

MISA SHIN GALLERY

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Press Release
September 2021

高山 明 Takayama Akira

War Painting / Heterotopia - The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Saturday, September 11 - Saturday, October 30, 2021

Tuesday - Saturday 12:00-19:00 (Closed on Mon, Sun, Public holidays)

戦争画 / ヘテロトピア

- 東京国立近代美術館編 -

War Painting / Heterotopia

- The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo -

MISA SHIN GALLERY is pleased to announce *War Painting / Heterotopia - The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo*, a solo exhibition by Takayama Akira, from Saturday, September 11 - Saturday, October 30, 2021.

Takayama's first Heterotopia series, *Tokyo Heterotopia*, was presented in 2013 as a "tour performance," taking the form of a self-guided tour. Participants travelled around Tokyo with guidebooks and radios in hand. At specified locations, they could tune in their radios to readings of stories written by poets and novelists about people from Asia who came to live in Tokyo as students, immigrants, and refugees, revealing Asian history in Tokyo. Since then, the Heterotopia series has expanded throughout the world, including *Beitou Heterotopia* (Taiwan, 2016), *Beirut Heterotopia* (Lebanon, 2017), *Piraeus Heterotopia* (Greece, 2017), *Heterotopia Abu Dhabi* (United Arab Emirates, 2019), and *Heterotopia Riga* (Latvia, 2019). The Tokyo version became an app and continues to this day.

War Painting / Heterotopia - The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo is the first public performance of a project to 'exhibit' at other locations paintings depicting war scenes that are held in the collection of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo. The Japanese military commissioned the production of the majority of these war paintings between 1937 and 1945. After the war, paintings collected by GHQ were seized by America, but were returned to Japan in 1970 on indefinite loan, and 153 are currently held in the collection of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

For this exhibition, white walls are lined with QR codes, but there are no actual paintings. When visitors use their phones to access a work by reading a QR code, they hear a reading of a poem created based on a specific war painting. Each poem is written by a poet from the country that is the setting for the painting or otherwise associated with the painting in some way. The readings are performed by the poets themselves. In this way, although not physically present, war paintings held in the collection of the

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National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo are 'exhibited' at the gallery by being visualized as the visitors listen to the readings.

One work at the exhibition, the poem *Grand Fond Blanc (Wonderful White)* by Walis Nokan was written based on Tsuguharu Foujita's *Fierce Fighting of Kaoru Paratroops After Landing on the Enemy's Position*. The soldiers who made up the Kaoru Paratroops were mainly from the indigenous peoples of Taiwan, and this war painting depicts a gruesome scene in which they make a forced landing and attack on an airfield on the island of Leyte in the Philippines occupied by American forces. Walis belongs to one of the indigenous peoples of Taiwan known as the Atayal, and he is widely known in Taiwan as a writer of Taiwanese indigenous literature. The poem is told from the standpoint of one of the Taiwanese soldiers among the Japanese forces depicted in the war painting, and is directed at Foujita, who painted the work. Readings can be heard by Walis himself in the original Chinese or by artist Tsuyoshi Ozawa who provides a Japanese translation.

This exhibition also presents poems created based on Miyamoto Saburo's *Meeting of Generals Yamashita and Percival*, Yamashita Shinichi's *British and Australian Captives Work at Inchon, Korea*, and Inokuma Genichiro's *Railroad Construction in a Certain Area*. There are plans for the project to continue on after this exhibition. This show *War Painting / Heterotopia - The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo*, is the first of what promises to be a fascinating series.

Takayama Akira

Born in 1969. In 2002, he formed the theater company Port B, and since then has been producing installations, touring performances and social experiments utilizing urban spaces as a way of engaging with cities and societies across the world. In recent years, collaboration with those from other fields including visual art, tourism, literature, architecture, and urban researches has seen the scope of his practice broadening further, and he has applied his theatrical philosophy and methodology to opening up new possibilities in a variety of fields. Major works include the *Wagner Project* (Yokohama, Oita, Frankfurt), *McDonald's Radio University* (Frankfurt, Berlin, Tokyo, Kanazawa, Hong Kong), *Heterotopia* (Tokyo, Athens, Taipei etc.), *Compartment City - Vienna* (Vienna), *Referendum Project* (Tokyo, Fukushima, Vienna etc.), and *The Complete Manual of Evacuation* (Tokyo, Frankfurt). He has participated in major exhibitions, such as Yokohama Triennale (2014), Maison Hermès (2015, Tokyo), Roppongi Crossing (2016, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo), Sharjah Biennial (2017), and Biennale of Sydney (2018). *The Wagner Project* will be held at the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa in January 2022.

Walis Nokan

Walis is a writer of Atayal (indigenous people of Taiwan) descent. During the 1990s he started publishing a magazine about indigenous culture and launched an Atayal literary style. The recipient of many literature prizes, *He Makes Another Survey* (1996) was a semi-finalist for the 19th China Times Literary Award. His work has been widely translated. He continues to play a leading role in the development of indigenous literature and the promotion of public awareness of indigenous history.

Alfian Sa'at

Alfian is a Resident Playwright with WILD RICE, one of Singapore's most recognized theatre companies. His published works include three collections of poetry, *One Fierce Hour*, *A History of Amnesia* and *The Invisible Manuscript*, a collection of short stories, *Corridor*, a collection of flash fiction, *Malay Sketches*, three collections of plays as well as the published play *Cooling-Off Day*. Alfian has been nominated eleven times for Best Original Script at the Life! Theatre Awards, eventually winning in 2005 for *Landmarks*, in 2010 for *Nadirah*, in 2013 for *Kakak Kau Punya Laki (Your Sister's Husband)*, and in 2016 for *Hotel* (coauthored with Marcia Vanderstraaten).

Lee Sul-Yaa

Born in Incheon, South Korea. She completed the doctoral program at the Department of Korean Language and Literature, Graduate School of General Studies, Inha University. She made her debut as a poet in 2011 with the "Writers Opening Tomorrow" New Poet Award, and in 2016 published her collection of poems *We Decided to Get Darker* (Changbi publishers). In 2017 she won the 1st "Gosan Literature Award" New Poet Award. She was the editor of the quarterly *Writers* from 2014 to 2019. In 2021, she discovered the life of the independence activist Kim Eungtae, who was the leader of the Kato Rice Mill Strike during the Japanese Emperor era, and introduced it in the "People's Oral" section of the *Writers*. Currently, she is working on a new collection of poems translated into Korean and English.

Anusorn Tipayanon

Anusorn Tipayanon was born in Bangkok, Thailand. He is a writer and was awarded the Mekhong Writer Award in 2019. His other published works include fictions such as *London Blue*, *8 1/2 Richters*, *Chunking Sexpress*, *Neutrino Romance*, *Cat in a Cold Flesh Heart*, *Misty Town* and *Wayang Amritsa*. Now he resides in the northeastern part of Thailand and eagerly researches about the food culture around there.