

## Tomoharu Murakami

McCaffrey Fine Art, New York

Exhibition Dates: March 24–April 28, 2012

Gallery Hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10.00 A.M.–6.00 P.M.

McCaffrey Fine Art is proud to present a solo exhibition of paintings and works on paper by Tomoharu Murakami (b. 1938). This will be the artist's first solo exhibition in New York.

Though he works with oil paint and graphite on paper and canvas, Murakami's working methods scarcely resemble traditional means of painting. His most representative works are black monochrome paintings in oil paint which he began making in 1961. Since the mid 1970's his technique has been the application of hundreds of thousands of minute dots of pigment laid down on canvas, one on top of another, creating skin after skin. White monochrome works on paper are undertaken in the opposite manner, by subtraction. White paint and graphite are applied only to be worn away by countless precise strokes of a sharp point on the paper surface.

Murakami's paintings and works on paper evolve almost organically over months and years through a dawn to dusk working regime that continues inexorably. The results are dense fields of not quite monochrome pigment that possess individual character, singular presence, and authority. Each work is a meditation on the meaning and experience of what it is to live, and represents the artist's existence as he passes from birth to death. By encapsulating and documenting the passage of time in the tradition of the *memento mori* genre, these modestly scaled and rare works yield a beauty and presence that resonate beyond the visual.

Murakami abandoned art making between 1963 and 1974 and since then he has chosen to undertake his life and work with minimal interaction with the art world. Since 1978 the artist has regularly exhibited with Shigeru Yokota Gallery, Tokyo. Murakami has only occasionally shown his work outside of Japan, most notably at James Corcoran Gallery, Santa Monica. A retrospective of Murakami's work took place at the Nagoya City Art Museum in 2010.

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