



Taka Ishii Gallery

Photography / Film

5-17-1 2F Roppongi Minato-ku Tokyo #106-0032, Japan

tel 03 5575 5004

fax 03 5575 5016

web [www.takaishiigallery.com](http://www.takaishiigallery.com)

email [tigpf@takaishiigallery.com](mailto:tigpf@takaishiigallery.com)

## Takashi Hamaguchi “Dissidents”

Dates: Nov 21 – Dec 26, 2015

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film

Opening reception: Saturday, Nov 21, 18:00 – 20:00

Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film is pleased to present “Dissidents,” a solo exhibition of works by Takashi Hamaguchi from November 21 to December 26. This show, which will be the artist’s second solo exhibition with the gallery, features approximately 32 photographs of two dissident movements – the student struggle and the protests against the construction of Narita Airport – which he made between the late 1960s and late 1970s as a photojournalist.

Takashi Hamaguchi began working as a photographer in the 1950s and captured numerous social and political struggles, major incidents and historical turning points. Hamaguchi was not simply interested in reportage, but also the essence of these rising social issues. To maintain his own autonomy in making photographs, he worked freelance instead of belonging to a newspaper or news agency.

The student movement, which was reignited in various regions starting in the mid-1960s, in most cases was initially based on local student struggles. In the latter half of the 1960s, however, the student movement in Japan, in response to rigid responses from universities and intervention from the state and riot police, and in line with the global phenomenon of Student Power, would transform to become one that critiqued and negated existing power structures and politics. The direct actions of the Zenkyoto (All-Campus Joint Struggle League), which included the blockading of main buildings on campuses and barricade strikes, became increasingly radicalized in its methods. In 1966, Sanrizuka-Shibayama was named the site for the construction of Narita Airport, administration’s most important agenda, in a sudden Cabinet decision. The local farmers aggressively protested the government’s ignoring of local demands and the public corporation’s attitude and launched a protest movement. Students supported the movement, which soon clashed violently with the riot police. The intense struggle, which led to bloodshed, also intensified the contemporary student movement.

*That students on university campuses, places designed for academic study, were wearing helmets and fighting with wooden sticks seems unthinkable, but as I went into the field and took a closer look, it became clear that they had reasons to revolt. (...) I was driven to shoot simply by a sense of mission, which told me that I had to document and disseminate the situation.*

Takashi Hamaguchi, “Reflections on shooting”, *University Struggle Towards ANPO 70*, Yuzankaku, 1969, p.189

Hamaguchi’s photographs, which he made as a journalist despite the dangers of the riots and being denied permission to report, not only communicate the feverish quality of the times, but also raise the question of what it means for humans to live in a human-like manner. His photographs, which he shot conscientiously over the long term to document incidents and struggles, from beginning to end, are attractive as historical documents, which surpass any editorial or opinion pieces.

*His works are not influenced by ideology; they are pure and produced out of tenacious will to seriously engage each issue and to document and disseminate it. (...) These documentary images surpass emotions and appeal to reasons, continually asking us to consider what we need to consider and do today. In other words, his works are based on humanism – human interactions and emotional connections.*

Tadahiko Hayashi, “Fierce Human Touch”, *University Struggle Towards ANPO 70*, Yuzankaku, 1969, pp.12–13

A book *Dissidents* will also be published in conjunction with the exhibition.

【Publication detail】

Takashi Hamaguchi, *Dissidents*

Expected retail price: ¥12,000- (tax excl.), published by shashasha (2015)

Hard cover, total 272 pages, 118 illustrations, A4

Text by Ryuichi Kaneko (English and Japanese)

Takashi Hamaguchi was born in 1931 in Shizuoka Prefecture. He began working seriously as a photographer after registering with the Nihon Hodo-Shashin Renmei photojournalist association in 1956. He debuted as a photojournalist with his image of the decisive moment of a student throwing a rock at Crown Prince Akihito's wedding carriage in 1959, which was published widely in magazines. He went on to shoot socio-political issues regarding the US military bases, Niigata earthquake, student struggles, and protests against the construction of Narita Airport. His major awards include the All-Japan Mainichi Photography Exhibition Prime Minister's Award, which he received for "Niigata Earthquake" in 1964. He has been included in major exhibitions such as "Record and Instant" at Nikon Salon on 1968. His photobooks and texts include *Record and Instant* (1969) and *University Struggle Towards ANPO 70* (1969).

For further information please contact:

Exhibition: Akiko Takeda Press: Marie Okamura

5-17-1 2F Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032

tel: 81-3-5575-5004 fax: 81-3-5575-5016 e-mail: [tigpf@takaishigallery.com](mailto:tigpf@takaishigallery.com) website: [www.takaishigallery.com](http://www.takaishigallery.com)

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



Takashi Hamaguchi

"August 7, 1977, Chiba | First noise test with Boeing 747 LR around Narita airport"

1977 / 1978

Gelatin silver print

Image & paper size: 30 x 22 cm

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Takashi Hamaguchi

"June, 1968, Campus disturbances at the University of Kyushu, Fukuoka | Japanese students protest after crash of U.S. jet plane on June 2nd"

1968 / 1969

Gelatin silver print

Image & paper size: 30.4 x 21.6 cm

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