

VENUS OVER MANHATTAN

Press Release

SUSUMU KAMIJO: FISH & FLOWERS

Opening: Tuesday, June 10th, 2025
6:00 – 8:00 PM

39 Great Jones Street
New York, NY 10012



(New York, NY) – **Venus Over Manhattan** is pleased to present ***Fish & Flowers***, a solo exhibition comprising fourteen new paintings by Japanese-born, Brooklyn-based artist **Susumu Kamijo**. Opening on Tuesday, **June 10th**, at **39 Great Jones Street**, the exhibition marks Kamijo's third solo presentation with the gallery, following *The Motherland* (2023) and *Jack & Venus* (2022).

The paintings on view in *Fish & Flowers* show Kamijo expanding his visual vocabulary, introducing new subjects and compositional strategies while preserving the vibrant, graphic style that has become his signature. Widely recognized for his energetic abstractions of animals—especially poodles, but also birds, sheep, and landscapes—Kamijo now turns his attention to flowers and fish, classical motifs employed as fresh vehicles for exploring gesture, color, and surface.

All of the works on view take flowers as their nominal subject. The compositions vary in structure and arrangement, ranging from densely packed clusters of blossoms atop slender stems to commanding, isolated blooms set against sparse, minimally articulated backgrounds. Ka-

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mijo renders these botanical forms with exaggerated, voluminous petals that frame stamens and pistils articulated in meticulous detail. With an architectonic clarity reminiscent of the inner structure of certain orchids, these interior elements register a quiet unease. Their unsettling precision introduces a taut visual tension with the planes of color that shape the surrounding petals, complicating the conventional perception of floral imagery as merely decorative or innocuous.

Several paintings feature fish, which Kamijo renders with stylized fins, piranha-like teeth, and rounded heads that echo the sweeping contours of his flowers. He assembles these figures from interwoven contours that trap shifting transparencies, producing shapes that hover between flatness and layered depth. As outlines converge and forms collapse, fish give way to flowers, and the boundary between figure and ground begins to unravel. The result is a set of vibrant, near all-over compositions that privilege formal play over the spatial hierarchies of conventional still-lives.

The fish and flowers that populate Kamijo's compositions are subjects long associated with still-life painting, recalling the lush arrangements of Dutch Old Masters and the refined simplicity of

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Japanese *ukiyo-e* prints. Kamijo situates these subjects outside their customary contexts, setting aside the symbolic and narrative associations historically invited by still-life painting. Where traditional compositions often relied on carefully chosen objects—wilted flowers, filleted fish, or abundant tablescapes—to convey moral lessons about vanity, mortality, and impermanence, Kamijo shifts his focus to the formal qualities of his subjects. His stylized fish and flowers move between legible figuration and enigmatic structure, compelling sustained visual attention and mapping the subtle threshold between representation and abstraction.

Integral to Kamijo's practice is his distinctive use of Flashe paint. Its matte, velvety finish yields intensely saturated hues, privileging graphic immediacy over illusionistic depth. His use of clear gesso, by contrast, sets areas of exposed canvas against sharply defined planes of pigment, generating tension through crisp edges and spatial layering. This visual interplay recalls the flattened, lyrical compositions of Milton Avery and the early abstractions of Philip Guston, underscoring Kamijo's commitment to formal experimentation. Through carefully chosen materials and meticulous technique, he foregrounds the structural aspects of painting, allowing recognizable subjects to surface momentarily before breaking apart into passages of line, shape, and color.

ABOUT SUSUMU KAMIJO

Susumu Kamijo was born in 1975 in Nagano, Japan, and currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He earned his BFA from the University of Oregon in 2000 and his MFA from the University of Washington in 2002. Kamijo is celebrated for vibrant, graphic compositions depicting the natural world, most notably abstracted portrayals of poodles. These spirited forms serve as

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vehicles for exploring pattern, color, and surface with a playful yet rigorous approach. Recent series have expanded his visual vocabulary, incorporating birds, foliage, and other elements, further enriching his distinct artistic language. Kamijo's work has subject of numerous solo exhibitions both stateside and abroad, including recent presentations at Stems Gallery, Brussels; Perrotin, Hong Kong; Maki Gallery, Tokyo; Venus Over Manhattan, New York; and Perrotin, Paris. His work frequently features in group exhibitions around the world, including recent exhibitions at the New-York Historical Society, New York; Timothy Taylor Gallery, New York; Jack Hanley Gallery, East Hampton; Bortolami, Las Vegas; What Museum, Tokyo; and Marvin Gardens, Queens.

ABOUT VENUS OVER MANHATTAN

Venus Over Manhattan is dedicated to illuminating the work of a diverse range of historical and contemporary artists through dynamic rotating exhibitions and scholarly publications. Since it was founded by Adam Lindemann in 2012, the gallery has been responsible for revitalizing and establishing commercial, scholarly, and public interest for artists such as Peter Saul, Richard Mayhew, and Joan Brown. Venus Over Manhattan operates from Great Jones Street in New York City, and its distinct exhibitions program, which has recently featured works by Claude Lawrence, Peter Saul, Richard Mayhew, Chéri Samba, Keiichi Tanaami, and Joan Brown, attracts a broad spectrum of collectors, curators, writers, and arts enthusiasts. As art world trends continue to shift, Venus Over Manhattan remains steadfast in its focus on the discovery of artists across generations, geographies, and cultures and to expanding the depth of artists celebrated across global institutions, by audiences, and within the art market.

For additional information about the presentation and availability, please contact the gallery at info@venusovermanhattan.com

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39 Great Jones Street
New York, NY 10012

GALLERY HOURS

Tuesday – Saturday
10:00 am – 6:00 pm

PRESS CONTACT

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IMAGE CREDITS

Wildflower, 2025
Perfect Summer, 2025
Whispering Lilies, 2025
Two of Us, 2025
Beach Flowers, 2025

Images of all works by Susumu Kamijo: Courtesy the artist and Venus Over Manhattan, New York.