

Takashi Murakami: Art on the Cutting Edge of Pop Art, Traditional Japanese Landscape and History Painting, Comic Art, and Graphic Design

Ellen Kim¹*

¹Henry M. Gunn High School, Palo Alto, CA, USA

*Corresponding Author: ellenhyunsuhkim@gmail.com

Advisor: Cynthia Brannvall, brannvallcynthia@fhda.edu

Received June 28, 2023; Revised October 18, 2023; Accepted, November 21, 2023

Abstract

Takashi Murakami fundamentally influenced contemporary Japanese art, creating a new art movement called Superflat. This paper explores his artworks through art historical methods of formal analysis to highlight how Murakami not only “infiltrate[d] the manga and anime fan communities with his art, he also managed to throw popular culture into the realms of fine art.” This assertion is supported by a visual analysis of three Murakami artworks: *My Lonesome Cowboy* (Sculpture made of oil, acrylic, fiberglass and iron, 100” x 46” x 36”, 1998), *Mr. Rainbow Dob* (Offset lithograph, 26.8” x 26.8”, 2006) and *Superflat my first love flowers* (Archival pigment print, 29.5” x 29.5”, 2020). These artworks showcased the incorporation of traditional Nihonga aesthetics for which Murakami is formally trained into which he blends popular culture elements like manga and anime, creating the SuperFlat art form and new Japanese identity through mass merchandizing. The paper concludes that Murakami was a driving force of Japanese contemporary art and identity while providing suggestions for further research.

Keywords: Takashi Murakami, Superflat, Manga

1. Introduction

This research paper presents the confluence of factors that allowed Takashi Murakami to create a new art form that would inform what many foreigners today consider the Japanese identity. To contextualize many of these factors, one ought to understand the traditional Japanese art of Nihonga to appreciate how Murakami combined this ancestral art form with manga and anime to create Superflat during the aftermath of World War II (1939-45) and subsequent economic downturns that accelerated Japan’s adoption of westernized ideals. This research paper argues that Takashi Murakami’s exploration of traditional Japanese art, manga, anime, and popular culture (Otaku) influenced the subject matter, medium, and meaning of his artworks, creating a new art movement, Superflat, which brought Japan’s uniquely flat and consumer-centric identity to the world’s attention. This paper shall examine this influence through three Murakami artworks: *My Lonesome Cowboy* (Figure 1), *Mr. Rainbow Dob* (Figure 2) and *The Future will Be Full of Smile! For Sure!* (Figure 3).

1.1 Traditional Japanese Art of Nihonga

To understand Superflat, one must consider its cultural and stylistic influences, beginning with Nihonga. Around the early 1900s, Nihonga was first used to describe Japanese paintings that adhered to traditional Japanese materials, techniques, and conventions. During the Meiji period, Japan began cross-border trade with foreign lands at the time, resulting in increased modernization and exposure to western artistic styles and culture. As a result, Nihonga and its antithesis, Yoga, were introduced to mark the difference between traditional Japanese artworks and art influenced by

the West. Eventually, Nihonga became an umbrella term for past Japanese art styles like Yamato-e and ukiyo-e, for which traditional Japanese art is most popularly known. In contrast to the comparative depth of western-influenced Yoga which used techniques like modeling and perspective, Nihonga emphasized flatness. Refraining from a realistic representation of its subject matter, Nihonga includes the emphasized use of outlines using Sumi ink and the layering of colors, simplified expressions, and color applied in flat areas. The media used in Nihonga typically included a mixture of natural mineral pigments with water and animal glue (Sumi ink) applied to Japanese paper (Washi) or Japanese silk (Eginu). This style attempted to evoke a greater understanding of the beautiful impermanence of objects and the importance of consciously staying in the moment, like admiring cherry blossom trees that bloom each spring before withering.

2. Murakami’s Background

Born on February 1, 1962, in Tokyo, Japan, Takeshi Murakami is a contemporary Japanese artist who pioneered the Superflat art movement in 2000, combining Japanese artistic traditions with popular culture and commercial themes. He is considered the “most successful Japanese contemporary artist to have emerged in the early 1990s” (Favell, 2014, p. 135). In 2008, he was the only visual artist named as one of the top “100 Most Influential People” by Time magazine. In 2010, Murakami became the first Japanese and third contemporary artist to exhibit at the prestigious Palace of Versailles. Murakami also expanded beyond the fine-art world and collaborated with many high-end fashion brands like Louis Vuitton and Marc Jacobs and entertainers like controversial rapper Kayne West, singer-songwriter Billie Eilish, and music producer Pharrell Williams. His artworks have been

Table 1. Top Contemporary Artists by number of lots sold (2000-2019), <https://www.artprice.com/artprice-reports/the-contemporary-art-market-report-2020/multiple-choice>

#	Artist	Lots Sold	Average Price	Total Price
1	Takashi Murakami (b. 1962)	5,512	\$40,618	\$223,886,416
2	Keith Haring (1958 - 1990)	4,806	\$63,345	\$304,436,070
3	Damien Hirst (b. 1965)	4,244	\$163,893	\$695,561,892
4	Shepard Fairey (b. 1970)	2,989	\$2,513	\$7,511,357
5	Banksy (b. 1974)	2,815	\$35,677	\$100,430,755
6	Robert Combas (b. 1957)	2,789	\$14,907	\$41,575,623
7	Zhu Xinjian (1953 - 2014)	2,755	\$22,634	\$62,356,670
8	Yoshitomo Nara (b. 1959)	2,727	\$120,178	\$327,725,406
9	KAWS (b. 1974)	2,104	\$78,784	\$165,761,536
10	Jeff Koons (b. 1955)	1,902	\$493,470	\$938,579,940

Table 2. Market Size Comparison of Contemporary Art of United States and Japan, <https://www.artprice.com/artprice-reports/the-contemporary-art-market-report-2020/the-contemporary-art-rush/>, <https://imgpublic.artprice.com/pdf/artprice-contemporary-2013-2014-en.pdf>, <https://www.artprice.com/artprice-reports/the-contemporary-art-market-report-2016/market-geography>, <https://www.artprice.com/artprice-reports/the-contemporary-art-market-report-2018/general-synopsis-contemporary-arts-market-performance>, <https://www.artprice.com/artprice-reports/the-contemporary-art-market-report-2020/the-contemporary-art-rush/>, <https://www.artprice.com/artprice-reports/the-contemporary-art-market-report-2022/key-figures-for-the-contemporary-art-market>

(in \$ millions)	2000	2010	2014	2016	2018	2022	8-year growth %
United States	\$62.0	\$152.6	\$583.1	\$582.4	\$612.8	\$1,052.5	80.5%
Japan	\$0.0	Under \$2	\$3.6	\$6.5	\$14.0	\$65.2	1724.6%
Total Contemporary Art Market	\$92.0	\$1,145.0	\$1,584.0	\$1,500.0	\$1,900.0	\$2,700.0	70.5%

showcased in over eighty prominent exhibits, and one of his sculptures, My Lonesome Cowboy, sold for over \$15 million in 2008. (Naka, 2023, p.130). From 2000 to 2019, Murakami sold the largest number of

artworks than any other contemporary artist (Table 1), leading to substantial growth in the Japanese contemporary art market over the last twenty years (Table 2).

2.1 Murakami’s Early Years and Influences

During his adolescent years, Murakami was fascinated with manga and anime, both of which grew in popularity as an escapist response to the repercussions of World War II. Popularized in the 1960s by Osamu Tezuka, manga (translated as “whimsical pictures”) is a style of Japanese graphic novels and comics. Anime (short for animation) is a style of Japanese computer-animated cartoons based on hand drawings. Murakami stated that “Japan was emasculated by the atomic bombs and the United States and that his generation or younger Japanese have resorted to all things cute in order to escape the realities of life” (Yoshimoto, 2012, p. 119).

Although Murakami aspired to be an animator during his early years, he instead decided to attend Tokyo

University of the Arts, where he received his undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degrees (1993) in Nihonga, which translates as “Japanese painting.” After Japan opened its trading borders during the Meiji period (1868-1912), Japanese painting started to adopt Western influences. In contrast to Western-style paintings, Nihonga represents the return to traditional Japanese painting traditions.

However, Murakami became dissatisfied with the bureaucratic aspects and limited monetary prospects of the Nihonga art world and sought to explore contemporary art styles that would have more commercial appeal. During this exploration, Murakami grew frustrated by the dominant western (namely American) influences of contemporary Japanese art and sought to invent a new art movement based on Japanese tradition and current culture. His background in Nihonga and his fascination with manga and anime would serve as the foundation on which he would explore and eventually represent the emerging popular culture of its fanatical young consumers (Otaku) obsessed with computers, digital media, and pop culture.

After realizing that the Japanese market was not open to new forms of fine art, Murakami strategically moved to New York City to develop an aesthetic that would gain American appeal, after which he could introduce it to Japan with increased leverage. In search for a more Japanese-centric style based on Japanese tradition and his observations of the emerging Otaku generation, Murakami developed the artistic concept of Superflat, which focused on using flat two-dimensional imagery with flat color planes found in traditional Japanese artworks and manga. Superflat, in effect, would break down the traditional distinction between low and fine art, and combine Japanese traditional and contemporary culture. The Superflat imagery resembles the flat silkscreen prints of Andy Warhol, widely considered the founder of popular art. Like Andy Warhol, Murakami brought concepts of low-end Japanese preferences to the high-end market, appealing to all demographics. However, unlike Warhol, he leveraged high-end iconography to produce consumer products at affordable prices for mass consumption domestically and globally.

2.2 Shifts in Japanese Consumerism and The Rise of the Otaku Sub-culture

As a result of Japan's loss in World War II and subsequent concessions like opening its economic and trading borders, Japanese retail consumption increased substantially. “Since the 1960s, the Japanese economy developed with remarkable speed, becoming the world’s second-largest economy after the USA, and during the years of the economic boom, in the 1970s and 1980s, the Japanese population moved from being a nation of savers to a nation of spenders” (Borggreen, 2018, p. 175). This mass consumption reflected and accelerated changes to Japanese culture, namely the increased popularity of entertainment, celebrity, and fandom. The changing economic conditions in the latter half of the 20th century drove swift changes in consumer habits and purchases. During the oil crisis in 1973, Japanese consumption shifted from those benefiting the nuclear family, like high-quality television sets, to those of the individual, like luxury clothing.

However, during the recession from 1991 to 2001, the increase in individual consumption resulted in eventual unfulfillment and unhappiness (Borggreen, 2018, p. 176). Consumers began to turn away from luxury goods and toward simple and casual items like manga comics. Examples of widespread changes in purchasing included shifting from western to local, goods to services, and self-interested to altruistic (Borggreen, 2018, p. 178). The art world also changed to reflect and influence these trends. During the 1990s, artworks started to represent consumer iconography, leveraging its recognition as fine art into affordable consumable products. A big driver of this movement was Murakami, who was both a part of and inspired by the emerging Otaku subculture.

Otaku is a descriptive term for people with obsessive interests, typically in computers, video games, manga, and anime. They are “geeks who spend their lives withdrawn from mainstream society, holed up inside their rooms consuming pile upon pile of comic books and watching anime on home monitors... the otaku is most satisfied by solitary and masturbatory imagined relationships with comic book or animation characters” (Cornyetz, 2012, p. 181). Despite being viewed by many as social outcasts in a historically conservative society, the size of the Otaku community continued to expand with the growing popularity of manga, anime, and video games. This trend was fueled further by advancements in broadband, mobile, and internet technology, creating greater adoption and perpetual engagement. As an Otaku himself, Murakami’s desire to represent and champion the Otaku culture “comes from the public ignorance of otaku” (Wakasa, 2000).

2.3 Manga and Anime

Manga is known for its cartoonish dominant style, expressive line drawing, use of cute characters with exaggerated facial expressions, and complex storylines. While its roots can be traced back to the Edo period (1603-1867), manga's initial growth in popularity didn't occur until the 1920s, with more widespread adoption starting in the 1950s. Over time, manga separated into gender-age genres like Shonen (for young boys) and Shojo (for young girls) to cater to the specific tastes and grow the readership of these demographic groups.

With a similar artistic style to manga, anime is a Japanese animated cartoon that emerged during the 1960s. Like manga, anime is known for its thick dark outlines, flat drawings and use of colors, limited animation, characters rendered with exaggerated facial features and expressions, and complex narratives. Historically, anime evolved from stories on scrolls narrated by storytellers (Emakimono), and its characters were borrowed from Japanese ukiyo-e prints during the Edo period. Anime changed considerably by adopting Western technological advancements like the limited frame counts invented by the Walt Disney Company, allowing considerably fewer frame-by-frame manual drawings.

As an avid manga and anime enthusiast, Murakami “not only incorporated these styles into his artwork to appeal to the Otaku but in doing so also managed to throw popular culture into the realms of fine art” (Borggreen, 2018, p. 184). In essence, Murakami shepherded the contemporary Japanese art world from pre-war traditional Japanese Nihonga art to a more post-war western style centered on manga, anime, and Otaku and its mass consumerization.

2.4 Superflat Art Movement

A term invented by Murakami in 2001, the Superflat art movement represents a departure from traditional Japanese art to a post-modern version. Fusing popular culture and post-World War II sentiments, Superflat attempts to create a unique Japanese identity. “Many have celebrated the distinctive visual sensibility of Superflat art, which claims to be informed by Japanese visual cultures such as manga and anime, as a unique challenge to Western visual tradition of Renaissance perspective” (Li, 2012, p. 203).

With Superflat as a new art form and cultural philosophy, Murakami introduces a satirical critique of the lack of depth in Japanese culture and consumption through artistic tools like two-dimensional objects, flat colors, thick outlines, and limited depth and perspective. In some sense, Superflat represents Japan's societal homogeneity and flatness, given its simplified ideals of cuteness without an underlying identity.

With Superflat, Murakami attempts to return Japanese contemporary art to traditional Japanese views that historically did not distinguish between fine art and craft, as well as aesthetics and utility. In contrast to Western art, Superflat “posits that there is a legacy of flat, 2-dimensional imagery from Japanese art history in manga and anime... Superflat also served as a commentary on postwar Japanese society in which, Murakami argues, differences in social class and popular taste have ‘flattened,’ producing a culture with little distinction between ‘high’ and ‘low’” (Rothkopf, 2007, p. 144).

Influenced by Otaku's infatuation with computers and digital media, Murakami goes beyond Warhol's industrial silkscreen-created artworks of commercial and celebrity iconography but instead attempts to represent the aesthetics seen in our present-day technology-driven world like those experienced on flat-screen television and mobile phones. Superflat represents the “soft power of Japanese popular culture as a site of the nation's own infantilization and argues for the soft power of Japanese popular culture to resurrect the nation to new global heights” (Yano, 2009, p. 685). Simplistically, Superflat combines traditional Japanese art of planar forms and humanistic storylines with cutesy characters of manga/anime. An example of using manga, anime and Otaku fascinations can be found in Murakami's infamous sculpture *My Lonesome Cowboy*.

3. My Lonesome Cowboy (1998)

At a relatively large scale of 100 inches tall by 46 inches wide by 36 inches deep, Murakami's sculpture *My Lonesome Cowboy* depicts a nude teenager in the style of a typical Shonen manga comic or anime. The naked teenager has an adult-like muscular, peach-colored body with spiky fluorescent-yellow hair that protrudes mainly to the left

with three pronounced long triangular-shaped extensions pointed to the upper left-hand corner. He stands in an irreverent and proud pose. With his left hand, he is holding his large genitalia, which emanates a jagged sword-like stream of semen, which curls in the air like a cowboy's lasso. His right arm is slightly bent with widespread fingers, softly holding a thick stream of semen as it starts to curve above the teenager.



Figure 1. Takashi Murakami, *My Lonesome Cowboy*, 1998, oil, acrylic, fiberglass and iron, 100" x 46" x 36", https://www.artnet.com/artists/takashi-murakami/my-lonesome-cowboy-CZ3qc_fWDjp5NquruOGf9w2

His large bright green eyes are webbed-shaped and cover most of his small triangular face. His mouth is slightly ajar and pointed upwards at the ends. His legs are proudly spread wide beyond the width of his shoulders, forming an equilateral triangle. This toy-like figure incorporates an infantile style. Its incorporation of masturbation is similar to pornography found in manga comics and anime cartoons. The artwork also references some characteristics of Ukiyo-e, such as exaggerated genitalia. Given that the figure appears Caucasian, this artwork seems to challenge and satirize Western masculinity's ideals while adhering to Japanese art's roots.

The title of the artwork appears to be a reference to Andy Warhol's 1968 film *Lonesome Cowboys*, which attempts to represent and satirize American consumer culture, similar to Murakami's goals for his own artworks. Like Warhol, Murakami "set out to challenge the conventions and cultural systems of Otaku communities and dojinshi (fan-driven magazines) environments, for example by modifying the aesthetics of the collectable, small-size figurines and creating life-size figures, thus positioning these characters as disturbingly similar to sex dolls" (Borggreen, 2018, p. 184). In *My Lonesome Cowboy*, Murakami uses the duality of immaturity and sexual desires, representing characteristics of

Japanese identity.

4. Mr. Rainbow Dob (2006)

Whereas *My Lonesome Cowboy* used sculpture to reference Japanese identity based on manga, anime, and Otaku, Murakami's digitally created artworks *Mr. Rainbow Dob* represents a pursuit of universal iconography of the Japanese identity. At a relatively small scale of 26.8 inches tall by 26.8 inches wide, this offset lithograph artwork presents the enlarged head of a Mickey Mouse-like animal. Both of the animal's large ears are cropped on the upper right-hand corner and the middle of the left-hand side. The character's head and eyes are looking towards the bottom left-hand side of the artwork. Although the head is angled, there is limited depth.

A thin white outline surrounds the mouse's entire head. The white circular face, in the shape of the letter "O," has two large circular black eyes. The right eye has a pink tapered outline that is thickened towards the top of the black-colored eye. Three thick triangular eyelashes protrude from the upper right side of the eye. The right oval-shaped pupil is towards the eye's upper right corner. The color of the exterior portion of the pupil is a dark pastel blue. The left eyes are similar but with different colors. In contrast, the inner oval-shaped portion is a faint sky-blue color with a minuscule target-like concentric circle with orange and red coloring. Two white circles on both sides of the tiny circle resemble two points of reflection from a bright light source.

The character's nose is rendered horizontally and oval-shaped with a thick black outline, while the large exaggerated smiling mouth has a black color with thin white vertical lines. The remainder of the face and ears have a smooth progression of colors from yellow to orange to purple to blue to green as the viewer progresses from the animal's right ear to the left. Although the blended transitions resemble shading, the flatness of the head still comes through. On the right ear is a large curvy, white-colored letter "B." In contrast, the other ear has a similarly styled large letter "D." In the negative space surrounding the head, Murakami presents expressive, organic psychedelic shapes with varying pastel colors of off-white, pink, purple, red, and orange.

This character, affectionately known as Mr. DOB, is Murakami's alter ego or avatar. Mr. DOB is a shortened

form of the Japanese slang word Dobojite, which translates to “why.” Modeled after a manga creature (Doraemon) and a Walt Disney character (Mickey Mouse), Murakami created the Mr. DOB character to test ubiquitous characters’ consumer viability. Murakami seems to question why Japanese consumer society needs to be viewed as empty and shallow.

By rendering Mr. DOB with extreme cuteness (Kawaii style), Murakami attempts to create a Japanese version of Mickey Mouse. To Murakami, Mr. DOB is a self-portrait of the Japanese people, highlighting the shallowness of its superficial culture. The character is cute but does not appear to have any meaning or understanding. This Superflat artwork would provide the groundwork for Murakami’s famous series of smiling flower artwork like *The Future will Be Full of Smile! For Sure!*

5. The Future will Be Full of Smile! For Sure! (2020)

At a scale of 29.5 inches tall by 29.5 inches wide, this colorful print has hundreds of repeated cartoon-like flowers (the subject matter) with overlapping petals. With twelve rounded and symmetric petals, each flower has a circular face. The flowers cover the entire square space, cropping some images on the edges. Most of the space is filled by a large, exaggerated mouth with a slightly concave top and open rounded bottom, resembling an open mouth screaming with joy. Above the smile are two small dots representing their eyes. There are black outlines around all the petals, the circular face, and the mouth.

Although the overlapping petals provide some sense of depth, the flat figures and their flat colors are overwhelmingly two-dimensional. The lightly toned colors range across the spectrum from white, yellow, orange, red, purple, blue, green, brown, and black. The flowers vary in size and coloring of their petals, face, eyes, and mouth. Most petals are colored in the same color, while others have alternating colors. No two flowers use the same colors, creating uniformity of design and form, but uniqueness and individuality with colors.



Figure 3. Takashi Murakami, *The Future will Be Full of Smile! For Sure!*, 2020, archival pigment print, 29.5” x 29.5”, https://www.artnet.com/artists/takashi-murakami/the-future-will-be-full-of-smile-for-sure-a-ternyg3Q2xu_y02NuMxiqQ2

conflicting duality of identity between interior anxiety and exterior happiness, mixing elements of the past (Nihonga) with the present (manga, anime, Otaku).



Figure 2. Takashi Murakami, *Mr. Rainbow Dob*, 2006, offset lithograph, 26.8” x 26.8”, <https://www.artnet.com/artists/takashi-murakami/mr-rainbow-dob-a-RtoFiHP4yZd53kXtuLLUx2>

Murakami’s subject matter of this painting references familiar iconography found in Nihonga artworks, like the moon, snow, and flower. The medium of pigment print represents digital design and print, alluding to the technology familiar to Otaku. The many smiling flowers with bright colors seem to represent the uniformity of the Otaku in their purchasing characteristics and love of digital media but also reflect their inherent individuality. Although a casual observer may mistakenly interpret this artwork as a cheerful expression synonymous with the “cute” Japanese style, there is a far darker and more serious subtext.

Murakami instead tried to “represent or provide comfort after the trauma and collective dark emotions Japanese locals still are experiencing from the 1945 Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings” (Rothkopf, 2007, p. 151). Therefore, the perception of happiness is a facade, covering underlying feelings of discomfort and anxiety and representing potential emotions that Otaku feels. “My art is not Pop art. It is a record of the struggle of the discriminated people” (Wakasa, 2000). In many of his artworks, Murakami appears to represent the

6. Conclusion

The amalgamation of Murakami's formal training in Nihonga, interest in manga and anime, and deep connection with the emerging Otaku culture helped create Superflat. He selects subject matter like cute manga-like characters and chooses medium like fiberglass and digital prints. Murakami also uses bright, uplifting colors, and highlights the status and changing viewpoints of those who are traditionally marginalized as outcasts. Reflecting Japanese popular culture, this new artistic style and its mass commercialization into affordable consumer products fundamentally changed Japanese contemporary art, making it more accessible to both Japan's broader population and foreign viewpoints.

Although some refer to Murakami as "The Japanese Andy Warhol," given his blurring of the lines between low-end with fine art, Murakami furthers this concept by offering fine art beyond the elite to the mass population through affordable merchandise extensions. Furthermore, by combining the old with the new in creating Superflat, he elevated the presence of the Otaku as a significant component of the Japanese identity. "For Takashi Murakami, popular culture, cartoons, and Japanimation provide a way of locating a contemporary Japanese identity that is expressed through commodity culture" (Higa, 1996, p. 8). Murakami demonstrated that art magazines and the press carried greater power than art critics and museums in a market-driven art world. He also challenged in what form fine art can be consumed.

Murakami credits his artistic success to what he sees as a widespread cultural mindset of hopelessness in Japan. "It's a closed world with no way out. So, they have to live in a fantasy. I also escape from reality... Therefore, people who have given up resistance find security when they look at art made by a person who is still resisting... This is the role of the artist" (Wakasa, 2000). Whether accurate or not, Murakami questions the identity of nations – away from governmental identity to one of its people and their interests. The necessity of destruction to rebuild an authentic identity is a question which other nations grapple with, including America.

Some may debate whether artists like Murakami were merely shining a spotlight on already emerging cultural trends or the driving force in forging and broadly communicating a new Japanese identity. However, he impacted Japanese contemporary art by tying Japanese pop culture with its global identity. "For Murakami, popular culture, cartoons, and Japanimation provide a way of locating a contemporary Japanese identity that is expressed through commodity culture" (Higa, 1996, p. 6). As an artist, Murakami's most significant impact was representing a more updated, authentic Japanese identity for Japanese citizens and the exotic pleasures of foreign nations. It warrants further investigation whether he also helped redefine the meaning of fine art.

References

- Borggreen, G. (2018). "Art and Consumption in Post-Bubble Japan: From Postmodern Irony to Shared Engagement." *Consuming Life in Post-Bubble Japan: A Transdisciplinary Perspective*, edited by Katarzyna J. Cwiertka and Ewa Machotka. *Amsterdam University Press*, 175–194. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv56fgjm>
- Cornyetz, N. (2012). "Murakami Takashi and the Hell of Others: Sexual (In)difference, the Eye, and the Gaze in © "Murakami"." *Criticism*, 54(2), 181–195. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23267737>.
- Favell, A. (2014). "Resources, Scale, and Recognition in Japanese Contemporary Art: 'Tokyo Pop' and the Struggle for a Page in Art History." *Review of Japanese Culture and Society*, 26, 135–153. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43945795>
- Favell, A. (2014). "Visions of Tokyo in Japanese Contemporary Art." *Impressions*, 35, 68–83. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24869101>
- Higa, K. (1996). "Some Thoughts on National and Cultural Identity: Art by Contemporary Japanese and Japanese American Artists." *Art Journal*, 55(3), 6–13. <https://doi.org/10.2307/777760>.
- Li, J. "From Superflat Windows to Facebook Walls: Mobility and Multiplicity of an Animated Shopping Gaze." *Mechademia: Second Arc*, 7, 203–221. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41601850>

Murakami, T. (2001). *Summon Monsters? Open the Door? Heal? Or Die? Tokyo*, Kaikai Kiki. Naka, K. (2023, January 24). *Takashi Murakami*. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Murakami-Takashi>

Roeder, K. (2008). “Looking High and Low at Comic Art.” *American Art*, 22(1), 2–9. <https://doi.org/10.1086/587910>

Rothkopf, S. (2007). “Takashi Murakami: Company Man” In Mika Yoshitake, Paul Schimmel and Lisa Gabrielle Mark Murakami. *Museum of Contemporary Art and Rizzoli International Publications*, 128-159.

Wakasa, M. (2000). "Takashi Murakami." *Journal of Contemporary Art*. <http://www.jca-online.com/murakami.html>

Yano, C. R. (2009). “Wink on Pink: Interpreting Japanese Cute as It Grabs the Global Headlines.” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 68(3), 681–688. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20619791>

Yoshimoto, M. (2012). “Bye Bye Kitty!!!” *Impressions*, 33, 118–27. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42597969>