

For Immediate Release

July 2, 2014

Los Angeles, CA

CHG CIRCA

HIKARI SHIMODA

"FANTASTIC PLANET, GOODBYE MAN"



OPENING RECEPTION SATURDAY, JULY 19, FROM 7-10PM
ON VIEW JULY 19 - AUGUST 23, 2014

Culver City (July 1, 2014): On Saturday, July 19, 2014, CHG Circa presents Hikari Shimoda's "Fantastic Planet, Goodbye Man", her first solo show in the U.S.

The bright, usually cheery, pastel color palette Hikari employs in her portraits tell the opposite story of the anxious, starry-eyed spirits she portrays. The paintings, embellished by sparkly stickers and Manga stylings, depict pale, horned children—demonic muses called upon to remind us of our mortality and the longevity of harm caused to humanity and our ecosystem. Hikari explores two concepts for this first solo exhibition at Circa. Children of this Planet, using Anime depictions of Japanese magic or "Shojo", girls and Whereabouts of God, a series inspired by Fukushima and the equally tragic Chernobyl disasters. Hikari's pint-sized omniscients carry a

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tell-tale scar around their neck, the “Chernobyl necklace” seen on those children who underwent surgery for thyroid cancer after the incident. This new body of work also shows an evolution of Hikari’s technique, as the skin tones of her subjects achieve more depth through detail and there is a renewed emotional complexity in their expressions.

“I believe that deities were created because the human race felt helpless and could no longer resolve its problems,” Hikari explains. “The idea of salvation as referred to by the Last Judgment in the Bible and afterlife in Buddhism promises that humanity will not perish. We constantly wonder what will happen next. I’ve created my vision of the world while thinking about such things.” The opening reception for Hikari Shimoda will be hosted Saturday, July 19, 2014, from 7-10pm at CHG Circa. The reception is open to the public, and the exhibition is on view through August 23, 2014.

Hikari Shimoda

Based in Nagano, Japan, Hikari Shimoda first studied illustration at the prestigious Kyoto Saga University of Art and Aoyama Juku School before beginning her career as a contemporary artist in 2008. Soon afterward, Shimoda was selected for her first solo exhibition at Motto Gallery in Tokyo, and since then has held exhibitions annually in galleries worldwide, spanning Japan, the United States, Canada, and Milano, Italy. Shimoda’s artwork paints a world where cuteness and horror coexist, and fantasy meets reality. She credits the Japanese pop culture she grew up with as the main source of inspiration of her Lowbrow-Irasuto style, inspired by anime and manga. There are often children putting on heroic costumes such as Superman and Shojo girls, an anime sub-genre of young girls who use magic. Through depicting children especially, Shimoda reveals the problems people in today’s society struggle with from within. Children possess a simple existence because their identity is ambiguous which provides her with an original point of view. In her Whereabouts of God portrait series of other-worldly horned children, she also comments on Christianity’s anointment of Jesus Christ as savior of humanity and mirror of our fantasy heroes. These characters not only represent heroism but an adult desire to watch our children grow and defend the world we have constructed. With each new piece, Shimoda advances her search for salvation and her deeper understanding of this chaotic world.

CHG Circa

Established in 2012 by Los Angeles gallerists Jan Corey Helford and Bruce Helford, CHG Circa is their exciting new art venue on Washington Blvd. After launching the highly-successful Corey Helford Gallery in 2006 in the Culver City Arts District, the Helfords opened CHG Circa as a platform to highlight figurative and pop surreal artists worldwide, including Lola, Van Arno, Sylvia Ji, Amy Sol and many more. Corey Helford Gallery is internationally-renowned for its standout exhibitions, from “Letters From America” during the 2012 London Olympics to “Art From The New World,” Corey Helford’s transatlantic collaboration with the Bristol’s City Museum & Art Gallery showcasing work by a formidable group of 49 of the finest emerging and noted American artists in the New Contemporary art scene. CHG Circa will present exhibitions and special projects of equal quality and caliber. “We believe the artists we show and support are creating timeless art,” the Helfords add, and to celebrate this, CHG Circa will have an elegant 1930s’ ambiance, stamped tin ceilings and 10 foot archways. CHG Circa presents new exhibitions every 4-5 weeks. For more information and an upcoming exhibition schedule, please visit coreyhelfordgallery.com

CHG Circa

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