

Kedmey, Karen, "With Cut Paper and Glue, Katsumi Hayakawa Builds Tiny But Infinite Worlds," Artsy.net. February 14, 2015.

McCLAIN  
GALLERY



## With Cut Paper and Glue, Katsumi Hayakawa Builds Tiny But Infinite Worlds

*"Katsumi Hayakawa: Paper Works" is on view at McClain Gallery, Houston, Jan. 15–Feb. 14, 2015.*

Karen Kedmey Feb 4, 2015 10:28am





*See from the Side 1, 2014*

McClain Gallery

“I want to mix small worlds, like micro-cosmos, [with] macro-cosmos,” says Hayakawa, who builds entire worlds out of cut paper and glue. He applies his training in woodcutting, painting, and paper working to these intricate sculptures, a new selection of which is currently on view at McClain Gallery, in “Katsumi Hayakawa: Paper Works.”

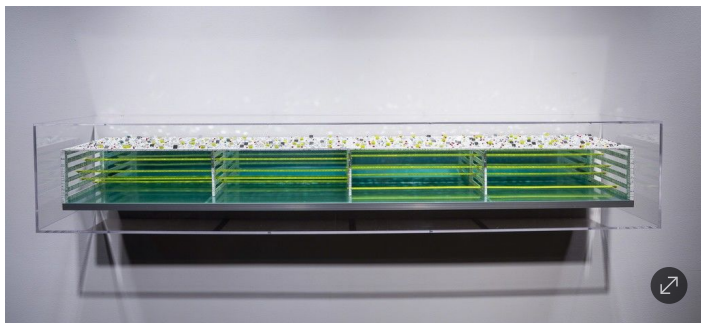
The artist’s wondrous constructions spur many references, among them the venerable tradition of Japanese craftsmanship. Think hand-embroidered kimonos; entire architectural structures built with nary a nail; sumptuous lacquered objects whose richness derives from painting on layer upon layer of the sticky, temperamental tree sap. Such painstaking processes, and the patience and perseverance required to master them, anchor Hayakawa’s own handiwork.

The instructions-based, openwork sculptures of Sol LeWitt also come to mind. Especially when considering Hayakawa’s two suspended cityscapes included in the exhibition, formed from gridded towers of varying heights cut from white paper. These miniaturized urban vistas resemble dense and layered city skylines as much as they recall the elder artist’s minimalist structures.

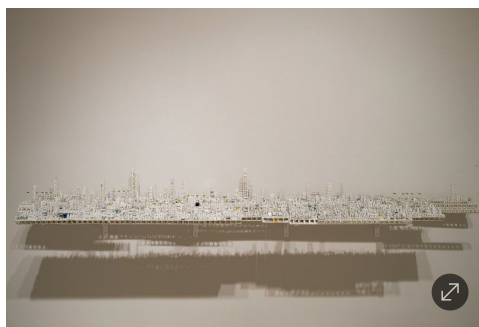
When making these works, the artist keeps in mind not only the parts of the city that are defining and visible—its many-windowed buildings; the patterns of its streets and sidewalks; the unevenness of its topography, seen from a bird’s-eye view—but also the invisible (to most) substructures that power our technological revolution. These include computer motherboards and chips, as well as the thick bundles of fiber optic cables snaking through and beneath city streets and buildings. A work like *Color Element Unit* (2014), for example, resembles massive apartment blocks faced with colorful balconies and open windows and—at the same time—the intricate interior networks of a computer. *Reflection* (2014) recalls both the densest megalopolises pushing ever farther out beyond their borders and the so-called “snow” that appears on television monitors when signals become scrambled. This is what Hayakawa means when he speaks of merging the micro with the macro; hereminds us that every city encloses within it a multitude of smaller worlds.

Karen Kedmey

“Katsumi Hayakawa: Paper Works” is on view at McClain Gallery, Houston, Jan. 15–Feb. 14, 2015.



*See from the Side 3*, 2014  
McClain Gallery



*Bonsai City*, 2014  
McClain Gallery

