

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chinatsu Ban

February 19 – March 19, 2005
opening reception February 19, 6-8 pm

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to announce the next exhibition will be new work by Chinatsu Ban, a young Japanese artist who has debuted under the tutelage of artist Takashi Murakami. The show will include drawing, painting, and sculpture. While working at Murakami's Saitama-based company Kaikai Kiki, Ban has developed a portfolio of her own; featuring acrylic paintings and sketches of elephants and human figures floating against Japanese *washi* paper backgrounds or in front of candy-colored stripes. Rendered delicately and with a childlike touch, Ban's endearing characters are frequently shown wearing underpants or tights, and sometimes sprouting cactus plants from their heads.

Ban's obsession with cuteness is so pervasive and all-consuming that her work exudes the urgency of religious works focused on salvation. In Japan, "cute" (or *kawaii*) has gone beyond a simple adjective and become a wide-spread cultural phenomenon, permeating into the work of many Japanese Neo-Pop artists. For Ban, the elephant also represents salvation. She explains: "These things are like talismans. It's scary to imagine that someday I won't exist in this world anymore. I am troubled by the urge to run away from this fear. Elephants make me feel safe. They have saved me many times."

One of the centerpieces of the exhibition will be Ban's maquette for V W X Yellow Elephant Underwear/H I J Kiddy Elephant, a project for the Public Art Fund and the Japan Society that will be presented in April 2005 at Doris C. Freedman Plaza in New York City, in conjunction with the exhibition "Little Boy: The Arts of Japan's Exploding Subculture", curated by Takashi Murakami, and organized by the Japan Society in collaboration with Public Art Fund (Japan Society, 4/8 – 7/24/2005).

This is Ban's first solo show outside of Japan.

Marianne Boesky Gallery is located at 535 West 22nd Street, 2nd Floor, New York. The Gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 – 6. Please call 212-680-6889 for further information.

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