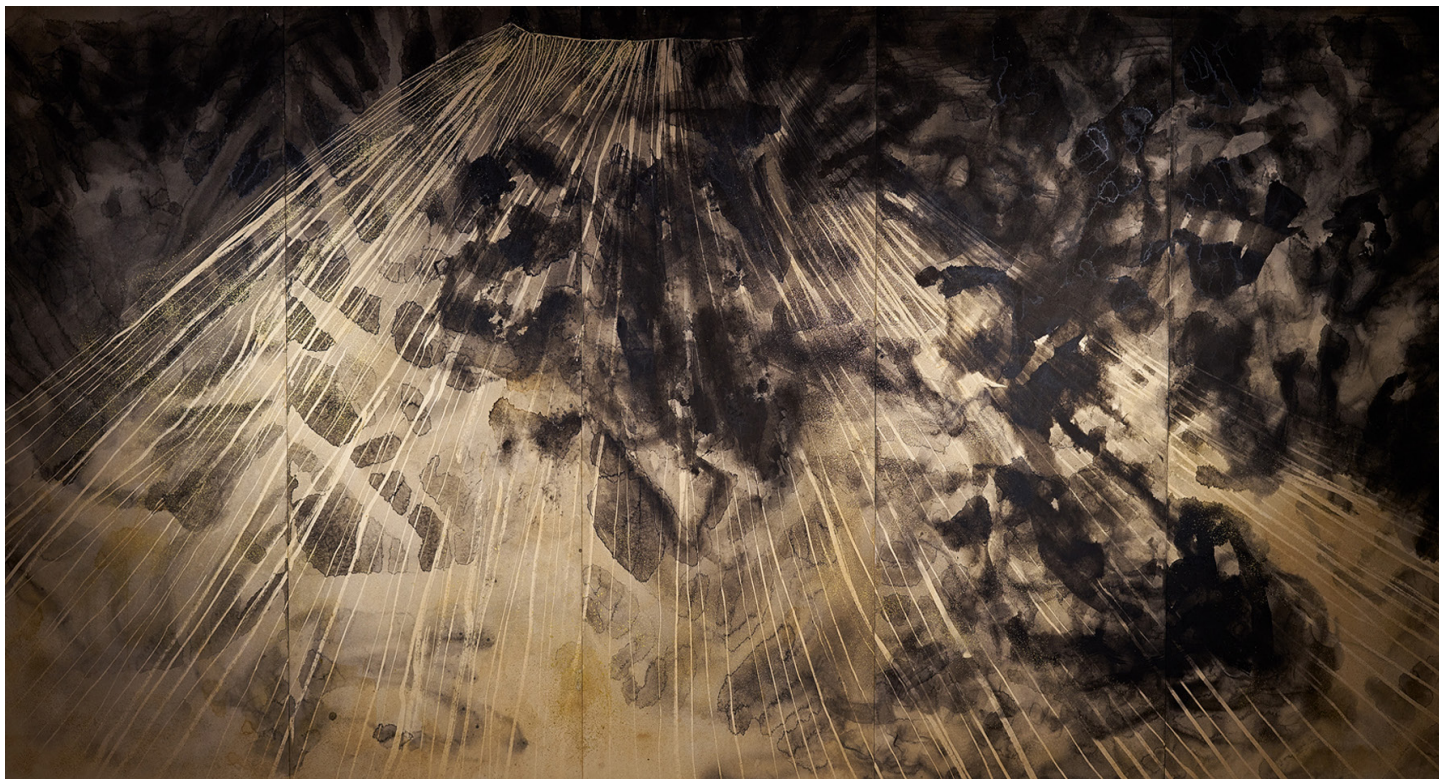


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## *Ikuro Yagi: Grand Nature*

October 10 - November 22, 2024 | Opening Reception featuring the Artist: October 10, 6–8PM.



*Mt. Fuji*, 2004, Washi paper, panel board, adhesive paste, Sumi ink, gold leaf, H89.375 x W171.25 in, H227 x W435 cm (A28182). Photo courtesy of Douglas Dubler 3.

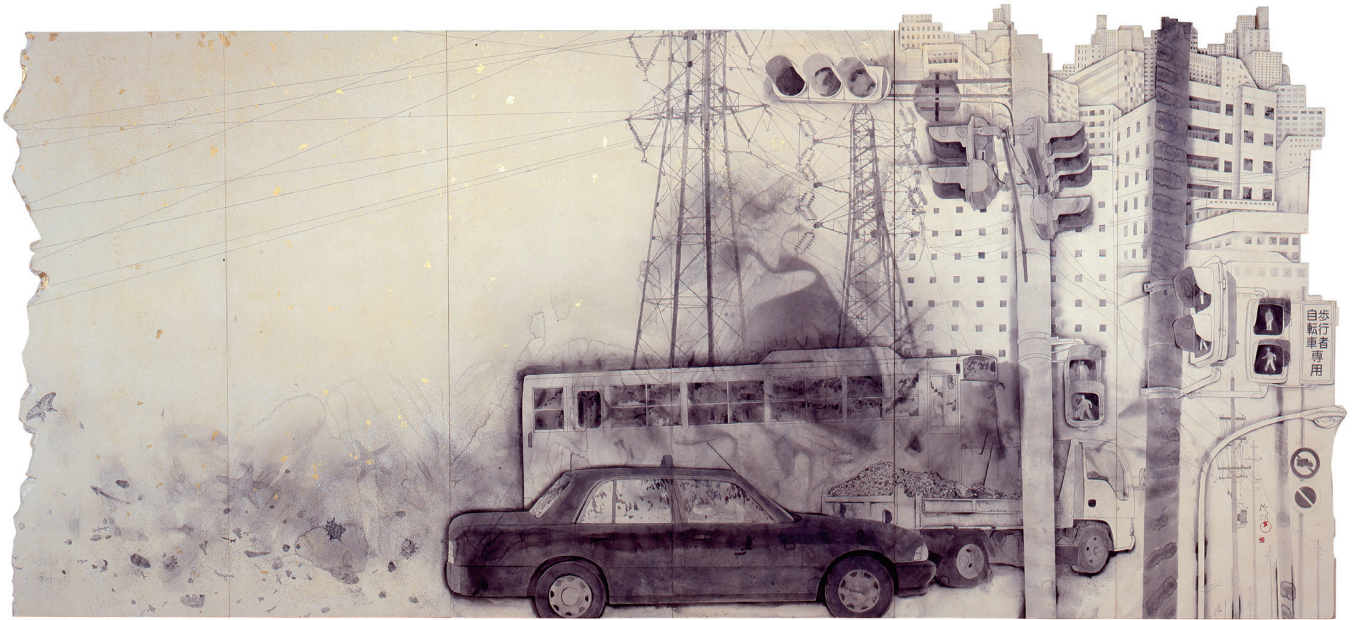
New York, NY — Ippodo Gallery presents the premiere exhibition for Japanese painter **Ikuro Yagi: Grand Nature** in the United States from October 10 through November 22, 2024. Spanning works from 1984 to 2024, Yagi debuts overseas some of the greatest masterpieces created in his long career. More than 10 painted and collaged works on Japanese washi paper, wood panels, and canvas speak to a universal language of nature and city life in Japan through the visual medium of sumi ink and nihonga. The permeating theme of Yagi's paintings is the power of nature on the human soul; a reminder of coexistence between people and the earth.

“Sumi ink is not simply carbon; infusion into the washi paper grants us a sense of holding a piece of nature. Perhaps it is the same sort of sensation as strolling amidst the trees.” Ikuro Yagi (b. 1955) maintains his innovative nihonga painting practice from his home in Shizuoka Prefecture where his roots have long been set. Mount Fuji resides in Shizuoka, and Yagi sees no barrier between man-made spaces and the grand presence of the mountain which he depicts so prominently. His education brought him to Paris following study under nihonga master Matazo Kayama at Tama Art University and western-style painter Koji Kinutani. The French influence invigorated his approach to nihonga styles, the medium through which he began to depict all sorts of material culture. His vivid paintings of sea creatures, flowers in bloom, and all other sorts of wilderness draw on decorative traditions that defined nihonga painting in the era of ornate interiors during the Edo period (1603-1868).



Beyond the work he has done on behalf of Japan's Agency of Cultural Affairs, Yagi has also contributed to temples and shrines throughout Japan. Among these contributions is the world-famous Fushimi Inari shrine outside Kyoto, known for the innumerable red torii gates. For generations, nihonga paintings lined temples halls or adorned castle sliding doors; Yagi incorporates these elements as found objects, such as discarded wood from shrines and towns.

Yagi's 'La Ville' (2010) meditates on daily life and how proximity to nature functions during urbanization and through the course of time. Transition is at the heart of Yagi's themes and mediums; powerful brush strokes, layered collages, and his mode of painting on irregular panels and found objects reformulate centuries of *sumi* ink painting to match modern sensibilities and reality. Yagi's techniques, bearing semblances of Kanō and Hasegawa influences such as Tōhaku's *Pine Trees Screens*, uniquely draw together impressionist and abstract modes of depiction while emphasizing the organic appearance and texture of mineral pigments and sumi, washi paper, and wood.



*La Ville*, 2010, Washi paper, panel board, adhesive paste, Sumi ink, gold leaf, H93.25 x W202.75 in, H237 x W515 cm (A28185). Photo courtesy of the Artist.

Ikuro Yagi is represented in the collections of museum institutions and spiritual sites across Japan, including the Hamamatsu Municipal Museum of Art, Niigata Bandaijima Museum of Art, Hirano Museum of Art, Shimoda-shi Museum, Hiroshima Prefectural University Art Museum, Nerima Art Museum, Shizuoka Prefecture Museum, Taima-ji, and Zōjyo-ji. His works have exhibited in Japan and Germany, and his paintings have garnered awards including the Takashima Award for Art from the Takashimaya Cultural Fund.

### About the Gallery

**Ippodo Gallery** is a cultural bridge to Japan's living master artists. Founded in Tokyo (1996-), the New York gallery (2008-) presents fine handcrafted and rare works created using traditional materials and methods. Each piece selected embodies Japanese aesthetic sensitivity that is born of a spiritual bond with nature. Ippodo's exhibition program features unique objects — fine ceramics, lacquerware, metal crafts, sculpture, paintings, and works on paper — that celebrate human invention, the natural world, and sublime beauty.

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