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AKI GOTO:
EYES ON SHINE
MAY 8-JUNE 8



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AKI GOTO
God Amused, 2025
digital video 13.33 minute, found furniture





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AKI GOTO
the land has to be the warmth, 2025
digital video 8.21 Minutes, found objects,



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AKI GOTO
Inheritance, 2025
Framed C-print
24 x 18 inches
Edition of 10



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AKI GOTO
Thundery, 2025
digital video, 8.00 minutes,
found object





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AKI GOTO
Longevity, 2025
ballpoint pen on paper
31 x 23.25 inches (Framed)

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AKI GOTO
Romance Only, 2025
ballpoint pen on paper
31 x 23.25 inches (Framed)



AKI GOTO: *EYES ON SHINE*

Contending with the demands of motherhood after the birth of her son, filmmaker Agnès Varda had a 300-foot electrical “umbilical cord” installed in her home.⁽¹⁾ Like an astronaut tethered to the mothership, Varda connected her camera to her cables and ventured outside, resolving to work within her means. The result was *Daguerréotypes* (1976), one of the twentieth century’s most innovative documentaries, acclaimed for its nuanced portraits of neighborhood shopkeepers—shot entirely within the span of her electrical equipment.

Reconciling the struggle between parenting, art, and autonomy is a deed passed down. Enter Aki Goto (b. Tokyo, Japan, 1978), a member of the fellowship of superhumans who miraculously juggle art and motherhood. Goto’s non-linear experimental home videos offer an unorthodox yet highly relatable fusion of these occupations. Using her iPhone to capture everyday life with her children, Goto produces lo-fi audio and special effects with a DIY ethos, instinctively merging life and art.⁽²⁾ As if responding to author Sheila Heti’s maxim that one does not have a child, one does it, Goto does art while driving her kids to school, preventing poolside mishaps, and tucking them into bed.

Blending the diaristic rigor of Jonas Mekas with the technical sagacity of Shigeo Kubota, Goto transforms the *unspectacular* activities of parenting into a creative collaboration—a theater of minor events.⁽³⁾ With her background as an avant-garde musician, Goto’s audio accentuates humorous, tender, and improvised moments typically overlooked. What’s radical about Goto’s work, you ask? Imagine if Mekas, “the father of avant-garde cinema” and Kubota, “the mother of video art” had a rebellious art lovechild.

In *Eyes on Shine*, Goto’s sophomore exhibition at EUROPA in New York, the artist presents a multi-screen video installation featuring sculptural displays that alternate between horizontal and vertical orientations.⁽⁴⁾ The exhibition debuts three videos made between 2023 and 2025: *the land has to be the warmth* (a glitching day at the pool); *Thunder* (a sonic escapade unfolding over a dark and stormy night), and *God Amused* (a family trip to Japan for Shichi-go-san 七五三).⁽⁵⁾

Known for her video studies on Instagram, Goto’s exhibition asserts her digital practice in three dimensions. At the center of the show is a large vertical screen that hovers over a glass tabletop. The mirrored surface, which rests on a base of secondhand furniture severed in half, reflects the glitching, shimmering psychedelia of adolescence playing out above.

1 Varda, Agnès. 2013. *Agnès Varda: Interviews*. Edited by T. Jefferson Kline. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013. P.60

2 Goto cites American artist Susan Cianciolo as an early inspiration. First seeing Cianciolo’s clothing in a Japanese magazine during college, and meeting her in 2004, Goto eventually worked as Cianciolo’s translator, played music for her runway shows, and eventually moved to New York City to work with her.

3 For Mekas, see: *As I Was Moving Ahead Occasionally I Saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty* (2000); For Kubota, see her *Broken Diary* series spanning the mid-70s to the mid 2000s. Kubota likened her filmmaking to “liquid reality,” where “infinite variation becomes possible...freedom to dissolve, reconstruct, mutate all forms, shape, color, location, speed, scale.”

4 The title is a play on Goto’s name. In Kanji, Aki 輝 means “shine.” So the exhibition also means, *Eyes on Aki*.

5 Shichi-go-san is a Japanese rite of passage where families celebrate children at ages seven, five and three. During this intergenerational ceremony, families visit shrines and temples while children wear traditional clothes like kimonos, tabi socks, and zori sandals for photographs. Children also eat chitose ame, known as the “one thousand year candy,” because of the time it takes them to eat it.

Arranged throughout the gallery’s glass offices, two additional videos play on screens that recline on armchairs and rest on mattresses, echoing the portability of Goto’s practice. In one office, a traditional photograph of three generations of women—taken in Japan for Shichi-go-san—is projected through a large pane of glass. As the only static image in the exhibition, it emits a quiet resonance, evoking the unspoken maternal power dynamics it suggests. Again and again, *Eyes on Shine* reveals the disrobed realities of parenting unfolding within the debris of domestic life.

– Lola Kramer

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