

[Press Release]

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ShugoArts Show —Sprout

Clara SPILLIAERT

Masato KOBAYASHI, Naofumi MARUYAMA, Anju Michele,

Ritsue MISHIMA, Yoriko TAKABATAKE, Shigeo TOYA

30 August – 4 October 2025



Clara SPILLIAERT, *Figwasp*, 2022, watercolour on plaster, 21x16cm

ShugoArts is pleased to present a group exhibition featuring Clara Spilliaert. Born in Tokyo in 1993, Spilliaert relocated in 2009 to Belgium, her father's homeland. After completing her graduate studies at LUCA School of Arts in Ghent, she has continued her artistic practice there. She has been garnering increasing attention while holding a solo exhibition at Kunsthal Gent in 2024 and being set to participate in the RHIZOMA Biennale in 2025. She is also active in public art, having created murals and undertaken commissioned works. In Japan, she received the Grand Prize at the 2020 CAF Awards and held a solo exhibition titled Clara Sekirara at the Contemporary Art Foundation, the award's host organization, in 2022.

Having come of age during the sensitive period of transition from childhood to adulthood, Spilliaert grew up navigating the fluctuations of cultural identity. She possesses a deep sensitivity toward nature, animals, the body, and gender while she is strongly drawn to the stories and histories of land and peoples. These interests form the foundation of her creative practice, giving rise to a distinctive—and at times humorous—worldview that transcends various boundaries and resonates with collective consciousness and ancestral roots.



Clara SPILLIAERT, *Spruit-Stamboom*, Reference image Photo by Stijn Cole

This exhibition features six works that chart Spilliaert creative path, highlighted by the ceramic sculpture *Spruit-Stamboom* (Sprout / Family Tree), first shown in Belgium in 2021, together with a selection of early drawings. To echo the corporeality and vital energy that underpin her practice, we are also presenting works by Masato Kobayashi, Naofumi Maruyama, Anju Michele, Ritsue Mishima, Yoriko Takabatake, and Shigeo Toya.



Anju Michele, *circle*, 2025, oil on aluminum paper mounted on panel, 53x53cm Photo by Yasushi Ichikawa

This year, ShugoArts celebrates its 25th anniversary. Over the years, we have held approximately 180 exhibitions and walked alongside many artists. Some things change with time, while others remain constant—but the work of the gallery continues steadily, and through the expressions of artists, new possibilities are always being opened. We invite you to look forward to the fresh emergence that Clara Spilliaert's work brings forth.

Thanks to Keteleer Gallery
ShugoArts, July 2025



Ritsue MISHIMA, *MILLELUCI*, 2024, glass, 23x13.5x15cm Photo by Francesco Barasciutti



Masato KOBAYASHI, *Portrait of the Artist "Where have all the flowers gone"*, 2024, oil, canvas, wood, 170x142x17cm

ShugoArts Show —Sprout

Artists: Clara SPILLIAERT, Masato KOBAYASHI, Naofumi MARUYAMA, Anju Michele, Ritsue MISHIMA, Yoriko TAKABATAKE, Shigeo TOYA

Dates: 30 August – 4 October 2025

Venue: ShugoArts

Clara SPILLIAERT Biography

Born in Tokyo in 1993, Spilliaert relocated in 2009 to Belgium. After completing her graduate studies at LUCA School of Arts in Ghent, she has continued her artistic practice there. Spilliaert weaves personal experiences, historical perspectives, and elements of nature into her work, presenting them through a wide range of media — from drawings, including a seven-year visual diary, to murals, ceramics, and installations. Underlying her practice is a keen interest in the role of symbols in cultural formation and the ways they reveal connections between nature and the human body. Her reflections on culture and history also bring a distinctive character to her public space projects, where she crafts new narratives. Spilliaert creates a distinctive, and at times humorous, worldview that transcends various boundaries and resonates with collective consciousness and ancestral roots.

Selected exhibitions: “My Sister is Pregnant”, Kunsthall Gent, Ghent, 2024; “Stambomen”, Keteleer Gallery, Antwerp, 2024; “Hairy Tale”, Lichtekooi Artspace, Antwerp, 2023; “Clara Sekirara”, Contemporary Art Foundation, Tokyo, 2022; “Publiek Park”, Friends of S.M.A.K., Ghent, 2021. Selected Public Collections: Mu.Zee (Ostend, Belgium), the National Bank of Belgium (Brussels, Belgium). Her permanent works include installations at Kunsthall Extra City (Antwerp) and public art commissions in the Belgian cities of Geraardsbergen, Kruibeke, and Leuven. Awards: Prix Fintro Prijs Supporting Young Artist, Winner Visual Arts, Belgium, 2023; Contemporary Art Foundation CAF Award 2020, Grand Prize, Japan, 2020.

Masato KOBAYASHI Biography

Masato Kobayashi was born in Tokyo in 1957. He was the Japanese representative of the 1996 São Paulo Biennale. In 1997, invited by Jan Hoet, he traveled to Europe, and continued to create works in various locations while based in Ghent, Belgium. Kobayashi returned to Japan in 2006 and began working based in Tomonoura, Fukuyama City, Hiroshima. He was also a professor at the Tokyo University of the Arts from 2017 to 2023. He has developed a unique technique of applying color by rubbing it into the canvas while supporting the fabric with one hand, simultaneously stretching it over the wooden frame to bring the painting to life and “aiming for a painting that does not lose its essence by merely existing.” Kobayashi has prolifically produced paintings that possess a form and unique

brightness that can only emerge from that specific situation.

Selected solo exhibitions: “Portrait of the Artist — Exhibition Celebrating the Publication of MK”, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2024; Selection from the CCMA Collection Special Edition “Kobayashi Masato: Ku-Sen and A Son of Painting”, Chiba City Museum of Art, Chiba, Japan, 2023; “Family of this Planet”, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2021; “Artist and the Model”, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2019; “ART TODAY 2012”, Sezon Museum of Modern Art, Nagano, 2012; “MASATO KOBAYASHI – The Paint of the Planet”, Nariwa Museum, Okayama, 2009; “Starry Paint, stars of outer space by pure painting”, Tensta Konsthall, Spanga, Sweden, 2004; “A Son of Painting Masato Kobayashi”, S.M.A.K., Ghent, 2001; “KOBAYASHI Masato”, The Miyagi Museum of Art, 2000.

Naofumi MARUYAMA Biography

Born in Niigata, Japan in 1964. Maruyama currently lives and works in Tokyo. He has become one of the most important painters in Japan since the 1990s. The artist incorporates the stain technique, a painting technique using cotton cloths soaked with water and acrylics, in order to depict his motifs which are so soft that they melt with time and place. His paintings are figurative yet abstract, ushering the viewers to a plateau where there is no boundary between a subject and an object; in other words, the viewers become part of his paintings. Maruyama’s painting practice is bolstered by his diligent, rational and sincere research and practice of “the possibility of the spaces that exist only inside paintings.” He has been a Professor in the Painting Department at the Musashino Art University since 2000. Maruyama received The Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology’s Art Encouragement Prize for New Artists in 2008. A solo exhibition is planned at Keteleer Gallery (Antwerp) in winter 2025.

Selected exhibitions: NO DATE, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2025; HIRAKU Project Vol.14 Naofumi Maruyama Kicking the Water: Sengokuhara, Pola Museum of Art, Kanagawa, 2023; Kicking the Water, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2022; Lascaux and Weather, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2018; FLOWING, Wooson Gallery, Daegu, 2017; GROUND2: Talking About Paintings, Talking About Seeing, Musashino Art University Museum & Library, Tokyo, 2016; Niigata Creations - Museum in Motion, Niigata City Art Museum, Niigata, 2014; Floating Boat, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi, 2011; Transparent Footsteps, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2010; the front in the back, Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, 2008; Portrait Session, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima, 2007; The Elegance of Silence: Contemporary Art from East Asia, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, 2005; HAPPINESS: A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR ART + LIFE, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, 2003; Taipei Biennial: Great Theatre of the World, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei, 2002; MOT Annual 1999: Modest Radicalism, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, 1999; 8th Triennale-India, Lalit Kala Akademi, National Academy of Art, New Delhi, 1994; Solo at Satani Gallery Tokyo, 1992

Anju Michele Biography

Born in 1989 in Venice, Italy, Anju Michele currently lives in Kyoto, Japan. Using silver and gold evaporated aluminum paper, a material used in Nishijin textiles, as a support, he creates paintings that embody the changing light. Expressed in light and organic forms that are difficult to describe, his practice “begins with the gesture,” showing us that there is a world that is different from the reality we usually see. And Anju’s body, which makes it difficult for him to hear outside sounds, fosters a rich sensory experience and reveals free and fearless brushwork.

Selected exhibitions: Circular Skies, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2024; Imaginarium, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2020; VOCA The Vision of Contemporary Art 2020, The Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo, 2020; Yokohama Triennale, Yokohama Museum of Art, Kanagawa, 2014; About Freedom, TRAUMARIS, Tokyo, 2011; Kagami of love, HIGURE 17-15cas, Tokyo, 2009; Infanzia, Cube gallery, Venice, 2005

Ritsue MISHIMA Biography

Born in Kyoto, Japan in 1962. Mishima moved to Venice in 1989. Having established a residence in Kyoto in 2011, she lives and works between the two cities. Collaborating with glassmiths on Murano Island, Italy, the artist takes advantage of the translucency and viscosity of Venetian glass in order to create clear glass sculptures, which bear the contours of light while becoming parts of the environments. Since Mishima’s sculptures visualize the energy of the exhibited spaces by absorbing the surrounding air and light, they have received high praise as public artworks as well. Currently the artist is expanding her practice beyond fine art through collaborating with different creative industries such as architecture, fashion and design. Solo exhibition “RITSUE MISHIMA – GLASS WORKS” at the Gallerie dell’Accademia in Venice in 2022, awarded the Fondazione di Venezia award for the best project in the Venice section of The Italian Glass Weeks. The artist also received BVLGARI AVRORA AWARDS 2022.

Selected solo exhibitions: Forms of Light, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2023; RITSUE MISHIMA - GLASS WORKS, Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice, 2022; HALL OF LIGHT, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2019-2020; In Grimani. Ritsue Mishima Glass Works, Museum of Palazzo Grimani, Venice, 2013; As it should be, Shiseido Gallery, Tokyo, 2011; Frozen garden / Fruits of fire, Museum Boijmans, Rotterdam, 2010. Selected group exhibitions: Wonderment Noe Aoki / Ritsue Mishima, Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum, Tokyo, 2024; Asia Corridor Contemporary Art Exhibition, Culture City of East Asia 2017 Kyoto, Nijo Castle, Kyoto, 2017; Yokohama Triennale, Yokohama Museum of Art, Kanagawa, 2014; the 53rd International Art Exhibition: Venice Biennale, Venice Pavilion, Venice, 2009.

Yoriko TAKABATAKE Biography

Born in Fukuoka, Japan in 1982, Takabatake currently lives in Tokyo. In 2015, she participated in an

artist residency at the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation in Connecticut in order to conduct research on Anni Albers. Through the physical phenomena of her materials, Takabatake has developed two-dimensional painting into an existence with a physical structure. While experiencing firsthand the magnitude of the world through the Lascaux cave murals and the Nazca terrestrial paintings, Takabatake creates her works through dialogue with materials, which encompass physical spaces that cannot be realized solely by painting images.

Solo exhibitions: LINE(N), ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2024; CAVE, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2022; MARS, Gana Art Nineone, Seoul, 2022; MARS, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2020; VENUS, Gana Art Hannam, Seoul, 2019; Fountain, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2018; Bathing, ShugoArts Weekend Gallery, Tokyo, 2016; Project N 58 Yoriko Takabatake, Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, Tokyo, 2014. Selected group exhibitions: ABSTRACTION: The Genesis and Evolution of Abstract Painting Cézanne, Fauvism, Cubism and on to Today, Artizon Museum, Tokyo, 2023; FUJI TEXTILE WEEK 2021, Fujiyoshida City, Yamanashi, Japan, 2021; TRICK-DIMENSION, TOKYO FRONT LINE, Tokyo, 2013; Art Award Tokyo Marunouchi 2013, Tokyo, 2013; DANDANS at No Man's Land, former French Embassy, Tokyo, 2010. Public collection: Artizon Museum, Tokyo.

Shigeo TOYA Biography

Born in Nagano, Japan, in 1947. Currently lives and works in Saitama. Toya started his artistic career with his attempt to reconstruct sculpture as a medium, which had been deconstructed by the preceding art movements such as postminimalism and mono-ha. Since the 1970s, the artist has diligently pursued the principles and structures of sculpture, which resonate with the epistemological foundations of our very existence, underscoring their essence and possibility through his artmaking practice. By manipulating various art histories of all times and places, encompassing the period of cave paintings and Greco-Roman sculptures to contemporary art, with his bona fide sculptural philosophy, Toya has been recognized as one of the leading sculptors in Japan, Asia and the Pacific at large. The artist received the Art Encouragement Prize of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Japan in 2004 and his Medal of Honor with Purple Ribbon in 2009. He is also a Professor Emeritus at Musashino Art University. A solo exhibition is planned at ShugoArts (Tokyo) in fall 2025.

Selected exhibitions: Toya Shigeo Sculpture, Nagano Prefectural Art Museum, Nagano, 2022-2023, The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, 2023; Body of the Gaze: from Scatter to Linkage, from Linkage to Accumulation, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2022; Shigeo Toya Forest – Lake: Regeneration and Memory, Ichihara Lakeside Museum, Chiba, 2021; Body of the Gaze, ShugoArts, Tokyo, 2019; Shigeo Toya–Sculpture to Emerge, Musashino Art University Museum & Library, Tokyo, 2017; Memories in the cave, Vangi Sculpture Garden Museum, Shizuoka, 2011-12; Shigeo Toya : Folds, Gazes and Anima of the Woods, Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, Aichi, 2003; The 3rd Kwangju Biennale, Kwangju, 2000; Forest

of Visions, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima, 1995; Yama – Mori - Mura, Kuma Museum of Art, Ehime, 1994; The First Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 1993; The 43rd Venice Biennale, Japanese Pavilion, Venice, 1988; Selected publications: Shigeo Toya–Sculpture and Words (Choukoku-To-Kotoba) 1974-2013, Vangi Sculpture Garden Museum, 2014; Shigeo Toya–Sculpture to Emerge, Musashino Art University Museum & Library, 2017

For further information, please contact: info@shugoarts.com

Exhibition: Minako Ishii / Press: Saya Fujita

complex665 2F, 6-5-24, Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032 / +81 3 6447 2234

website: <https://shugoarts.com/en>