

May Avoid May mayhem—take a deep breath and plan your itinerary wisely. Start with New York, hosting the major sales and openings such as **Tim Hawkinson's** debut at **PaceWildenstein** and **Francesco Clemente** at **Mary Boone** and **Deitch Projects**. Next stop, London, for **Serpentine Gallery's** premiere of digital works by **Paul Chan**. It's on to Geneva for watch and jewelry auctions, then Madrid for the shutter-bug festival **PHotoEspaña**. Hong Kong's got **Christie's** Asian offerings and the **International Asian Antique and Art Fair**. Complete the circuit back in New York at the **Metropolitan Museum of Art's** homage to early 20th-century designer **Paul Poiret**.



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Works by Japanese artist Mr., who is showing at Lehmann Maupin in New York: A 2004–05 fiberglass and plastic sculpture, top, and acrylic canvases, *You Girls*, 2007, below, and *Making Things Right*, 2006, left.



marks the artist's much-anticipated move from longtime dealer **Marianne Boesky**. Running from May 1 through June 9, it features a mixture of new and familiar paintings, setting the stage for his retrospective in October at the **Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**.

But the premiere that many art world insiders are paying particular attention to is the solo show of **Masakatsu Iwamoto** at **Lehmann Maupin** from May 3 through June 23. **Mr.**, as Iwamoto is known, is one of several artists in Murakami's inner circle who have been making waves: **Aya Takano** just closed an exhibition at **Emmanuel Perrotin's** Miami space, and **Chiho Aoshima** created an installation for Boston's new **Institute of Contemporary Art**. But **Mr.**—Murakami's first assistant, beginning in 1995, about a

year before dealers **Rachel Lehmann** and **David Maupin** first met the two men—seems best positioned to be the next big thing. "We are thrilled to give Mr. his first New York show," says Lehmann. "He makes sense for us in the way he is exploring the self and identity. He is in line with many artists we work with already."

More than any other **Kaikai Kiki** front-runner, **Mr.** is fully immersed in the Japanese *otaku* culture, centered on the cult of adolescence and the worship of Lolita-like characters. He began by drawing anime girls on receipts, but his hottest works are his paintings

and large sculptures of bright-eyed figures plucked from Japanese cartoons.

At the last Armory Show, Lehmann Maupin presented four works, all of which sold, as teasers for this exhibit, which includes drawings (\$1,500 and up), paintings (starting at \$45,000) and sculptures (\$80,000–150,000). An American museum has already expressed interest in the centerpiece, one of Mr.'s enormous disembodied heads of pigtailed girls. This example is different, though, says Lehmann: Visitors will be able to climb into it, virtually becoming one with *otaku* culture.

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NEW YORK

The Talented Mr.

It would be wrong to say that the art world has forgotten **Takashi Murakami** and his **Kaikai Kiki** disciples. Still, the hype has certainly died down, no doubt allowing the new Chinese market darlings to be heard from. This month in New York, however, members of the Japanese group are again making noise.

A Murakami show at **Gagosian's** uptown gallery