



Ai Yamaguchi
netemo nedemo, 2013
Acrylic on cotton, blanket and panel
12.5 x 13.5 x 2 inches / 32 x 34.5 x 5 cm

The flowing hair of Japanese paintings reveal surprisingly literary roots...

Rob Wilkes • 8 September, 2015

There's an interesting poetic aspect to Ai Yamaguchi's work that goes beyond her style and subject matter. This beautiful collection of paintings is called *Shinchishirin*, a title that has been formed from the deconstruction of several verses from an anthology of Waka poetry of the Heian period. Yamaguchi often reassembles elements of poems to form new ones, and in this case her reformed title translates as "heart, earth, words, forest", suggesting that if the Waka takes root in the earth of the heart, a forest of words will grow.

Yamaguchi's collection is a celebration of female beauty, using a traditional technique which is an extension of calligraphy; the girls' long, flowing black hair becomes part of the scenery and influences the shape of her abstract canvas and panel scenes. The artist has a background in textiles and fabrics, and she has incorporated her skills in those areas into her painting. One particular innovation sees wooden panels covered in a blanket and then wrapped in cotton. When her gesso is applied to the fabric it gives an almost ceramic quality to the work. *Shinchishirin* is being exhibited at Joshua Liner Gallery in New York until 7 June.

@JLGallery



Ai Yamaguchi
kinou kyō, 2013
Acrylic on cotton, blanket and panel
16.5 x 12.5 x 2 inches / 42 x 32 x 5 cm



Ai Yamaguchi
haru demo aki demo nai fuyu, 2014
Acrylic on cotton, panel
73 x 45 x 3 inches / 186 x 115 x 8 cm



Ai Yamaguchi
hana ni naku, 2014
Acrylic on cotton, panel
13 x 22.5 x 3 inches / 32.5 x 57.5 x 7 cm



Ai Yamaguchi
yorozu no ha, 2014
Acrylic on cotton, panel
24 x 30 x 2.5 inches / 61 x 75 x 6 cm



Ai Yamaguchi
suguni sou, 2013
Acrylic on cotton, blanket and panel
11 x 8 x 2 inches / 28.5 x 20 x 5 cm



Ai Yamaguchi
nagusamuru wa, 2014
Acrylic on cotton, panel
18 x 16 x 3 inches / 45 x 40 x 7 cm