



Taka Ishii Gallery

Photography / Film

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Hitoshi Tsukiji "Shashinzo"

Dates: Feb 25 – Apr 1, 2017

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film

Opening reception: Saturday, Feb 25, 18:00 – 20:00

Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film is pleased to present "Shashinzo," a solo exhibition of works by Hitoshi Tsukiji from February 25 to April 1. Since the mid-1960s, Tsukiji has searched for the essence of photographic expression, shooting in the city with an incisive perspective while eliminating the lyricism attached to subjects and themes. This exhibition will feature approximately 20 works selected from Tsukiji's book *Shashinzo* published in 1984.

I shoot photographs, i.e. archetypal images. (...) Photographs interrupt time and space and fix them on a surface. I capture the dynamic texture of the city. The undulating light and radiance of shadows... I reduce the complexity of "shooting," "making," "viewing," and "contemplating" photographs to light and shadow. (...) I want to create a place where photographs simply exist as photographs. (...) Photographs are not subordinate to the meaning of their subjects. The photograph is the site from which images rise.

Hitoshi Tsukiji, 'essay', "Tsukiji Hitoshi Photograph", Nihon Shashin Kikaku, 2015, n.p.

Tsukiji, who had learned much from photographic trends in Europe and the U.S., opposed emotional photographs that merely explained and portrayed their subjects, which in turn provided the images' history, narrative, and event. In 1975, he self-published *Vertical, (DOMAIN)* to pursue expressions unique to the photographic medium. The works in this book, which were collected with the attitude that photographs can only capture a limited range of phenomena, exuded an interest in and desire to propose how photographs might take note of and visualize the world within the medium's limitations. Uniquely formatted as a series of gatefolds, the book documents the photographer's ocular responses to the pulses of things in circular form.

In the latter half of the 1970s, young "post-Provoke" photographers started independent galleries and magazines to create and disseminate "photographs of our own generation." Through the independently operated Photo Gallery Prism, launched in Shinjuku, Tsukiji became acquainted with Ryuichi Kaneko, Shinzo Shimao and Miyabi Taniguchi. Along with them, Tsukiji established CAMERA WORKS as a place to publish a series of photobooks including those compiling their own works. The project, however, was never realized and the booklet *camera works tokyo* was published in the interim. Originally focused on the translation and interpretation of photographic theory, the magazine eventually featured the works not only of its founders, but also of other next-generation photographers, and thereby transformed the notion of photographic education into practice. At the time, many photographers who presented their works at independent galleries and magazines, later called "independent photographers," privileged methodology in the process of going against the original foundations of photographic expression, hence diminishing the scale of their expressions. Tsukiji, however, used the theoretical applications carried out in CAMERA WORKS and the context of structuralist theory, which had then become widespread in Japan, to strengthen the conceptual basis of his works. His 1984 publication *Shashinzo* focused on the structure of photographic expression.

What I wanted to do in "Shashinzo" was to clarify the "structure" of photographs. The "structure" comprises layers of epidermises of photographic expression, combining the character and content of the subject, light and shadow, texture and detail, reality, site, and the moment. Illuminating the structural facets of my photographic expression was an important concept in "Shashinzo" series. I would like to represent the conceptual structure and the essence of consciousness in photography.

Hitoshi Tsukiji, December 2016

These images, which Tsukiji made with penetrating perspective and superior technique while roaming the city with a 6x6 camera, display restrained textures of light and dark, uniquely beautiful compositions, and a heightened materiality

conveyed through the form, volume, quality, and color of the delicate gelatin silver prints. This series aimed to use photographs to deconstruct and map out the pure, essential elements of the medium: The qualia and sensibility conveyed by the photographic subject; the subjective recognition of the world; the “why here now” of photography; photographic beauty as it is manifested in the fluctuation and shifting of signs; and the photographers’ and viewers’ mental structure.

Hitoshi Tsukiji was born in Kanagawa Prefecture in 1947. Originally self-taught, Tsukiji later became acquainted with the book designer Nobuyoshi Kikuchi, who taught him methods of photographic expression and thought. Since the mid-1960s, Tsukiji has pursued the essence of photographic expression in the city with a sharp eye while eliminating lyricism. In 1979, he established CAMERA WORKS with photographic historian Ryuichi Kaneko, and photographers Shinzo Shimao and Miyabi Taniguchi and published the booklet *camera works tokyo* (1979-1995). His solo exhibitions include “VECTOR”, Photo Gallery Prism (Tokyo, 1976); “Shashinzo”, Zeit-Foto Salon (Tokyo, 1984); “Vertical, (DOMAIN)”, Mole (Tokyo, 1992); “Hitoshi Tsukiji Now <Naze · Ima · Kokoni> 1974-1998”, Shadai Gallery (Tokyo, 1998). His group exhibitions include “The Landscape is Waving”, Photo Gallery Prism (Tokyo, 1977); “Objects, Faces and Anti-Narratives – Rethinking Modernism”, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum (Tokyo, 1995). His publications include *Vertical, (DOMAIN)*, Self-publishing, 1975 ; *Shashinzo*, CAMERA WORKS, 1984 ; *Tsukiji Hitoshi Photograph*, Nihon Shashin Kikaku, 2015. He is the recipient of the Photographic Society of Japan’s Newcomer’s Award (for the series “Shashinzo”, 1985). His photographs are included in the collections of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo; Tokyo Photographic Art Museum; Kawasaki City Museum; the Japan Foundation; Princeton University.

For further information please contact:

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Gallery hours: 11:00-19:00 Closed on Sun, Mon and National holidays



Hitoshi Tsukiji
“Shashinzo”, 1984
Gelatin silver print
Image size: 24.9 x 24.9 cm
Paper size: 35.5 x 27.8 cm
© Hitoshi Tsukiji



Hitoshi Tsukiji
“Shashinzo”
Gelatin silver print
Image size: 24.9 x 24.8 cm
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