

Hiroshi Senju, Falling Water, 2013, Acrylic and fluorescent pigments on Japanese, mulberry paper, 63 13/16 x 89 1/2 inches, © 2013 Hiroshi Senju

Hiroshi Senju

Capturing the passage of time

Acclaimed Japanese artist, Hiroshi Senju's solo show in Sundaram Tagore Gallery awards the viewer a glimpse of serenity and an inkling of the passage of time as planet earth measures it rather than in fleeting human terms. The waterfall series of paintings on show here were meticulously created using natural pigments consisting of ground rocks such as lapis lazuli. After capturing the unceasing movement of water in these images the artist incorporated pigments that glow in ultra violet light transforming them when darkness falls into eerie blue spectral presences.

In an ancient yet modern, and perhaps uniquely Japanese approach, he produces minimal paintings that speak of the universal themes of human frailty and transience in the face of momentous forces of nature, interweaving his personal response to the evolution of the planet.

Senju's early paintings captured urban landscapes, hauntingly empty like those of de Chirico, but with hints of human presence through fast moving traffic, hinted at with a swoosh of paint. Later his journey to Hawaii and bird's eye view of the island by helicopter led to a series of still water paintings where the whiteness of the sky reflected in the water's surface suggested the infinity of the universe through the opaqueness of cloud. Following this period he spent some time in the desert, expecting to find a dead environment but instead experiencing an epiphany of life affirming joy in the natural world he perceived there.

Using hand mixed paints Senju adjusts the angle of the canvas to illustrate the force of falling water so that a steeper angle suggests speed as the poured paint echoes the path of water plunging from height into a tranquil pool below. He captures the mist that surrounds the waterfall using the modern technology of a spray gun that poignantly forms a direct link from contemporary art to prehistoric subterranean artists spraying pigment onto the walls of caves with their mouths.

As an internationally renowned artist, Senju's works adorn the walls of commercial and public locations such as the Grand Hyatt hotel and Tokyo International Airport. Senju has recently focussed on a new series of cliff paintings inspired by pieces of scrunched up paper discarded on the studio floor and in a sense these form part of a continued obsession with the wonder of life on earth expressed through the movement of water. [Q](#)



DATA

Hiroshi Senju: Day Falls/Night Falls

April 16 – June 9, 2013

Sundaram Tagore Gallery

57-59 Hollywood Road, Central, Hong Kong