

Yoin / Hibiki (Remaining Sound / Reverbrating Echo):
Works of Three Japanese Photographers

Venue: Gallery Hyun (Seoul = <http://www.hyungallery.com/>)

Date: October 24 – November 8, 2009

Opening Reception: October 24 (Sat) from 5pm.

- Live Performance of Butoh Dance and Music (Performed by Dakei et al.)

- Artists' Talk

Introduction

In this exhibition titled “Yoin / Hibiki (Remaining Sound / Reverbrating Echo)” at Gallery Hyun in Seoul, the works of three Japanese photographers are exhibited in the aim of exploring the fertile field of photography, which is a universal art language. We also hope that this exhibition will give contemporary photography a new ground for understanding and appreciation, and help us find the traditional aesthetic in Japanese art alive and at work in photographic art – that is, to reverbrate “yoin,” or remaining sound, within the audience’s heart.

Traditionally, Japanese painters, such as picture scroll makers and, more recently, decorative Rimpa painters of Edo era, have deftly dealt with “blankness” and “omission” in their depiction of space. Rather than precisely reproducing all the details in the picture plane and putting an effort of explanation, those painters left the viewers with spaces and gaps where they can slide themselves in and put their own imagination at work. Thus, Japanese painters tried to present the world more attractively or truthfully than it actually looks.

The shortest poetry form in the world, Haiku, holds some similarities with traditional Japanese painting, in a sense that people appreciate “blankness” or “omission.” in both. Cutting down the whole words to simple 5-7-5 syllables would, despite the limitation and simplicity, allows a reader to picture a world which spreads out limitlessly in his/her mind with help of imagination. Resonant emotions and feelings, or “hibiki,” generated out of the extreme simplicity and conciseness of words, are the key to approach Haiku aesthetic.

This attitude of appreciating “yoin” and “hibiki” can be traced down in the contemporary art in Japan, and it is above all interesting to notice how contemporary photographers have succeeded it and transferred it to their own works. Because photography can be characterized with sheer objectivity, it may be analogized with “Syasei” (objective depiction) attitude in the art of Haiku. Trimming the world into a certain frame, as a photographer does, is similar to the 17-syllable policy of Haiku.

Toshiyuki Nanjo, Seiko Oka and Asako Tanaka, who are included in this exhibition, among others, are aware of the possibility of making the images resound and spread out like echoes. It might be said that they take advantage of the limitation of photography. Their respective work methods differ from each other, but they do reveal a certain affinity between traditional Japanese aesthetic and contemporary photographic art.

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Artists

Toshiyuki Nanjo has recently been solely working on photographs of water surface with the sun reflected upon it. There the sun itself is expelled out of the frame, and its existence is only alleged by its reflection, thus guiding the viewer's attention out of the photographic rectangle and into imagination. With help of the traces of sunlight, captured through long-time exposure, the door leading to outside of the picture opens up and we gain extended visual experience. At a glance Nanjo seems to fix and freeze the sunlight, but his work actually liberates the light from the limitation of time and space. After all, his work does not really represent a part of the world in front of us; rather, it might be said that it is a sort of "metaphor," which, transcending time and space, points to the principles of the world.

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1972 Born in Tokyo

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 1999 "EXIT" Hokari Fine Art Gallery, Tokyo
- 2000 "a blue" Hokari Fine Art Gallery
- 2002 "The Sun on Water" Gallery Pirka, Tokyo
- 2006 "suns" Exhibit Live & Moris, Tokyo
- 2007 "suns" Masui R.D.R Gallery, Saitama
- 2008 "suns" Gallery Grand Cafe, Tokyo

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1999 "Hokari Collection 1999" Hokari Fine Art Gallery, Tokyo
- "Jin 'Photo' Session 2000" Gallery Jin, Tokyo
- "STRATOFOTOGRAFICO II" Setagaya Art Museum Citizen's Gallery, Tokyo
- 2001 "Jin Session Small Works 2001" Gallery Jin, Tokyo
- "Jin Session 2001 Vol. 3" Gallery Jin, Tokyo
- "STRATOFOTOGRAFICO III" Setagaya Art Museum Citizen's Gallery, Tokyo
- 2004 "cresc. photo exhibition" Gallery Satoru, Tokyo
- "One Hundred Photographers" Gallery Ississ, Kyoto
- "Element / vol. 2" Exhibit Live & Moris, Tokyo
- 2006 "Experimental Vision II" San-Ai Gallery, Tokyo
- 2007 "Skin and Texture" Exhibit Live & Moris, Tokyo
- 2008 "Internal - figure -" San-Ai GALLERY, Tokyo
- "Blue Dot Asia" Seoul Arts Center, Seoul
- "Let There Be Light" Gallery Hangil, Paju
- 2008-09 "Floating Odyssey 2008" Waterloo Gallery, London / Exhibit Live & Moris, Tokyo / Book House Art Space, Paju

Seiko Oka deals with ordinary, un-photogenic places and scenes, putting them in certain compositional structures. Her photographs are apparently emotionless, dry and tasteless; but it helps activating the genuine act of seeing, instead of analyzing or interpreting the image. Oka's works leaves the viewer with a vast space to be filled with his/her own memory or vision in mind, waiting to be decorated and enriched, just like the dry sand absorbing water. This voidness gives Oka's work a certain sensuality. In the new series titled "Her/story," Oka places two photographs of different sites without connection in one picture plane, side by side. In this series she lets the two unrelated scenes resound with each other in a peculiar way, attempting to generate waves of totally unanticipated senses in-between.

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1979 Born in Osaka
2006 MFA in photography, University of Florida

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2005 "Two Ambiguities" Focus Gallery, Florida
2007 "Vera Icona" AD&A Gallery, Osaka
2008 "A Line of Subtraction" Galerie Ou, Osaka

Selected Group Exhibitions

2003 Cedar Key Arts Center, Florida
"BFA Exhibition" Trisolini Art Gallery, Athens, Ohio
2006 Thomas Center Galleries, Florida
"Cross-Foldings" University Gallery, Florida
"Fine Arts College Council's Juried Arts Exhibition" University Gallery, Florida
2007 "Trick of the Light" Manifest Gallery, Cincinnati, Ohio
"The Select" Thomas Center Galleries, Florida
"Tous Photographes!" Musee de l'Elysee, Swiss
2008 "Einladung zur Eröffnung der Ausstellung" Atelier Rondo, Graz, Austria
"Blue Dot Asia" Seoul Arts Center, Seoul
"video rendezvous" Osaka City Modern Museum, Osaka
2009 "The Surface of Windows" Kyoto International Foundation, Kyoto
"P&E" Art Court Gallery, Osaka
"Kobe Art Collection 2009" Kobe Fashion Museum, Kobe

Awards / Grants / Residence

2006 Outstanding Artistic Achievement Award, Thomas Center, Florida
Merit Award, University Gallery, Florida
2008 Cultural Grant, Scandinavia-Japan Sasakawa Foundation
National Workshop for Arts and Crafts Residence, Copenhagen
Atelier Rondo Art Residence, Graz, Austria

Asako Tanaka photographs ordinary everyday things – household goods, kitchen tools, stationary or food – putting them in slightly unordinary settings, arranging them with relaxed sense of humor, or sheer nonsensicality. Tanaka puts those undramatic things, which otherwise would not attract attention, under a different light, pulls them out of the stereotypical context, and presents them as something unfamiliar. She sometimes tries wordplay or game of association in her work, which you might well compare with Haiku and its “Kaigyaku,” or jest, or “Karumi,” or weightlessness. She deconstructs and reconstructs the images of things, with intention to induce a soft and subtle quiver of emotion in the viewer’s mind, with a slight flavor of absurdity; instead of a novel meaning or interpretation.

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1972 Born in Osaka
2003 DFA, Kyoto City University of Arts

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2000 “Image Airing” Gallery Artislong, Kyoto
2001 “nomart project 01” Nomart, Osaka
2002 O Gallery eyes, Osaka
2003 “boox” Nomart, Osaka
Base Gallery, Tokyo
2005 “ ʌ [flæt]” Nomart, Osaka
2007 “pool” Nomart, Osaka
2009 “index” Gallery X, Tokyo

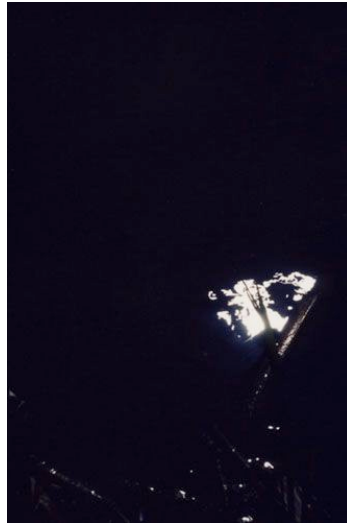
Selected Group Exhibitions

1998 “Kobe Art Annual ‘98: Thinking Images” Kobe Art Village Center, Kobe
2000 “Source of Spring” O Gallery eyes, Osaka
2001 “Spring of Impression / Volatility of Object” O Gallery, Tokyo
2002 “SOLITUDE” O Gallery, Tokyo
2004 “Multiples” Nomart, Osaka
“Photo / Print – The Difference” Gallery Satoru, Tokyo
2005 “photographics” CASO, Osaka
“Independent - Image and Form - 2005” Aichi Art Museum Gallery, Nagoya
2006 “Material: White Book” Nomart, Osaka
2007 “Distance of Printmaking” Kyoto Art Center, Kyoto
2008 “Wind - Tour to Tomorrow” Gallery Keihu, Kyoto

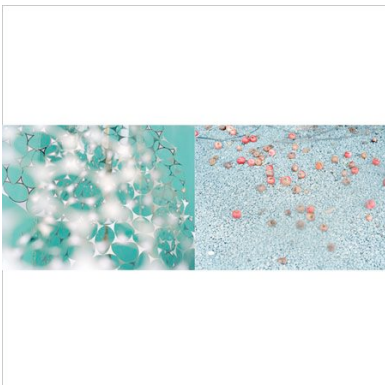
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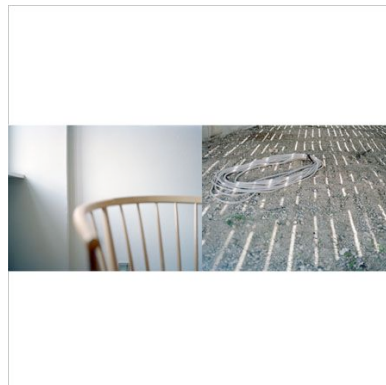
Toshiyuki Nanjo "suns-43"
C-print 89x60cm 2009



Toshiyuki Nanjo "suns-44"
C-print 89x60cm 2009



Seiko Oka "Her/story"
ink jet print 45x45cm 2008



Seiko Oka "Her/story"
ink jet print 35x35cm 2008



Asako Tanaka "saucer/cup"
gelatin silver print 60x60cm 2002



Asako Tanaka "blanc(s)"
gelatin silver print 60x60cm 2001

Related Program for the Opening Reception

Live Performance of Butoh Dance & Music

Date & Time: October 24, 2009, from 5pm.

Place: Gallery Hyun

Performers:

Dakei, Aya, Asuka Itagaki (Dance)

Ken Nobunaga, Scott Jordan (Music)

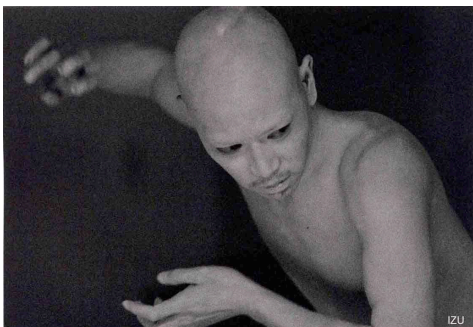
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Dakei is a dancer/producer, director of dancers' group "Shizuku."

Earned his DFA at Tokyo National University of Art and Music in 2000.

In 1998 he participated in the Butoh program of "Yan-shu" for the first time, and since took part in every program of "Yan-shu." In 2000 he launched a group of dancers called "Shizuku," whose inaugural performance took place in Madrid, Spain.

Dakei has taken part in many international dance festivals, as well as doing his own dance performances in Japan and oversea, actively organizing dance workshops.



*Improvisational performance of Butoh dance and music by Dakei and co., "Improvisation: Two Night Dance" will be held at Gallery Hyun in Seoul on October 21st and 22nd, from 7:00pm.