

Kiyoshi NAKAGAMI

Light

February 1st – March 1st, 2025

Galerie Richard, Paris presents nine paintings by Kiyoshi Nakagami on his solo exhibition entitled “Light” from February 1st to March 1st 2025. Galerie Richard has represented the artist since 2003. Kiyoshi Nakagami is one of Japan's most respected artists. His 2018 paintings with deep contrasts and dark areas through the contribution of Indian ink are juxtaposed with recent new works that mark a return to color and greater overall luminosity.

“As a painter, there's nothing more difficult than representing light in paint. Those who succeed are the greatest painters, the greatest artists”. Kiyoshi Nakagami

He is not impressed by his fellow artists, with the exception of James Turrell, whom he assists with his installations in Japan. The public is invited to contemplate the arrangement and gradation of light density in the painting. This density varies from one work to the next, as does its dispersion in the dark space. The light spreads through a series of sumptuous, perfect gradations. Before the light reaches its focal point, it must pass through an indeterminate vaporous material. The artist's ability to reproduce the beauty of light diffusion in a painting has no equal.

His first exhibition in New York was the subject of a text by the great art historian Donald Kuspit published in Artforum in December 2012: “As a result Nakagami ‘paints’ by depositing his acrylic layer on the canvas, moving it, and allowing gravity to move the pigment he has enriched with mica. The result is ripple-filled works that evoke cascades of light, devoid of brushstrokes. This absence of gestuality also suggests Neumann's works, recalling the means by which he tried to avoid encumbering the experience of pure color. Similarly, for Nakagami, removing the trace of the work's creator's hand is a means of facilitating meditative contemplation (1).

Because he believes that mankind has no control over nature, he allows natural processes to develop in his paintings. “Nakagami does not reproduce the light of the natural world. The light in his paintings exists only in paint. The artist's awareness of time in the concentrated moment during which light manifests itself is very closely associated with the surprise of inadvertently encountering something ephemeral and sublime” (2).

Nakagami was born in Shizuoka in 1949. His works are in the collections of the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo, the Osaka Museum of Modern Art, the Yokohama Museum of Modern Art, the Kamakura & Hayama Museum of Modern Art, the Kanagawa Prefectural Gallery...Critics Donald Kuspit, Daniel Gauss, C.B. Liddell, Taney Roniger, Jonathan Goodman, Robert C. Morgan have written about his exhibitions.

(1) Kuspit, Donald. Kiyoshi Nakagami - Galerie Richard, Artforum, December 2012, p.278-279

(2) Yamanashi, Toshio. On the New Work of Kiyoshi Nakagami: Light from Afar, in catalog Kiyoshi Nakagami, The Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura & Hayama, p.15