

Foundation d'entreprise Hermès is pleased to present the exhibition Hisachika Takahashi by Yuki Okumura. Yuki Okumura (born 1978, lives and works in Brussels and Maastricht) is an artist who revisits the history of art and takes various starting points for projects, including interpretations of others' works, creating art rooted in contemporary art issues such as the nature of authorship and collaboration. Each of his personal yet conceptual projects can be seen as extending chains of events that occur in the course of his intense research and engaging in a consistent questioning of the relationship between body and identity, selfhood, and subjectivity.

This is a joint exhibition by Okumura and Hisachika Takahashi (born 1940, lives and works in Vermont and Paris), focusing on the latter. Takahashi moved to Italy in 1962 and worked as an assistant to Lucio Fontana, then from 1969 to 2008 was an assistant to Robert Rauschenberg in New York, and he produced art in collaboration with both artists. Although he was deeply engaged with the activities of his contemporaries such as Gordon Matta-Clark and developed radical works that transcend the limitations of an individual framework, his practice was largely unknown in official art history. Okumura discovered materials on Takahashi's 1967 solo show at Wide White Space, the legendary gallery in Antwerp, Belgium one day, and began investigating it out of curiosity. After gaining cooperation from the gallery owner at the time, assembling fragmentary information from the Internet, and interacting with a curator who shared an interest in Takahashi, Okumura eventually succeeded in meeting Takahashi himself. This led to a reconstruction of the exhibition in Brussels (WIELS Contemporary Art Centre, 2013), which then traveled to Liverpool (Exhibition Research Centre, 2013). Also, Okumura has facilitated another restating of the Brussels exhibition in a different form in Tokyo (Mori Art Museum, 2013), and has been cooperating with Takahashi in an interventionary fashion continually since then, including at a two-person show in Amsterdam (Annet Gelink Gallery, 2015) where Okumura annotated Takahashi's works and acted as his surrogate.

This show at Le Forum explores one side of art history in the present progressive tense, through a body of works unearthed and newly created through interaction between the two artists.

Notable among these is *FROM MEMORY DRAW A MAP OF THE UNITED STATES* (1971-72) an intriguing work in which Takahashi got 22 artists to do what the title describes. This is not only a masterwork of collaborative conceptual art, it also offers a fascinating window in the New York art scene and community in the 1970s, including some major names as Jasper Johns and Cy Twombly. In addition, Okumura adopts various approaches that generate new views of art history and poetically expand interpretations of both artist and work, including the video piece *Who Is Hisachika Takahashi: An Interview* by Daniel Baumann (2015) in which Okumura gives an

interview as if he were Takahashi, and projections of Takahashi's memories into Okumura's own works that create effects of both overlap and dissonance.

The fresh, engaging dialogue between the two artists suggests to the viewer that through artists' practices, art is always open to new contexts and interpretations. It also conveys the potential for escape from the inevitable "I" as subject, and for unleashing a powerful force by intervening in history through the memories and images of others.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the artist, the gallery, the collectors who loaned us valuable works from their collections, and all the other individuals and organizations who helped us to make this exhibition possible.

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