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Almine Rech Paris opens Hajime Sorayama's first solo exhibition with the gallery

By Jose Villareal, May 4, 2022.



Hajime Sorayama, Untitled, 2021 - Acrylic paint, digital print on canvas - 197 x 139 cm, 77 1/2 x 54 1/2 in / © Hajime Sorayama - Courtesy of the Artist and Almine Rech.

Jérôme Sans: You started your career in advertising, then worked in illustration, art, fashion, design, and even technology, having collaborated with Sony to make a robotic pet. What would you say your main occupation is?

Hajime Sorayama: I work in entertainment. I never think of myself as an artist as I don't know what 'art' is.

JS: When did you start working on 'feminine cyborgs' or 'sexy robots'? The theme seems to be more and more relevant in our increasingly technological society.

HS: I painted the first pinup robot in 1980. It was commissioned work for the Japanese whisky, Suntory.

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JS: While robots are usually seen as machines designed for human consumption, you portray them with highly human qualities through eroticisation. Where does the idea come from?

HS: I've been interested in machines and metal since I was child. I am addicted to the shine of metal. As I was born male, the female body provides aesthetic qualities which I never bore of. It's like a natural or primitive emotion that was handed down from my ancestors 200,000 years ago.

JS: There is a unique closeness that unites Japanese people and technology, a true symbiosis leading to technology infiltrating every corner of Japanese society. Do you think that your work is influenced by the digital culture that is very present in Japan and in Asia in general?

HS: I'm not sure how to answer that, but when I collaborated with Kim Jones for Dior, people started telling me my work represented Japanese culture, which is ironic because my family are ashamed of me.