

June 9, 2022

Nir Hod 'Echo of Memories'
First solo exhibition in Japan to open at KOTARO NUKAGA, Roppongi.



Nir Hod, *The Love Story of Young Helena*, 2022

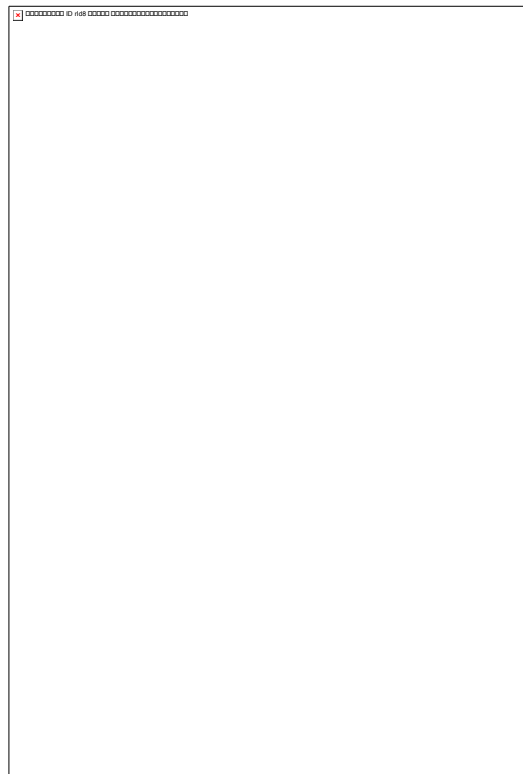
From July 9th (Sat) to August 27 (Sat), 2022, KOTARO NUKAGA, Roppongi is pleased to present 'Echo of Memories', the first solo exhibition in Japan by Israeli-born New York-based artist Nir Hod (b. 1970). The exhibition will consist of new works from Hod's signature chrome paintings series, "The Life We Left Behind," as well as new monochrome paintings of images based on reconstructed found photos.

Art has the potential to build and alter networks of inclusion and exclusion, and, even if only temporarily, to reconstruct the social field. This is what French philosopher Jacques Rancière (1940-) described as *partage du sensible*– "the distribution of the sensible" (=sharing). Nicolas Bourriaud's (1965-) influential essay, "Relational Aesthetics", published in 1998, also led to more widespread acknowledgment of art that incorporates human relations and social context into its aesthetic background. However, an important point to remember is that despite Bourriaud's emphasis on participatory art, he has said that "it is not something that distances itself from traditional object work", and that the relationship between the viewer and the art is, as an artistic practice, about "learning to inhabit the world in a better way."

The title of the exhibition, "Echo", has its etymological roots in the ancient Greek belief that the sounds that reverberated back from the mountains and valleys were replies from the mountain nymph, Echo. Similarly, in Japanese

folklore, there is a belief in the existence of kodama (木霊, literally “tree spirit”). Regardless of whether in the East or the West, the phenomenon of echoes and reverberations has aroused the imagination of many peoples who believed it to be the work of spirits.

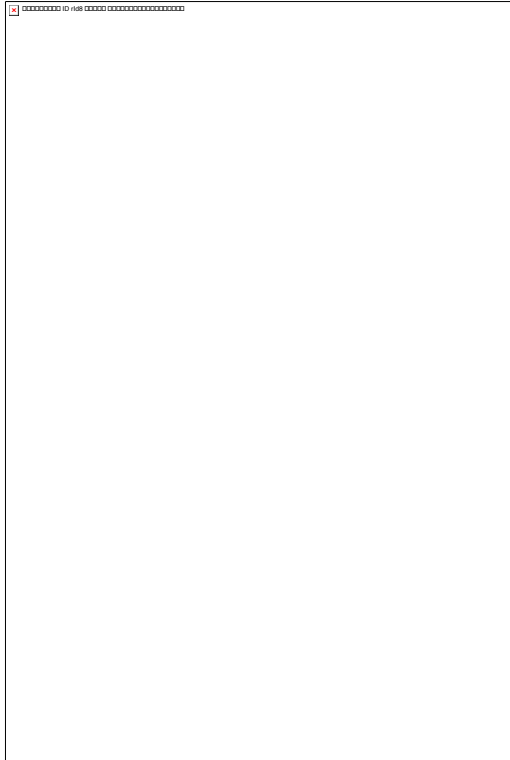
Hod's chrome paintings, with their mirrored surfaces, bring the viewer and their environment into the world of the painting, shimmering and shifting, pulling the viewer's thoughts into a space of endless reverberation. The canvases painted in seemingly abstract black, gray, blue, green, and chrome are then subjected to elements such as ammonia, gasoline, and various acids in order to realize the narratives Hod envisions. Through these chemical reactions, the colors are degraded and eventually stripped away, and through this destructive act, Hod sets free the light of the chrome within. This ray of hope that is born out of this paradox, this antinomy of destruction and creation, brings a mystical power to Hod's paintings. But though the reflective nature of the work is mirror-like in its radiance, it does not interact with the world as a mirror would. The complex mirrored surface does not perfectly reflect the world in its entirety, but instead makes it abstract, turns it into a diminished echo. It creates a rift in reality, becoming a gateway to a parallel world. In front of these chrome paintings, the viewer is able to replace their own vague reflection with a character from an ephemeral but beautiful narrative. With an audience before it, the artwork becomes a functional device that resonates with our memories, inviting the viewer to create a new narrative at this site of destruction.



Nir Hod, *The Life We Left Behind*, 2022

On the other hand, the world is full of events that are difficult to face head-on, and humankind shares a number of unforgettable memories within our collective history.

“I like to look at tragic events and images and turn them into something beautiful, to make them loveable again. For me different bodies of works complete one big story of art inspired by people and life from different times and different places.”



Nir Hod, *Leah*, 2022

The monochrome paintings convey the fragility of the old found photographs they are based on, and depict taboo images of death, destruction, ugliness, and sadness that overflow in our world. However, Hod also allows for creation, beauty, and joy to cohabit these images so that the work becomes dichotomous, a place of antinomy, a mixture of both good and bad. In this way, art becomes a cave that envelops the echoes of sad memories and reverberates in the space between the concepts of death and beauty, opening the door for people to imagine beautiful narratives that recreate negative histories into a new historical code.

In this exhibition, Hod's unceasing exploration of memory, light and reflection, loss and trauma, destruction and rebirth, and the creativity and imagination that they give birth to, allow his works to transcend the physicality of the painting as object. Hod's works speak not of reality, but of beauty; however, this exhibition invites us to contemplate on the idea that beauty is a kind of truth in itself.

EXHIBITION DETAILS

Nir Hod, 'Echo of Memories'

July 9 (Sat) - Aug 27 (Sat), 2022

11:00-18:00 (Tue - Sat)

*Closed on Sun, Mon and Public Holidays

*Schedule and contents are subject to change at the request of the national and local governments

VENUE

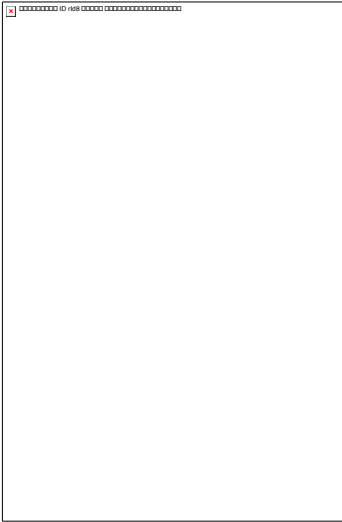
KOTARO NUKAGA, Roppongi

Piramide Bldg. 2F, 6-6-9 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032 Japan

3 minutes walk from Tokyo Metro Hibiya Line and the Toei Subway Oedo Line Exit 1 or 3 of Roppongi station

ARTIST PROFILE

Nir Hod



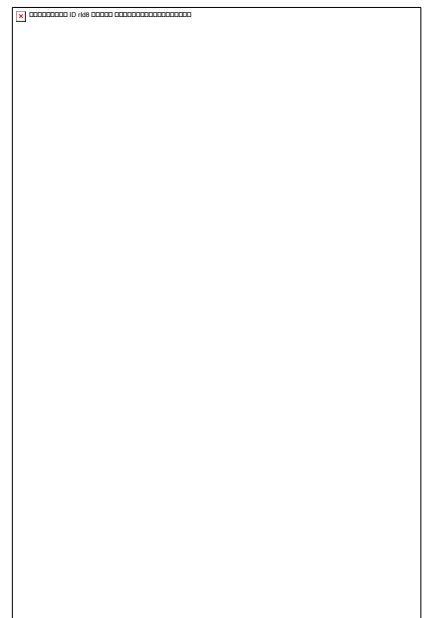
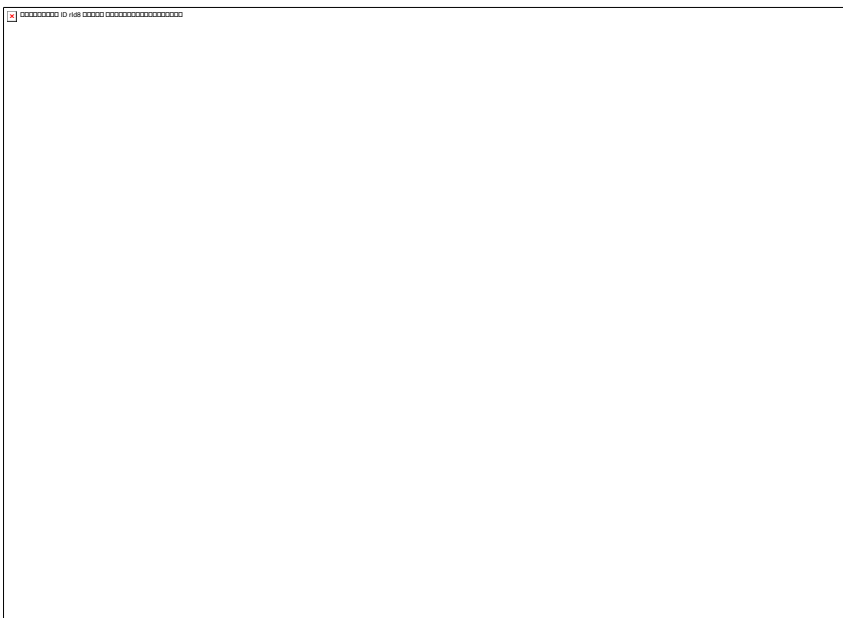
Nir Hod was born in 1970 in Tel Aviv, Israel, and is currently based in New York. Hod earned his B.F.A from the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, Jerusalem, and also received artistic training at New York's Cooper Union School of Art.

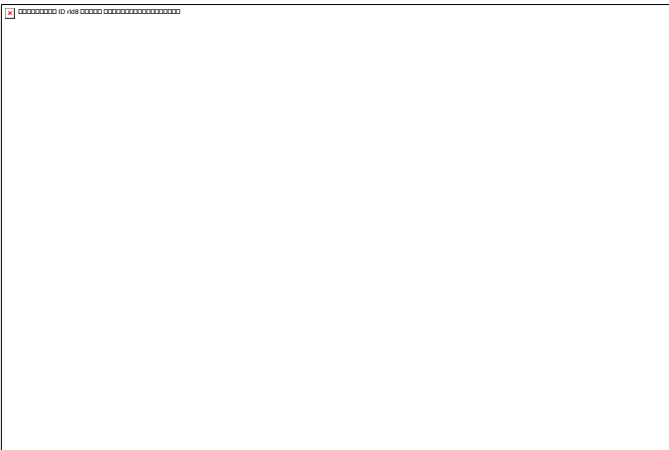
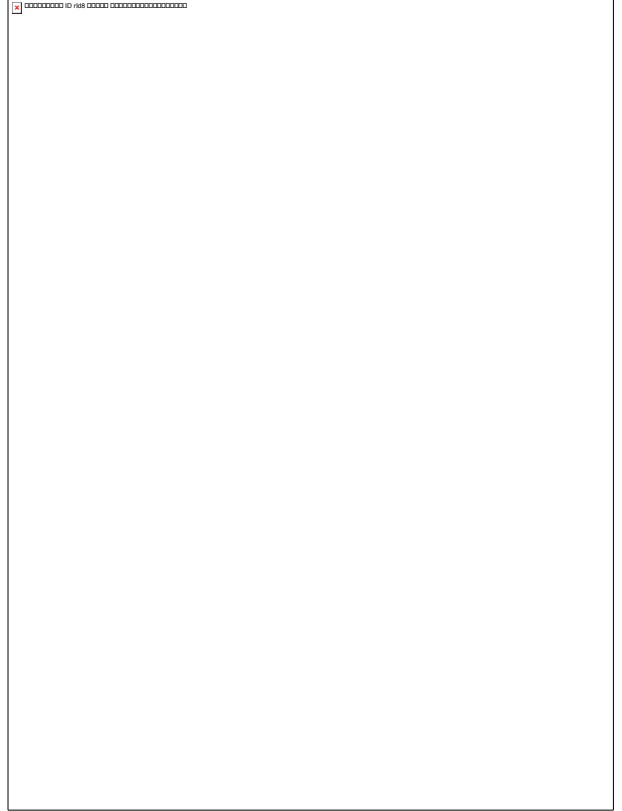
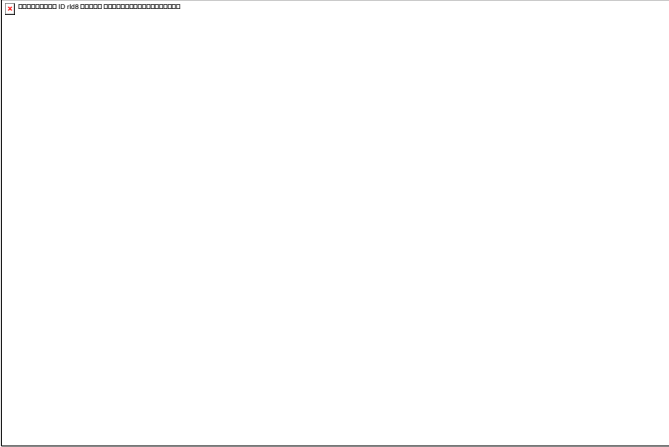
Through sculpture, film, and canvas mediums, Hod freely traverses within and around ideas of beauty, contrast, sexuality, decadence, and lost innocence. At the center of his work, Hod tells a story about raw contrast that can exist in people. He questions indulgence as sin and offers, instead, curiosity. His work suggests to us that life and reality are easier to bear when we consider alternate possibilities, when we consider things that are larger than life.

In 2005, Hod held a solo exhibition at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (Israel), and has since exhibited at the Jewish Museum (New York), Sara Hildén Art Museum (Finland), Kasmin Gallery (New York), and Kohn Gallery (Los Angeles), among many others. Interviews are regularly featured in the international media such as the New York Times, Interview Magazine, W, ELLE, The Wall Street Journal, "T"

Magazine, New York Observer, Financial Times, and more.

Installation view





works



Nir Hod, *The Love Story of Young Helena*, 2022



Nir Hod, *The Life We Left Behind*, 2022



Nir Hod, *Burning Flower in The Rain*, 2022



PRESS CONTACT

For more information, please contact Aya Kato (EMAIL: kato@kotaronukaga.com, TEL: 070-3350-5109)

EMAIL: info@kotaronukaga.com URL: www.kotaronukaga.com

ROPPONGI: TEL +81(0)3 6721 1180 / FAX +81(0)3 6721 1181