

JIRO OSUGA

THE THEATRE OF THE WORLD

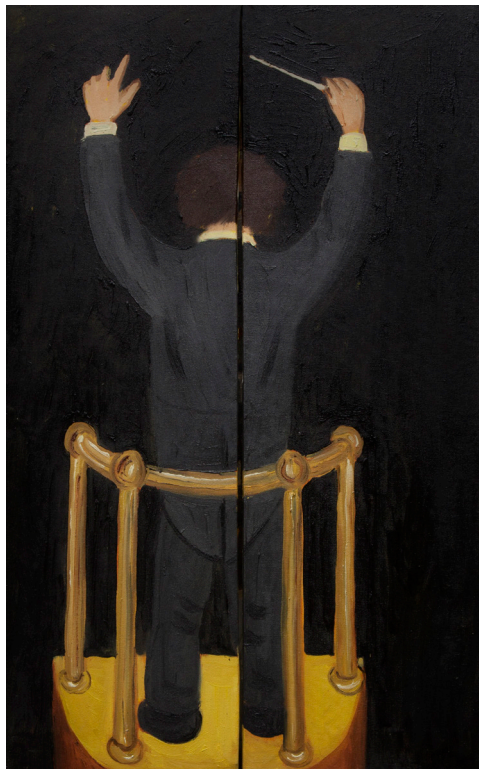
529 West 20th Street
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APRIL 9 - MAY 9, 2015

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OPENING RECEPTION
THURSDAY APRIL 9, 6 - 8PM

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Orchestra, 2014, Oil on canvas, closed: 30 1/8 x 19 1/8 in, open: 30 1/8 x 37 1/2 in

Flowers Gallery is pleased to announce the first solo presentation by London, UK-based artist, Jiro Osuga at Flowers, New York.

The title of the exhibition is derived from a painting made over twenty years ago while Osuga was still a student at art school. Back then, dissatisfied with the small intricate paintings that he was making, Osuga took a nine foot piece of un-stretched canvas and started filling it ad hoc with observations of the world around him. Over the next three weeks the huge canvas gradually filled up with an encyclopaedic array of images - of market stalls, restaurants, flora, fauna and the solar system, until eventually, a proscenium arch and an auditorium emerged, transforming the painting into a theatre in which the whole world was presented on the stage.

The 'world as theatre' has remained a key metaphor in Osuga's work ever since. Individual scenes from the original painting have kept on reappearing on smaller canvases over the subsequent two decades, and have supplied the content for the recent paintings included in this show. Osuga is fascinated by what he describes as "*the maddening richness and complexity of the World*". Exploring everything from day-to-day activities to dreams and nightmares, he draws upon his life experiences, both in his native Tokyo and London, to create what is cumulatively a complete microcosmic stage.

The artist himself is often the lead player in this personal theatre, at times dressed up in different guises. In one painting he stars as a Roman legionary, while in the painting *The Multitude*, he plays every man, woman, child and animal within sight.

Despite their apparent humor, many of the works have an undertone of melancholy which Osuga likens to *"the gulf between the heightened fantasy on the glittering stage and the spectators in the darkness of the auditorium."* This theatrical metaphor suggests the artist to be a detached observer of the spectacle of the world.

For the visitor to the exhibition however, the show promises to be a fully participatory experience. Some of the works play with the implied space between the viewer and the painting. Others are interactive - hinged panels and strings unfold mini-narratives such as a gunfight, a coin flip, or the peeling of a banana. By manipulating the space both inside and outside the painting, Osuga invites the viewer to enter the scene as a player in his theatre.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

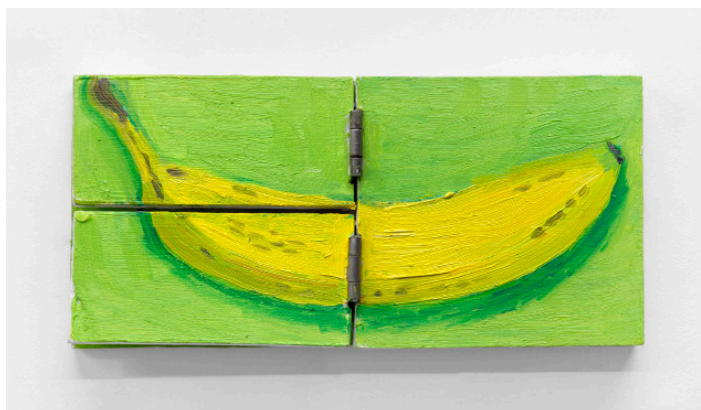
Jiro Osuga was born in Tokyo and grew up in Japan and the UK. He studied Fine Art at Central St Martins, Chelsea and the Royal College of Art in London. Recent exhibitions include: *The Everyday Joys of Japan: Paintings by Jiro Osuga*, Charles B. Wang Center, New York; *Queen's Terrace Café*, London; *Japanese Embassy*, London; and *Streatham Festival*, London. Osuga's work is in both the Museum of London and the Royal College of Art.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Opening Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 6pm

Image Credits: *Image courtesy of Flowers Gallery, London and New York*

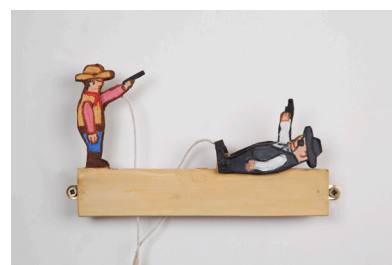
For further information and images please contact Brent Beamon on brent@flowersgallery.com or 212 439 1700.



Banana, 2014, Oil on board, 4 3/8 x 8 7/8 in



The Multitude, 2013, Oil on canvas, 35 1/4 x 51 1/2 in



Gunfight, 2014, Acrylic on board, 6 x 9 in