

Masami Teraoka

Masami Teraoka's Apocalyptic Theater/The Pope, Putin, Peach Boy and Pussy Riot Galore

January 9 – February 20, 2016

Join us for an opening with the artist
on Saturday, January 9
from 4 - 6 pm



Masami Teraoka, *Pussy Riot / Swan Lake* (2015)

Oil on panel, with 24 karat gold-leaf frame

119 1/8 x 112 1/2 x 2 3/4 inches (open)

San Francisco, CA: Catharine Clark Gallery presents, *Masami Teraoka's Apocalyptic Theater/Pussy Riot, The Pope, Putin, and Peach Boy*, a solo exhibition of new and selected work by Masami Teraoka. On view January 9 – February 20, 2016, the exhibit features four large triptych paintings more than a decade in the making, in which Teraoka continues his brazen portrayals of abusive power. While shocking and lurid, the exhibit (titled after the villains and heroes in the artist's theatrical renderings) is also sardonic and impishly humorous: power changes hands, traditional roles reverse, and fates are reimagined. Mirroring the triptych construction of his paintings, Teraoka's tableaus literally and figuratively open the secretive and dark underworlds of institutional power to Teraoka's singular brand of unabashed truth-telling, searing criticism, and playful ridicule. The artist will be present for the exhibition opening on Saturday, January 9, from 4 -6 pm.

Teraoka's work in multi-frame panels, wrought in the style of Medieval and Renaissance religious triptychs, began in the early 1990s as a response to revelations of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. Since then, Teraoka has used his stylistic transformation to evocatively explore topics ranging from the invasion of Iraq, to Karl Rove, to gender stereotypes. In his latest body of work, Teraoka draws on specific current events in which members of the music group Pussy Riot, The Pope, Vladimir Putin, and the geisha Momotarō play central roles. In *Pussy Riot/Russian Orthodox Confessors*, Teraoka references the band's 2012 protest

performance in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Savior. Tried and imprisoned for 'hooliganism,' Pussy Riot drew world-wide attention for their caustic views of Vladimir Putin and the Catholic Church. Here, in Teraoka's Kabuki-esque continuation of the narrative, Pussy Riot presides over the confessional of penitent priests, giving them, according to Teraoka, "a crash course in Sexuality 101," which includes their participation in a jumping massage class, seen in the left panel. In each painting, absurdity abounds: Vladimir Putin wears a tutu, a Catholic cardinal is potty-training, and the Pope sports lingerie and high heels. Teraoka introduces the character of Geisha Momotarō (a currently practicing geisha, whose name means "Peach Boy" in Japanese) as a quintessential example of hybridity and role reversal. Momotarō appears as a victim, a feminist hero, and in her most transformative role, she occupies the role of Pope in *The Cloisters / Geisha and Pope*. Teraoka both beseeches viewers to acknowledge the real horrors wrought by unchecked power; and remind us that for revolution to occur, we must first imagine the ridiculous, and make it possible.

Masami Teraoka | *Masami Teraoka's Apocalyptic Theater / Pussy Riot, the Pope, Putin, and Peach Boy*

January 9 – February 20, 2016

Saturday, January 9 :	Opening reception with the artist	4 – 6 pm
	Artist talk and exhibit walk-thru	4:30 pm

This event is free and open to the public.

Media inquiries contact Allison Stockman: marketing@cclarkgallery.com

Masami Teraoka was born in 1936 in Onomichi, Hiroshima-ken, Japan. He graduated in 1959 with a B.A. in aesthetics from Kwansei Gakuin University, and continued his education to receive a B.F.A. and an M.F.A. from Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles in 1968. Integrating reality with fantasy, humor with commentary, and history with the present became his working challenge. His early paintings are often focused on the meeting of his two cultures—East and West. Series such as *McDonald's Hamburgers Invading Japan* and *31 Flavors Invading Japan* characterize some themes in his work. In the 1980's, Teraoka's watercolors became large scale in an effort to depict the subject of AIDS. Since the late 1990's, he has been producing large-scale narrative work addressing social and political issues, especially the abuse of children by priests and other examples of hypocrisy in religious institutions. His recent large-scale paintings are inspired by Renaissance paintings and continue the narrative approach of his Ukiyo-e inspired work.

Teraoka has been the subject of more than 70 solo exhibitions, many of which have traveled extensively, including those organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art (1979), the Yale University Art Gallery (1998), New Albion Gallery (2012), and the McKinney Avenue Contemporary (2014). In 1996 he was featured in a solo exhibition at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery/Smithsonian Institution, and in 1997 at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco. Most recently, The Honolulu Museum of Art hosted a 2015 solo exhibition of Teraoka's work titled, *Feast of Fools: Triptych Paintings of Masami Teraoka*. His work is represented in more than 50 public collections worldwide, including the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (San Francisco, CA); the Smithsonian Institution (Washington D.C.), the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, NY), the Tate Modern (London, UK), the Queensland Art Gallery (South Brisbane, Australia), the Gallery of Modern Art (Glasgow, Scotland), the Oakland Museum of California (Oakland, CA), the Asian Art Museum (San Francisco, CA) and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Los Angeles, CA). Masami Teraoka's work will be the subject of a solo exhibition organized by Mike McGee at Cal State Fullerton, with an accompanying catalog, and traveling to the Crocker Museum of Art in 2017. Teraoka has exhibited with Catharine Clark Gallery since 1998.