

Tomohiro Takahashi
「Make Me Art!」
Jan 21 (Wed.) - Feb 21 (Sat.), 2026



ANIMISM 2025 Oil, acrylic and oil pastel on cotton, panel 164.8 x 226.8 cm ©Takahashi Tomohiro

MAHO KUBOTA GALLERY is delighted to present *Make Me Art!*, a new solo exhibition by emerging artist Tomohiro Takahashi, opening on January 21, 2026.

Takahashi's interest does not lie in directly representing existing phenomena, the real world, or purely imaginary worlds devoid of physical presence. At the core of his practice lies an autonomous, generative world that emerges from within the artist himself—one structured in a distinctly theatrical manner. Within this world exist characters that function as his *yorishiro*—spiritual intermediaries—as well as companions, each assuming different roles within the narrative space he constructs.

Takahashi begins his process by physically constructing a model world, much like assembling a film set. Using ordinary, readily available paper to create architectural elements and interior motifs, he positions everyday objects—such as stuffed animals and toys—within these settings, as if they were actors inhabiting a theatrical world. Through this process, he gives rise to a fictional space—a small world governed by a logic and scale distinct from that of reality. Rather than designing a fully realized world from the outset, this act is closer to a process of playful experimentation, in which construction and play unfold inseparably. Takahashi

then paints this world from a bird's-eye perspective. Through the act of painting, he reintroduces time, atmosphere, and a life-like energy into the static sandbox environment, transforming it into a unique pictorial expression.

Underlying this method is Takahashi's long-standing interest in animistic ways of thinking. Grounded in the belief that all things in nature possess spirit or intention, he grants life to objects conventionally regarded as inanimate—such as toys and stuffed animals—speaking to them and forming relationships with them. These interactions are characterized less by faith or ritual than by a lightness akin to play. Through the accumulation of dialogue and communication between the artist and his motifs, a distinct worldview gradually takes shape and reemerges as painting. At the same time, traces of this communication are visualized through naïve, seemingly childlike drawings reminiscent of doodles, functioning much like automatist drawing in Surrealism and reinforcing an animistic sense of vitality.

Last year, Takahashi relocated his studio from Kyoto, where he had lived since his student days, to Tokyo. The change in environment stirred his emotions more deeply than expected, and for several months after the move, he found it difficult even to construct the autonomous inner world that had previously sustained his practice. During this period, he began regularly visiting a nearby Shinto shrine, quietly offering prayers, which gradually brought him a sense of calm. By reconnecting with the ancient Japanese belief in *Yaoyorozu no Kami* — the idea that countless deities dwell in all things — the characters inhabiting Takahashi's work slowly began to regain their energy.



SUPIRU 2025 Acrylic and oil paint on cotton, wood, resin, colored pencils, wooden panel 44.8 × 38.6 cm

The exhibition title *Make Me Art!* reflects not only the artist's own creative impulse, but also resonates as a voice seemingly uttered by the characters and inanimate beings themselves: "Make me art!" It marks the moment when entities brought to life through play and relationship begin to participate actively in the world. The paintings that emerge from this process transcend the confines of two-dimensional space, appearing instead as microcosms rich with texture and tactility—worlds that respond to and interact with the viewer's gaze, actions, and imagination. We warmly invite you to experience Takahashi Tomohiro's latest experimental endeavor.



Altar #1 2025 88.8 x 68.6 cm Acrylic and oil paint on cotton, charcoal, window frame, acrylic board, wooden panel ©Takahashi Tomohiro

Tomohiro Takahashi

1996 Born in Oita, Japan

2019 Bachelor's degree at Kyoto University of Art and Design, Kyoto

2021 Master's degree at Kyoto University of Art and Design, Kyoto

2023 "NUZU" MAHO KUBOTA GALLERY

2022 "BROKEN PINATA" L21 Gallery, Spain

2021 "emerging japanese painters" SHOP Taka Ishii Gallery, Hong Kong

2021 "ANIMISM" COHJU contemporary art, Kyoto

[Exhibition Overview]

Tomohiro Takahashi

Make Me Art!

January 21 - February 21, 2026

Open 12:00 - 19:00

Closed on SUN, MON and National Holidays

MAHO KUBOTA GALLERY

2-4-7 Jingumae Shibuya-ku Tokyo Japan

tel +81 (0)3-6434-7716

<https://www.mahokubota.com/en/>