

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cosmic Sound: Master Paintings by Ken Matsubara

March 14 - April 4, 2024 | Opening Reception with the Artist: March 14, 6-8 PM



Ken Matsubara, "Seiryū" Long Azure Dragon 青龍 (2023), H38 5/8 x W14 1/8 x D1 5/8 in

New York, NY – Ippodo Gallery proudly announces **Cosmic Sound: Master Paintings by Ken Matsubara**, a culmination of the artist's concepts featuring 20 of the beloved painter's unique artworks from **March 14 to April 4, 2024 coinciding with Asia Week 2024**. Matsubara showcases series spanning his long and illustrious career, including three works depicting the auspicious and fearsome dragon zodiac, the spectacular 12-panel *Kūkai's View*, and versions of *Scenery*, and the *Moon Sound*. Please join Ippodo Gallery for an opening reception with the artist on March 14, 2024.



Ken Matsubara (b. 1948) came to the medium of painting as a young man living amongst monks at a Buddhist temple in north-central Japan. Now residing in Nasu, Tochigi Prefecture, a natural landscape of rivers and waterfalls, Matsubara sojourned across the Japanese archipelago, finding inspiration through researching local imaginations of the dragon—sometimes a sky god or spirit of the water. The transcendental themes of his youth continue to permeate his works. One universal symbol is the circle, symbolizing the resonant sound of a ringing prayer bowl. The repetitive shape muddies the separation between sun or moon, sky or sea, or foreground from background: all is one and one is all.

Ken Matsubara, "Yō" Yang 陽 (Six-Panel Byōbu Screen) (2023), H59.84 x W129.13 in

Pigments derived straight from the earth comprise Matsubara's iconic technique. Many of his works are primed with an oxidized iron dye called *bengara* on Echigo *washi* paper, a localized method of papermaking native to the region of Matsubara's hometown in Toyama prefecture. Local stories fuel Matsubara's inspiration, including his *Sun & Moon* series that reimagines the tale of a cave-dwelling aesthetic monk gazing up at the celestial bodies.

Matsubara's paintings and works on traditional Japanese mediums such as folding screens (*byōbu*) are in esteemed collections including the Minneapolis Institute of Art, where Matsubara's *Chaos* (1983) is on view alongside the antique *Taima Mandala* through mid-April 2024. Matsubara's unique evolution on traditional Japanese painting, the monk Kūkai's cave view of the moon, is also in the possession of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and was highlighted in the museum's most recent publication, "Art of Japan" (2023).

The artist has held group shows at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum, Ueno Royal Museum, the Barcelona Museum of Contemporary Art, and many more esteemed institutions. In acknowledgement of his talents, Matsubara has received many awards, including the Dai-ichi Bijyutsu Award, the Kanazawa Prefectural Assembly Chairman's Award, the Special Award at the INF International Art Exhibition, among others.



Ken Matsubara, "*Kokujitsu Gyōsei*" Kukai's View; Sun and Venus 旭日昴星 (2017), H71 x 442 in

About the Gallery

Ippodo Gallery fosters shared craft- and fine art-oriented experiences. The gallery showcases work by living Japanese artists in keeping with our mission to honor traditions and present a gratitude for nature. Established in 1996 by Keiko Aono, Ippodo Gallery has represented more than 200 artists and held thousands of exhibitions in both Tokyo and New York over three decades. Shoko Aono began Ippodo Gallery New York in 2008, where she continues to expose global audiences to the finest artworks made in Japan today.

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