

Kenta Cobayashi “Tokyo Débris”

Artist : Kenta Cobayashi

Duration : 4/2 (Sat.) - 5/1 (Sun.), 2022

*There is no opening reception for this exhibition.

*We are open on Wed to Sat. 12-7pm and Sun. 12-5pm

*Closed on Mon., Tue. (We are open on 4/29 (Fri.))

Venue : WAITINGROOM (1F-2-14-2 Suido, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 112-0005, JAPAN)

WAITINGROOM (Tokyo) is pleased to present “Tokyo Débris,” a solo exhibition of new works by Kenta Cobayashi from April 2nd (Sat.) to May 1st (Sun.), 2022. Cobayashi is known for his series of colorful photographic works, in which photographs taken by Cobayashi himself are drastically altered through digital processing. At this exhibition, his first solo show at the gallery, he sublimes “fragments of memory of people living in the city” into new works using debris as a motif. The exhibition will feature a series of new works that expands the scope of his practice to encompass a wide variety of materials, centering on photography, including three-dimensional works where the shapes of fragments of a broken mirror are reconstructed using acrylic mirrors, a new series of relief works in which the shapes of these fragments are reflected in photographs mounted on acrylic and multiple fragments are combined with each other, photographic pieces in which CG images of cityscapes reflected in a broken mirror are mounted on circular panels of acrylic, and his first forays into NFTs. These pieces will be displayed throughout the gallery space with huge graphics laid out on the floor.



“Tokyo Débris” image

About the artist, Kenta Cobayashi

Cobayashi expands the boundaries of photographic expression to encompass a diversity of media, creating works that question the notion of an aesthetic sensibility closely tied to the technology and social structures of our contemporary world, including his representative series of photographic works in which photographs he has taken himself are subjected to bold and extreme digital processing. Recent exhibitions include the solo exhibitions “Space-Time Continuum” (Seibu Shibuya, Tokyo, 2022) and “#smudge” (ANB Tokyo, Tokyo, 2021), the group exhibitions “I am here by WAITINGROOM” (CADAN Yurakucho, Tokyo, 2021), “Shape of Gaze.02” (WAITINGROOM, Tokyo), the 2020 solo exhibition “Live in Fluctuations” (Little Big Man Gallery, USA), the 2019 solo exhibition “The Magician’s Nephew” (rin art association, Gunma Prefecture), the 2018 group exhibition “Hello World - For the Post-Human Age” (Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki Prefecture), the 2017 solo exhibition “Insectautomobily / What is an aesthetic?” (G/P Gallery, Tokyo), and the 2016 group exhibition “Give Me Yesterday” (Fondazione Prada Osservatorio, Milan, Italy). In 2019, Cobayashi did a collaboration with Dunhill for its Spring/Summer 2020 collection, led by Mark Weston, and produced campaign images for Louis Vuitton’s Men’s Fall/Winter 2019 collection, under Virgil Abloh.

↓<NEXT PAGE> About the Exhibition (continued.)

Artist Statement

Tokyo Débris

“I looked out over Tokyo from the rooftop of Scramble Square and saw countless small pieces of debris that seemed to flicker in the evening sun. We live reluctantly among these concrete buildings that extend upwards with no apparent order. What can photography do to this spectacle below — the interweaving of these controlled elements and that which spills out from them? Tokyo is full of debris. Redevelopment, social media, a saturation of images, neuroses, data supremacy, NFTs... Hollow eyes, devoid of passion, persistently chase what is displayed on smartphones. Repressed life, confessions experienced through a mask, flash between these scattered fragments of Tokyo débris. If we aspire to become like the nameless birds that turn themselves around and fly, and envy the beasts that run across the earth on all fours, we too can burn this blood. Let us step on these corpses tainted by Mammon and half-hearted kindness, let us fall in love, drink and dance dirty. Once we let go of the reins of emotion, we will never be the same again. This is what the adults you see are really like. I’m sure I’m half a corpse, too. So take that leap. With Tokyo Débris as your stage set, the diffuse light of the LEDs and the radiant glow of the sun in the background, light up your body with a true sense of being alive.”

Kenta Cobayashi



“Broken Mirror”, 2022, acrylic mirror, 700 x 650 x 480 mm



“Acceleration, Variation, Coolness”, 2022, inkjet print mounted with acrylic, iron, 1800 x 1470 x 490 mm

Tokyo, a city constructed from the fragments of countless gazes

Kenta Cobayashi’s visually striking works, no matter what materials are used in them, start from the very fundamental question, “what is photography?” Anchoring his practice in a mode of artistic expression based not on photography’s original etymology of “drawing with light,” but rather the Japanese translation of the term that literally means “to reflect or project the truth,” Cobayashi continues to question what this “truth” might be, and what it might mean to “reflect” or “project” it. *Broken Mirror*, a three-dimensional work that reconstructs broken mirror fragments using acrylic mirrors, was first presented at Art Fair Tokyo 2022 in March. According to Cobayashi, over the course of his search for a way to express the photographic act of “reflecting reality” without using photographs, he was inspired to use mirrors here to reflect the surrounding environment in their reflections in a diffuse way.

Now that the Web and social media have become commonplace, we are seeing the emergence of a “mirror world” supported by augmented reality (AR) technology, in the form of a giant digital platform coming in the wake of these services. The Web accelerates the digitization of information, social media accelerates the digitization of human communication, while the “mirror world” digitizes everything else as a counterpart to reality, foreshadowing a not-so-distant future in which the real world and the virtual one, which still appear to run parallel to each other at the moment, will merge. The “mirror world” created by elaborate scans of the real world from a myriad of perspectives will be supported by an accumulation of countless fragmentary photographs.

Cobayashi describes Tokyo, a city under constant development, as “full of debris.” He challenges the photographic medium to capture the memories, emotions, and physicality that spill out of the mirror world. Urban landscapes are shaped by a simultaneous mixture of various things, and we may only recognize fragments of this reality through photographs taken by others. When we find fragments of the known Tokyo landscape in Cobayashi’s photographs, which have been drastically altered in terms of color and shape, it is our own aesthetic sense of what is “beautiful” that makes us feel that we are living this reality now. At the same time, we are made keenly aware of how difficult it is to separate image from reality in this ever-accelerating world. We hope you enjoy Kenta Cobayashi’s new works, in which he uses a variety of materials to expand the scope of photographic expression through this accumulation of debris that captures these fragments of Tokyo.

↓<NEXT PAGE> Artist Biography (continued.)

Kenta COBAYASHI

1992 Born in Kanagawa, Japan
Currently lives and works in Tokyo and Shonan area.

EDUCATION

2016 Tokyo Zokei University, Department of Fine Arts, Painting

SOLO EXHIBITION

- 2022 Space-Time Continuum, Seibu Shibuya, Tokyo
- 2021 #smudge, ANB Tokyo, Tokyo
- 2020 CALENDAR, People, Tokyo
Live in Fluctuations, Little Big Man Gallery, Los Angeles, America
- 2019 The Magician's Nephew, rin art association, Gunma
Kenta Cobayashi. Portraits curated by Marcella Manni, Nonostante Marras, Vogue Photo Festival, Milan, Italy
Photographic Universe, curated by Francesco Zanot, Fotografia Europea 2019, Reggio Emilia, Italy
Rapid Eye Movement, IMA gallery, Tokyo
- 2017 Insectautomobily / What is an aesthetic?, G/P gallery, Tokyo
- 2016 # photo, G/P gallery, Tokyo



Solo exhibition "#smudge" installation view
(ANB Tokyo, Tokyo, 2021)

GROUP EXHIBITION

- 2021 I am here by WAITINGROOM, CADAN YURAKUCHO, Tokyo
constellation#02, rin art association, Gunma
Shape of Gaze.02, WAITINGROOM, Tokyo
New Existentialism, Unexistence Gallery, ONLINE / HULIC & New UDAGAWA, Tokyo
Photo 2021: The Truth, Franklin St East, Melbourne, Australia
- 2020 SOURCE/ADIT: Studio TOKYO PHOTOGRAPHIC RESEARCH, ENCOUNTERS, ANB Tokyo, Tokyo
Nature is Not your Household, ONLINE
constellation #01, rin art association, Gunma
- 2019 The Shape of Things to Come: Technology - AI and the Human, Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo
Asama International Photo Festival 2019, Photo MIYOTA, Nagano
new flesh, curated by Efreem Zelony-Mindell, The Light Factory, North Carolina, America
TENNOZ ART FESTIVAL 2019, Tennoz isle, Tokyo
#005 PHOTO Playground, Ginza Sony Park, Tokyo
Arte Fiera 2019, Bologna Exhibition Center, Bologna, Italy
- 2018 2018 SEOUL PHOTO FESTIVAL <BRAVE NEW WORLD>, Buk Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea
Unseen Amsterdam 2018, Amsterdam, Netherland
Breda Photo Festival, Breda, Netherland
Asama International Photo Festival 2018, Photo MIYOTA, Nagano
From My Point of View, Metronom, Modena, Italy
Hello World - For the Post-Human Age, ART TOWER MITO, Ibaraki
Tokyo Before/After, The Japan Foundation, Toronto, Canada
- 2017 Forever Fornever, Bannister Gallery, Providence, America
Unseen Amsterdam 2017, Amsterdam, Netherland
Guangzhou Image Triennial 2017, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China
FORMAT International Photography Festival, Derby, UK
- 2016 GIVE ME YESTERDAY, Fondazione Prada Milan Osservatorio, Milano, Italy
asdfghjkl; ' x < あwせdrftgyふじこlp, 3331 Arts Chiyoda, Tokyo
New Rube Goldberg Machine, KAYOKOYUKI + Komagome SOKO, Tokyo
New Material, Casemore Kirkeby, San Fransisco, America
Close to the Edge: New Photography from Japan, MIYAKO YOSHINAGA, New York, America
NEW VISIONS #2, G/P gallery shinonome, Tokyo
- 2015 Trans-Tokyo / Trans-Photo JimeixArles East West Encounters International Photo Festival, Xiamen, Chima
Gestaltkreis, HAGISO, Tokyo
The Devil May Care, Noorderlicht Photogallery, Groningen, Netherland
hyper-materiality on photo (Photo London) , Somerset House, London, UK
hyper-materiality on photo, G/P gallery SHINONOME, Tokyo
New Japanese Photography, DOOMED GALLERY, London, UK
ISLAND IS ISLANDS, NORIKO NAKAZATO x Psychic VR Lab x Kenta Cobayashi, G/P gallery shinonome, Tokyo
TOKYO FRONTLINE PHOTO AWARD NEW VISIONS #1, G/P gallery SHINONOME, Tokyo

- 2014 Multi(Multi)(ple(s)) , The Container, Tokyo
The Exposed #7, G/P gallery SHINONOME, Tokyo
PICTURE-PARTY 2, TAV Gallery, Tokyo
PICTURE-PARTY 1, SHIBUHOUSE, Tokyo
- 2013 MEGA MAX GIGA GREAT ZERO ZILLION NEBULA NOVA, TANA Gallerybookshelf, Tokyo
THE NEW BLACK, UltraSuperNew Gallery, Tokyo
GIGMENTA 2013: IKERU-KIGASURU, curated by SHIBUHOUSE, HIGURE 17-15 cas, Tokyo

SELECTED COLLABORATION / CAMPAIGN

- 2020 Dunhill 'Blue Capsule Collection' by Mark Weston (collaboration), London, UK
2019 Dunhill 'Men's Spring/Summer 2020' by Mark Weston (collaboration), London, UK
Louis Vuitton 'Men's Fall/Winter 2019' by Virgil Abloh (campaign images), Paris, France
2018 Unseen Amsterdam 2018 (campaign images), Amsterdam, Netherland

AWARD

- 2015 TOKYO FRONTLINE PHOTO AWARD 2015, Grand prize

PUBLICATIONS

- "FROM CAMERA ROLL", Newfave, 2020
"BROKEN MIRRORS drawing and splitting, artbeatpublishers supported by FUJIXEROX, 2020
"Everything_2", Newfave, 2020
"Everything_1", Newfave, 2016

PUBLIC COLLECTION

- Asian Art Museum, San Francisco
Tokyo Before/After, The Japan Foundation
Amana Collection
Takahashi Collection

ARTIST WEBSITE

<https://kentacobayashi.com>



"Technological Development and relativity of time", 2022, NFT work (image)

***Inquiry about the exhibition and artist**

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