



UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH

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ART MUSEUM, USJ PRESENTS *TAJIMA IN RELIEF, a Retrospective of the Artist's Prints*

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. (August 30, 2021) – The Art Museum, University of Saint Joseph will open ***TAJIMA IN RELIEF*** on Friday, September 24, 2021 with a public reception from 5:00-7:30 p.m. The exhibition will run from September 24 – December 11, 2021.

TAJIMA IN RELIEF is the first major museum retrospective of relief prints by Tajima Hiroyuki (1911-1997), a Japanese artist internationally renowned for his use of layered and luminous color and his complex and creative printmaking techniques. Featuring more than 60 prints made over the course of his career, it examines Tajima's recurring themes and his approach to abstraction. Tajima exemplifies the inventive incorporation of international trends that characterizes post-WWII Japanese printmaking.

Tajima Hiroyuki trained as an artist at Nihon University, graduating in 1932, and the Western Painting division of Tokyo's School of Fine Arts. In 1946 he joined Bijutsu Bunka Kiyokai, a group of artists engaged in revitalizing Japanese abstract and surrealist painting after WWII. Tajima not only embraced surrealism as an avant-garde mode of abstraction, but also incorporated technical studies in fabric dyeing and color photographic processes into his *sosaku hanga* ("creative prints" in which the printmaker is sole creator, serving as designer, block cutter, and printer).

The U.S. occupation of Japan after WWII provided a receptive audience for *sosaku hanga* and contributed to its international success. From the 1960s to the 1980s, Tajima won widespread acclaim for his abstract woodblock prints, whose experimental techniques created a thoroughly modern idiom while remaining in dialogue with traditional Japanese arts.

The exhibition opening reception will feature shakuhachi (bamboo flute) performances. A Lion Dance (6:15 p.m.) will precede the dedication of cherry trees, a gift to USJ from the Us & Japan Society of Connecticut; Miyoshi America, Inc.; and Maruichi Japanese Food & Deli and its patrons.

TAJIMA IN RELIEF is organized by the Art Museum, University of Saint Joseph and is supported in part by an anonymous foundation; Benjamin Ortiz and Victor Torchia, Jr.; Miyoshi America, Inc.; the Us & Japan Society of Connecticut (UJSC); the Karen L. Chase '97 Fund; and Gregory A. Boyko.

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The Art Museum, University of Saint Joseph is located in Bruyette Athenaeum on the University's main campus at 1678 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford. It is open Wednesday through Saturday: 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.; closed Monday, Tuesday, and Sunday. Admission is free. For more information, visit www.usj.edu/artmuseum.

The University of Saint Joseph (USJ) offers a wide range of coeducational undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs that combine a professional and liberal arts education with opportunities for mentored research, community service, clinical field work, and internships. Programs are taught on the University's two campuses in West Hartford and Hartford, Connecticut; at off-campus locations throughout the state; and online. Founded in 1932 by the Sisters of Mercy, the University of Saint Joseph offers degrees with value and values. To learn more, view our website at www.usj.edu.

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