



Taka Ishii Gallery

Photography / Film

5-17-1 2F Roppongi Minato-ku Tokyo #106-0032, Japan
tel 03 5575 5004
fax 03 5575 5016
web www.takaishiigallery.com
email tigpf@takaishiigallery.com

Hitoshi Tsukiji

“Mother Police City”

Dates: Jan 12 – Mar 2, 2019

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film

Opening reception: Saturday, Jan 12, 18:00 – 20:00

Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film is pleased to announce “Mother Police City”, an exhibition of works by Hitoshi Tsukiji, from January 12 to March 2, 2019. This will be his second solo exhibition with the gallery and feature approximately 25 works selected from a show held under the same title at the Polaroid Gallery in Tokyo in 1984.

Since the mid-1960s, Tsukiji has consistently taken the city as his subject and confronted society with a critical and penetrating perspective. Through his practice, he has reinterpreted and reconstructed the world using the nonverbal medium of photography rather than linguistic expression, which is dependent on thought and emotion. From 1983 to 1984, he produced the “Mother Police City” series, which addressed the transformation, regeneration, construction, and dismantling of the city. The series, which comprised over 60 images, was shot on 4x5 Polaroid film, which was rarely used to create works at the time. Witnessing the scrap-and-build development of the city in the 1980s, prior to the bursting of the so-called bubble economy, Tsukiji explored real life phenomena through photography and captured the contemporary state of the city from a perspective that was influenced by New Topographics.

I was interested in the relations between the color reproduction, polysemy, and tone that is produced within the singular Polaroid image, which only allows the photographer to shoot one frame per moment. The work is made on site and in the moment. I fell in love with the tension created by the Polaroid photograph, in which one has to try and capture the singularity of each moment. (...) In this project, without the instantaneity of shooting and making the Polaroid image on site, I would neither have been able to explore the issues regarding the contemporary city, site, and reality nor clarify my thoughts and sensibilities on photography and what it means to shoot, create, look, and think.

Hitoshi Tsukiji, November 2018

When Tsukiji began shooting photographs, letterpress printing shops filled urban neighborhoods with the sounds of printing presses and letters being cast. The title of this series “Mother Police City” was inspired by the matrix that is used to cast the individual letters for letterpress printing. Thinking of the way the amalgamation of letters cast from matrixes enabled the development of modern civilization, Tsukiji felt it may be possible to shoot the city as if he was casting and printing numerous facets of the changing city, and collect a mass of images, to produce an overview of the city’s constitutive elements. The result was the “Mother Police City” and Tsukiji continues to photographically survey the city in search of the matrixes of its contemporary state, sites, and reality today.

Surveying the city by shooting Polaroids, one can instantly give feedback on the city’s relation to society, which uses human consciousness and computerized systems to make transformation predictable. The Polaroid has the potential to be a tool that calmly and visually captures the states of differentiation and commodification rampant in all fields. In the process of deciphering the contemporary city, which refuses to be set up by fabrication, silent photographs that simply fix images can generate new thought.

Hitoshi Tsukiji, *Camera Mainichi*, September issue, 1984, p.298

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, 1977); "Shashinzo", Zeit-Foto Salon (Tokyo, 1984); "Vertical, (DOMAIN)", Mole (Tokyo, 1992); "Objects, Faces and Anti-Narratives – Rethinking Modernism", Tokyo Photographic Art Museum (Tokyo, 1995); "Hitoshi Tsukiji Now <Naze・Ima・Kokoni> 1974-1998", Shadai Gallery, Tokyo Polytechnic University (Tokyo, 1998); "Shashinzo", Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film (Tokyo, 2017). His publications include *Vertical, (DOMAIN)*, Self-published, 1975; *Light on the Seashore*, CAMERAWORKS, 1980; *Shashinzo*, CAMERA WORKS, 1984; *TOSHIBA* [by Hitoshi Tsukiji and Lewis Baltz], UPU, 1989; *Hitoshi Tsukiji Photographs (Shashin)*, 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 Shadai Gallery, Tokyo Polytechnic University; Japan Foundation; The Kawasaki City Museum; The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography; Shanghai Art Museum; Princeton University Art Museum; Fondazione MAST.

For further information please contact:

Exhibition: Yuko Kosuge Press: Marie Okamura

5-17-1 2F Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032

tel: 81-3-5575-5004 fax: 81-3-5575-5016 e-mail: tigpf@takaishiigallery.com website: www.takaishiigallery.com

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



Hitoshi Tsukiji

"Mother Police City", 1983 - 1984

Polaroid

Image size: 11.4 x 8.9 cm

Paper size: 13.2 x 10.6 cm

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Hitoshi Tsukiji

"Mother Police City", 1983 - 1984

Polaroid

Image size: 8.9 x 11.4 cm

Paper size: 10.6 x 13.2 cm

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