

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

AnOther

Culture

In Pictures | *Takashi Murakami*

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In Pictures is a still and moving image gallery for significant works, events and places



Takashi Murakami installation views *All Artworks* © Takashi Murakami/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved
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Prolific contemporary Japanese artist **Takashi Murakami** is renowned for his 'Superflat' works – the style he is credited with inventing – and his merriment of high and low art. The only visual artist to make the Time magazine's 2008 100 Most Influential People list, he has stormed the art world with his bright, candy coloured, cartoon paintings and sculptures. Often featuring smiling flowers and vibrant mushrooms, Murakami's work defies all convention and tradition and has received an unprecedented amount of success (and controversy).

This month sees the man who brought us as diversifying art objects as \$5000 limited-edition Louis Vuitton handbags and infamous magma sculptures *Hiropon* (1997) and *My Lonesome Cowboy* (1998), present his most recent sculptures and paintings at **Gagosian Gallery, Britannia Street**. Revisiting his frequently explored themes of nudity and 'pornotopia' – an idealised, eroticised and fantastical world parallel to contemporary urban life – Murakami's otaku-inspired graphic depictions of male and female figures and anatomy appear exaggerated and engorged. Sexually-clad women appear unbalanced teetering on high heels with oversized breasts, and sexual genitalia are enlarged and metallised set against delirious backgrounds of image and pattern. With his latest paintings, the nude figure is also rendered in manga style, but here Murakami pays homage to painter Kuroda Seiki's famous triptych *Wisdom, Impression, Sentiment* (c.1990), recreating his own series and employing traditional nihonga techniques.



Whilst it has been a while since the artist has shown in the UK, this exhibition will be sure to reawaken the senses and reaffirm that Murakami is back in town. Not for the faint of heart, Takashi Murakami at Gagosian Gallery shows Murakami at his garish, erotic and provocative best. Is he making a statement about the top-heaviness of the art market? Our enduring obsession with sexuality? Or is this just an artistic exploration into human form? You decide.

Takashi Murakami runs at Gagosian Gallery, Britannia Street until August 5, 2011.

Text by Lucia Davies

Lucia Davies is the AnOther Editorial Assistant and a regular contributor to Dazed Digital. She has also contributed to titles that include Dazed & Confused and Twin.