

## Fergus McCaffrey, St. Barth

Natsuyuki Nakanishi / Jiro Takamatsu  
**August 6 – September 15, 2015**

Fergus McCaffrey, St. Barth is proud to present an exhibition of drawings and works on paper by two of the most influential Japanese artist. *Natsuyuki Nakanishi / Jiro Takamatsu* will be on view from August 6 - September 15, with an opening reception from 6:00 – 8:00 PM on Thursday, August 6.



Natsuyuki Nakanishi and Jiro Takamatsu formed the legendary collective Hi Red Center in 1963 along with Genpei Akasegawa; named from the English translations of the first characters of their surnames-- “*taka*” (high), “*aka*” (red) and “*naka*” (center). The movement was short-lived, but produced performance pieces involving the community and participants in Tokyo, which sought to eliminate the boundary between art and life. After the movement ended in 1964, Nakanishi and Takamatsu worked individually in order to pursue their own artistic practice.

In his over 50-year career, Nakanishi has constantly challenged the role of the artist and his relation to art making. Describing his art as coming to its own fruition, Nakanishi works to deconstruct formal elements to recompose them into abstract

forms. The drawings featured in the exhibition each have their own individual development, yet are explorations of a continuous idea. Though minimal in nature, Nakanishi’s works hold much depth and investigate the abstract process that gravity imposes on the medium on a flat plane.

Perhaps one of the most influential artists working in Japan during the 1960s and 1970s, Jiro Takamatsu altered the evolution of conceptual art in Japan as an artist and theorist, dominating Japanese artistic discourse during those years. The exhibition features a selection of drawings that provide insights into Takamatsu’s process as an artist to develop abstract ideas through 2D work. His series, *In the Form of a Square*, Takamatsu uses pencil and gouache to create strategic waves and straight lines, exposing the paper below. This minimally approached series of works on paper explores optical illusions and manipulation of form; a concept he had continually explored through various media during his artistic career.



Nakanishi has had solo exhibitions at numerous museums, including: Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art (1985), Seibu Museum (1989), Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art (1995/2002-03), Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo (1997), Kawamura Memorial DIC Museum of Art (2004/2012), The Shoto Museum of Art (2008). His works have also been shown in notable group exhibitions such as, *Japanese Art After 1945: Scream against the Sky*, Yokohama Museum of Art, Guggenheim Soho, and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1994); and *Tokyo*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2013). Between 1996 and 2003, Nakanishi taught at Tokyo University of the Arts.

Takamatsu represented Japan at the 1968 Venice Biennale, winning the Carlo Cardazzo Prize, and exhibited at the 1969 Biennale de Paris. He taught at Tama Art University, Tokyo between 1968 and 1972 and then at Tokyo University of the Arts from 1972-1974, and was a key figure in the development of the Mono-Ha movement. Takamatsu's work has been the subject of numerous retrospectives, including ones at the National Museum of Modern Art, Osaka (1999/ 2015); the Chiba City Museum of Art, Chiba (2000); the Fuchu Art Museum, Tokyo (2004); Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art, Fukuoka (2004); and *Tokyo*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2013).

### **About Fergus McCaffrey**

Founded in 2006, Fergus McCaffrey is internationally recognized for its groundbreaking role in promoting the work of post-war Japanese artists, as well as a quality roster of select contemporary European and American artists. Fergus McCaffrey's rigorous, thoughtful approach is marked by a commitment to discovery, often presenting the work of artists previously unrepresented or misrepresented. Dublin-born founder Fergus McCaffrey has been instrumental in introducing post-war Japanese art to a Western market: Gutai artists Sadamasa Motonaga and Kazuo Shiraga; Hi-Red Center members Jiro Takamatsu and Natsuyuki Nakanishi; and Noriyuki Haraguchi and Hitoshi Nomura from the Mono-Ha era. The gallery also exhibits the work of emerging and seminal Western artists, including Jack Early, Marcia Hafif, Birgit Jürgenssen, Richard Nonas, Sigmar Polke, Gary Rough, William Scott, and Andy Warhol.

Chelsea, NY based Fergus McCaffrey opened a second gallery location on the Caribbean island of St. Barthélemy in November 2014.

### **Images:**

1. Natsuyuki Nakanishi, *Untitled (4/12-1 4/22)*, 2011, Watercolor on paper, 12 x 9 inches (30.4 x 22.9 cm). © Natsuyuki Nakanishi; Courtesy of Fergus McCaffrey, New York / St. Barth
2. Jiro Takamatsu, *In the Form of a Square*, 1972, Pencil and bodycolor on Kent paper, 13  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 13  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches (35 x 35.1 cm). © The Estate of Jiro Takamatsu; Courtesy of Fergus McCaffrey, New York / St. Barth

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