



Taka Ishii Gallery

Photography / Film

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Muga Miyahara “Renaissance”

Dates: Aug 20 – Sep 17, 2016

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film

Opening reception: Saturday, Aug 20, 18:00 – 20:00

Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film is pleased to present “Renaissance,” a solo exhibition by Muga Miyahara, from August 20 to September 17. It will be his first solo exhibition with the gallery and feature approximately 13 pieces from his latest and ongoing series “Renaissance” and “Radiation,” which he began last year.

Influenced by his art director father, Miyahara was acquainted with art at an early age. In his late teens, he aspired to become a photographer and is now working on the frontline of photography, primarily in the fields of fashion advertising and editorial photography. As an artist, his interest in the history and classical techniques of photography deepened. He has crossed photographic genres and techniques effortlessly, making images that capture a moment on the one hand and constructed images fabricated like paintings on the other. Feeling increasingly uncomfortable with his experiences in commercial fashion photography, which he felt was merely mimicking Western mode magazines, he began to explore his own identity and became well versed in Japanese history and traditional culture. His recent works manifest a sensibility, which is informed by the discoveries he made in his research.

Miyahara has made the following statement in regard to his multifaceted work:

I close my eyes slowly and enter the darkness. After a while, a single point of light enters from a distance.

The light gradually multiplies and intersects. Am I inside a dream or a prayer?

There are no rules, laws, or preconceived notions there.

I remain in this place and make my photographs.

Muga Miyahara, June 2016

In the “Renaissance” series, Miyahara tears apart his own prints and casually collages the scattered parts to breathe new life into them. The resulting images are also an expression of small universes that the artist can control. He has said that the experience of dismantling two dimensional prints of actually existent three dimensional objects and reassembling them in new configurations to partially destroy the uniqueness of the images and partially strengthen their signification is akin to the sensation of looking through a peep hole. Unlike a puzzle which must be assembled with a specific end in mind, the collaged parts in “Renaissance” move freely on the picture plane and the artist’s hand dominates the resultant world unconsciously.

The childlike impulses seen in “Renaissance” are also notably present in “Radiation.” The series takes cue from a method of drawing Miyahara favored as a child. The method involves laying down an array of colors and covering it over in black in crayon, and scratching at the surface to reveal multi-colored lines beneath. In the series, this technique is coupled with a radial motif, with which the artist is also strongly drawn to. In radiating light, he sees release and convergence of the energy of life. In concert, the release and convergence also represents the boundary between life and death. In the series, the radial motifs are placed infinitely or all over the pictorial plane to symbolize an idle space. The resulting images express something like a prayer for Miyahara.

Muga Miyahara was born in Tokyo in 1971. In 1993, he graduated from the Tokyo Visual Arts and entered the Kuwasawa Design School. In 1996, he began working as a freelance photographer and in 2001, he joined the design agency Image. In 2010, he established his independent photography office Muga Miyahara Fotografia. While also continuing to produce commercial and editorial work, he has sought to make artworks that express a sensibility rooted in Japanese culture. His major group exhibitions include the Muga Miyahara and Ayako Suwa two-person exhibition “mimi” at Gallery POINT (Tokyo, 2011) and “IPPO” at Muga Miyahara Fotografia (Tokyo, 2011). His solo exhibitions include “TOKONOMA & Nulla nasca dal nulla” at Emon Photo Gallery (Tokyo, 2008), “invisible layers” at MICHEKO GALERIE (Munich, 2010), “sange” at hgrp gallery (Tokyo, 2013), and “Shinken-shirahadori” at 72 Gallery (Tokyo, 2014). In 1992, he received a Japan Professional Photographers Society prize, and in 2005 the Mainichi Advertising Design Award. His major publications include *Shinken-shirahadori* (Omoplate, 2014) and *sange* (atelier vie, 2013).

For further information please contact:

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Gallery hours: 11:00-19:00 Closed on Sun, Mon and National holidays



Muga Miyahara

“Untitled”, 2015

Photo collage on paper

Paper size: 51.5 x 36.4 cm

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Muga Miyahara

“Untitled”, 2015

C-print

Image size: 53 x 42.9 cm

Paper size: 61 x 50.7 cm

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