



SADAMASA MOTONAGA ((1922-2011))

Untitled

Signed lower right, "S. Motonaga '69"

acrylic on board with cotton cloth

14 1/2 x 20 in. (14 3/4 x 20 7/8 x 1 3/8 in.)

1969

38769

PROVENANCE:

Private Collection, 1970, acquired directly from the artist

Private Collection, Washington, DC, by descent from above

Sadamasa Motonaga (1922-2011) worked as a manga artist and newspaper illustrator before joining Gutai, the Japanese collective renowned for its experiments with material, space and performance. In 1966 Motonaga moved to New York and returned to the world of two dimensions. The works assembled by Fergus McCaffrey from the second half of the artist's life are brightly colored surreal landscapes, totally flat save for the gradients that modulate the anonymous biomorphs that populate them. Work (Water)—a set of plastic tubes filled with dyed water—is the only throwback to Motonaga's Gutai period, but it's more subdued than the version installed at "Gutai: Splendid Playground," the 2013 survey at the Guggenheim. There, transparent cradles traversed the museum's atrium at dramatic diagonals, and the vivid water seemed kinetic, about to spill. At Fergus McCaffrey the evenly sized stripes of water cling to the front windows, where they measure out the width of panes of glass. Dye sparkles in natural light and colored shadows dance on the floor, highlighting the slender, strange and playful forms of Motonaga's paintings.

(Art in America)

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S. Motonaga













