

Masahiro Kodaira “videre videor II”

Dates: Jul 15 – Aug 12, 2023

Location: amanaTIGP

Opening reception: Saturday, Jul 15, 17:00 –20:00

amanaTIGP is pleased to present Masahiro Kodaira’s solo exhibition “videre videor II” from July 15 to August 12. This exhibition, which marks the artist’s third solo show at the gallery, and his first in five years, will feature 11 works from his series photographed since 2014. This body of work serves as a sequel to the “videre videor I” series, which was exhibited from April to June this year in “The Actuality of Film Photography” exhibition at Tokyo Art Museum.

Kodaira, while taking photographs according to his own intuition, has constantly reflected on how he perceives his subjects and what compels him to capture them through the lens of his camera. In this series of work, he reconsiders such questions and proposes a point of return of sorts by drawing reference to a particular phrase from René Descartes’ *Meditations on First Philosophy*, “videre videor, audirevideor calescere videor” (it is certain that I seem to see light, hear a noise, and feel heat), which served as a prerequisite for the famed dictum, “cogito ergo sum” (I think, therefore I am).

René Descartes’ “cogito ergo sum” (I think, therefore I am) is regarded as a touchstone of the modern ego. However, I have long avoided this phrase, because as I attempted to trace in detail the sensations I feel when photographing, I could not bring myself to believe that they were grounded upon the perception of ‘I think.’ While the cogito has given rise to various critique and interpretation, clinical psychologist Mari Nagai focuses on the very phrase that enabled Descartes to arrive at the cogito argument, that is, “...it is certain that I seem to see light, hear a noise, and feel heat; this cannot be false.” In doing so, she asserts that the ‘I think’ as advocated in the cogito is not merely active, but rather a mode that is neither active nor passive and is instead directed to oneself = the mediopassive voice. She articulates that “such an ‘I’—in the true sense of the word—is the very ‘sub-jectum’ (what lies beneath, all that is underlying).”*

Before long, my eyes sense the subject, leading to the arousal of my emotions, and I find myself firmly gripping the camera. It is only then that the ‘I think’ finally comes to emerge. The ‘I’ immediately creates the illusion that one has thought and acted on one’s own, and erases ‘that’ which lies behind one’s eyes.

* Mari Nagai, *The Structure of Introspection*, Iwanami Shoten, p.192-193

Masahiro Kodaira, April 2023

All of the works in this exhibition were printed in the darkroom in the artist's home, and the images taken on 35mm negative film were enlarged to measure 100cm in length when being exposed on photographic paper. In the prints, the texture and contrast of the particles comprising the image are highlighted due to the high

magnification rate at which the film is projected. Furthermore, they reveal the increasing visual intensity of the photographs, which are essentially the product of an intuitive response, as well as the strength of the photographic nature of the artist's work that pursues the physicality of photography resulting from the repeated act of photographing.

This series is also the first to include works in which the shooting range has been narrowed down to pinpoint mere fragments of the human body. For Kodaira, who has focused on the unconscious as a means of contemplating the relationship between the self and the world, approaching the 'human being' as a subject also demonstrates an attempt to facilitate an amalgamation with 'society' and the 'hidden consciousness' captured in his previous work "I am that I am." When confronting the work and recognizing a difference between the impression of the subject that is spontaneously perceived and the impression that is perceived only after contemplation, viewers too, may momentarily find themselves within the state of "videre videor."

Masahiro Kodaira was born in Tokyo in 1972 and graduated from Tokyo Zokei University in 1997. He studied photography under Yutaka Takanashi and Akihide Tamura. Joined the archive project for the work of Kiyoji Otsuji in 1996, he produced modern prints from Otsuji's negatives and also organized exhibitions of Otsuji's works. Motivated by his interest in the fundamental mysteries regarding his relation to the world, Kodaira shoots intuitively in response to various environments. He then fixes his images, through his sophisticated darkroom techniques, as works with unique visual intensity. His solo exhibitions include "Dr. Lorenz's Butterfly," Sirius Aidem Photo Gallery, Tokyo (2002), "tsuzuki-no kawarini (Instead of Continuation)," Gekkoso, Tokyo (2009), "The Wholly Other," Omotesando Garo, Tokyo (2013), "The Wholly Other," Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film and Plaza Gallery, Tokyo (2015), "I am that I am," Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film, Tokyo (2018) and "Emergence", KURENBOH, Tokyo (2019). His recent publications include, *I Often Saw Him At The Same Time In The Same Place* (Symmetry, 2020) and *Sugiuraso Room A* (Symmetry, 2023).

For further information, please contact:

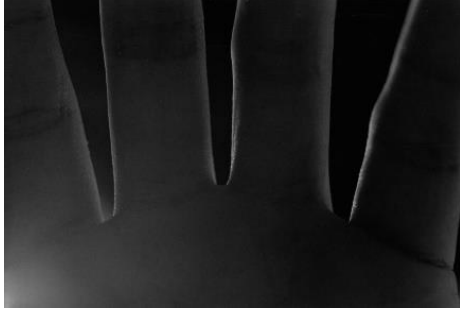
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Gallery hours: 12:00-19:00 Closed on Sun, Mon, and National holidays



Masahiro Kodaira

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Gelatin silver print

Image size: 66.8 x 100.7 cm

Paper size: 71 x 105 cm

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