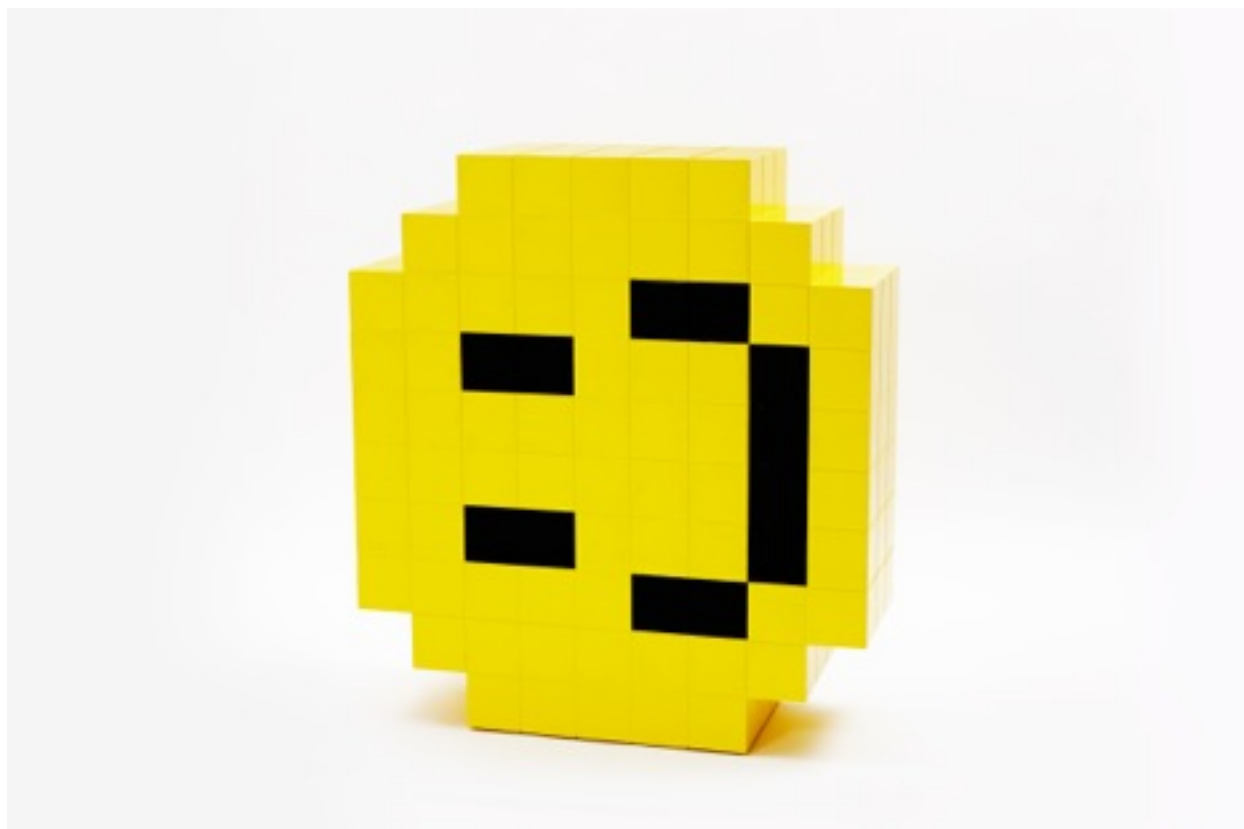


Shinji Murakami's “:)” at Artion Galleries in collaboration with TINCA ART  
**Opening March 7, 2014**



*Smiley*, 2014, plywood, screw, alkyd with stand, 40 x 36 x 12 in (102 x 91 x 30 cm)

**Shinji Murakami**

:)

March 7 - 30, 2014

TINCA ART in collaboration with ARTION GALLERIES

275 Water Street

**Opening Reception: Friday, March 7, 2014, 6-9pm**

New York City (February 10, 2014) – TINCA ART and Artion Galleries are pleased to announce the forthcoming exhibition :), the first solo exhibition of works by young Japanese artist **Shinji Murakami**. Curated by [Catinca Tabacaru](#), the exhibition will be on view from **March 7-30, 2014** at **275 Water Street, New York**.

Shinji Murakami (born 1980, Osaka) employs 8-bit video game expression translated into two and three-dimensional works to create a world where less is more, a world where he

can achieve effects of great complexity from the simplest components – a struggle central to the art of storytelling.

Murakami's body of work speaks to the famous inventor of Game Boy, Gunpei Yokoi's theory of lateral thinking with withered technology. *Withered technology* refers to a mature technology that is cheap and well understood, while *lateral thinking* is concerned with finding radical new ways of using such technology. Murakami's seemingly simple works materialize Yokoi's view that the best toys and games do not require cutting edge technology; novel and fun gameplay are more important.

The **3D-8bit works** use tediously hand-cut wood blocks assembled, glued and clamped to create the end forms. Refuting the idea that a simple object requires simple technique, Murakami plays with the viewer's perception: the shiny, colorful outer layer gives the false impression that the artwork is more likely to originate from a trendy process like 3D printing, than from the artist's manually intensive, artisan process.

Three series of **2D-8bit works**, *Maps*, *Flowers* and *Nipples* display Murakami's interest in both the physical and historical space around him. *Maps* are acrylic works on heavy wood canvases, which use Murakami's vocabulary of symbols to depict neighborhoods around New York - Shake Shack makes an appearance next to Central Park - Tokyo, and the cosmic beyond. *Flowers* is a silkscreen series, also on wood, where Murakami takes the tradition of the motif and reinterprets it. From Andy Warhol to Takashi Murakami to Christopher Wool, the universal language of flowers has been explored time and again, each master finding new relevance in the subject. In a sense, flowers are a symbol of art itself and Murakami's ongoing series of appropriated flowers acts as an 8-bit retrospective of the image. While the appropriation of works sets Murakami deep in the vernacular of Pop Art, his meticulous process assimilates him more to the likes of Constantin Brancusi than Jeff Koons. In fabulous Jungian fashion, *Nipples* acts as the shadow cast by Murakami's intense focus on the colorful and adorable. Taking public domain images of celebrities' nipples and distorting them down to their basic pixels, Murakami comments on the disorienting effect of the infinite searching, accessing and saving.

Murakami draws on a broad lexicon of art historical and pop culture references to make visually compelling objects, each unique in their narrative and evocative content. His work is included in public and private collections around the world, has been exhibited internationally at museums and institutions including the Telfair Museums, Williamsburg Arts & History Center, Dumbo Arts Center and Geisai Museum in Tokyo. In 2011, Murakami was featured in the “**100 Artists to Watch**” edition of Modern Painters, Art Info.