

Press Release 2019.6.20

Julian Opie

Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery is pleased to announce Julian Opie, running from Wednesday, 10 July to Monday, 23 September, 2019. Julian Opie (1958-) is a leading artist from the UK known for his style for portraying people and landscapes full of energy using a minimalist visual language of dots and lines. In addition to traditional painting and sculpture materials, his art includes familiar industrial products, such as LED displays and billboards. The completely new visual expression Opie creates from common materials appeals to a broad demographic that transcends age, sex, and cultural background. Having distinguished himself in the European art scene since the 1980s, and with his art held in the collections of the world's leading art museums, Opie is a significant artist and an essential element in any description of contemporary art. His two-dimensional works resonate with both graphic design and pictograms, brimming with a hybrid appeal that goes beyond the confines of conventional paintings. Opie is known for being a collector of Japanese ukiyo-e and animation cels, and one can sense their influence in the clearly defined outlines of his characteristic style. This 2019 exhibition marks the 20th anniversary of the opening of Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery. Bringing together several of the many genres represented in Opie's work, it hints at one of the directions that the gallery should consider in today's world of increasing globalization. We present the outline and highlights of this unique exhibition, Julian Opie, below.

[Outline]

Julian Opie

Venue: Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery

Open hours :11:00 —19:00 (to 20:00 on Fridays and Saturdays. Entry up to 30 minutes before closing)

Closed on Mondays (Tuesday if the Monday is a public holiday); 4 August (maintenance)


Admission: adult 1200(1000)yen, University and high school students 800(600)yen, free for Junior high and under

Fare includes admission for "From the Terada Collection 067 IKEDA Ryoji Works" and "project N 76 SUEMATSU Yukari"

Fares in brackets are rates for group 15 or more. Free for person with disability certificate and an attendant. Only one reduction is available at a time. Nonrefundable

For inquiries: 03-5777-8600 (NTT Hello dail)

URL: <http://www.operacity.jp/ag/>

 <https://www.facebook.com/tocag>   [operacity_ag](https://www.instagram.com/operacity_ag) 

Organiser: Tokyo Opera City Cultural Foundation

Sponsor: Japan Real Estate Investment Corporation

Cooperation: MAHO KUBOTA GALLERY

1. First solo exhibition at a Japanese art museum in eleven years

This is the first large-scale solo exhibition of Julian Opie's art at a Japanese art museum in eleven years. His 2008 show at the Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito secured Opie's popularity in Japan. The name Julian Opie may still bring to mind truly simple portraits from the period from the latter half of the 1990s to the first half of the 2000s, rendered with clearly defined outlines and eyes depicted with black dots that nevertheless properly convey the individuality and personality of the model. Recently, however, Opie has been producing a wide variety of art, including paintings and films showing people walking on city streets, three-dimensional works depicting groupings of city buildings and crows, country landscapes, sculptures of sheep, and works of people jogging. This exhibition presents the Julian Opie of today, and consists mainly of new works selected by the artist himself, including paintings, sculptures, and films that are being seen in public for the first time.

2. The ultimate simplification of the human figure

Moving on from his earlier portraits showing only the head, many of Opie's recent works depict full human figures viewed from the side. Although they continue to be portrayed using clearly defined outlines and simple, translucent colours, the tendency towards reduction and simplification is more pronounced, with the head depicted simply as a circle. Similarly, the titles are also simplified, with a work showing a man with a tattoo entitled Tattoo, a woman walking with headphones called Headphone, and a woman walking with a mobile phone in her hand described as Phone. The complete abstraction of depiction and title produces a portrayal of a universal figure that one could see in any city on the planet.

3. Movement and music composed by the artist

Opie's portrayal of people running using LED monitors in Running 1 and Running 2 is simplified even further. The figures running hurriedly in these works appear somehow comical, and perhaps that is how we living in busy modern-day societies appear. Note that the music that can be heard playing in the background at the exhibition venue is also part of the artist's oeuvre. Overall, the exhibition presents the realm of Julian Opie's latest works in a bold configuration that splits the art into two-dimensional and three-dimensional works.

■ Press inquiry

Contact Motoaki Hori / Yasuko Ichikawa

Tel:+81-3-5353-0756 / Fax:+81-3-5353-0776 / Email: ag-press@toccf.com



Sam Amelia Jeremy Teresa 1, 2019



Telephone, 2018



Towers 1, 2018



Walking in New York 1, 2019