

For immediate release:



Installation view: *Galley in the Age of Great Knowledge* (detail) at the National Museum of Art, Osaka, 2012.

Nobuaki Takekawa: "We Are Pirates of Uncharted History"

18 January - 10 March 2013

Opening Reception with the artist: 18 January 19:00 to 21:00

Artist talk: 19 January 16:00 to 18:00

In conversation with the artist and art critic Darryl Wee,
with translation into English

RSVP for the artist talk with sg@otafinearts.com

To inaugurate the new year, Ota Fine Arts is delighted to showcase new works by Nobuaki Takekawa for the first time in Singapore.

Born and raised in Japan, Nobuaki Takekawa was one of tens of thousands of Japanese who encountered the massive earthquake and subsequent nuclear accident of 2011. These incidents shattered the illusions of a promising future endowed by new scientific and technological developments. The events spurred Takekawa on to question the rapid

progress of a “Western-originated” world, and to reconsider the history of mankind and the origins of technology.

By focussing on China, the Middle East and other Asian regions, Takekawa allegorises discrete histories, geographies, ecologies and technologies to present unlikely alternatives to Western-centric narratives. The results are reconstituted maps, charts, and objects that quite poetically reverse the waves of past imperial enterprises, which through Takekawa’s own curiosity are inflected by the local and even the personal.

Over the past decade, the artist has also been consistently invested in suggesting notions of time and duration to his viewer in rather unexpected ways. He is highly attentive to idiosyncratic details and often chronicles patterns in nature—from a cicada’s eclosion and life cycle, to the harvesting of a sea cucumber. He reconstructs these into colourful family trees drawn with a humorous aesthetic, or into glass models that betray a finer intuition. For him, these patterns are more than decorative features; they accumulate and unfold as exquisite records of personal, natural, and cultural histories.

Thus, one can readily trace Takekawa’s selection of the individual object towards a broader comprehension of the world. In his latest work, he has become very preoccupied with sea creatures, waves, boats, maritime mythology and mapping. The ocean shapes his vision of the globe, as it both dissects and connects time and space.

For this exhibition titled “We Are Pirates of Uncharted History”, Ota Fine Arts will feature Takekawa’s incisions of world maps that reveal bold figurative paintings beneath their cut-out areas, and a signature piece called *Island of Nuclides*, a sprawling map of a fictitious island-mass assembled from a Periodic Table’s unstable chemical elements. Another remarkable work is an enigmatic exposed skeleton of a drifting model galley titled *Galley in the Age of Great Knowledge*. In *Treasure—Chocopie*, Takekawa fills a pirate’s treasure chest with chocolate biscuits, an improbable but witty combination that relates to peripheral financial technologies during the recent North Korean monetary crisis. And finally, a unique revolving lantern that projects shadow pictures is a modest but strongly conceptual key piece, as it utilises heat as power to revolve and indicates the original form of the modern nuclear plant.

With this exhibition, Takekawa will set a stage for all of us to reconsider the present state of our society where history no longer proceeds in a straightforward linear path, and nothing is predictable. He raises the questions on how the technology of today will be charted into history, and how the inventions of tomorrow will give rise to a closer, global society.

Join us for an exclusive talk in the presence of the artist, moderated by art critic and writer Darryl Wee on 19 January, 16:00 to 18:00.

About the Artist

Born in Tokyo, Japan in 1977, Nobuaki Takekawa received his BA in oil painting at the Tokyo University of the Arts in 2002. He has since exhibited at Collection Lambert, Avignon (1999), Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art (2007), and has held seven solo shows at Ota Fine Arts in Tokyo. His recent installation at "Real Japanesque—The Unique World of Japanese Contemporary Art" at the National Museum of Art, Osaka, has drawn critical acclaim. Takekawa continues to divulge many of his personal experiences in his work, while interweaving them with current events and cultural history.

About Ota Fine Arts

Ota Fine Arts is a contemporary art gallery located in Singapore's new art-complex Gillman Barracks, an initiative jointly developed by the Economic Development Board and the National Arts Council. An extension of its already established presence in Tokyo since 1994, Ota Fine Arts will continue an exciting roster of emerging artists from the "Asian cultural belt": the Middle East to South, Southeast Asia and East Asia.

Gallery opening hours:

Tuesday-Saturday 12:00-19:00

Sunday 12:00-18:00

Closed on Mondays and Public Holidays

Gallery contact:

Ota Fine Arts

47 Malan Road

#01-23 Gillman Barracks

Singapore 109444

+65 6694 3071 (tel)

+65 6694 3072 (fax)

www.otafinearts.com

For more information, or to schedule
an appointment, contact:

sg@otafinearts.com

