

Taro Masushio  
GOLDFISH  
May 9–June 13

Ulrik is pleased to present *Goldfish*, Taro Masushio's second solo exhibition at Ulrik. The show includes a series of photographs and two videos.

Masushio regards these works as thought experiments: How does something become something else? How does something become something, as in itself? Put differently, how is a found image found? The primitive mind wonders.

Matilde Guidelli-Guidi writes on the photographs: "Masushio took the *Untitled (Youth)* pictures in San Francisco in the early aughts, at a time of youthful infatuation with the aesthetics and techniques of formalist photography. He shot the SoMa scene through that lens: analog camera and the zone system, the body flattened and closely cropped in black-and-white symmetries. Finding those negatives in his archive last summer arose feelings of embarrassment toward his puppy love days... The form/affect dyad shifts valence from attraction to embarrassment to kink in the reception of these works. Which is real? This fractal approach to the archive is typical of his overall method."

The photograph is found. Or...?

In *Untitled (Unnatural History)*, Alice, in the inverted wonderland of her own thought, becomes herself again and again (says she: who in the world am I?); its source footage was found and sliced up so each local point of this operatic metamorphosis could be studied minutely. The infra-thin changes accumulate into a field of tendencies or the infra-thicc, an integral self in which derivative selves can be located. The geometric reduction implicates an expansion, as Alice becomes more and more compressed, something else must swell. In the end, paper cutout of Alice waves us goodbye as she prepares herself defiantly for the life of the party in the world without meaning. Inside the gallery, ghostly sound ripples through the thin air.

Analogously, in *Untitled (Crash)*, a short loop of found footage of someone stubbing their toes is turned into a forensic instrument to measure phantom pain. The point of collision is elsewhere—barely out of sight—the invisible crash and the invisible pain, flat affect over and over again. Plath-type question: how does one feel nothing so completely? A nothing so total, that it can be shared? How does one feel nothing the other is yet to feel? But why, of course, it's just a moving image of feet and a diagonal rod.

All of this is to say, all sorts of things can happen in images; no matter how unreasonable things may appear, it is just a Tuesday in the world of images.

Taro Masushio, born in Japan, works and lives in New York City. Masushio received his BA from UC Berkeley and MFA from New York University and has taught at both institutions. Solo exhibitions include *NAKED*, Scheusal, Berlin (2025); *PASS*, Empty Gallery, Hong Kong (2024); *DRUMMER*, BIS Center, Mönchengladbach (2023); *LIAR, LIAR*, Ulrik, New York (2023); and *RUMOR HAS IT*, Empty Gallery, Hong Kong (2020). His work has also been featured in group exhibitions including: *GREATER NEW YORK*, MoMA PS1, New York (2026); *FORMAZIONE DI FORME* curated by Matilde Guidelli-Guidi, Felix Gaudlitz, Vienna (2024); *FORGET EACH OTHER IN THE RIVERS AND LAKES*, Hordaland Kunstsenter, Bergen (2023); *THE DRIFTERS*, Duddell's, Hong Kong (2023); *DEAR ALIEN*, *DEAR DOPPELGÄNGER*, The Clemente Soto Vélaz Cultural & Educational Center, New York (2023); *JAHRESGABEN 2021*, Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn (2021); *PASTORAL (GRIND AND DRONE)*, 47 Canal, New York (2019); *SCRAGGLY BEARD GRANDPA*, Capsule, Shanghai (2018); among others. Masushio was the 2022/23 City Artist in Residence at Internationales Atelier-stipendium Mönchengladbach. He is currently the Henry Wolf Chair in Photography at Cooper Union, New York.