



Taka Ishii

Gallery

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Naoya Hatakeyama “Tsunami Trees”

Dates: Aug 31 – Sep 28, 2024

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery (complex665)

Opening reception: Saturday, Aug 31, 17:00 – 19:00

Taka Ishii Gallery is pleased to present Naoya Hatakeyama's solo exhibition “Tsunami Trees” from Saturday, August 31 to Saturday, September 28. Hatakeyama's works, which are strictly made with a focus on the relationship between nature, cities, and photography, and delivered to the viewer with a rich poetic sentiment, have received international acclaim. Since losing his parents' house and his mother in the 2011 tsunami following the Great East Japan Earthquake, Hatakeyama has been documenting the changing landscape of his hometown, Rikuzentakata. In this exhibition, his first solo show at Taka Ishii Gallery in eight years, 10 works from “Tsunami Trees” and 30 works from his new series “Kochi” will be exhibited.

“Tsunami Trees”, which Hatakeyama has been working on since 2018 and has culminated in a photobook in 2024, is a group of works documenting the trees and landscapes left behind on the Pacific coast that retain the traces of the tsunami. In 2017, six years after the Great East Japan Earthquake, Hatakeyama came across a walnut tree on a riverbank upstream from the Kesen River, which flows through his hometown of Rikuzentakata. The tree, which Hatakeyama calls ‘half a tree’, has abundant foliage on its left half, but the trunk of the right half was damaged by the objects from the Tsunami, preventing water and nutrients from reaching the dead branches. Driven by the urge to find similar trees, Hatakeyama traveled around the Tohoku region with the help of his acquaintances, and when he came across trees that had been affected by the disaster in various ways, he recorded them with his large format camera. The “Tsunami Trees” captured in the photographs bring us back to our awareness of the relationship between trees and people; at times the trees are revered as a steadfast presence, and at other times they are inconsiderately cut down and used. The newly constructed seawalls and highways around the freestanding trees also provide a glimpse of the time that has passed since the disaster, evoking our individual memories.

Another series of works that comprise this exhibition is “Kochi” which was photographed in Kochi Prefecture from 2021 to 2022. From this series, photographs that capture the tsunami evacuation towers will be newly presented and exhibited. In Kuroshio-cho, Kochi Prefecture, a tsunami caused by a Nankai Trough earthquake is expected to be 30 meters high, twice the height of the massive tsunami that devastated the coastal areas of the Tohoku region in 2011. Temporary evacuation facilities called tsunami evacuation towers have been constructed in various parts of the prefecture. The typological composition of the “Kochi” series in this exhibition highlights how towers have been integrated into the everyday living environment since the Great East Japan Earthquake. Hatakeyama's photographs capture them soaring as sites of relief to reduce casualties as much as possible, while quietly warning of the time when the surrounding landscape will be lost

to the overwhelming power. This series provokes thought about the way we deal with natural phenomena and the possibility that science and technology that develop from them could define our future.

Naoya Hatakeyama was born in 1958 in Rikuzentakata, Iwate Prefecture, Japan. He studied under Kiyoji Otsuji at the University of Tsukuba's School of Art and Design, and completed his postgraduate studies at the same university in 1984. Since then, he has been based in Tokyo and has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Japan and abroad. In 1997, he won the 22nd Kimura Ihei Award for his photobook *Lime Works* (Synergy Geometry, 1996), which depicts limestone mines, lime factories and cement plants scattered throughout Japan, and the exhibition "Maquettes" at Gallery NW House. Hatakeyama participated in the 49th Venice Biennale in 2001 and received the 42nd Mainichi Art Prize. In 2012, he received the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's Art Encouragement Prize for his large-scale solo exhibition "Natural Stories" (Tokyo Photographic Art Museum), which looked back on his career from his early works to Rikuzentakata, a portrait of his hometown after the Great East Japan Earthquake. At Venice Biennale's 13th International Architecture Exhibition, he was awarded the Golden Lion for his participation in the Japanese Pavilion. His publications include *BLAST* (Shogakukan, 2013), *Kesengawa* (Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 2012), and *Rikuzentakata 2011-2014* (Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 2015). His works are included in the collections of Tate, London; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; La Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris; Swiss Foundation for Photography, Winterthur; National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo; Tokyo Photographic Art Museum; and the National Museum of Art, Osaka.

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Tue-Sat 12:00 – 19:00 Closed on Sun, Mon, and National Holidays



Naoya Hatakeyama

From the series "Tsunami Trees", 2018

Lambda print

108 x 126.6 cm

© Naoya Hatakeyama



Naoya Hatakeyama

From the series "Kochi", 2022

C-print

21.2 x 24.8 cm

© Naoya Hatakeyama



Naoya Hatakeyama

From the series "Tsunami Trees", 2019

Lambda print

108 x 126.6 cm

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Naoya Hatakeyama

From the series "Kochi", 2022

C-print

21.2 x 24.8 cm

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