

KAWAUCHI Rinko

Illuminance, Ametsuchi, Seeing Shadow

May 12, Sat. – July 16, Mon. 2012
Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography



Untitled, from the series of *Ametsuchi* 2012

Overview of the Exhibition

The Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography is delighted to present the solo exhibition entitled *Kawauchi Rinko: Illuminance, Ametsuchi, Seeing Shadow*, devoted to the work of Kawauchi Rinko, a photographer who has exemplified the period from 2000 on, winning support largely from the younger generation, and has also achieved renown on the international stage. This exhibition, Kawauchi Rinko's first solo exhibition at a museum in the Tokyo area, will introduce *Illuminance*, which mainly consists of recent work in the 6 x 6 cm format, the style of photography that is almost synonymous with this artist, as well as her latest work, *Ametsuchi* and *Seeing Shadow*, series being exhibited for the first time.

Kawauchi Rinko has spent nearly 15 years shooting the photographs that make up the *Illuminance* series, in which we see a deepening of themes that first appeared in her *Utatane* series, for which she won the 2002 Kimura Ihee Award. Here again we see, with a greater depth of style, everyday privatescenes shot in a way that illuminates the universal brilliance of life. The artist's unique world of images develops spatially, mingling light and dark, life and death, beauty and sadness in a large number of momentary scenes.

The new *Ametsuchi* and *Seeing Shadow* series, which include both large prints and video works, create intuitive depictions of the cosmic order, the connection between heaven and earth, primitive scenes, through a variety of earthly phenomena, including the burning off of the fields around Mt. Asoin early spring. A group of photographs photographed with a large format 4 x 5 inch camera and presented as large-scale prints, about two meters wide, combined with an experiential video presentation on a large screen reflect a view of the world on a huge scale not seen in Kawauchi's earlier work.

The exhibition consists of approximately 80 works that present the essence and fascination of Kawauchi Rinko's creative cosmos and draws close to new developments.

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Works in the Exhibition

Illuminance; approximately 60 original prints and a video work from the *Illuminance* series

The photographs in the *Illuminance* series were shot with a 6 x 6 cm Rolleiflex camera in Kawauchi Rinko's hallmark style. In photography, "*illuminate*" is a technical term that refers to the intensity of illumination. Depending on the quality of light on a particular day, colors can take on a variety of iridescent shades. The exhibition title thus refers to the numerous ways in which the world can be seen depending on how it is lighted. The works on display at this exhibition were selected from the book of photographs of the same title *Illuminance* jointly published in 2011 by Aperture and Foil, reorganized as a spatial installation for this exhibition. Here we see the slices of life, the moments of universal beauty captured in the distinctive style that has consistently distinguished Kawauchi Rinko's work since her debut in 2001. These images, selected from photographs shot over a period of nearly 15 years, capture light in a manner that constantly redounds to the essence of photography, transcending time, while achieving a yet more pure visual quality.

Shown with the video work of the same title and with contact prints, the exhibition captures *Illuminance's* multifaceted fascination.



Untitled, from the series of *Illuminance* 2007



Untitled, from the series of *Illuminance* 2009



Untitled, from the series of *Illuminance* 2009



Untitled, from the series of *Illuminance* 2009



Untitled, from the series of *Illuminance* 2009



Untitled, from the series of *Illuminance* 2009



Untitled, from the series of *Illuminance* 2007

Ametsuchi; approximately 15 original prints and a new video work from the new *Ametsuchi* series

Seeing Shadow; the new video work

As Kawauchi was shooting the burning off of the fields, an ancient custom of Mt. Aso in Kumamoto Prefecture, she experienced for the first time the feeling that she herself was standing on a star. The shadows of worshippers praying at a wall, the orbits traced by light across the dark night sky of a planetarium, and the ritual dance offered to the gods all came together as connected events, all taking place on the Earth's surface. This direct intuition of the sheer scale of the cosmos informs this new series.

The photographs were shot with a 4 x 5 inch large format camera, using an approach different from Kawauchi's previous work. This section of the exhibition includes two new video works. The 20 minute *Ametsuchi* video slowly captures the annual ritual of the burning off of the fields. Seeing Shadow captures the flight of migrating birds, an event that takes place at a certain season, only once each year. Both capture recurring events and embody annual cycles and rhythms in nature of which we have been unconscious. In these works, Kawauchi's career enters a new stage, in which she addresses connections between Heaven and Earth and cosmic origins.

These works are, in this sense, experiments in search of the essence of photography. These new series break new ground for Kawauchi Rinko.

Untitled, from the series of *Ametsuchi* 2012



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Untitled, from the series of *Ametsuchi* 2012



Untitled, from the series of *Ametsuchi* 2012



Untitled, from the series of *Ametsuchi* 2012



Video Work *Seeing Shadow* 2012

Profile

Born in Shiga, Japan, in 1972. Lives and works in Tokyo. In 2001 she simultaneously released a series of three photographic books – *UTATANE*, *HANABI*, *HANAKO* from Little More publisher, which created an overnight sensation in the photography world in Japan. In 2002, she was awarded prestigious 27th Annual Kimura Ihee Award for two of the books, *UTATANE* and *HANABI*. Further publications of Rinko Kawauchi, which should be mentioned, are *AILA* (FOIL 2004), *the eyes, the ears*, and *Cui Cui* (FOIL, 2005 / both) and *Illuminance* (Aperture / FOIL / Kehrer Verlag / Editions Xavier Barral / POSTCART, 2011). Received the eminent Annual Infinity Award 2009 by International Center of Photography, USA, in Art Category. Kawauchi has joined and held many group and solo exhibitions both at home and abroad to date, among others, major solo exhibitions are: 2005 Foundation Cartier pour l'art Contemporain, Paris; 2006 The Photographers' Gallery, London; 2007 *AILA + the eyes, the ears*, Hasselblad Centre, Göteborg; 2007 *Semear* Museu de Arte Moderna de Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo; 2008 *Cui Cui* The Vangi Sculpture Garden Museum, Shizuoka; 2011 *Illuminance* Gallery at Hermès, New York. Major group exhibitions include: 2006 *Collection of the Foundation Cartier pour l'art Contemporain* Museum Contemporary Art, Tokyo; 2008 *Blooming: Brazil-Japan Where You Are* Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi; Brighton Photo Biennial 2010 *New Documents* Brighton; *Bye Bye Kitty!!! Between Heaven and Hell in Contemporary Japanese Art* Japan Society, New York; Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal.

The Exhibition Catalog

The catalog contains primarily new works, an interview with Kawauchi Rinko, and commentary by the curator of the exhibit. It is scheduled for publication by Seigensha Art Publishing in a modified B5 format. The price is not yet determined.

Exhibition Details

Title: KAWAUCHI Rinko: *Illuminance*, *Ametsuchi*, *Seeing Shadow*

Dates: May 12, Sat. – July 16, Mon. 2012

Opening hours: 10:00 to 18:00 (until 20:00 on Thursday and Friday) *Admittance is 30 minutes before a closing
Closed on Mondays (When a closure day is a public holiday or a substitute holiday, it is the next day)

Venue: 2F Exhibition Gallery, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography

Admission: Adults ¥ 700 / College Students ¥ 600

High School and Junior High School Students, Over 65 ¥ 500

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