

Naoko Tosa



Space Flower

Space Flower: New Works by Naoko Tosa

5 Sep – 1 Nov 2014

Naoko Tosa's new series of works pays homage to Rimpa, one of the major historical schools of Japanese painting that was founded in Kyoto in the 17th century. Famed for its usage of luxurious golden colour, one of its key exponents was the artist Korin Ogata, whose paintings of "Wind God and Thunder God" have become representative of the style. The fragmentation of flowers by the elements of wind and thunder serves an allegory for the fading of old customs and the beckoning of a new future. *Oiran* alludes to the eponymous courtesans popular during the 18th and 19th century; the roses, as though performers in a Kabuki piece, exude a gallant beauty while their fragility evokes a dream-like presence, at once ephemeral and elusive. A flower blooming in space in *Space Flower* symbolizes life and refers to one's individual self. Perhaps the act of maturing requires one to reject one's past, an act that inflicts hurt upon one's self, but the individual more often than not comes out stronger. *Space Jungle* depicts a jungle on a planet far away from ours. Abundant water and flora abound on the surface while an array of minerals and plants inhabit the underground, navigating the chaos of zero gravity in obliterative spurts of dance. Drawing inspiration from Ogata's painting "Red and White Plum Blossoms", a national treasure of Japan, *Moon Flower* considers how red and white plum blossoms would appear on the Moon, presenting a continuous kaleidoscope of exploding moon flowers. The deified characters of Ogata's "Wind God and Thunder God" take centre stage with Tosa's reimaginings. *Wind God* shows a figure approaching and unfolding onto the scene before departing while *Thunder God* invokes the Japanese thunder god Susanoo, whom remains likeable in spite of his selfish and mischievous personality.



Moon Flower
2014
Video (colour, sound), 5 min 24 sec
1080 x 1920 pixels



Space Flower
2014
Video (colour, sound), 6 min 12 sec
1080 x 1920 pixels



Space Jungle
2014
Video (colour, sound), 5 min 33 sec
1080 x 1920 pixels



Oiran
2014
Video (colour, sound), 5 min 28 sec
1080 x 1920 pixels

Naoko Tosa

Naoko Tosa is an internationally renowned Japanese media artist, born in 1961 in Fukuoka, Japan. After receiving a PhD for Art and Technology Research from the University of Tokyo, she was a fellow at the Centre for Advanced Visual Studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) from 2002 to 2004 and is currently a professor at Kyoto University. She has exhibited her artworks at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the New York Metropolitan Art Museum and Japan Creative Center at Singapore among many locations worldwide. In 2000, she received a prize from the Interactive Art section in ARS Electronica. Also in 2004 she received 2nd prize for Nabi Digital Storytelling Competition of Intangible Heritage, organized by UNESCO2004. In 2012, Naoko Tosa was asked to create a digital artwork for Yeosu Marine Expo in Korea. In the EXPO Digital Gallery with a LED screen measuring 250 metres by 30 metres, she exhibited a digital artwork called "Four God Fag" symbolizing the idea of Asian traditional four gods connecting Asia. The work was honored by Expo 2012 Committee.

www.naokotosa.com

Cover: Space Jungle
Top right: Wind God, 2014, Video (colour, sound), 6 min 45 sec, 1080 x 1920 pixels
Bottom: Thunder God, 2014, Video (colour, sound), 6 min 45 sec, 1080 x 1920 pixels



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