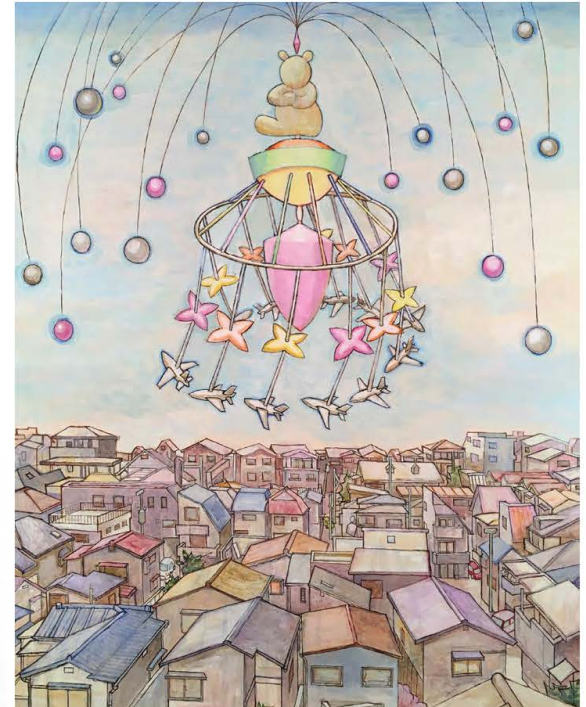
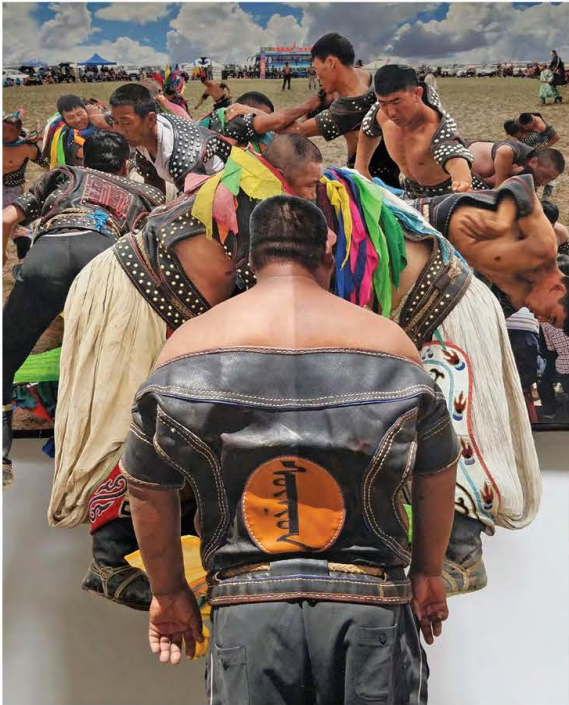


TRACING ORIGINS



Colette Fu | Claes Gabriel | Hiro Sakaguchi

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This group exhibition brings together three Philadelphia-based artists who create work inspired by their ancestral homelands and native cultures. Pulling from personal memories, experiences, and familial influences, their stories are expressed through photography, paper engineering, painting, and sculpture.

Colette Fu creates one-of-a-kind collapsible artist's books that combine photography with pop-up paper engineering. The work in this show incorporates Fu's photographic exploration of minority populations in Yunnan Province, the region of her mother's birthplace, as well as peripheral areas of China including Xinjiang Province and the autonomous regions of Inner Mongolia and Guangxi.

Literally translating as "South of the Clouds," Yunnan is China's most southwestern Province, sharing borders with Tibet, Burma, Laos, and Vietnam. With snow-capped mountains to the Northwest and tropical rainforests to the South, Yunnan is rich in natural resources and has the largest diversity of plant life in China. While in Yunnan, Colette discovered that her great-grandfather helped establish the university where she was teaching, was a member of the powerful black Yi tribe, and was the governor and general of Yunnan during the transitional years of WWII. There are twenty-five ethnic minority groups that reside in Yunnan, which comprise less than 9% of the nation's population. Many people inside China, and most people outside of the country, are unaware of this cultural richness.

Originally from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, **Claes Gabriel's** work combines the cultural richness of Haiti with contemporary practice and use of materials that mimic tribal masks and totems. The shape of each piece informs its unique personality, which Gabriel heightens with bright color, eyes, and lips. Gabriel's first influence was his father, Jacques Gabriel (1934–1988), a classically-trained painter who depicted the lushness and vibrant life of Haiti in his own paintings. He was also influenced by contemporary artists such as Frank Stella and Sam Gilliam. Referencing Haitian culture through color, folklore, and his own imagined tales, Gabriel creates a mythical like presences in each artwork.

Hiro Sakaguchi was born as a twin in Nagano, Japan and grew up in Chiba City, near Tokyo. Arriving in the US in the 1990s he creates ambiguous atmospheric paintings based on his memories of life growing up in Japan. His work reflects issues of environment, ecology, science, world history, peace and conflict, and popular culture. Symbolism and narrative provide a conceptual platform for him. Models, toys, and games from childhood often appear in his works. This innocent point of departure allows Hiro to get at the heart of more current topics and adult concerns while simultaneously telling a loosely autobiographical, fictional story.



COLETTE FU

I create one-of-a-kind collapsible artist's books that combine my photography with pop-up paper engineering. Pop-up and flap books originally illustrated ideas about astronomy, fortune telling, navigation, the anatomy of the body and other scientific principles. This history prompted me to construct my own books reflecting ideas on how our selves relate to society today.

Growing up in North Brunswick, New Jersey, I was not proud of my Chinese heritage. After college, I went to Kunming, the capital city of my mother's birthplace in Yunnan Province, China to teach English. Literally translating as "South of the Clouds," Yunnan is China's most southwestern Province, sharing borders with Tibet, Burma, Laos, and Vietnam. With snow-capped mountains to the Northwest and tropical rainforests to the South, Yunnan is rich in natural resources and has the largest diversity of plant life in China. This diversity extends its population as well. While in Yunnan I discovered that my great-grandfather had not only helped establish the university where I was teaching but was a member of the powerful black Yi tribe, and the governor and general of Yunnan during the transitional years of WWII. I stayed in Yunnan for three years; it was these experiences that helped me find a new sense of pride and identity and encouraged me to pursue a profession as a photographer and artist.

With the help of a 2008 Fulbright fellowship, I traveled once again to Yunnan, specifically to photograph for a pop-up book of the twenty-five ethnic minority groups that reside there. 25 of the 55 minority tribes of China reside in Yunnan and comprise less than 9% of the nation's population, with the Han representing the majority. Many people inside China and most people outside are unaware of this cultural richness. Since then I have returned to China to extend my project outside of Yunnan Province. Inspiration from recent trips to India, Morocco, and Kyrgyzstan are incorporated into newer work.

Constructing pop-ups allows me to combine intuitive design and technical acuity with my love of traveling as I try to understand the world around me. With pop-up books, I want to eliminate the boundaries between book, installation, photography, craft, and sculpture. Traveling through the mountainous Yi landscape, one old Yi man told me, "Although an eagle flies far into the distance, its wings will fold back. For the Yi, the ultimate goal of life is to find the path of your ancestors." Another Yi man advised me, "Don't follow the black road, which is madness, dampness, illness, and the ghost road. You should follow the white road, which leads you back to your ancestors."

BIOGRAPHY

Colette Fu received her MFA in Fine Art Photography from the Rochester Institute of Technology in 2003, and soon after began devising complex compositions that incorporate photography and pop-up paper engineering. She has designed for award winning stop motion animation commercials and free-lanced for clients including Greenpeace, Vogue China, Canon Asia and Moët Hennessy • Louis Vuitton and the Delaware Disaster Research Center. Her pop-up books are included in the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Library of Congress, Metropolitan Museum of Art, the West Collection and many private and rare archive collections. In 2014, Fu attended a 6-month artist residency at the Swatch Art Peace Hotel in Shanghai, where she continued her "We are Tiger Dragon" project, an extensive visual exploration of China's ethnic minorities. There she also designed China's largest (1 spread) pop-up book measuring 2.5 x 5 x 1.7 meters high. In October 2017, Colette created the world's largest – Tao Hua Yuan Ji, a 13.8 x 21 feet pop up book that people could enter, at the Philadelphia Photo Arts Center.

Fu's numerous awards include the 2018 Meggendorfer Prize for best paper engineered artist book, a Fulbright Research Fellowship to China, and grants from the Independence Foundation, Leeway Foundation, En Foco, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, CFEVA (Center for Emerging Visual Artists), New York Foundation for the Arts, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Puffin Foundation and Society for Photographic Education. She has attended many fully funded artist residencies including those at the Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center, Swatch Art Peace Hotel, Yaddo, the Macdowell Colony, Sacatar, the Vermont Studio Center, the Delaware Contemporary, the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Visual Studies Workshop, the Institute of Electronic Arts at Alfred University, the Millay Colony and the Alden B. Dow Center for Creativity. Her solo show "Wanderer/Wonderer: the Pop-ups of Colette Fu" was presented at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in 2016/17.

A passionate educator, Fu also teaches artmaking as a way to give voice to communities through pop-up paper engineered projects. She teaches pop-up courses and community workshops to marginalized populations at art centers, universities and institutions internationally.

"She simply has a way with people, says her friend Sally Blakemore. 'Colette's manner of speaking is very subtle and almost shy, but her personality is huge. She doesn't want to take center stage. Instead, she lets her work speak for itself.' Much as her books come to life when they open up, revealing magic and wonder inside, Fu has emerged as a unique and passionate artist by consistently venturing out of her comfort zone. Happy to blend in, she shines reaching out." Joyce Lovelace, American Craft, July 2015.

colettefu.com



CLAES GABRIEL

Claes Gabriel is a Philadelphia-based artist from Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Gabriel immigrated to the States in 1989 and earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Painting and Sculpture at the Maryland Institute College of Art in 1999. His three-dimensional paintings ring with the spiritual energy of beings from folklore and his own imagined tales, capturing a deified presence in each piece. Inspired by modernists such as Frank Stella and Sam Gilliam, Gabriel's work lives beyond the confines of a flat wall; he stretches and sews canvases taut over wooden armatures to construct masks and free-standing statues. After considering the natural shape of the piece, Gabriel uses bright acrylics to pull out patterns, eyes, lips, and personality that seem to rise to the surface of their own free will. Gabriel often says he knows a piece is finished when he can bow to it.

Gabriel's first influence was his father, classically-trained painter Jacques Gabriel (1934–1988), whose lush images of peasant life in Haiti depicted the commonplace in the vibrant, modernist language of the extraordinary. Gabriel's work aims to bring the sublime within reach. Gabriel has exhibited in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Baltimore, MD, Washington DC, and Paris, France. His work is included in the permanent collection of the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, MD. He currently lives and works in West Philadelphia.

claesgabriel.com



HIRO SAKAGUCHI

My artworks reflect issues of environment, ecology, science, world history, peace and conflict, and popular culture. Symbolism and narrative provide a conceptual platform for me. Models, toys and games from childhood often appear in my works. They emerge out of my memory of this time in my life and give me initial inspiration to make something. This makes my work somewhat autobiographical. I would like to explore now what wasn't possible for me then. This innocent point of departure allows me to get at the heart of

more current topics and adult concerns while simultaneously telling a loosely autobiographical, fictional story.

BIOGRAPHY

Hiro Sakaguchi was born in Nagano, Japan and grew up in Chiba City, near Tokyo. He was born as a twin. He moved to the United States in the 1990's to study art at the University of the Arts (BFA) and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (MFA). He currently has a studio and resides in Lansdowne, a close suburb of Philadelphia, PA.

Sakaguchi has had numerous solo and group exhibitions, having shown at various venues internationally such as the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Secession Museum, Austria, the Mori Museum, Tokyo, and the KIASMA museum of contemporary art in Helsinki, Finland. Sakaguchi has also exhibited at PULSE art fair in Miami and at the Melbourne Art Fair in Australia, both with Mizuma Art Gallery, Tokyo.

In 2011 Sakaguchi exhibited his first museum solo show "No Particular Place to Go" at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Morris Gallery. His 2014 / 2015 solo exhibition Avert, Escape or Cope With at the Delaware Center for Contemporary Arts was reviewed in ART NEWS, June 2015. In 2015 Sakaguchi exhibited a two-person show at Nancy Margolis Gallery, NYC alongside Anne Canfield. In 2019, he participated Philadelphia Fine Art Fair through Seraphin Gallery, Philadelphia.

Artworks by Hiro Sakaguchi can be found in both public and private collections internationally including the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia. He has representation at Seraphin Gallery in Philadelphia, Galerie Heubner & Heubner in Frankfurt, and Nancy Margolis Gallery in New York.

hirosakaguchi.com

TRACING ORIGINS



Colette Fu
Claes Gabriel
Hiro Sakaguchi

Tracing Origins is a selection of work inspired by the artists' ancestral homelands and native cultures. Pulling from personal memories, experiences, and familial influences, their stories are expressed through photography, paper engineering, painting, and sculpture.

Claes Gabriel, *Ghost Spirit*, Acrylic on shaped canvas, 2016





Colette Fu, *Yi Costume Festival*, Archival inkjet pop-up book, 2014





Claes Gabriel, *Burning Monk*, Acrylic on canvas, 2019



Claes Gabriel
Geisha
Acrylic on shaped canvas
2018



Colette Fu
Uyghur Food
Archival inkjet pop-up book
2019



Claes Gabriel, *Esther*, Acrylic on shaped canvas, 2017



Claes Gabriel

Esther

Acrylic on shaped canvas

2017



Claes Gabriel, *Boat People*, Acrylic on canvas, 2019



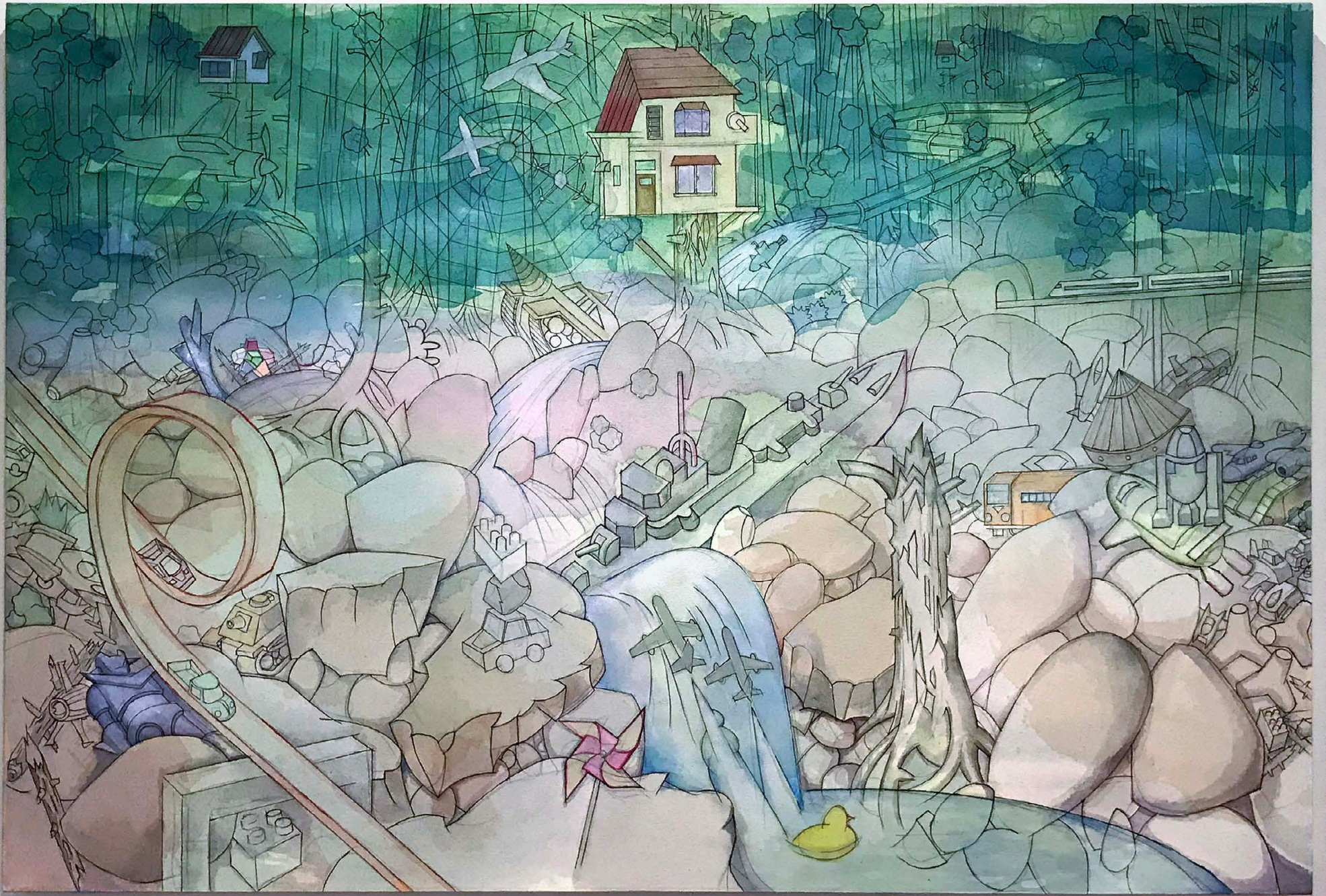
Claes Gabriel, *Boat People*, Acrylic on canvas, 2019



Claes Gabriel
Spear Head
Acrylic on shaped canvas
2016



Claes Gabriel, *Femme au Turban*, Acrylic on canvas, 2017



Hiro Sakaguchi, *Lost in the Wood*, Acrylic on canvas, 2020



Hiro Sakaguchi, *Transplanting / Settlement*, Acrylic on panel, 2020



Colette Fu, *Bökh*, Archival inkjet pop-up book, 2019



Hiro Sakaguchi, *Finding Megalopolis*, Acrylic on panel, 2020



Hiro Sakaguchi
Lullaby
Acrylic on canvas
2016



Colette Fu, *Axi Fire Festival*, Archival inkjet pop-up book, 2014



Colette Fu, *Yi Tiger Festival*, Archival inkjet pop-up book, 2020



Claes Gabriel
Harlequin
Acrylic on shaped canvas
2017



Claes Gabriel, *Harlequin*, Acrylic on shaped canvas, 2017 (foreground)

Colette Fu, *Miao Fishing Contest*, Archival inkjet pop-up book, 2017 (background)





Colette Fu, *Miao Fishing Contest*, Archival inkjet pop-up book, 2017 (background)





Hiro Sakaguchi, *Looking Forward*, Paintings of BANDAI Model Kit Boxes, Acrylic on linen, 2019–20



Hiro Sakaguchi, *Looking Forward*, Paintings of BANDAI Model Kit Boxes, Acrylic on linen, 2019–20







Claes Gabriel, *Little Prince*, Acrylic on shaped canvas, 2015



Claes Gabriel
Little Prince (foreground)
Acrylic on shaped canvas
2015



Claes Gabriel
Voluptuous
Acrylic on shaped canvas
2019

Claes Gabriel
Voluptuous
Acrylic on shaped canvas
2019







COLETTE FU



Uyghur Food
Archival inkjet
Pop-up book
23 x 34 x16 inches
2019



Bökh
Archival inkjet
Pop-up book
23 x 34 x13 inches
2019



Yi Costume Festival
Archival inkjet
Pop-up book
22 x 32 x7.5 inches
2014



Yi Tiger Festival
Archival inkjet
Pop-up book
23 x 34 x8.5 inches
2020



Axi Fire Festival
Archival inkjet
Pop-up book
22 x 32 x12 inches
2014



Miao Fishing Contest
Archival inkjet pop-up book
162 x 30 x 14 inches
2017

CLAES GABRIEL



Ghost Spirit
Acrylic on shaped canvas
24 x 17 inches
2016



Femme au Turban
Acrylic on canvas
32 x 32 inches
2017



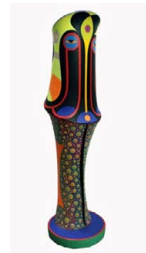
Burning Monk
Acrylic on canvas
36 x 36 inches
2019



Voluptuous
Acrylic on shaped canvas
36 x 10 x 13 inches
2019



Geisha
Acrylic on shaped canvas
30 x 12 x 4 inches
2018



Little Prince
Acrylic on shaped canvas
28 x 12 x 9 inches
2015



Boat People
Acrylic on canvas
40 x 50 inches
2019



Esther
Acrylic on shaped canvas
69 x 40 x 30 inches
2017



Spear Head
Acrylic on shaped canvas
21 x 14 inches
2016



Harlequin
Acrylic on shaped canvas
76 x 27 x 27 inches
2017

HIRO SAKAGUCHI



Lost in the Wood
Acrylic on canvas
42 x 62 inches
2020



Looking Forward
Paintings of BANDAI
Model Kit Boxes
Acrylic on linen
3.5 x 6 x 1.5 inches each
2019–20



**Transplanting /
Settlement**
Acrylic on panel
36 x 48 inches
2020

DRAWING



No Particular Place to Go
Graphite, ink, and
watercolor on paper
9 x 12 inches
2019



Finding Megalopolis
Acrylic on panel
36 x 48 inches
2020



**Building Island for Future
Home Town**
Graphite and watercolor on
paper
9 x 12 inches
2020



Lullaby
Acrylic on canvas
48 x 38 inches
2016



Lost in the Wood
Graphite, ink and
watercolor on paper
9 x 12 inches
2019