

Augustine Paredes, Erika Kobayashi, Futoshi Miyagi: *Traces*

September 20 - November 15, 2025

Yutaka Kikutake Gallery Kyobashi will be holding a group exhibition featuring Augustine Paredes, Erika Kobayashi, and Futoshi Miyagi from September 20 (Sat) to November 15 (Sat). Augustine Paredes examines postcolonial identity as a Filipino living in diaspora. Erika Kobayashi uses a variety of media to express invisible subject matter, untold histories, and personal memories and emotions. Futoshi Miyagi sifts through the subtle emotions and thoughts that have been overlooked in the shadows of history by basing his practice on dialogue with his own identity as a sexual minority. This exhibition brings together three artists who confront the divisions and gaps produced by war, conflict, the history of colonial rule, and social and political oppression from a perspective that transcends binary framework.

Augustine Paredes was born in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines in 1994. He is currently based in Dubai and Frankfurt where his evolving artistic practice explores diasporic perspectives across a range of material approaches including photography, painting, installation, and poetry. Paredes's work often features traditional materials from the Philippines. Highlighting this exhibition are *Devotions* (2025), a work made with a material woven from the fibers of pineapple leaves (a fruit that the Spanish introduced to the Philippines in the 15th century) called piña fabric, and *In an embrace* (2025), a two-dimensional work composed of layers of fabrics and adornments sourced from the Philippines. Piña fabric—an essential part of Paredes's practice—is an ambiguous material that weaves indigenous traditions with memories of the Spanish colonial era, and, according to the artist, symbolizes tenderness that comes from violence. *Thank you, Sorry* (2023) is a piece from a series that hints at feelings of regret and remorse through the juxtaposition of immigrants constantly mired in resistance to power and domination alongside the figure of Icarus who famously disobeyed his father and flew too close to the sun.

Through meticulous research, Erika Kobayashi has been collecting invisible subject matter and unspoken memories and emotions while developing various means of expression ranging from painting to writing. *Dollar* (2024), one of Kobayashi's works in her ongoing exploration of nuclear power and radiation that began before the Great East Japan Earthquake, evokes a half-century of nuclear history spanning uranium mining, Marie Curie's discovery of radiation, and the first nuclear bomb test in the United States. Linking the dollar, said to have originated from a currency called Joachimsthaler minted in a city in the region of Bohemia, with uraninite ore discovered in the same location enables this work to provoke a visceral human desire for the suspiciously beautiful radioactive material that glows fluorescent green under ultraviolet light. Also on display are two-dimensional works that describe the route the Olympic torch took to the 1936 Berlin Olympics under the Nazi regime, the planned route for the 1940 Tokyo Olympic torch relay, and the route Nazi Germany attempted to use to ship uranium from Joachimsthal to Japan in 1945.

Futoshi Miyagi is another artist who utilizes disparate material approaches, including photography, video, text, and installation, to express subtle emotional fluctuations in the forgotten corners of history. This exhibition will feature two pieces inspired by Miyagi's ongoing American Boyfriend work, a project central to his practice that has developed out of references to various sources of literature, film and music. The title of both pieces, Banner, is also a motif frequently found in Miyagi's work. Embroidery is a key feature of both the cloth draped over the lampshade with Beethoven's performance instructions for his Piano Sonata no. 31 "Klagender Gesang," as well as the wall-hanging piece featuring lyrics from the Okinawan folk song "Nishinjo-bushi" translated into English by Miyagi himself. "We must retrace our history and seek out the quiet voices that have been buried," he says. Amidst the struggle against ongoing social and political oppression in Okinawa, one can perhaps find modest hope in Miyagi's work.

Immigrants, minorities, untold feelings and memories—the works of the three artists in this exhibition leverage rich poetic sentiment as they engage with the personal perspectives of those who have been socially ostracized and marginalized to the corners of history. These stories woven by each artist's unique sensibilities also seem to evince a desire for recovery and reconstruction in the face of disconnection. In today's world of extreme contradiction and confusion, we invite you to experience the ways in which these three artists tackle the difficult questions of our time. This will also be the first exhibition in Japan for Augustine Paredes.

Augustine Paredes (b. 1994, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines) is a multi-disciplinary artist questioning what it means to desire in the light of migration, identity, and longing. His expanded photographic practice revolves and evolves in questioning the postcolonial identity of a Filipino in diaspora through different appropriation of artistic mediums, traditional materials, queer gaze, and historical narratives. Augustine works with image-making via photography, painting, poetry, performance, and installation. He lives and works between Frankfurt and Dubai. His work has been exhibited at institutions and galleries such as Paulina Caspari, (Munich, DE, 2025); Jameel Arts Centre, (Dubai, UAE, 2024); Leaks at Foundry, (Dubai, UAE, 2023); Ffriedrich, (Frankfurt am Main, DE, 2023); Gulf Photo Plus, (Dubai, UAE, 2022); and Today x Future, (Quezon City, PH, 2016). He participated in group exhibitions internationally, most notably at Museum Angewandte Kunst, (Frankfurt, DE, 2024), (Delfina Foundation, UK, 2023), Tarzeer Pictures, (Manila, PH, 2023), Gravity Art Space, (Manila, PH, 2023), (Gulf Photo Plus, UAE, 2023), (Goethe Institut, Dubai, UAE, 2021), Middle East Institute (Washington, US, 2021), among others. Augustine authored art and poetry books entitled *Slow Disco* (2024), *The Bitter Taste of Sweetness* (2022), *Happy to be here to be happy* (2022), *Long Night Stands With Lonely, Lonely Boys* (2021) and *Conversations at the end of the universe* (2020).

He is also a co-founder of Sa Tahanan Collective along with curator Anna Bernice delos Reyes.

Augustine has currently been shortlisted for the Vordemberge-Gildewart Scholarship with a forthcoming exhibition in Museum Wiesbaden.

Erika Kobayashi (b. 1978, Tokyo) is based in Tokyo. Her work is inspired by invisible subject matter, time and history, family and memory, and traces of place. In addition to developing expressive approaches through the use of novels, comics, drawing, photography, film and installation, recently Kobayashi's creative practiced has engaged with the history of nuclear power and radiation, a topic she has been researching since before the Great East Japan Earthquake. Her literary work, *Girls, Making Paper Balloon Bombs* (Bungeishunju 2024), captures through meticulous research the previously unheard voices of women during the war. Kobayashi won the 78th Mainichi Publishing Culture Award in the category of literature and art for this book, and has received high praise for her writing. Her painting *Cherry blossoms 1938* (2025) which is based on *Girls, Making Paper Balloon Bombs* was part of 14th Berlin Biennale.

Futoshi Miyagi (b. 1981, Okinawa) is currently based in Tokyo. Centered on a dialogue with his own identity as a sexual minority, Miyagi makes use of a diverse range of material approaches including photography, video, objects, text, printed material, and installation to convey the subtle emotions and feelings that have been overlooked throughout history. The American Boyfriend project, which has evolved from blogs, letters, and other personal communication to video and installation, is a fundamental part of Miyagi's artistic practice. Among his many talents, Miyagi is involved in operating the first art book store in Utrecht, and also serves as the co-director for the artist collective XYZ collective.