

RAMIKEN

TAKAKO YAMAGUCHI

7+7

October 16 - November 20, 2021

Garments painted thread by thread, each a self-portrait from a photograph of the artist modeling her own clothes. She emerges from the outskirts in glimpses of her skin - a bit of neck, some cleavage, an inside elbow. She flirts in and out of self-representation like a cat, cleverly hiding herself by standing still in plain view. The compositions are tightly cropped, exerting brilliant restraint in avoiding overt sexuality in a tactical repression that produces an undeniable eroticism. The color is shocking.

Seven smaller works, 18 x 24 inches, oil on linen, join the conversation from a completely different position. Painted from photographs of small plaster and cardboard models constructed by Yamaguchi, these white-on-white works appear as apparitions, tricking the eye with simple geometric patterns and shapes that appear to be reliefs. Is it a monochrome, if the additional colors are the shadows within a depiction of a hypothetical monochromatic space? Is this trompe l'oeil, or modernist abstraction? Kitsch or ideology?

Yamaguchi has a knack for putting any expectations of her art in uniquely uncomfortable positions, as she has unrelentingly challenged the status quo throughout over forty years of making art. The two bodies of work in this show are the products of patient labor. Seven paintings from one body of work, seven from another, installed in one room. What we are presented with is not an evolution, but an attitude - genuinely punk, refusing to take shortcuts, a commitment to a fundamental violation - which has continually set Yamaguchi apart for the length of her career.

Takako Yamaguchi (b. 1952, Okayama, Japan) lives and works in Santa Monica, California. *Takako Yamaguchi: Smoking Women*, an exhibition of two paintings made by Yamaguchi in 1994-1995, is currently on view at Egan and Rosen at 11 E 78th Street. Yamaguchi is also currently featured in *With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972-1985*, at the Hessel Museum of Art, through November 28, 2021.