

10 Chancery Lane Gallery

Katie de Tilly Contemporary Artists

G/F, 10 Chancery Lane

SoHo, Central, Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2810-0065

Email: info@10chancerylanegallery.com

ATTENTION ART EDITORS

For Immediate Release



AI YAMAGUCHI 山口藍

ashita mata (again tomorrow)

10 Chancery Lane Gallery Hong Kong

in collaboration with Mizuma Art Gallery of Tokyo

14 May – 23 June, 2012

at 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, SoHo

[12 April 2012, Hong Kong] - 10 Chancery Lane Gallery Hong Kong, in collaboration with Mizuma Art Gallery in Tokyo, is proud to present the first Hong Kong solo exhibition of renowned contemporary Japanese artist Ai Yamaguchi, *ashita mata (again tomorrow)*, opening on 14 May 2012, to coincide with the ART HK 12. Yamaguchi has achieved an international reputation for her strongly characterized style and unique synthesis of the traditional Japanese *ukiyo*e style with contemporary interpretation.

Yamaguchi's works represent a connection from the far past to the current day, endlessly pushing the boundaries of applying traditional and contemporary Japanese art. Born in 1977, Yamaguchi, initially trained in textile design at university, was inspired to paint on various textiles that she later developed into her narrative paintings. Most recognized for her paintings of nine child-like courtesans with long fine hair and round turquoise eyes quietly lounging in an invented brothel. Yamaguchi incorporates a realistic quality of animé into her imaginative landscapes using the "flat" style of Japanese paintings. Borrowing references from the traditional *ukiyo*e, which gained its popularity in the late 17th century Edo-period in Japan, she contemporizes her figures of young girls onto super smooth surfaces that are made voluminous by adding padding under the canvas. Without sharp corners or defined edges, they liberate us to the free association and boundless imagination beyond the canvas. The works show no perspective or shadow reflecting Japan's post war obsession with manga cartoons, an important subculture among young Japanese. However, Yamaguchi's figures differ from popular manga works and are far more personal. Her created postures come from her own posing and are highly expressive scenes of her self-observation of her own body. The existence of the characters in her works transcends eras. The depiction of these half-naked women are subtly erotic in an almost innocent way, carrying a naive hollow gaze, as if they are absorbed with their own dreams and emotions. The patterns on the kimono that they wear, in contrast to the relatively simple outline of bodies, are delicately painted that on their own elaborate another story. However tranquil and harmonic the setting appears, these women almost float with unease, reflecting a precarious connection with their surroundings.

For the exhibition at 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Yamaguchi will install her largest multi-canvas work to date inside the gallery's space in SoHo, complemented with large site-specific wall murals. These works, entitled *ashita mata*, take their reference from calligraphy and are deliberately made into pieces, suggesting a fleeting feeling of a lost unity, the mystery born from imagining the absent surrounding pieces, and the new image and values created by taking each part separately. Each of them can be read as a piece in time, connected with *iren*, the space between each character in calligraphy which maintains the flow and strengthens the consciousness toward the primordial unity. Also in the exhibition are new prints from the series called *yorokobi*, which depicts the joy and delights for seasonal changes.

The title of the exhibition, *ashita mata (again tomorrow)*, refers to expressions suggesting a gesture such as "let's meet here again tomorrow" or "let's talk again tomorrow." It proposes a potential reunification of the pieces evolving in different environments as well as them sharing the same portion of time after all.

Ai Yamaguchi is best known to Hong Kong audience of her collaboration project with cosmetic brand Shu Uemura in which she developed a series of paintings on the packaging for the brand. She has exhibited extensively in Los Angeles, USA, Tokyo, Japan, Taipei, Taiwan and Beijing, China. The exhibition at 10 Chancery Lane Gallery is her first solo exhibition in Hong Kong. She is one of the five members of the artists group "ninyu works" which is based in Tokyo. Yamaguchi will be in Hong Kong to install the wall paintings and attend the opening of the exhibition.

For interview and press enquiries please contact Heidi Kim on heidi@10chancerylanegallery.com or +852 2810 0065.

10 Chancery Lane Gallery during the week of ART HK 12

Ai Yamaguchi's *ashita mata (again tomorrow)*, opening on 14 May 2012, is part of the 10 Chancery Lane Gallery programs for ART HK 12, which runs from 17 to 20 May 2012. Also opening in the week include Dinh Q. Lê's *Erasure* and Carol Lee Mei Kuen's *Thread of Luminosity* at Art East Island in Chai Wan on 17 May, 2012. For details of our exciting programs please follow us on Facebook "10 Chancery Lane Gallery / Katie de Tilly Contemporary Artists" or visit website: www.arteastisland.com.

AI YAMAGUCHI 山口藍 *ashita mata (again tomorrow)*

10 Chancery Lane Gallery Hong Kong in collaboration with Mizuma Art Gallery of Tokyo

14 May – 23 June, 2012

SOLO EXHIBITION AT

10 Chancery Lane Gallery, CENTRAL

G/F, 10 Chancery Lane, SoHo, Central

Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 6pm

Enquiry: +852 2810 0065

10 Chancery Lane Gallery will be showing at **BOOTH 1F12** at ART HK 12, HKCEC, Wanchai