



### Murakami, Versailles

The inclusion of contemporary art by internationally renowned artists has given a magic fusion of periods and styles to the Grand Palace of Versailles in France. The area is rejuvenated with the impressive multi-media work by the great Japanese artist **Takashi Murakami**. Previously, artists like Jeff Koons and Xavier Veilhan have presented their works in the palace grounds.

All the main halls and rooms of the palace are enhanced by the artist's work and installations. The curatorship of the exhibition by Lauren Le Bon, (Director of the Centre Pompidou Metz) denotes a careful selection and distribution while the design and mounting reclaims each particular space for a **Murakami** art work. Even within the environment of the eighteenth century fully elaborate and dense Rococo style of the objects, furniture and heavily decorated walls, Murakami's images demand attention.

The exhibit includes a retrospective of eleven works, plus eleven created especially for the occasion.



**Tongari-Kun (Mister Pointy)**  
2003-2004



**Oval Buddha-** 2007-2010

Bronze, steel and gold leaves

The majority have been placed at the central halls while the monumental piece **Oval Buddha-** (2007-2010) stands out majestically in the gardens. For most works, the artist employed various

materials such as – fiberglass, resin, iron, wood, textiles, oil and acrylic paints and lacquer combined with assembling techniques. This variety of materials and mixed media allows the artist to convey his ideas and statements in a very powerful manner.

The content in these artworks brings forward the artist's concern in major issues of contemporary society while employing a very particular imagery brought forth precisely from other media such as the *Manga* cartoons. Such personal style and content, based on an imagery of caricature appearance and an integral aspect of the artist's proposal, may deviate for some spectators the understanding of the profound statements expressed visually. However such imagery constitutes a significant part of his social as well as esthetic concerns.



**Jellyfish Eyes- Sake**

**Miss Ko 1999**

While a public debate of whether the inclusion of this art exhibition, contemporary in every aspect: concept, process and materialization, within a historical monument such as Versailles is worth, there seems to be an agreement among the professionals that it has been a major and positive artistic event. Rather than integration or a confrontation of the present with the past, the inclusion of the so called controversial Murakami's works establishes a way of communication of



**Kinoko Isu (medium) 2003**



contemporary society with the past, which in essence deals with the same human conditions. Within the realm of art we could analyze various aspects. Perhaps at this particular moment Murakami's artistic statements do provide an access to the eighteenth century royal society from the standpoint of the present since what seems like opposites could become a way of approaching the past.

**Kinoko Isu (large) 2003**





Flower Matango 2001-2006

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Photographs by Myrna E. Rodríguez Vega



Superflat Flowers

Murakami has been able to integrate a career as an artist as well as an entrepreneur, running his company, *Kaikai Kiki* which employs approximately 300 workers. This bright and ingenious artist holds a PhD from Tokyo University of the Arts and has been curator for various shows. The exhibition will continue until December 2010.

**J 2010** (Aluminum and gold leaves)



**"Kawaii - Vacances, Summer Vacation in the Kingdom of the Golden"** and **"Untitled (Carpet)"** in the Salle des gardes du Roi at the Château de Versailles

