

Kyoji Takubo

[Exhibition Outline]

This is the first major solo exhibition to be held in Tokyo featuring the work of Kyoji Takubo (1949 -), who is famous for 'The Chapel of the Apple Trees' restoration project in Normandy, France, and is currently involved in the regeneration project of the Mt. Kotohira-yama, Shikoku.

Entering from Tama Art University in 1968, Takubo's activities in the early seventies initially pivoted around performance art, then up until the mid-eighties he focused on the creation of objets d'art, in which he applied gold leaf to scrap wood, etc., that he then used to construct forms in the shape of window frames or doorways, these being shown at numerous galleries and exhibitions (including the 1984 Venice Biennale).

During the eighties the center of Tokyo was undergoing major redevelopment and in 1987 he, together with an architect named Ryoji Suzuki and a photographer named Shigeo Anzaï, produced the 'Absolute Scene' project. This consisted of taking ordinary, two-story wooden houses in the center of town, removing the walls and floors to leave only a framework, then fitting glass floors and inviting people to walk over them, recording the whole process. After this he turned his back on Tokyo and its bubble economy, moving to Normandy in 1989, where he devoted himself to the restoration and decoration of a derelict, 16th century chapel in a tiny village named St. Vigor de Mieux. This project, in which he highlighted the original structure of the building while decorating the walls with a mural depicting the apple trees that form a major feature of the local landscape. This project took more than ten years to complete and was achieved through the cooperation of the local people, and the patronage of both corporations and individuals, representing a new direction for art, combining the work itself, the recipients, the investors and the issue of ownership. Since his return to Japan in 1999 he has involved himself in a restoration project covering the entire area surrounding the Kotohira-gu Shrine in Shikoku, a venture that has received attention for the way in which it combines traditional cultural heritage with the long-term activities of a contemporary artist.

Having been involved in these restoration activities for 20 years, Takubo describes 'the act of expressing landscape of a particular place that will live for a much long time than myself as "scenic art" and the actual scenery, that will exist in the future after the artist has left, as "art of landscape" and he aims to develop these spatial and temporal activities in the future.

This exhibition will present these two projects with which he has been involved in recent years, not through the work he produced at these locations but through a Tokyo version that takes the form of another restoration. In addition to introducing his current activities it will also show work from his

early and transition periods, tracing a career in which he has questioned the relationship that exists between artist and society.

Takubo's work has developed through a desire to surpass the boundaries of genre and location while remaining confined within a certain regional or cultural complex, demonstrating an earnest desire to come to grips with contemporary themes. We hope that this exhibition will provide an opportunity for people to come into contact with this form of contemporary creativity that spans a variety of locations and forms.

[Highlights of the Exhibition]

A Long-awaited Solo Exhibition in Tokyo

Despite having been active since the seventies, TAKUBO has spent the last 20 years involved in restoration projects and it has been virtually impossible to view his recent work in Tokyo. Living in rural societies in Normandy and Kotohira, far from the cities, he has been engaged in projects that extend over a ten-year time span and deepening his relationship with local people who appreciate his work, so the aim of this exhibition is to trace his activities over this period.

Another Restoration Project

A full-scale recreation of the site plan, that was proposed for the 'Chapel of the Apple Trees' project but not realized, will be displayed in the Atrium of the museum in the form of a new, Tokyo version of the project. In the 'Kotohira-yama Regeneration Project' he produced a mural on sheets of porcelain for a restaurant/café that was also designed by him, and this exhibition will present his latest mural, carried out on the same scale using ink. The floors in both these installations consist of steel and cast iron, allowing the viewer to enjoy the serene atmosphere as they walk across the rust-colored surface and experience its unique texture and sound.

Work in Progress

Since 2005 Takubo has been working on oil pastel designs for Fusuma (paper doors) at Kotohira-gu Shrine, to be placed in the Shiroshoin room that is situated between rooms with paper doors decorated with paintings by Okyo Maruyama and Jakuchu Ito. In this exhibition, these Fusumas with designs of camellia blossom will be placed in the same positions as the shrine, to recreate this room that faces onto a garden filled with wild camellia, allowing the viewer to experience the atmosphere of the place. It will also introduce a study sculpture for the 'Kamitsubaki Bridge' that is currently being planned to serve visitors to the shrine.

Experiments in Painting

Before starting work on the mural in the chapel in France, TAKUBO constructed a double wall inside the original stone structure that he then covered with lead to protect the work from rising damp and condensation. Next he covered the wall with multiple coats of pigment that he then scraped away with a chisel, exploring a unique technique, and the concentration of these various colored lines opened the gates of painting within him that had remained closed for so long. In the restaurant/café set among the greenery of Mt. Kotohira, the blue lines of the intertwining foliage of the mural were applied to the sheets of light-reflecting, white porcelain using the techniques developed for Aritayaki porcelain. This exhibition will present studies that he made at his studio in Normandy in preparation for the mural on the chapel walls as well as porcelain sheets that he produced at Arita.

Before Art of Landscape

This exhibition will also display drawings of plaster casts that he produced on the roof of his university, performances that he carried out at various galleries, a relief carving of his hand that was produced during his transition period and his 'Absolute Scene 1987', that developed within the urban space, illustrating the process of interaction he underwent with the system and society as he gradually developed his 'Landscape Art'.

[Artist]

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| 1949 | Born in Imabari, Ehime Prefecture |
| 1968 | BFA Tama Art University (Painting Course) |
| 1971-3 | Exhibits 5 series of solo shows named <i>Image Trial</i> in galleries around Tokyo. |
| 1975 | Participates in The 9 th Biennale de Paris |
| 1984 | Solo exhibition at Fuji Television Gallery (also held in 1986, 1990, and 1996)
Participates in The 41 st Venice Biennale (Japanese Pavilion) |
| 1987 | Collaborates with the architect, Ryoji Suzuki and the photographer, Shigeo Anzaï with the work of <i>Absolute Scene, 1987</i> |
| 1989 | In charge of stage art for the Opera performance of <i>Golem</i> at Almeida Theatre, London
Moves to Falaise, Normandy in France and starts with the restoration project of the Chapel of St. Vigor-de-Mieux |
| 1999 | Receives 'Murano Togo Award' for the restoration project of the chapel and returns to Japan |
| 2000 | Receives the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Order of Arts and Letters) from the The Provisional Government of the French Republic for the Chapel Restoration Project.
Lives and works in Kotohira, (Kagawa, Japan) as the Cultural advisor of Kotohira-gu |

Shrine on the 'Kotohira-yama Regeneration Project'.

2001

Solo exhibition at The Museum of Art, Ehime

2004-

In charge of research and restoration of the Kotohira-gu collection, and creates permanent collection gallery for the works of Yuichi Takahashi in the former shrine office. (In 2008, organizes an exhibition named 'Konpira-san, Sanctuaire de la mer-Trésors de la peinture japonaise' exhibition at le Musée national des arts asiatiques Guimet, Paris with the masterpiece collection of Konpira-san)

From 2005 onwards, working on the painting of Shoin, and in 2007, completes *Kamitsubaki*, a mural on sheets of porcelain, for the restaurant/café along with the architectural design of the site.

広報用画像



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KYOJI TAKUBO

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- 1. *Event on the Roof of Tama Art University*, 1971, photo: Kyoji Takubo
- 2. *Algo*, 1983, gold, beeswax, plaster, iron, wood, collection of Sogetsu Art Museum, Deposit Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo
- 3. Ryoji Suzuki, Kyoji Takubo, Shigeo Anzaï, *Absolute Scene 1987*, 1987, photo: Shigeo Anzaï
- 4. *Chapel of Apple*, 1999, photo: Keiichi Kawamura © Kyoji Takubo 2011
- 5. *Chapel of Apple*, 1996, pigment, lead photo: Kyoji Takubo © Kyoji Takubo 2011
- 6. *Orange*, 1998, pigment, lead, wood, collection of Odawara City photo: Keiichi Kawamura © Kyoji Takubo 2011
- 7. *Yabutsubaki*, 2005-, Fusuma for Shoin in Kotohira-gu, oil pastel, photo: Keiichi Kawamura © Kyoji Takubo 2011
- 8. *Kamitsubaki*, 2006, Mural Painting for Cafeteria in Kotohira-gu, porcelain, photo: Keiichi Kawamura © Kyoji Takubo 2011

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