

# Keisuke Tada

*Phantom Emotion* @ MAKI Gallery

*Rhizomed Material* @ Gallery COMMON

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Artist:	Keisuke Tada
Exhibition Title:	Phantom Emotion
Dates:	September 30 (Sat.) - November 8 (Wed.)
Location:	MAKI Gallery / Omotesando, Tokyo

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Keisuke Tada, *Painting of incomplete remains #116*, 2023, oil, acrylic, and pigment on canvas, 33.6 x 24.5 x 5.0 cm



MAKI Gallery and Gallery COMMON are pleased to announce the concurrent hosting of two solo exhibitions by Aichi-based artist Keisuke Tada. Tada's debut show with MAKI Gallery, titled *Phantom Emotion*, will be held at the Omotesando gallery space and present a body of work that evinces the artist's strong fascination for the relationship between real and fabricated constructs. Traversing the obscure boundary that separates reality and fiction, he creates paintings that capture the essence of his central theme: the conflict between 'being there' and 'not.' When confronted with Tada's works, our bodies are transported to a place where notions of time and space lose their function, evoking a sense of disorientation in our perception and awareness.

In this exhibition, the artist invites viewers on a journey into virtual spaces and the realm where reality and fiction intertwine. The *Paintings of incomplete remains* may initially resemble classical European paintings, yet they are actually based on landscapes experienced by Tada during his wanderings of the virtual plane. Referencing the compositions of the Barbizon School, exemplified by Millet's work in 19<sup>th</sup> century France, Tada applies a patina to the surface of his paintings, thusly creating an artificially aged ambience that recalls the vistas once captured by artists traveling with small canvases in hand.

*Phantom Emotion* features approximately 100 works that portray various landscapes—including deserts, crags, mountains, skies, deteriorated structures, abandoned living spaces, flora, and fauna—all of which seem to have existed in some corner of history despite their fictitious nature. These subjects not only summon a spirit of adventure in the viewer but also subtly convey a sense of melancholy and solitude. Tada manipulates time by applying aging techniques to such imagined landscapes, where temporality is inherently absent. Through this mechanism, a gap emerges between the eternal expanse of the virtual world and the finite temporality and materiality of human beings, intensifying the paintings' ephemeral quality.

The works' small yet thick canvases are coated on their sides with pristine white, conjuring a distinct contrast with the detailed imagery on the painted surfaces. The patent juxtaposition suggests that the landscapes exist in an unreachable dimension, a space beyond tangible contact.

Furthermore, the exhibition presents a work from the *Heaven's Door* series, in which Tada crafts antique gates from paint so meticulously that they are nearly indistinguishable from the real thing. The artist subsequently subjects the gates to attacks with an axe, and the colours that emerge from this destructive gesture become an integral part of the painting process. Exhibited alongside the work is a video documenting Tada as he destroys the crafted doors using his own body; the act alludes to the inherent human desire to transcend limitations even while acknowledging their existence.

Both *Paintings of incomplete remains* and *Heaven's Door* demonstrate a longing to explore and engage with imagined realms, as well as the poignant sense of detachment and loneliness brought about by the stark disconnect between such worlds and reality. As was the case for Tada himself, the experience of entering virtual spheres and becoming enamoured by their worldview may feel challenging to process and understand. Through this suite of work, the artist aims to create a unique space that intentionally exposes viewers to these elusive sensations and emotions.

Please take this opportunity to venture into a world hovering between existence and non-existence, one that is shaped by Tada's exceptional skills and creative ingenuity.

Written by Haruna Takeda



Keisuke Tada, *Painting of incomplete remains #106*, 2023  
Oil, acrylic, and pigment on canvas  
18.5 x 14.5 x 5.0cm



Keisuke Tada, *Painting of incomplete remains #110*, 2023  
Oil, acrylic, and pigment on canvas  
24.0 x 20.0 x 5.0 cm



Keisuke Tada, *Painting of incomplete remains #100*, 2023, oil, acrylic, and pigment on canvas, 5.2 x 6.2 x 5.0 cm

#### Concurrent Exhibition

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Artist: Keisuke Tada  
Exhibition Title: Rhizomed Material  
Opening Reception: September 29 (Fri.), 19:00-21:00  
Dates: September 30 (Sat.) - November 5 (Sun.)  
Location: Gallery COMMON  
Jingumae 5-39-6 B1F, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0001  
Hours: 12:00-19:00  
Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays

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Keisuke Tada



Photo: Daisuke Omori

Born in 1986 in Aichi, Japan, Keisuke Tada received both his BFA and MFA in oil painting from Aichi University of the Arts in 2010 and 2012, respectively. Fascinated by the sensory experiences offered by games and other virtual worlds, Tada creates paintings that explore the blurry boundary between reality and fiction. His series *trace / dimension* looks like an assemblage of wooden boards, chains, and tiles; *Heaven's Door* resembles an antique door that seems to have been attacked with an axe. Despite their appearance, all the works are made entirely out of paint. In *Paintings of incomplete remains*, the artist creates fabricated time by convincingly aging the surface of the canvas, which are likened to classical European paintings. It could be said that Tada, who investigates the conflict between "what exist and what doesn't" through his unconventional use of paint, brings new dimension to the medium.

Tada's recent solo exhibitions include *Traffic*, MITSUKOSHI CONTEMPORARY GALLERY (Tokyo, 2022); *Beautiful Dream*, MAHO KUBOTA GALLERY (Tokyo, 2020); *CHANGELING*, rin art association (Gunma, Japan, 2020); and *BORDER*, CAPSULE (Tokyo, 2018). He also actively participates in various group exhibitions, primarily in Japan and Hong Kong.

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## MAKI Gallery / Omotesando, Tokyo

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Closed on Sundays and Mondays

\*For further inquiries, please contact