

"Preview: Gajin Fujita 'Warriors, Ghosts and Ancient Gods of the Pacific' @ L.A. Louver." *L.A. Taco*, May 20, 2015. Web.

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Preview: Gajin Fujita “Warriors, Ghosts and Ancient Gods of the Pacific” @ L.A. Louver



Gajin Fujita is well-known to regular readers of this website, and he remains one of the most vital artists working in Los Angeles today. His latest show at L.A. Louver opens next week, on Wednesday, May 27th in Venice Beach.

One theme that is always present in Gajin’s work is the concept and application of loyalty. Explicit references to city and crew, combined with inspiration drawn from deep cultural roots, enhanced by literal contributions by friends and other artists to some of the paintings create a unique world that is steeped in unbreakable bonds. Martial loyalty as expressed in Japanese *ukiyo-*

e woodblock art is an enduring theme that finds its continuation in Fujita's paintings, especially the large scale warriors who each strive to represent their version of loyalty from behind a drawn sword.

The artist's own code is complex— coming from an era where (graffiti) crews battled using spray cans rather than swords, there is a certain distance and humor given to the idea of life-or-death clan warfare, even as the technique behind the art is deeply serious and intricate. At the same time, Fujita never fails to represent his crew, **K2S**, linking himself directly to the battles and struggle that have existed in his own life and throughout history. His pioneering success in the art world may create a new reality of its own, but here we see a fierce loyalty to technique, to crew, and to city still reigns in both expression and intent.

“Studying the *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints and their intricacies, I strive to get close to the Japanese masters, and I want to keep violating people's expectations” — Gajin Fujita