

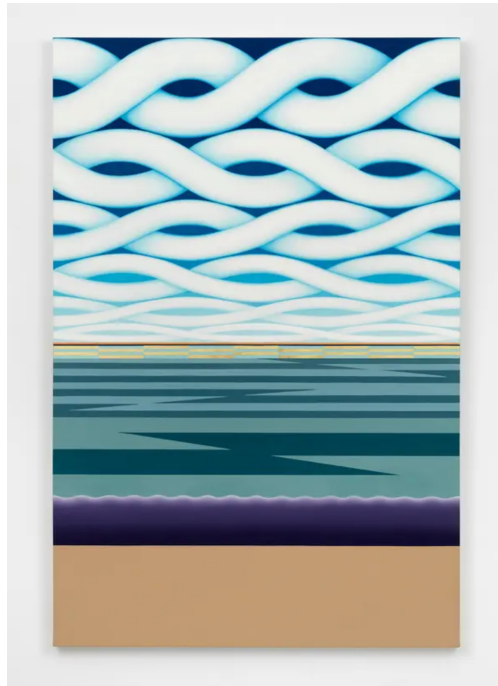
# The New York Times

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TRIBECA

## Takako Yamaguchi

Through June 17. Ortuzar Projects, 9 White Street, Manhattan; [ortuzarprojects.com](https://ortuzarprojects.com).



Takako Yamaguchi's "Hinge" (2022) in her show "New Paintings." via Ortuzar Projects, New York. Photo by Dario Lasagni.

In her latest paintings, Takako Yamaguchi, who was born in Japan in 1952 and has lived in Los Angeles since 1978, continues to pit art against craft, East against West, and one style against another, creating works in which abstraction, representation and decoration mingle to unexpected effect. Previously, the artist roiled her multiple references into turbulent, Baroque compositions of disparate elements, variously representational, abstract and decorative. Figures from Diego Rivera or Lucas Cranach would mingle with the brocade patterns usual to Japanese kimono silks or the gold-leaf clouds of Japanese folding screens.

Now Yamaguchi has achieved a dazzling simplicity, absorbing her usual oppositions into seamless wholes. In these 60-by-40-inch canvases a series of horizontal bands all incorporate the abstract, representational and decorative. The

dominant feature in all are pure white tubular elements, delicately shaded, whose repeating patterns serve as skies or as single, more symbolic forms. They can evoke the extensive vocabulary of braided, knotted and sometimes tasseled cords used in traditional kimono dressing or samurai armor; but they also suggest beautiful if unlikely cloud formations similar to those in the work of Georgia O'Keeffe and Agnes Pelton, as well as the Chicago Imagist Roger Brown. In "Hinge," the cloud formations seem braided. In "Clasp" strands of white encircle the red over blue seascape like a knotted belt, fancy frame or a porthole.

That Yamaguchi's exquisite compositions flip between textile flat and landscape deep with wit and clarity not usually found in Western modernism adds to the thrill.

ROBERTA SMITH