

Press Release
Summer Show: *Tanabata*
7th July – September 7th 2010

Maddox Arts is delighted to present its summer show for 2010, featuring new work by four Japanese artists: Emi Miyashita, Kounosuke Kawakami, Kentaro Kobuke and Kengo Kito. For this special occasion these artists have taken The Japanese Festival of the Weaver, *Tanabata*, as their source of inspiration.

The festival traces its origin to a legend derived from the Chinese Star Festival, Qi Xi. The story celebrates the meeting of the Weaver Star, Vega, and the Shepherd Star, Altair, across the Milky Way for their annual tryst. Vega the celestial princess daughter of Tentei, Emperor of the Heavens, wove beautiful garments by the bank of the Amanogawa for her father. So solely devoted to weaving cloth for the gods and her father, the weaving princess worried she would never have time to fall in love. Concerned about her daughter's sadness, Tentei arranged for her to meet a handsome shepherd star, Altair. Both stars fell instantly in love with each other and married shortly thereafter. As a result of their great love, Vega neglected weaving cloth for the gods and Altair allowed his cows to stray. In punishment, the Emperor of the Heavens separated the star lovers to opposite sides of the Milky Way and stated that they would only be allowed to meet once a year on the seventh day of the seventh month. Artists Kobuke, Kawakami, Miyashita and Kito respond to the legend by employing visual elements that not only resemble aspects of the ancient story, but also complement its mythological essence by adding layers of contemporary flavour. In this show artists bring together fantasy, abstraction and imagination in a variety of media including sculpture, drawing and painting.

Kentaro Kobuke: completed his MA in Fine Arts at the Chelsea College of Art and Design in 2009. Solo shows include 'Parfait' at SCAI The Bathhouse in Tokyo and 'Names' at AAA Gallery in Paris. Kobuke has also shown in New York with John Connelly Presents and at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo. The artist's works were also exhibited this year at the Saatchi Gallery as part of Highlights from the Franks-Suss Collection. Kobuke is represented in Tokyo by SCAI The Bathhouse. He lives and works in London.

Kounosuke Kawakami: gained his MA in Fine Arts at Central Saint Martins College of Art in 2004. He was a prizewinner of the VOCA Painting Prize (UENO Royal Museum) in 2008 and was also part of Creekside I and II at APT, London, selected by Victoria Miro and Matthew Collins. Collections include the Progressive Collection, Ohio; the West Collection, Pennsylvania; UBS, NY and Los Angeles; Wellington Management, Boston and London and the Elspeth and Imogen Turner Collection, UK. Presently, Kawakami is based in London where he works and lives.

Kengo Kito: graduated from the Department of Oil Painting at Nagoya University of Fine Arts in 2001. Selected solo exhibitions include 'Sagittarius' at am Gallery in Tokyo; 'Flimsy Royal' at Humanities Gallery in NY and 'Cosmic Elements' at Eaplanade in Singapore. Kito has exhibited widely across Europe and Asia. He is represented by Koyanagui Gallery in Tokyo. Public Collections include Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi; The Vangi Sculpture Garden Museum, Shizuoka and Takamatsu City Museum of Art. He lives and works in Berlin.

Emi Miyashita: completed a BA in Fine Arts at Central Saint Martins and graduated from Chelsea College of Art & Design with a MA in Fine Arts. Recent solo and group shows include 'Female to Female' at The Running Horse Gallery in Lebanon; C4RD Centre for Recent Drawing, London; The Affordable Art Fair in Bristol; 'Hana-Bana' at Gallery Conceal Ginza, Tokyo and The Embassy of Japan in London. This year Miyashita was commissioned to produce images for a limited edition art book titled F65, a project supported and represented by DegreeArt. The artist lives and works in London.