

# JIRO OSUGA

## THE RIVER

Online and by appointment

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Flowers Gallery is pleased to present *The River*, a series of recent paintings by Jiro Osuga charting the dramatic vistas of London's River Thames from the intimate and personal perspective of walking its south bank.

Following an initial painting completed in 2018 featuring a section of the river on the artist's daily commute from Kew Bridge to Barnes, Osuga spent the Summer of 2019 walking on the south side of the Thames between the Southbank and the Thames Barrier, drawing, as he states, "every single building, every bridge, every kind of boat."

The drawings provided the basis for paintings that would each present a composite view of the north-facing riverscape, featuring dramatic shifts in vantage point and perspective. Often painted in long, panoramic formats, Osuga creates the sensation of walking along the river, witnessing the changing views and experiencing the vast bridges leaping overhead. While appearing vertiginously complex at first glance, an unfolding narrative becomes apparent, suggesting a visual journey taking place over time. Osuga likens their elongated horizontal format to Chinese scroll paintings, stating that the de-centralised composition guides you to "travel along them."

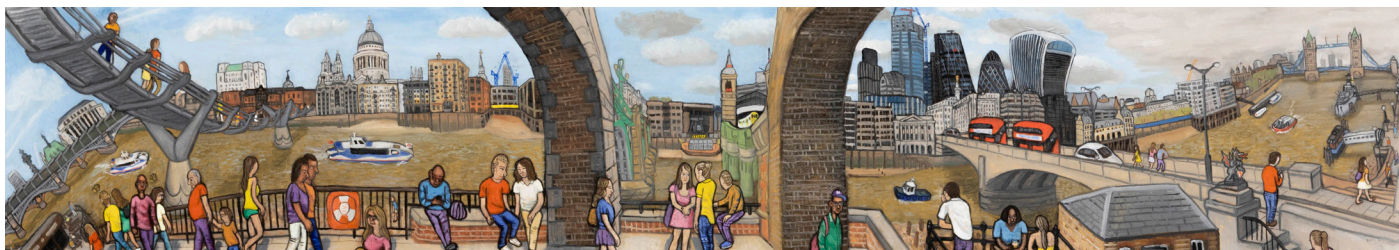
The paintings combine what Osuga describes as the 'strip-like' viewpoint of walking along the river with a flattened aerial perspective. For example, *The River, 8. Canary Wharf to the Thames Barrier* (the last painting in the series) portrays both the dramatic serpentine curve of the Isle of Dogs with the riverside view experienced at first hand. In this painting, the scene is also compressed and curled vertically, as though thwarting the edge of the canvas and the resulting journey's end.

Although the scenes are populated with brightly coloured figures, Osuga describes the foreground activity as schematic, representing the flux and character of each section of the river, rather than individual encounters. He says: "for years I always preferred buildings to people. That's what attracted me about the river, it's not so much about the human activity."

For more information and images please contact Hannah Hughes:  
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*The River, 8. Canary Wharf to the Thames Barrier, 2019,*  
oil on canvas, 130 x 162 cm



Captions from top: *The River, 6. Blackfriars Bridge to Tower Bridge*, 2019, oil on canvas, 44 x 242 cm; *The River, 2. Barnes Bridge to Putney Bridge*, 2019, oil on canvas, 104 x 118 cm

## ABOUT JIRO OSUGA

Jiro Osuga was born in Tokyo in 1968 and grew up in Japan and the UK. He studied Fine Art at Central St Martins, Chelsea School of Art and the Royal College of Art in London. Solo exhibitions include *The Everyday Joys of Japan: Paintings by Jiro Osuga*, Charles B. Wang Center, New York; and *Café Jiro*, Queens Terrace Café, London; and his work has been presented in numerous group exhibitions including the Royal Academy *Summer Exhibition*, London; *The Ruth Borchard Collection, Self-Portraiture in the 21st Century*, Kings Place, London; *Iro Iro – Japan, In Colour*, Japanese Embassy, London; and Streatham Festival, London. Osuga's work is in the collections of the Guildhall Art Gallery, London, the Museum of London and the Ruth Borchard Collection. His work was featured in *The Streatham Sketchbook*, by Jiro Osuga and Mireille Galinou, published by Your London Publishing in 2017.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

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