

EDGE

HIROSHIMA - LONDON

EDGE

ARTWORK BETWEEN BOUNDARIES

Ava Grauls • Makiko Shimizu Harris • Megumi Ohata

Royal College of Art, Contemporary Art Practice

Edge is an artist collaboration supported by GBSF



Royal College of Art
Postgraduate Art & Design



The Great Britain
SASAKAWA
FOUNDATION
グレートブリテン・ササカワ財団



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Ava Grauls, Makiko Shimizu Harris, and Megumi Ohata met at the Royal College of Art in London. Their shared interest in cultural independence within the diaspora led to the creation of an artist collective.

The result was *EDGE* exhibition, Hiroshima City, 2023.

These artists explore the challenges of living within and across boundaries, both in the intimacy of our bodies and in the larger context of vast territories.

We hope to bring these discussions from Hiroshima to London.

Why this title 'Edge'

For us, the Edge is both a liminal place, as well as a frame of mind. The Edge belongs far from the centre and continuously slips between the boundaries by remaining just outside of formalised culture. The edge becomes the realm for the migrant. From this position, new and interesting perspectives can be explored and considered.

How do we define ourselves?
How has 'where we were born' affected our identities
and can we separate culture from the place we have come from?



Grauls, Ohata, Shimizu Harris

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

The EDGE is a global exhibition considering how women and queer migrant artists explore beyond the boundaries of national cultural stereotype. Their new artwork takes on textiles of the skin, familial cloth and the paper maps, redesigning new states of being between cultural boundaries.

Royal College of Art graduates, Ava Grauls, Makiko Shimizu Harris, and Megumi Ohata, presented the EDGE exhibition in Hiroshima City with the support of Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation. After a successful exhibition in Hiroshima, the artist collective are currently seeking a London venue to collaborate with and share their experiences and work with the public.

Grauls' national landscape painting: 'Floating Fortresses', takes monumental scale, investigating the management of social memory in the form of subjective historical documentation, rethinking the violent and subjective practice of mapmaking.

Shimizu Harris takes a contemporary feminist approach towards deconstructing her heritage. Her paintings blow up, deface and manipulate the burden of these symbols of the Shimizu familial legacy in the form of redefining the matriarch in these inherited kimono crests.

Ohata explores their past trauma, ghosts and non-human beings through their wearable sculptures. Their work explores diasporic identities and the importance of embracing one's skin through translucent skin.

The artist collective are currently seeking a London venue to collaborate with and share their Hiroshima experiences and artwork with the public.



ARTIST 1/3

Ava Grauls (Painter + Performer)

[Website](#) / [Instagram](#)

A

Ava Grauls (1982) is a South African / Belgian artist based in London. Her work explores speculative questions regarding nationalised legitimacy, cultural legacy, and environmental influences on identity from a geographic perspective. Her practice is multidisciplinary, utilising video, performance, painting, and music.

Grauls' work is often inspired by her own experiences of living through clashing or disappearing histories. She was born in South Africa during apartheid, her family moved to Belgium when she was a child and further relocated to a British asbestos mine in Eswatini. Her practice has been shaped by these experiences, directing her to question forms of influence and education that manage memory. Her perspective is of a traveler seeking maps and what the maps say of the land and of those that conquer.

Grauls' paintings and films have been exhibited in London, Scotland, Lisbon, and Japan. She won the Moira McGregor Bursary (2019), the RSA David Mitchie Travel Award (2021), was part of the Lisbon Art Weekend (2022), was selected artist for the London Art Biennale (2023), and is currently a participant in the RA Summer Exhibition(2023).

1982 Born in Stellenbosch, South Africa. Lived in Belgium, Swaziland, Johannesburg

1998 Moved to London, UK

2006 Graduated from Westminster University for Filmmaking, employed as a projectionist at the British Film Institute

2021 Graduated from Duncan Jordanstone University of Art and Design

2023 Royal College of Art: MA Contemporary Art Practice, London, UK

SELECTED SHOWS & EXHIBITIONS

2010 Battle of the Sexless, Sh1, London.

2012 Hiroshima Charity Art show, Hiroshima City.

2013 Me & Me Gallery G, Hiroshima City

2020 4th Year take over, Generator Projects, Dundee.

2018 Choice Cuts Sugar Club, Cameo, Edinburgh

2019 [IM]PRINT Studio Kura, Itoshima, Japan

2022 Contemporary Art Practice Festival RCA, London

2022 *SLUICE screening* Lisbon Art Weekend, Lisbon, Portugal

2022 *SLUICE screening* IMT Gallery London

2023 *LAND SALE* - Phoenix Cinema, London

2023 Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, London

2023 Royal College of Art Graduation Exhibition, London

2023 London Art Biennale, London

2023 *EDGE*, Hiroshima

2024 Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh, award exhibit

2024 *LAND SALE 2.0* Old Fire Station, Oxford

AWARDS & GRANTS

2019 Moira McGregor travel Bursary

2021 RSA David Michie Travel award

2021 John Milne Purvis Prize for 'Landing'

2022 recipient of The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation Arts & Culture grant

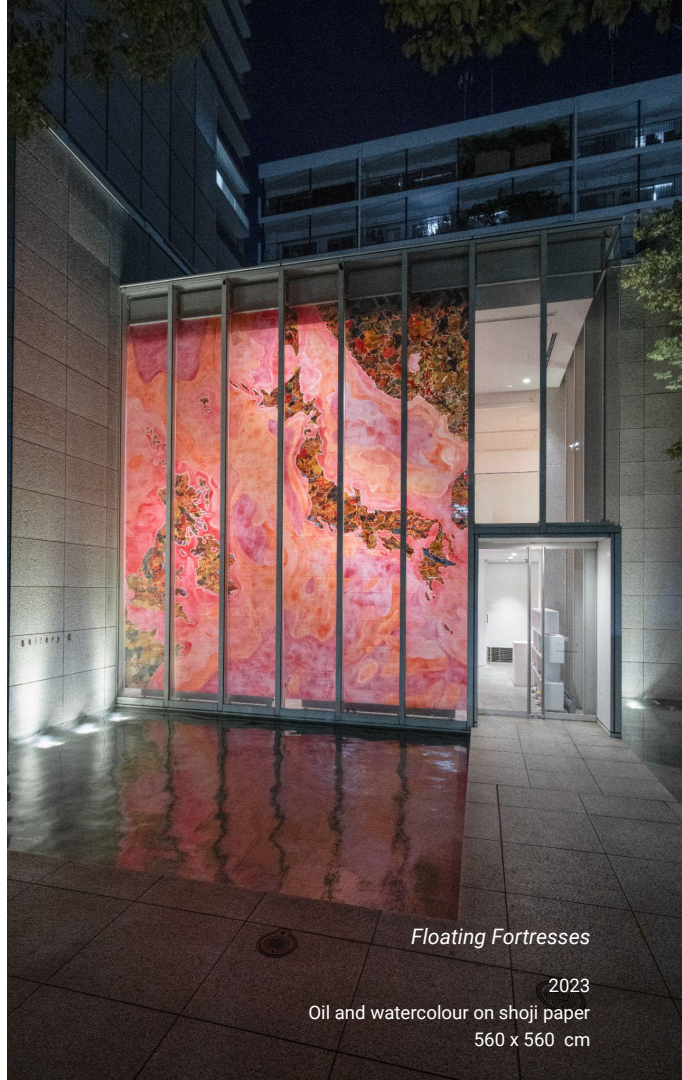


Floating Fortresses

2023

Oil and watercolour on shoji paper

560 x 560 cm



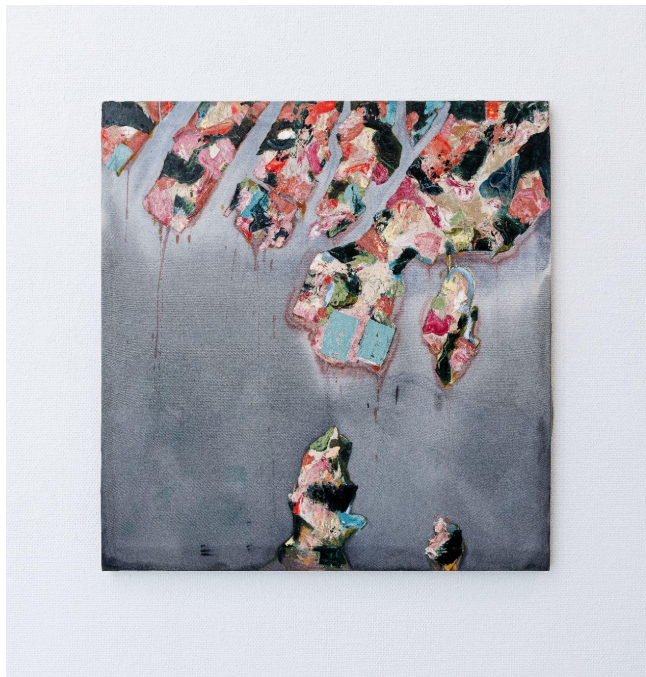
Floating Fortresses

2023

Oil and watercolour on shoji paper

560 x 560 cm

Catalogue



New Dejima

Oil, watercolour and acrylic on canvas

Mukaishima

Oil, watercolour and acrylic on canvas

Floating Fortresses

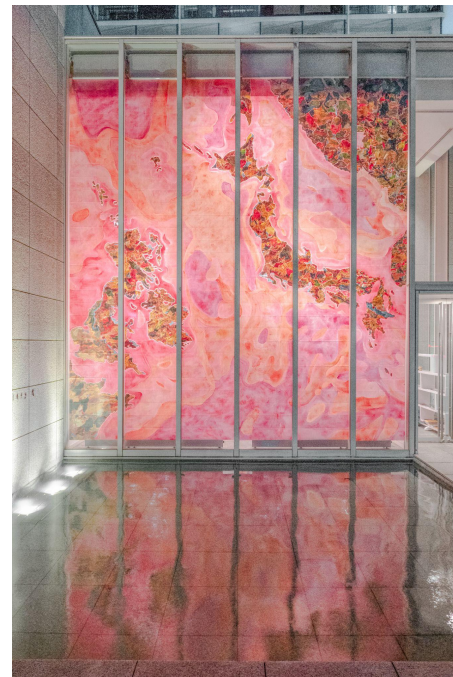
Oil, watercolour and acrylic on shoji paper



88 x 91 cm, 2023

77 x 45cm, 2023

560 x 560cm, 2023





ARTIST 2/3

Makiko Shimizu Harris (Interdisciplinary Artist + Musician)

[Website](#) / [Instagram](#)

Makiko Shimizu Harris (b. 1989, American + Japanese) is a London based interdisciplinary artist who explores themes of hybridity, identity, and power. Informed by feminist theory and her own experiences as a biracial woman, Harris uses painting, installation, sculpture, and sound to create immersive environments that challenge viewers to think critically about their own roles in power dynamics.

In Harris' painting practice, she explores the body as a site of agency and resistance. This aims to offer a critical alternative to a world where multiracial and other bodies that defy easy categorization are often met with scrutiny, objectification, and fetishization. In the Good Girl series, Harris explores mixed identity through a consideration of lineage and inheritance. Using high-resolution scans from kimonos worn by four generations of women in her family as the base, she reclaims these traditional patterns as her own through scale and abstraction.

1989 Born in Breda, The Netherlands

1990 - 2021 Lived in Tokyo, Japan, San Francisco, CA, Boston, MA, and New York, NY

2011 Graduated Tufts University: BA Philosophy and Studio Art, Boston, MA, USA

2021 Moved to London, UK

2023 Graduated Royal College of Art: MA Contemporary Art Practice, London, UK

SELECTED SHOWS & EXHIBITIONS

2019 *Silent Conviction*, Frank Ratchye Project Space, Root Division, San Francisco, CA, USA

2020 Solo exhibition *Truth or Consequences*, Magnolia Brewing, San Francisco, CA, USA

2021 *A Joy Unexpected*, Root Division, San Francisco, CA, USA

2021 *14th Anniversary Show*, Seccession Art & Design, San Francisco, CA, USA

2022 *Chromatic*, PXP Contemporary, online

2022 *A Line Made By Walking*, Upper Gulbenkian Gallery, London, UK

2022 *Beyond Repetition*, Buinho at The Old Chickpea Factory, Messejana, Portugal

2022 *Falling into Place*, Liz Lidgett Gallery, Des Moines, IA, USA

2022 *Work in Progress 2022*, Royal College of Art, London, UK

2022 *CAP Salon*, Dyson Gallery, London, UK

2023 *Texture*, Liz Lidgett Gallery, Des Moines, IA, USA

2023 *Unfolding Traces*, presented by Pigeon Park, The Hangar Gallery, London, UK

2023 *Tate Modern Lates*, Tate Modern, London, UK [Screening of film, *Circle Burn*]

2023 *RCA2023 Degree Show*, The Truman Brewery, London, UK

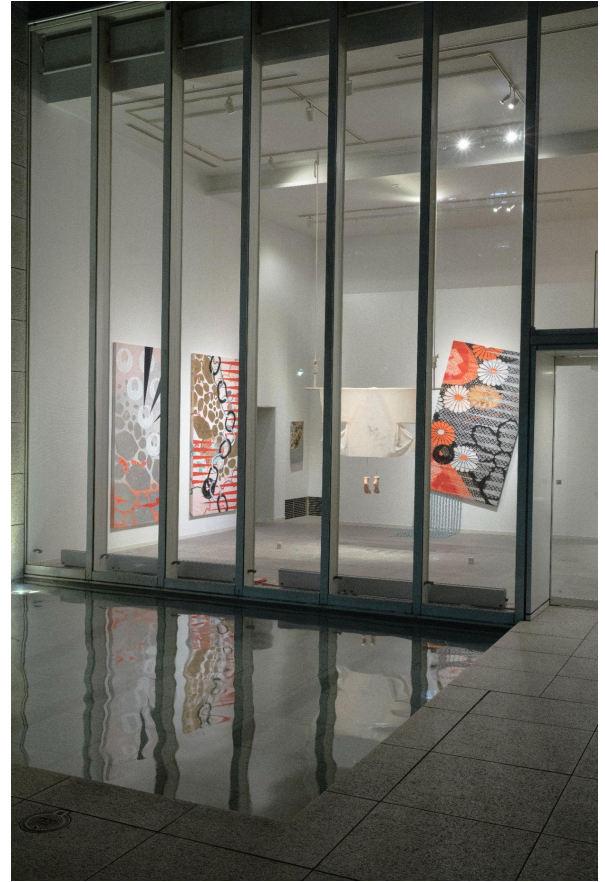
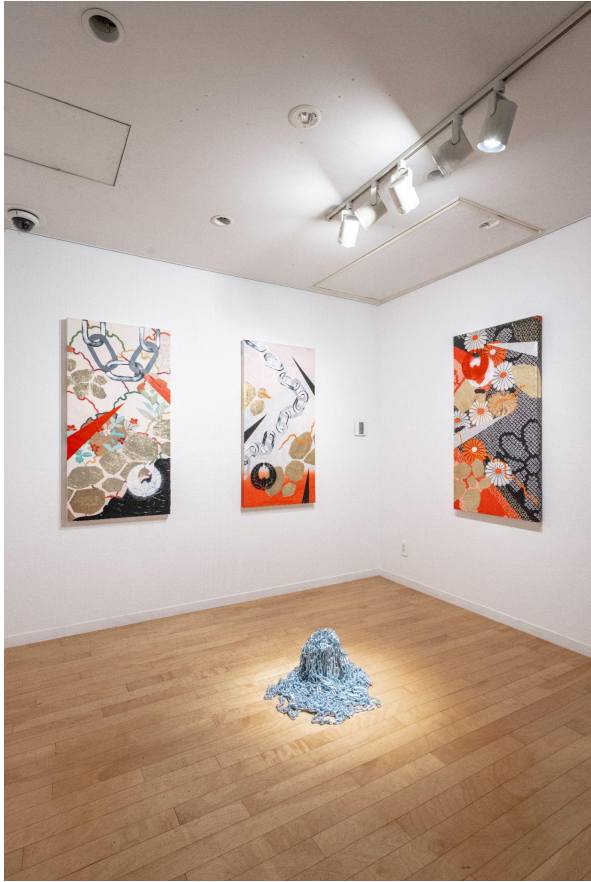
2023 *EDGE*, Hiroshima

GRANTS & RESIDENCIES

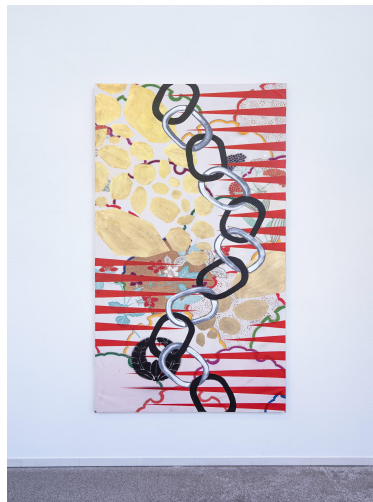
2019 Art & Soul International Artist Residency, Truth or Consequences, NM, USA

2021 Buinho Artist Residency, Messejana, Portugal

2022 Recipient of *The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation Arts & Culture* grant, London, UK



Catalogue



Good Girl - Black Spike

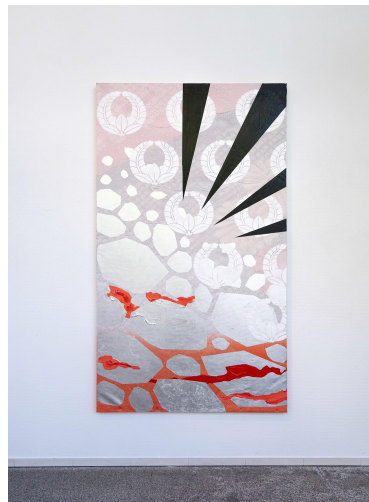
Good Girl - Red Spike

Good Girl - Silver Spike

Good Girl - Multi Chain

Good Girl - White

Good Girl - Red



Acrylic, metal leaf, oil stick, and spray paint

Acrylic, metal leaf, oil stick, and spray paint

Acrylic, metal leaf, oil stick, and spray paint

Acrylic, metal leaf, oil stick, and spray paint

Acrylic, metal leaf, oil stick, and spray paint

Acrylic, metal leaf, oil stick, spray paint, and embroidery

120 x 60cm, 2023

120 x 60cm, 2023

120 x 60cm, 2023

250 x 130cm, 2023

250 x 130cm, 2023

250 x 130cm, 2023





ARTIST 3/3

Megumi Ohata (Interdisciplinary Artist + SFX MUA)

[Website](#) / [Instagram](#)

Megumi Ohata is a London-based interdisciplinary artist and SFX makeup artist, of primarily Japanese heritage, with a mixed Korean background. They are renowned for their innovative works marked by unique artificial skin fabrics imprinted with their own skin textures.

Ohata's practice deeply explores gender, identity, and Posthuman philosophy. Their work confronts personal traumas, ranging from the effects of child abuse and gender struggles to the discrimination they have faced due to their Asian heritage. Their artistic process is introspective, symbolising the act of extracting parts from their own body—physically and psychologically—and progressively transforming them into works of art.

Ohata views their art as an extension of their own body, a tool to blur boundaries beyond their skin and to discover the non-human form within. In their journey to reconcile these traumatic experiences, Ohata questions the role of artists in escaping society's negative cycle and poses the question: What does a body need to be relatable?

EDUCATION

2021 - 2023 Royal College of Art: MA Contemporary Art Practice, London, UK. [Achieved Distinction]

2020 - 2021 Royal College of Art: Graduate Diploma Art & Design (Fine Art), London, UK.

2016 - 2019 University of the Arts London, Camberwell College of Arts: BA (Hons) Illustration, London, UK. [Achieved a First Class Honours Degree]

SELECTED SHOWS & EXHIBITIONS

2023

ACROSS & OVER, HSBC HQ in Canary Wharf, London, UK.

Alter-native, Ugly Duck, London, UK.

Edge, Gallery G, Hiroshima, JP.

RCA2023 Degree Show, The Truman Brewery, London, UK.

Kaechan's Imagination Oasis, TAV GALLERY, Tokyo, JP. [Collaboration]

recombinator, Staffordshire, London, UK.

Tate Modern Lates, Tate Modern, London, UK. [Artist Talk]

2022

Bow Arts Open Studios, London, UK.

14ndStep ES, Tabula Rasa Gallery, London, UK. [Collaboration]

CAP Salon, Dyson Gallery, London, UK.

Work in Progress 2022, Royal College of Art, London, UK.

2021

Kawaii Agency, Avalon Cafe, London, UK.

Kawaii Agency, The Wrong Biennale. [Online]

VISIONARY Projects & Legion Paper present: Overexposed, New York, US. [Online]

Humanism, BIOS Exploring Urban Culture, Athens, GR.

Shiftists present: Lingua Franca, Hoxton 253, London, UK.

AWARDS & GRANTS

2022 Recipient of The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation Arts & Culture grant

2021 Shortlisted: THE HOLY ART Presents, HUMANISM Art Contest

2019 Runner up: BATSFORD PRIZE 2019 'Fashion Category'

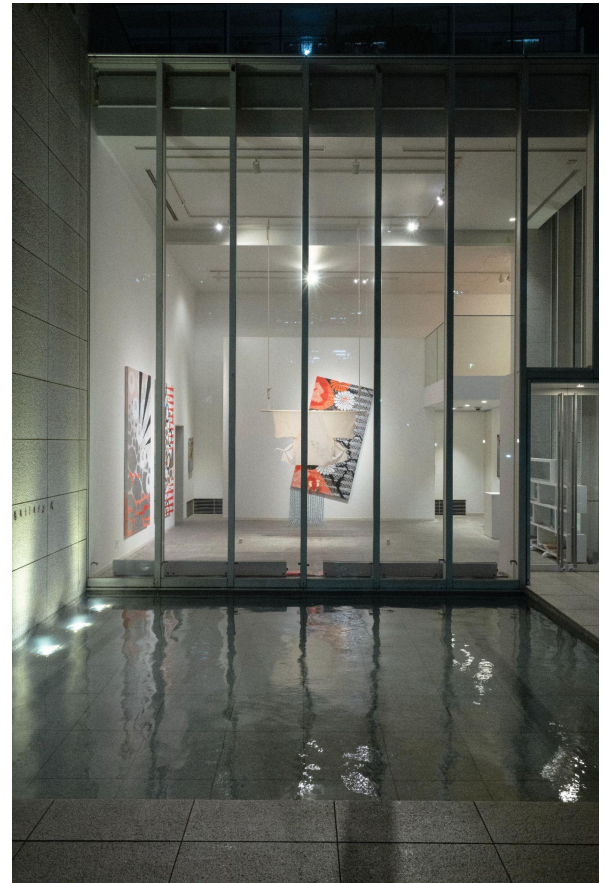


Haori (installation)

2021-

Silicone, pigment, thread, foam, wood, metal, and rope

143 x 103 cm / 56 x 40 in





Haori

2021-
Silicone, pigment, thread, adhesive
143 x 103 cm / 56 x 40 in

Catalogue



Haori

Silicone, pigment, thread, foam, wood, metal, and rope



143 x 103 cm, 2021-



Bilingual Artist Talk, 7 October 2023, gallery G, Hiroshima City

There is value in learning to critically separate yourself from your culture and heritage, towards practicing new forms of knowledge. Our relationship with the land and how we come to form an identity around it, fascinated me and I am always looking at other artists who consciously question or recognise their cultural heritage in their work. I considered Makiko and Megumi as artist partners because I could see how they were critically re-evaluating their cultural position in regards to the geographic location they have been mentally relocated to, in the eyes of others.

We seek independence and a more self-awareness within what we think is our 'naturalised' culture.

Ava Grauls, Artist talk, 07.10.2023

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