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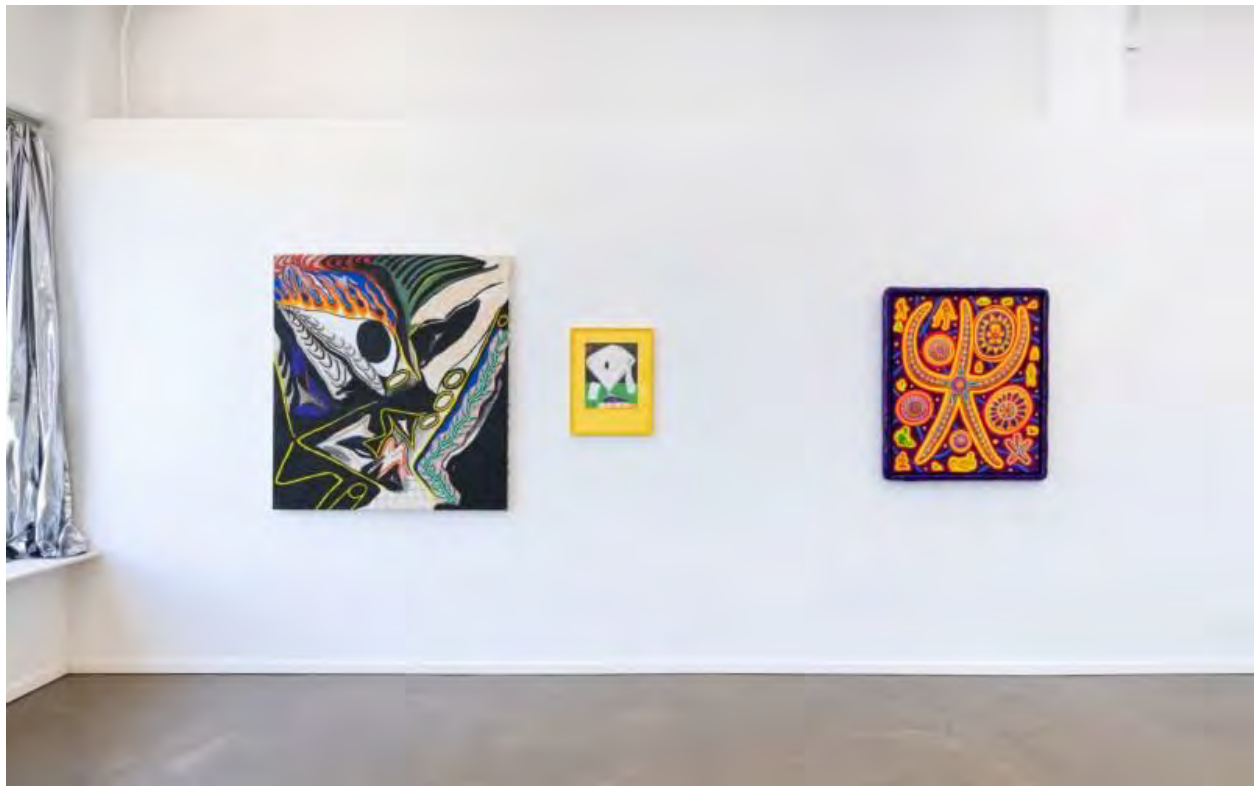
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展評：Nationale 畫廊 Christian Rogers & Shohei Takasaki 雙人展

雙人展「捲髮 / 熱金屬」將 Takasaki 大膽的姿態抽象畫與 Rogers 的人物拼貼畫並列展出

AUGUST 8, 2022

JEFF ALESSANDRELLI



Installation view of “Curly Hair/Hot Metal” at Nationale, Image © Mario Gallucci courtesy of Nationale

Christian Rogers 和 Shohei Takasaki 兩位藝術家此前都曾在 Nationale 舉辦過個展，他們的首次雙人展是對二元性的研究，兩位藝術家的作品既相互補充，又相互矛盾。「捲髮 / 熱金屬」中的合作效果以最吸引人的方式令人震撼。Takasaki 的繪畫切口與 Rogers 的皮膚、色調和顏色的不同組合進行了有意義的對話。

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當然，膚色、色調和色彩的不同組合，但「多姿多彩的肉體景觀」是我最初盯著羅傑斯在展覽中的作品時記下的。「肉體景觀」對鹹味和低調的莊嚴同樣感興趣，在某種程度上，它確實包含了Rogers在「捲髮/熱金屬」中達到的效果。

高崎昌平在「卷發/熱金屬」中的作品在某些方面與羅傑斯的作品直接吻合，而在其他方面則略有不同。與羅傑斯一樣，高崎也關注擁抱當下。藝術家的每幅畫作都被標注為「無題」，但每幅畫作都包含日期括號：例如（2022年6月17日）或（2022年2月28日）。雖然尚不清楚高崎是否真的在指定日期完成了每幅畫作--這一點似乎值得懷疑--但可以肯定的是，每幅畫作上的日期都具有重要意義，說明了靈感和創作的即時性。無論我們如何計劃或準備，時間永遠就是現在，就是現在，接受這種確定性是完全活在（凡人的）當下的唯一方式。

肉體和身體也是高崎在「卷發/熱金屬」中關注的問題。在一些畫作的畫框側面，用粗黑炭筆寫下了各種隱晦的、類似「神諭」的箴言：如「破窗皮膚」、「皮膚交流」和「電視霧霾麻木皮膚」等。與畫布上的實際作品相比，觀眾只能自己去解讀這些信息--這兩個部分之間並沒有直接的關係，但顯而易見的是，與羅傑斯一樣，高崎也投入到了活在這個世界上的日常親密關係中。這種親密關係岌岌可危。

高崎在《無題》（2022年5月23日）和《無題》（2022年6月17日）等畫作中使用的線條原始而具體，是一種宣言而非暗示。它是一種聲明而非暗示，它是一種阻礙而非澄清，而且對說教式的啟示毫無興趣。（此外，《無題》（2022年6月22日）和《無題》（2022年5月23日）所展示的朦朧形像中可見的眼睛，與其說是視覺的容器，不如說是存在的容器。它們視而不見，而隨著它們被放置在每塊畫布上，觀眾會自然而然地試圖在它們周圍形成一張臉。然而，這種願望會被挫敗，或者至少被高崎拒絕直接具像化的態度所緩和。「腐蝕性的暗示性」是我在研究高崎參展畫作時在筆記本上寫下的一句話，經過進一步思考，我認為這句話確實抓住了藝術家在「卷發/熱金屬」中達到的某些效果。腐蝕一詞通常具有貶義--某物已被破壞或扭曲，但在這個例子中，我是正面使用它的。高崎在展覽中的畫作所呈現出的分裂，以其獨特的方式瀕臨邊緣，徘徊在某種重生的邊緣，但還沒有達到目的。因此，它們存在於一個邊緣空間，介於兩者之間，但又完全成型，呈現於眼前。對於觀眾來說，這是一個豐富而肥沃的地方。

在快速瀏覽了《卷發/熱金屬》之後，我很難確定克裡斯蒂安·羅傑斯和高崎昌平的作品之間到底有什麼聯系。然而，隨著不斷的觀看和思考，我發現每位藝術家的手勢能量都在以相似的頻率嗡嗡作響。作品本身的範圍和基調各不相同，但內在的表達熱情是相同的。這種熱情值得在Nationale展上親身體驗。

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Shohei Takasaki, *Untitled (May 23 2022)* (2022). Oil pastel and charcoal on canvas. 36 x 32 inches.
Image © Mario Gallucci courtesy of Nationale

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Shohei Takasaki, *Untitled (June 22 2022)* (2022). Oil pastel and charcoal on canvas. 52 x 48 inches.
Image © Mario Gallucci courtesy of Nationale

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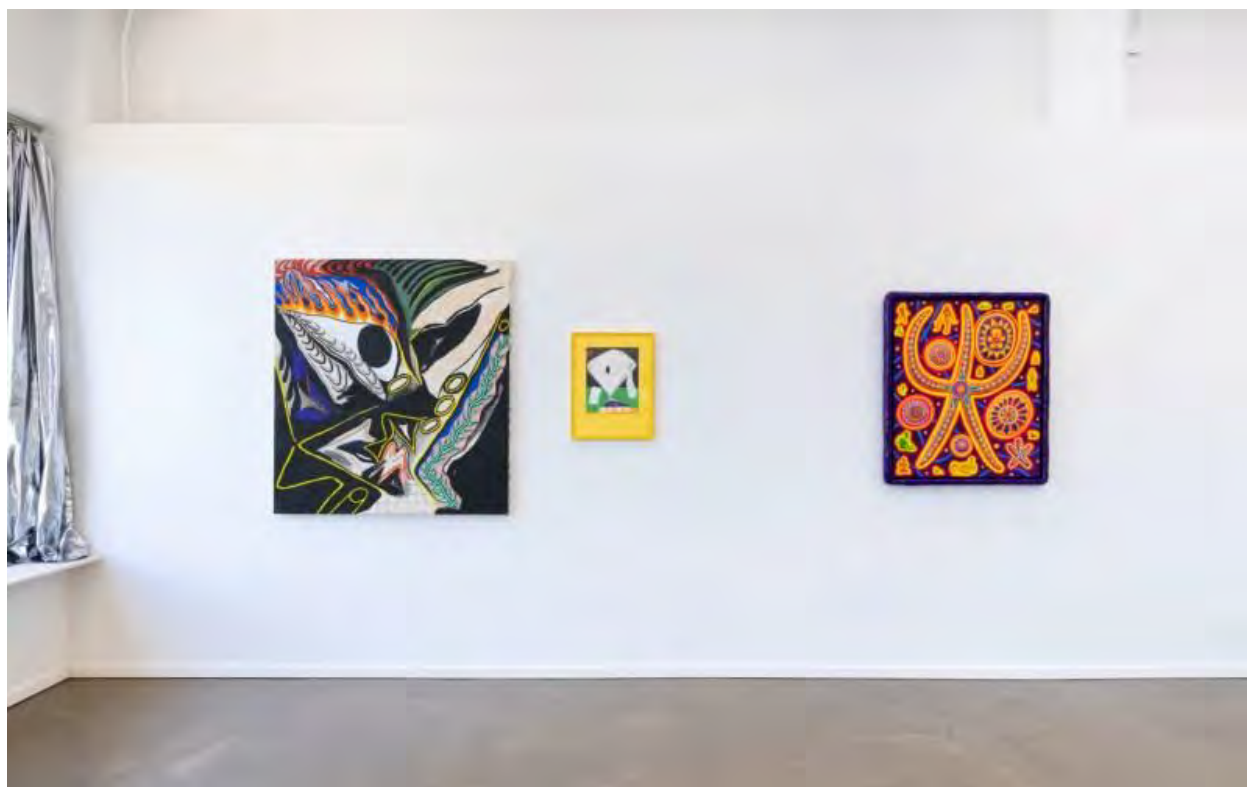
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Art Review: Christian Rogers & Shohei Takasaki at Nationale

The dual exhibition "Curly Hair/Hot Metal" juxtaposes Takasaki's bold, gestural abstractions with Rogers' figure-inclusive collages.

AUGUST 8, 2022

JEFF ALESSANDRELLI



Installation view of "Curly Hair/Hot Metal" at Nationale, Image © Mario Gallucci courtesy of Nationale

The first dual exhibition by the artists Christian Rogers and Shohei Takasaki—both of whom have had solo exhibitions at Nationale previously—represents a study in duality, with the work of each artist alternately complementing and contradicting his counterpart. The collaborative effect in *Curly Hair/Hot Metal* is jarring in the most appealing of ways. Walking through the show one inhabits two

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distinct worlds that become one when juxtaposed, with Takasaki's painterly incisions engaging in a meaningful conversation with Rogers' disparate assemblages of skin, tone and color.

Disparate assemblages of skin, tone and color, sure, but “multitudinous fleshscapes” is what I initially jotted down while staring at Rogers' work in the show. Equally interested in salaciousness and understated solemnity, “fleshscapes” does, on some level, encompass what Rogers achieves in “Curly Hair/Hot Metal.” Works like *Gay Cruise Line* and *By Invitation Only* do feature both naked and thinly clothed male bodies, and the untitled Rogers' Polaroid photos in the show *do* luxuriate in the unadorned physical and natural worlds. (According to the catalog for the show Rogers sourced all the collage-based imagery from vintage erotic magazines.) At the same time, however, this prurient aspect of “Hair/Hot Metal” veers more towards sexual elegy rather than elation, especially when buttressed by the Day-Glo figurations that overhang the collaged aspects of each work. Although the shapes themselves—dense and expansive—exude a certain frivolity, the more I studied each painting the more poignant, even grave, it appeared. Humans are acolytes of light and the brighter something is the more we're inclined to think of it as happy, filled with life.

As I stared intently at Rogers' painting *Heatwave*, however, I inhabited conflicting states of mind. Fluorescent green in the main, certainly the painting's coloration is one of openhanded agreement. It asks for attention and immediately receives it. That said, the collaged men that make up a portion of the composition of *Heatwave* seem to also float a certain “lust as grief” trope. Positioned near the center of the work, one of the men stares at the viewer pensively. He's not bashful about his nakedness or sexuality so much as cognizant of his own mortality. Heavy handed or fatalistic as it might seem, to live is to love is to die, and *Heatwave* encompasses this notion completely. The fact that who we are now is not who (or where) we'll be in one hundred years is not a cause for lamentation. Instead, it's a reason to celebrate, to live in the moment knowing that tomorrow is never promised to anyone. The men in Rogers' paintings and Polaroids in “Curly Hair/Hot Metal” know this; Rogers' effusive colors and shapes know it too. The cumulative effect is one of vivacious passion, yes, but also fragility.

Shohei Takasaki's work in “Curly Hair/Hot Metal” dovetails directly with Rogers' in certain ways and in other respects skirts it. Like Rogers, Takasaki is concerned with embracing the present moment. Every painting by the artist is identified as “Untitled” but each also contains a dated parenthetical: (*June 17 2022*) or (*Feb 28 2022*), for example. Although it's unclear if Takasaki actually completed each painting on the given day—it seems doubtful—surely the inclusion of each date is a significant one, speaking to the immediacy of inspiration and creation. No matter how much we might plan or prepare, time is forever now, just now, and accepting that certainty is the only way to fully live in the (mortal) present.

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Shohei Takasaki, *Untitled (May 23 2022)* (2022). Oil pastel and charcoal on canvas. 36 x 32 inches.
Image © Mario Gallucci courtesy of Nationale

Flesh and the body are also concerns of Takasaki's in "Curly Hair/Hot Metal." Written on the side of some of the paintings' frames in thick black charcoal are various cryptic, koan-like incitements: "Broken Windows Skin," "Skin Communication" and "TV Haze Numbes Skin", among others. Vis-à-vis the actual artwork on the canvas, the viewer is left to decipher these messages for herself—there is no direct relationship between the two components—but what is clear is that, same as Rogers, Takasaki is invested in the daily intimacy of being alive in the world. And it's a precarious intimacy.

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Shohei Takasaki, *Untitled (June 22 2022)* (2022). Oil pastel and charcoal on canvas. 52 x 48 inches.
Image © Mario Gallucci courtesy of Nationale

Takasaki's line in paintings like *Untitled (May 23 2022)* and *Untitled (June 17 2022)* is raw and tangible, a declaration rather than suggestion. It stymies rather than clarifies and is decidedly uninterested in didactic illumination. (2+2= time + vision. Anything but 4.) The visible eyes in the shadowy figurations displayed in *Untitled (June 22 2022)* and *Untitled (May 23 2022)*, moreover, are not vessels of sight so much as presence. They see without seeing, and with their placement on each canvas the viewer will naturally try to form a face around them. This desire will be thwarted, however, or at least tempered by Takasaki's refusal to engage in direct figuration. "Corrosive suggestibility" is what

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I wrote in my notebook while studying Takasaki's paintings in the show and, having further reflected, I do think that phrase captures some of what the artist achieves in "Curly Hair/Hot Metal." The word corrosion normally has a pejorative sense—something has been destroyed or distorted—but in this instance I use it positively. The schisms that comprise Takasaki paintings in the show are, in their idiosyncratic way, on the brink, teetering towards a rebirth of some kind but not there yet. They thus exist in a liminal space, in between and yet fully formed, present. For the viewer, then, this is a rich and fertile place to be.

After doing an initial quick walkthrough of "Curly Hair/Hot Metal" I was hard-pressed to ascertain just what exactly connected the work of Christian Rogers and Shohei Takasaki. With continued viewings and reflection, however, it's clear that the gestural energy of each artist hums at a similar frequency. The works themselves vary in scope and tone, but the underlying expressive ardor is the same. It's an ardor worth experiencing firsthand at Nationale.