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Gagosian to Present a Major Takashi Murakami Exhibition in New York This Spring

Three-Part Presentation of Paintings and Sculptures Was Inspired by an Ancient Yuan Dynasty Vase and the Artist's Own NFT Initiatives

***An Arrow through History* Opens in New York on May 11, 2022**



Takashi Murakami, *CLONE X #1 Murakami Arhat*, 2022, acrylic on canvas mounted on aluminum frame, 59 1/8 × 59 1/8 inches (150 × 150 cm) © 2022 Takashi Murakami/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All rights reserved

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Japanese culture originally came from the Eurasian continent, and my concept has been to go beyond from there into the metaverse, shooting through the history of art with a single arrow.

—Takashi Murakami

NEW YORK, April 27, 2022—Gagosian is pleased to present *An Arrow through History*, an exhibition of new works by Takashi Murakami, opening on May 11, 2022. In three simultaneous presentations spanning two of Gagosian's New York galleries, at 976 and 980 Madison Avenue, Murakami bridges the physical and digital realms. *An Arrow through History* incorporates Gagosian's first use of virtual reality, featuring a digital rendering of the 976 and 980 Madison Avenue galleries. The immersive viewing experience, created by RTFKT and Oncyber, is accessible online via gagosian.com or through a VR headset and allows access to the entire exhibition from anywhere in the world. In addition, visitors on-site can activate numerous custom Snapchat Lenses to view augmented-reality animations in each gallery and on the building's exterior. This will be Murakami's first exhibition at Gagosian in New York since 2014 and represents his return to 980 Madison Avenue, where he had his inaugural exhibition with the gallery in 2007.

Murakami's presentation at 976 Madison Avenue consists of works based on the *Clone X* NFT initiative (2021), which he developed in collaboration with RTFKT Studios. *Clone X* is a series of NFT avatars conceived as three-dimensional figures bearing the artist's distinctive motifs. The works at Gagosian translate the digitally modeled NFTs into meticulously detailed, hand-painted portraits and full-scale figurative sculptures—physical manifestations of art created for the metaverse. As Murakami explains: "When I work on a creative production, I make no distinction between digital and analog. I'm always working in the context of contemporary art, and that context is all about whether I can be involved in events that manage to trigger a cognitive revolution."

The fifth floor of 980 Madison Avenue is devoted to paintings related to the *Murakami.Flowers* NFT project (2021–22), including pink-and-white works based on his initial designs for the series, along with others that translate selections from their final, multihued iterations into paintings. The artist's newest interpretation of his iconic flower motif, *Murakami.Flowers* combines his influential Superflat aesthetic with a style that evokes nostalgia for the pixelated graphics of 1980s video games, especially those played on the Nintendo Famicom console. This body of work was conceived in multiple permutations with a base of 108 flowers, corresponding with the number associated with the Buddhist principle of *bonnō*, or earthly temptations.

The sixth floor of 980 Madison Avenue is dedicated to new paintings inspired by the fish motif depicted on a Qinghua blue-and-white porcelain vase—a masterpiece from China's Yuan dynasty (c. 1279–1368)—from the Museum of Oriental Ceramics in Osaka, Japan, and by Murakami's childhood memories of riverside journeys with his father, during which he observed anglers fishing for carp. To make these works on circular canvases, he translated the single brushstrokes used to decorate ceramics into subtly colored, multilayered paintings of the fish, an auspicious symbol of abundance that also establishes a link to the past.

An Arrow through History will open in New York just ahead of a special exhibition dedicated to Murakami at the Broad in Los Angeles. Featuring all of the museum's Murakami works and new immersive environments, *Takashi Murakami: Stepping on the Tail of a Rainbow* will be on view from May 21 through September 25, 2022.

Gagosian is also pleased to announce that the gallery now accepts cryptocurrency. Through a partnership with Coinbase, payments will be accepted in Bitcoin (BTC), Ether (ETH), and USD Coin (USDC).

Takashi Murakami was born in Tokyo, where he lives and works. Collections include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Broad, Los Angeles; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan. Exhibitions include *Murakami Versailles*, Château de Versailles, France (2010); *Murakami: The 500 Arhats*, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2015); *Murakami by Murakami*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2017); *The Deep End of the Universe*, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY (2017); *Under the Radiation Falls*, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2017); *The Octopus Eats Its Own Leg*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2017, traveled to Vancouver Art Gallery, Canada, and Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, TX, in 2018); and *Murakami vs. Murakami*, Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong (2019).

#TakashiMurakami

TAKASHI MURAKAMI

An Arrow through History

Opening reception: Wednesday, May 11, 4–8pm

May 11–June 25, 2022

976 and 980 Madison Avenue, New York

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