

PETRINE.

Sena Sasaki

I hear nothing but the sound of the scissors on my head

09.04.2025 — 24.05.2025

This is the first exhibition of Sena Sasaki's work in Germany and is the inaugural exhibition at Petrine's Düsseldorf exhibition space in the office of a former foundry. Petrine will also maintain its exhibition space in Paris, where Sena had an exhibition in early 2024.

The exhibition *I hear nothing but the sound of the scissors on my head*, presents six North Star paintings, depicting the first flag of Hokkaido, which was in use for ten years, from 1872–1882, following its annexation, and colonization by Japan. Prior to being occupied and renamed to Hokkaido, the island was known as Ezo, and inhabited by the Ainu people. There are few existing images of this flag, some fragments exist in historical museums, a few black and white photographs.

Sena repeats the act of painting the cultural memory of this flag – in white and red, which indicated a government building, or blue and red – with different variations of color, and application, in the same format, but always their own painting. The works are titled as the date they were completed. The flag is the HOKUSHINKI, the North Star. He works on these only from his studio in Hokkaido, some take a few days, others or sometimes multiple, framed together, in a single day.

In the second room is a six-channel video work titled *I hear nothing but the sound of the scissors on my head*. White space from steam emerging from a volcano in Hokkaido, and Sena's own breath on a cold night, the white noise is punctuated with collected subtitles from films silently describing an array of wordless sounds. Ambient human noise from the mouths of individuals and groups of people, laughter, sighing, urgent expressions. Affect in void space, with no context, fills space loudly; you can almost feel the temperature. Noises of natural phenomena appear peacefully but are riptides into memory. Noises from machines and humans touching them. Descriptions of silence. The piece ends with subtitled sounds of animals and repeats from the top down again.

This is a vertiginous experience. It is hypnotic and silent. There is something violent about each subtitle next to another, each world super imposed onto the next, describing fragments of vastly different invisible spaces. They do not homogenize, they dissociate.

The North Star is a phantom image of a dead star, from a period of occupation and annexation. A disappeared body, a glimmer of lost time. *I hear nothing but the sound of the scissors on my head* forces our still eyes through the silent reorganization of space, time, and inhabitants, annexed from their origin points. It is the static and the atomic, the steam parting to the North Star.

— Tyler Murphy

Sena Sasaki (b. 1990, Tokyo, Japan) is based in Hokkaido. Recent exhibitions include Petrine, Paris (2024); and Commercial Street at 5152 La Vista Court & 709 N Hill St (2021).

Petrine

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First room

North Star (June 24, 2022), 2022

oil on paper

23.5 x 27.2 cm

North Star (November 9, 2024), 2024

oil on paper

23.5 x 27.2 cm

North Star (November 20, 2024), 2024

oil on paper

23.5 x 27.2 cm

North Star (January 15, 2025), 2025

oil on paper

23.5 x 27.2 cm

North Star (January 17, 2025), 2025

oil on paper

23.5 x 27.2 cm

North Star (March 5, 2025), 2025

oil on paper

48.6 x 27.2 cm

Second room

I hear nothing but the sound of the scissors on my head, 2021-2025

six channel video installation, 30:00 minutes, looped

dimensions variable

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