

The Armory Show

BARO

24 - 27 Sep, 2026

Ayako Rokkaku

24 - 27 SEP, 2026 / BOOTH 127

THE
ARMORY
SHOW

Ayako Rokkaku

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In this edition of the Armory Show, Baró arrives for its third consecutive participation presenting Japanese artist Ayako Rokkaku at Booth 127.

Ayako Rokkaku (b. 1982, Chiba, Japan) is a self-taught artist internationally recognized for her vibrant paintings created directly with her hands. Developed outside formal academic training, her practice establishes a distinctive dialogue with the legacy of postwar American Abstract Expressionism. Guillermo Solana, curator of the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, has pointed to Pollock as a frequent reference point for her work, alongside the gestural and performative approaches associated with artists such as Cy Twombly — references Rokkaku has cited as formative following her first visit to New York.

The Armory Show presentation marks a pivotal moment in the artist's trajectory, bringing her work into direct dialogue with the city historically associated with the emergence of postwar gestural abstraction.

Bringing together a new series of nine works on cardboard and canvas, the presentation explores ideas of tactility, gesture, and material presence. Rokkaku paints with her fingers, translating the movement of her body onto the surface. Her visual language shifts between abstract, gestural formations and figurative elements drawn from Japan's kawaii culture, bringing together opposing forces within the same image — irony and gentleness, aggressiveness and delicacy — allowing tension to surface within otherwise familiar, playful imagery.







AYAKO ROKKAKU
Untitled

2026

Acrylic on canvas
160 x 240 cm | 62 15/16 x 94 1/2 in

165.000 EUR





AYAKO ROKKAKU
Untitled

2026

Acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm | 47 1/4 x 47 1/4 in

100.000 EUR







AYAKO ROKKAKU
Untitled

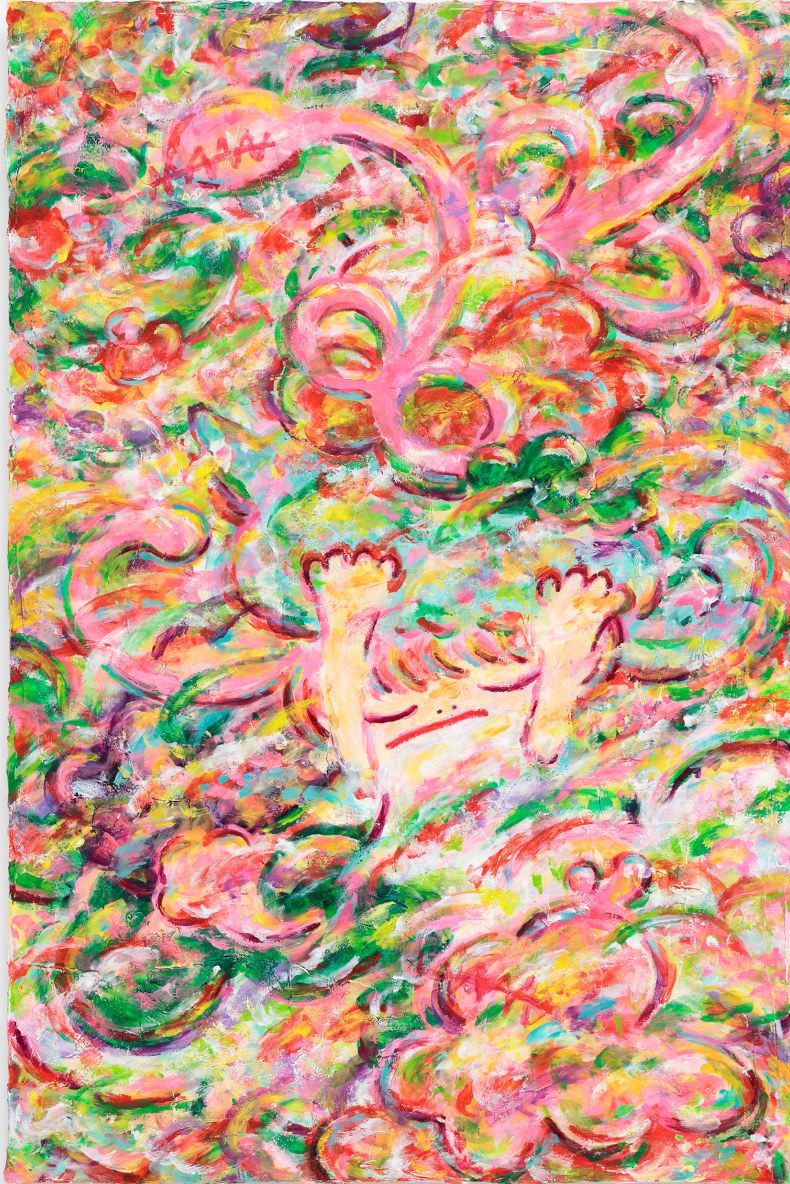
2026

Acrylic on canvas
120 x 120 cm | 47 1/4 x 47 1/4 in

100.000 EUR







AYAKO ROKKAKU
Untitled

2026

Acrylic on canvas
90 x 60 cm | 35 7/16 x 23 5/8 in

65.000 EUR







AYAKO ROKKAKU
Untitled

2026

Acrylic on canvas
90 x 60 cm | 35 7/16 x 23 5/8 in

65.000 EUR







AYAKO ROKKAKU
Untitled

2026

Acrylic on canvas
90 x 60 cm | 35 7/16 x 23 5/8 in

65.000 EUR









AYAKO ROKKAKU
Untitled

2026

Acrylic on cardboard
51 x 71 cm | 20 1/16 x 27 15/16 in

18.000 EUR







AYAKO ROKKAKU
Untitled

2026

Acrylic on cardboard
40 x 60 cm | 15 3/4 x 23 5/8 in

16.000 EUR







AYAKO ROKKAKU
Untitled

2026

Acrylic on cardboard
40 x 60 cm | 15 3/4 x 23 5/8 in

16.000 EUR







Ayako Rokkaku

Born in 1982 in Tokyo, Japan

Lives and works in Berlin, Porto, Tokyo

Ayako Rokkaku's artistic process involves an instinctive and performative approach, as she uses her bare hands to apply acrylic paint, translating the motion of her body onto the canvas. True to her distinctive technique, she moulds figures with the tips of her fingers, whether on canvas, through glass, or in bronze. Rokkaku's visual language seamlessly shifts between elusive abstract formations and figurative elements, drawing inspiration from the kawaii culture (Japanese for cute) and capturing the boundless imagination of a child. Rokkaku is known for her colourful canvases populated by imaginary landscapes and fantastical characters. Indeed, Rokkaku stages live painting performances in contexts where her work will be exhibited, bringing the dialogue between the audience and artist as close to one another as the touch that animates her inspired practice.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS & PERFORMANCES

- 2026 (Upcoming) Solo Booth (127) The Armory Show, New York, USA
- 2026 (Upcoming) Playful, Stormy, Continuing, Baró, São Paulo, Brazil
- 2026 Trails of Life in the Air, CICA Vancouver, Vancouver, Canada
- 2026 Scenery in the Process of Being Formed, KÖNIG GALERIE, Berlin, Germany
- 2026 THE ISLAND — ONIGASHIMA, Landmark, Hong Kong, HK
- 2025 Breathing with Chaos, Total Museum, Seoul, Korea
- 2025 Close to Your Treasure, Long Museum, Chongqing, China
- 2025 For the Moments You Feel Paradise, Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Spain
- 2024 Mountains of Nameless Emotions, KÖNIG SEUL, Seoul, Korea
- 2024 Detour for an Ice Cream Fairy, Palazzo Corner Mocenigo, Venice, Italy
- 2024 Surreal Surroundings, Mexico City, Mexico
- 2024 Holding an Island, CCA Andratx, Mallorca, Spain
- 2023 Ayako Rokkaku: Close to Your Treasure, Long Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2023 CUTE. WEIRD. FREE., KÖNIG GALERIE, St. Agnes, Berlin, Germany
- 2022 T&Y Projects, Tokyo, Japan
- 2022 Asia NOW Paris Asian Art Fair, Paris, France
- 2022 Imagination for Flying Adventure, KÖNIG LONDON, London, UK
- 2022 Solo Booth (Booth E6) at FRIEZE Los Angeles, California, USA
- 2021 Born in the fluffy journey, Berlin, Germany
- 2021 "Phantom Thief Stray Junkie", Gallery Trax, Yamanashi, Japan
- 2020 Magic Hand, Chiba Prefectural Museum of Art, Chiba, Japan
- 2019 Fumble in colors, tiny discoveries, Museum Jan van der Togt, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2018 Bright wind, another step, Gallery Delaive, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2017 OBSCURA, Gallery Target, Tokyo, Japan
- 2017 ramblings' habitat, Gallery Trax, Yamanashi, Japan
- 2016 Sealed Reminiscence, Gallery Delaive, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2015 Lumpy Fluffy Splatter, Gallery Trax, Yamanashi, Japan
- 2014 Never ending love letter, Gallery Target, Tokyo, Japan
- 2012 Where the smell comes from, Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum, Bratislava, Slovakia
- 2011 Colours in my hand, KUNSTHAL Museum, Rotterdam, Netherlands
- 2010 About Us, Gallery Delaive, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2010 About Us, VACANT, Tokyo, Japan
- 2009 girl in moment, Guy Peters Gallery, Knokke-Heist, Belgium
- 2009 Untitled, San Carlo Gallery, Milano, Italy
- 2008 Untitled, Galerie Wild, Frankfurt, Germany
- 2008 Untitled, Juliana Gallery, Seoul, Korea
- 2007 Rokkaku Ayako Exhibition, Galerie Teo, Tokyo, Japan
- 2007 Untitled, Galerie Moderne, Silkeborg, Denmark
- 2007 Walking around cloud, Gallery Delaive, Amsterdam, Netherlands

AWARDS & RESIDENCIES

- Scout Prize | GEISAI #4, Tokyo, Japan
- Illustration Prize | GEISAI #5, Tokyo, Japan
- Akio Goto Prize | GEISAI #9, Tokyo, Japan
- CCA Andratx, Palma de Mallorca, Spain

COLLECTIONS

- Oketa Collection, Tokyo, Japan
- Chiba Prefectural Museum of Art, Chiba, Japan
- Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum, Slovakia
- Voorlinden Museum, Netherlands
- Gunma Museum of Art, Japan
- Sehwa Museum of Art / Sehwa Art & Culture Foundation, South Korea
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Karuizawa, Japan
- CCA Andratx, Palma de Mallorca, Spain
- Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Spain



Trails Of Life In The Air

Center Of International Contemporary Art (Cica), Vancouver, Canada
10 April — 19 July 2026

For her solo exhibition TRAILS OF LIFE IN THE AIR at CICA Vancouver, Ayako Rokkaku presents a new series of works that continue her exploration of color, movement, and the quiet presence of living forms. Vivid hues and drifting shapes unfold across the surface like currents of air in gentle circulation. Within layered fields of abstraction, delicate creatures and traces of life emerge and dissolve, hovering between the visible and the imagined. They feel both ancient and newly born, as if they have long inhabited the air yet are coming into being before our eyes. In these works, air becomes a space of transformation—a realm where forms continuously shift, merge, and renew themselves.





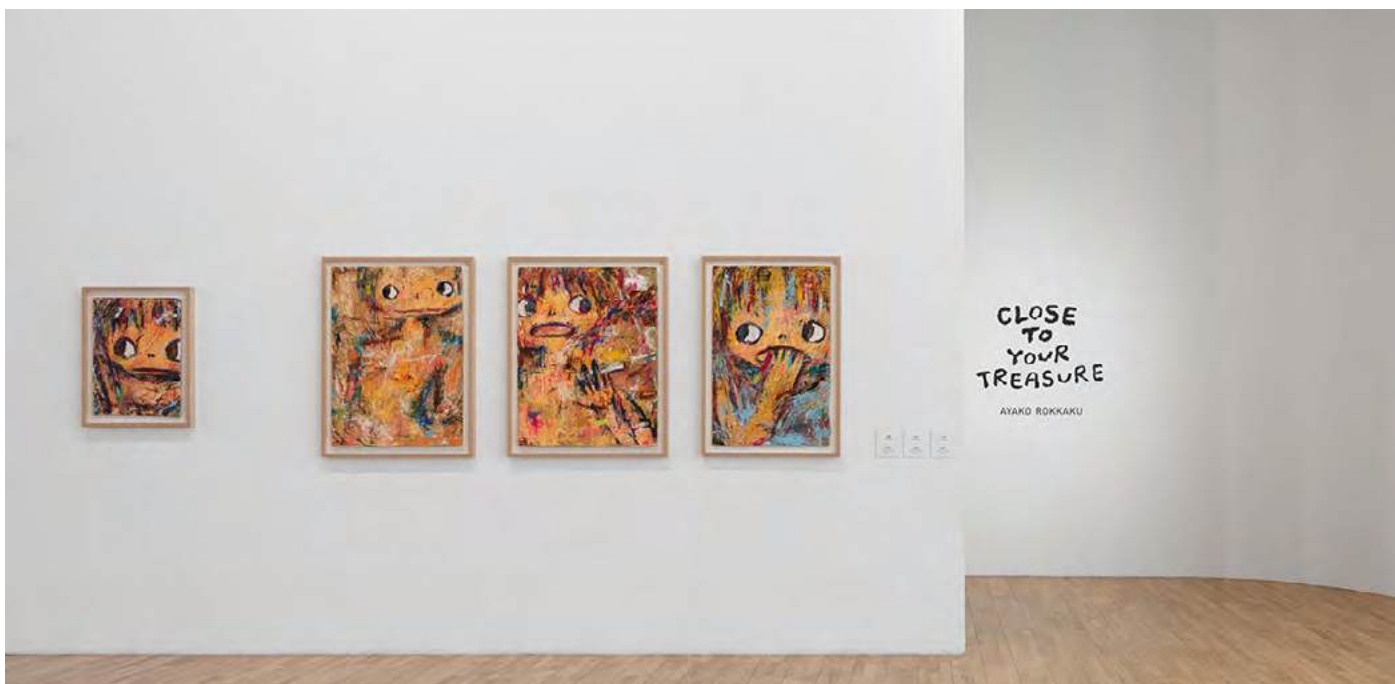
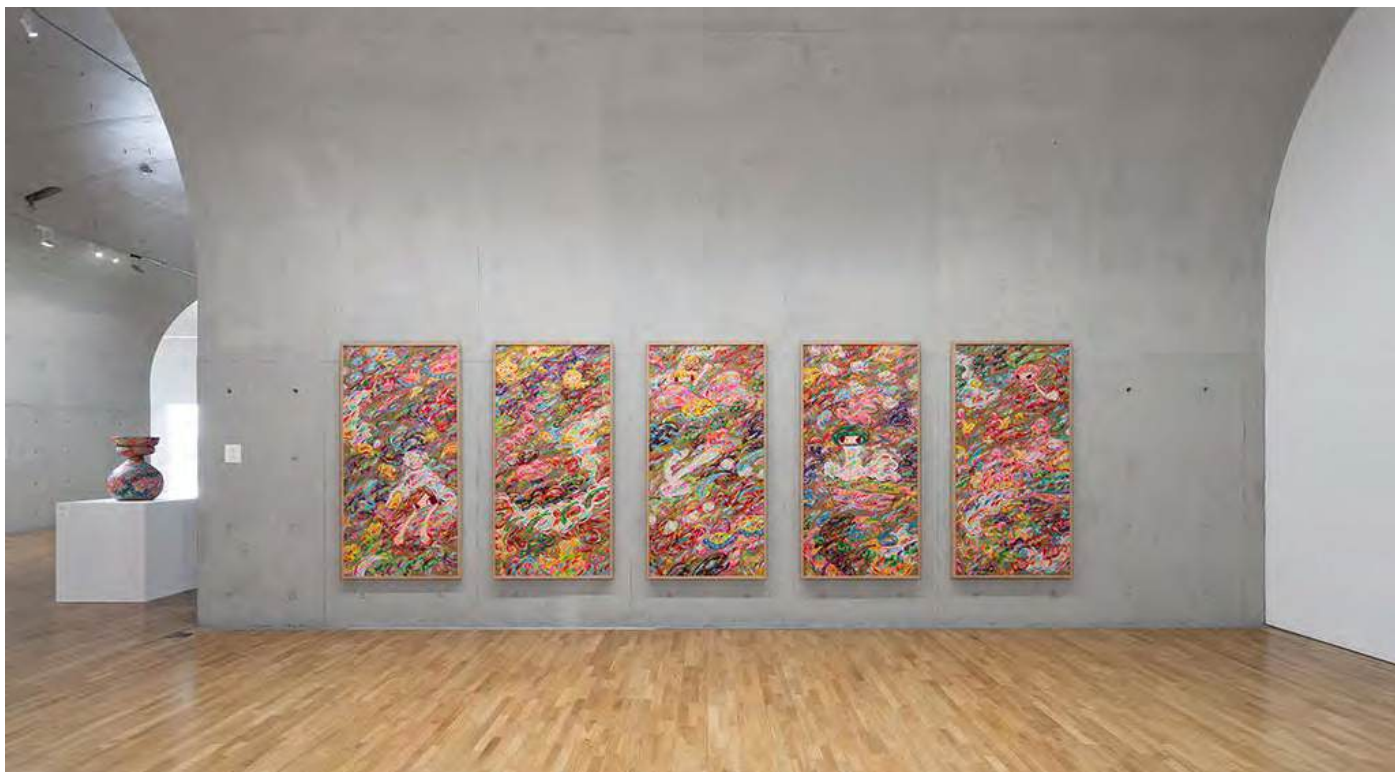
For the Moments you feel Paradise

Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Spain
23 May — 7 September 2025

As part of the programme devoted to the Blanca and Borja Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, the museum presents the first exhibition in Spain by artist Ayako Rokkaku.

The show features a selection of twenty-nine pieces created between 2001 and 2025, including paintings, sculptures, an installation and a live painting performance in front of the audience.





Close to Your Treasure

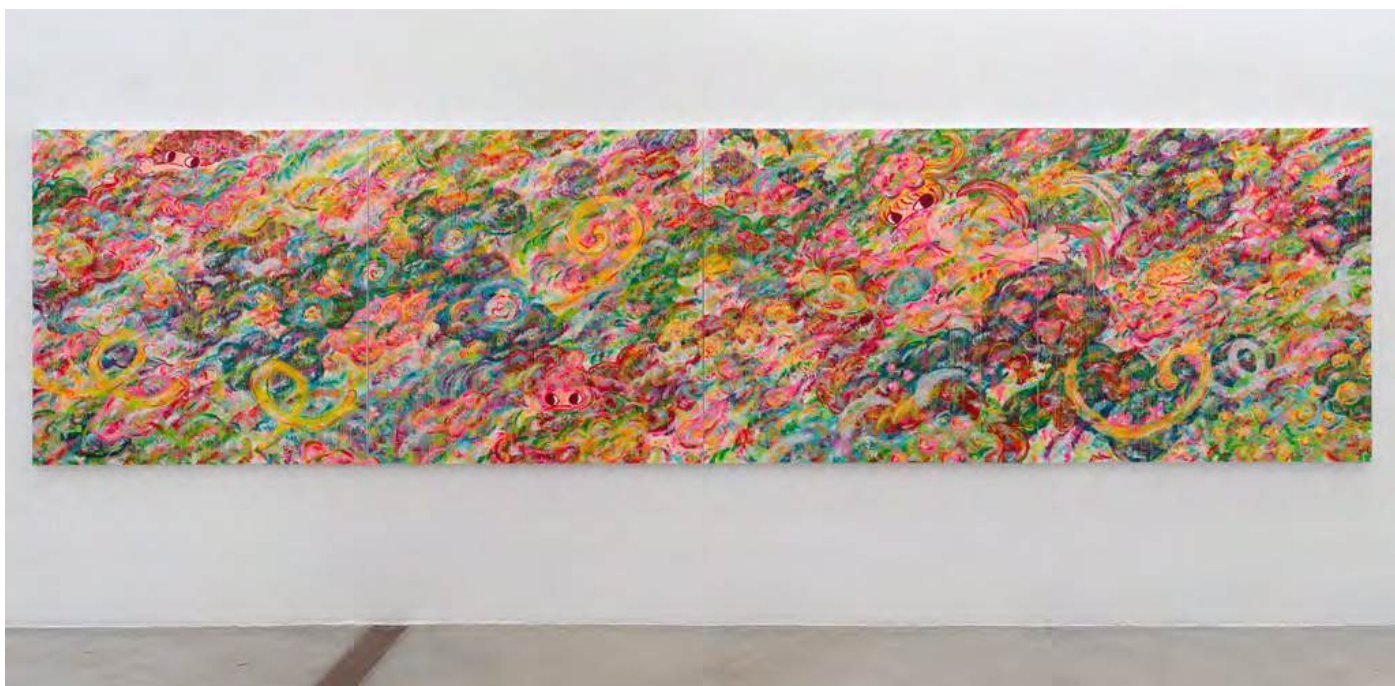
Long Museum West Bund, Binjiang, Xuhui District, Shanghai, China
May 27 - August 13 2023

The first solo exhibition in China by Japanese artist Ayako Rokkaku, 'Close to Your Treasure,' were presented at the Long Museum West Bund. This momentous showcase spans over a decade, from 2006 to the present, with a captivating display of more than 130 artworks by Ayako Rokkaku. This exhibition includes the artist's early doodles on corrugated paper and a collection of large-scale paintings. Additionally, many other series of artworks are on display, including the irregular canvas series featuring the theme of 'Cosmos in Battle,' the 'Flower Vase' series created on traditional wooden embryos, and the artist's first attempt at sculptural works using bronze as a medium.





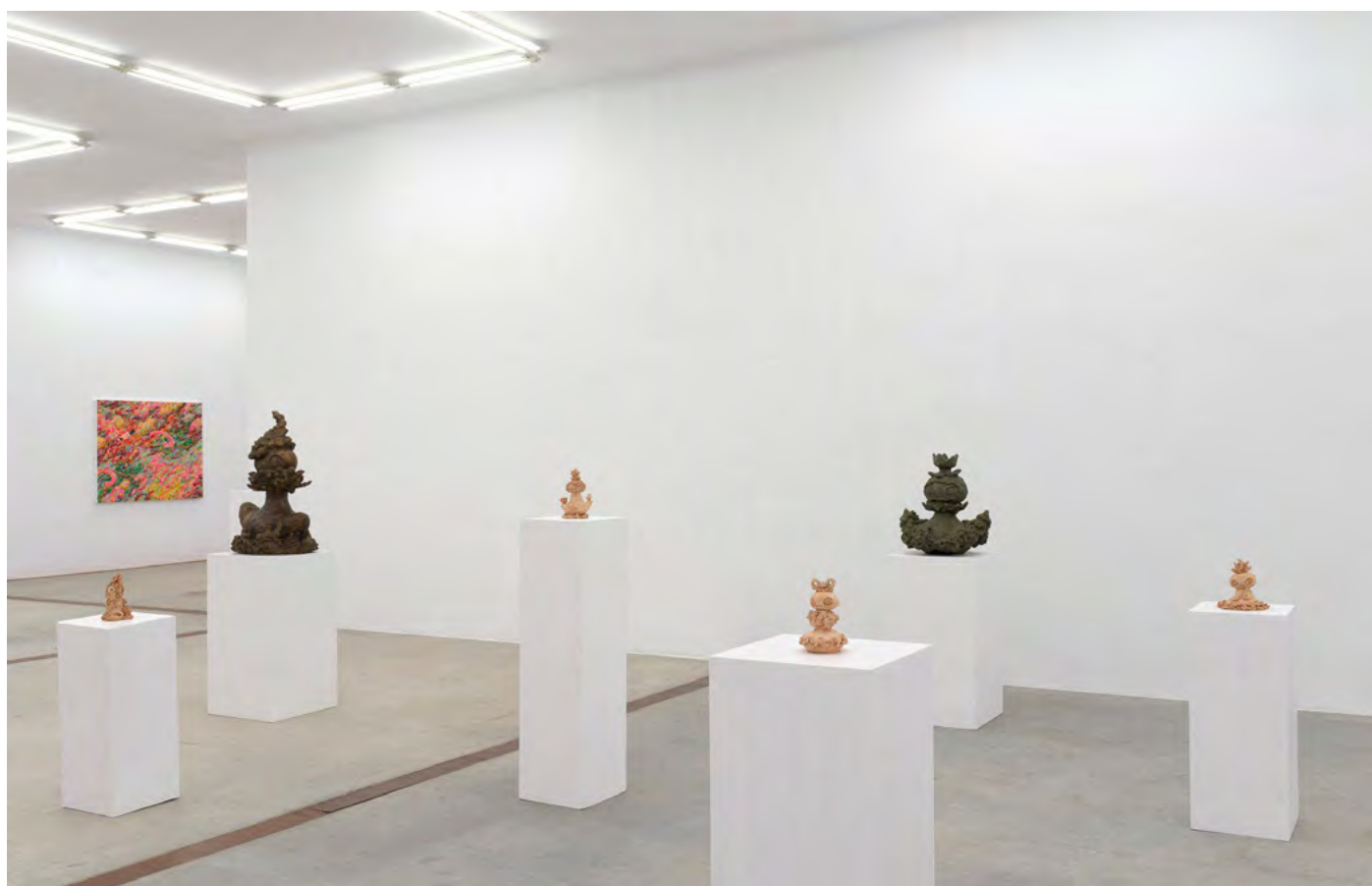




Holding An Island

CCA Andratx, Mallorca, Spain
20 July — 27 October 2024

Rokkaku, who lives and works between Berlin, Porto, and Tokyo, spent nearly three enriching months at the CCA Andratx artist residency. During this time, she immersed herself in the unique cultural tapestry that binds Mallorca and Japan. The exhibition **HOLDING AN ISLAND** stands as a testament to the cultural exchange facilitated by Rokkaku's residency. Her time in the Mediterranean environment of Mallorca has infused her work with new perspectives and inspirations, enriching her already vibrant artistic expression.





Fumble in colors, tiny discoveries

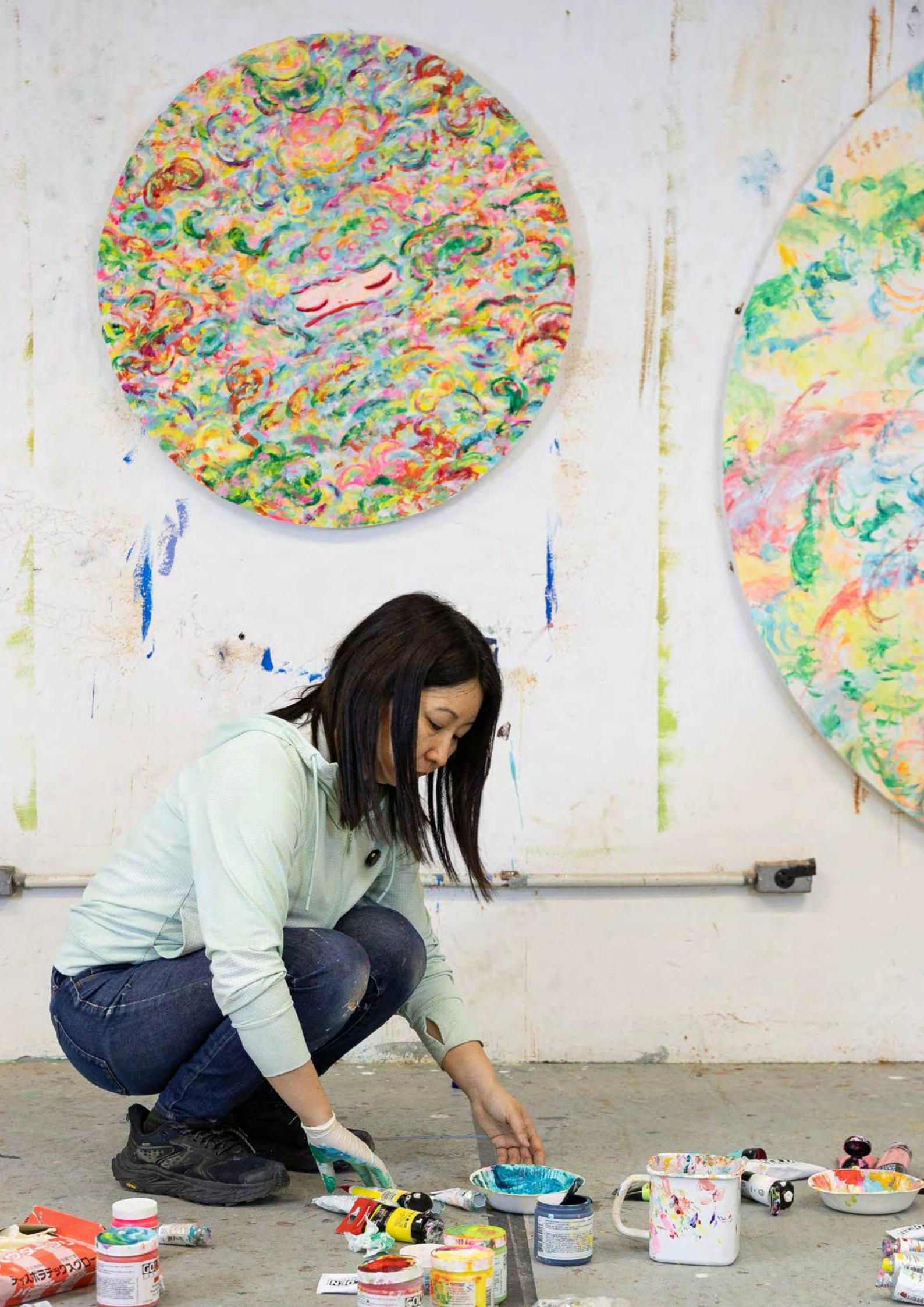
Museum Jan van der Togt Amsterdam, The Netherlands
8 Jun - 25 Aug 2019

Museum Jan van der Togt presented 'Fumble in colors, tiny discoveries' by the Japanese artist Ayako Rokkaku. In addition to installing new paintings, Rokkaku also provided a retrospective of the work she produced in recent years. Visitors were able to see Ayako paint and experience her unique way of working up close.





I began painting. While experimenting with different materials, I accidentally tried applying paint with my hands, and I instantly realised that this felt natural to me. I also enjoyed using materials like discarded cardboard, rather than traditional paper or canvas with fixed shapes. The freedom to tear it before or after painting, creating organic and spontaneous forms, was something I really liked. I think I have a strong desire to always maintain the world of childhood and the child's gaze. Returning to the pure feelings we had as children, no matter the circumstances, serves as a positive guiding light for us as we navigate the various choices we face in our daily lives. It reminds us to trust our instincts and embrace a sense of freedom in our decisions. When I stand in front of a painting, I want to feel that way.



I enjoy abstract-expressionist painting, but I can't help but want to include creatures within it. I often feel the urge to add elements that look like eyes, ears, or horns. I also love the Japanese kawaii aesthetic, but I don't want to take an overly literal approach. More than focusing on what's depicted, I want people to feel the energy of the work. Depending on the period, the figures may become clearer, or the abstraction may become stronger, but the way I hybridise them changes depending on the moment.

To people outside of Japan, my artwork may seem reminiscent of anime or manga, but as a Japanese person, I don't see it as particularly manga-like or anime-like. While manga and anime are wonderful Japanese culture, they haven't had so much influence on my work. Rather, growing up in Japan, I was surrounded by a constant presence of cute characters in everyday life—from shop signs and adverts to even the smallest stationery items. Everywhere you look, objects are often anthropomorphised, turned into characters with faces and personalities. This culture of cuteness permeates daily life. This attention to detail and cuteness helps draw focus, makes the presence of things known, and makes it easier to embrace imperfections, mysteries, and diversity.¹

Ayako Rokkaku in conversation with Guillermo Solana (Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza)



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