

# Susumu Kamijo

## *When You Come Home*

Artist | Susumu Kamijo

Exhibition Title | *When You Come Home*

Dates | April 20 (Sat.) – June 8 (Sat.), 2024

Location | MAKI Gallery / Tennoz, Tokyo



*The Three Pals*, 2024, acrylic, flashe vinyl paint, and pastel pencil on canvas, 147.3 x 180.3 cm

MAKI Gallery is pleased to announce *When You Come Home*, a major solo exhibition featuring New York-based artist Susumu Kamijo's latest body of work. This show marks the artist's notable return to Tennoz, following his last solo showcase three years prior.



Since 2014, Kamiyo has integrated the motif of poodles into his artwork, crafting pieces with crayons and pastels on paper. In more recent years, he has shifted to canvas and flashe vinyl paint, persistently pursuing the experimentation of forms, colors, compositions, and textures in painting, with the poodle as his gateway for exploration. The artist's keen spirit of inquiry and genuine curiosity about the act of painting is conveyed through diverse paint textures created by skillful brush movements and layering colors, as well as the exquisite balance of composition that emerges from connecting forms composed with both straight and curved lines.

As Kamiyo stated from the beginning, he has no emotional attachment to the motif of poodles, what we encounter in this exhibition is a creature born from the process towards the abstraction of the poodle, which appears elusive, resembling both a beastlike subject and a human.

Furthermore, while his previous works often depicted poodles in outdoor scenes with substantial negative space in the background, the pieces showcased in this series feature creatures arranged within indoor spaces, constructed by dividing planes on the canvas. These domestic environments comprise a broader spectrum of colors and incorporate various new components, such as birds, cats and fish. This approach is influenced by the fusion of figures and surrounding decorations seen in the work of Francis Bacon and Henri Matisse. It reflects Kamiyo's commitment to delving deep into his inner self as an artist. By adding extra layers of detailing to his work, he creates new opportunities with which to confront his deepest desires. Grappling with the paintings he truly wants to create, he strives to break free of his artistic tendencies.



*The Three Goldfishes*, 2024, acrylic, flashe vinyl paint, and pastel pencil on canvas, 147.3 x 180.3 cm



*In The Lodge*, 2024, acrylic, flashe vinyl paint, and pastel pencil on canvas, 147.3 x 180.3 cm

This new practice appears to act as a process through which Kamijo, occasionally wrestling with conflicts, continues to reaffirm and uncover the identity of Susumu Kamijo as an artist. Despite his influence by abstract painting, Kamijo does not strive toward complete abstraction; instead, he explores the arrangement of lines, colors, and shapes while preserving a certain degree of figuration. Albeit his admiration of works that inquire into the darker aspects of humanity and society, he never loses sight of the brightness and playfulness that has always marked his work. Although driven by the impulse to depict chaos across the entirety of the canvas, Kamijo consciously maintains balance in whitespace and composition. These deliberate decisions shape a world that is uniquely Kamijo's, and perhaps it is why we can, standing before his works, find a sense of cheerfulness.

Kamijo voices, "I have a sense of understanding what comes back to me." With this, the artist wishes to convey his ever-deepening awareness of the sensations and expressions that repeatedly manifest within himself and his work, as he navigates the process of experimenting with various painting techniques in pursuit of his inner desires. As the works in this exhibition demonstrate, there is no doubt that Kamijo's paintings, alongside his poodle motifs, will continue to evolve. We invite you, through this exhibition, to witness the many new creations born from his profound dialogue with himself.





The Blossom, 2024 (detail)



**Susumu Kamijo**

Born in 1975 in Nagano, Japan, Susumu Kamijo currently lives and works in Brooklyn. Kamijo moved to the United States at the age of 16 and completed a BFA at the University of Oregon in 2000, followed by an MFA at the University of Washington in 2002. Kamijo explores the abstraction of familiar motifs such as animals and human faces through the distortion of color and shape and has been actively producing a series of drawings and paintings featuring poodles since 2014.

The artist's recent solo exhibitions include *The Motherland*, Venus Over Manhattan (New York, NY, 2023); *The Sun Inside*, Perrotin (Paris, 2023); *Jack and Venus*, Jack Hanley Gallery and Venus Over Manhattan (New York, NY, 2022); *Alone with Everybody*, Perrotin (Seoul, 2022); *How Was Your Summer?*, Harper's (East Hampton, 2021); and *Beyond The Hills*, MAKI Gallery (Tokyo, 2021). He has also participated in group shows and art fairs across the globe, including in the United Kingdom, Belgium, Greece, Hong Kong, and Mexico, while continuing to primarily exhibit his work in the United States and Europe.

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Hours: 11:30-19:00

Closed on Sundays and Mondays

\*For further inquiries, please contact the above.