

It a film adaptation of the Nineties miniseries of the Eighties book that gave everyone everywhere a crippling fear of clowns is finally here, ready to strike red-nosed, clown-feet terror into the heart of a new generation. The pedigree is promising: director Andy Muschietti was behind 2013's brilliant and unsettling horror *Mama*, while Cary Fukunaga – of *True Detective* series one – wrote the script. Even better: this is only part one of a planned duology. Strap in. **SM**



ART

# Takashi Murakami's nuclear family

Having established himself alongside Jeff Koons and Damien Hirst at the top table of contemporary art, the Japanese vision king takes his ultra-pop melange of bright characters and atomic fallout to Moscow's Garage Museum

STORY BY **Nimrod Kamer**

He is not related to renowned author Haruki, but for the first time, Japanese artist Takashi Murakami has outdone the writer he shares a name with in online searches and western recognition. After exhibiting at MCA in Chicago, Moma and Gagosian in New York and The Broad in LA, this month he takes over the esteemed Garage Museum in Moscow, founded in 2008 by socialite Dasha Zhukova and her husband, Roman Abramovich.

Born in 1962, Murakami has a manga-infused manifesto called "Superflat". His magnitude hit home in May when he positioned himself alongside Jeff Koons and Damien Hirst in a notorious Instagram post, as the masters of the art universe. Last June, Facebook Messenger issued a series of selfie filters that allowed his stylised flowerhead and octopus to be placed on users' heads, as well as the glorified, saw-tooth creature Mr DOB.

**Cometh the manga: Takashi Murakami brings his art manifesto to Moscow**



**Nimrod Kramer: You never give interviews to Japanese media. Why?**

**Takashi Murakami:** The local art scene here is in a state of deep appropriation of western trends. I'm doing something much more local but it isn't appreciated here. There's some jealousy of what I do, too, I guess.

**NK: Why Garage in Moscow?**

**TM:** My art factory in Miyoshi, near Tokyo, is, in a sense, a garage and they offered me the chance to copy it in its entirety in Moscow. It will exhibit five sections, based on my five practices. The Geijutsu area will have the best paintings, the Little Boy and the Fat Man areas will be about the effects of nuclear power on Japanese visual culture. [Feature film] *Jellyfish Eyes* will be screened at the Kawaii section and Sutajito will have my many installations from the studio. The last section, Asobi & Kazari, will be spread across the museum's café, bookshop and façade with parasite ornaments.

**NK: Do brand artists need museum-size studios these days?**

**TM:** Yes, they do. It takes a village – it takes a factory – to operate beyond gallery shows and normal canvases. Especially if you want to create an umbrella of products and deliver them to the masses.

**NK: You also promote Japanese talent, such as Madsaki, who showed in your gallery.**

**TM:** Madsaki is a pseudo-Matisse laughing barrel. I discovered him on a colleague's Instagram and immediately negotiated a discount to buy his early works. We became good friends. His show *Here Today, Gone Tomorrow*



consists of graffiti-style paintings of his wife in many soulful scenarios (*below, inset*). The surface and eyes exude his peculiar brand of sorrow.

**NK: Mobile phones in Japan can't be muted when taking a picture. What's going on?**

**TM:** This has become the overlaying ambience in many of my public shows. The mandatory shutter sound dates back to 2000 and the first cell phones. It cannot be turned off because of voyeurism and up-skirt photography, creeps in the metro taking unholy pictures. Many here are protective of public morals and wary of secret photography.

**NK: You prefer talking in Japanese but your social media is in English.**

**TM:** I can be more concise and direct in my born language. Talking about my dogma and artistic theorem requires a better skill than composing a caption to a post. Hashtags will always be in English, though.

**NK: Any emerging western artist you can recommend?**

**TM:** Austin Lee from Long Island City [New York]. Very young. Incredibly focused on his blurred, colourful creatures. Go see him.

**NK: In Art Basel Hong Kong, you hosted a huge party with Young Lord and Daoko. No other artists hosted a bash; it was just galleries and institutions.**

**TM:** I know. We can't seem to stop.

**NK: OK, see you in Gorky Park, Moscow, in September.**

**TM: Sayonara. GQ**

*Under The Radiation Falls* is at Garage Museum Of Contemporary Art, Moscow, 29 September – 4 February. [garagemca.org](http://garagemca.org)

DON'T MISS

**23**  
**What:** *Jasper Johns: Something Resembling Truth*  
**When:** Until 10 December  
**Why:** Jasper Johns' first UK survey show for 40 years features more than 150 sculptures, drawings and prints, including his early, iconic images. Now 87, he is still a working artist. This is a once-in-a-lifetime show. **Sophie Hastings**  
*Royal Academy Of Arts, London.*  
[royalacademy.org.uk](http://royalacademy.org.uk)



**28**  
**What:** *Jenny Holzer At Blenheim Palace*  
**When:** Until 31 December  
**Why:** US artist Jenny Holzer questions the "truths" we are presented by infiltrating public spaces with words (*right*) written on flyposters, carved in stone and lit in LEDs. Her subversive tone appears in delicious juxtaposition against this baroque palace. Expect site-specific light projections. **SH**  
*Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire.*  
[blenheimpalace.com](http://blenheimpalace.com)

