

# Sanae Takahata



## Metamorphosis

29 November 2014 - 7 February 2015

## Introduction

The solo exhibition *Metamorphosis* by Japanese artist Sanae Takahata features an installation of dress-shaped painted sculptures accompanied by paintings.

Takahata's latest series renders into shapes and images her deeply personal and powerful experience of the illness and loss of a close friend. About the dress-shaped sculptures of the *Metamorphosis* series, Takahata says: 'Inside them are the time she lived through and the life of hers I saw.'

Through fluid shapes, vibrant colors and elaborate patterns, the artworks deal with the journeys and flows between the material and spiritual realms, and between figuration and abstraction. Great attention was paid to the display and sequence of the artworks to respect the artist's wish to follow her friend's life journey. The installation and lighting aims at surrounding visitors with a feeling of freshness and lightness, as if an ocean breeze was circulating within the bright space.

Takahata often likens her sculptures to cast-off skins. Beyond the intimacy of the artworks and their subject, the *Metamorphosis* exhibition invites visitors to reflect upon the many possibilities and opportunities to evolve and reinvent one self.

The *Metamorphosis* series was presented in a solo exhibition part of the program of the Yokohama Triennale 2014, and is showcased for the first time outside Japan.



Exhibition view of *Metamorphosis – Homage to Chimera Noko*, Yokohama, Aug-Sep 2014

## 展覽概要

「銳變」是日本藝術家高畑早苗的個人展，展覽會展出大型的手繪長裙雕塑和油畫。

高畑早苗於新作中把她對摯友因病離世刻骨銘心的感情表露無遺。有關「銳變」系列的長裙雕塑，高畑早苗說：「所存其中，是為她曾活著的時間，也是她映在我眼裏的生命。」

通過流動的形態、充滿活力的色彩、精心設計的圖案和深思熟慮的展示方式，展覽會引領參觀者遊走物質與精神的領域以感受作品具體和抽象的元素。藝術品的展示方式和次序也是高畑早苗根據友人的生路歷程刻意編排。所有在展覽裡的裝置和燈光效果目的是為了令參觀者有清新和明亮的感覺，猶如海洋的微風於明亮的空間內循環。

高畑早苗常把雕塑作品和她與摯友的回憶相連起。是次展覽除了可探討作品和主題之間的密切關係外，亦邀請參觀者來反思重新塑造一個人的無限可能性和機會。

「銳變」系列已於 2014 橫濱三年展作為個人展覽項目展出，這次是首次在日本以外的地方展示其系列作品。



Exhibition view of *Metamorphosis* at Mur Nomade

## Artist Statement

“From WEAR ME to *Metamorphosis*”

Nature, matters, loved ones and myself constantly change. Yet I think that painting is like a wish and an act of weaving the eternal time into the canvas. With the theme of ‘Change and Impermanence’, I have been pursuing the eternal time in my work.

The series of the dress-shaped works called WEAR ME, which I have been creating since 2001 are entirely improvisational paintings. Each piece is a portrait of my surface consciousness of the time and they are also the cast-off skins that I stripped off as I kept changing in my life. Although my central core remains there without changing, like a post standing at the center of a house, my surface conscious keeps changing constantly as it responds to stimulations from the outside world. I embodied that.



I titled the first twenty-four pieces WEAR ME - Armors of Unconscious, Kabuto Helmets of Conscious. The heavy armors with layers of glass beads and the kabuto helmets with flowers and faces of beasts were necessarily born in the midst of battles against myself and society. Without creating these dress-shaped sculptures, I wouldn't have been able to survive the process of self-transformation that lasted for seven years. As I fought storms of horrific images that emerged from within myself, I portrayed my surface consciousness on the dresses, which kept changing everyday like a kaleidoscope. To survive those hours that seemed never ending, I needed a dress as heavy as an armor.

Life changes as if it draws spirals. At some point, I started seeing the outside world that was not visible to me while I kept paying attention to my inner world. Before I knew it, I was portraying my outer world ever since WEAR ME #25 *Ryukyu Dance* created in 2009. Even without wearing the viewer-threatening helmets, the glass beads that can hurt whoever touches them or the internally installed heavy armors, my dresses have transformed to be able to stand lightly.

And now *Metamorphosis*, the series I present in Hong Kong, showcases a huge transformation in terms of forms and subjects portrayed. They are not bodies I lived in but bodies my close friend lived in. Inside them are the time she lived through and the life of hers I saw. This is the opening of the series that is sequel to *Intimate Reflections: Birth of Self Portraits (1991-1995)* a series of self-portraits exhibited in 1995.

October 2014  
Sanae Takahata

## 藝術家自述 - 從「WEAR ME」到「銳變」

自然也好，事物也好，我所愛的人也好，甚至是我自身都未有一息停下，不斷變化。相反，繪畫的行為卻是一種願望，追求於畫布上編織出永恆不滅時間。我一直以「變化無常」為題，卻又於作品中追尋永恆不滅的時間。

2001 年開始制作的 Dress Shape 作品系列「WEAR ME」，全部都是即興創作。那可說是其時「我表層意識的肖像」，也可說是經歷無盡變化後為我所捨棄的「我的脫殼」。我的核心部份如佇立在家裏正中心的柱一樣，不會改變，但表層的意識則為外界的刺激所反應，化作無止境的變化。我則將之具體化。

最初的 24 幅作品，我將之命名為「WEAR ME - 無意識的鎧甲，意識的兜盔」。拼砌幾層玻璃彩珠的沉重鎧甲，以及用花、獸臉作成的盔兜，均為我和社會搏鬥的時間之中必然生成之物。要是抹殺製作長裙的時間，這段持續七年的自我變化過程，我想我無法渡過難關。在我跟內面出現的可怕如旋風的形象搏鬥之同時，我把如萬花筒一樣的每天轉變的自我意識沉澱累積，將之描繪於長裙之上。為了存活於無法預計何時終結的時間中，沉重如鎧甲的長裙乃生之所須。

生命如旋渦流轉一樣變化。一直只注視內面的我，終在某段時期把長年未有正視的外在世界映入眼簾。驀然回首，自 2009 年的「WEAR ME #25 琉球舞踊」以來，我開始繪畫自己的外在世界。脫下威嚇觀者的頭飾；除下或能傷及觸者的玻璃彩珠，即使卸下置於內部的重裝備，長裙仍能輕盈地佇立。

至於今次在香港發表的「Metamorphosis」系列，則不論在形態上，還是在繪畫對象上也成就重大的變化。這些作品都不是我曾活過的身軀，而是我的摯友曾活過的身軀。所存其中，是為她曾活著的時間，也是她映在我眼裏的生命，同時為打開 1995 年發表的自畫像系列：「Intimate Reflections 自畫像們的誕生 1991 - 1995」續編之序幕。

2014 年 10 月

高畑早苗

## Foreword

The artist Sanae Takahata has been going through metamorphoses since the days of living in Paris at the age of 18. Not only does she change through the time course but she travels back and forth between dual worlds of past and present, dreams and reality, and this life and afterlife.

For her dress-shaped series titled WEAR ME, which she has been working on since 2001, the material that covers the surfaces has been changed from beads to tableau, and the series has become the protean canvas to portray subjects like her state of mind and body, symbolic flowers and space that evokes ocean floors and vast universe.

Along with the dress-shaped series, she has been showcasing wearable objects in recent years. They conjure up decorative patterns of medieval architectures or female portraiture by Cranach from German Renaissance era.

After being deeply involved in the process of metamorphosis of life from a physical existence to a spiritual entity two years ago, she cast the integrated two worlds into shape by surrounding a new three-dimensional work with two-dimensional works of landscapes as well as people that exist in the border zone between dreams and reality. This is a new Sanae's World we see for the first time in this solo show.

August 2014

Kiyoko Sawatari

Superior Researcher, Yokohama Museum of Art

## 引言

藝術家高畑早苗的一直在變——由 18 歲的巴黎時期至今。她在時間的流轉之中並不止於變化，並且在兩種世界——現在與過去；夢與現實；現世與來生——之間往返不斷。

自 2001 年以來一直以「WEAR ME」為題創作的 dress shape 系列裏，覆蓋於畫面的素材由彩珠變成繪畫，內容由身心的存在形式延伸至富象徵意味的花朵，讓人聯想為海底和宇宙等無限擴展的空間，是為變化自如的表現場所。

與此並行的是，近年發表的可穿戴「物件」（object）。當中可見中世紀的裝飾花樣、讓人連想德國文藝復興時期老盧卡斯·克拉納赫（Lucas Cranach der Ältere）的女性人物等。

前年，當她深深體會個體生命從物質存在至靈魂昇華的過程後，她成功將兩個世界形象化。她把立體的新作包圍在有關風景的平面作品及存在於幻境與現實之間的人物。這就是在今次個展中首次呈現於我們眼前一個全新的早苗世界。

2014 年 8 月

猿渡紀代子

橫濱美術館特任研究員



Sanae Takahata was born in Maebashi City, Gunma province, in Japan. She lives and works in Tokyo. After graduating from high school, she bought a one-way ticket to Paris, where she made her debut at a gallery in 1977. She then moved to the United States and quickly signed a contract with a New York gallery. She returned to Japan at the end of the nineteen-eighties.

Sanae Takahata received a very exclusive invitation to present her first series of dress-shaped painted sculptures, WEAR ME, at the Honen-in Temple in Kyoto in 2006. Her paintings and sculptures have been exhibited in galleries and museums around the world.

Sanae Takahata is a free spirit and an independent woman. She neither knows borders nor belongs to any specific art circle. Her artistic practice reflects her vision of nature, matters and people as ever-changing. Yet she thinks 'painting is like a wish and an act of weaving the eternal time into the canvas.'

高畑早苗出生於日本群馬縣，現於東京定居及工作。高中畢業後，她買了一張單程票到巴黎，於 1977 年在當地一家畫廊做了人生中的首演。然後她搬到美國，在短時間內和一間紐約畫廊簽訂了合同。她於 1980 年尾返回日本。

之後她接受了一個非常獨特的邀請，於 2006 年在京都法然院展示其第一個裙型雕塑系列 WEAR ME。她的油畫和雕塑早已廣泛在世界各地的畫廊和博物館展出。

高畑早苗是一個獨立自主的女性。她既沒有創作界限，也不屬於任何特定的藝術圈。高畑早苗的藝術創作反映了她對的大自然、身邊的人和事物不斷變化的看法。相反，她認為「繪畫的行為卻是一種願望，追求於畫布上編織出永恆不滅時間」。



## Exhibition Views



*Metamorphosis – Homage to Chimera Noko, Yokohama, Aug-Sep 2014*



Mur Nomade



Mur Nomade



Mur Nomade

# Sculptures



*A Container of Time*  
2014  
Acrylic and glass beads on cotton  
53 x 20 cm



*Blue Flowers – Chinoiserie Love*  
2013 - 2014  
Acrylic on cotton  
142 x 43 cm





*Bodhisattva*  
2014  
Acrylic on cotton  
158 x 32 cm



*Hirado – To the piece where we  
can confluent  
2014  
Acrylic and glass beads on cotton  
108 x 41 cm*



*Samarkand – A Frozen Moon*  
2013 - 2014  
Acrylic on cotton  
103 x 32 cm



*Spiritual Dalia – Life's Explosion*  
2012  
Acrylic on cotton  
153 x 43 cm



*Trance – Her Spirit Flows out from her Body  
and Fills up her Living room*

2012

Acrylic on cotton

142 x 43 cm



*Venice – Transformed into a Black Swallowtail Butterfly,  
Taking a Bath with Gathered Evening Dew*

2014

Acrylic on canvas

182 x 59 x 20 cm



*Wisteria Maiden – Breathing in Water,  
Surrounded with Flowers*  
2012  
Acrylic on cotton  
146 x 43 cm



*Zero Point Field – Continuously Changing  
the Ocean of Bubbling Energy*  
2014  
Acrylic on cotton  
173 x 87 cm





*WEAR ME #29 Spring*  
2012  
Acrylic on canvas  
145 x 45 cm

# Paintings



*Anastasia - Resurrection*  
2014  
Oil on canvas  
Ellipse 50.5 x 40.5 cm



*We Don't Need Words*

2014

Oil on canvas

Ellipse 50.5 x 40.5 cm



**Left image**

*Eve*

2013

Oil on canvas

33 x 33 cm

**Right image**

*Lilith*

2013

Oil on canvas

33 x 33 cm



*Lived through the Age of Discovery*

2014

Oil on canvas

Ellipse 60.6 x 50 cm

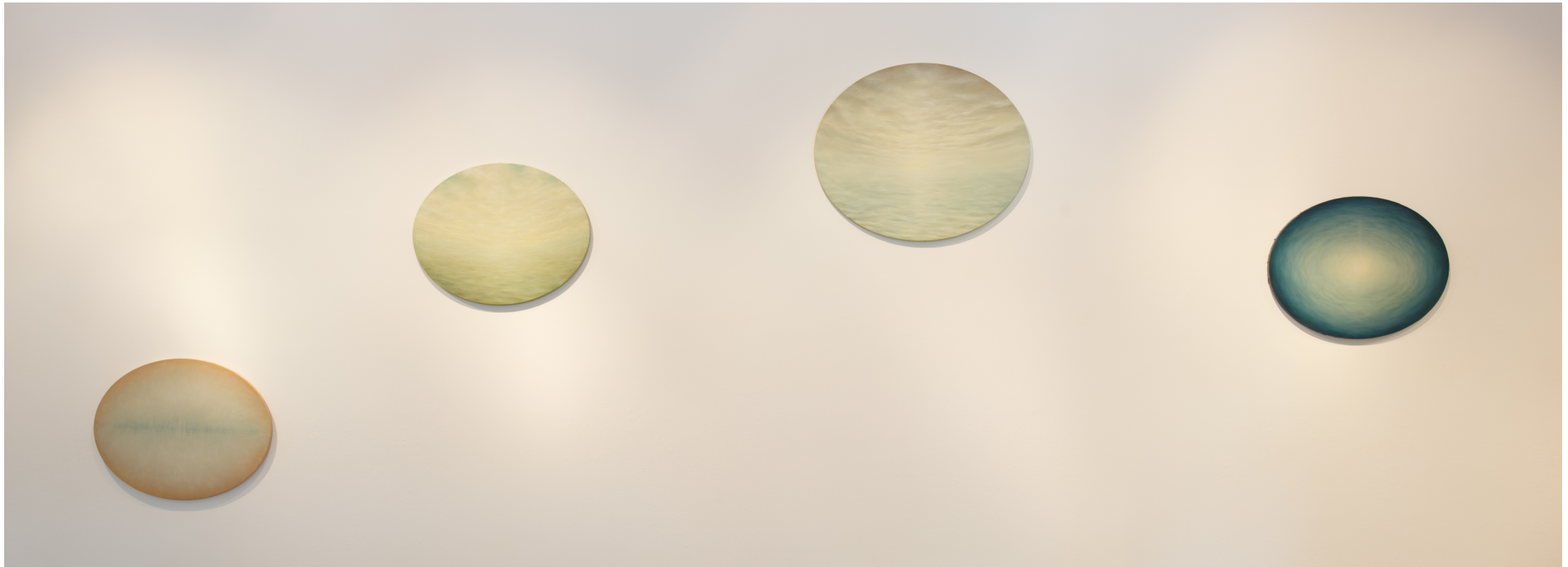


*Mingled with the Desert Nomads*

2014

Oil on canvas

Ellipse 50.5 x 40.5 cm



*Transforming Spirit #2 –  
Approaching Zero*  
2014  
Oil on canvas  
Ellipse 50.5 x 40.5 cm

*Traveling Ocean and Sky  
#2*  
2014  
Oil on canvas  
Ellipse 50.5 x 40.5 cm

*Traveling Ocean and Sky  
#1*  
2014  
Oil on canvas  
Ellipse 60.5 x 50 cm

*Transforming Spirit #1 –  
Beyond the Light*  
2014  
Oil on canvas  
Ellipse 50.5 x 40.5 cm





*Mandara #1*  
2014  
Acrylic on canvas  
100 x 100 cm

## Biography

### Solo Exhibitions

- 2014-2015 Metamorphosis, Mur Nomade, Hong Kong
- 2014 Medieval Garden, a.m. space, Hong Kong  
Metamorphosis - Homage to Chimera Noko, Support Program of the 2014 Yokohama Triennale, Galerie Paris, Yokohama, Japan
- 2013 Medieval Garden 2 – Eva and Lilith, Gallery Saoh, Tokyo, Japan
- 2012 WEAR ME – Life’s Changes and Shifts, Manggha Museum of Japanese Art and Technology, Krakow, Poland  
Medieval Garden 1, Gallery Tomos, Tokyo, Japan
- 2011 WEAR ME – Life’s Changes and Shifts, Galerie Paris, Yokohama, Japan
- 2009 State-of-the-Arts Gallery, Hong Kong
- 2008 The Spell and The Butterflies, Gallery Saoh & Gallery Tomos, Tokyo, Japan  
WEAR ME, OC Gallery, Hong Kong  
WEAR ME, The Economist Gallery, The Fringe Club, Hong Kong
- 2006 WEAR ME, Honen-in Temple, Kyoto, Japan  
WEAR ME, Galerie Omotesando, Tokyo, Japan
- 2002-2005 Open Studio Exhibition, Ningyocho Art Studio, Tokyo, Japan
- 2001 Gallery Bonoa, Naha City, Japan
- 1999 The Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan, Tokyo, Japan
- 1998 ‘Prehistoric Moon’ Artist Place Mischief, Takasaki, Japan
- 1997 ‘My Sister’s Room’ Artist Place Mischief, Takasaki, Japan
- 1996 Intimate Reflections 1991-1995, F-ritz Art Center, Maebashi, Japan  
Intimate Reflections 1991-1995, Honen-in Temple, Kyoto, Japan
- 1995 Intimate Reflections 1991-1995, Sagocho Exhibit Space, Tokyo, Japan
- 1991 ‘Tokyo series’ – Tokyo before the bubbling economy burst, The Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan, Tokyo, Japan

- 1990 SEIBU Umeda LOFT, Styling Gallery, Osaka, Japan  
Deep Freeze, ST Spot, Yokohama, Japan
- 1989 Enpoo yori kita hitobito, Gallery Saho & Gallery Tomosu, Tokyo, Japan
- 1988-1989 Exhibiting 'Wearable art objects', Seattle Museum Store and Tacoma Museum Store
- 1988 Insync Gallery, Seattle, U.S.A.
- 1987 Penryn Gallery, Seattle, U.S.A.
- 1985 Seeking for Tomorrow's Face, Sagacho bis, Tokyo, Japan  
Galerie Chimera, Tokyo, Japan
- 1984 Peaceful Place, Sagacho Exhibit Space, Tokyo, Japan
- 1982 Puffs from Passing Incarnations, Zoma Gallery, New York, U.S.A.
- 1979 Myrna Myers Gallery, Paris, France  
Gumma Public Culture Center, Maebashi, Japan

## Group Exhibitions

- 2014 JoMo News Paper Art Prize Winners Exhibition, Takasaki City Gallery, Japan
- 2011 Hope, Gallery Saoh & Gallery Tomos, Tokyo, Japan
- 2009-2011 State-of-the-Arts Gallery, Hong Kong
- 2007 Wearable Art Exhibition, Gallery Saoh, Tokyo, Japan
- 2001 Tokyo International Learning Community Art Auction, Australia Embassy, Tokyo, Japan
- 1996 Phillip Morris Art Award Exhibition, Tokyo, Japan
- 1990 Galerie Chimera, Tokyo, Japan  
Ijigen Muse, F.R.P. sculptures sponsored by Taiyo Kogei Company, Travelling exhibition in Tokyo, Osaka, Fukuoka, Japan
- 1989-1990 Neo Persona Gallery, New York, U.S.A.
- 1988 Masks, Hartness-Schools Gallery, Seattle, U.S.A.
- 1984 Japan Festival, Bloomingdale Department Store, New York, U.S.A.
- 1983 Japan Dynasty '83, John Wanamaker Department Store, Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Arcadia Chelsea Space Show, Sponsored by Arcadia Chelsea Company, New York, U.S.A.

- 1981 Zoma Gallery, New York, U.S.A.
- 1979 Le Salon, Grand Palace, Paris, France
- 1978 Le Salon, Grand Palace, Paris, France
- 1977 Salon d'Automne, Grand Palace, Paris, France
- Myrna Myer Gallery, Paris, France

## Awards

- 1996 Jyomo Art Prize, Sponsored by Jyomo Newspaper Company, Japan

## Publications

- 2010 Women and the Arts, ed. Rebecca Jennison and Soko Miki, Daisan Shokan
- 1995 Y.O.U.A.L.L (A.NA.TA.TA.CHI) – Healing from Ego, Chizuko Ueno, NHK Book



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