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“Asian Artists to Watch 2024: Hiroka Yamashita”

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Home > Lifestyle > Asian Artists to Watch 2024: Hiroka Yamashita

Asian Artists to Watch 2024: Hiroka Yamashita

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Each year, we identify the Asian artists on the rise, shining a light on the exciting and provocative works enriching the region’s artistic and cultural landscape. The Japanese artist Hiroka Yamashita shares her story.

In an artistic statement, Japanese artist Hiroka Yamashita once described the world as something that could “never be fully understood in a single person’s lifetime”. Born in Hyogo and now based in Okayama, Yamashita eschews an urban life, preferring to lead a satoyama lifestyle surrounded by nature.



Artist to Watch 2024: Hiroka Yamashita

In her works she explores an almost spiritual dimension of the natural world – the coldness of stone, the softness of soil, the movement of the moon and the clouds – and paints them in dreamy tones and surrealistic strokes. But she is also quick to claim her paintings are realistic and faithful to what she sees. Yamashita paints by spontaneously applying colour to canvas and allowing natural forms and structures to take shape over time, the process of which can be visible on close inspection, where initial forms and brushstrokes can abruptly change and morph into new entities on the canvas.

Yamashita received vigorous training in Japanese calligraphy, and her works reflect her interest in traditional Japanese art and literature. In her first solo exhibition with Kiang Malingue in its Tin Wan studio space last year, titled *Field, Force, Surface*, two of her art pieces reconsider the legacy of the Azuchi-Momoyama-period painter, Hasegawa Tōhaku. The artist has also called poet Matsuo Bashō a major influence.



Hiroka Yamashita, Field (Blue and Green) (2022)

Yamashita received a BFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York in 2017 and a MFA from the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University, New Jersey in 2019. Her most recent solo exhibitions include *Fūdo* at Tanya Leighton, Berlin (2022); *Project N 84* at Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery (2021); *Cosmos Remembered* at The Club, Tokyo (2021); and *Evanescent Horizon* with Naoya Inose at FOMO Art, Taipei (2021).

[See our Art Basel Hong Kong coverage here.](#)

(Header image: Hiroka Yamashita, *Field* (峠 Tōge))

Artists To Watch