



For Immediate Release

Contact: Marina Hadley
marina@monkdogz.com



YOKAIDO

Opening reception on Thursday October 16
from 5 to 8pm

Show runs until November 8, 2008.

Shigeru Mizuki
- In the Alcove -

In Yokaido (Ghost Road) Shigeru Mizuki takes us on a journey through the nether world of Japan's myths and monsters. Ghostly beings are driven by man's fears, insecurities and imagination. Each being is possessed with its own sense of humor, malice and distinct mission to disrupt and enlighten.

Mizuki is best known in Japan as a manga author, a master of the 'yokai' (ghost) genre and as the creator of the series "Ge ge ge no Kitaro". He was one of the pioneers to be published in the shonen (boys) manga magazines which started in 1959. Today he is a household name in Japan with museums dedicated to his work.

Historically the origins of manga are attributed to either American cartoons of the early 20th century or the ukiyo-e prints of the Edo period in Japan popularized by Hokusai, a renown painter and printer. The term "manga" was a term that Hokusai applied to his less serious work. However the modern manga probably has a more direct lineage to the European and American political cartoons of the late 19th and early 20th centuries as well as the multi-panel comic strips that emerged in American newspapers at the same time.

Understanding these influences, Mizuki was inspired to re-create the famous Hiroshige Tokaido woodblock prints by replacing the original human figures with the ghostly characters from his own yokai creations.

In the original series of woodblock prints created by Hiroshige from 1831 – 1834 the 53 stations of Tokaido were designed to give a realistic depiction of the journey from Edo (the shogunate capital, now Tokyo) to Kyoto (the old Imperial capital). But as we all know, any journey to and from a place of comfort and familiarity is bound to be driven by ones own imagination, sense of uncertainty, and adventure. Taking these ideas and using Hiroshige's landscapes, Mizuki breathes life into his yokai. They become alive within our own beings and surround us in our own physical environment.

Since the dawn of time man has attempted to deal with ghosts and monsters on a 'fight or flight' basis with very little success. Although the yokai live in a world of darkness, the re-design of the 53 stations provides the portal through which the yokai can gain visibility by bringing them into the light of man's awareness.

Considered a national icon of the modern Japanese culture, Mizuki's exhibition here will give us a better understanding of his work and culture as well as a better understanding of ourselves and the world we all live in.



547 W 27 Street New York, NY 10001 - 212 216 0030