

# ULTERIOR

Feria Material Vol.10 | Stand A23 | Gaku Tsutaja



Gaku Tsutaja, *Onitaiji: Fall*, 2024. Acrylic on cotton canvas. 72 x 83 inches / 182.9 x 210.8 cm

Uterior Gallery is pleased to present a group of works by a Japanese mixed-media artist Gaku Tsutaja, inspired by the history and concept of Diego Rivera's mural, *Man at the Crossroad* (1933), at Feria Material in Mexico City. Three large paintings on canvas will dominate the booth, and related sculptures and a series of black and white drawings will accompany the set of paintings. The gallery will be located at Stand A23 at Expo Reforma from February 8 through February 11.

Rivera's work *Man at the Crossroads* was conceived initially as a three-panel painting—taking a cue from this fact, Tsutaja created three sequential unstretched canvas paintings that are directly tacked on the wall. The mural by Rivera, the fresco commissioned for the Rockefeller Center in New York in 1933, was censored and destroyed before its completion by order of Nelson Rockefeller due to its Leftist contents. Rivera later repainted this mural in Mexico City and titled it, *Man Controller of the Universe*. This painting is still on view almost a century later. Tsutaja's choice of material, painting on cotton canvas tacked to the wall, points to this removal and recreation of Rivera's work. This material makes it possible for the work to be easily de-installed and transported; and by omitting the stretchers traditionally used with easel paintings, Tsutaja aims to give these paintings mobility—the freedom to travel. As Rivera's mural was received differently at two different locations, New York and Mexico, Tsutaja imagines the mobility of her work will make them unbounded and keep them from censorship by local or domestic politics.

Tsutaja says, "Art supports the history, how it will be reimagined, remembered, and archived as the society's memory." History repeats, and the artist tries to find the channel to register the current issues in the art and connect them with the past and future.

Gaku Tsutaja, born in 1974 in Tokyo, Japan, earned her MFA from SUNY Purchase College in 2018. Currently based in Queens, NY, Tsutaja utilizes multimedia to unveil the multiplicity of perspectives, shedding light on the invisible and suppressed histories and memories of the nuclear age. Her work captures the fading voices of those who have experienced the horrors of nuclear events.

Tsutaja's artistic journey has gained international recognition through exhibitions at prestigious venues. Notable showcases include solo exhibitions at Uterior Gallery, New York, NY (2017, 2020, 2023); Maruki Gallery for The Hiroshima Panels, Saitama, Japan (2022); the Hawaii Triennial 2022, Honolulu, HI; the Rubin Center for Visual Arts at UTEP, El Paso, TX (2021); and Shirley Fiterman Art Center at BMCC in New York, NY (2019). Tsutaja's exhibitions and artworks have been widely reviewed in numerous outlets including *The New York Times*, *Artforum*, and *NHK Broadcast* among others.

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