

Tam Ochiai,
M.O.
21 February–22 March, 2020
4 Herald Street, London

giggling
opening night
drum beats for roberta
a young girl on a date
is he a philosopher ?
walking from west with anne
the pleasure at washington sq
park
ghost of astor place
teens blues
chess players on thompson st
children's corner
LES
record collector's dream
the end of the 90's
uniform
5pm
the habits of nocturnal
breakfast at rather's
film buff's hobby
a lady on west 88th street
hail on mulberry
an elegant rabbit greeting
it's not lion
blue's blue

Soft Opening,

*an incident on east 9th street
church X
grumpy claude's masterpiece
cover story
that's why
funny-her-eyebrow
lost in west village
tender afternoon
tribeca air
jose
gazing stanley
the short moment on 57th st
spring on the 72nd st
cafe V
after january
sharing a cab with colin
he is on a sabbatical
east 40's
he doesn't trust answering
machines
lost item
the ladder at st marks
bookshop
new machine
she is carryng a synthesizers
in a storm
autumn in may
roselee's class
gin
walking in the village
1995 skirt*

In a solo exhibition titled *M.O.*, in reference to the Surrealist artist Meret Oppenheim, Tam Ochiai presents a new series of small assemblage paintings alongside a group of previously un-exhibited works on paper and two earlier paintings. This constellation of work from four separate but connected series' traverse the artist's ongoing interest in place and reaffirm an understanding that the seemingly arbitrary movement between locations can function as an index for geographical distance, temporality and a tracing of personal history and experience.

Ochiai's newest body of work, playfully displayed across the floor, finds its genesis in a once-lost gift Meret Oppenheim made for her then-lover Max Ernst titled *Husch, Husch, der schöne Vokal entleert sich* (1934). Rediscovered in a Parisian flea market forty years later by a French art dealer and then bought back and restored by the artist, the painting incorporates a golden metal chain that links a grey painted mass with six coloured shapes. This anecdotal narrative becomes a kind of score for the exhibition, while the process of incorporating found material in the formal construction of a painting in this way reaffirms and complicates Ochiai's notion that place can be identified in a single object.

The artist's concern with understanding the idiosyncratic movement between places during a lifetime is exemplified in the artist's ongoing series *Everyone Has Two Places*. The works in this series present the names of two cities painted onto otherwise largely abstract compositions. These words, seemingly arbitrary, refer to the birth and death locations of a historical or fictitious individual. A single work from this series features in *M.O.*, a biographical portrait of Ulrike Marie Meinhof via simple script.

A selection of works on paper accompany the paintings. Portraits of a fleeting New York—the city where Ochiai is now based—the list of titles for these works (pp. 1–2) represents a deeply personal study of a city, rich with playful nostalgia. Reminiscent of early 20th century paintings celebrating the towering skyscrapers and fast-paced Manhattan energy, each drawing

is constructed from a series of straight marks spiking upwards with coloured pencil. Mediated by line, each title seems to mark a single instance, a momentary memory or “found” scenario stumbled across accidentally, not dissimilar to the objects assembled to construct Ochiai’s recent paintings.

A single work from another ongoing series amplifies this incorporation of found objects in his work while implicating the viewer in the exhibition. Two antique ashtrays fixed onto the surface of a horizontal painting represents a functioning ashtray, the artist invites gallery visitors to smoke in his exhibition if they so wish, encouraging the audience to locate themselves in their own narrative of place.

List of Works,
gallery, left to right...

a tangled tale, 2017
Oil, vintage ashtrays
and plastic on wood
41 × 25 × 4 cm

Oldenburg Stuttgart,
2019
Oil on canvas
84 × 54 cm

Works on paper

5pm, 2018
Coloured pencil and
pen on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

walking in the village,
2018
Coloured pencil and
pen on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

autumn in may, 2018
Coloured pencil and
pen on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

gin, 2018
Coloured pencil
on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

blue’s blue, 2018
Coloured pencil
on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

opening night, 2018
Coloured pencil
on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

*she is carryng a synth-
esizers in a storm*, 2018
Coloured pencil
on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

spring on the 72nd st,
2018
Coloured pencil
on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

ghost of astor place, 2018
Coloured pencil
on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

*the pleasure at
washington sq park*, 2018
Coloured pencil and
pen on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

cover story, 2018
Coloured pencil and
pen on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

drum beats for roberta,
2018
Coloured pencil and
pen on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

breakfast at rather's,
2018
Coloured pencil
on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

*an incident on east 9th
street*, 2018
Coloured pencil
on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

uniform, 2018
Coloured pencil and
pen on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

jose, 2018
Coloured pencil and
pen on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

1995 skirt, 2018
Coloured pencil
on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

giggling, 2018
Coloured pencil
on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

tribeca air, 2018
Coloured pencil and
pen on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

roselee's class, 2018
Coloured pencil and
pen on paper
28 × 21.5 cm (11 × 8.5 in)
39.5 × 33 cm (15.5 × 13 in)
framed

Floor works

M.O (green. red), 2020
Oil and typewriter
piece on wood
25 × 30.5 cm

M.O (S.P), 2020
Oil and typewriter
piece on canvas
43.5 × 33 cm

M.O (before the storm),
2020
Oil and typewriter
piece on wood
25.5 × 31 cm

M.O (Avenue), 2020
Oil and necklace
on wood
33 × 25 cm

M.O (silver meret), 2020
Oil, spray paint,
typewriter piece,
wire, nails and letters
on wood
23 × 38 cm

M.O (terminator), 2020
Oil, typewriter piece
and Danish coin
on wood
26 × 20 cm

M.O (Musk), 2020
Oil and typewriter
piece on wood
28 × 21 × 10 cm

See Also,
Soft Opening Picadilly...

Maria Pasenau,
365 DAYS OF PASENAU
Curated by Isabella Burley
31 Jan.—29 Mar., 2020
Piccadilly Circus
Underground Station

Tam Ochiai was born in Yokohama, Kanagawa in 1967. He moved to the United States in 1990 after graduating from Wako University, and completed his MA in New York University in 1993. He currently lives and works in New York. Ochiai's major exhibitions include: *Criterion 16: Tam Ochiai 'Shopping bags'*, Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki, Japan (1995); *MOT Annual: Fiction? Painting in the Age of the Virtual*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan (2002); *Flashback*, Kunstverein Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany (2005); *The Door into Summer – The Age of Micropop*, Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki, Japan (2006); *Winter Garden: The Exploration of the Micropop Imagination in Contemporary Japanese Art*, Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo [touring Japanisches Kulturinstitut, Cologne and numerous other venues] (2009); *spies are only revealed when they get caught*, WATARIUM Museum, Tokyo, Japan (2010); and *Yokohama Triennale 2011: Our Magic Hour*, Yokohama Museum of Art, NYK Waterfront Warehouse [BankART Studio NYK], Kanagawa, Japan (2011). In recent years he has been involved in Anne Eastman's artist-in-residence programme at the Troedsson Villa in Nikko, continuing to engage in experimental artistic practices with artists from both Japan and overseas. Ochiai's works are housed in the collections of The National Museum of Art, Osaka, The Japan Foundation, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Deutsche Bank, and the Takahashi Collection.