



Tomokazu Matsuyama, *The Future is Always Bright*  
Mixed media on four canvases  
72 x 200 inches (183 x 508 cm)  
2011

**MEDIA ALERT:**

**Tomokazu Matsuyama, *The Future is Always Bright***  
May 3 – June 30, 2012

**Gallery Reception: Thursday, May 3, 5:00 – 8:00**  
**Frey Norris Contemporary & Modern**  
**161 Jessie Street (at New Montgomery), San Francisco, CA 94105**

- Second solo exhibition with Frey Norris coincides with solo exhibition *Thousand Regards* at the Katzen Arts Center in Washington, D.C., April 3 – May 20, 2012
- New paintings, sculptures and a variety of installation elements create a blended environment of bold colors and clashing shapes.
- Sculptures incorporate high-density synthetic materials, references to Japanese antiquities and use of taxidermy, humorously playing with Asian symbolisms of good fortune and prosperity. Robert Indiana is paid homage in a new pair of figures entitled *Bon Voyage*.
- Recent collaborations with the Standard Hotel and Nike sneakers, a large commissioned painting for the Cosmopolitan Hotel in Las Vegas, and in 2010 and 2011 was a finalist for the Japanese National Culture and Arts Affairs award, the most generous grant given to a Japanese artist to work abroad.
- May 5<sup>th</sup> at 3:00pm, panel discussion at Frey Norris with artist Tomokazu Matsuyama and Jagannath Panda; gallerist Peter Nagy; adjunct professor at CCA, Cristin McKnight Sethi and moderator Raman Frey.

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA.**

Tomokazu Matsuyama, “Matsu” for short, is an artist fascinated with how we live, particularly with the reciprocal bleeding of cultures into one another powered by new communications

technologies. These technologies play on ubiquitous devices, allowing constant e-mails, texting, and updates to social media. Urban centers have transformed into a patchwork of intermingling cultural signifiers born of locales near and distant, sometimes in multiple languages and with clashing symbologies. We experience a new conflation of the local and the global, giving rise to a glocal community, something the artist himself experiences every day in his adoptive New York City. "Glocal" is a term coined in 1990 by Dr. Manfred Lange in Bonn, Germany that combines "global" with "local," and in many manners is the fertile soil from which a polished and meticulous art is created by Matsu.

A chaotic fast-paced mix has become the artist's everyday context. Out of this has grown the artist's unflagging optimism, every setback only a pretext for a greater accomplishment, almost the quintessence of American optimism. In eponymous painting *The Future is Always Bright*, Matsu has found a body of pan-Asian superstitions and symbols associated with affluence, prosperity and good fortune, such as the carp or tortoise. For *Money Talks*, Matsu both pays homage to a 13<sup>th</sup> century Buddhist sage *Basu Sennin* and satirizes him, leaning on a yellow cane and holding a pink piggy bank shedding a rainbow of casino chips onto a black Perspex plinth. The sage is backed by a taxidermied deer with iridescent metallic antlers to match his beetle carapace robes; the deer is historically a symbol of the Buddha's first "turning of the wheel of the Dharma," his initial sermon in the deer park in Sarnath and in some ways the very first establishing of Buddhist ideas and liturgy.

*The Future is Always Bright* includes both large and small paintings in strange and amorphous shapes, rectilinear and curvacious, sculpture and installations that act upon the gallery's architecture, disintegrating the boundaries between his pieces and the space through novel placement of diagonal patterned carpeting and the occupation of transitional corners and edges with small objects.

Tomokazu Matsuyama grew up in both Costa Mesa, California and the town of Takayama City in Gifu Prefecture, Japan. His sense of cultural displacement and nomadic living has served as a keystone to the creation of his artwork ever since, fusing cowboy American optimism and the exquisite craftsmanship and bushido work-ethic he learned by completing a graduate degree in business management. He has completed commissions for Burton snowboards, Le Sport Sac, Nike, The Standard Hotel and a recent painting at The Cosmopolitan Hotel in Las Vegas. For two years running, he was one of three finalists for Japanese National Culture and Arts Affairs award, the most generous grant given to a Japanese artist living abroad. Presented in parallel to the exhibition at Frey Norris, Matsu has mounted his first solo museum exhibition at the Katzen Arts Center at American University in Washington, D.C..

For additional information and images please contact the gallery (415) 346-7812 or email [melissa@freynorris.com](mailto:melissa@freynorris.com).