



TAKASHI MURAKAMI (b. 1962)**Genki Ball**

Signed lower right, "Murakami" and editioned lower right, "200/300"

off set lithograph in colors

19 3/4 x 19 3/4 in. (21 5/8 x 21 5/8 x 1 in.)

200/300

2001

18523

PROVENANCE:

Private Collection, Ohio

Takashi Murakami (b. 1962 in Tokyo) earned a BA, MFA, and PhD from Tokyo University of the Arts. Although, he attended with the intention of working in the Japanese animation industry, Murakami eventually majored in Nihonga, the traditional 20th century Japanese painting style with strict guidelines on subject, technique, and material. After graduating, however, Murakami grew disillusioned with the art world. He found that traditional Nihonga artmaking was a too insular and political world, while the contemporary art world in Japan had appropriated the trends of the West. As a result, Murakami's early work incorporated biting social criticism against Japan's consumer culture and art world

Since the early 1990s, Murakami has invented characters in his art that synthesize various elements of popular culture, especially cartoons, from Japan, Europe, and the United States. These characters serve various purposes, acting sometimes as a means of self-portraiture or as icons for themes related to violence, technology, and fantasy. Today, Murakami is particularly known for Superflat, a 2000 exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles that also heralded a new theory of art. Developed by Murakami in an essay accompanying the exhibition, the Superflat theory posits that there is a legacy of 2-dimensionality in Japanese visual culture which can be found in traditional Nihonga painting, ukiyo-e printmaking, as well as anime and manga. The Superflat theory also argues that there is a cultural flattening in Japan, wherein the distinction between social class and popular taste is collapsing.

Since the Superflat exhibition, Murakami's popularity and cultural influence have only grown. In addition to exhibitions of his work at major art institutions, Murakami's work is also found on mass-produced items such as toys, key-chains, and t-shirts. Murakami's work merges artistic time periods, styles, and subjects, and also crosses between the gallery, studio, art fair, museum, and the mass consumer.

Takashi Murakami's work has been exhibited in prestigious museums and galleries all over the world. He has had recent solo shows at Gagosian in Beverly Hills, London, and Paris (2019, 2018); the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY (2017); the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2017); The Palace of Versailles, Île-de-France, France (2010); the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris (2002); and Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo. His work is represented in the public collections of the

Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN among many others

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