

# 分別代表二十世紀九十年代與二十一世紀初日本當代藝術趨勢的兩個展覽——《日本零年》《通往夏天的大門》

## Ground Zero Japan and The Door into Summer: Two Exhibitions Representing Two Japanese Contemporary Art Tendencies in the 1990s and 2000s.

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**1:** *War Picture Returns*, 1995-1999. Works by Aida Makoto. Installation view, “Ground Zero Japan” exhibition at Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki, Japan, 1999-2000. Photo by Yoichi Inoue. Courtesy of Mizuma Art Gallery  
**2:** *Bunker Bunker*, 1998-1999 (Centre). *Atom Car (Yellow)*, 1998 (Left and Right). Works by Yanobe Kenji. Installation view, “Ground Zero Japan” exhibition at Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki, Japan, 1999-2000. Photo by Yoichi Inoue. Courtesy of YAMAMOTO GENDAI

2007年，松井碧在日本茨城縣的水戶藝術館策劃了一場展覽，名為《通往夏天的大門：微波普的時代》。

這是一個具有劃時代意義的展覽，松井碧為九十年代末與二十一世紀初大致具有相似創作趨勢的藝術家提供了理論框架，標誌著日本當代藝術的一個轉折點。她稱之為「微波普 (Micropop)」。

同一時期，或更早些，會田誠、村上隆、小沢剛、矢延憲司、鉛屋法水等藝術家在其作品中使用了政治或策略性概念。他們的作品揭露了緊隨經濟急速增長階段後的日本社會的扭曲，挑戰禁忌，創造出異於尋常的日本城市景觀，並在他們的作品中利用日本本次文化物品來探討異域風情和流行文化符號。榎木野衣針對這個強烈的社會信息策劃了名為《日本零年》(1999-2000, 日本茨城縣水戶藝術館)的展覽。榎木試圖在這個展覽中揭示冷戰後全球格局對於日本當代藝術的影響，展覽中還包括了岡本太郎和東松照明等幾位在歷史上具有重要地位的大師級藝術家。

榎木野衣自己撰寫的《日本・現代・美術》(1998)<sup>1</sup>是這個展覽的靈感來源。榎木認為，自日本與二戰戰敗後，就一直試圖趕上西方世界的步伐。經濟層面的成果豐碩，但文化斷層和扭曲仍然存在，尤其在當代藝術領域。展覽聚集了一群企圖以「清零重置」為途徑而創造出真正的日本當代藝術的藝術家和作品，展覽不僅收錄了美術，還有音樂及大眾文化（例如電視動畫），並意圖從日本藝術家的視角來展示「現實」。另外，展覽中矢延憲司以切爾諾貝爾核電站爆炸為題創作的裝置<sup>2</sup>，和村上隆的裝置<sup>3</sup>中那幅描繪了蘑菇雲和刺眼光芒的繪畫都似乎預言了福島的今天。

然而，松井的展覽中展示的這批於九十年代末逐漸為人所知的藝術家卻有著不同的風格。其中包括田中功起、泉太郎、有馬薰、島袋道浩等人。第一眼看上去，他們的作品並未傳達政治信息，技巧亦不甚高明，也毫無特別的視覺闡述。他們的作品有時看上去荒謬得很，像開玩笑，譬如泉太郎的影像作品，他在電視機上一遍又一遍地畫上幾筆再抹掉<sup>4</sup>，或是用動物圖畫書來對應動物的叫聲<sup>5</sup>。

儘管作品採用的媒介各異，但技巧簡單、相似，以日常物品做成。他們似乎更鍾情耽於自我的內在世界，對於身邊小範圍的人際關係感興趣，對於社會政治問題毫不關心。我記得我的一個朋友描述「微波普」展覽的時候說道：「就是那個在牆上貼著許多張紙，上面都是亂塗亂畫」。在某種意義上來說這個說法沒錯，因為確實其中沒什麼大場面、沒有大規模標誌性的當代藝術作品，也沒傳達什麼具有強烈政治性、爭議性的信息。

然而，松井認為「微波普」展覽中的作品反映了九十年代及零零年代的社會情況，尤其是阪神地震和東京地鐵沙林毒氣事件(都發生在 1995 年)等災難經歷。對於松井來說，展覽中的作品反映了日本藝術家當時的生存策略。

松井引用了兩個關鍵的概念，德勒茲和瓜達里的「小文學」<sup>6</sup>，以及米歇爾・德・塞爾托<sup>7</sup>形容的受壓迫民眾所採用的「重複使用」策略。在後現代和後殖民世界，缺乏知識或主流文化背景認識的受壓迫民眾需要用他們的想像力來創造新的工具或語言。他們發明新的方法來使用這些過時的物品，還將詞語賦予新意。松井採用的詞根是「普 (pop)」，小寫的「p」，來自於德勒茲同瓜達里的說法——在小文學

中，來自鎮壓者的語言可以被自由重組<sup>8</sup>。

展覽《通往夏天的大門：微波普的時代》，以島袋道浩的《恢復人性的機會》(1995)開頭，這是一系列紀錄性照片，鏡頭下的藝術家在高雄市區放置一塊標語牌，上面寫著「恢復人性的機會」，時正值 1995 年大地震後。開始的時候我以為這是黑色幽默：上萬人受傷，6400 人死亡，在這樣的大型災難期間，誰會在乎志願者的感受和自尊？然而，當你知道藝術家本人出生並成長於高雄的時候，這件作品就承擔了完全不同的意義。這對於「機會」的呼喚，事實上是藝術家對於幫助他的家人、朋友、親屬的真切希望。

落合多武、田中功起、奈良美智、泉太郎、大木裕之及其同輩人的作品常常有種脆弱性、幽默感和組合過時物品的習慣，還少不了孩童似遊戲的痕跡和一種未成年人的天真。他們不去製造場面壯觀的裝置，來發表宣言或是宣洩吶喊，而是採用日常用品秘密私語。我常想，究竟是誰或什麼構成了這些藝術家的「壓迫者」——是一場災難性事件還是他們自己的未來。

我們能看到的來自同一個時代的兩個相當不同的日本藝術家展覽。兩個展覽中的藝術家均出生於六十至八十年代，代溝並不明顯。這些藝術家中，有些似乎在不同時期遊走於兩個組別之間。這兩個展覽則將兩個重要的日本當代藝術運動和日本當今藝術中的多樣性概念化。

<sup>3</sup> 村上隆，《海風》(1992)。  
<sup>4</sup> 泉太郎，《庫洛斯洞》(2005)，影像。  
<sup>5</sup> 泉太郎，《喇嘛》(2006)，影像。  
<sup>6</sup> 德勒茲和瓜達里，《卡夫卡：為少數文學而作》，明尼蘇達州立大學出版社，1986 年。  
<sup>7</sup> 米歇爾・德・塞爾托，《日常生活實踐》，巴黎：出版總會，1980 年山田登世子訳『日常の實踐のポイエティック』国文社，1987。  
<sup>8</sup> 松井碧，《冬之花園——探索日本當代藝術的微波普想象》，展覽畫冊，日本國際交流基金會，2007

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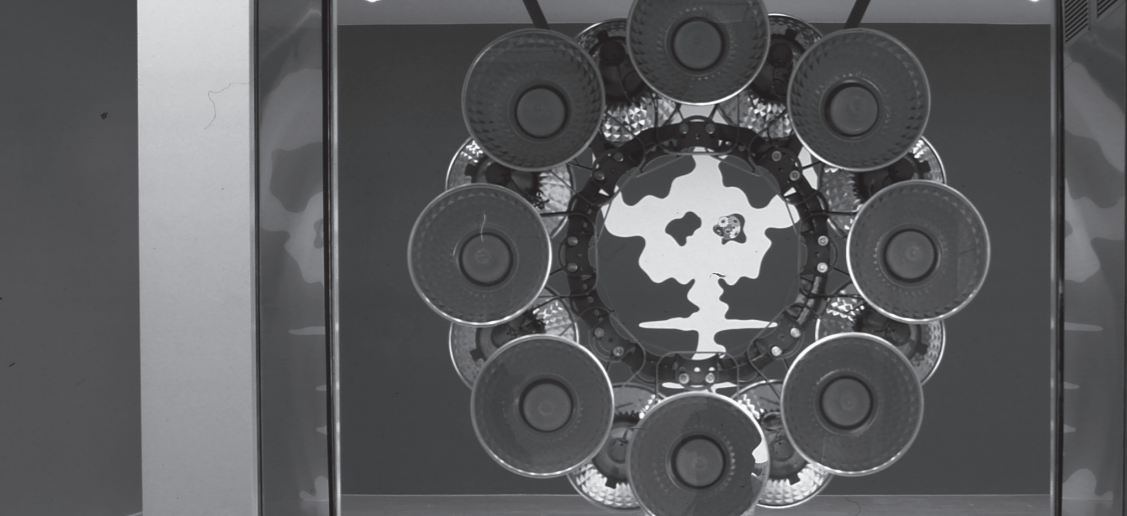
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**3:** *Sea Breeze*. Installation view, “Ground Zero Japan” exhibition at Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki, Japan, 1999-2000. Photo by Yoichi Inoue. ©1992 Takashi Murakami/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

**4a:** *Neko*, 2005/DVD/5 mins 59 sec. (Front). *Lime at the Bottom of the Lake*, 2006/DVD/3 mins 3 sec. (Back). Installation view, “The Door into Summer - The Age of Micropop” exhibition at Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki, Japan, 2007. ©Taro Izumi, Courtesy of Take Ninagawa, Tokyo.

**4b:** *Neko*, 2005/DVD/5 mins 59 sec. (Front). *Curos Cave*, 2005/DVD/7 mins 36 sec. (Back). Installation view, “The Door into Summer - The Age of Micropop” exhibition at Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki, 2007. ©Taro Izumi, Courtesy of Take Ninagawa, Tokyo.

In 2007, Midori Matsui curated an exhibition entitled *The Door into Summer: The Age of Micropop* at the Art Tower Mito in Ibaraki, Japan.

It was an epoch-making exhibition, indicating a turning point in Japanese contemporary art, because Midori Matsui provided a conceptual framework for artists who loosely had a similar tendency in their artistic practice in the late 1990s and 2000’s. She named the concept “Micropop”.

Around the same period, or just before, there were several artists who featured political or strategic concepts in their art, such as Makoto Aida, Takashi Murakami, Tsuyoshi Ozawa, Kenji Yanobe, Norimizu Ameya and others. Their works revealed distortions in the Japanese society following the rapid economic growth period, challenged taboos, created anomalous landscapes in urban Japan, and utilised Japanese subcultural objects in their works to examine exoticism and popular cultural icons. Focusing on these strong social messages, Noi Sawaragi curated an exhibition entitled *Ground Zero Japan* (1999-2000), Mito Art Tower, Ibaraki, Japan). Sawaragi tried to examine the influence of the post-Cold War world framework in Japanese contemporary art in the exhibition, including several historical master artists like Taro Okamoto and Shomei Tomatsu.

The exhibition was inspired by Sawaragi’s own book, *Japan Contemporary Art* (1998)<sup>1</sup>. He argued that Japan had been trying to catch up to the Western world after its defeat in World War II. It had had certain success in economic terms, but many gaps and several cultural distortions remained, especially in

contemporary art. The exhibition gathered artists and works that tried to create a truly Japanese contemporary art, by “resetting” to Zero. The exhibition included not only fine art but also music and mass culture (such as TV animation), and tried to picture “Reality” from Japanese artists’ perspective. In addition, the show’s inclusion of Kenji Yanobe’s installation on the Chernobyl nuclear plant explosion<sup>2</sup>, and Takashi Murakami’s installation<sup>3</sup> that includes a painting of a mushroom cloud and dazzling light seem to have prophesised the state of Fukushima today.

However the artists that emerged in the late 1990s, who exhibited at Matsui’s exhibition, had a different tendency. These artists included Koki Tanaka, Taro Izumi, Kaworu Arima, Michihiro Shimabuku and others. At first glance, their works of art have no political message, no distinguished technique, and no special visual elaborations. Sometimes their works seems to be absurd or like a joke, such as Taro Izumi’s videos where the artist draws the lines on a TV and erases them again and again<sup>4</sup>, or syncs the calls of animals with the pages of the animal picture book<sup>5</sup>.

Though the media of the works varied, the techniques are rather simple and analogue, built from everyday objects. It seems like they are more ready to indulge in their internal world, interested in only in the small human circles around them, never caring about social and political matters. Remember a friend of mine describing the Micropop exhibition as “The exhibition with many scribbled papers on the walls.” In a way this was right, because there were no spectacles, no massive prototypical contemporary art works, or works with a strong political or controversial message.

However, Matsui argues that the works in the Micropop exhibition reflect the social conditions of the 1990s and 2000s, particularly the experience of disasters like the Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake and the Aum cult subway attack (both in 1995). For Matsui, the works in the exhibition imply tactics for the survival of Japanese artists at the time.

Matsui cites two key concepts, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s “minor literature<sup>6</sup>,” and the ‘re-use’ tactic used by oppressed people described by Michel de Certeau<sup>7</sup>. In the postmodern and postcolonial world, oppressed people who don’t have knowledge or a mainstream cultural background need to use their imagination to create new tools or languages. They find new ways of using obsolete objects and new meanings for words. Matsui based the word “pop”, with a lower case “p”, on Deleuze and Guattari’s idea that in minor literature, the language given by the oppressors can be freely reconfigured.<sup>8</sup>

The exhibition *The Door into Summer: The Age of Micropop* started with Michihiro Shimabuku’s *The Chance to Recover our Humanity* (1995), a set of documentation photos featuring the artist putting a signboard in Kobe city that says “The Chance to recover our Humanity” on it, at the time right after the huge earthquake in 1995. At first I thought this could only be black humour, because during the huge disaster, with casualties of more than 10,000 and about 6,400 people dead, who cares about your feelings or self-esteem as a voluntarily worker? However, after one learns that the artist himself was born and raised in Kobe, the work takes on a totally different meaning. This call for “Chance” was in fact a sincere wish by the artist to help his family, friends and relatives.

The works of Tamu Ochiai, Koki Tanaka, Yoshitomo Nara, Taro Izumi, Hiroyuki Ohki and others of their generation often have a certain vulnerability, a sense of humour, a tendency to assemble obsolete objects, traces of child-like play, and a naïve sense of adolescence. Rather than spectacular installations, they use objects from everyday life, presenting not as manifestoes or shouts but as clandestine murmurings. I wonder who or what constitutes the “oppressor” to these artists, whether it is a catastrophic incident or their own future.

We could see two quite different exhibitions of Japanese artists within the same decade. Both exhibition’s artists were born during the 1960s to 1980s, and there is no obvious generation gap. Among these artists, some seem at times to belong to both groups. However, these exhibitions served to conceptualise two important Japanese contemporary art movements, and the diversity within Japanese art today.

<sup>1</sup> Noi Sawaragi, ‘Japan Contemporary Art’, Shintyou Sha, 1998.  
<sup>2</sup> Kenji Yanobe, *Luna Project* (1998). This installation regarding Chernobyl includes: *Atom Car* (1998), in which the cars featured are like those at fun parks, if the audience puts in 300JPY, the car would start. Each car also has a Geiger counter, if it detects radiation 10 times the normal amount, the car would stop. *Survival Gachapon* (1998). *The Biggest Theatre Ever* (1998), a documentary film featuring the artist visiting Chernobyl with a 100JPY coin, staying till the Geiger counter detects radiation three times normal. *Atom Suits Project* (1997-1998). *Bunker, Bunker* (1998), a massive shelter for survival, for the future of nuclear war.  
<sup>3</sup> Takashi Murakami, *Sea Breeze* (1992).  
<sup>4</sup> Taro Izumi, *Curos Cave* (2005) video.  
<sup>5</sup> Taro Izumi, *Lama* (2006), video.  
<sup>6</sup> Gilles Deleuzes and Felix Guattari, ‘Kafka: Toward a minor Literature’, University of Minnesota Press, 1986.  
<sup>7</sup> Michel de Certeau, ‘L’invention du quotidien. 1: Arts de faire’, Paris: Union generale d’editions 1980. 山田登世子訳『日常実践のポイエティック』国文社、1987.  
<sup>8</sup> Midori Matsui Winter Garden –The Exploration of Micropop Imagination in Contemporary Japanese Art, Exhibitio Catalogue, Japan Foundation 2007.