

Tokyo International Gallery

Solo Exhibition

Visible／Vanishing／Drawn／Unpainting

Exhibition Period : 2025. 11. 1. Sat. – 12. 20. Sat

Opening Reception : 2025. 11. 1. Sat. 17:00 ~ 20:00



Tokyo International Gallery presents a solo exhibition
by Masayuki Arai
“Visible／Vanishing／Drawn／Unpainting”

Tokyo International Gallery (Shinagawa / Tennoz) is pleased to announce the solo exhibition “Visible／Vanishing／Drawn／Unpainting” by Masayuki Arai, opening on Saturday, November 1, 2025.

Arai’s practice begins with imagining the space beyond a photograph affixed to the canvas. Paint, discharged through a syringe, accumulates in multiple layers on the surface, gradually transforming into a complex and singular image.

The title *Visible / Invisible / Paintable / Unpaintable* reflects the very process of his creation. While continuing to paint what lies beyond the visible in the photograph, Arai eventually stops his hand. Confronted with the resulting work, viewers are drawn into their own chain of imagination from a different standpoint than the artist.

This exhibition will present approximately ten new works that trace various stages of this process. We invite you to experience Arai’s transversal practice, which moves fluidly between reality and imagination.



= Exhibition Statement =

The *Like painting* series begins with sourcing photographs from the internet and attaching them to the canvas. From there, I expand the image by imaginatively painting what lies outside the photographic frame. Through this process, the space of painting emerges.

Instead of a brush, I use a syringe to deposit paint—a method that allows me to engage simultaneously with paint as material substance and with painting as illusion. The rectangular traces left on the surface mark the removal of the photographs, signaling the transition from photograph to painting. In some works, this act is layered with multiple photographs.

Why place a photograph on the canvas? It is an attempt to question the very beginning of painting—or, conversely, to relinquish it. Even without a clearly defined subject or theme, painting can come into being. Since Surrealism, an interest in the unconscious and in chance has linked painting to the act of “encounter.” Today, this is no longer a mere re-enactment, but rather a framework that bridges reality and imagination within the contemporary information environment. From this idea arose the act of extending a photograph outward through imagination. And the question “where does it begin?” inevitably invites the question “where does it end?”

The daily flood of uploaded images and videos intersects with the realities grasped by our bodies. Reality and imagination fragment and overlap, and their boundaries are increasingly lost. While photographs cut out and present a part of reality, advances in image manipulation—and now the emergence of generative AI—have subverted this very premise. Our sense of reality not only shifts from person to person, but wavers already at a deeper, more fundamental stage.

In neuroscience, it has been pointed out that the human capacity to distinguish boundaries is never complete, leaving us vulnerable to misrecognition between reality and imagination. Painting embodies a similar condition: viewed up close, only the sheer materiality of paint is perceivable; from a distance, an image emerges. At what point does this visual inversion between substance and image occur in front of a painting? And is it truly possible to share that boundary?

The syringe method restricts arbitrariness, continually posing the question of when paint becomes image. Within the simultaneous processes of generation and collapse, the traditional notion of “completion” is rendered obsolete. It is precisely in this lack of freedom, in things not going as intended, that my relationship with painting resides. By absorbing fragments from the outside, passing them through the inside, and opening them outward once again, painting breathes—like the rhythm of inhalation and exhalation.

Arai Masayuki

ARTIST PROFILE

ARAI Masayuki

<BIOGRAPHY>

1984 Born in the United States, raised in Osaka

2009 BFA in Oil Painting, Aichi University of the Arts

2011 MFA in Oil Painting and Printmaking, Aichi University of the Arts

Currently based in Ryugasaki, Ibaraki Prefecture



<PROFILE>

Working from photographs collected online, Arai creates paintings by imaginatively extending beyond the frame. The multilayered surfaces, constructed by dripping paint with a syringe, traverse the boundaries between reality and the virtual, chance and intention—establishing painting as an open site in continual transformation.

Major solo exhibitions include *LIKE PAINTINGS* (Primo Marella Gallery, Milan, 2025), *Imaginary Accumulation* (Mitsukoshi Contemporary, Tokyo, 2024), and *Like a Painting* (STANDING PINE, Aichi, 2021). Past participations include *VOCA 2014* (The Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo, 2014) and the *Aichi Triennale 2013* (Nayabashi Area: Toyo Warehouse, Aichi, 2013).

<SOLO EXHIBITIONS>

- 2025 Visible / Invisible / Paintable / Unpaintable, Tokyo International Gallery, Tokyo
- 2025 LIKE PAINTINGS, Primo Marella Gallery Milano, Milan
- 2024 Imaginary Accumulation, Mitsukoshi Contemporary, Tokyo
- 2023 Like Paintings 005, Ginza Tsutaya Books Art Wall, Tokyo
Like paintings, Primo Marella Gallery Lugano, Lugano
- 2022 Like paintings, Nihombashi Mitsukoshi Main Store Art Salon, Tokyo
Like paintings, un petit garage, Tokyo
- 2021 Like paintings, STANDING PINE, Aichi
- 2019 Distorted Horizon, STANDING PINE, Aichi
- 2016 vanilla:, STANDING PINE, Aichi
- 2011 picture picture, YEBISU ART LABO, Aichi

<GROUP EXHIBITIONS>

- 2025 The Park Before This One, *Machiya Art Gallery, Ibaraki*
2023 CONCERTO, *Lurf Museum, Tokyo*
2021 STUDIO KODAI vol.2, *CAPSULE, Tokyo*
2017 Objédar: In the Midst of the Future, *Kyomachiya Campus Ninigi, Kyoto*
2016 INTERWOVEN: A Generation Interlaced, Nagoya City Art Gallery Yada, Aichi
2015 Dreaming Beyond "In the Midst of the Future", ARTZONE, Kyoto
Slice Pack, Galerie16, Kyoto
Toward the Future in the Making, Museum and Archives, Kyoto Institute of Technology, Kyoto
2014 VOCA 2014: The Vision of Contemporary Art, The Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo
Lagrangian Point, Gallery PARC, Kyoto
2013 Aichi Triennale 2013, Nayabashi Area: Toyo Warehouse, Aichi
Summer Drawing Show, GALLERY SIDE2, Tokyo
relational map, STANDING PINE, Aichi
2012 Utsusu (To Project / To Reflect), Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art Gallery, Aichi
Utsusu (To Project / To Reflect), florist_gallery N, Aichi
2011 dreaming the world, MEGI HOUSE, Kagawa

<ART FAIR>

- 2025 MIART 2025, MiCo, Milan (represented by Primo Marella Gallery)
2024 Artissima 2024, Oval Lingotto Fiere, Turin (represented by Primo Marella Gallery)
2023 Artissima 2023, Oval Lingotto Fiere, Turin (represented by Primo Marella Gallery)
2019 KIAF ART SEOUL 2019, COEX Hall A&B, Seoul (represented by STANDING PINE)
ART BUSAN 2019, BEXCO, Busan (represented by STANDING PINE)
2018 ART021, Shanghai Exhibition Center, Shanghai (represented by STANDING PINE)

<CV>

- 2022 Selected as a recipient of the 35th Holbein Scholarship
2014 Selected for VOCA 2014: The Vision of Contemporary Art

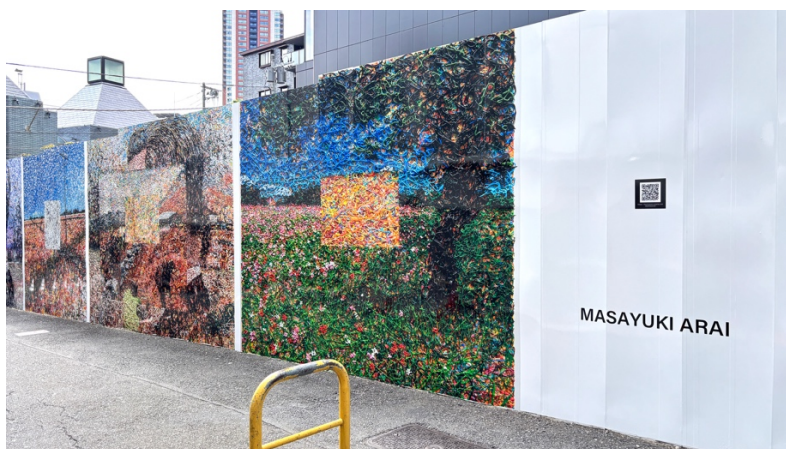
■ Exhibition Overview

- Title : “Visible／Vanishing／Drawn／Unpainting”
- Artist : Masayuki Arai
- Venue : Tokyo International Gallery
- Address : TERRADA ART COMPLEX II, 2F, 1-32-8 Higashi-Shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo
- Dates : November 1 (Sat) – December 20 (Sat), 2025 12:00-18:00
- Closed : Mondays and Tuesdays / Wednesdays by appointment only

■ Opening Reception

- Date : November 1 (Sat)
- Time : 17:00-20:00

■ ROPPONGI ART NIGHT 2025



As part of Roppongi Art Night 2025, which aims to propose a new lifestyle of enjoying art in daily life and to create a pioneering model of urban development in Tokyo, works by Arai Masayuki are being exhibited at the site of the former Azabu Police Station, designated for the construction of the temporary Azabu Fire Station. (HP : <https://roppongiartnight.com/2025/programs/624/>)

【 Contact 】

Tokyo International Gallery Co., Ltd.

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