

# Kawaii

May 21 — Jun 26, 2021 | Shanghai

Almine Rech Shanghai is pleased to present *Kawaii*, a group exhibition on view from May 21 to June 19, 2021.

*Kawaii* (Japanese: **かわいい** or **可愛い**) is the culture of cuteness which has become a symbol of contemporary Japan nation-wide and abroad. The concept stems from the 1970s when young girls started writing, doodling, and creating exaggeratedly cute outfits in order to confront the traditional roles imposed on them. Often translated as “cute” or “super-cute”, the real meaning of *Kawaii* varies across generations and social groups, signifying the intuitive emotions one experiences induced by cognitive appraisal. Such consequential implication has transformed this adjective into a noun, which then describes an entire subculture present worldwide. Referring to items, humans, and non-humans that evoke sympathy, are lovely, adorable, shy, and/or childlike, *Kawaii*'s impact can nowadays be seen in entertainment, clothing, food, toys, personal appearance, mannerisms, as well as fashion and visual art.

The visual art, *Kawaii*, features characters with Western pop culture, the sculptures, paintings, and drawings praised by art critics gained the artist a cult following around globally, both in the world of art collectors and other artists.

With this exhibition, Almine Rech Shanghai aims to acknowledge this movement. By presenting the works by three artists from different backgrounds or parts of the world, **Sun Yitian**, **Szabolcs Bozó**, and **Edgar Plans**, the gallery is hoping to provide an insight into present day redefinition of *Kawaii* globally.

- Sasha Bogojev

Writer and Curator