

HOLLIS TAGGART DOWNTOWN

Hollis Taggart Downtown Presents *Cave Painting*, a Solo Exhibition of New Paintings by Osamu Kobayashi

On View at Hollis Taggart Downtown: September 3 – October 10, 2026

Opening Reception: **Thursday, September 3**, from 6–8 PM

August 3, 2026 - Hollis Taggart Downtown is pleased to present *Cave Painting*, a solo exhibition of paintings by Brooklyn-based artist Osamu Kobayashi. The presentation marks Kobayashi's second solo exhibition with Hollis Taggart, following his 2024 debut, *On Apparition*, at the gallery's Chelsea location. The exhibition will be on view from September 3 through October 10, 2026, with an opening reception on Thursday, September 3, from 6 to 8 pm at 109 Norfolk Street.

For Kobayashi, this latest body of work is both an extension of his 2024 solo exhibition with the gallery and a departure towards something new. The paintings retain the bold brushwork and fluid forms that define his practice, yet they emerge from what the artist describes as a “different mental space.” Instead of starting from a fixed theme, he allowed each painting to evolve independently, guided by the formal relationships that emerged in the studio, rather than revealing themselves immediately. Recurring ideas and visual connections surface gradually, with relationships between works becoming clearer over time.

A recurring motif of the arch occurs in many of the paintings, shifting in meaning from one composition to the next. The arch, for Kobayashi, resists a single fixed meaning. Both architectural and organic, the shape appears throughout his compositions representing caves, passageways, or openings. This ambiguity gives the exhibition its title, *Cave Paintings*. It is a nod to both the earliest forms of human art and to Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*, a meditation on perception, illusion, and the pursuit of knowledge. Like Plato's allegory, Kobayashi's paintings explore the space between appearance and reality, where forms hover between recognition and abstraction.

Artist and writer Nora Griffin observes: “The works in *Cave Painting* may be Kobayashi's boldest statement to date. There is so much joy in watching these paintings unfold, each surface shimmers slightly, like water as a rock is skipped across it. The paint lies somewhere between translucent and solid. A streak of buttery orange merges with bright magenta, suggesting radiating heat. A curved arch could be a cathedral window or the mouth of a sea cave.”

The paintings in the exhibition vary dramatically in scale, reinforcing the shifting meanings of the recurring arch motif. In the larger canvases, the arch becomes immersive, inviting viewers to enter inside the composition and experience it on a more physical level. By contrast, the smaller works feel more intimate and descriptive. Regardless of scale, each painting is united by Kobayashi's distinctive fluid brushwork. Though these broad gestures may appear effortless and spontaneous, they are the result of a highly deliberate process.

Each painting begins with preparatory pencil sketches where Kobayashi develops forms before translating them to canvas. Singular brushstrokes are built up gradually through successive layers of paint until the desired color and density are achieved. They are created using custom-built tools assembled from multiple utility brushes bolted together. Using his whole body to guide the brush-tool across the canvas, Kobayashi creates the energetic, sweeping gestures that are so recognizable in his works.

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In discussing his process, Kobayashi notes that “a good painting has all these kinds of opposing visual elements that create a sort of tension.” Throughout *Cave Painting*, warm and cool colors, control and spontaneity, and the descriptive and the immersive are held in careful balance, creating a space where symbolic meaning and sensory experience converge.

Osamu Kobayashi was born in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1984 and received a B.F.A. from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2006. He has exhibited throughout the United States and abroad, including solo exhibitions at Hollis Taggart, New York; Underdonk Gallery, New York; A+B Gallery, Brescia, Italy; Mindy Solomon Gallery, Florida; Greenwich House, New York; John David Gallery, Hudson, New York; and LA Artcore, Los Angeles. He has participated in group exhibitions at The American contemporary art GALLERY, Munich; Lissone Contemporary Art Museum; Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery at Stony Brook University; the Bronx River Art Center; and the Columbia Museum of Art. In 2013, Kobayashi was awarded the Hassam, Speicher, Betts, and Symons Purchase Fund from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and in 2021, he was awarded a NYFA Artist Fellowship. He is also a participant in the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program. He lives and works in Brooklyn.

Nora Griffin is a Brooklyn-based artist and writer. She has taught at RISD, Cooper Union, Columbia University, and SVA, and has written criticism for *Art in America* and *The Brooklyn Rail*.

About Hollis Taggart Downtown

109 Norfolk Street, New York, NY

Hollis Taggart Downtown represents the new secondary location for Hollis Taggart realized through a partnership between Hollis Taggart, Paul Efstathiou, and Eleanor de Ropp Flatow. The downtown expansion builds upon the gallery’s presence and commitment to emerging and mid-career artists.

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