

Press Release

Contact: Katrina Ellis
katrina@flomenhaftgallery.com

Roger Shimomura “An American Knockoff”

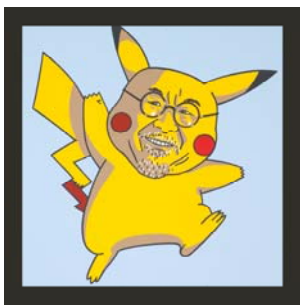
October 28 – December 11, 2010

Reception: October 28, 6-8 pm
Meet the Artist

The Flomenhaft Gallery is proud to present Roger Shimomura’s newest series of artworks, “An American Knockoff.” The title eludes to Shimomura’s experience as a third generation American citizen who is all too often asked what part of Japan he comes from, and is too often misconnected to so-called “oriental” physical and behavioral traits. Actually he was born in Seattle and unfortunately spent several years of his childhood in an internment camp, Minidoka, in Idaho. These works are his “attempt to ameliorate the outrage of the misconceptions” and “in tongue-in-cheek fashion he becomes the same stereotypes.”



American vs. America, 34" x 34"

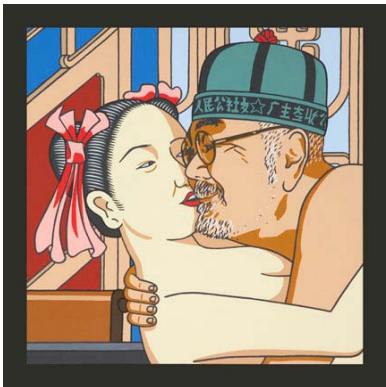


Shimomura’s newest paintings, in fabulous color, almost all include a self portrait. We see him, in art critic Lucy Lippard’s words “kicking ass” at his own country. They are dynamic, filled with references to pop art, in works such as “*American vs. Disney Stereotypes*.” The paintings include Mickey Mouse, Bugs Bunny, Donald Duck, Popeye and the three little pigs, also Ukiyo theater folk. Often mistaken for Chinese, he goes for it and represents himself as a “Chinese Imposter,” as a General leading his Chinese army, and in other works he stands in for a Chinese communist, but also points at the color confusion by representing celebrants of Mao. A most powerful work represents the conundrum in Shimomura’s life, “*American vs. Japs*.” It shows him acting the part of a Japanese American, making a distinction between himself and the Japanese enemy during WWII. Here he kicks the Jap’s ass. What a turn of events.

Roger Shimomura, in painting, prints and theater pieces has always addressed the sociopolitical issues of Asian Americans. He has had over 125 solo exhibitions and has presented theater pieces throughout the country.

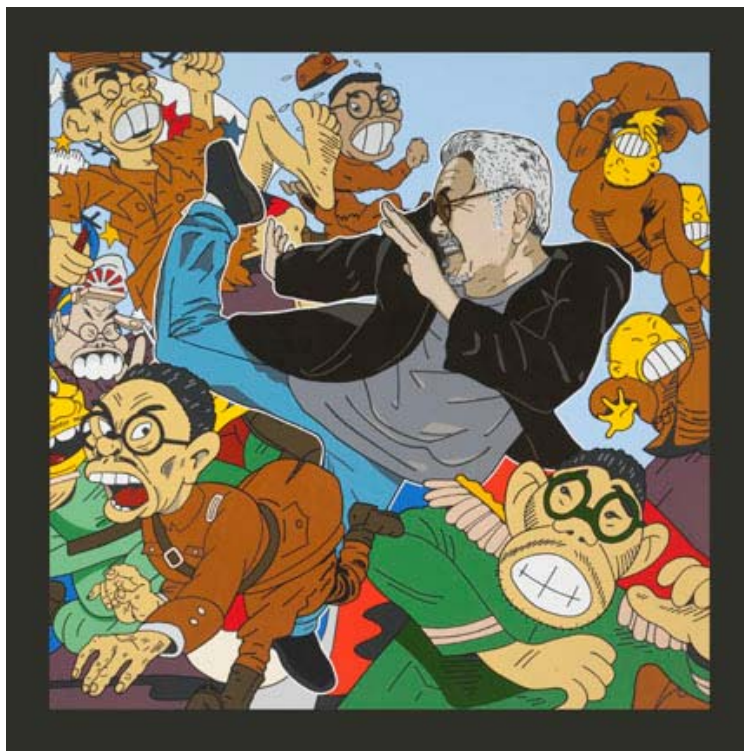


He is the recipient of more than 30 grants, four of which came from the National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Painting and Performance Art. He has lectured and has been a visiting artist at more than 200 universities, and the College Art Association presented him with the Artist Award for Most Distinguished Body of Work in 2002 for his four year, twelve museum tour of the painting exhibition "An American Diary." It was based on the diaries his grandmother kept from the time she came to America as a photograph wife and includes her experiences in Minidoka. Shimomura was a Distinguished Professor at the School of Fine Arts at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, from 1969 until he retired in 2004. He is now the University Distinguished Professor of Art Emeritus of the University of Kansas.



Chinese Imposter #4, 24" x 24"
& *Chinese Imposter #2, 24" x 24"*

Presently there is a travelling show entitled "*Yellow Terror: the Collection and Paintings of Roger Shimomura*," co-curated by Roger and Dr. Stacey Uradomo-Barre, the curator for the Art in Public Places Program of the Hawaiian State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. It was produced by the Wing Luke Museum, Seattle, our nation's only pan-Asian Pacific American museum and an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution. From Wing Luke it will go to the Richmond Center for Visual Arts, Western Michigan University, opening on October 21st.



American vs. Japs #2, 54" x 54"