

Futoshi Miyagi, Hannah Quinlan & Rosie Hastings *Echo in the Memory*

10 February – 9 March, 2024

Yutaka Kikutake Gallery is pleased to present a group exhibition featuring work by London-based artist duo Hannah Quinlan & Rosie Hastings, the first exhibition of their work anywhere in Japan, and Tokyo-based artist Futoshi Miyagi.

Focusing on dialogue with his own identity as a queer person, Futoshi Miyagi's work has utilized a wide variety of approaches, including photography, video, text, and installation, to express the small fluctuations of emotion that have been overlooked in the shadows of the past. Miyagi is currently working on a complex project that uses his hometown of Okinawa as a backdrop called American Boyfriend. This series thematically engages with the relationship that arises between a United States soldier and an Okinawan man. For this exhibition, Miyagi will be presenting installation work, including the first exhibition in Japan of Hope We'll See Each Other Soon Again (2009-2024). Hope We'll See Each Other Soon Again is a piece that imagines an Okinawa where the fences that surround it are made from red acrylic and cotton strings. This artwork uses the characteristics of a soft material that can easily be cut with scissors as a contrast to the cold image of fences, and their association with pain, hurt, and distance, to instead evoke a poetic worldview where connection and acceptance take center stage. The handmade "WELCOME" sign, based on the artist's personal experiences, is a developing piece that revolves around considerations of tolerance and intolerance. Miyagi's video piece entitled Reading Brokeback Mountain in Kadena (2016) shows the artist himself reading aloud a scene from the novel of the same name that depicts a romantic attraction between two men. In a dispassionate voice, Miyagi reads about the implication of violence experienced by the two characters when they were young as they approach a situation that recalls that chain of events. The place name included in the title of this work indicates that it was filmed in Kadena, Okinawa.

Through their work, Hannah Quinlan & Rosie Hastings question authority and power, as well as the invisible structures of control and obedience that are formed in public spaces. Their collaborative practice is grounded in researching how various communities have been represented at different moments in history, and their work encompasses painting, video, performance, publishing, and installation. In their exhibition Tulips (2022) at Tate Britain, the artists used the traditional medium of fresco painting to depict imagined street scenes inspired by the fresco cycle in the Brancacci Chapel in Florence, as well as archival street photography, exploring power dynamics, social class, and authority in public spaces. For this exhibition, we will present their 2018 video work Gaby. In Gaby, a video work named for the duo's best friend, the artists present three vignettes highlighting intersections of gay culture (its iconography, politics and relationships) and the police (their tactics and their personnel). The vignettes include a montage of found video clips where active police dance to Y.M.C.A. at pride parades, often joined by celebrating paraders; an animatics sequence of a 1977 issue of Christopher Street magazine, extolling (white, male) gay communities' propensity to rejuvenate disregarded neighbourhoods and "save" Manhattan from the "slums"; and a recounting by the eponymous Gaby of his brief relationship as an eighteen-year-old with a straight-presenting gay cop. By observing the interactions between those in power and those outside of power, as well as the behavior of underrepresented groups, Quinlan and Hastings intervene in events and seek to create an emotional and sensory connection with the viewer. In this way, their approach also overlaps with that of Futoshi Miyagi in Kadena as he reads aloud a story about the relationship between two men. Futoshi Miyagi's work captures the fluctuations of the queer periphery in various forms, while Hannah Quinlan and Rosie Hastings represent the structure of historical and cultural conflict from a non-hierarchical perspective. We look forward to welcoming you to this refreshing presentation of work by both Japanese and British artists. An additional video work by Quinlan and Hastings will also be included in the special screening program of the Yebisu International Festival of Art & Alternative Visions 2024 where Miyagi serves as part of the selection committee.