

FRAENKEL

49 GEARY STREET SAN FRANCISCO 94108 415 981 2661

For immediate release:



Grand Princess, 2023, transparency in lightbox

Kota Ezawa Joins Fraenkel Gallery

Fraenkel Gallery is pleased to announce the representation of internationally celebrated Bay Area-based artist Kota Ezawa. Working in a wide variety of media, including his radically inventive video animations and lightboxes, Ezawa's sustained engagement with photography has often been inspired by moments embedded in our collective consciousness. These subjects have included the O.J. Simpson trial, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the assassinations of Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy, and more recently, NFL players "taking a knee" in response to police brutality, and the arrival of COVID-19 in the U.S. An inaugural solo exhibition at the gallery is planned for the fall of 2024.

In a career spanning 20 years, Ezawa has explored the construction of shared experience through images, transforming complex visual information into its most essential elements. His striking, flattened

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versions of photographs and artworks have been exhibited in museums across the U.S., Canada, and Europe.

Ezawa's work delves into the intersection of technology and mass media, resulting in visually captivating pieces that dismantle the assumptions viewers bring to widely-circulated images. *The Simpson Verdict* animates original courtroom footage from the O.J. Simpson trial, simplifying the images to draw attention to the issues of race and celebrity that the case evoked. In *The History of Photography Remix*, Ezawa recreates important art and documentary photographs, building a reimagined version of history in which differences between eras and styles are erased. *The Crime of Art* chronicles real and fictional museum heists, including the infamous theft of thirteen works from Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in 1990, and allows viewers to re-encounter stolen artworks as contemporary drawings. In *National Anthem*, which was featured in the Whitney Biennial in 2019, hand-painted watercolor images are animated to recreate footage of NFL athletes protesting during *The Star-Spangled Banner*, emphasizing the reverence of the gesture.

"We are delighted to welcome Kota to Fraenkel Gallery," said Fraenkel Gallery Partner Daphne Palmer. "The thought-provoking, image-saturated nature of his work aligns perfectly with the gallery's mission to understand photography and its relation to other media. We look forward to collaborating with Kota and sharing his work with a wider audience."

Fraenkel Gallery will join RYAN LEE Gallery in New York in co-representing the artist.

About the Artist:

Kota Ezawa has been featured in solo exhibitions at the Baltimore Museum of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Santa Barbara, California; SITE Santa Fe; Mead Art Museum, Amherst, Massachusetts; Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia; Buffalo AKG Art Museum, New York; Vancouver Art Gallery, Canada; and the Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri, among others. He participated in the Whitney Biennial 2019 and the Shanghai Biennale 2004. His work is in the collections of institutions including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Art Institute of Chicago; Musée D'Art Contemporain de Montréal, Canada; and the Baltimore Museum of Art. Ezawa received a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Award in 2004, a SECA Art Award in 2006, and a Eureka Fellowship in 2010.

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