

MATTHEW BROWN LOS ANGELES

NOBUYA HOKI

Opening Friday, August 28

The problems of figure (or rather line); and ground and picture size and the body noted below are posed in order to explore the possibility of bridging the aesthetics of oil paint, which is not absorbed into the surface, but rather moves around on top of it until it dries, and once dry is neither absorbed or mixed....

— Nobuya Hoki

Nobuya Hoki's paintings—limited to a polychromatic threshold of greens, blues, and burgundy reds—emerge with animated gesticulation; an ensemble, a flurry of blurs, diffusions, cuts, and diverging lines.

The artist wields two brushes at once, in the style of *Nihonga*, or double line drawing, through his own mysterious inventions. The brushstrokes, depending on the speed, thick or thinness, medium or color of paint, determine the variability within each canvas. This transfer of hand (body) to brush (oil) onto another bodily form (canvas) defines Hoki's distinctive tripartite construction method.

Concerned with the history of Japanese calligraphy and ink painting, Hoki considers the “unerasability” of aesthetics, a term coined by the artist himself. At the faintest touch, ink pressed upon a surface absorbs smoothly and quickly. Any trace of a brushstroke vanishes; the ink and surface, once existing as two elements, integrate into one. Hoki, however, decisively separates each element on the surface as an autonomous entity. Hoki accentuates the spatial complexities possible within painting through the manipulation of oil paint, an exceptionally malleable and languid medium. The shifting oil pigments, broken by jaspé lines and pulsating densities, are suspended above the canvas. The oil clouds the canvas, yet is never absorbed.

Hoki indulges in the indexical; the movements of his body are imbued within the oil brushstrokes, and the brushstrokes themselves inscribe their own movement through the double vision effect of *Nihonga*. As opposed to a singular line, each stroke bears witness to its own shadow.

Hoki's tableaux come forth as a chorus of vibrations across a hierarchy of planes. These ruminations on this un-erasability through a series of tempestuous confrontations, between oil and canvas, melt together as abstracted landscapes. Hoki reduces or expands the size of canvas, accumulating a plentitude of works in different scales. Inextricably linked, the brushstrokes, performing as twin flames, ebb and flow, or swell, at the will of the artist's hand.

Nobuya Hoki (b. 1966, Kyoto, Japan) lives and works in Kyoto. He received his MFA from Kyoto City University of Arts in 1993.

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Recent solo exhibitions include *ASSEMBRIDGE NAGOYA 2017*, Former Minato Dormitory of Nagoya customs, Aichi (2017); eN Arts, Kyoto (2015); Taka Ishii Gallery (2014); Taka Ishii Gallery, Kyoto (2012); Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo (2010) Taka Ishii Gallery, Kyoto (2008).

His work has been exhibited in numerous group exhibitions including *Survived!*, Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo (2019); *Spider's Thread—Spinning images of Japanese beauty*, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi (2016); Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo (2016); Taka Ishii Gallery (2014); *Daiwa Collection VI*, Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum, Okinawa (2013); *NEW PHASES in CONTEMPORARY PAINTING A Curator's Message 2012*, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art, Hyogo, Japan (2012); *Texture and Sense (Kime to Kehai)*, Aomori Contemporary Art Centre, Aomori, Japan (2012).

Hoki's works are included in the collections of Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Toyota Art Collection, The National Museum of Art, Osaka, Takamatsu City Museum of Art, Kagawa, and the Okazaki City Museum, Aichi.

Matthew Brown Los Angeles is thrilled to present the artist's first exhibition at the gallery, and in the United States at large.