

Master HIRAMATSU Reiji

Today, I would like to introduce a Japanese Nihonga master painter: Mr HIRAMATSU Reiji.

I got to know him about 20 years ago as part of my work duties. Since then, I have been invited to the opening ceremony of the HIRAMATSU Reiji Gallery at the Yugawara City Museum in 2006, as well as many of his other personal exhibitions. Both my wife and I have been a huge fan of Mr Hiramatsu. Mr Hiramatsu has been exploring Japonisme which many European artists including Claude Monet were devoted to in the late 19th century, from his own unique perspective. Mr Hiramatsu's works boast high popularity especially in Europe – and in recognition of his outstanding achievements, he was awarded with the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (The Order of Arts and Letters) by the Government of France last year. I believe that Mr Hiramatsu's art works will also be highly praised in Australia, too.

Recently, Mr Hiramatsu kindly gifted the Consulate (official residence) an artwork which magnificently depicts the beauty of Japan, titled *Nihon no Inori*, meaning 'Prayers of Japan'. It safely arrived in Melbourne at the end of last year, and I hope that many Australian people as well as Japanese people residing in Australia will have a chance to look at it. Although difficult times continue from the pandemic, I believe that this artwork will fascinate people of all nationalities, ages, and genders – and also can give its viewers dreams, hopes, and courage.



Nihon no Inori (Prayers of Japan), HIRAMATSU Reiji

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