Kazuna Taguchi

I'll never ask you

With texts by Elisabeth Bronfen
and Heike Eipeldauer

mumok
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and essays by Elisabeth Bronfen and Heike Eipeldauer. It is published
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June 13 to November 16, 2025

Kazuna Taguchi's enigmatic works at the threshold of painting and
photography self-reflexively respond to the historical discourses of both
media. Drawing from a repository of image sources, Taguchi inter-
weaves different temporalities, narrative spaces, and viewing regimes.
In her pictures, the figures seem suspended in a phantasmatic moment
between appearance and vanishing.

Taguchi's working method privileges repetitive resonance and
reanimation over conventions of original creation and linear pro-
gression. The artist draws inspiration from collective visual memory:
anonymous, mass-media pictures, historical artworks—for example,
from the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna—but also private
photographs from the artist or her own paintings and image fragments
are subjected to revisions, translation through her media of choice, or
various recombinations. Taguchi herself compares the multiple layers
and successive interventions, which finally culminate in analog black-
and-white photographs, to the work of a painter who constantly runs
back and forth to her easel. The unique aura of other-worldliness in the
artist's work can best be summarized with the term *yügen*: a central
concept in Japanese aesthetics that favors allusiveness over explicitness
and completeness.

In her exhibition *I'll never ask you*, Taguchi presents two different
groups of works in a specially designed architecture structured into
a sequence of five small, serial compartments. In *The Eyes of Eurydice*,
ongoing since 2019 and her most extensive work cycle to date, she
alludes to the mythological figure of Eurydice, whom Orpheus was
unable to redeem for he dared a forbidden look at her on their way
back from the underworld. She brings to light what the myth usually
omits: Eurydice's perspective—her anticipation of returning to life
and realization that her husband had deprived her of this—and how
the essence of death, which is beyond the scope of mortal eyes, can
be conveyed aesthetically as a multilayered memory. In infinite shades

of gray, the depicted body fragments, gestures, or gazes of women attain a phantomic quality, invoking the Surrealist tradition of undermining conventional representations of the female body. In contrast, Taguchi's new photographic series *In Anticipation* (2025) is dedicated to *Spatial Concept, Expectations* by Italian painter Lucio Fontana from the 1950s and 1960s. What began as Fontana's attempt to escape the two-dimensional, merely illusionistic pictorial space by cutting into the material surface of the picture and provoke a coexistence with infinity becomes an exploration of what can potentially emerge in between these realms in Taguchi's œuvre.

The intangible distance that emanates from these phantasmal yet clearly composed photographs testifies to Taguchi's resistant engagement with a present that is governed by visual feedback loops and unrelenting work on the digital "self."

Kazuna Taguchi (born 1979 in Tokyo) lives and works in Vienna since 2013. She studied painting at Tokyo University of the Arts and developed her photographic practice independently. *I'll never ask you* at mumok is her first solo museum exhibition outside Japan. Her recent exhibitions include *Black Paintings*, Radio Athènes, Athens (2023), *A Quiet Sun*, Ginza Maison Hermès Le Forum, Tokyo (curated by Reiko Setsuda, 2022), *Due*, Ermes-Ermes, Rome (2021), and *Autumn Sale of Dreams and Love* together with Haus der Matsubara – Significant Other, Vienna (2019).

Entrance/Exit

1	1	1		2	2
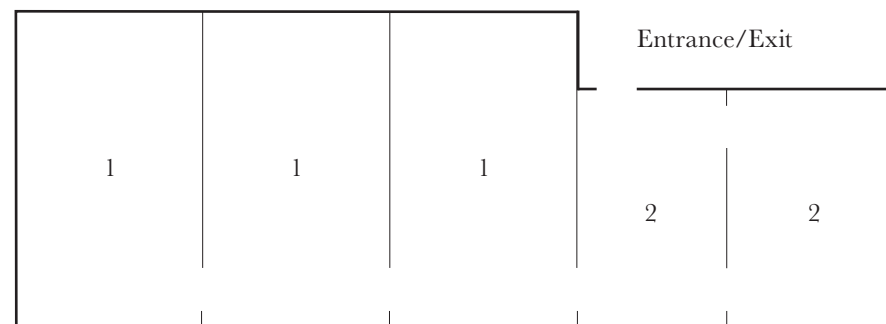
1
The Eyes of Eurydice, 2019–2022
Gelatin silver print
Each 16.6 × 12.1 cm

2
In Anticipation, 2025
Gelatin silver print
Dimensions variable