

# G A S W O R K S

## PRESS RELEASE

Umi Ishihara: *Nocturnal Melody*

22 January – 22 March 2026

Opening 21 January, 6:30 – 8:30pm



Gasworks presents *Nocturnal Melody*, the first European solo exhibition by London-based, Japanese artist Umi Ishihara. Mixing documentary and fiction, Umi's moving-image practice explores themes of community and alienation. Documenting the lives of those who have been forgotten and pushed to the margins of society, she often works with non-actors, friends, and family in Japan, combining her own personal memories of growing up in Tokyo with broader social and political issues.

For her exhibition at Gasworks, Umi will present *Nocturnal Melody*, a new experimental documentary film that weaves together personal stories, societal histories and generational effects in an examination of women and their experiences of nightlife. The work follows the daily lives and experiences of Eri and Catalina, two dancers based in Tokyo, who move between work and performance in differing states of ecstasy. Shifting between different registers, including interviews, reportage and dream-like sequences, the work focuses in on the complex lives of women whose experiences are shaped by deep basslines, flashing lights, and illegal substances.

*Nocturnal Melody* draws from Umi's personal history growing up with parents involved in the free rave scene in Japan in the 1990s. Her childhood was a world populated by people from society's fringes, including unemployed artists, criminals and other outcasts. Reflecting on moments in her childhood in these spaces, Umi envisages the women in her film as nocturnal animals. Animalistic and untamed, they take over the city under the cover of darkness, finding out about themselves along the way.

## EXHIBITION CREDITS

The headline supporter for Umi Ishihara's exhibition is Japan House London Trust. Additional support from the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation, the Kumagai Masatoshi Culture Foundation and the Yoshino Gypsum Art Foundation. Gasworks' Exhibitions programme is supported by Catherine Petitgas, Gasworks Exhibitions Supporters and Arts Council England. Gasworks' 2025/26 programme is generously funded by Cockayne Grants for the Arts, a Donor Advised Fund held at The Prism Charitable Trust.



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## PRESS CONTACT

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<https://www.gasworks.org.uk/about-us/press/>

## IMAGE CREDIT

Umi Ishihara, *Nocturnal Melody*, production image. Courtesy the artist.

## ABOUT UMI ISHIHARA

**Umi Ishihara** (b. 1993, Tokyo, Japan) is based in London and Tokyo. She gained an MA in Artist's Film & Moving Image from Goldsmiths, London in 2024, and a BA in Fine Arts (Inter Media Art) from Tokyo University of the Arts, Japan in 2018. Recent solo exhibitions include *Thundergod*, Gallery Restaurant Butaiura, Tokyo (2024); *Gravity and Radiance*, Shiseido Gallery, Tokyo (2021); *Mire of Dickhead Demon*, TAV Gallery, Tokyo (2017). Recent group exhibitions include *Home Sweet Home*, Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, Kagawa; *Struggle*, Fukuoka Art Museum (both 2024); *Home Sweet Home*, The National Museum of Art, Osaka (2023); *Coming of Age*, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris (2022); *Bloomberg New Contemporaries*, South London Gallery (2019). Umi's works have been screened in museums and film festivals worldwide including Centre Pompidou, ICA London, BFI Southbank, International Film Festival Rotterdam, CPH:DOC. In 2024 she was awarded a GQ Global Creativity Award.

## **ABOUT GASWORKS**

Gasworks is a leading non-profit arts organisation based in south London. Working at the intersection of UK and international contemporary art, we have supported more than 700 artists from over 100 countries since our founding in 1994.

We commission and produce exhibitions by emerging and underrepresented artists, and host residencies that enable artists from all over the world to research and develop new work. We also provide subsidised studios for London-based artists and co-design participation projects for local children, young people and families together with community partners.

Above all, Gasworks is a home for artists. We are committed to building long-term relationships with all the artists we work with. Thanks to our award-winning history, we have developed an unparalleled reputation for cultivating new artistic talent.

Gasworks is a registered charity, the London hub of Triangle Network, and part of Arts Council England's National Portfolio.

## **LISTINGS INFORMATION**

Umi Ishihara, *Nocturnal Melody*

22 October – 22 March 2026

Opening Wednesday 21 January, 6:30 – 8:30pm

Gasworks, 155 Vauxhall Street, London SE11 5RH

Open Weds – Sun 12–6pm. Free admission

@GasworksLondon: [Instagram](#) / [YouTube](#) / [Facebook](#)

URL: <https://gasworks.org.uk/exhibitions/umi-ishihara/>