

NEWS RELEASE

Exhibition: Tadao Takano: *Cybergrams 1982-1988*

Dates: March 30 - May 18, 2024

Address: 16 Main Street, Ground Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Higher Pictures presents *Cybergrams 1982-1988* by Tadao Takano (1926-2010). This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

Born in Yakima, Washington, the Japanese-American Takano was interned with his family by the U.S. government during World War II before being drafted in the army. In 1948, Takano enrolled in László Moholy-Nagy's New Chicago Bauhaus-Institute of Design at IIT in Chicago, where he studied photography with Harry Callahan. Takano received his Bachelor of Arts in Visual Design in 1952, after which he worked as a graphic designer and typographer for more than a decade. In 1963 Takano became a professor in the School of Art and Design at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he taught for thirty years. In the early 1980s Takano embarked upon a stunning, experimental body of work which was one of the first true mergers of darkroom photography and new technologies. BIGS, Takano's groundbreaking robotic machine made in consultation with filmmaker Wayne Boyer and engineer Jim Logan, was controlled by a numerical algorithm entered into an IBM 5160 PC-XT personal computer. Hung from the ceiling, BIGS moved along its X and Y axes to make multiple exposures of the same image—up to 2,000 times—on gelatin silver paper. The resulting camera-less images, which Takano dubbed "cybergrams," were then developed in a traditional darkroom.

As "intuitive as drawing with light" is how Takano described these visually arresting, one-of-a-kind prints. His elegant, continuous-tone black and white abstractions are visual music, evoking the kinetic energy of electric waves or the rhythmic dynamism of musical scores, staccato compositions of light and shadow. Still others feature enigmatic geometric configurations like flattened matrices for unconstructed 3D objects. Over an extraordinarily creative eleven year period, Takano created thousands of unique cybergram prints.