



Taka Ishii

Gallery

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Kei Takemura

“dearest unknown You”

Dates: January 21- February 10, 2012

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery (Kiyosumi, Tokyo)

Opening reception: Saturday, January 21, 2012, 18:00-20:00

Taka Ishii Gallery (Kiyosumi, Tokyo) is pleased to present “dearest unknown You,” an exhibition of Kei Takemura’s latest works from January 21 to February 10, 2012. The third solo exhibition by Berlin-based Takemura includes a selection of new drawings, and “prosaic verse,” an installation of furniture consisting of a chair, table, and a closet. We will also present large-scale work comprised of two layers of embroidery and a photograph entitled, “Blocks in my Head and Berlin,” as well as “between tree ghost has come,” a piece which bases itself upon a tree which stands between Takemura’s paternal grandmother’s house and her family home. Also exhibited is a wall installation entitled “in such a small world,” and Takemura’s newest small sculptures from her ‘renovation’ series.

It was when I gave birth to my child. After experiencing a tiresome amount of pain, I suddenly felt deceived. I was eager with the thought that the process of giving birth was an act which was the closest of ‘life’ however, I understood in that moment that I was standing in a place that was most close to ‘death.’

The day of the earthquake. It was just after noon on the second day of being back in my family home in Tokyo, upon accompanying my husband who had come for work. The house was shaking, so much that I clutched my son within my arms and went outside. The tree which stood in front of the house was shaking alarmingly. In front of it I saw my father who had by chance just returned from the hospital, only just managing to remain standing by holding on to the railing. There were people stopping their cars in the parking lot where my grandmother’s house used to stand, presumably standing outside to seek refuge. They smiled towards me perplexedly. I contemplated which had been stronger, that time when I had hid under my desk, but my father said that it was the first time in his life that he had experienced such a strong tremor.

Every day there was footage of extreme destruction on television. After returning to Berlin, I saw a lot of photographs of the areas that had experienced damage. In German newspapers and magazines, there

were photographs showing the bodies of those who had passed away, showing the images of the destroyed towns in their background. To myself who had believed that within photographs the souls of those who are captured are somehow preserved, it was unbelievable to witness the bodies of unknown people in such a way.

Up until then I had been interested in the lives of those whom I knew, but the experience of 'that moment', led to my interest in the lives of people whom I did not know. I went to a nearby market in Berlin and collected photographs taken by people whom I did not know. The images captured within the photographs taken by unknown people, varied in time periods, ranging from the 1920's up until the 1980's however, they somehow all connected to the landscapes I was familiar with.

Kei Takemura

“prosaic verse” is a poetry of drawings selected from various scenes in which Takemura personally felt a sense of familiarity; these cut out from the hundreds of photographs she found in the market. The piece is based on a series of photographs taken in the pre-war period of the 1920's when Takemura's grandmother spent her childhood, to the 1980's in which Takemura herself had spent her childhood. The photographs taken coevally are each placed in a photo frame which the artist felt suitable to coincide with the 'space' in which each of the objects and people captured in the photographs had existed. Furthermore, a familiar desk, chair, and book shelf are also chosen as a space in which the photo frames exist. Takemura states, “Through the process of transferring the lives of the unknown, I have perhaps aroused in myself a sensation as if the objects in their homes had seemingly existed within my own life. “

A large-scale work comprised of two layers of embroidery and a photograph entitled, “Blocks in my Head and Berlin,” is a portrait of a wall, embroidered through reminiscing the concrete blocks stacked upon the vacant lot where Takemura's paternal grandmother's house used to stand. The wall, completed through sensitively arranging the assemblage of blocks, is akin to the block wall witnessed by the artist on a daily basis in Berlin. The artist's memory does not establish itself on its own, but intersects with the memories of others who trace the thread, gradually transcending the boundary and striving to evoke a universal memory which in turn encapsulates even the lives of unknown people.

The embroidered piece “between tree, ghost has come,” is in direct contrast to the piece “To remember grandmother's room,” presented in Takemura's solo exhibition “for dearest You” (Taka Ishii Gallery, Kiyosumi, Tokyo, 2004). Within the piece presented in 2004, Takemura focuses on her maternal grandmother's room, however, the new piece centers itself upon the tree which stands between Takemura's paternal grandmother's house and her family home. Through the overlapping image and embroidery, Takemura summons within the viewer, a space which had existed in a different environment, and the memories which drift amidst it.

Many of the exhibited works are comprised of overlapping a layer of embroidered cloth onto a photograph or drawing. For Takemura, the act of embroidery is to create a state of being 'tentative,' and transform objects and places which no longer exist, and fragments of memory towards a tangible existence. Moreover, Takemura isolates scenes from the passage of time and landscapes of the lives of others which overlap with the memories of her own, and projects her personal history upon it in order to create her works. When the light falls upon the photographs and the drawings glimpse through the organdy cloth, the memory of the 'place' is evoked through the relationship of light and the incomplete shadow of the embroidered line. Not only is this the memory of the artist, but at the same time it is the memory and experiences of tens of thousands of "dearest unknown You's."

Biography

Kei Takemura (b.1975, Tokyo), lives and works in Berlin, and graduated with a Masters from the Tokyo National University of Fine Art and Music in 2002. In the same year Takemura left for Berlin where she studied at the Berlin Art Academy. Takemura achieved a Scholarship from the Agency for cultural Affairs, Japan where she worked as a research associate between 2004-2007. Her major solo exhibitions include *For dearest You* (Taka Ishii Gallery, Kiyosumi, Tokyo, 2004), *Kei Takemura* (Gallerie Alexandra Saheb, Berlin, 2004), *even if we're not together* (Taka Ishii Gallery, Kiyosumi, Tokyo, 2007), *A part Apart* (Tokyo Wonder Site, Tokyo, 2008), and *Dresden Dream with Y.A* (Gallerie Alexandra Saheb, Berlin, 2009). In 2005 Takemura released her first publication of works, "Takemura Kei in Berlin 2000-2005." Takemura participated in the 15th Biennale of Sydney, and has consistently continued to strengthen her international presence while expanding her areas of activity

For further information, please contact:

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Tue-Sat 12:00-19:00 Closed on Sun, Mon and National holiday



Kei Takemura
prosaic verse (detail), 2011



Kei Takemura
in such a small world (detail), 2011



Kei Takemura

between tree, ghost has come (work in progress), 2011