

ARTFORUM

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Takako Yamaguchi, *Parade*, 2022, oil and metal leaf on canvas, 60 × 40".

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Takako Yamaguchi

ORTUZAR PROJECTS

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Takako Yamaguchi's new oil paintings feature self-contained seaside dreamscapes, patterned with polychromatic natural elements.

Attenuated clouds whirl about with attitude, knotting, braiding, and coiling themselves through whimsical feats of elasticity. Water is rendered as an unpredictably capricious entity, either as a smooth and restful gradient block or a field of undulating waves ordered into a syncopated arrangement. These surrealistic snapshots feel like Agnes Pelton's mystical landscapes, infused with the graphic language of designer Tadanori Yokoo's psychedelia.

Yamaguchi produces intensely crisp details so precise that they often seem computer generated. The magic lies in her astonishing brushwork and subtle optics. Take *Parade* (all works 2022), in which vertical, rectangular strips of rain cascade across the canvas. Upon closer inspection, however, we see that these seemingly all-white bands contain faintly shadowed edges, making them pop just enough against the painting's gradated gold-and-cobalt background. Yamaguchi bifurcates this and several other compositions with a solid-colored stripe to indicate a horizon line, a typically invisible indicator of depth that the artist has concretized in a self-consciously stylized manner. The viewer is allowed to float within Yamaguchi's optical suspensions, which deftly play with the flatness of the canvas and the illusory depths of the picture. In this way, the greatest delight of Yamaguchi's art rests in its delicate balances: of two and three dimensions, of the absurd and the everyday, of deep serenity and endless surprise.

— Evan Lincoln