

I'm Traveling with a 165-Metre Mermaid

Carte grise à Lani Maestro

May 15 to June 13, 1999

An informal session with the artist is held on May 15

A bilingual publication with a text by Lani Maestro accompanies the exhibition

Each year, within the program *Carte grise*, Dazibao provides an opportunity to discover a particular artist's view on contemporary photography via an exhibition and a publication. In this context Lani Maestro has chosen to introduce us to the work of Shimabuku through the exhibition, *I'm Traveling with a 165-Metre Mermaid*.

Shimabuku has created performance and installation work that feels of the everyday and yet rigorously opens up complex relationships, challenging the conventional relationship that involve artist, work and spectator. *I'm Traveling with a 165-Metre Mermaid* was inspired by Shimabuku's encounter with an 13th century mermaid story at the Ryugu-ji Temple in Fukuoka, Japan. Photographs, performance, drawings, and other objects are, for Shimabuku, markers that identify traces of his passage. This work changes according to its sites, integrating new aspects as it goes: Sydney, Australia in 1998, Marseilles, France in 1999 and now Dazibao in Montreal. During his travels to these places, he gathered local interpretations of the mermaid story by working with local artisans, other artists, musicians, children and passers by. True to his other performance work, this kind of story telling and sharing expands the notion of translation through what he calls "beautiful misunderstandings". The nature of his exchanges with these people are felt in the works that they've produced and that have been integrated into Shimabuku's installation.

Shimabuku was born in Kobe in 1969 and lives in Nagoya, Japan. Exhibition projects in Japan include *Octopus Road Project* (1991); *Konnichiwa*, at the Nagoya City Art Museum (1993); *Christmas in Southern Hemisphere* in Suma, Kobe (1994); *Adolescence*, Kita Kanto Museum of Fine Arts, Gunma; *Southern Hemisphere* at Yokohama Citizen's Gallery (1996); *In Search of Deer* at ARCUS, Iberaki and Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo (1998). Recent group exhibitions include *Space*, Witt de With, Rotterdam,

Netherlands (1999) and *ExtraETordinaire* in Le Printemps de Cahors, France. A solo exhibition in Air de Paris, France will open this summer (1999).

Lani Maestro lives in Montreal. Her installation works combine photography with a phenomenological conception of architectural and embodied space. Most recently, her work was seen in the exhibition *Crossings/Traversées* at the National Gallery in Ottawa, Canada (1998). Her first introduction to Shimabuku's work was in 1996 when she participated in a group exhibition with him, *Displacement* at the Yokohama Citizen's Gallery, Yokohama, Japan. For Lani Maestro, this meeting sparked challenging reflections on the relationship of art and everyday life, especially concerning the role of artistic intention in the formulation of meaning. The two artists represented Canada and Japan respectively at the 11th Biennale of Sydney, Australia (1998).