUKAGA**

Established in the fall of 2018, KOTARO NUKAGA endeavors to introduce Japanese and international contemporary artists to new audiences. In doing so, KOTARO NUKAGA exhibits works by artists who not only historically contextualize their work, but also pose questions about contemporary society. In their unique ways, these artists therefore challenge the viewer in various ways to see the world around them in a different light. Situated in TERRADA Art Complex in Tennoz, an area of Tokyo that has fast become a central location for contemporary art, KOTARO NUKAGA is NUKAGA GALLERY’s fourth location.

Learn more at [https://www.kotaronukaga.com/en/](https://www.kotaronukaga.com/en/)

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