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Yoshitomo Nara, Red Kitty, 1999

**ARTIST**

Yoshitomo Nara (b.1959)

TITLE

Red Kitty

MEDIUM

Oil on canvas mounted on board

DATE

1999

SIZE

10 7/8 x 14 5/8 in : 27.6 x 37.1 cm

INSCRIPTIONS

Signed, titled and dated on the reverse: 'Red Kitty / Nara 99'

PROVENANCE

Tomio Koyama Gallery, Tokyo
Private Collection (acquired from the above)
Private Collection

LITERATURE

The Yoshitomo Nara Foundation, *Yoshitomo Nara: The Works, Online Catalogue Raisonné*, no. YNF2436, studio no. P-1999-050

REGISTRATION

This work is included in the Yoshitomo Nara online Catalogue Raisonné under no. YNF2436

REFERENCE

AC25-15



Yoshitomo Nara

Yoshitomo Nara is a Japanese artist who lives and works in Tokyo. He produces paintings, drawings and sculpture which are cartoon-like in appearance, but contain a deep and often disquieting beauty. His work first came to attention in Japan in the 1990s and was almost immediately noticed by several international curators and critics who were also intrigued by the work of his colleague Takashi Murakami. Whereas Murakami's works are wantonly hard-edged and super-flat though, Nara's are painterly and poignant.

The large-eyed children who often appear in Nara's pictures may at first appear to be cute or vulnerable are however, upon closer inspection, subverted in some way. Some have their hands behind their backs and stare defiantly, some openly brandish weapons, some swear. Nara explains that his children, though, are 'among other, bigger, bad people all around them, who are holding bigger knives'.

Manga and animé are both obvious influences on Nara's work, however so is punk rock. By juxtaposing the innocent child with a suggestion of evil intent, and referencing anarchic music, Nara reacts to Japan's rigid social conventions.



Nara's work has been shown in a great many exhibitions in galleries and institutions worldwide, including in the 2020s alone:

"YOSHITOMO NARA. ALL MY LITTLE WORDS," The Albertina Modern, Vienna (Austria), 2023

"Yoshitomo Nara: Reach Out to the Moon, Even If We Can't," The Art Gallery of Western Australia, 2023

"Yoshitomo Nara: I Forgot Their Names and Often Can't Remember Their Faces but Remember Their Voices Well," Dallas Contemporary (USA), 2021

"Yoshitomo Nara," Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts (Taipei, Taiwan); Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts (Taiwan); Tainan Art Museum (Taiwan), 2021

"Though no one may notice, the world knows all that you have seen," 13 stores in Sapporo and Otaru (Hokkaido, Japan), 2021

"Love From the Sea," A vacant store at Yanagawa St. in Otaru (Hokkaido, Japan), 2021 (as a event of URA-OTARU Baza-Art)

"Yoshitomo Nara: Pinacoteca," Pace Gallery, London (UK), 2021

"Yoshitomo Nara," Los Angeles County Museum of Art (USA); Yuz Museum Shanghai (China), 2021–23



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