

Takesada Matsutani

Oct 3 — Dec 17, 2024 | Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, Japan

A major retrospective of Takesada Matsutani, presents his journey from Gutai to Paris, and from Paris to the world through over 200 exhibits.

Matsutani has been based in Paris for over half a century and his international reputation is on the rise. Including current works, this is a most comprehensive exhibition in Japan.

Throughout a career spanning more than sixty years, Takesada Matsutani (b.1937) has created outstanding works in which the expression, texture, and presence of material objects are interwoven with the surge and flux of life. In the first half of the 1960s, Matsutani became renowned as a leading light of the second-generation Gutai* artists for his relief works with organic forms created using vinyl adhesive, which was then a novel material. Matsutani moved to France in 1966. Based in Paris, he embarked on a new path in the field of printmaking, which was at the forefront of contemporary art at the time. From his exploration of space and time in two-dimensional media, he gradually shifted to hard-edged expression characterised by geometric and organic forms in vivid colours. In the late 1970s he returned to his creative roots, using familiar materials such as pencil and paper, establishing a form of expression that fills the paper with black pencilled strokes, engendering a representation of biological time. He also revisited organic forms made from vinyl adhesive, breaking new ground in his layered graphite stroke works. His output increasingly took the form of installations incorporating architecture, and at the same time, his performance elements embodied greater individuality. Even today, Matsutani continues to work vigorously in Paris, and he is enjoying international acclaim, exhibiting at the Venice Biennale in 2017 and a survey of his work at the Centre Pompidou in Paris in 2019. In recent years, instead of adhering to one technique or style, his work has become increasingly free and expansive, combining boldness with subtle delicacy. Takesada Matsutani's works come alive when his own body and all his senses meet his materials. The sheer diversity of his works never ceases speaking to those who view them.

Assembled are more than 200 pieces based on recent and extensive research for the exhibition to present Takesada Matsutani's entire oeuvre from his earliest to his latest works including documents, and video footage.

***Gutai (the Gutai Art Association):** A group of artists that led the postwar Japanese avant-garde art movement in the 1950s-1970s. Its forward-thinking spirit still attracts worldwide acclaim and attention today.