

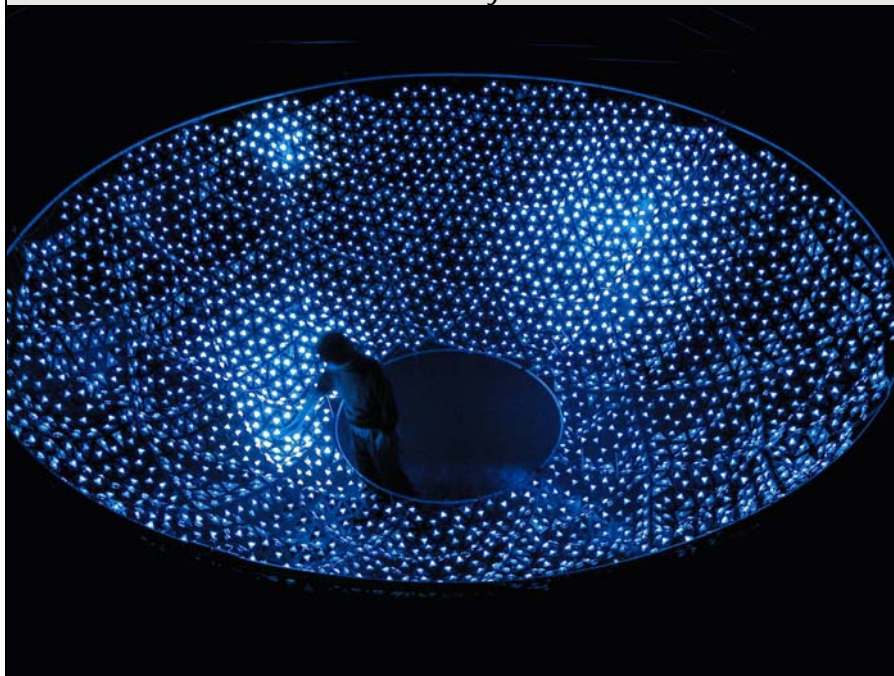
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## EXHIBITION

### **CHIKAKU. Time and memory in Japan**

Contemporary Japanese Art

7th October 2005 – 22nd January 2006 EXHIBITION HALL ON THE GROUND FLOOR



MORI WAKAI. *Lake Awareness*, 2005

## WHEN

7<sup>th</sup> October 2005 – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2006

## WHERE

Exhibition hall on the ground floor

## OPENING TIMES

From Tuesday to Saturday (including holidays), from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## PRODUCED BY

This exhibition is produced by The Japan Foundation and MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo, in partnership with Casa Asia, Barcelona

## CURATOR

Toshiharu Ito, in partnership with Miki Okabe

**MARCO Chief curator**

Iñaki Martínez Antelo

**MARCO Coordinator**

Marta García Viña

## ARTISTS ON EXHIBITION: 16

- **Rieko Hidaka** (born in Tokyo, Japan 1958; lives and works in Tokyo)
- **Takashi Ito** (born in Fukuoka, Japan, 1956; lives and works in Kyoto, Japan)
- **Emiko Kasahara** (born in Tokyo, Japan, 1963; lives and works in New York, USA)
- **Yayoi Kusama** (born in Matsumoto, Japan, 1929; lives and works in Tokyo, Japan)
- **Trinh T. Minh-ha** (born in Hanoi, Vietnam, 1952; lives and works in USA)
- **Daido Moriyama** (born in Osaka, Japan, 1938; lives and works in Tokyo, Japan)
- **Hiroyuki Moriwaki** (born in Wakayama, Japan, 1964; lives and works in Tokyo, Japan)
- **Takuma Nakahira** (born in Tokyo, Japan, 1938; lives and works in Tokyo)
- **Tetsuya Nakamura** (born in Chiba, Japan, 1969; lives and works in Tokyo, Japan)
- **Motohiko Odani** (born in Tokyo, Japan, 1972; lives and works in Tokyo)
- **Taro Okamoto** (born in Kawasaki, Japan, 1911; dead in Tokyo, Japan, 1996)
- **Yutaka Sone** (born in Shizuoka, Japan, 1965; lives and works in California, USA)
- **Yoshihiro Suda** (born in Yamanashi, Japan, 1969; lives and works in Tokyo, Japan)
- **Hiroshi Sugimoto** (born in Tokyo, Japan, 1948; lives and works in New York, USA)
- **Makoto Sei Watanabe** (born in Yokohama, Japan, 1952; lives and works in Tokyo, Japan)
- **Miwa Yanagi** (born in Kobe, Japan, 1967; lives and works in Kyoto, Japan)

## WORKS ON EXHIBITION

The exhibition is composed of paintings, sculptures, installations, photographs, videos, cinema and architecture selected from a deliberately eclectic point of view with the aim of establishing new relationships between artists of different periods and creative fields.

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## ABOUT THE CURATOR

Born in Tokyo, Japan, in 1953, Toshiharu Ito is an art historian, art and communication theorist and exhibition curator. He was professor at the Tama Art University of Tokyo from 1990 to 2001, and at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music since 2001. He is Artistic Director at the Intermedia Institute of Osaka since 1995, and from 1992 to 1998 curator at the Inter Communication Center of Tokyo; he worked as Artistic Director at Tokyo AAD Studio from 2000 to 2003. A selection of his published works includes the following titles: *History of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Photography* (Tokyo, Chikuma Shobo Pub., 1988); *Machine Art* (Tokyo, Iwanami Pub., 1991); *Electronic Art* (Tokyo, NTT Press, 1999).

## CATALOGUE

This exhibition will be marked by a trilingual catalogue (Galician, Spanish, and English) which will include texts written by Toshiharu Ito, Makoto Sei Watanabe, Ryuta Imafuku, Yoko Tawada, photographs of the exhibited artworks, and the biographies of the artists.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

### • Cinema season: "An insight into Japanese cinema"

When: from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2005

Where: Auditorio del Ayuntamiento, Plaza del Rey s/n

Every Monday at 8.30 p.m.

Produced by: Cineclub Lumière, in partnership with MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo

As an additional activity to this exhibition, Cineclub Lumière will screen Japanese films with the support of MARCO during October: a selection of five titles of contemporary Japanese filmmakers, from the eighties to the present date.

#### Programme:

- **3<sup>rd</sup> October:** *Narayama Bushiko* [**Ballad of Narayama**], by **Shoei Imamura**. Japan, 1982.
- **10<sup>th</sup> October:** *Zegen*, by **Shoei Imamura**. Japan-USA, 1987.
- **17<sup>th</sup> October:** *Ten To Chi To* [**Heaven and Earth**], by **Haruki Kadokawa**. Japan-USA, 1990.
- **24<sup>th</sup> October:** *Tasogare Seibei* [**The Twilight Samurai**], by **Yoji Yamada**. Japan, 2002.
- **31<sup>st</sup> October:** *Daremo Shiranai* [**Nobody Knows**], by **Hirokazu Kore-Eda**. Japan, 2004.

### • Web directory: "Contemporary Japanese art"

Directory of digital resources about contemporary Japanese art, focusing on the artists featured on this exhibition.

Where: MARCO, Library-Multimedia section (first floor)

Opening times: from Tuesday to Saturday, from 11 p.m. to 2 p.m. and from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Free entrance through the museum's back entrance (C/ Progreso)

### • Guided tours

- Everyday at 6 p.m.
- Guided tours "à la carte" for groups, only by appointment calling 986 113900/11 (extension 307 or 314)
- Guided tours for associations, on Thursday and Friday at 5 p.m., only by appointment calling 986 113900/11 (extension 307 or 314)
- Guided tour by the curator, only for "Amigos del MARCO", on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October at 12 p.m.

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## SUMMARY OF THE EXHIBITION PROJECT

The Japanese word *chikaku*, often translated as 'perception,' is a compound of two characters – *chi* or 'knowing' and *kaku* or 'sensing'. *Chi* has a logical meaning –in the way it is used to create the word *chie* or 'wisdom.' *Kaku* is used to create the word *kankaku* or sense. The combining of the two –*chi* and *kaku*- results in the single word *chikaku*, a word that represents both thinking and feeling. *Chikaku* has always been a word that represents two different meanings.

This is the title of the exhibition that in its Spanish venue will be hosted exclusively in MARCO, Vigo. The exhibition analyses the development of Japanese art through the last fifty years by means of a selection of artworks by 16 artists belonging to different generations and with a particular focus on three concepts: the forms of perception, the sense of time, and the structures of memory.

Since the late nineteenth century, and after 300 years of isolation, Japan has embarked in an extremely rapid modernization race. The significant growth achieved during three key periods – the social reconstruction in the post-war years in the fifties, the rapid economic growth in the seventies and the revolution of the information technologies in the nineties– has turned it into an outstanding modernist country due to its economical power and technological development.

The speedy emergence of Japanese culture from its historical isolation has resulted in the birth of an extraordinarily different way of understanding existence. Contemporary Japanese art is created under the influence of modernization and technological progress. However, despite these dramatic changes, the Japanese still keep alive their own lifestyle with deep physical and cultural roots; the struggle between the world of traditional values and the world of the most futurist modernity can be seen in the artworks of the main Japanese artists.

The Western view on so fascinating and contradictory a country as Japan has traditionally been full of clichéd and even mythical images. Apart from commentaries on Japan's economic success and cultural differences at large, the truth is that our knowledge about other aspects of Japanese culture is more often than not fragmentary and determined by certain clichés.

From a conceptual point of view, this exhibition analyses the assumption that the different forms of international postmodernist perception, time and memory have their roots in Japan. It could be said that the particular circumstances in which the revolution of Japanese art took place, with constant polarizations, are now reflected in the conditions that, under the name of globalization, the world as a whole is nowadays facing.

While analysing these fundamental issues relating the evolution of Japanese art during the last fifty years, new dimensions of artistic activity are being explored. Thus, the exhibition aims to re-analyse Western aesthetic values, to reconsider the meaning of art in the twenty-first century and to identify new paths for Japanese art in the complex framework of contemporary life, taking into account above all the latest artistic transformations in communication and multimedia systems and the role of technological advances, more and more evident in our everyday life.

The period covered by the exhibition –from the fifties to the present date– includes a wide range of artworks, considered with the intention of identifying and establishing new relationships among different generations and creative fields: from historic photographers such as Taro **Okamoto**, Takuma **Nakahira** and Daido **Moriyama**, or young Motohiko **Odani** –whose spectacular installations recall remains abandoned in a post nuclear landscape–, to universally acknowledged Hiroshi **Sugimoto** –whose photographs explore time and memories in a very personal way–, Yayoi **Kusama** –whose artworks shock us because of their formal baroque style, so alien *a priori* to Japanese perception–, and Yutaka **Sone**, –who invents poetic places that do not even exist.

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There are artists who reinterpret tradition, such as Rieko **Hidaka** –whose delicate paintings wed precision pencil drawing to the *Nihonga* Japanese painting tradition–, Yoshihiro **Suda** –a master in the Japanese woodcarving tradition, who meticulously reproduces life-size garden flora–, or Tetsuya **Nakamura** –whose refined large sculptures reproduce non-functional sinks and tubs lacquered with traditional Japanese flower patterns. On the other hand, Hiroyuki **Moriwaki** makes use of the latest technologies in a surprising way, creating “living” light objects that dim or shine as people approach, interactive behaviour shaped by a Japanese view of natural life. Miwa **Yanagi** also uses digital technologies to explore new dimensions of time and memory, but the results are completely different. Halfway between installation and performance, Emiko **Kasahara** examines the body and gender through her art.

The exhibition includes disparate videos as well. Takashi **Ito** has created a body of experimental film and video that draw the viewer into retinal labyrinths, and Vietnamese filmmaker Trinh **T. Minh-ha**, the only non-Japanese artist on this exhibition, shows us in her film *The Fourth Dimension* her own approach to this country and probes deep into Japanese daily life from perspectives far removed from any stereotypical view of Japan.

As for the installation, the display of the artworks in the hall has been carefully considered. The spatial distribution of the artworks has been designed for this occasion by architect Makoto Sei **Watanabe**, who has been given two roles at this exhibition: the role of exhibition architect who designs the exhibition, and the role of participating artist. In the text he wrote for the catalogue, Watanabe himself describes the solutions devised to maximize the visitors’ perceptive powers. This has been achieved mainly by his intervention in the central panopticon:

“All I wanted was for all the exhibition rooms to be visible as the visitor looked around the space. I decided to depict a fake opening on these walls so that visitors could see a representation of the exhibition rooms that lay beyond. The *trompe l’oeil* treatment dilutes the presence of these walls and results in the emergence of a view that expands radially as in the original plan. The forgotten mechanism of the past –the mechanism of evoking *chikaku*– has now been revived”.

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## TEXT BY THE CURATOR

"Starting from the 1868 Meiji Restoration, Japan modernized earliest and most rapidly among the nations of Asia; especially since World War II, Japan has undergone unparalleled transformations and brought forth new economic realities with record speed. Yet despite these rapid changes, the Japanese still preserve their own physically and culturally grounded way of life (...) The escape from speed into extensive time bears deeply upon quintessential Japanese perceptions and collective unconsciousness, slowing ever further asymptotically toward timelessness. Speed and perpetuity: two coexistent poles of the Japanese psyche, a duality embodied in diverse gestures and behaviours.

Japanese art has also confronted the rapid changes of late-twentieth to twenty-first century speed-space, and brought forth many expressions of this duality. Indeed, the view through such dyadic perceptual structures would seem to constitute a major distinguishing factor in Japanese art. The fusion of vibrant flux with the immutable into a vertiginous sense of multi-layered being, the counter-perspective transformations and distortions, the material register of memory, the keen focus upon voids and negative space, the simultaneous past-present vision, the interplay of reality and fantasy —these special characteristics, the very identity of Japanese art may well derive from the multi-mode manner in which the Japanese live. This exhibition examines from various viewpoints these special characteristics of Japanese art over the last fifty years in order to discover their renewed meaning today.

(...)

In her first digital video feature *The Fourth Dimension*, renowned Vietnamese-born writer-filmmaker Trinh Minh-ha probes deep into Japanese daily life from perspectives far removed from any stereotypical view of Japan, examining unconscious gestures, memory-laden practices and rituals deeply ingrained among the Japanese, so as to reveal underlying attitudes toward time and retrieve elements long overlooked in Japan's rush toward modernization (...) In *The Fourth Dimension*, Trinh shows us a society pursuing digitisation, efficiency and convenience in every aspect of life, chasing after hyper-real dreams scarcely glimpsed between one technological advancement and the next, ripping apart in the physical act of trying to outstrip the very thresholds of time.

These physically stressful aspects of Japanese perception today may be especially pronounced to her outside eye—though this vision is to some extent surely shared by the Japanese artists who have come up through the society (...) Film is the experience of time and light, now pushed into the realm of "enhanced time" via advanced digital technologies. In this regard, Japanese art has been struggling to come to terms with these conditions from perhaps earlier on than that of any other country; thus the perception of such time has been more readily apparent in the currents of Japanese modernity to postmodernism.

These last fifty years Japanese art has been laboured under a special kind of gravitation, a force that constantly confronts artists and informs the structure, qualities and formats of their expression. The dynamic developments seen in Japanese art in the late twentieth to twenty-first century all bear uniquely upon questions of perception, time and memory.

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Torn between body and speed amidst unprecedented rapid modernisation and industrialisation, Japanese art has probed complex pathways into issues of our humanity and environment. And now that these once-special circumstances appear ever more global in scope, it is time to extract the essential problematics of this history and find clues toward a new powers of expression, new dimensions in creativity. This, then, is the aim of our exhibition: we must reassess the values of Western art and reconsider its meaning for the twenty-first century, so as to point the way to new possibilities in Japanese art at the juncture of dramatic changes in media and communications and the daily life personalisation of technology."

### **Toshiharu Ito**

Curator of the Exhibition

[From the text "The Fourth Dimension of Perception: New Coordinates for Japanese Contemporary Art", in the Exhibition Catalogue]

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## REQUEST FOR GRAPHIC MATERIAL

### EXHIBITION

"CHIKAKU. Time and Memory in Japan"

#### **GRAPHIC MATERIAL AVAILABLE TO THE PRESS:**

CD including texts and photographs of the exhibition in different formats.

**IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE DOCUMENTATION, PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND SEND IT BY E-MAIL, FAX OR MAIL POST TO:**

#### **MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo**

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36202 Vigo (Pontevedra). Spain

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