



Collector 2, 2009, Acrylic on canvas, 76 x 64 inches (194 x 162 cm)

Akikazu Iwamoto

Drawings and Paintings

May 10 – June 23, 2012

Stux Gallery is pleased to announce the first solo show of drawings and paintings by Hiroshima born, Japanese artist **Akikazu Iwamoto**. Akikazu creates wildly imaginative, candy-colored paintings and drawings that offer confronting, amusing, and sometimes frightening revelations of our inflated inner desires in their most distilled state.

Akikazu was orphaned at a young age, and raised by his grandmother in a house just one kilometer away from the Atomic Bomb Dome. The images and artifacts of the Bomb affected him greatly during his childhood. The main thrust for his artwork is a general deep-seated sense of wickedness that he believes to exist in every human psyche.

Akikazu cites Maurice Utrillo, an early 20th century painter of emotionally charged Parisian landscapes, as one of his notable inspirations. His works are also influenced by the ethereal colors he witnessed during a trip to Nepal as well as the works of American painter Aaron Johnson and Canadian Marcel Dzama. His visions take place in a comprehensive atmosphere free from the restrictions of reality, where violently mutated creatures, detached body parts and nondescript organic forms are rendered masterfully, contending an inherent connection between violence and innocence.

In *Collector 2*, a tiger with five arms and a thousand legs, which represents the artist himself, is dressed in neon yellow dress. Small, smiling monsters float about leisurely, and a growth from the tiger's ear impales a creature that seems to be attempting to hop over the tiger like a pole-vaulter. The characters hover above a receding blue background, and all signs of violence and feral grotesqueness evaporate temporarily beneath Iwamoto's candied colors and balanced composition.

His vast portfolio of drawings further showcases his powerful imagination, and sheds light on his enigmatic compositional processes. Delicately rendered with pastels and colored pencils, these images offer spontaneous, experimental, stand-alone frames that, in their totality, form a panorama of his mental kingdom. They often emanate a sense of mystery that supplements the excitement and energy of his canvases. Their sketchbook-like quality inserts a reporter's notebook-sensibility that makes these jarring, candid scenes from his psychological landscape simultaneously personable and haunting.

-Lucy Li

Akikazu Iwamoto is a Japanese painter, born and based in Hiroshima. He earned a degree in graphic design from Tohoku College of Arts and Design in Japan, receiving several awards for his design work before turning to painting. His work has been featured prominently in his home country of Japan as well as internationally in the U.S. This is Mr. Iwamoto's second solo show in New York and his first at Stux Gallery.

For further information please contact the gallery at Andrea@stuxgallery.com