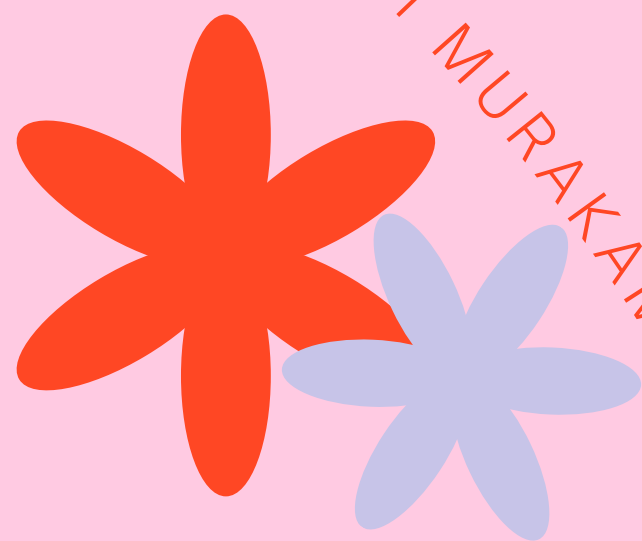


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ARTIST BIO

— Childhood

Takashi Murakami was born in 1962. Murakami's father was a taxi driver, and his mother was a homemaker. His parents often had him write reviews on exhibitions he had seen. If he refused, he was forced to go to bed without dinner. Raised in such a highly competitive environment, Murakami learned how to think and write quickly. These skills partly inform his later fame as an acerbic art critic. Murakami developed an early appreciation of both traditional Japanese culture and modern European art, Japanese animation had the most significant impact on him during his formative teenage years. This explains why a major part of his works are dedicated to the otaku audience, a subculture obsessed with apocalyptic and fetishistic imagery.



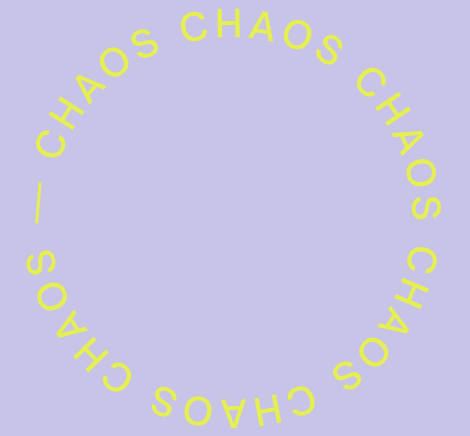
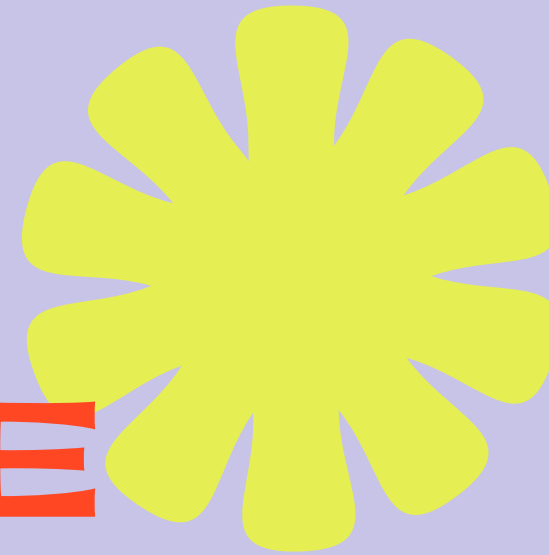
— Early Training & Work

Initially interested in studying background art for animations, in 1980 Murakami enrolled in the nihonga (a traditional Japanese painting style that draws on elements of Western art) department of the prestigious Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, where he stayed on for master's (completed in 1988) and doctoral degree (completed in 1993). Murakami's early works reflect the realities with which he had grown up, exploring the complex post-WWII relationship between Japan and the U.S. For example, Polyrhythm (1991) uses plastic World War II toy soldiers, Sea Breeze (1992) refers to the atomic bomb. These works demonstrate his early development of a playful and seemingly light style that always refers to a more cynical stance.



ARTIST BIO

— MATURE LIFE



MR. DOB

Moving to New York for a fellowship was the beginning of a huge shift for him as an artist where he wanted to emphasize deeper the Japanese culture of his works. Created his "Mr. DOB," persona to encapsulate his new aesthetic.

Hiropon // Kaikai KikiCo.

Opened "Hiropon," a collaborative environment for him to make his sculptures in the early 2000s, now known as Kaikai Kiki.

Superflat

Published his manifesto on Superflat in 2000, influential movement to accentuate classic Japanese styles in a contemporary Western way. Inspired by the art form "nihonga," and cultural forms of anime and manga.

CURRENT PRACTICE & LEGACY



Murakami's projects have been more commercially charged and have explored unconventional artistic media including fashion, music, entertainment, public installations, animation, and films. This shift between roles reveals Murakami's ambition of redefining what a postmodern, international artist can be. This also made Murakami widely known for further blurring commercial boundaries. He declared he was on a mission to fool the West and smash the Japanese art system. Despite the clash of reception between his artwork, alternating between heavy disdain and blatant celebration, Superflat has come to dominate the world's view of Japanese contemporary art.

