

FERGUS McCaffREY, NEW YORK**TOSHIO YOSHIDA (1928–1997)****APRIL 27–JUNE 24, 2017****OPENING RECEPTION: APRIL 27, 6:00–8:00PM****Fergus McCaffrey announces the representation of Gutai's Toshio Yoshida with spring exhibition.**

This spring Fergus McCaffrey is honored to announce its representation of the estate of Toshio Yoshida with the first solo exhibition of the artist's work in the United States. The exhibition will include thirty works created between 1954 and 1983.

Toshio Yoshida (1928-1997) adopted the mantra of Jiro Yoshihara—"Do what has never been done before"—to explore the intersection of painting and performance, and was one of the great original thinkers and innovators of Gutai alongside Kazuo Shiraga, Sadamasa Motonaga, Atsuko Tanaka, Shozo Shimamoto, and Saburo Murakami.

The exhibition at McCaffrey begins with a selection of *Burn Paintings* from 1954, which Yoshida created

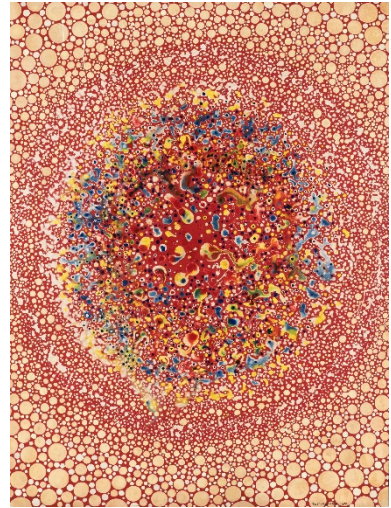
through searing and scaring plywood panels with a soldering iron, or with red hot coals. These works predate, and prefigure, Yves Klein's *Fire* paintings of 1960, and even Alberto Burri's *Combustioni* works of 1955. The audacity and directness of Yoshida's Brushstroke paintings from 1955 and 1956 have few parallels in postwar art, occupying a unique space between Nicolas de Staël and Robert Ryman. Examples of these will also be on display: *Sakuhin* (55-11), 1955 is an almost monochrome canvas, made up of hundreds of heavily impastoed brush strokes, while *Sakuhin* (56-12), 1956 features a single applied stroke of thick paint on a black wooden panel.



Action is felt in the works, as painting and performance went hand-in-hand in Gutai. The *Second Gutai Art Exhibition* at Tokyo's Ohara Kaikan in 1956 saw many legendary performances including Atsuko Tanaka in her *Electric Dress* created from fluorescent tubes, and Saburo Murakami charging through a series of paper screens to create *Passage*. At that show Yoshida, characteristically, took the most direct route to painterly innovation by pouring India ink from a watering can ten feet above an enormous canvas below.

As Michel Tapié's influence on Gutai took hold in the late 1950s, painting came more and more to the fore. Yoshida developed an even greater emphasis on the matter of painting—its matter, and how to explore its immaterial forms. In

1961 he began to use thick layers of paper clay in works such as *Sakuhin* (61-10) to form a ground onto which he splashed layer upon layer of color. But by 1965, he was embracing bubbles and foam in his paintings and sculptures. The instability and temporality of the material soon gave way to painterly renditions of cellular forms and water droplets like *Sakuhin*, 1966, and kinetic sculptures such as *Foam Pattern 2125*, 1972. (All on display at Fergus McCaffrey.)



Fergus McCaffrey gallery has been at the forefront of expanding knowledge about Gutai internationally for over a decade. Research into Toshio Yoshida's career is in the early stages of development, but Fergus McCaffrey, with Gutai scholar Koichi Kawasaki, will publish of a catalogue raisonné Toshio Yoshida's work in 2019.

Yoshida has been featured in every major Gutai retrospective including "Gutai: Japanische Avant-garde 1954-1965," Mathildenhöhe, Darmstadt, Germany, 1991; "Gutai," Jeu de Paume, Paris, in 1991; "Gutai: The Spirit of an Era," National Art Center, Tokyo, in 2012; and "Gutai: Splendid Playground," Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, in 2013. Important examples of Yoshida's works exist in the collections of Les Abattoires, Toulouse, France; Ashiya City Museum of Art and History, Japan; Glenstone Museum, Potomac, MD; The Pinault Collection, Paris; and The Rachofsky Collection, Dallas, TX.



About Fergus McCaffrey

Founded in 2006, Fergus McCaffrey is internationally recognized for its groundbreaking role in promoting the work of postwar Japanese artists such as Sadamasa Motonaga, Natsuyuki Nakanishi, Kazuo Shiraga, and Jiro Takamatsu. The gallery also exhibits the work of emerging and seminal Western artists such as Anna Conway, Jack Early, Marcia Hafif, Birgit Jürgenssen, Richard Nonas, Sigmar Polke, and Carol Rama.

Images:

1. Toshio Yoshida in studio, unidentified location, 1969.
Photograph: Shunk-Kender © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2014.R.20)
2. *BURN by CF No. 16*, 1954. Burnt wood, 28 5/8 x 24 inches (72.8 x 61 cm)
© The Estate of Toshio Yoshida; Courtesy of Fergus McCaffrey, New York
3. *Sakuhin (56-12)*, 1956. Oil on board, 35 7/8 x 35 7/8 inches (91 x 91 cm)
© Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland
4. *Sakuhin*, 1966. Oil on canvas, 44 3/4 x 58 1/8 inches (113.5 x 147.7 cm)
© Private collection, Tokyo
5. *Foam Pattern 2125*, 1972. Plastic tape in acrylic box, 11 3/4 x 23 1/2 inches (30 x 59.8 cm)
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For press inquiries, please contact: Alexandra von Stumberg McCaffrey

Tel +1 212 988 2200 Email alexandra@fergusmccaffrey.com

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