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Wataru Yamamoto

Desired Forms (2012-2017)

Thursday, November 22 – Saturday, December 22, 2018

Venue: Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku
Park Grace Shinjuku Bld., 206, 4-32-6 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0023
Gallery Hours: 12:00-19:00

*Closed on Sundays, Mondays, and national holidays

Opening Reception: Thursday, November 22, 18:00-20:00

Talk Event: Saturday, December 8, 17:00-18:00

***Speakers: Wataru Yamamoto and Arata Hasegawa
(Independent Curator)**

Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku is pleased to host the event ***Desired Forms (2012-2017)***, a solo show of Wataru Yamamoto from Thursday, November 22nd, 2018. The show will present new works by the artist from the series *Desired Forms* that the gallery exhibited in 2012.

The objects that were photographed after *Art Forms in Nature* (1928) by Karl Blossfeldt convey to us a fact in a New Objectivistic manner all the more for its clear details.

The fact: these objects are not penises.

The photographed objects are plastic forms composed of plaster that has been cast from the inside of an artificial vagina made as a sex toy for males. Hence, at first glance, the negative of the artificial vagina thus produced, appears as an artificial penis. However, the more we observe these photos by Yamamoto, the more they give us the strange impression that they are non-penis-like. They look as though they are naturally grown plants in a contemporary city; they have gone through a different type of weathering from the type experienced by the penises of outdoor male nude sculptures whose forms have changed to mere protuberances, which Naoyuki Kinoshita described as 'melting crotch.' As a result of the product development based on human engineering and rigorous interviews with users, the form of the hollow of artificial vaginas became distanced from that of penises, instead of resembling them more closely. The realistic resemblance to penises and vaginas no longer functions as a condition of productions. The contours of the plaster forms are drawn solely to maximize pleasure and to pursue the technical possibilities that achieve it.

The artists of 'New Objectivity' particularly preferred as their subjects, succulent plants that were a popular interior ornament at that time; their works reveal the artists' conviction for the possibility that the natural element of plants can be assumed as non-biological and commercial, or even as a mechanical form of existence. In their time when mechanization and capitalization were greatly advancing, simple naturalism was insufficient to grasp reality. The succulent plants were photographed objectively to present a technique and art that adequately fixes on the photographic paper, the reality in which everything may circulate as a commodity to satisfy human desire. That is the reason that more than the works by Blossfeldt, other works by the artists of the same school, such as the cacti photographed by Aenne Biermann present closer affinity to the efforts of Yamamoto.

These strange but substantial objects that were photographed become connected to the town of Akihabara through Yamamoto's own experience, and further associated with the sub-culture and the virtual space on the Internet, where the echoes of the massacre of 2008 certainly remain. Hence, we gain a temporary conclusion here that these photos are a representation of the society that gets formed and specialized by human desire. However, the photographic images that were captured in a piercing, frozen gaze call for our attention once again:



Attention! These images are not of society itself.

This new work consists of color photographs showing pictures of women from the packaging of the aforementioned male masturbatory aids, projected onto the plaster casts. Affixed to the odd-looking objects bathed in vivid light are the bodies of these cartoon females and their hugely exaggerated eyes, themselves odd-looking to begin with, facing the viewer. There is undoubtedly something twisted about the sex here, but it is all too easy to be sidetracked by that discussion, so let us avoid it. The leap made here is greater and deeper than one might think, and we would be better to start from the fact, and what is called to our attention. As scrupulously as possible; to the extent that we even forget what we are looking at.

Arata Hasegawa (Independent Curator)

■ Artist Statement

Desired Forms is a series of photographs of plaster molds cast from the inside of sex toys formed to resemble female vaginas that were made for the use of male masturbation.

With this series, I attempted to capture the whole of the one who desires by photographing the reversed form of an artificial vagina as an artificial penis. It also compares an eco-system where various different kinds of artificial vaginas for masturbatory purposes grow, which is a phenomenon or space where otaku culture, the town of Akihabara, and the virtual space on the Internet complexly interrelate, to a natural forest in Galapagos that was disconnected from the rest of the world and represents my own desire to collect the mushrooms from it. The reason that I took on the project of photographing the objects was to pursue a non-substantial image based on a concrete product. Karl Blossfeldt had set an example for me for this kind of approach.

The works in this show are the newest ones from the series which was first publicly exhibited in 2012. They were based on artificial vaginas that were released in the market from 2012 to 2017. From 2007 on, I have worked part-time in an adult shop in Akihabara for research purposes; there, I witnessed the Akihabara massacre in 2008. Because I have observed the transformation of the town of Akihabara over the past years, the year 2018 marks a milestone for me. I do hope that the viewers will see images of stagnation and development of the past decade, observed by way of the hole in the artificial vaginas. In this solo show of 2018, I will present life-size images in black and white print photographs that were created using the same method that I employed for the series I showed in 2012. I will also show color-print photographs of the plaster sculptures on which the images of the character cartoons on the packaging of artificial vaginas were light projected.

Wataru Yamamoto

■ Opening Reception

Date: Thursday, November 22, 2018, 18:00-20:00

Venue : Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku

■ Special Talk

Date: Saturday, December 8, 2018, 17:00 -18:00

Venue: Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku

Speakers: Wataru Yamamoto and Arata Hasegawa (Independent Curator)

*Admission free. Booking required. Seating capacity: 20

*For booking, send an email with your name, address, and telephone number to event@ycassociates.co.jp

*If you do not receive a reply from the gallery, please contact us during gallery's opening hours.



■ Artist Profile

Wataru Yamamoto

1986 Born in Tochigi. Lives and works in Tokyo.
2011 Won Excellence Award at "Canon New Cosmos of Photography 2011"
2013 Complete a master's degree at Tama Art University

Solo Exhibitions

2018 Aliens, IG Photo Gallery (Tokyo)
2016 Simi Some Siwa, Cale/Field Sewing Tokyo (Tokyo)
The Summer Sun, Yumiko Chiba Associates (Tokyo)
Simi Some Siwa, Yumiko Chiba Associates (Tokyo)
2014 Desired Forms -The Deep Shadows of Vessels-, NADiff Gallery (Tokyo)
Spring, Yumiko Chiba Associates (Tokyo)
2013 Plane Tree Observations, Yumiko Chiba Associates (Tokyo)
2013 Drawing a Line, photographers' gallery (Tokyo)
2012 Wataru Yamamoto, Another Function (Tokyo)

Group Exhibitions

2017 Exhibition of Two Artists / Lilac and Angelica, Cale/Field Sewing Tokyo (Tokyo)
2017 T3 PHOTO FESTIVAL TOKYO, Ueno Park (Tokyo)
2016 Rituals - Fluid landscapes, AKIBATAMABI 21 (Tokyo)
2015 New Japanese Photography, DOOMED GALLERY (London)
LUMIX MEETS / TOKYO 2020 BY JAPANESE PHOTOGRAPHERS #2,
IMA CONCEPT STORE (Tokyo)
2014 LUMIX MEETS / TOKYO 2020 By Japanese Photographers # 2, Yellow Korner Paris Pompidou (Paris)
Unseen Photo Fair 2014 "Anima on Photo – Hidden sense of Japanese Photography", Westergasfabriek-Festival Ground
(Amsterdam)
TOKYO2020, Christophe Guye Galerie (Zurich)
2013 LIVING WITH PHOTOGRAPHY, Isetan Shinjyuku (Tokyo)
LIMIX MEETS / TOKYO 2020 BY JAPANESE PHOTOGRAPHERS 9,
1 RUE RICHELIEU, HILLSIDE TERRACE / HILLSIDE FORUM (Paris, Tokyo)
2012 3331 TRANS ARTS, 3331 Arts Chiyoda (Tokyo)
2011 Canon New Cosmos of Photography Award 2011, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography (Tokyo)
2010 126 Polaroid, Yokohama Museum of Art (Yokohama)

Collections

the amana collection

Arata Hasegawa (Independent Curator)

Born in 1988.

Hasegawa is an independent curator whose past projects include

On the Desert Islands: Sculptures, 3D Works and Installations in the 1980s (2014),

Palais de Kyoto/Nothing But Sound (2015), Chronicle, Chronicle! (2016-2017) and Impurity / Immunity (2017-2018).

He is the 2017-2018 guest curator for PARADISE AIR.

He teaches at the Nippon Photography Institute, and is an official reviewer for the Architectural Institute of Japan.

For further information or images, please contact Yumiko Chiba Associates.

E-mail: info@ycassociates.co.jp Tel. +81-3-6276-6731 <http://www.ycassociates.co.jp>

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