

PRESS RELEASE

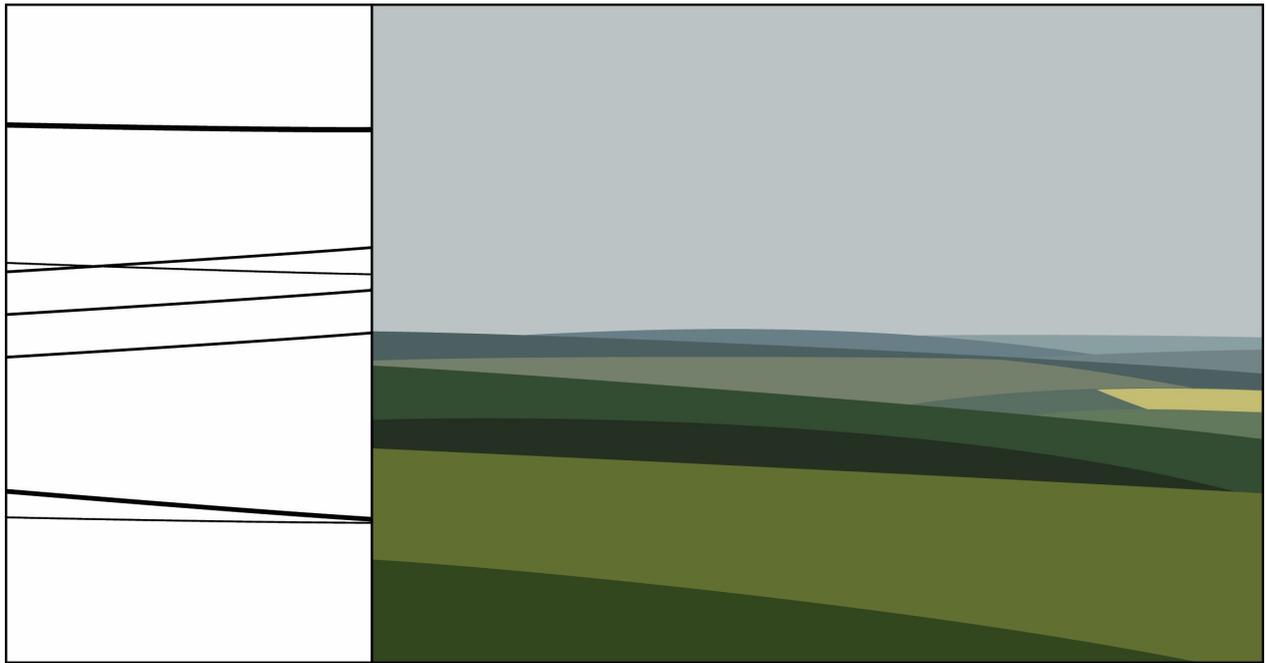
Julian Opie

OCTOBER 19–DECEMBER 3, 2016

12-7pm

Closed on SUN, MON and National Holidays

Opening Reception: Wednesday, OCTOBER 19, 6-8pm



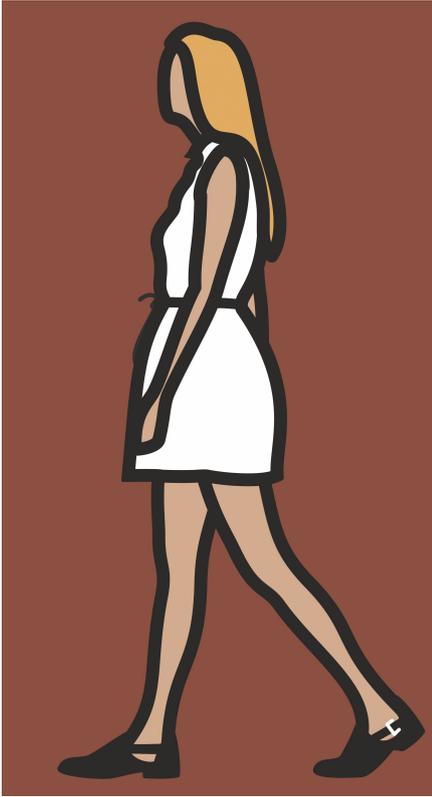
Train. 2016 Continuous computer animation on 46" LCD screen with inkjet print on paper

©Julian Opie / MAHO KUBOTA GALLERY

MAHO KUBOTA GALLERY is pleased to announce a solo exhibition by Julian Opie opening Wednesday, October 19, 2016. The exhibition is scheduled to show fourteen new works by the artist, including both video and paintings.

Julian Opie is one of the UK's leading artists, and today his works can be seen throughout the world. Installed in cities as part of their natural metropolitan landscape, Opie's works bring joy to passersby of all nationalities and ages—whether it be sculpture work permanently installed in central London, a mural in a New York hotel lobby, giant video works on the street in Zurich and Hong Kong, the video works of walking people in the lobby of Dentsu's headquarters in the Shiodome area of Tokyo, or stone sculptures in the ruins of Takamatsu Castle in Takamatsu City, Japan. Characterized by simple black line drawings and vibrant colors that bring to mind pictograms and digital signage, his work blends into our daily lives without us being away of it, until one day it catches our attention, and we ask with surprise, "What's this, ... why is it here?" Unlike static artwork that awaits visitors at art museums and galleries, Opie's work makes its own way onto the street and finds its place in the midst of the relationships between people and the city. It is lively art, embodying contemporary society.

PRESS RELEASE



Tina. 2. 2016
acrylic hand painting on aluminum

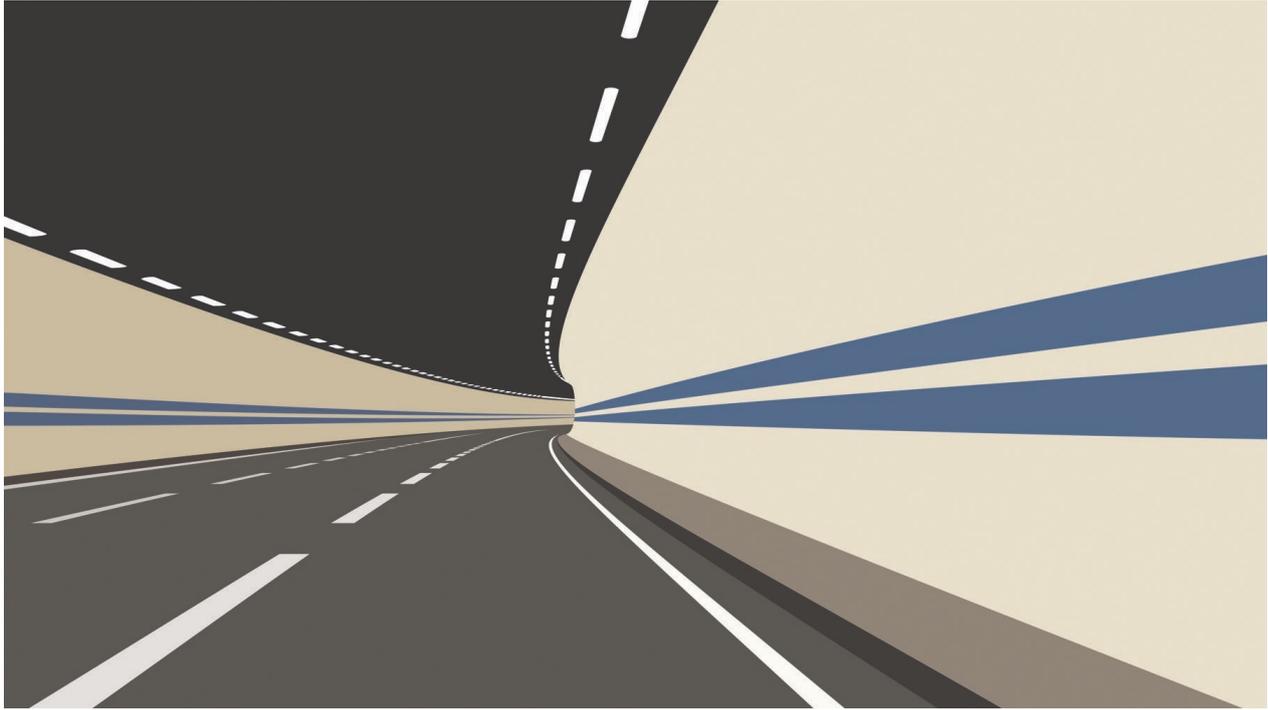


Faime. 1. 2016
acrylic hand painting on aluminum

You could say that the fascination of Opie's work is in how it reproduces a visual experience that sometimes comes closer to reality than the real world itself by adding minimal, living details to exceedingly simple visual images. His style of expression is to build motifs that appear at first glance to have been chosen using random selection or a mechanical algorithm, but in fact that is not the case. This style has been achieved through countless experiments by the artist over many decades. It can legitimately be described as a unique style. Opie describes the process not as simplifying something that is complex, but as gradually adding the bare minimum required to express something from nothing. This style makes his art instantly recognizable and his technique easily reproducible in the viewer's own mind.

For this exhibition, Opie plans to install walls to subdivide the gallery and create a labyrinthine space. As the viewer who wanders into the maze goes here and there throughout the narrow spaces, his or her movements will come to echo those in the paintings on the walls. Through the video work at the subsequent corner, the viewer will experience a complex perceptual process like a simulation of the outside world. Something moving, and alongside it, something standing still. This is obvious in the reality of our world. We impart life to the world through the act of seeing. While being a visual experience, art is, in fact, not merely an experience of the eyes alone, but a truly complex and comprehensive perceptual experience that we only first become aware of when all five senses, or senses that transcend them, have been mobilized. This is what Julian Opie's new artwork attempts to convey using the simplest forms of expression. In his art, one might even be able to transcend time, and sense the breathing at each moment of the artists of different times, including ancient Egyptians and ukiyoe artists of the Edo Period. We hope that this exhibition allows you to sense that art is the very essence of the relationship between the individual and the world, regardless of the age or place, and that art is formed through an amalgam of the entire environment in which we find ourselves and fragmentary experiences.

PRESS RELEASE



Tunnel. 1. 2016. Continuous computer animation on 46" LCD screen.
©Julian Opie / MAHO KUBOTA GALLERY

Julian Opie

Julian Opie was born in London in 1958, and is one of the UK's leading contemporary artists today. He uses pictograms and simple drawings and coloring reminiscent of anime to simplify the main artistic motifs of ancient times, such as landscapes and the human figure. This style of expression that employs minimal detail is continuing to garner support in both the art world and the broader cultural scene. Opie also has extensive knowledge of Japanese art. He is a collector of Japanese woodblock prints (*ukiyo*e) by Utagawa Hiroshige and Kitagawa Utamaro, and the influence of Japanese art on his style is well known. His art is housed in the collections of major art museums throughout the world, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the British Museum, the Tate Gallery, and Stedelijk Museum, as well as collections in Japan, such as those at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo and the National Museum of Art, Osaka.

The artist is also engaged in numerous projects that transcend the framework of art, including producing four portraits for the cover of the "Blur: The Best Of" album, doing the set design for the Royal Ballet at the Royal Opera House, and participating in stage design for the band U2.

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