

Tatsuo Ikeda: BRAHMAN**Fergus McCaffrey Tokyo**

April 2 – May 7, 2022

Fergus McCaffrey is pleased to present *Tatsuo Ikeda: BRAHMAN*, opening at the gallery's Tokyo location on Saturday, April 2, 2022.



Concurrent with the artist's participation in the 2022 edition of the Venice Biennale, as well as the much lauded group exhibition, *Surrealism Beyond Borders*, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (October 11, 2021 – January 30, 2022) and Tate Modern, London (February 24 – August 29, 2022), this solo Tokyo show features twenty paintings on paper from 1975–1980 from the artist's seminal series: *BRAHMAN*.

Tatsuo Ikeda (1928–2020) was born in Saga Prefecture, Japan, in 1928. At the age of fifteen, he was conscripted into the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service as a kamikaze pilot. Spared by the ending of World War II, Ikeda moved to Tokyo and attended Tama Art University where he became engaged in Taro Okamoto and Kiyoteru Hanada's Avant-garde Art Study Group. While the artist's work of the 1950s engaged politically through reportage and satire, the following decade saw a break from social concerns as he began to explore new motifs and consider the relationship between human consciousness and the body, with series, *Elliptical Space* (1963–64), and, *Toy World* (1966–70).

By 1973, Ikeda adopted and committed to a contemplative and philosophical approach to his practice—embarking on his historic *BRAHMAN* series, centered on a visual myth about the beginnings of the universe. With *BRAHMAN*, the artist found complete emancipation from the social causes that pervaded his earlier work to embrace a state of eternal truth and bliss occupied by genderless embryonic forms in infinite space. Adding airbrush to his repertory, he produced fantastically rendered paintings addressing Hindu philosophy, biological forms, and sexuality. Narrating his own story of genesis, turning his attention inward, the artist explored the metaphysical bonds that underlie and unify the universe—defining these paintings as a “wormhole connecting the inner and outer worlds.”

Completed in 1988, the series consists of ten chapters, produced over the course of fifteen years. *BRAHMAN* marked a pivotal moment of visual and philosophical innovation for Ikeda—as his journey to understanding the unfolding events of the universe and the ever-changing array of lived experience.

**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, Kazuo Shiraga and Jiro Takamatsu. The gallery also exhibits the work of emerging and seminal Western artists including Marcia Hafif, Birgit Jürgenssen, Richard Nonas, Sigmar Polke and Carol Rama. In keeping with the gallery's commitment to Japanese art and culture, McCaffrey opened its Tokyo outpost in March 2018 with an exhibition of paintings by Robert Ryman. The gallery's 2019–2021 program featured exhibitions by

Matthew Barney, Carolee Schneemann, Kazuo Shiraga, Min Tanaka, Jasper Johns, and Richard Serra, among others.

For press inquiries, please contact:

Tel: +81 (0)3 6447 2660

Email: press@fergusmccaffrey.com

Images: 1. Tatsuo Ikeda, *BRAHMAN: Chapter 2: Helix Granular Movement-9*, 1979. Acrylic on paper, 15 1/2 x 15 1/2 inches (39.3 x 39.3 cm) © Estate of Tatsuo Ikeda; 2. Tatsuo Ikeda, *BRAHMAN: Chapter 2: Space Egg-7*, 1976. Acrylic on paper, 15 1/2 x 16 inches (39.5 x 40.5 cm) © Estate of Tatsuo Ikeda