



Contemporary Art & Photography in Japan: STILL / ALIVE



Shoko Ise, *Swimming in Qualia*, 2007 (video work)

Organized by: The Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, and Tokyo Shimbun

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Sponsored by: Shiseido Co., Ltd., and Toppan Printing Co., Ltd

In cooperation with: Canon Inc.; Fuji Xerox Co., Ltd.; Sapporo Breweries, Ltd.

Exhibition dates: Saturday, December 22, 2007, to Sunday, February 20, 2008 (49 days)

Venue: Second-floor Exhibition Gallery, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography

Hours: 10:00 am to 6:00 pm (until 8:00 pm on Thursdays and Fridays); admissions end 30 minutes before closing time

Exceptions: Open until 6:00 pm on Friday, December 28, and 11:00 am to 6:00 pm on January 2 to 4

Closing days: Mondays (unless a public holiday is on a Monday, in which case the museum will be closed on the following Tuesday) and at year-end and New Year from December 29 to January 1.

Admission: Adults 700 (560) yen, college students 600 (480) yen, high school and junior high school students and over 65 years old 500 (400) yen.*

** Figures in parentheses () are admission fees for groups of 20 or more and for members of Friends of the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography. Any child below junior high school age or person with disabilities (with that person's caregiver) will be admitted free of charge. On the third Wednesday of each month, admission is also free for those 65 and older.*

< Exhibition summary >

STILL/ALIVE is the sixth in the annual series of exhibitions of work by contemporary photographers in Japan held by the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography. In this year's exhibition, the focus is on contemporary lives and times and their expression in a group exhibition presenting the work of four artists, all in their thirties, who work in photography and video.

People living today must keep up with an ever-accelerating pace of life, yet recognize that speed is not all. Our values are shifting towards recognizing the merits of the "slow life," towards appreciating a more leisurely approach. We also now have more options for how to live and ways to spend our time than ever before. The option of the innocent faith in progress that once prevailed

is, however, denied to us. As individuals, children and adults both experience an inchoate despair, a pall devoid of hope hanging over the future.

In the world of photography and imaging, the rapid development of digital media and communication tools has made it possible to edit our experiences freely and to take it for granted that we can replay them over and over as well as share them with others. At the same time, however, those changes undermine our sense of living in the here and now. Time itself is invisible and conceptual, but as human beings we do, or expect to, experience the times we live acutely and as very real. Is that possible in our digital, fast-moving world? In our ever-more-complex, multi-layered reality, how is time being transformed? What does that mean?

The exhibition title, *STILL/ALIVE*, implies immobility and motion, and, in terms of time, synchronic and diachronic: still and video photography. Artists give form to their images of time, stimulated by their constant interaction with the everyday world of reality. Those images are sculpted by memories of times past, intimations of the future, and time now. The title is also a metaphor for the place an exhibition is held and the real world going about its business outside its walls. The exhibition's goal is that the many senses of time and expressions of it incorporated in the works on display and the time that visitors to the exhibition and the many people involved in it spend conjoin in a shared sense of living in the here and now.

< Profiles of the Artists >

Shoko Ise

A video artist, Ise was born in 1969 and lives in Hyogo Prefecture. She presents videos and still photographs of everyday scenes and events that change, willy-nilly, through the passage of time or the application of forces external to them. Her work presents a uniquely floating ambience and sense of time. Ise collaborates extensively with many musicians, including Steve Jansen and Human Audio Sponge, in works combining audio and visuals.

Jin Ohashi

Ohashi, a photographer, was born in 1972 and lives in Tokyo. His photographs, with people and events in everyday life as his subjects, directly address life and death in capturing the very moment of an encounter with the Other. His work communicates to the viewer an intense appreciation of the here and now. Ohashi has published two collections of photographs, *Me no mae no tsuzuki* (What's happening before your eyes, continued; Seigensha, 1999) and *Ima* (Now; Seigensha, 2005).

Koki Tanaka

Born in 1970, Tanaka is an artist who lives in Tokyo. He presents video works and spatial installations on changes in events that occur through the intervention of some kind of action in everyday affairs. He creates multi-layered meanings and experiences in spaces composed of multiple visual images and commonplace objects.

Toshihiro Yashiro

An artist residing in Tokyo, Yashiro was born in 1970. In his *Kaitenkai* (Revolving + Revolution) series, his own movements are combined with photographs in performances carried out in public or private spaces. In recent years, the *Kaitenkai* series has evolved into *Kaitenkai Live!* collaborative projects with members of the general public. In the works recording the course of his revolutions in various locations, his body seems to be assimilated to the space, to become something alien, to share time with an unknown Other.

< Works in the Exhibition >



Shoko Ise, *Swimming in Qualia*, video, 2007

Ise's new work of video art takes as its theme swimming in what have been called "raw feels," subjective sensations and emotions, that is, qualia.

It features a double projection of two sets of video images, one lyrically leisurely and the other cool and fast paced. The videos use the same materials, shown at dissimilar tempos, to weave a subtle sense of time and a nuanced, ambiguous sensory experience with the delicacy of a breeze brushing one's cheeks and that, digital though it is, has sensory resonance. The original sound track for this work is by Steve Jansen, formerly of Japan, a British New Wave techno band famous in the 1980s.



A photograph from Photo Works, 2006, (for reference)



A video from T.F.L., 2003, (for reference)

composed differently and



**Jin Ohashi
Sea, photographs, 2007**

Innocent smiles, stray dogs wandering in the night: as though confronting those who gaze at them, they glare at us, then, realizing they are being photographed, turn their faces away. The women photographed are sex workers in Thailand. The flow of time and sensation that photographer and photographed weave together connects to images

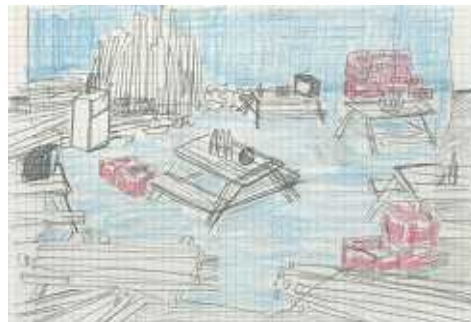


of the sea from Rio de Janeiro and Hawaii, with the moment-by-moment gleam of waves and light. For this exhibition, Jin Ohashi has selected about 80 new works from images he has photographed throughout the world.

Koki Tanaka, *A House Turns into a Garden Table, All About Beer Bottles, When a Band Performs* (tentative title), installation, 2007



From *Research Photographs for the New Work*, 2004-2007 年 (for reference)



From *Installation Plan for the New York*, drawing, 2007 (for reference)

Koki Tanaka's new installation intervenes in processes such as demolishing buildings and recycling beer bottles, freezing their flow, bringing them to the exhibition site, and reconstructing them as temporary spaces for people to enjoy together. Freezing phenomena and events that we ordinarily glance at without

letting their details register, he gives us another, more penetrating look at them. As the smooth flow changes and its speed slows, we may just possibly see things we had never noticed before. The installation will include a garden table made from materials from a demolished house and a video of the beer bottling process at a brewery.

Toshihiro Yashiro

***School Kaitenkai Live!*, photographs, 2007**

Toshihiro Yashiro uses schools as his settings for collaborations with a large number of students in this extension of his participatory art project *Kaitenkai Live!* The fifteen participating schools range from kindergartens through universities; all are places where young people spend time until adulthood, before going out in the world on their own. This series records students in the act of whirling, in photographs from 2005 to



Kaitenkai Live! Graduation Ceremony at School S, photograph, 2007



Kaitenkai Live! Tohoku University of Art & Design, photograph, 2007



Kaitenkai Live! S Junior High School, Yokohama, Room 2, photograph, 2005

2007; the simultaneous presence of the ordinariness of life at school and festive extraordinariness achieve a vivid capture of the moment we call “now.”

Related events:

- Gallery tours with floor lectures by the curators will be held at 2 p.m. on the first and third Friday of each month during the exhibition.
- Happy New Year 2008 *Kaitenkai Live!* will begin at 3 p.m. on January 4, 2008.

For further details, see our website, www.syabi.com.

For further information

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