



Sho Shibuya

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

October 9 - November 8, 2025

Opening reception: Thursday, October 9, from 6 to 8pm

"Legally, freedom of speech in the United States protects everyone — citizens and foreigners alike — as long as they are within the country. But in practice, these protections can feel fragile. Immigration policies, surveillance, and political polarization create an environment where expression sometimes feels restricted, and where the consequences of speech can extend beyond the law. I believe freedom of speech is the most important and fundamental value of the United States. Through my paintings, I try to document the changes I witness and capture this moment in time. My art becomes a voice — a way to preserve even a small form of individual expression, especially when that freedom feels at risk." –Sho Shibuya, September 2025

Bienvenu Steinberg & C is pleased to present *Freedom of Speech*, Sho Shibuya's second exhibition in New York. Since April 2020, Sho Shibuya (b.1984, Tokyo) has painted the sunrise each morning on the front page of *The New York Times*, transforming the incessant chaos of the world into a quiet continuity, in his words, "a way to erase the news with nature" in order to capture the present. The show will present 20 recent paintings on the front page of *The New York Times*, alternating *Sunrise* and headline-based *Event* paintings.

His ongoing series *Sunrise from a Small Window* reconciles the anxiety of global headlines with the immutable fact that the sun rises every single day. Each painting becomes both a record of time and a reflection on it—capturing the fleeting light of the day while acknowledging the broader political and environmental conditions beneath. What began as a personal meditation has evolved into a long-term visual diary, amid the unpredictability of the world at large.

Day after day Shibuya constructs a growing archive of our collective memory. *"As much as I love the printed newspaper, one day it won't be around; I'm 99 percent certain that in my lifetime it won't really exist as a format anymore. Then I won't be able to paint on the newspaper each day. Knowing that limitation – that this thing might not be available in another ten years or 15 years – makes this practice feel precious."*

In its use of repetition and time-based practice, Shibuya's work pertains to a conceptual history that includes Japanese artist On Kawara's date paintings, Roman Opalka's lifelong numerical series, or Tehching Hsieh's yearlong performance works. Hanne Darboven's structured writing to mark and archive time also comes to mind, as well as Kim Tschang-Yeul or Sophie Calle who also developed rigorous daily routines as foundations of their visual language. All share a commitment to using the everyday as material, and to transforming personal discipline into broader cultural reflection. *"I wake up in the morning and the first thing I do is climb up to my roof to take a photo of the sunrise (...) Then I read the news and speak to friends and family. Afterwards I go on my run – every day I run 3 miles and on the way back I pick up my copy of the paper at the local neighborhood newsstand... Then I start painting (...)* I like making rules in my artwork or in my life. I think that it helps to keep me consistent and in doing so, that consistency makes me open to anything beyond it." (Sho Shibuya)

A way of processing the overwhelming nature of daily headlines, which included political unrest, the pandemic, and protests, the paintings quickly became a form of quiet resistance and emotional regulation. In June 2020, another strand of work emerged, as a more direct response to the urgent sociopolitical climate. The *Event* paintings visually render an emotional reaction to the news, *"my goal is to share a concept without a caption, almost like a billboard."*

Sho Shibuya lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Selected exhibitions include: *We, such fragile beings*, PODO Museum, Korea (2025–2026); *Fifty Sky Views of Japan*, Tokyo National Museum, hosted by Fondation Cartier, Tokyo, Japan (2024); *55 SUNRISES*, Art Basel Miami x Saint Laurent, Miami, USA (2022); *Headlines: Mondo Reale*, 23rd International Exhibition Triennale, hosted by Fondation Cartier, Milan, Italy (2022); *E/Motion. Fashion in Transition*, MoMu, Antwerp, Belgium (2021–2022). *Sunrise from a Small Window: A Selection from 2020*, Isetan The Space, Tokyo, Japan (2022).

Please email contact@bsandcgallery.com for more information.