

For Immediate Release:

Yasumasa Morimura
An Inner Dialogue With Frida Kahlo

September 8 – October 6, 2001



Opening September 8, Luhring Augustine is pleased to present a new series of self-portraits by Japanese artist Yasumasa Morimura. This body of work pays homage to the extraordinary Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. Morimura recreates, relives and indulges in the painter's artistic process, vividly depicting the glamorous yet agonizing life of this remarkable woman

An Inner Dialogue with Frida Kahlo is the crystallization of a project that has taken ten years to complete. Inspired by her remarkable life and career, Morimura becomes Frida Kahlo in this exhibition to reveal her world of joy, suffering, and mental and physical pain, and to seek a process by which healing may occur. Morimura describes Kahlo's art as a "fierce and intense manifestation of human sentiments and universal themes, such as joy, anger, sorrow, happiness, beauty, life, and love." It's these themes that have provided inspiration for Morimura in this new body of work.

Widely known as the artist who transforms himself into the Mona Lisa and movie actresses, Yasumasa Morimura has won international acclaim for his unique and avant-garde expression of "beauty." Since 1985, his focus has been his "self-portrait" series, consisting of unique reconstructions of art masterpieces in which the subject's face is substituted with that of Morimura himself. Through careful study and analysis of the themes, artists, and historical background of these works, Morimura searches out their *raison d'être* and transforms them according to his own interpretations. His ability to deconstruct, subvert and simultaneously create an homage is what enables his work to continually defy categorization.

This exhibition will be shown simultaneously with Galerie Thaddeus Ropac in Paris, the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, in Tokyo and a selection of works will travel to the Steirischerbst Museum in Graz. Morimura has shown extensively in international solo exhibitions, and his work is in the following selected collections: The Yokohama Museum of Art, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, The Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, The Modern Art Museum, Fort Worth, The Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

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