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For Immediate Release:

Aki Goto You Are The Universe February 28 through March 28, 2009

Take Ninagawa is pleased to announce the opening of New York and Tokyo based mixed-media artist Aki Goto's first solo exhibition at the gallery, "You are the Universe." The exhibition will comprise a multi-component installation with paintings on canvas and a participatory performance during the opening event.

Aki Goto is known for her installations of drawings and paintings that incorporate materials such as duct tape or sheets of found fabric to distort perspective by altering the architecture of the display area. "You are the Universe" will feature a new series of paintings on canvas that employ kitsch imagery and palettes to upend visual conventions. For example, *Origami is Wonderful* (2008) features two disembodied kitten heads set against a daisy-yellow background and above a field of pastel blue, purple and gray interweaving geometric forms. Another painting, *At First* (2008), is dominated by a large leaf that rises against a black background. The leaf is flanked on either side by three-dimensional hashmark patterns, one of which floats in space and the other of which occupies the center of a green heart. Running along the bottom of the canvas is a gestural, neon red wave-like line that cuts across a patch of blue and then an expanse of violet. Vaguely recognizable from greeting cards, primitive website design and late 1980s and early 1990s album covers, Goto's sensibility flirts with multiple contexts but resists easy categorization.

Goto will also cover one wall of the gallery in a digitally-printed wallpaper featuring a found photograph of a cat resting in a wooden fence in the middle of a wheat field, and she will cover the gallery floor with earth, in which she will plant different kinds of grass. This installation will be the setting for a participatory performance conducted by the artist during the exhibition opening. Goto will prepare for and share with the audience organic tea and treats in clay cups and dishes that she has made for the event. A 21st-century bohemian tea ceremony, the performance reverses a contemporary urban cosmology in which lifestyle choices are affected by market forces, social hierarchy and apathy. By sharing with audience members organic products that are usually associated with high-end consumption, Goto investigates the economy of happiness and hopes to prompt in each individual reflection on community and compassion.

Born in 1978, Aki Goto graduated from Tama Art University with a degree in textile design in 2002. She is part of a group of artists and collaborators including Yuki Kimura, Yukinori Maeda (Cosmic Wonder) and Tepei Kaneuji who are articulating a new Japanese conceptualism through the use of unconventional, yet simple materials, fractured form and environmental design. She has previously exhibited in a solo show at Takefloor 404&502 and the group show "Not only A, but also B" at Transformer Gallery, Washington DC, both in 2007.