

# AYA NAKAMURA

b. 1982, Tokyo, Japan

Lives and works in Chicago, IL

## EDUCATION

- 2013 MFA, Painting and Drawing, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
- 2011 Post-Baccalaureate Certificate, Painting and Drawing, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
- 2004 BA, Fine Arts and Political Science, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 Western Exhibitions, Chicago, IL
- 2022 *Wayfaring*, Western Exhibitions, Chicago, IL
- 2019 *Slow Trace*, Rainbo Club, Chicago, IL  
*Relatum, Relata*, Fox River Grove, IL
- 2017 *Memory Material*, Final Resting Place, Chicago, IL

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *Cosmic Geometries II*, Carrie Secrist Gallery, curated by Hilma's Ghost, Chicago, IL
- 2023 *The Western Exhibitions Drawing Biennial*, Chicago, IL  
*Concentrate and Ask Again*, Heaven Gallery, Chicago, IL  
*Regather*, Merwin Gallery, Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, IL  
*Serenity of Less*, curated by YoungSun Choi, The Research House for Asian Art (RHAA), Chicago, IL
- 2022 *The Western Exhibitions Drawing Biennial*, Chicago, IL
- 2021 *In Good Company*, Monira Foundation, Chicago, IL
- 2019 *Mana Decentralized*, Mana New Jersey, Jersey City, NJ
- 2018 *Tyrants*, Final Resting Place, Chicago, IL  
*Bibliotheca*, Roman Susan, Chicago, IL
- 2017 *The New Normal*, Supa Salon, Istanbul, Turkey

*The New Normal*, The Hangar and Dawawine, Beirut, Lebanon  
*En/Counter*, Hybrid Salon, Chicago, IL

2015 *Art from Excess*, Marshall J. Gardner Center for the Arts, Gary, IN  
*A\*HAUL: Part Duh*, 2nd Floor Rear, Chicago, IL

2014 *In Medias Res*, Biblio Exhibitions, Lyons, IL  
*Scrap Heap II*, Tusk, Chicago, IL  
*A\*HAUL*, 2nd Floor Rear, Chicago, IL

2013 *Eye Sense*, The Chandelier Room, Chicago, IL  
*Graduate MFA Exhibition*, Sullivan Galleries, Chicago, IL

2011 *Graduate MFA Exhibition*, Sullivan Galleries, Chicago, IL

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2023 [The Reader](#). Pocaro, Alan. "Unassuming and self-assured." March 20, 2023  
2022 [New City](#). Pocaro, Alan. "Strange Confederations: A Review of Aya Nakamura at Western Exhibitions and Megan Greene at Regards." February 21, 2022

## COLLECTIONS

Fidelity Investments Corporate Collection

## RESIDENCIES

- 2022 Chop Wood, Carry Water, Pachamanka, NW IL  
2020 Fresh Press, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, IL 2020 - Present  
2021 Meta Open Arts, Chicago, IL 2020 - 2021  
2019 Pyramid Atlantic Art Center, Hyattsville, MD Fall 2019  
2012 Art Farm, Marquette, NE Summer 2012

## AWARDS

- 2023 DCASE Individual Artist Program  
2022 Rauschenberg Medical Emergency Grants, Robert Rauschenberg Foundation  
2022 Rex Abandon Fund, Chop Wood, Carry Water  
2019 Denbo Fellowship, Pyramid Atlantic Art Center  
2013 George and Ann Siegel Fellowship, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago

## GROUPS

Chicago API (Asian, Pacific Islander) Artists United (CAAU), Summer 2020 - Present

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Aya Nakamura's work is influenced by a philosophy of mind that does not exclusively locate consciousness in the human, derived from interacting with plants and following posthumanist research in biology and anthropology. Nakamura's drawings are colored pencil on handmade paper of different sizes and shapes, which have a physicality and assert themselves during the drawing process. Variegated lines move across, alongside and into fields of color, and these assemble into amorphous compositions that appear to simultaneously build and dissolve. Some have visual links to existing symbols and objects, which provide a starting point and focus. Inspirations for recent drawings are various but orbit around a cataclysmic event, the passing of a loved one in the spring of 2021. They are meditations on death and metaphysics, and provide a space for questioning, grief, memorial, humor, and healing.

Aya Nakamura's first show at Western Exhibitions in 2022 was reviewed in *New City*. She has shown at venues in the United States and abroad, recently at Secrist Beach and Heaven, both in Chicago, and at The Hangar and Dawawine in Beirut, Lebanon; Supa Salon in Istanbul, Turkey; Mana Decentralized in Jersey City, NJ; and MPSTN in Fox River Grove, IL. She is the recipient of the Denbo Fellowship from Pyramid Atlantic Art Center and the George and Ann Siegel Fellowship from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is a member of Chicago API (Asian, Pacific Islander) and Artists United (CAAU). Nakamura was born in Japan and educated in France and the United States, holding a BA in Fine Arts and Political Science from the University of Pennsylvania, and a MFA in Painting and Drawing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Nakamura currently lives and works in Chicago.

**WESTERN EXHIBITIONS** 1709 W Chicago Ave., Chicago IL 60622 USA  
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