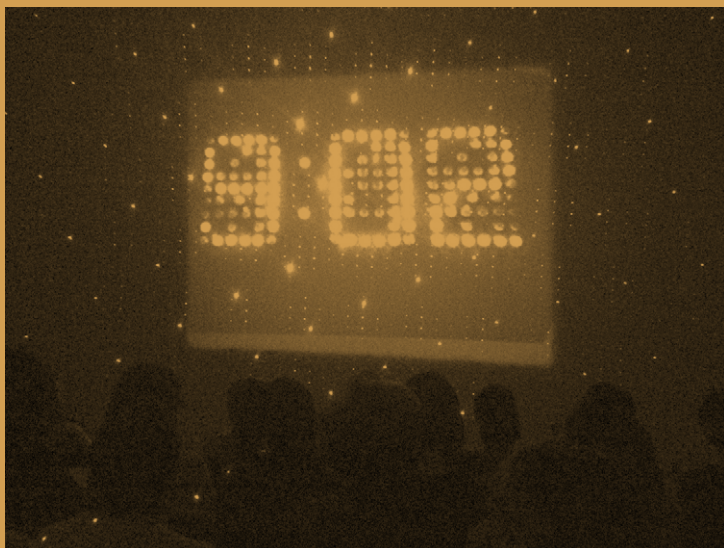


Edited by Go Hirasawa, Ann Adachi-Tasch, Julian Ross

Japanese Expanded Cinema and Intermedia:



Critical Texts of the 1960s

Archive Books

Japanese Expanded Cinema and Intermedia:

Critical Texts
of the 1960s



This and cover photo: Screening of *Phenomenology of Zeitgeist* (1967) by Miyai Rikurō at Tate Modern, 2016.
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Foreword

Ann Adachi-Tasch
Executive Director,
Collaborative Cataloging Japan

Japanese Expanded Cinema and Intermedia: Critical Texts of the 1960s is Collaborative Cataloging Japan's (CCJ) first publication project. Aimed at English-language readers with a serious interest in Japanese film experiments of the 1960s, the book is intended to make important texts more widely available and make this field more accessible to interested audiences. This project accompanies the research on Japanese Expanded Cinema that CCJ and our collaborators have been engaged with since 2016. The initiative first received support from the Andy Warhol Foundation through a Curatorial Fellowships grant, thanks to which CCJ conducted numerous interviews, archival research, film collection surveys, digitization of films, and commissioning of new essays. The culmination of this project is now taking shape in the form of an exhibition and this publication.

Since the start of this project and the launch of CCJ, two foundational collaborators have been its lead researchers: Go Hirasawa, Meiji Gakuin University; and Julian Ross, Leiden University and International Film Festival Rotterdam. In the process of advising CCJ, they have identified artists and collections that should take priority, working from the combined standpoint of research relevance and media conservation urgency. We have worked as a team with them with the shared mission of preserving this legacy. CCJ is deeply indebted to their tireless efforts not only to produce this book, but also to realize the many projects CCJ has

organized thus far since its founding in the fall of 2015. We wish to express our special gratitude to Go, who served as the co-editor as well as the lead advisor in this project and oversaw the selection of images, and to Julian, co-editor, whose expertise in reviewing translations was essential to this book.

It is important to note that this book was conceived with the notion that it may become a series. Many influential texts were omitted accordingly, and readers should keep in mind this book does not fully illustrate the landscape of Japanese Expanded Cinema and Intermedia.

The Japan-US Friendship Commission's belief in, and support of, this project, as well as our overall mission, is one of the reasons we have been able to produce many high-impact outcomes in a short span of time. We are also grateful to the National Endowment for the Arts, for contributing to the funds to produce this book. We are excited to partner with Archive Books (Berlin), and thankful that such a capable publisher has joined us to produce and distribute this book.

This volume would not have been possible without the generous support of the editor and copyeditor, Jennifer C. Cornwell, who meticulously reviewed most of the translated texts. Her tremendous in-kind help has provided this fledgling organization with a reliable and much-needed resource. We are also thankful to Rachel Valinsky for her skillful copyediting and advise at the final steps of the project. Her contribution was integral to the process. Our special acknowledgement goes to Reiko Tomii for providing guidance on style conventions, as well as encouragement throughout the project. Our translators for this project, Colin Smith and Yūzō Sakuramoto, carefully worked through the most difficult passages. Researcher Shūhei Hosoya provided efficient assistance for securing many of the images and their copyright permissions, and Akihiro Suzuki of SIG also supported this project. In addition,

I would like to acknowledge the vision and leadership of Hiroko Tasaka of the Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, in actively promoting this history to a large audience in Japan. We are lucky to have her support in all aspects of our projects.

Lastly, we thank all the represented artists, authors, institutions, and collections for allowing us to include and reproduce texts and images in this book.

Preservation, interpretation, and access form the core mission of Collaborative Cataloging Japan (CCJ), which supports Japanese experimental moving image through archival, exhibition, and publishing initiatives. As works on film and video continue to deteriorate, we are committed to helping to save important works of postwar Japanese avant-garde culture. For more information, please visit: <http://www.collabjapan.org/>

Note:

Japanese authors of the primary documents in this book are noted in Japanese form, family names first followed by given names, except for figures well known internationally by their given names first. The production staff of this book including the co-editors and translators appear with given names first.

Situating Intermedia and Expanded Cinema in 1960s Japan

Julian Ross

Introduction

Two prints of the same film are projected simultaneously and on top of one another. A few seconds delay separates the overlapping images, the resulting effect being one image appears as a ghost of the other, chasing its counterpart but never quite reaching it. Onscreen, a point-of-view perspective gives a gliding tour of a familiar city with its inhabitants occasionally joining in with on-street performances and happenings. Back at the site of projection, the artist, standing next to the 16mm projectors, is holding up several colored gels to give different color tones to the black-and-white images. As the projection takes place across approximately forty minutes, the artist introduces increasing numbers of colors, blocks the light with his hands, and alternates these interruptions against the light between the two projectors. A digital clock, with the time out of sync between the two projectors, fills the frame for the last few minutes until the two projectors run out of film one after the other.

What I describe here is what an audience might have seen on the first occasion that *Phenomenology of Zeitgeist* (*Jidai seishin no genshōgaku*, 1967), a performance with two analogue film projectors, was presented to the public in Jiyū gekijō in Tokyo, as part of their event series *The Underground in March* (*Sangatsu no angura*) in March 1967. Sandwiched between the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo and the 1970 World Exposition in Osaka, 1967

in Japan marks a period of economic ascendance years after their defeat against the Allied forces in World War II. Political unrest is on the rise as the re-signing of the Anpo US-Japan Security Treaty approaches: scheduled for 1970, this event is set to occur in a moment when American military forces are in Vietnam, universities have been exposed for their misappropriation of money, and farmers are being forcibly ejected from their land to build what will become Narita airport. Counterculture is in emergence as a symptom of social progress and unrest, with the streets becoming a stage for public performances and a site for casual hippie (*fūten*) hangouts. Miyai Rikurō, the artist responsible for *Phenomenology of Zeitgeist*, sits at the center of this whirlwind as a well-known hippie, regularly featured in magazines and interviewed on television as a representative of his generation, but also as an artist and critic active in shaping the discourse and practice of the Japanese art community, and particularly that of the emerging movement of Expanded Cinema that was to become an integral part of his and others' artistic practice in the years to come.

Despite being considered the first of a wave of works in Japanese Expanded Cinema to feature multiple projectors—a set-up frequently utilized by artists working in Expanded Cinema in Japan and elsewhere—both *Phenomenology of Zeitgeist* and Miyai Rikurō mostly go unmentioned in the recent historicization of expanded cinema in the English language. In the past ten or so years, many events and several publications have identified expanded cinema as an international phenomenon that transcended national boundaries in the 1960s and '70s with artists such as Carolee Schneemann, Stan VanDerBeek, Robert Whitman, Malcolm Le Grice, Lis Rhodes, and Valie Export broadly considered key figures of this movement. While Japanese artists at the time were traveling to and from other countries, the paucity of readily available information on their activities in expanded cinema, and the absence of texts on their works in a language other than Japanese has meant that their contributions to expanded cinema has been

mostly ignored. In the edited collection *Expanded Cinema: Art, Performance, Film* (Tate, 2011), the only Japanese artists mentioned were the Kansai-based artist collective Gutai, whose contributions to cinema beyond documenting their actions and activities were minimal, and Iimura Takahiko, whose artworks mentioned were only those made or presented outside of his home country. This kind of omission, though certainly not intentional, creates a dominant narrative that the movement existed primarily among Euro-American art circles and flattens not only the geographical scope the movement reached but also minimizes its impact on Japanese art.

Research and curatorial activities of recent years, such as those initiated by scholars of Japanese arts and cinema as well as members of Collaborative Cataloging Japan, including myself, have sought to highlight contributions made by Japanese artists to expanded cinema in order to shift its current historicization to incorporate a broader, international perspective. In their English-language writing on 1960s Japanese arts, Yuriko Furuhashi and Miryam Sas have both identified expanded cinema as an integral component of the period's artistic and critical discourse. Curatorial activities have similarly sought to introduce these works to a broader and international public. In 2016, Hirasawa Go and I co-curated the series *Throwing Shadows: Japanese Expanded Cinema in the Time of Pop* (January 2016), which was presented at Tate Modern (with co-curator George Clark) and International Film Festival Rotterdam, alongside an academic symposium at the University of Westminster. In this series, the artists Miyai Rikurō, Shūzō Azuchi Gulliver, and Okuyama Jun'ichi were invited to reenact their historical works of expanded cinema that were originally performed in Japan in the 1960s and '70s to audiences in Europe for the first time. A year later, with Hirasawa and I as curatorial advisors, the Tokyo Photographic Art Museum in Ebisu launched the exhibition *Japanese Expanded Cinema Revisited* (August 15–October 15, 2017), which, for the first time in Japan, provided a comprehensive

account of the existence of this historical movement in its local art and film history. We also curated smaller scale performance and exhibition presentations on Japanese Expanded Cinema at Eye Filmmuseum (Amsterdam), the Art Institute of Chicago, and BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts (Brussels). As these works encountered a public for the first time in years, museums began to express their interest in acquiring them for their collections, ensuring the preservation of these works in art history and hopefully for those curious in the future. The collective efforts of our work as Collaborative Cataloging Japan, led by Ann Adachi-Tasch, have sought to identify the location and conditions of the film materials for Japanese works of expanded cinema, which had been historically neglected as neither the film archive nor the art museum considered them to fall under their curatorial remit, occupying a space between the disciplinary boundaries of film, performance, and installation. In a sense, the description of *Phenomenology of Zeitgeist* that opened this introductory chapter was only made possible to imagine through these efforts: firstly, through the archival research that located original descriptions of the performance; secondly, through an extensive interview with the artist; and finally, through staging a reenactment of the performance by the artist in the contemporary context.

As more attention has been placed on works of Japanese Expanded Cinema, it has become necessary to situate them within the local context in which they emerged. To simply apply the definitions of terms such as “intermedia” and “expanded cinema” as they pertain to the American and European discourse would be to reduce the critical debates involving these terms upon and after their arrival into the Japanese art community. With this in mind, we asked ourselves: What was the critical and artistic context in which Expanded Cinema became a phenomenon in Japan? How were Japanese critics analyzing these works and how were event organizers promoting them? How did Japanese artists describe their own and other peers’ works? While Japanese artists

and critics used the terms “intermedia” and “expanded cinema” as loanwords, the interpretation of the terms often varied according to who used them. On the one hand, these terms were often discussed in relation, often in comparison or in contrast, to the debate on media interaction and interdisciplinary practice predating the arrival of the two terms. On the other hand, “intermedia” and “expanded cinema” became terms of convenience to legitimize new work or theoretical approaches by placing one’s critical stance within a global context or qualifying a statement by aligning it with an international movement. Moreover, the terms themselves negotiated different interpretations within their birthplace of the United States and beyond, and in many ways continue to do so. Parsing through the particularities of the critical discourse on “intermedia” and “expanded cinema” within Japan became necessary in order to ensure that dominance of the English language interpretations of the terms isn’t assumed, especially with regards to the analysis of local case studies.

This desire to bring the Japanese discourse on “intermedia” and “expanded cinema” into the broader discussion on 1960s and ’70s experimental arts and expanded cinema was the genesis of this book project. Rather than assuming the interpretations of the terms were the same as their counterparts abroad, we decided to commission translations of a selection of key texts that we felt were instrumental in shaping the specific discourse around these terms. While we consider the choices to have been made with care, they are by no means meant to be comprehensive, and we of course welcome any further commitments to identifying and translating key texts on the subject. The essays selected are written by an assortment of figures in the Japanese art scene ranging from artists who themselves practiced expanded cinema, such as Imura Takahiko, Miyai Rikurō, Jōnouchi Motoharu, and Manabe Hiroshi, to critics like Satō Jūshin and Ishiko Junzō, in an effort to demonstrate the texts were neither anomalies nor debates held in isolated cliques. The printed matter in which these essays were

originally published were similarly varied. As the notion of intermedia and the practice of expanded cinema touched on different artistic disciplines, texts were published in magazines in the different fields of architecture (*Shōten Kenchiku* [Commercial architecture]), design (*SD* [Space Design]), art (*SAC Journal* and *Bijutsu Techō* [Art notebook]) and cinema (*Eizō Geijutsu* [Image arts], *Eiga Geijutsu* [Film art], *Eiga Hihyō* [Film criticism], and *Kikan Firumu* [Film quarterly], among others). Not only that, key texts on the subject were published on posters, flyers, and other ephemera printed on the occasion and for the promotion of several events that took place and that are broadly considered to have been integral to the discussion on intermedia and expanded cinema. While printed matter of this kind is often denied importance, it arguably shaped how audiences—including the artists themselves and the critics—experienced the artworks in a more impactful way, as they were directly accessible to the attendees, unlike magazines and journals.¹ Our selection of critical texts also includes several articles that predate the arrival of the terms “intermedia” and “expanded cinema,” even in the United States, and certainly in Japan. Their inclusion was important in order to acknowledge the existence of discussions surrounding the subject before it got crystallized, as well as to paint a picture of the context in which these terms were imported. In some cases, as will be discussed later, Intermedia and Expanded Cinema, written in *katakana*, were distinguished as loanwords, giving the writer an opportunity to use these terms to be in dialogue with the latest international and contemporaneous discourse on the arts. Whether the articles were for publication within the pages of journals or on the pamphlet of an event series, the writer’s position and their intention must be

¹ Here I acknowledge the work of our colleague Uesaki Sen, ex-archivist at Keio University Art Center, who handled documents related to Sōgetsu Art Center in their archive and was instrumental in setting up the online publication of these ephemera as part of the launch of post (<https://post.at.moma.org/>), the online platform for C-MAP (Contemporary and Modern Art Perspectives), an internal research initiative by the Museum of Modern Art, to which Ann Adachi-Tasch, Hirasawa Go, and I contributed. In his role as archivist and researcher, Uesaki is concerned with the temporality of ephemera, particularly as it pertains to events, and that promotional materials shouldn’t be considered historical evidence of what took place at an event as it was printed prior to it taking place.

acknowledged in all these cases: much of these texts were written to advocate a certain way of understanding the terms rather than analyzing them, which may account for why so many artists practicing expanded cinema wrote about it.² In this sense, the way “intermedia” and “expanded cinema” were discussed and practiced was mutually reciprocal and influential. On the one hand, the works categorized as expanded cinema directly impacted upon how these terms were interpreted; on the other hand, the discussion of the terms themselves influenced the forms and approaches expanded cinema would take.

Often presented as one-off events and leaving sparse documentation, expanded cinema is a challenging object of historical study. Incorporating characteristics of film, performance, and installation, expanded cinema has rarely been preserved, archived, or even documented. The common route for cinema would be for a work to enter a distribution catalogue and eventually a film archive. In the case of an artwork, the art object would usually be sold or donated to a private collection or a museum collection by the artist or his or her representation (whether a gallery or an estate). While it remains a challenge, performance works have more recently been acquired into collections, together with the necessary instructions, materials, and documentation. Although expanded cinema could enter museum collections in a similar ways, one of the reasons this has been prevented is the lack of resources and experience in handling film material in most art institutions and museums; at the same time, film archives similarly lack the expertise in handling the complexities of performance and installations. Lost in between, expanded cinema from around the world is suffering a crisis of preservation, especially considering that historical works on analogue film are vulnerable to deterioration

2 This is also a reflection of the Japanese art community in the 1960s and '70s, where artists participated in critical discourse as editors, writers, and participants of panel discussions that were transcribed and published. For example, Iimura Takahiko and Matsumoto Toshio were both on the editorial board of *Kikan Film* [Film quarterly] as well as being regular contributors.

unless kept in the appropriate climate and conditions. Its continual disregard by the industry has meant it often gets devalued and eventually forgotten.

Even when the film material has survived, other challenges await. As works of expanded cinema were mostly conceived for the artist to present it themselves, it is more than often the case that little documentation has been left of the performance. Miyai Rikurō's *Phenomenology of Zeitgeist*, for example, is a case in point. Miyai had let go of most of his belongings when he left for India in 1976, only to return thirty years later to Japan in 2010. As such, very little material on his work as an artist remains intact: luckily, a film print of *Phenomenology of Zeitgeist* had been kept by Katō Yoshihiro, founder of the artist group Zero Jigen [Zero Dimension], presumably as it features the group's street performance as part of the footage. It was through archival research and interviews with the artists that we were able to ascertain the film was part of a multi-projection performance. In such cases, we must rely on the remnants of the event to piece together an impression of the performance: from diagrams and instructions; any materials used in the performance; promotional materials and other ephemera; reviews and reports published at the time or thereafter; photographic documentation; memories of the artist, other participants of the performance and event, and other visitors. We are often lucky to have any of the above accessible to us fifty years later. In this situation where documentation is sparse, texts and articles discussing the broader subject of expanded cinema are instrumental in providing another insight into the works themselves, and the translations of these texts into English not only widens their access but also enables a fuller understanding of where these works came from, ephemeral as they are. As such, we consider these translations to be an extension and contribution to the cataloging work we are doing as Collaborative Cataloging Japan. The following pages will be dedicated to negotiating the terminologies of "intermedia" and "expanded cinema" in the Japanese context

in order to provide an insight into the critical discourse in which they participated and were influenced by.

Intermedia

Intermedia as a theoretical framework has been increasingly prominent in art and film history across recent years and can be loosely framed as a discourse on interactions between media, or artistic disciplines, that are usually considered separate and in isolation. The approach chimes with the increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary research in academic circles, which often materialize as cross-departmental research projects, and encourages the sharing of analytical tools and knowledge among disciplines. For many years, various terminologies had been used to describe media interactions of a slightly different emphasis, often reflecting on the research discipline from which the writer came from: intertextuality, often used by literary scholars, positioned “texts” to be in dialogue with one another (Kristeva 1967/1980; Lehtonen 2001); interartiality, which described the interrelations between artistic disciplines (Clüver 1996; Greenblatt 1997); and multimodality, often used by media scholars, usually designated the accumulation of multiple media in an artistic presentation. In more recent years, the terms “intermedia” and “intermediality” have caught currency to describe and analyze, broadly speaking, interactions between different media or artistic disciplines. What distinguishes the theoretical framework of intermedia from its predecessors may be that it is used across the academic disciplines of literature (Wolf 2005; Rajewsky 2005), performance (Kattenbelt 2006; Bay-Cheng et al. 2010), cinema (Pethő 2011; Jerslev and Nagib 2013), and film and video (Houwen 2017), appropriately for a term that shouldn’t be privileging a medium over another. While it has found increasing relevance in the past two decades, particularly within European academic circles, the notion of “intermedia” has existed since

the 1960s. Most texts hark back to the writing of Dick Higgins, a Fluxus artist, who was active in the New York art community. His essay “Intermedia,” published in 1966 as part of a newsletter for limited circulation for Something Else Press, the small publishing house he found in 1963 for experimental literature, is widely cited as the first to promote the term. Most likely unbeknownst to him, intermedia had traveled beyond language barriers and was enthusiastically picked up by Japanese artists and critics. As demonstrated in the publication of the *Handbook of Intermediality: Literature – Image – Sound – Music* (2015), published as part of De Gruyter’s Handbook of English and American Studies series, the historicization and interpretations of the term more often than not neglects its widespread influence across languages and locally-specific interpretations.

Intermedia arrived into the Japanese critical discourse soon after it was coined by Dick Higgins. The term found its way to Japan relatively quickly despite the geographical distance and language barriers because there was a proximity between the art communities of Japan and the United States and, in particular, Tokyo and New York. Travel abroad increased as the economy stabilized in the postwar years, and increasingly so when the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 abolished the quota system for traveling abroad. Many artists, in their young age, traveled to New York to study and several made the trip through seminar and fellowship programs, such as the International Seminar at Harvard University and the Japan Society Visiting Artist Fellowship.³ Migration away from Japan and to New York was particularly common among women artists who struggle to get their work recognized in their home country and sought acceptance elsewhere. These artists include Yoko Ono, Yayoi Kusama, Shigeko Kubota, Idemitsu

3 limura Takahiko and artist Kanesaka Kenji first traveled to the United States through their acceptance into the International Seminar at Harvard University. limura extended his stay through the Japan Society Visiting Artist Fellowship.

Mako, Shiomi Mieko, and Saitō Takako.⁴ The Japanese artists Akiyama Kuniharu, Ay-O, Ichianagi Toshi, Kosugi Takehisa, Shigeko Kubota, Yoko Ono, Saitō Takako, Shiomi Mieko, and Tone Yasunao were involved in the international network Fluxus as members and, upon their return to Japan, shared their peers' works at events such as *Fluxus Week* at Gallery Crystal, Tokyo (September 8, 9, 11, and 14, 1965).⁵ Due to their close affiliation with the New York-based Fluxus community, several Japanese artists and critics inherited the term "intermedia," most likely directly through Higgins. That being said, as far as we can ascertain, the first instance of the use of the term "intermedia" in Japanese print was in an article published in December 1966 and written by Iimura Takahiko, a filmmaker with some affinity with Fluxus through pre-existing relationships he had with Japanese artists before arriving in New York.⁶ In the article "Special Report! Seismic Rumbles from the Underground," Iimura reports on the latest works by artists Stan VanDerBeek, Robert Whitman, and the artist group USCO, as well as his experience visiting a discotheque in San Francisco, for the Japanese film magazine *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism]. While the journal covered a wider scope of arts beyond cinema, its primary coverage was on cinema, and specifically on experimental film. In the article, Iimura spells the word "intermedia" in its *katakana* rendering three different ways, which indicates there wasn't yet consensus on how to spell its Japanese iteration, probably as it was the first instance in which it was written for a Japanese readership. He also conflated the

4 Midori Yoshimoto provides an account of Japanese women artists in New York in her book *Into Performance: Japanese Women Artists in New York* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005). The lack of opportunities in Japan for women artists may also explain the absence of women from Japanese discussions on Intermedia and Expanded Cinema and the fact that there were barely any women artists whose work at the time could be categorized as expanded cinema.

5 The event series was co-organized by Ichianagi Toshi, Yamaguchi Katsuhiro and Akiyama Kuniharu and involved performances by Shiomi Mieko, a concert by Ichianagi, Akiyama, Takemitsu Tōru, Tone Yasunao and an event by Yamaguchi. The event series also included a film screening, which included a film by Dick Higgins as well as Nam June Paik and Japanese animator Kuri Yōji.

6 Iimura's films *Ai* (Love, 1962–63) and *Kuzu* (Junk, 1962) include a soundtrack by Yoko Ono and Kosugi Takehisa, respectively. Iimura and Kosugi worked together again later for Iimura's film *New York Day and Night* (1989).

term “intermedia” with “expanded cinema,” and suggested it was used synonymously (1966/2013). His position as a filmmaker, the publication’s primary remit as a cinema magazine, and Iimura’s interpretation of the term, arguably dictated the initial conception of “intermedia” to have a deep relation with cinema, which continued to be prevalent in the discourse on the terms thereon. This can be seen across the three main events that took place between 1967 and 1969 in Tokyo with the use of the word “intermedia” in their title: *Intermedia*, an event series that took place at Lunami Gallery, May 23–28, 1967; Intermedia Art Festival, which took place in the discotheque Killer Joe’s, January 18–19, 1969, and at Nikkei Hall on January 21, 1969; and, finally, *Cross Talk / Intermedia*, which was presented at Yoyogi Gymnasium, February 5–7, 1969.

The first event, *Intermedia*, was co-organized by Satō Jūshin, editor of *Eiga Hyōron*, and the magazine’s contributing writer Ishizaki Kōichirō. While Iimura wasn’t involved in the organization of this event series, the fact that his article was published in this journal establishes some affiliation. Ishizaki conceived the event series as a continuation of his film screening series *Lunami Film Gallery*, which he presented four times between January and April 1966, a year prior to the event *Intermedia*.⁷ The pamphlet published for this event includes several essays, translated for this book, which sought to define the newly established term “intermedia,” in recognition of the fact that most Japanese audiences would not have understood its meaning in that moment. Works that were presented at this event series were categorized into four sections: fine art; happening; expanded cinema; and cinema. Nevertheless, 18 out of 27 participants presented works that involved film projection, indicating the strong affinity between the Japanese conception of “intermedia” and cinema. The Fluxus affiliation also remained

7 In the second part of the series, Jōnouchi Motoharu presented *VAN Document* (1966), which was described as a “Happening-film” on the flyer and involved the artist interrupting the projection of his film with his body and whipping the wall during the projection. Performances such as these would later be described as “intermedia” or “expanded cinema.”

intact through the participation of artists like Tone Yasunao and the projection of *Easily Burnable Ears* (*Moeyasui mimi*, 1963) by Kanesaka Kenji in the form of a happening that incorporated a performance based on the event score *Licking Piece* (1964) by Fluxus founder Benjamin Patterson, wherein the instructions outlined for a woman's body to be covered with whipped cream. Kanesaka interrupted his own film with this "event," covering the model Hijiri Chiko, considered to be Japan's Twiggy at the time, with whipped cream and inviting his audience and other participants to lick it off her.

Intermedia Arts Festival, which took place almost two years later, was similarly indebted to the interpretation of intermedia that derived from Fluxus activities. Organized by Tone Yasunao, a Fluxus member, four out of the five Japanese artists, including Tone, had been temporarily based in New York and had participated in Fluxus. Events by Fluxus artists George Brecht, Jackson Mac Low, Ben Vautier, Tomas Schmit, Nam June Paik, and Dick Higgins were presented as part of the festival by local artists based on their event scores. The infamous photograph of Dick Higgins performing *Danger Music No. 17* (1962) can be seen on the poster design of Intermedia Arts Festival. While the Fluxus events were relatively simple and used sparse equipment, several of the other performances involved electronic media and were works of comparatively larger scale. Shūzō Azuchi Gulliver's *Cinematic Illumination* (1968–1969), for example, was a work involving eighteen carousel slide projectors synchronized using technology for lighting display. In this work that he made at the young age of nineteen, the projectors were pointed towards all the inner walls of the discotheque and created an immersive environment.⁸ Even more inclined toward this direction was *Cross Talk / Intermedia*, an event series co-organized by American composers Karen Reynolds and Roger Reynolds with

8 The works presented by Tone Yasunao and Kosugi Takehisa similarly involved electronic media, specifically music, indicating the direction in which their endeavours in music were heading.

Japanese composers Akiyama Kuniharu and Yuasa Jōji. *Cross Talk* was a concert series organized by the Reynoldses through the American Cultural Center to showcase contemporary music from Japan and the United States in a kind of exchange. Sponsored by Pepsi, the free event series brought intermedia into the mainstream and brought to mind the activities of E.A.T., Experiments in Art and Technology, and their event series *9 Evenings: Theater and Engineering* for its ambition and scope, as well as the fact that the electronic companies Sony, Pioneer, and TEAC Corporation were directly involved in the loaning and invention of equipment for the purposes of several performances. The resulting event involved a series of large scale presentations in a gymnasium that was used for the 1964 Summer Olympics, including projections onto large inflatables in the form of *Projection for Icon* (*Icon no tame no projection*, 1969) by Matsumoto Toshio and *Circles* (1969) by Iimura Takahiko in collaboration with musician Alvin Lucier. In just two years, the scale of the locations in which Intermedia was presented moved from the small confines of a gallery to a sports gymnasium.

In such ways, *Cross Talk / Intermedia* illustrated the shift in interpretation of the term “intermedia” towards a larger scale presentation of multiple media with which it would later become associated. This was by no means a shift that was only taking place in Japan. In the United States, intermedia had come to designate “an offshoot of expanded cinema characterized by all-encompassing, disorienting mass spectacles of multisensorial media collage incorporating architecture, sound, projected light and film, strobes, and sometimes tactile and olfactory stimuli as well” (Harren 2015). The media collective USCO, among other artists, took part in the touring festival Intermedia ’68 that characterized the type of intermedia that sought to channel, recreate, and for some of its audience, accompany, drug-induced psychedelic experiences through multisensorial and immersive audiovisual presentations. These works broke away from the traditional approach of keeping the audience at bay from the artwork; rather, brought

audiences in as active participants. While some of the works presented somewhat aligned with this type of standpoint, Intermedia Arts Festival was in part conceived by artist Tone Yasunao as a response to the apolitical spectacle that he saw Intermedia was becoming. Strategically planning the event a few weeks before *Cross Talk / Intermedia*, Tone saw the lack of criticality in the new direction that intermedia was taking as a misinterpretation. In describing his reading of Intermedia, Tone twice invoked his viewing experience of the experimental film *Arnulf Rainer* (1960) by Austrian filmmaker Peter Kubelka. The film is considered canonical in the subgenre of “flicker films” as it is entirely comprised of black and clear film leader that alternates at different rhythms to create a flicker effect. As it hones in on light and shadow as the essential qualities of cinema, and through only film material, the film’s purist approach may appear at odds with the notion of intermedia commonly understood as the fusion between the arts. Nevertheless, Tone considered the ways in which the oscillation between black and clear film leader lit up the screening space to be “Intermedia,” as it established a link between the work, the space, and the audience within it. He referred to this coexistence as *zentai sei* (totality).⁹ Rather than a simple interaction between distinct media, Tone felt works of Intermedia, such as those he brought together for Intermedia Arts Festival, invited the body of the audience member or exhibition visitor into the interrelational dynamics. As such, Tone felt art and society to be inextricably linked and saw Intermedia as a political method to highlight this interrelation. Dick Higgins similarly went on to see intermedia as political. As Nathalie Harren describes, Higgins uses more overtly political language in his essay “Statement on Intermedia” (Higgins 1966), his second text on the concept, writing on the “dialectics between the media” and calling for intermedia to go beyond formal questions and assert its social dimension.

⁹ Tone discusses *Arnulf Rainer* in the context of intermedia (Tone 1967, 104 and 1968, 83). Tone recalled a screening of *Arnulf Rainer* at Minami Gallery, Tokyo, during the exhibition of *Arnulf Rainer's* work in 1962 (Saitō et al. 1970, 66).

Proponents of Intermedia in Japan, in line with Tone's stance, called for an active spectatorship that participated in the shaping of the work. In dance critic Ichikawa Miyabi's point of view, the audience were witnesses to "accidents" in the event of experiencing a work of Intermedia (1969, 70). Proposing that Intermedia resulted in "unforeseen worlds where individual (*ko*) and totality (*zentaisei*) are no longer in contradiction" (1971, 123), Ichikawa, like Tone, considered the audience a part of the interrelational dynamics that come into play in Intermedia. As such, the potential Intermedia had for Ichikawa was the undetermined nature of the outcome in an intermedial event. Rather than a totality that brings together all participating media into one whole, Ichikawa suggested intermedia brought about a "scattered totality (*bara-bara zentaisei*)" (1971, 123), where the individual media remain intact in the process of mixing with others. If the audience members are a component that take part, as Ichikawa suggests, they remain critical observers rather than being insouciantly caught up in total immersion. Ichikawa grew to become frustrated with the Japanese interpretation of intermedia, particularly as it neglected dance, a physical form of expression that is often disregarded in the mass spectacle that Intermedia was becoming in some circles. As such, he turned to the notion of "expanded," which resonated with expanded cinema, and which was similarly rooted in Fluxus through George Maciunas' *Expanded Arts Diagram* (1966). On March 21, 1970, Ichikawa organized the Expanded Art Festival at the Kishi Memorial Gymnasium in Shibuya, Tokyo, where he invited the all-women dance troupe Kuni Chiya Dance Institute (Kuni Chiya Buyō Kenkyūjyo) and the dancers Atsugi Bonjin and Ishii Mitsutake, as well as Iimura, who presented the film performance *Floating* (1970). Iimura's performance involved three projections of black film leader loops onto which projectionists made holes using a hole-puncher until the film snapped. Projecting onto black pneumatic balloons made by artist Ōnishi Seiji, the light shining through the holes appeared as momentary circular flashes in the dark. Leaving the work in the hands of other projectionists

and some serendipity, Iimura decentered himself as an artist and the audience bore witness to what Ichikawa would call an “accident,” or, an act of Intermedia.

In part, Ichikawa’s interpretations of intermedia were influenced by the time he spent in New York between 1966 and 1968, precisely when intermedia was garnering a lot of attention. Nonetheless, his stance regarding intermedia in that period was informed by the critical discussions on media interaction that took place in Japan prior to the arrival of the terminology in the mid-1960s. In the 1950s, this discussion was characterized by the term *sōgō geijutsu* (synthesis arts, or, total work of art). Indeed, in his short essay published as part of the pamphlet for Lunami Gallery’s event series *Intermedia*, critic Ishiko Junzō reminded his readers that the synthesis between commonly separated media, or genres (*gyanru*) as it is often referred to in Japan, had already been a discussion point around *sōgō geijutsu*. Yet, in some ways, Ichikawa and others, including Tone, were positioning themselves and their critical stance on intermedia in relation both to the previous generation and their debates on the and to their American counterparts. In part, Japanese artists and critics saw in intermedia a way to pave a new path in the discussion around media interaction away from *sōgō geijutsu* of the 1950s. According to critic Yoshida Yoshie, the animator Manabe Hiroshi declared he “distrusts” in what he called “half-breed infants” born from *sōgō geijutsu* (Yoshida 1970, 4). The statement, albeit a paraphrased recollection from Yoshida, harks back to a cartoon Manabe drew to accompany his 1960 article “Calculation Time” (*Keisan no jikan*) in *SAC Journal*, the publication of the Sōgetsu Art Center. In this article, he critiqued the idea of synthesis (*sōgō*) with a drawing of two figures with a pair of breasts each, a plus sign between them, and an equal sign after them, revealing a figure with four breasts, suggesting that *sōgō* can lead to deformities and simply juxtaposing media doesn’t always lead to productive outcomes. In the same year, Manabe presented his projection experiment *Marine Snow: Animation for the*

Stage (Marin sunō: Butai no tame no animēshon, 1960) at Sōgetsu Art Center where his animated film was interrupted by dancers, a Noh performer Kanze Hideo, and live performances of tape music from NHK Radio during the projection. The composition of the work can be seen as a precedent to the works of expanded cinema that emerged later in the same decade. Another early example of expanded cinema is the presentation *Document 6.15* by members of the VAN Film Science Research Center (VAN Eiga Kagaku Kenkyūjo), a collective space set up in 1960 by students and ex-students of the Nihon University Film Study Club, a.k.a. Nichidai Eiken (Nihon Daigaku Eiga Kenkyūkai), including Adachi Masao and Jōnouchi Motoharu. In 1961, the All-Japan League of Student Self-Government (Zengakuren) commissioned VAN to make the film as an ode to student protestor Kanba Michiko who had died during protest activities on June 15, 1960. Described as a precursor to intermedia events by Go Hirasawa (2002, 108), the projection of the film involved other elements, such as tape recordings and slide and light projection, all presented in asynchronous disarray, which was implemented to interrupt what was to be the public announcement to disband Bundo, a strand of Zengakuren, and instead incite the presenters and the attending public into another rally. As such, the political crux of Intermedia to instigate a critical spectatorship and stimulate audiences into participation was achieved to a degree many years prior to the arrival and subsequent discussion of the term. With Adachi, Jōnouchi, and to a lesser extent, Manabe, remaining active artists and critical voices in the Japanese art community of the late 1960s, the political potential they saw in the fusion between different media informed the ways in which Intermedia was discussed later in the decade.

The critical discussions on the terms “intermedia” and “expanded cinema” were somewhat short-lived. By 1970, intermedia became broadly associated with the advanced technology and scale of Expo ’70, the 1970 World Exposition in Osaka, for which many artists involved in the debates on Intermedia and Expanded

Cinema went on to be involved in as commissioned artists. Their decisions caused quite a controversy among the Japanese art community as the event was seen to be wrapped in a nationalist and industrialist agenda, with many historians considering the event to mark an ending for the postwar Japanese avant-garde. Intermedia is broadly considered to have vanished with it. Performance historian KuroDalaiJee suggests that Intermedia became “an apolitical spectacle with more high-tech equipment, grand exhibition spaces and large-scale funding—no longer *angura* or avant-garde” (2010, 82). His evaluation may be somewhat reductive, however, as Intermedia continued to be utilized by artists against Expo ’70 and, at times, after 1970. Expo ’70 Destruction Joint-Struggle Group (Banpaku Hakai Kyōtō-ha), comprised of Zero Jigen [Zero Dimension] group, the film collective 8 Generation, and others, called their first event *8 Generation + Intermedia Show*, presented at Theater 36 in Nagoya, February 22-23, 1969. Nonetheless, the term “intermedia” gradually lost its currency in the Japanese art community, whose interests shifted towards video art and installation, both of which conceptually overlap with Intermedia and Expanded Cinema but in their infancy usually concerned projects smaller in scale and spectacle than the works with which the two terms became associated. Nevertheless, Intermedia and Expanded Cinema, both as critical approach and artistic practice, left an indelible mark in a period of Japanese art history that is broadly considered to be one of its most dynamic moments in the wake of its postwar reemergence. Despite the burgeoning interest in academic and curatorial circles in this period of Japanese art history, the paucity of readily available material in a language other than Japanese has meant the local context, particularly the ways in which the terms were critically debated, was somewhat neglected. The texts selected in this book are ones that deal with Intermedia and Expanded Cinema firsthand. Through these translations, our hope is that Japanese debates on intermedia can contribute to international discourse, and that works of Japanese Expanded Cinema can be preserved, reenacted and analyzed with these discussions in mind.

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Intermedia

Introduction

Go Hirasawa

In Japan, the terms “expanded cinema” and “intermedia” were introduced, extensively discussed, and popularized, primarily in film and art journals, by filmmaker Iimura Takahiko, film and art critic Ishizaki Kōichirō, film critics Kanesaka Kenji and Satō Jūshin, musician Tone Yasunao, filmmaker Matsumoto Toshio, designer Awazu Kiyoshi, and others. The universality, or distinctive and original character, of various interdisciplinary art activities such as rituals, happenings, events, festivals, *Sōgō Geijutsu* (*Gesamtkunstwerk* or the “total work of art”), anti-art, and environments was reexamined through the lens of these expanded cinema and intermedia categorizations. In the context of intermedia, the term first used by Fluxus artist Dick Higgins, the existing field of film was just one of many media, but in Japan, expanded cinema and intermedia were inextricably connected due in large part to the fact that the film world played a central role in introducing them to Japan.

In May 1967 at Lunami Gallery in Ginza, Tokyo, a seven-day event entitled “Intermedia” took place, and was divided into five sections: painting, happenings, expanded cinema, film, and symposium. It was planned by Ishizaki at the request of gallery owner Namikawa Emiko, and was an endeavor to expand the activities of Lunami Film Gallery, a series of experimental film screenings already being held at the same space. This was the first project in Japan labeled with the term “intermedia.” The happenings section featured Tone, Kanesaka, and Miyuki Minako, the expanded cinema section filmmakers Adachi Masao, Jōnouchi Motoharu, Miyai Rikurō, Tomita Katsuhiro, and Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, the film

section Imura Takahiko, Donald Richie, Noda Shinkichi, and Yokoo Tadanori, and the painting section Ōnishi Seiji and Okabe Michio, among others. Ishizaki wrote “An Introduction for Intermedia” (Intermedia maesetsu) for the project’s pamphlet, critiquing the conventional concept of the “sōgō” (total), which entails combining existing fields of art, and advocating the new potential of “intermedia.” In addition, Kanesaka, critics Ishiko Junzō and Akatsuka Yukio, and co-organizer Satō each contributed short texts.

Incidentally, the concept of *Sōgō Geijutsu* was advocated in the 1950s by Hanada Kiyoteru and others endeavoring to synthesize multiple artistic disciplines, including film. The group Experimental Workshop (Jikken Kōbō), whose members were artists and critics working in a variety of disciplines including musicians Yuasa Jōji and Takemitsu Tōru, photographer Ōtsuji Kiyoji, critic Akiyama Kuniharu, and filmmaker Yamaguchi Katsuhiro, were at the forefront of this movement in both theory and practice. Then, in November 1966, thirty-eight artists and critics including art critics Takiguchi Shūzō and Tōno Yoshiaki, architect Isozaki Arata, musician Ichihyanagi Toshi, Yamaguchi, and Awazu gathered under the group name of Environment Society (Enbairamento no Kai) to hold the exhibition and event program *From Space to Environment* (*Kūkan kara kankyō e*, November 1966). Many of the group members were involved in Jikken Kōbō, but instead of the previous model of combining multiple disciplines, the concept of *environment* was placed front and center, and environmental art would form a bridge from *synthesis* (sōgō) to *intermedia*.

These new attempts lead to the activities at Lunami Gallery, followed by endeavors carried on in underground cinemas, theaters, halls, galleries, and elsewhere. *EX•POSE 1968: Say Something I’m Trying* (*EX•POSE 1968: Nanika ittekure, ima, sagasu*), held in April 1968 at the Sōgetsu Art Center in collaboration with the journal *Design Hihyō* [Design criticism], was a



Both images: Jōnouchi Motoharu performance at Lunami Gallery, 1967, Photographer unknown. Collection of Namikawa Emiko

seminal event incorporating expanded cinema, film screenings, slideshows, theater, music, poetry, improvisatory painting, happenings, psychedelic shows, symposia, and more, over five days.

Meanwhile, in parallel with this loosely defined artistic movement, new spaces emerged in response to the psychedelic revolution, including discotheques, clubs, performance spaces, bars, and cafés such as L.S.D. and Angura Pop in Shinjuku, Killer Joe's in Ginza, and MUGEN and Space Capsule in Akasaka, which played an important role as new venues for staging screenings, light shows, happenings and more.



Performance during Intermedia, Lunami Gallery, 1967. Photographer unknown. Collection of Namikawa Emiko

In January 1969 the Intermedia Arts Festival was held at Killer Joe's and Nikkei Hall, organized by former members of Group Ongaku including Tone and the musicians Kosugi Takehisa and Shiomi Mieko. Under the direction of Miyai and with design by architect Hayata Yasuhiro, Killer Joe's had its ceiling, walls, and pillars covered with silver vinyl, and illustrations by animator and designer Tanaami Keiichi were projected with slide and overhead projectors on motorized walls that moved up and down. Shūzō Azuchi Gulliver's *Cinematic Illumination* (1968–69), which premiered at the festival, featured 1,440 images projected over a

360-degree span with eighteen slide projectors, capitalizing on the unique space and its facilities. The main focus was a sequence of a moving male body shot at 16mm, blown up to 35mm, and film was cut up frame by frame in the form of slides, while other images, flashing on and off like holiday lights, showed close-ups of his face and body, the bustle of the city, and clippings from weekly magazines. Rather than in existing, conventional movie theaters, Gulliver presented his work at discotheques and clubs, and through his conceptual pieces and performances, reexamined various aspects of the environment surrounding film. This work explored the zone between photography and film and questioned what moving image media is by projecting twenty-four still images per second on a screen to create the afterimage effect of an illusion of motion, rendering this structure visible with a 360-degree screen. The “Intermedia Arts Festival Statement” is a manifesto Tone wrote for this event. Fluxus intermedia experiments, in the form of reperformances of John Cage, Nam June Paik, Higgins, and others, resonated with the newly emerging discotheques and underground culture, opening up new horizons beyond existing art forms.

Meanwhile, in February 1969, Akiyama, Yuasa, and Roger Reynolds organized *Cross Talk / Intermedia* with the sponsorship of the American Cultural Center, and filmmaker Stan VanDerBeek, Matsumoto, Imura, Ichianagi, Takemitsu, and many other Japanese and American artists were invited to conduct spectacular media experiments. This sort of state-of-the-art, technologically mediated state capitalist cultural intervention and fragmentation reached a peak at Expo '70 Osaka, which lasted from March to September 1970. The progression of artistic maturation was inversely proportional to the broadly-defined Japanese avant-garde art movement which began to wane. “Does Art Exist for the Sake of Industrial Cooperation? Comprehensive Review of *Cross Talk / Intermedia*” (Geijutsu wa sangyō kyōryoku no tame ni aruka—*Cross Talk / Intermedia sōhyō*) was a text for *Cross Talk* written by

Ishiko, which critiqued the current state of the Intermedia movement in Japan, originally led by independent artists, as having prioritized the expansion of modes of expression and aesthetic experimentation to such an extent that it was co-opted by industrial capital.

Another text, “Extreme Cinema” (*Eiga no kyokuchihyōgen*), was written by Satō Jūshin for Tanaami Keiichi and photographer Hara Eizaburō’s collaborative book *Kyozō mirai zukan* [Illustrated book of imaginary tomorrow]. Introducing the concept of “Extreme Cinema,” he discussed experimental films by underground artists such as Andy Warhol, Michael Snow, Tony Conrad, and Ōe Masanori, and contrasted them with art that had been co-opted by Expo ’70 and industrial capitalism. In this context Satō actively introduced anti-Expo activities centered on the Zero Jigen [Zero Dimension] group and Expo ’70 Destruction Joint-Struggle Group (Banpaku Hakai Kyōtō-ha) in the film journal *Eiga Hihyō* [Film criticism], of which he was the editor-in-chief. One of the most important texts summarizing Japanese avant-garde art of the 1960s was “Art Becomes Non-Art: The Collapse of the Contemporary in Art” (*Hi-geijutsuka suru geijutsu—geijutsu ni okeru kindai no hōkai*) written by Tone and focusing on the state of Intermedia in Japan. Through a comparison of the Intermedia Arts Festival, *Cross Talk / Intermedia*, and Expo ’70, Tone critiqued the direction of large-scale events organized in a top-down fashion by the capitalist system and the state, while also examining existing experimental forms such as anti-art and environmental art in a historical context. In order to aim for a “non-art” of art-as-environment differing from both the artist-oriented and establishment-led models, Tone reexamined the possibilities of everyday artistic practice that were an intrinsic part of early Intermedia and preceding art movements, and advocated adhering to this mode of art. However, after Expo ’70 Osaka, the growing power of the capitalist system and the state led to the hollowing out of expanded cinema and intermedia, while the revolutionary political fervor that peaked in 1968 also faded. Tone, Miyai, and

many others moved their bases of operation overseas, while artists in Japan were forced to suspend their experimental cinematic and artistic activities.



From left to right: performer, Miyai Rikurō, and Tone Yasunao at Intermedia, 1967. Photograph by Hanaga Mitsutoshi
© Hanaga Taro



Leaflet for Intermedia, 1967. Collection of Namikawa Emiko

An Introduction for *Intermedia* (1967)

Ishizaki Kōichirō

Originally published as “Intermedia maesetsu,” pamphlet for *Intermedia* exhibition (Gallery Lunami, Tokyo, May 23–28, 1967).

Translated by Yūzō Sakuramoto

The image vaguely conjured by the compound term *intermedia* is a derivation of what has already been developed in some genres of the visual arts.

Art has recently been exposed to a rapid transformation. Whereas mass communication systems—supported by technological and institutional development—have extended the perceptual world of the individual to a universal dimension, under such circumstances there have been various frictions, as traditional media in and of itself has already become incapable of accommodating its contents. This inevitable impulse seems to have been evidenced negatively by a distrust in the spontaneity of the individual, as art after Pop art had clearly indicated.

This holds true with media other than individualistic practices such as painting and sculpture. There has been a common sense of lack in the historically quite new genre of cinema, as well. The fictional structure, which has traditionally supported film art,

is already incapable of catching up with this complex and diverse reality. For instance, a feeling of absence casting a shadow in the films of [Michelangelo] Antonioni or [Jean-Luc] Godard, as well as the awareness that such a construct has collapsed, as seen in some of cinema vérité or American underground cinema, unexpectedly attests to the fact that these films do not embody the totality of the sensory world inhabited by authors and spectators.

In other words, there has been a common intention and sense of lack surrounding each medium, and as a result of the effort to fill the gaps therein, areas in-between which are incongruous with traditional art genres—such as happening, event, and expanded cinema—are being created.

At its inception, our screening event of experimental films in a small gallery set about using this particularity to our advantage. *Intermedia* is a similar such attempt. However, concerning the question as to what specific form it would take, excepting already packaged experimental films, we have no choice but to let nature take its course. I am not saying this out of thoughtlessness, but might it be impossible to presuppose the synthesis of various media or art genres in the first place?

As an avid reader of [Marshall] McLuhan, who posited the impossibility of taking into account the content as well as the medium of communication in advance, I say this acknowledging the boredom of forecasting the results. If something like a *synthesis* appears, I firmly believe that it is only at a point beyond the circle of individual intention that such an appearance must be made for the first time.

INTER-MEDIA



● 絵画 Fine Art <AM.11:00—PM.10:00>

大西清自 岡部道男 齊藤司郎 佐野政義
多田啓介 坪内一忠

● ハプニング Happenings <P. M. 7:00—>

刀根康尚 金坂健二 幸美奈子 赤瀬川原平

● 拡張映画 Expanded Cinema

足立正生 加藤衛 鈴木慶則 大林宣彦
富田勝弘 城之内元晴 宮井陸郎

● 映画 Cinema

23日 <戦争ごっこ> ドナルド・リチー・作品

<題未定> 桜林宏

↓ <ある若者の記録> 長野千秋

24日 <ブラック・アウト> アルド・タンペリーニ

25日 <題未定> 飯村隆彦

<天地創造説> 岡部道男

↓ <伝説の午後—いっか見たドラキュラ> 大林宣彦

26日 <誕生> スタン・ブラケージ

27日 <Kiss Kiss Kiss> 横尾忠則

ふたりの長距離ランナーの孤独> 野田真吉

↓ <燃えやすい耳> 金坂健二

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ルナミ・フィルム・ギャラリー

第2回研究会 研究会費 200円 研究会員費 500円 (3ヶ月)

2月13日《月》14日《火》午後7時より

第1回映写会と討論会は満員の裡に終わりました

あなた自身のなにかを引き出すキッカケを作り得る—そんな研究会に育てたいと思っています

あなたの積極的な参加を心から期待しております

●ドナルド・リチャー作品《熱海ブルース》40分

脚本=マリー・エヴァンス 音楽=武満 徹 出演=和田チエコ 他

《日本映画》《黒沢 明》等の著者として、日本通評論家として

ひろく海外に名前を知られるドナルド・リチャー氏の実験的作品

観光都市アタミでの男女の偶然の出会いを 音楽だけの

ダイアログなしで描き出した異色作

●城之内元晴作品《VAN DOCUMENT》30分

出演=中西夏之 赤瀬川源平 オノ・ヨーコ

VAN 映画科学研究所製作による

帝国ホテルを舞台にしたハプニング映画

千円札事件の赤瀬川源平 他の画家・音楽家が多数出演

●美術映画《フォートリエ》20分

監督=フィリップ・パラデユック

ルナミ・フィルム・ギャラリー

氏名

住所

月まで有効

会 員

Intermedia Arts Festival Statement (1969)

Tone Yasunao

Originally published as “Intermedia Arts Festival Statement,” poster for Intermedia Arts Festival (Killer Joe’s and Nikkei Hall, Tokyo, January 18, 19, and 21, 1969).
Translated by Colin Smith

Since last spring, we have been planning to form a group dedicated to events and other works of performance art dating from the early 1960s until today.

The aim of this group is not just to promote the interdisciplinary artistic practices we call “intermedia.” It takes intermedia as a point of departure, its validity self-evident. This means going beyond modes of expression that are simply oriented toward total experience, and aiming to create a forum that surmounts barriers between various fields and genres. We advocate a mode of performative action we call *realization*. Through *realization*, works that exist only as words or symbols printed on paper are interpreted, amplified, and revealed in a manner that transfigures the works themselves.

We are not trying to reproduce the original works, but rather to give them form through the bodies and intentions of the people who realize them, which are bound to transform them radically.

At the same time, the *realization* of works underscores their anonymity, and in the context of commonalities among various aspects of reality, secreted within the audience members, the audience comes to practical grips with new concepts of participation.

In this festival, we reconstruct the history of works from the 1960s. Throughout the program, our hope is that new directions will emerge not through words, but through the spontaneous agency of the audience.

Does Art Exist for the Sake of Industrial Cooperation? Comprehensive Review of *Cross Talk / Intermedia* (1969)

Ishiko Junzō

Originally published as “Geijutsu wa sangyō kyōryoku no tame ni aruka—*Cross Talk / Intermedia* sōhyō,” *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism] 26, no. 4 (April 1969): 81-84.
Translated by Yūzō Sakuramoto

About three years ago, a series of gatherings titled *Intermedia* were held over the course of seven days at the Lunami Gallery in Ginza. The idea, as I recall, was developed by a study group as a way to screen various types of experimental films for a small group of people after the gallery closed. The screenings were planned mainly by Ishizaki Kōichirō and Satō Jūshin, involving as participants filmmakers, painters, and musicians. As unguarded as ever, I was swayed by Ishizaki, and joined the event, with a work simultaneously using five projectors to screen slides, which I had created earlier with painter Suzuki Yoshinori and musician Tone Yasunao. At the time of the screening, the painter Akasegawa Genpai, as well as Kazakura Shō, one of the few creators of happenings in

Japan, offered me a helping hand. These gatherings, as a whole, were evenings for experimental films and happenings, significantly lacking the specificities and dynamics implicit in the “inter-ness” of intermedia. However, people like Ishizaki and Tone were already convinced, in the late sixties, that attempts towards these experiments should be sought in various forms. Though it was a time when so-called underground cinema was popular in Japan, we argued that most of the films were based on a concept of the image which was no different from that of the experimental films of the 1930s, and that contemporary cinema should begin by calling into question the logic immanent in filming and screening itself. Reflecting this, I agreed to the proposition, and felt that the modesty in scale and lack of impact of the events was sufficiently complemented [by their cutting-edge experiments]. I understood that the compound term “intermedia,” unlike the idea of the addition of different genres, as in what was previously called total art, pertains to various *and*, not only between one genre of art and another, but also between art *and* technology, environment *and* art, everyday life *and* art, and medium *and* message, aiming to totalize even more comprehensive relational structures of perception *and* cognition. (However, this rhetoric of *and* is something I have recently been using everywhere, and it was not discussed that way at that time.) The shortcomings and orientation common within conventional genres, which had been investigated around 1960 through happenings, events, concrete poetry, and so on, was now being transcended in multiple ways.

Thus, the Intermedia gatherings, surrounded by misunderstandings, ended almost without scrutiny.

When nearly three full years had passed, and intermedia was about to be the subject of reflection, *Cross Talk / Intermedia*, sponsored by the American Cultural Center in Tokyo—a legitimately large-scale event, but still far from widely known—was held at the Minor Gym of the Yoyogi National Gymnasium over

three evenings, February 5–7 [1969]. The event was free of charge and was attended by over ten thousand people. It was planned and organized by three people—Roger Reynolds, Akiyama Kuniharu, and Yuasa Jōji—and was held as an expanded version of the performance series of avant-garde music *Cross Talk*, seemingly with an emphasis on the contemporary novelty that characterizes intermedia.



Cross Talk Intermedia held at Yoyogi National Gymnasium, 1969. Photograph by Hanaga Mitsutoshi © Hanaga Taro

People such as Stan VanDerBeek, an experimental artist known for his multi-projections; Robert Ashley, who was introduced as a composer trying to discover new patterns of interaction between performers and audience; Gordon Mumma, an electronic musician who is known to design electronic circuitry himself, and Salvatore Martirano, a composer known for his eclecticism and unique combinations of different types of music, all came to Japan for the festival, and compositions by John Cage and others, as well as their own works, were performed. From Japan, musicians including Takemitsu Tōru, Ichihayashi Toshi, Matsudaira Yoriaki,

Yuasa Jōji, as well as Kosugi Takehisa, Shiomi Mieko, and Mizuno Shūkō, members of Group Ongaku (except Tone Yasunao), were joined by filmmakers Iimura Takahiko and Matsumoto Toshio.

Meanwhile, immediately before this festival rumored to be part of some American cultural invasion, the three-day-long Intermedia Arts Festival, organized by Kosugi, Shiomi and Tone, was also held, and immediately thereafter, a talk and film event by VanDerBeek was held at Sōgetsu Hall.

Though I did not see all of these events, I attended performances of the work of Cage and Tone at the Intermedia Arts Festival, and also went to *Cross Talk*, spending an evening and a half (I left in the middle of the event), including attending a witty talk by VanDerBeek. Based on these limited experiences, there seemed to be a distance between the organizers and performers in terms of intention and understanding (this, of course, may be natural and what made it interesting). I believe that the ease and actuality embodied in the current attempt called “intermedia” seems to have been sufficiently expressed.

For example, Tone, who was originally scheduled to participate but withdrew, devoting himself instead to his own project, summarized the situation as follows immediately after the two festivals ended, “These two types of intermedia were in many senses diametrically opposed. Our intention was clear. First we started with the fact that intermedia is already taken for granted.” On the other hand, people involved in *Cross Talk* tried to focus “exclusively on the synthesis of art and technology.” Thus, while *Cross Talk* aimed at a new style in art to reach some kind of conclusion, Tone and others, understood intermedia as a possibility to commit themselves to the world, “in an attempt to resituate art within *praxis* or the *relationship of mediation between people/things*” (*Nihon Dokusho Shimbun*, no. 1496).

I thought that this point, though it may sound like a self-justification, was, in a sense, spot-on. I cannot touch upon individual pieces at *Cross Talk / Intermedia* specifically, for I saw only half or so, and it would not mean much, either, if I recounted what they looked like. From what I saw, however, I felt that almost all except Martirano's *L's GA* were similarly monotonous. To exaggerate to a degree, everything was a mixture of random images with strictly controlled electronic sound, occasionally peppered with strangely altered human voices. That said, the pieces at Tone's event were substantially the same, and were more or less equally monotonous. *Cross Talk* was perhaps better because more money was invested in it.

Though perhaps subtle, I found that the difference arose from the orientation, and in this regard, I believe the point indicated by Tone is accurate. In short, it is the difference between perception *and* recognition found at the bottom of words such as "novelty," "contemporaneity," or the "electronic age." It is a simple reversal of a dualistic rationalism found in European modernity, sometimes hinted at within terms such as "anonymity" and "immateriality." It is that which could be called the contemporary version of modernism.

Take, for example, the issue of art *and* technology, or art *and* the human being. In exchange for a previous faith in humanity or the individual, an acknowledgement of science or materiality has emerged as a near-absolute mode of orientation, and the shift away from this constitutes a popular trend. In short, it is the objective view of nature and things, and is the flip side of anthropocentric way of being and worldview. In contemporary art, rather than calling into question an issue of media in the midst of a technology-based communication system, the style remains unchanged as modern art reverses, hinted at by slogans such as the "end of the age of individuality," or "the demise of the human being." This immediately creates a pattern, which, through the repetition of the

same old logic of technology for formality's sake, is propagated as simple variation. It is more appropriate to call this popular entertainment, which is far from discovery or transformation. As some inevitable changes in human perception or cognition have nothing to do with progress, the pretense of newness—no matter how creative it claims to be—can be no more meaningful or relevant than the freshness of a newly enrolled first-grade student. This is much like the sweet nostalgia of the elderly, reminiscing about the past, safely oblivious to the actuality of time. There is a reasonable argument wherein children and elderly people can be said to have similar mentalities. Isn't intermedia—as the relational structure that can precisely be called “inter-ness” or the nexus of perception *and* recognition, by calling into the meaning of media (rather than meaning as media) in traditional art genres—something that has been sought forcibly in the fundamental questioning of media as it connects to being/world? It is not a matter of new or old, like “new audience, new venue,” as Akiyama Kuniharu wrote elsewhere; nor is it that the issue of the synthesis of art and technology became problematic with a collapse of art genres and the development of computer technology, but rather, of whether the meaning of art that can be tentatively referred to as ‘media’ be rethought as a questioning of the conventional communication system. This is exactly why I believe it [intermedia] must include distrust and criticism towards technology-based fantasy, rather than uncritical affirmation of human perception subjected to transformation.

It is perhaps my fault for having such an “old” prejudice. My excuse for not being able to genuinely enjoy the event is curmudgeonly, so I should stop dwelling on this now. I would like to briefly mention another thing about Stan VanDerBeek.

When I heard in different journals about a dome-shaped movie theater named Movie-Drome built by VanDerBeek (it was also introduced by Imura Takahiko in the February 1966 issue of this journal), I became interested in his *work*, including the building



Ôtsuji Kiyoji, *Cross Talk*. Intermedia held at Yoyogi National Gymnasium, Tokyo, February 1969
 © Ôtsuji Seiko, Musashino Art University Museum & Library

itself. I had a hunch that a contemporary form of cinema could arise from experiments such as this. However, experiencing a number of his film works (including those left unfinished) has made me realize that this impression may have been just my imagination.

I understand the point that human “technical capacity” and “excessive cultural expansion” are going to “allow logical supporting points of human intelligence to be situated far beyond the human domain” (from the *Cross Talk / Intermedia* pamphlet), and to some extent I agree. But I cannot keep up with the fact that he [VanDerBeek] seemingly believes that the “crisis” will be overcome through the development of an “international visual language.” It seems to me that this would, in fact, amplify what VanDerBeek calls a “crisis,” in a typically progressive American fashion.

As I am now running out of space, and I am fully aware that there are more things to discuss, let me withdraw by making note of a passage by Alain Jeffrois, also quoted by Tone, that elucidates one of the problems:

E.A.T. (Experiments in Art and Technology), led by Billy Klüver and Robert Rauschenberg in New York, according to their statement, aimed “to catalyze the inevitable active involvement of industry, technology, and the arts,” and “has assumed the responsibility of developing an effective collaborative relationship between artists and engineers.” But this, indeed, accurately indicates what role capitalist society hopes Western avant-garde art will play both materially and conceptually. The more complex the engineering employed by artists is, the more powerful the control exerted by capitalist society becomes, and artists then will be under the threat of decisive alienation. If they are aware of this, something can still be done. But if not, all hope is gone. Art will end up becoming an ideological instrument of oppression.” (“The Abolition of Art,” trans. Toshiaki Minemura, *Dezain Hihyō* [Design criticism], no. 8, 1969)

I hope that someone like Matsumoto Toshio will publish a critique of Jeffrois sometime soon.

Art Becomes Non-Art: The Collapse of the Contemporary in Art (1970)

Tone Yasunao

Originally published as “Hi-geijutsuka suru geijutsu—geijutsu ni okeru kindai no hōkai,” *SD* [Space Design], no. 56 (July 1969) and in Tone Yasunao, *Gendai geijutsu no isō: geijutsu wa shisō tariuru ka* (Tokyo: Tabata shoten, 1970).
Translated by Colin Smith

I have a few objections to the various complaints we hear about contemporary art. However, I do not object to the accusation that compared to the former state of art—in which there were so many rich sources of inspiration that one person could never tap them all, and works of art were believed to contain highly concentrated expression of the world as microcosm—contemporary art (including my own work) is withering away into something seemingly trifling and incomprehensible.

In fact, the most striking stylistic feature commonly seen in contemporary art, whether it is music, painting, or dance, is the centrality of the mundane and the profane. For example, in

Ichianagi Toshi's electronic music presented at *Cross Talk / Intermedia* (February 1969) at Yoyogi National Stadium, which is said to have drawn an audience of over ten thousand, the music generated by mobile audiovisual equipment that revolved around the circular audience seats consisted of popular *enka* ballads by the likes of Miyako Harumi and Suizenji Kiyoko.

In other shows held the same year, including *the Contemporary Art Exhibition of Japan (Gendai nihon bijutsuten)* and *International Psytech Art Exhibition: Electromagica 1969 (Kokusai saitekku āto ten: electromagica 1969)*, many works adopting mechanical and electrical approaches were practically indistinguishable from the latest show windows at department stores and other retailers. They could be described as pure display; not intended for customers but display for its own sake. However, while some may have lamented that art had sunk to the level of a shop window display, that criticism seems misguided. After all, when the course of art is set by defining painting as art for exhibition [or display], this appears to be an inevitable destination. Walter Benjamin discussed "the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction" and pointed out that in our stance toward painting and art in general, there is a stark contrast between our appreciation of its value as an object for display and its value as an object of ritual.

The ultimate result of generally emphasizing the former is the emergence of art as pure display, and it is not without reason that the latter, i.e. art's sacredness, has nearly completely faded. Here we find works of which the secular worship of beauty has been reduced to a minimum, and without a doubt this is a source of dissatisfaction with contemporary art among some viewers.

However, here it is important to recognize that endeavors like those described above appear to offer opportunities for the aesthetic avant-garde and the general public to connect, while at the same time sustaining the secular-worship mode of appreciating avant-garde art.

Several years ago at a department store in Ginza, there was a group show called *From Space to Environment* (*Kūkan kara kankyō e*, 1966) featuring artists of various disciplines including painters, designers, musicians, photographers, and architects. It was described as “a new style of amusement park,” a pioneering effort marking the first steps toward reconciliation between the avant-garde and the general public.

When the secularization of art is viewed macroscopically, we see the final stage of a process in which art has gradually been released from ritual while retaining its value as an object of worship. However, the emergence of the aesthetic avant-garde was also a reversion to the theological in art, which had become increasingly secular and commonplace, in other words, increasingly seen in terms of its value as an object for display. In the late nineteenth century, deep rifts became evident which had not been seen in art's classical era when bourgeois ideology was in harmony with artistic trends. These were the rifts between social classes that accompanied the birth of modern capitalism, and involved the relativization of bourgeois ideology as history moved into a new phase with the definitive debunking of illusions of liberty and equality, as seen in the Parisian workers' rebellion of 1848. It also involved the transformation of concepts of art, which are nothing if not products of modern civil society. Here we saw another rift between artists' social status and their roles as members of the intelligentsia, which had not been so pronounced in the era in which bourgeois ideology was a universal value system. Thus a relativization of ideology occurred, and in this process the notion of universality was lost. The artist's mentality could no longer conceal his status or position, and in this emerged the canonical principle of modern art: that ideology can only be overcome by rejecting it. This led to the emergence of artistic solipsism, where a single work in itself encompasses the entirety of art history and aesthetics. This was both the first crisis to strike modern art, and the beginning of a

process of determining the overall characteristics of modern art, derived from the aesthetic principle that resembles contemplative philosophy.

The development of new technologies of mechanical reproduction, as exemplified by photography, has also made it clearer that art is in crisis. And now “art for art’s sake” has achieved sacred status, a dead end that requires us to develop a theology of art. Since doing so, art has rejected all social functions, abandoned representational subject matter, and been severed from history and even from aesthetics under the principle of pure art, thus paradoxically invoking its own kind of theology in reverse. This consists, ultimately, in regarding the work of art as an object, and the processes of producing art as culminating in exhibition, while art’s formats or methodologies are considered mere consequences of production, like the outcomes of daily activities. Since this view has become prevalent, the position of art and the artist in contemporary society is often glorified, personified in the figure of the brilliant artist, or in frequent portrayals of artists as the protagonists of mediocre popular films. This view, which subordinates art to the artist and is consumed within artist himself, is the worst outcome of the ongoing metamorphosis of art, turning the artist as “creator,” a god in a godless era. While this trend is threatened by the rise of socialism, it remains strong nonetheless.

The rigorous philosopher Hegel’s stark declaration in a lecture on aesthetics that “art is and remains for us a thing of the past” relates to the individualization of art at the height of Romanticism in the nineteenth century, and implies that art, like history, can never be absolute. Our response to this remains undetermined to this day.

Modern art prides itself on the diverse trends and movements that it has gone through, and the loss of uniformity—including the negation of various formerly accepted equivalencies—as the very thing that makes modern art’s history so fertile, but on the

contrary, it can be seen as merely the history of self-contained individual views of art. And art begins to appear as if it were acting independently of content, autonomously establishing its own territory, and this territory in itself has come to appear as the grounds for status as “art.” The issue here is surely that the work of art is being implicitly presented as an emblem of the institution.

In other words, art has become a ritual, in which it is communicated that a work belongs to the category of art, and viewers appreciate it, independent of the content being expressed or the means of expression. When we attend this ritual, we enter a sacred space. An art space does not necessarily mean a visible entity such as a concert hall or an art gallery. It is any space in which this process takes place as a mutually understood manner.

And one result of this phenomenon is the misunderstanding of the progressive collapse of modern art as a collapse of genres.

The various phenomena now surrounding art are most clearly embodied by the perception that this sacred space must be violated. The sacred space will not collapse as long as we have the declaration that works constitute art, even if the “aura” of art has been eliminated by technologies of mechanical reproduction. When a work presents itself as art, it is impossible to think of “transparent forms” and “empty spaces” in the same way as before, and it is vital to recognize that various prejudices and assumptions are being expressed beyond the contents of the work itself. It must be said that this is also the place where we see the horizon on which art is currently being discussed in terms of media theory.

The issues art currently faces seem to reiterate Hegel’s words, but with a different implication. The value of avant-garde art has been critiqued in light of the fact that modern art has always expressed itself as anti-art, but as long as our current art is an extension of this discourse, there can be no hectic changes in style,

expansion of materials, or anything other than reinforcement of existing modern art. At the same time, there will be no evolutionary theory that goes further than the belief of the aesthetic avant-garde that expansion of time equals expansion of value. The innocently futuristic art exhibited at *Cross Talk / Intermedia*, *Electromagica*, and Expo '70 is in this respect only a passive representation of the progression of modernity's collapse. And we cannot continue discussions of the secularization of art that interpret its factors in terms of increased chance of interference, such as the development of mass media and the progress of mechanically reproduced art. This is surely only a technical amplification of the early 1960s anti-art situation. To that extent, there is no qualitative difference between computer art and earthworks.

The dominant tendency in art of the early '60s, the stylistic tendency most clearly showing art in a vague Orphic state, was the transformation of creative actions into everyday acts and the introduction of everyday objects into art. In these we can see unmistakable truth, as we once did in art itself, and the intention must have been that art should return to take its place amid the vibrant reality of this world. That was the goal artists in the early-1960s pursued with the greatest enthusiasm: to make all the environments around us into art. To revive art, which has been "confined to individual representation" and lost its vibrant presence in this world. The contradiction is that this is only possible through expression aimed at negating art.

Anti-art was not a negation of existing art, but an endeavor to nullify art by transforming everything in our experience and environment into art, as typified by action painting, where the idea is that "painting" is the *act* of painting itself. If painting is reduced to the *act* of painting, each work will always be incomplete, and painting will be perceived as equivalent to a daily activity. In this context, it is no wonder that works of art become equivalent to ordinary objects and actions, that any ordinary object can be a painting, and that all everyday actions can be art.

The same can be said of the music of [John] Cage—successor to the sound object composers [Edgard] Varèse and [Henry] Cowell and the Futurist musicians—who has used prepared piano, oscillators, and a wide variety of object in his pieces. At the same time, the development of modern music from dodecaphony to serialism has made it impossible to incorporate the performer's spontaneity into the performance, due to the subdivision of sound elements and refinement of sonic organization. The performance of these works paved the way for electronic music by demanding machine-like precision, and we now find electronic music engineers twisting dials and taking scissors to tape, actions that are qualitatively no different from the actions of a communications equipment company engineer adjusting a dial, thus forcing us to recognize that playing music is analogous to everyday activities.

Cage's insistence on incorporating everyday operations into music has thus been accepted not only by young painters and composers who are his students of the New School for Social Research, but also by other musicians.

As for poetry, it was Tanigawa Gan who shocked the poetry world by stating that if a poem is made valid by incontrovertibly asserting an expression of this world at a stroke, then poetry cannot exist at present, and if poems were to exist, they would be only poems lamenting the loss of poetry or making an alibi for poetry. This speaks to the status of anti-art at that time, which was deeply fixated on the perception that art could never be total but only a fragment. The secularization of art that we see today seems to be a remnant of a dream of art seeking to commit to the world as a practice. And the emergence of works that can be described as pure display implies that works of art are just fragments of reality.

This move toward *display*, i.e. the exhibition aspect of the work of art seemingly taking on a life of its own, means that works are simply products to be consumed, which are labeled as art.

Meanwhile, the orientation toward practice in what we call *anti-art* is a denial of the concept of creation, and at the same time, the self-awareness that a work of art is only a fragment of this world, as opposed to the distinctive modern viewpoint that each work is its own single microcosm. Therefore, we could say that *anti-art* became oriented toward totality through recognizing a lack of totality. However, pure display-oriented works emerged as consumer art, art that is only rendered meaningful through distribution, based on the premise of exhibition and appreciation. This was triggered by an awareness of *anti-art*'s lack of totality, but the result was forgetting its origins and ending up as mere social decoration, based on the standard of beauty as fragmentary. Therefore, no matter how *practical* and seemingly opposed to the concept of *creation*, it was actually based on the belief that what was rejected in display-oriented works would find completion in individual expression. However, the *appreciation of art* is always conceptually paired with the *creation of art*, the one always premised on the other. When we consider creation and appreciation as a single system, we view art with the premises of *appreciation* and *creation* rather than as simply embodied in the physical reality of artworks. It is an unseen rhetoric that informs us that art exists in a sacred space, the *art space*, and lets us know when we have entered this sacred space. This premise forms a strong foundation that forces us to accept any non-art work as art immediately. Since works of display-oriented art based on technology do not establish this premise, and are presented as works for *appreciation*, they represent not a negation of art, but rather a greater strengthening of modern art concepts. From the paradoxical idea of *anti-art* that revives the work of art by negating art itself, the non-artistic is transformed into art, thereby concealing the absence of art and leading further in the direction of art's marginalization.

The current state of art is such that when seeking to thoroughly transform art into non-art, the result is display-oriented art (much of which is called environmental art, characterized by

the utilization of Plexiglas neon, laser beams, and so forth, or by light that moves and blinks), and this technological art takes on the negative image of a “cultural product” of capitalist social entities such as corporations and Expo ’70. And we often hear the question: Whatever became of the avant-garde, which in the early ’60s took such drastic action, was so full of energy and dedicated to the destruction of the status quo? And, despite the radical anti-establishment student movement, have they too been tamed by the system? We already know that the destruction of art can descend into mere stylistic *art of destruction*. As already discussed, modern art has always gained validity by adopting the position of *anti-art*.

At first glance, the creative acts of *anti-art* artists in the early 1960s deserved to be called an eruption of resistance against art’s various conventions. For example, one artist continuously stood on top of a barrel during an art exhibition, another suspended phallic objects all over a museum gallery, another smashed a piano, another stood on top of an organ and raised a saxophone high in the air, another pressed a red-hot iron against his chest. Were these acts simply transgressive gestures? Have each of these artists gone on to succeed and become part of the mainstream? To be sure, many of them were picked up by art dealers or sponsored by large companies, and became official artists participating in Expo ’70. And indeed they have likely heightened their social status as artists by participating in Expo ’70 and gaining corporate sponsorship. If so, is it an issue of the artists’ morality? Here we cannot help but see the shadow of changes in concepts of expression since action painting. The concept of subordinating *what* is painted and *how* it is painted to the act of painting itself, the process of creation, has strengthened the character of art work as a part of the *welt-in-sein* (world-in-being), including the genres of junk assemblage, Pop art, and happenings.





Both Images: Tone Yasunao and Shūzō Azuchi Gulliver re-performing a work by John Cage at *Intermedia Art Festival*, Nikkei Hall, 1969. Photograph by Hanaga Mitsutoshi © Hanaga Tarō

In the early 1960s, artists found creative expression in everyday actions and endeavored to make art a commitment to the world by incorporating everyday actions into expression. Art ceased to consist of self-contained individual works, and the tendency to emphasize continuity with the environment became the dominant mode after action painting. A typical example was that of happenings, and the idea that a work of art must *happen* in the real world is prominent in the work of early 1960s artists. It is typified not only by the actions of Hi Red Center (the happenings going around Tokyo's Yamanote Line, at the Imperial Hotel, cleaning the street in Ginza, and so on), but also by Shinohara Ushio's work that envisioned a communication circuit in which a work would only be complete when covered by journalists primarily in weekly magazines, by painters' creation of posters in the late 1960s, and by the participation of artists in the newly emerging discotheque environment, all of which were viewed in the context of *anti-art*. The criticism of former *anti-artists* who participated in Expo '70 relates to their inherently losing sight of problems of expression in the 1960s dependent on their commitment to the real world, which must be resolved by means of the artists' morality. It shows that the reexamination of the cultural collective contained in the artistic actions of the early 1960s was miscarried when discussed in the context of simple artistic violence or *anti-art*.

The art of the early 1960s, described as the "descent of art into everyday life," was neither characterized by formal qualities, nor by a unification of art and everyday life. It should be described as a questioning of all the conditioning we have unconsciously imposed on both art and life. In this light, it becomes possible to dismantle what was nothing but a fiction conceptualized by the modern ideology of art. However, *anti-art*, which should be oriented toward the dismantling of modern art, would inevitably become mere objects for industrial display as seen in Expo '70, as long as the unification of art and life was the goal, as described above. And this is a cause for reflection and perhaps regret for *anti-art*

artists (myself among them) of the early '60s who have reached a certain culmination of their own art, regardless of whether or not they participated in Expo '70.

Wasn't the practice of *anti-art* a reinterpretation of *art* (i.e. the modern individualistic view of art), which has been viewed as the socialization or universalization of the personal, as the personalization of the social? In this we see the bankruptcy of the conception of art as *object* created by the *subject* of a single artist. And this ought to reveal the reason that the modern principle of denial or rejection in art, i.e. in the context of the transformative effect of the artist as sole subject, does not lead to denial of concepts of art as a whole. However, what remained through the repetition of denials in modern art is the view of art that assumes denial only by the creative subject, which, on the other hand, has always resulted in a dichotomy between appreciation of art and creation. Various contemporary art endeavors have led to *environmental art* as a style that attempts to overcome static appreciation through audience participation. Many of these endeavors are seen in works that employ technological means, but they did not go beyond process, remaining incomplete as their completion was based only on practical feasibility. Therefore, the two-dimensional concept of creation and appreciation was not abandoned, but only detoured.

Anti-art, on the other hand, emerged as the intention to reject art as a whole, and to abolish art by converting the entirety of our environment into art. *Anti-art* lost validity due to "the impossibility of art not existing" (Miyakawa Atsushi). *Anti-art* that failed to *negate art* by establishing all external environment as art, overcame the obstacle by orientating toward the concept of "art as environment." (See "What is Art as Environment?—The Territories Andy Warhol Disclosed" (Geijyutsu no kankyōka towa nanika—Andy Warhol ga kaiji shita ryōiki), *Design Hihyō* [Design critique] no. 8, February 1969).

Art as environment is very different from *environmental art*, which emerged as a style; it means that art is reestablished in our relationship with other people and things, in other words, in inter-subjectivity.

This would of course mean rejecting the consideration of art as an issue of creative subjectivity. Therefore, it becomes necessary to think of a work of art not as being created by a single artist, but as existing through the appreciator. It means viewing a work as something we perceive, rather than as a purely existing object. Works employing light, and kinetic works, are said to be environmental not because they physically occupy part of the environment, but in the sense that they involve the viewer and exist in terms of the relationship between the viewer and the creator rather than as physical entities. The reason why we began to see non-creative works in the conventional sense, such as kinetic, light, and other technological art, followed by Minimalism, Conceptualism, Arte Povera, and anti-form, is a result of shifting the basis of art from making to viewing.

Thinking that is in line with a broad interpretation of art appreciation, in other words, thinking that art exists for the viewers' consciousness, means that the possibility of experiencing art has already been established for the viewer. Thus it does not mean appreciation, but that I always belong to a structure in which I experience works of art even if I do not actually see, hear, or make them. And this in turn means art is not based on a priori knowledge or reasoning, but is an experience evoked by some particular form.

Art after Minimalism entirely discarded the spiritual character of asserting its status as a work of art, so works appear as mere objects, and this is in part because the experience of appreciating technological art is unlike any other. It is often said that movies, for example, are an early example of technological art, but cinema cannot exist without audiences at movie theaters.

A movie's value is completed when it is seen, and we do not describe the physical film in a canister as a movie. It is in this respect that light art and kinetic art differ in meaning from paintings in the museum.

The insistence, in art after Minimalism, that the work of art is "just what is there," can be seen as implying that works are not objects formed by the artist, but concrete manifestations of each person's "viewing" experience at any given time. When we seek to reveal works of art by eliminating the active work of the artist's creation, what still remains is the passive appearance of art's meaning. When taking away the notion of creation from an artwork and presenting it simply as an object, it becomes a process of selecting from among countless things around us an object as a work of art, as like discovering art in nature and in objects in general. But in that case, we mistake the significance of these works in a dual sense. First, these processes of selection and discovery are discussed as if supported by traditional standards of artistic value, and this conceals the fact that this concept of the non-artistic object is based on a modernist view of art. This view implicitly assumes a dualism of creation and appreciation.

Such uncreative and non-artistic "works" are not the product of solipsistic creation, but rather indicate growing awareness of art as an institution. And they demonstrate the distinctiveness and persistence of the concept of "creation" unique to modern art, with even post-Minimalist works, events, and happenings belonging to the context of modern art.

The passivity inherent in creative action is clearly described through [Edmund] Husserl's idea of "active and passive genesis" in *Cartesian Meditations*: "In any case, anything built by activity necessarily presupposes, as the lowest level, a passivity that gives something beforehand; and, when we trace anything built actively, we run into constitution by passive generation" (translated by Dorion Cairns [the original Japanese text quotes

Hosoya Tsuneo's Japanese translation]). And active composition only recaptures meaning that has already been generated. The concept of creation in art means active composition based on a passive synthesis, and even the principle of creation itself is nothing but a "sedimentation of meaning" (Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Philosophy*). We make even cultural objects that we judge to be uncreative or non-artistic into works of art when this "sedimentation of meaning" occurs. And it is the habitual sedimentation occurring not in the works of art themselves, but in us, as their appreciators, that can cause any kind of non-artistic object or action to be structured as new art.

For example, even Pop art was able to become art not because we prioritize the works' immediate directness in our perception, but because we configure them as objects that manifest painting concepts and cannot be reduced to mere real-world phenomena. Some believe performances using everyday objects and actions to create music for happenings and events should be carried out in the course of daily life, rather than gathering audiences at music venues and so forth, while many felt that Akasegawa Genpei's fake thousand-yen bill could only become a work of art by threatening society as "counterfeit money," because it is difficult to perceive the sedimentation of meaning in these works.

The non-artistic works of today represent one stage in the endless cycle of modern art, that of anti-art and its subsequent transformation into art. This is because they manifest an awareness that works of art are events, occurring within art's semantic system. It is as if, when we are speaking, it is not us speaking but the words themselves: it is the semantic operations of art that give the works meaning. And when works are mere representations of things and phenomena, without taking on the appearance of art, this has the paradoxical effect of localizing and temporalizing these semantic operations.

Extreme Cinema (1969)

Satō Jūshin

Originally published as “Eiga no kyokuchihiyōgen,” in *Kyozō mirai zukan* [Illustrated book of imaginary tomorrow], eds. Hara Eizaburō and Tanaami Keiichi (Tokyo: Bronze-sha, 1969).
Translated by Colin Smith

Right now, if you stand in front of the Sony Building in Sukiya-bashi you can see a “water screen.” Thick droplets fall from the ceiling like a curtain of rain, serving in place of a film screen, and a brightly colored animated film is projected on it.

Of course, this was created by the Ebara Corporation for Expo '70 Osaka, and anyone who encounters it will not be particularly surprised to see a film projected on water droplets. Most people's reaction seems to be something like a noncommittal, “Hmm, look at that.”

At the upcoming Expo '70, I'm sure we will see transparent films [*tōmei eiga*], air films [*kūchū eiga*], and so forth, as well as water screens and air screens. I use the term “Big Cinema” to describe this kind of technology-driven cinematic experimentation,

and its primary aim seems to be getting the audience as involved as possible with these technological advances.

But what I want to discuss here is not this phenomenon of taking Big Cinema to various technological extremes. Cinema will surely become more and more like a three-ring circus, and we can count on massive government financing to cover the cost of developing technology. For me, though, the issue is the direction of post-psychedelic visual expression. The psychedelic craze seems to have been a half-year to a year of brief blossoming that bore no true fruit, and left nothing but the husks of go-go bars slathered in fluorescent paint. However, I believe that some aspects of this brief flowering of psychedelia were by no means so brief.

What aspects? For those of us who have never experienced hallucinogens like LSD in the first place, there had never been such an immersive attempt to reproduce an otherworldly psychedelic landscape through a combination of various media. In the film world, our internal landscape had never been eroded by such external or environmental assaults. When the blinking of a strobe light made dancing people appear in jerky freeze-frame, or made a cup on a table seem to suddenly float up into the air, there was indeed a sense of slipping into a hallucinatory state.

Nothing in the wave of psychedelic expression assaulted our brains more than this strobe effect. The frightening thing about psychedelia is how the brain waves can come under attack in a fraction of a second. At times, there are illusions that one's limbs are moving in a soundless space. And Tony Conrad's *The Flicker* and Michael Snow's *Wavelength* are works that showed us even greater depths of terror to which stroboscopic effects could be pushed.



Photograph of Killer Joe's, 1968, Photograph by Hara Eizaburō. © Hara Eizaburo Museum, Hara Keiko

The Flicker begins with a white screen and then stroboscopic blinking, which eventually takes on tremendous speed. Suddenly the screen looks like a whirlpool, and you feel you must cling to your chair or you will be sucked into the screen. Optical illusions cause the white screen to appear violet or red. Tony Conrad evidently created *The Flicker* using high-level mathematics to combine its forty thousand black and white frames in various permutations. It lasts about thirty minutes, but viewing it is hard work, and after this half-hour the viewer is exhausted. Personally, what affected me most was not the hallucinations themselves, but something more fundamental, as if my brain waves were being torn apart.



Photograph of Killer Joe's, 1968, Photograph by Hara Eizaburō. © Hara Eizaburo Museum, Hara Keiko

Michael Snow's *Wavelength* is similar. For forty minutes, high-frequency sounds play at earsplitting volume. The image turns negative or flips over, or the camera zooms in, and all we see is film manipulated in a studio, but the image changes and evolves in sync with the sound cycles. Our sense of sight seems to be tested, or subjected to some kind of reversal. Of course, volume fluctuations here relate to our heartbeat and brain waves. In the end it is not the visual, but the sound, that makes us fear, unconsciously, that we will not be able to endure it.

From that point of view, these two films are "extreme cinema." What is being pushed to the extreme is not the limit of *what* can be expressed. It is the extent to which the viewer can coexist with the film. In underground cinema there are precursors, such as Andy Warhol's *Empire* and *Sleep*.

The six-hour *Empire* shows nothing but the Empire State Building and, beyond it, sunlight fading as the afternoon turns to evening, and the sea shimmering beautifully in the distance. At least, so it says in a review I have read, but it doesn't sound like something you could sit through. Again, the viewer is "tested."

In extreme cinema we are presented not with a progression of images that document events or convey a narrative, but with another dimension of cinema.

Warhol's *Empire* is not Pop art, nor is it an object—if it were, the Empire State Building would start to operate as a symbolic object of its own accord. Jonas Mekas uses the term "minimal cinema" to describe this form of extreme cinema that originates with Warhol.

But, considering the fundamental concept of minimalism, I hesitate to use this term. "Minimal" literally means stripping the elements of expression down to the minimum. The object exists as an object, with no link to what we perceive to be symbolic representations. *Empire* does indeed simply show us an object, and at least during the Pop era this was pretty exciting.

However, it is a feature of the contemporary world that objects in and of themselves resist intervention by artists. Perhaps this is what makes Mekas see the seeds of Minimalism in *Empire*. I once wrote an essay titled "New York: A Hymn to the Great Void," where I talked about how this city, like a mirage when viewed macroscopically with the naked eye, looks like a ruin. It seems clear that *Empire* represents the "void," but even if it does not present a void, there stands a nebulous towering entity. Warhol appears to be observing this entity with no acknowledgement of its symbolic significance.

In other words, *Empire*, *The Flicker*, and *Wavelength* occupy the same realm in terms of exploring the fundamental structure of our world. They seem to employ mathematical processes, but this is merely a means to an end, and the real goal of the works is to get inside the mechanisms that underlie our world. If we are going to use the words minimal or minimalist, *Empire* seems to be the most minimal, i.e. simple and direct, whereas employing mathematical calculation and cycles of waves, as in *The Flicker* and *Wavelength*, seems to be going the long way around. But, in terms of illuminating the equilibrium that sustains our world, these works are more structurally oriented than *Empire*.

Psychedelic film may have been an art of the internal. Using electronics to reproduce what one sees when hallucinating is the opposite of minimal, and in the effect of reproduction, lies the exploration of a visual frontier. The artistic value of *The Flicker* lies in its achievement of that reproduction in a more structured manner, operating directly on the mechanisms of our brain waves. It is more than just a stroboscopic effect. Meanwhile, *Wavelength* evolves as it slightly zooms in and out on a single scene. These demonstrations of the possibilities of films and filters lay bare the mechanism of the machine, while at the same time showing the versatility of filters and the capacity of our own brain wave reception. The suspense inherent to these cycles of varying wavelengths lies in the primal fear that neural connections in one's brain could fray and give way at any time.

Well, I seem to have dwelt on Minimalism for a bit too long. Among art movements that followed it, "earthwork" depends quite heavily on the structure of things and runs the risk of reverting to overly optimistic naturalism, or to mysticism like that of Stan Brakhage's endless twinkling stars in outer space.

I would say there is significant danger of earthwork descending to the level of something like the hobby of making miniature gardens, unless its practitioners recognize the solemn, noble beingness of the world while taking into account the existence of individual entities and the weight of terrestrial space.

Minimalism was, obviously, an exploration of the structure of things and the world in a work of art using a minimum number of elements. Meanwhile, although this may sound strange, the perils of earthwork which I described above are being seen today in Big Cinema, such as at Expo '70.

It is a big mistake to think that it is the use of multiple screens that leads to the immersive character of much contemporary art. The purpose of multiple screens is to expose the structure of the world, and to test the extremes of our vision. For example, in Ōe Masanori's *Great Society*, it is easy to see that a multi-projection film installation can be more than just multiple moving images projected simultaneously.



Ōe Masanori, still from *Great Society*, 1967, six-screen 16mm films transferred to single-channel video, color, sound, 18:00 min.
© Ōe Masanori

In this work, various different newsreel films are projected on six projectors. We see the assassination of Robert Kennedy, a speech by Lyndon Johnson, a screwdriver, and as it progresses all six screens show the American flag. Then in the end all six screens present a footage of sudden hydrogen bomb blasts. As pure images, the explosions beginning underground and morphing into various shapes are beautiful, but there is more to the work than that. It is as if we are seeing the images on the six screens from above, and they reveal all at once the structure of the world we live in. It may be a bit of a stretch to connect this with Minimalism, but the basis of multi-screens lies in accessing and charging the mechanisms underlying our world.

The greatest masterpiece of what I call Big Cinema is surely Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. In the film there appears a metallic monolith on the moon. Astronauts arriving on the moon fearfully touch the monolith. What is it, and is it really metallic at all? Nothing is clear, but the object evokes some kind of primal reaction in human beings. Then the monolith begins glowing like a miraculous crucifix, releasing a dazzling flood of psychedelic imagery. The space-time continuum is disrupted, and we have the terrifying sense of being poised on the brink of a chasm, about to fall into the depths of the cosmos.

It appears that many filmmakers today aspire to explore this kind of extreme cinema. Psychedelic cinema gave us the expectation that after all the hallucinations, some kind of vision of the ultimate would reveal itself. *Empire*, which lasts several hours, gives us the impression that the Empire State Building will still stand millennia from now, against the murky skies of New York City. In the future, we will see more films that address objects and events in transcendental space-time. I look forward to seeing further explorations of various kinds of extreme cinema.

Precedents to Expanded Cinema

Introduction

Go Hirasawa

In discussions of the history of Expanded Cinema or Intermedia in Japan, the narrative tends to be that they were introduced from the West in the early 1960s, starting with the underground cinema and Fluxus movements, and under their influence new homegrown works and movements emerged. This is not wrong if we are talking about expanded cinema and intermedia as two distinct and separate terms. However, many similar interdisciplinary experiments were being carried out in Japan even prior to 1966 and 1967, when these terms gained currency, and from that point on things developed, or in some cases degenerated, in various directions. Thus it is necessary to reexamine these newly generated movements in their totality, not simply in terms of unilateral influence or relationship, what preceded what and so forth, but in terms of their shared concern with contemporary issues and mutual resonance among artists working concurrently at the time.

There are differences in direction between Expanded Cinema, which meant the expansion of film into the real world or into other form of expressions, and Intermedia, which treated film as one of the many expressive forms available among the interdisciplinary collaborations between multiple media. Yet if we look at the prehistory of both movements in Japan, which begins around 1960, we see that two major forces were at work. One was the avant-garde art movement that emerged from and revolved around the Sōgetsu Art Center, and the other encompassed a number of groups including the Nihon University Film Study Club, a.k.a. Nichidai Eiken (Nihon Daigaku Eiga Kenkyūkai), VAN Film Science Research Center (VAN Eiga Kagaku Kenkyūjo),

Neo-Dada Organizers (Neo Dadaizumu Oruganaizāzu), and Group Ongaku. While the former had the filmmaker Teshigahara Hiroshi as a central figure and was a hub for well-known avant-garde cultural figures in diverse genres including film, visual art, music, theater, literature, poetry, and architecture, the latter had more of a homemade, grassroots quality, and expressed skepticism about accepted definitions of art, rejecting boundaries between art and life, and advocating direct action. However, while these divergent movements had an antagonistic relationship, they not only continued working in parallel, but sometimes intersected.

Sōgetsu Art Center, established when the Sōgetsu Kaikan building was completed in 1958, comprised the Sōgetsu Music Inn, which presented experimental jazz concerts; the Sōgetsu Contemporary Series, focused on new music; and Sōgetsu Cinematheque, which screened films and animation. Many interdisciplinary events and festivals were held in the context of these three projects. The first such Sōgetsu Cinematheque event, held in July 1961, was called *The Documentary Perspective* (*Dokyumentarī no shiten*), while later series actively introduced works by Western filmmakers, such as the 1966 “Retrospective of the World in Avant-Garde Cinema and Underground Cinema: Japan and USA.” The Sōgetsu Experimental Film Festival (launched in 1967 and renamed to the Film Art Festival in 1968) played a major role in the emergence of Japanese underground and experimental film. Prior to 1961, Sōgetsu Art Center had already presented many film screenings, as the launch of the Sōgetsu Cinematheque was preceded by the independent film screening and production activities of the Cinema 1956 group (formed in 1956 and consisting of filmmakers and critics such as Teshigahara and Hani Susumu). A notable example of these screenings was *Three-Person Animation* (*Sannin no animēshon*), held in November 1960 as the fifth installment of the Sōgetsu Contemporary Series. The Three-Person Animation Circle (Animation Sannin no Kai) was a group formed by painters, manga artists, and designers centered on Kuri Yōji,

Manabe Hiroshi, and Yanagihara Ryohei, and dedicated to transforming the role of animation from a merely commercial genre to an art form. The three presented their own work, and Manabe attached the subtitle “*Butai no tame no animēshon*” [*Animation for the stage*] to a screening of his *Marine Snow* (1960) that also featured a live-action scientific film with the same title, a light show, Noh and poetry recitations, and more. Manabe, who participated in a circle dedicated to the fusion of film and jazz and screened *Cine-Caricature* (1960) at *Music Inn 5: Multiple Aspects of Modern Jazz* (*Modern jazz no takakuteki ōyō*) in May of that year, was an early adopter of an interdisciplinary approach to the presentation of his own works. “Time for Calculations” (Keisan no jikan), published in the Sōgetsu Art Center’s in-house journal *SAC Journal*, was a special feature on the Three-Person Animation Circle. The article featured unique illustrations that critiqued *sōgō geijutsu* (Gesamtkunstwerk or integrated art) as having become merely a formal and superficial gathering place for artists of various genres, and advocated not only for animation as an art form, but also for new concepts and methodologies of collaborative endeavors. After three screenings, the Three-Person Animation Circle evolved into an animation festival in 1964, from which many animators and works emerged.

Nichidai Eiken, established in 1957, produced *Conversation Between Nail and Sock* (*Kugi to kutsushita no taiwa*, 1958) and subsequently went far beyond the framework of independent student film to become a central presence in the Japanese New Wave film movement that began in the 1950s, as well as in Ōshima Nagisa, Yoshida Yoshishige, and others’ Shōchiku New Wave; the avant-garde documentary film group that included Matsumoto Toshio and Noda Shinkichi; Teshigahara’s avant-garde art group, which produced independent films during the same period; and Iimura Takahiko and others’ 8mm film group. During the fierce conflict over the 1960 US-Japan Security Treaty, the Nihon University Film Study Club was reorganized into the New Film Study Club,

and key members including Jōnouchi Motoharu, Kanbara Hiroshi, and Adachi Masao established the VAN Film Science Research Center as a space to both live in and produce films together. VAN was a place where not only filmmakers but also artists, critics, and editors engaged with various media, including fine art, music, theater, photography, and poetry, could assemble. Out of their interaction grew a large number of interdisciplinary projects. Among the best-known works or events are *Document 6.15* (*Dokumento 6.15*, 1961) and *Sain Ceremony* (*Sain no gi*, 1963).

Jōnouchi and others fully participated in the 1960 anti-Security Treaty protest movement and documented it from the inside, and the following year were asked to screen a film at an event marking one year since the death of Kanba Michiko, a female university student killed during a demonstration in front of the National Diet Building. The film was significantly reedited by VAN members and other associates, with news footage and reenactments of violence by police and right-wing thugs inserted into footage of the struggle shot by Jōnouchi and his group. The soundtrack included politically conflicting voices played simultaneously, and the work as a whole deviated radically from the documentary film genre. At the screening, in addition to moving images, alternating still photographs of Kanba's face and paintings of Satan were inserted while the original "Song of the Devil" played on the soundtrack, and elements of a happening occurred, with objects being suspended and balloons being inflated in front of the screen. VAN, which was fundamentally critical of ritualistic political gatherings, sought to transcend the film medium and even art itself, with the concept of a one-time-only cinematic event framed as an artistic intervention in a political space. However, the audience had come to see a documentary film of the protests and responded with outrage, while the organizers vehemently lambasted VAN and halted the screening midway. A controversy over this fracas unfolded in the letters section of the *Nippon Dokyusho Shimbun* [Japan readers newspaper]. In response to political attacks on the staging of

the film screening, Matsuda Masao—then an editor and later a film critic allied with Adachi and associates—writing under the pen name Hirosawa Mina, fired back with a counterargument that questioned the nature of relationships among film and politics, art and activism. This was followed by a final article on the topic by Tamura Kazuo (actual name unknown), thought to be a VAN associate. Only fragments of the original work survive, and most of those involved left no written commentary, so this back-and-forth serves as a highly valuable discussion and document giving us a picture of the film screening event.

Following this, after the Nihon University New Film Study Club completed *Closed Vagina* (Sain, 1963), they endeavored to stage its screening as a ritual called *Sain Ceremony* (*Sain no gi*) in Kyoto in 1964. A series of events over two days was organized primarily by club members including Adachi and Okishima Isao, with cooperation from Kyoto avant-garde arts and theater groups. In addition to Adachi and Jōnouchi, participants included musicians Tone Yasunao and Kosugi Takehisa and visual artists Akasegawa Genpei and Kazakura Shō. A pre-event festival included performances in which Kazakura destroyed the venue's piano and Akasegawa set fire to paper. On the day of the screening, an unexpected incident occurred: the second half of the film to be projected was stolen by the radical student group Hanzaisha Dōmei (Criminal League). However, Adachi interpreted even this theft as part of the ritual, and screened the film that remained. When the post-screening performance began as scheduled, the audience crowding the stage was told that it had only seen half the film, and the venue descended into chaos and was surrounded by riot police. Critical of, and alienated from, the existing system of film production, *Closed Vagina* pursued the same ideas about methods of presentation as *Document 6.15* and pushed them even further in the direction of Expanded Cinema and Intermedia experimentation. "Documentation of the *Sain Ceremony*" (*Sain no gi roku*) was published when *Closed Vagina* (Sain, 1963) was shown

at Art Theatre Shinjuku Bunka, the main venue of the Art Theatre Guild, in 1965. The report on the film production and the *Sain Ceremony* events, as well as the *Sain* script were published by editor-in-chief Satō Jūshin in *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism], which was actively engaged in introducing underground films.

Iimura Takahiko, who gained attention with his self-produced 8mm films and experimental films, rethought not only visual and aesthetic experimentation in the films themselves, but also their conventionally accepted screening formats and venues. At the first *Naiqua Cinematheque* in August 1963 at Naiqua Gallery, which strongly promoted experimental artists, he presented *Dada 62* (1962) as a “film concert,” playing the projector like an instrument according to instructions by Tone Yasunao. The film documented works from the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition, also a crucial exhibition venue for the avant-garde. In December of the same year, at *Sweet 16: Performing Festival* organized by the Sōgetsu Art Center, his *Iro* (*Color*, 1962) was projected onto the back of Takamatsu Jiro, a member of the artist group Hi Red Center, and Akasegawa (also a member) cut his shirt into the shape of a screen in a performance called *Screen Play*. Iimura’s text “A Two-Way Peep Window” (*Mō hitotsu no nozokimado*) was published in a pamphlet produced at the time of this event, and contains a discussion of film in terms of media theory. In 1964, he called for the establishment of the group Film Indépendant for self-made films and experimental filmmakers, and organized modes of production and screening that differed from those of existing commercial films. This lay the groundwork for Japan’s first underground film distribution organization, the Japan Filmmakers’ Cooperative, established in 1968, and later the Japan Underground Center. Iimura’s text “Film Experiment or Experimental Film? Thoughts on *ONAN*” (*Eiga no jikken ka jikken no eiga ka: Onan no ba’ai*), which discussed the nature of cinema and how it should move forward with his own work *Onan* (1964) as a case study, was published in *Eizō Geijutsu* [Image arts], the in-house magazine of

Image Arts Society (Eizō Geijutsu no Kai), which was primarily made up of documentary filmmakers. After this, Iimura made concerted efforts to introduce Japanese experimental film in other countries, launching film screening tours that presented his own experimental works and those of his compatriots in the United States and Europe. Iimura worked alongside critic and filmmaker Kanesaka Kenji and critic Ishizaki Kōichirō to introduce underground film, expanded cinema, and intermedia artists, works, and ideas in Japan, and was a pioneer in the field in terms of both theory and practice.

Calculation Time (1960)

Manabe Hiroshi

Originally published as
“Keisan no jikan,”
SAC Journal 6 (September 1960).
Translated by Yūzō Sakuramoto

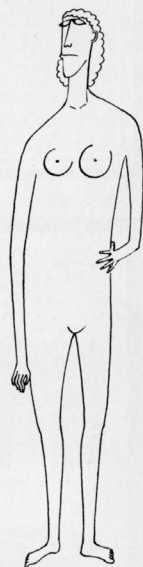
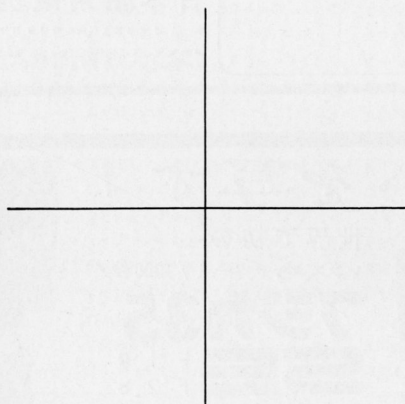
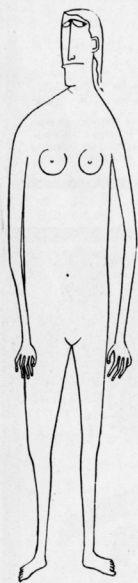
From design to *sprechchor*, not to mention in film and the performing arts, collaborative practice is on the rise. This would seem to go beyond the trend we had previously called a “synthesis of art.” While this is partly due to increased fragmentation in our work and existence, such direct momentum may come from the discovery, reaching its peak over the last year, by young graphic designers of an enhanced form of individuality coming out of collectivism. However, in observing the recent phenomenon, I see many works which are about synthesis for synthesis’ sake. Do they believe that, once things are simply combined, the outcome will become something special? Even the way things are combined has become patternized. Should we combine or separate? It looks like the time has come for calculation. “Putting things together is a better way to survive.” I am afraid that this is not good enough.

計算の時間

●真 鋼 博

映画や舞台はもちろんのことだが、デザインからジュブレイコールまで共同作業が多くなった。“芸術の総合”というような言葉で呼ばれた以前の動きよりもっ

と顕著なものを感じられる。ぼくたちも仕事や存在の細分化も原因だが、若いグラフィック・デザイナーたちが一昨年あたりをピークに没個性化のなかから新し



別の個性を発見しはじめたことが直接の刺激になったのにちがいない。しかし最近の現象を見ていると、総合のための総合でしかない仕事が多に多い。く

つつけば何かこがり出るくらいに思っているのだろうか。くつつき方にまで類型ができてきた。くつつけるか、きりはなすか、そろそろ計算の時間がやっつき

たようだ。「2人口は食べる」では困るのである。

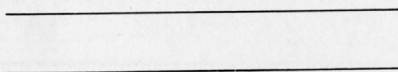


Illustration by Manabe Hiroshi on SAC Journal, No. 6, 1960. Private collection

Dismantling the Convention of the Dark—Critique on *6.15 Document* (1961)

Hirosawa Mina [Matsuda Masao]

Originally published as “Yami no
naka no shūkan wo yaburu—*6.15*
Dokyumento wo hyōka suru,”
Nippon Dokyusho Shimbun [Japan
readers newspaper], July 3, 1961.
Translated by Yūzō Sakuramoto

High praise for the film *6.15 Document*, produced by Zengakuren [All-Japan League of Student Self-Government]. Though the survey report, “A Year of Artistic Creation” (Geijutsu sōzō no ichinen) in the previous issue of this paper described a current situation in which, except for a film or two, there are virtually no “documentary films created by the hands of agents of the movement,” this film—which was screened spontaneously without preparation at a memorial assembly for Kanba Michiko a year later on June 15th—indeed became “almost the only documentation” filling “the strange feeling of emptiness” that I have towards “the screen-world without the Anpo struggle.” I call it impromptu because, as Central Executive Committee [of Zengakuren] member Kitakōji—who jumped up to the podium immediately after the screening—made clear, this film was suddenly thrown in front of two thousand spectators, without even having been previewed.

Expressing his discomfort in the previous issue of this paper, Gotō Tadashi criticized that, during the screening of the film, the audience at the venue was thrown into “a state of ecstatic screaming uncharacteristic of a memorial assembly.” But that was an outrageously false statement. What actually happened was not really ecstatic screaming. Rather, it was jeering, an outcry, a feeling of opposition, and booing. In short, the audience, inexorably confronting the screen in the atmosphere of a boiling cauldron, was compelled to speak out. Though it is needless to quote Haniya Yutaka now, when we sit in the dark, face to face with the world of the rectangle spreading out in front of us, we probably feel alone, so it is unlikely that even a cheap night show at a rundown venue would wholly trigger a state of ecstatic screaming; nor is it likely to run into a scene where young girls—no matter how lively they are—jeer, shouting things like, “bad images!” and making the author shiver. What I value the most about *6.15 Document* is that it was a provocative production plan that accomplished, at the initial screening, a dismantling of the convention of the dark, allowing the audience to become aware of confronting the screen, and to throw away their cozy feeling of solitude in the dark, instead launching a raging debate.

Therefore this work, enforcing mandatory dialogue throughout, dynamically takes full advantage of various techniques, colliding image with sound, with one shot contradicting the next and the sound from the right speaker colliding with that from the left, while the film’s *temporality* competes with *real-time*, causing debate among spectators, thereby turning the venue into a “state of ecstatic screams.” “Modernism,” “Beat consciousness,” as well as “spur of the moment experiment,” all employed for the sake of this provocation, produced a certain result.

Of course, I do not mean to claim that this film is an absolute masterpiece. I am only defending it deliberately, as I think that I should not entirely dismiss common sense views—like those of

Gotō Tadashi—who cannot help but categorize things based on “beauty and ugliness.” Likewise, an unrighteous attitude toward the work of art, such as that of politician Kitakōji Satoshi, who kept his statement—albeit representing the Zengakuren Central Executive Committee or Secretariat—from being an apology for their administrative incompetence, and blindly judged the film as “modernist decadence” from the podium at the mass assembly, must also be condemned. Having said that, I must say that the young filmmakers who created *6.15 Document*, taking no notice of off-site debate between outdated political artists or artful politicians, will create further work like this 333,333 more times. (Office worker, 28 years old)



Both images: Jönouchi Motoharu, still from *Document 6.15*, 1961, 16mm, b/w, 19:00 min. © Jönouchi Mineko

What Should Be Seen? — Again on *6.15 Document* (1961)

Hirosawa Mina [Matsuda Masao]

Originally published as “Nani
wo mirubekika—futatabi *6.15*
Document ni tsuite,”
Nippon Dokyusho Shimbun
[Japan readers newspaper],
July 31, 1961.

Translated by Yūzō Sakuramoto

In response to my short essay—which rescued the documentary film *6.15 Document* from vulgar assessments by proponents of common sense and indicate a positive axis of evaluation—I received three counter arguments. It should be cause for congratulations that I was given an opportunity to further push forward my view of *6.15 Document*, which, excepting a handful of supporters, was swept under the carpet after a roaring torrent of criticism.

As long as we are living in a philosophical climate in which as soon as an argument starts it devolves into mudslinging, I could, like my three opponents, choose to defeat their arguments by taking advantage of their slips of the tongue and adding my own interpretations. But, when discussing cinema exclusively, and

furthermore the opposition between screen and audience in the theater, it is futile to deal with opponents who bring up silly things, such as “what about pro-wrestling or rockabilly.” Instead I will take a step forward from writing about “what I saw and experienced,” and think using my head.

My largest axis of evaluation [in Hirosawa’s *Nippon Dokyusho Shimbun*, July 3, 1961 article, “Dismantling the Convention of the Dark—Critique on 6.15 Document”], the idea of the “provocative production plan” that “dismantled the convention of the dark,” is deeply related to the content of the work. I must now start rotating the “axis” of evaluation.

For instance, around the middle of the film, there is a series of bizarre stop-motion images that could be called a contest of devils. The attentive spectator may have discovered that this corresponds to a succession of continuous stop-motion images, at the beginning of the film, of “struggling figures” or “struggling faces,” drawn from portraits of the Anpo struggle. While a pack of devils are shown one by one, portraits of Kanba Michiko are suddenly folded in, and within a matter of seconds, images of devils follow; her face is inserted into this funeral procession of devils again and again.

Due to the effect of the afterimage, our eyes are able to see Kanba taking on the aspect of an evil devil growing two horns, raising her eyebrows, and baring her fangs, while a groaning monologue follows from the speakers: *Alas, devils, you are defeated by angels, killed and burned 333,333 times. But devils, while the surrender to the angels continues without interruption, sharpen your swords and fangs.* Sound such as this, and distorted images, make us discover images of Kanba Michiko that are “unsuitable for her memorial assembly.”

I don't think this image is necessarily the only correct representation of Kanba Michiko. However, in comparison to various tributes appropriate for the exuberant "funeral campaign"—"fervent" speeches by the guests during the first half of the memorial assembly, or the reminiscing by Mr. Kanba Toshio in closing, or Kawakami Jōtarō's, "Based on the ultimate sacrifice... fortunately we, as a progressive force, won victory at the general election last year..."—we see in the creation of the struggling figure a different aspect. Thus, at the venue on that day, jeering was exchanged back and forth between I (we) who supported this and the vulgar proponents of common sense, turning the darkness into [as Gotō Tadashi wrote] a "state of ecstatic screaming."

Also, I must become proactive in elevating "a stimuli processed by the cerebral cortex" to the level of "discussion," in line with the content of the work.

But, unfortunately, I am running out of space. I must accomplish this some other time.

Last, let me mention the appearance of Mōri Yuri. As someone on the battle-line aiming to become not a modern avant-garde, but an ultra-modern avant-garde, I have had a high regard for him as a proponent of critical movement, who is the same sex [as I] and from the same generation. So, when I mention him, I can't help but feel nostalgic. While I was wondering if someone knew the whereabouts of Yuri, I didn't realize that he had become a blue-collar worker. Perhaps, working hard doing physical labor, he may be losing his brilliance as an ex-polemicist. Set aside the matter of trivial title (damn-ass title?) and why don't we work assiduously on mental work? (Has Mōri even seen *6.15 Document?*) (Office worker, 28 years old)

Illuminating an Invisible Situation—To Hirosawa Mina, From One of the Producers of *Document 6.15* (1961)

Tamura Kazuo

[Actual name of author unknown]

Originally published as “Mienai hitotsu
no jōkyō wo terasu—Hirosawa Mina e,
Dokyumento 6.15 no seisakusha no hitori
toshite,” *Nippon Dokyusho Shimbun*
[Japan readers newspaper],
August 28, 1961.

Translated by Yūzō Sakuramoto

About *Document 6.15* (not *6.15 Document*, to note) various criticisms and denouncements have appeared in this paper, but I am not going to touch on them now. Among them, Hirosawa Mina (an unknown, likeable supporter, whom I respect) raised the problem of an “axis of evaluation” for the “work,” but as one of the producers, I would like to briefly describe the “work.”

In creating *Document*, we all agreed that a “Memorial assembly for Kanba Michiko” was absolute nonsense. We took the stance that, as far as the death of Kanba Michiko was described

as fact, nothing should be tacitly agreed upon in the name of commemorating her death. But, of course, this was not something that the entire creation could be based on. We carried out a plan, but the “work” was undetermined until the moment of the screening, and it was not “something definitive” even after the screening.

The venue, which held a very small audience, filled up as students returning from the protest meeting joined us. We then ran into a situation that transformed our “plan” of hosting various democratic groups. Unsettling voices of police, forcefully ordering students protesting in front of the venue to disperse, were heard. Following an introduction by the Zengakuren [All-Japan League of Student Self-Government] Secretariat, *Document* began, and the sound from the day of 60.6.15 was played in the dark. After a bit, a roar and an “ecstatic screaming” [Gotō Tadashi] began to be heard.

Partly due to technical mistakes, the film did not proceed as planned, but there was applause for scenes of the students militantly clashing with the police, while the scenes with a series of masks invoked an air of a crazy party. In any event, it was not completely audible [to me] since I was in the booth, and while running the film we also argued among ourselves.

The scheduled time had already passed. There were repeated phone calls from Zengakuren Secretariat telling us to stop the film immediately, but it was impossible for us to stop the film halfway through. We did have to relinquish the ending part. After the film, a recording from 6.15 in '61 (protest rallies at Hibiya and in front of the National Diet Building, including speeches by both Mr. Kitakōji and Ms. Kanba Mitsuko, which correspond to the grim scene of 60.6.15 at the beginning) was supposed to be played over a blank screen. However, when the film ended, Chief Secretary Kitakōji called *Document 6.15* “modernist decadence,” “nothing to do with Zengakuren Secretariat,” and apologized to the audience.

Perhaps the “work” is a one-time only thing. We did not want to create the “perfect work” from the start, and it is not appropriate, at least for me, to call this project “work.” The fact is that an invisible situation, which included Zengakuren, was illuminated. I consider that the creation of this situation must also be part of the direction. (Director, 24 years old)

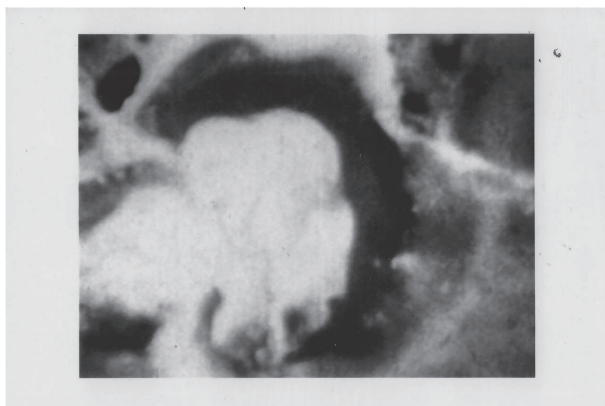
A Two-Way Peep Window (1963)

Iimura Takahiko

Originally published as
“Mō hitotsu no nozokimado,”
program notes for *Sweet 16*
performance, Sōgestu Art Center,
December 4–5, 1963.
Translated by Colin Smith

- ▶ Film is also a spatial art form. Not to belabor an obvious point, but the word *spatial* here has two meanings.
- ▶ One refers to the space within the frame of the film itself, and the other refers to the space outside the frame, in the venue where the film is projected.
- ▶ Until now, virtually all consideration of the spatial aspects of film has dealt with the space within the frame, and with the theory of space as it relates to the images recorded on the film.
- ▶ Today, however, in examining the spatial aspects of film, it is necessary to consider not only the images presented, but also the theory of space as it pertains to the venue where the film is projected.

- ▶ The first films were reproductions of stage plays, but, as film took shape as a medium for reproduction there was no reflection on the role of space in plays or the spatial nature of the theater as a venue. Even though films are viewed in theaters just as plays are, no attention has been paid to the theater as space, and the entire focus has been on the flat plane of the screen.
- ▶ Now, film is in the process of losing its primacy as a means of reproduction to the new medium of television. When films are broadcast on television, the medium of film is forced to renounce any claim to being a spatial art form, and abandon the entire concept of the theater as space.
- ▶ Is film destined to be divided and conquered, to surrender the “theater as space” to the world of stage drama, and the “screen as space” to the world of television?
- ▶ Could it be inherently impossible for film to unearth the latent possibilities of the “theater as space,” and breathe new life into them as a spatial art form?



limura Takahiko, still from *IRO (Color)*, 1962, 8mm, color, 11:00 min. © limura Takahiko

- ▶ Of course, there has been all manner of experimentation with the projection of film.
- ▶ Today we have CinemaScope, we have Cinerama. The future may see 180-degree wraparound screens, or even spherical screens.
- ▶ The larger sizes and three-dimensional screens are, of course, examples of the abovementioned experimentation.
- ▶ However, these are not the only possibilities. The current trend is toward increased distance (both physical and psychological) from the screen, and toward film as mass entertainment and spectacle.
- ▶ What I would like to see done with the theatrical space inherent to film, though, is just the opposite of this kind of spectacle. I would like to see the screen as a peep window for each individual viewer, as it used to be at the dawn of cinema history. This is a two-way peep window, and the screen doubles as an eye that watches the viewer watching it.

SWEET 16
今宵たのしくソット



小さなロマネスクの会

いかぞよ

Pamphlet for Sweet 16 event at Sôgetsu Art Center, December 4, 5, 1963. Private collection

Film Experiment or Experimental Film? Thoughts on *ONAN* (1965)

Iimura Takahiko

Originally published as “Eiga no jikken ka jikken no eiga ka: Onan no ba’ ai,” *Eizō Geijutsu* [Image arts], no. 3 (February 1965): 14–20.
Translated by Colin Smith

When I think about the nature of moving images, my mind turns first to my own work.

I have not yet sufficiently logically organized my work, and what’s more, I have no idea how it might be organized. In that sense, I have been quite irresponsible toward my own output, and this text does not qualify as an explanation or commentary on it, either.

For me this text, or rather the act of writing itself, is a clear-cut case of words not fitting deeds, and in some sense I am intentionally striving to make it so.

ONAN was the first 16mm film I made. I think there is no better example of a film that makes different impressions, depending upon the viewer.

ONAN has been screened four or five times so far, but it has never been shown in the same form, i.e. the same film has never been shown twice. The content does not change each time the film is shown (or perhaps it does), but in any case, it has not been shown in the same way. Each screening of the work is, of course, a one-time-only event, and while it would be possible to screen it as the same form over and over again, the one-time-only screening is part of the work's intent. As a result, each person who has seen it has seen a different work, though with the same story and the same title.

The forms in which *ONAN* has been shown are:

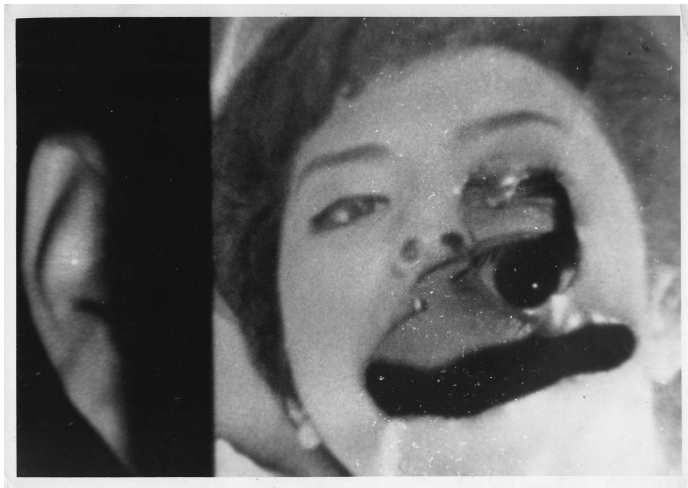
1. Original, 7 minutes (screened at the Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival)
2. Original, screened twice in a row, 17 minutes 30 seconds (final scene of the original repeated for a third time after second screening)
3. Original, screened three times in a row, 7 minutes + 7 minutes 30 seconds + 7 minutes, total 21 minutes 30 seconds (with final scene repeated during second screening, in the manner of [2] above, followed by letters indicating the END, followed by a third screening consisting of rushes accompanied by unaltered film noise, with holes punched in the film during some scenes)
4. Original, rushes with punch holes, 7 minutes (same as third screening described in [3] above, but with punch holes in all cuts except one scene)

That is the basic outline, about which the reader may notice that there are two basic intermingled approaches. One is repetition, the other, the use of punch holes. The fourth screening returns to the original, non-repeating format, but with punch holes added. I cannot say with certainty that the screenings took place in the order above, but when listed in this way, there does seem to

be a cyclical pattern to them. From my perspective as its maker, there is no single *ONAN*, but rather a group of works, each having the title *ONAN*, and when they are categorized, the first and fourth works (screenings) are in opposition. Both are the film in its original form, without repetition, and both can claim to be the “original.” Here I should point out that in these four screenings, there was not a single change to the story or, strictly speaking, to any of the scenes.

What does a film experiment like this mean? Is it just an example of playing around, or more accurately, mischief? Or is it nothing new, just recycling of old experiments that have already gone stale? Or even if it is something new, is it just eccentricity, novelty for novelty’s sake? Or...

There is no end of possible answers to these questions. Can the reader choose the answer as he or she sees fit? Can the answers be narrowed down to just one? Is this answer truth or misunderstanding?



limura Takahiko, still from *Onan*, 1964, 16mm, b/w, 8:00 min. © limura Takahiko

My ideas are as follows.

Cinema is also a form of spatial art. There are two aspects to this, although they seem obvious and hardly bear repeating at this point: one is the film itself or the frame in which it is projected, and the other is the venue where the film is being shown, outside the frame. Much of the discussion about space in cinema thus far has been concerned with the space inside the frame, and spatial theory regarding the images printed on the film.

Today, however, when we think about space in cinema, we need to rethink the theory of space to include not only images, but also the field in which they are projected.

Films began as replications of what occurred on the theater stage, but as cinema came into its own as a duplicative medium, it ceased taking into account the theater as a space and its character as a venue. Likewise, while the venue for projecting a film is the entire theater, we have been satisfied with directing our attention to the single flat rectangle of the screen.

Meanwhile, today cinema is in the process of ceding its primacy as a means of image duplication to television. When films are shown on television, they really are required to abandon any notion of theatrical venue.

Can cinema do nothing but wait in stunned silence as its roles are siphoned off by two opposing camps, the role of theatrical venue recaptured by theater, and its role as an image-space seized by television?

Is it impossible to recover the role cinema originally played as a theatrical venue, and reconstitute cinema as a spatial art? Of course, in terms of film projection, all manner of experiments have been carried out, from CinemaScope to Cinerama and 360-degree

circular screens. In the future, we may be completely enclosed in spherical screens.

This move toward larger size and three-dimensionality is one aspect of changes in cinema, but there is movement in other directions as well. One current direction is expansion of the distance (both physical and psychological) between the audience and the screen, and an increasing character of spectacle as mass leisure.

In my view, theatrical space in cinema is, contrary to such a spectacle, like an individual peephole for each viewer, as films once literally were, and at the same time there is another eye on the other side of the peephole looking back at the viewer. This is the type of relationship I envision for cinema. (Iimura Takahiko, "A Two-Way Peep Window," *Sweet 16* program note, 1963 [this quoted section reflects Iimura's original reformatting of the 1963 text in 1965])

In short, according to this somewhat crude theory of spatial art, my ideas are not limited to experimenting with moving images, and are focused on experimentation with *cinema*. Here *moving images* refers to images inside frames (for example on a screen), as described in the passage quoted above, while *cinema* refers to the general format of projecting film.

Experimentation with moving images emerges from questioning the duplicative medium of film. There can be no experimentation with moving images without questioning cinema itself, without turning back to the fundamentals of cinema as a moving image medium.

Let us return to *ONAN*. Thus far I have only described the methods and screening format of *ONAN*, but the various screening methods used with *ONAN* were not necessarily accidental. These methods were applied to a work with a specific story, *ONAN*, and cannot be applied in the same way to other works.

Here I must give an outline of the story of *ONAN*, quite simple if summarized: A young man burns a hole in a nude photograph with fire tongs, and then lays an enormous plastic egg (a work by Nakanishi Natsuyuki).

The title *ONAN* is taken from the well-known story of Onan in the Old Testament. It's a bit of a digression, but I would like to share the story here.

"Then Judah said to Onan, 'Sleep with your brother's wife and fulfill your duty to her as a brother-in-law to raise up off-spring for your brother.' But Onan knew that the child would not be his; so whenever he slept with his brother's wife, he spilled his semen on the ground to keep from providing offspring for his brother."

This passage describes not what we today call *onanī* [derived from "onanism" in Japanese] i.e. masturbation, but rather to coitus interruptus, and I am not sure how the word came to mean what it does today. In any case, the film *ONAN* relates to the present-day meaning of onanism.

A pertinent observation on onanism can be found in Shibusawa Tatsuhiko's writing on Jean-Paul Sartre: "Sartre's opinion can be seen as a defense of sexual desire in the absence of an object, i.e. of onanism." Sartre wrote, "Usually it is on the occasion of the Other's presence that the world is revealed as the world of sexual desire. Accessorily it can be revealed as such on the occasion of the absence of a particular Other or even on occasion of the absence of all Others." (Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, 1943)

ONAN also relates to this "desire in the absence of an object." In the film, the subject of "desire in the absence of an object" becomes objectified by the appearance of, quite literally, an *object* (the giant egg). Moreover, when the character falls down holding the object, this "desire in the absence of an object" is made into a

caricature. To speak in Sartre's terms, the world of sexual desire, which usually appears "on the occasion of the Other's presence," is driven to death by the appearance of a physical object in place of the Other. Moreover, what causes the collapse in *ONAN* is the odd event of a chance collision with the Other (a girl). The girl pays no attention whatsoever to the object. The image of the character collapsing due to his own *object* (the egg), while losing an opportunity to encounter an actual Other, embodies the onanism of our current era. In that sense, this work can be seen as an *admonition* against the futility of "desire in the absence of an object," i.e., against onanism.

There is more discussion on this topic: Satō Jūshin has recently discussed the theme of onanism in experimental film at length. What does his theory entail?

"We who produce experimental films are not engaged in 'handcraft' so much as 'masturbation,' and it requires a very sexual working process. It is my view that experimental film, and other forms of art, must be sexual to some extent." (Satō Jūshin, *Film Indépendants* pamphlet, 1965)

When this "masturbatory" theory of experimental film is viewed in light of the writing of Sartre, it does indeed seem to fall into place. "Desire in the absence of an object" can be applied wholesale to experimental film and other forms of art. The majority of experimental film is "in the absence of an object" and cannot be created without severance from the object. In this case, the object might mean the audience, or all aspects of *the Other* that appear in the act of creation. Of course, this is not an issue of whether to make experimental films alone or as a group. It is an issue of the subject and object of the creative act. Because there is no room here to expand on a theory of experimental film as it relates to this *masturbatory* theory, I would like simply to apply Satō's theory in the context of Sartre.

To turn back to *ONAN* once more, as mentioned above, *ONAN* is a caricatured representation of onanism. Looking back on it now, *ONAN* was the first experimental film I produced, so there seems to be a kind of causality there. In other words, in terms of the “masturbatory” theory, this work is a model experimental film. Put another way, it might be like a representation of private parts.

I do not know how these two theories relate to the work. I leave that judgment to others, but as for the “masturbatory” theory, *ONAN* is just one response to it, and regarding other works, all I can say is that other responses can surely be found.

Assuming *ONAN* is one response to the “masturbatory” theory, then this work, which expresses the futility of onanism, could be called almost too fitting a response. With this work I may have secured a one-way ticket to the realm of experimental film, but not yet a “free pass” that lets me come and go at will. That is what the “masturbatory” theory of experimental film would suggest. Naturally, the “masturbatory” theory is also a critique of experimental film, leveled at the genre, whether one affirms or denies the “masturbatory” theory. How does *ONAN* appear in light of this criticism?

If it had ended with the original work, it might have been a model response to the critique, but it changed in various ways, or multiplied, or started insisting on its own obliteration. These were the assorted variations on *ONAN* that I listed at the beginning. Readers may already have noticed that, in effect, the repetition and resulting multiplication of the original gave impetus to the hollowing-out of the work. The punch holes proliferated until they went through every scene, and the destruction of images gradually revealed the images’ illusory nature.

First, let us consider repetition. When the entire work is screened twice, the audience sees the same images, in the same sequence, and the same actions occurring in these images a second time.

However, a viewer cannot commit all the images in a film to memory. Each person remembers the images that interested them and the scenes that impressed them. Thus, when the same film is repeated, there are images discovered as if anew, while images already in memory seem familiar.

This differs from cases where the same scene is repeated in different parts of a single film. When the film is run in the exact same sequence, the images become hollowed out, rather than enlivened. On the one hand, there are new images discovered, and on the other hand, there are old images deadened. When viewing a film for the second time, the viewer becomes more critical than the first, even though he or she is watching exactly the same film, and of course, the second experience is also a critique of the first experience. Usually, people never see exactly the same action occur twice. A double experience of an image through repetition is only possible with the moving image, but cinema is a one-off act, even though it is one that can be replicated. Therefore, the spectator becomes accustomed to seeing actions in cinema as transitory images. The repeated screening of a film breaks down this acclimation, revealing to the viewer that moving images are duplicated, hollowed out, and deadened. This extends, in turn, to the work as a whole. So, what happens to the story of *ONAN*, with its classical literary trappings? (It should be noted that when the film is screened twice, the indication of *The End* comes only at the end of the second screening.)

And what of the punch holes? These do not require a lengthy explanation. Punch holes are physical holes opened in the film without relation to the image's composition. In the image, a young man makes a hole in a nude photo, and a huge hole opens up in the film as well. As soon as the young man lays the egg, punch holes open in that as well. As soon as the man falls down, a large white circle appears on the screen. The afterimage effect makes the circle appear to move slightly up and down, left and

right, or images untouched by punch holes linger for a moment. The white screen and the image-less film coexist simultaneously, and frequently, confusion arises as to which is the image. The viewer tries hard to see the image, but it is just an enormous white circle of screen. From time to time an image appears for an instant. Here, it is not that the image is destroyed, but that the white circle more fully reveals its illusionary quality.

The circle becomes a *peephole* through which the audience can see the young onanist.

Speaking of peepholes, in closing I would like to mention another work I made with Nakanishi Natsuyuki, called *On Eye Rape* (*Shikan ni tsuite*, 1962). We took a straightforward science film about the fertilization of plants and punched holes in every frame. Inserted in the film in several places were nude photos, which did not have punch holes. The work was a protest against the unjust and arbitrary actions of the censors.

Documentation of the Sain Ceremony — As a Report of the Production Committee (1966)

Adachi Masao

Originally published as “Sain no gi roku,” *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism] 23, no. 1 (January 1966): 121–126.
Translated by Yūzō Sakuramoto

As sung, “Far away, far far away, Okhotsk...,” in a recently popular Yakuza movie, it seems like there is nothing which so perfectly describes my current mindset on *Sain* (*Closed Vagina*) as the image of Okhotsk land in silhouette. The character of the prisoner who reads this poem is perhaps calling the misty clouds across the ocean “Okhotsk,” but as there is no way he could possibly see it, he sings about a small area called the “Sea of Okhotsk” he might have seen on a classroom map years ago. Now, unworthy and in prison, he sings the song alone, feeling his sorrow overflowing.

As a group we began planning and producing *Sain* (*Closed Vagina*, 1963) four years ago, completing the work two years ago. The script was written collectively under the banner of the Script-Writing Committee, and the film was directed collectively by the Direction Division. Without any so-called producer, all participants involved in the production contributed their own money, and the

prints were made by passing production tasks from one participant to another, resulting in a film that incorporates diverse images and the perspectives of many people. The group as a whole became something like a swirling of the dark currents of the northern sea, like the Sea of Okhotsk, and *Sain* the white waves cresting above.

For better or worse, I have spent the past four years shouldering the burden of the entire process of producing *Sain*, including authority over the Production Committee. The line to which I have plaintively adhered in order to address the challenges presented during those years, as in the markedly mournful singing of “Okhotsk” or the entire ocean is my hope to carry out the responsibility of reporting on it all, and to expedite the dissolution of the Production Committee as soon as possible. And if my arbitrary reference to “swirling” sounds unrelenting, then please cast aside the quasi-solidarity and pretense of “tides” that you rely on, and ambush me as you like.

Was *Sain* a ritual or not?

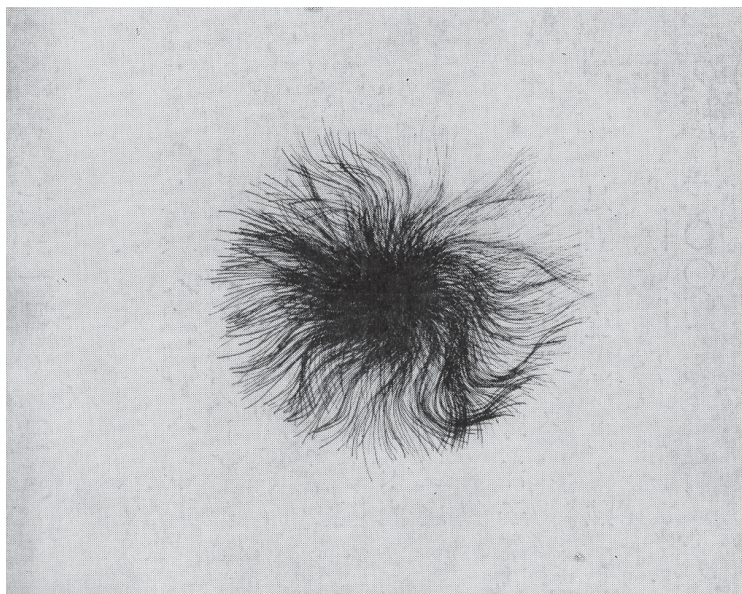
From the standpoint of the creator, the work is called a “ceremony”—however, with a hypothetical question mark. Furthermore, the author has never precisely stated the intention or subject matter of the film. It is what it is—as a film, *Sain* exists. How dare I try to explain it further? All that remains legitimate is for the film to be appreciated as is, or ignored. Therefore, if it is labeled “Obscene!” I say, “Fine. *Sain* is a symbolic image that captures the absurdity of the contemporary situation.” Since, due to its erotic nature, the film was banned, and is not available to watch, it becomes known as a “legendary film.” Labels such as these are interpretations, and have no bearing whatsoever on the author’s position.

However, since each one of these labels represents the contents of *Sain*, it could be said that *Sain*, as a work, has multiple facets. Keep in mind that, again, I use the expression “it could be said,” with no sense of responsibility. *Sain* was produced with the awareness that all seventy of the staff and cast members could be considered as authors. Whereas, ordinarily, the producer and/or director takes sole credit as author(s) of a given work, *Sain* was planned so that the production and directing would be the result of the input of all seventy individuals, to the extent that this was possible. It therefore consists of a series of images, which are symphonic and at the same time extremely discontinuous and fragmented. It could be said that, on the surface, some non-auteurist artists created an unconventional or off-beat work. Furthermore, there was no intention to rely on hindsight to achieve coherence in the form of an omnibus or anthology film. Seventy artists worked single-mindedly on their respective creative assignments, fulfilling their particular duties, each in their own laboratories.

I call that “ceremony.” Cinema’s expressive functions become the experiential center of the “ceremonial site.” And, rather than continuously documenting every detail of our experiences, we kept in mind to only retain the essential memories. All I did was simply recite prayers and routinely gather documentation, dedicating it to god in my mind. The domains of self presumably involve internal and external processes. An image as media, however, surpasses this division on the most superficial level, coming to embody a “concept-image” which can belong in either domain, evidencing quickly that it is first and foremost a “thing,” prior to entering consciousness, as a result of the stimulation of the self’s bodily senses, through the eyes, ears, nose, or genitals. Not only that, it can also possess in and of itself a duration of conscious apprehension. I believe that is where faith awakens. And with our vulnerable mind swirling in faith, the ceremony begins. This is explained clearly in the ending of Fellini’s *8 1/2*. A critic and screenwriter friend says to the protagonist, who has decided to

stop making his film, “Life is so full of confusion already. There’s no need to bring new chaos into it again.... It is better to stop creating.” As soon as the protagonist—who was supposed to have halted production—hears this, he immediately brings everyone together and holds a kind of carnival.

With that kind of atmosphere in mind, you may come to understand what the “ceremony” was all about.



Ticket for Sain Ceremony event, 1964. Private Collection

And so began the *Sain Ceremony* (*Sain no gi*).

The metaphysics of faith in the ceremony are based on the mutual independence of the creative subject and the work, centering on a triad of dichotomies—the author and the work, the work and the viewer, and the viewer and the author—that

are respectively designed on different levels. The ceremony is complete when the triad, either expanding or diminishing, transcends its designated space, completely dismantling these three dichotomies.

At the *Sain Ceremony* (*Sain no gi*) in Kyoto, first, the so-called “happenings” or “events” transpire: for instance, a composer composes and performs on the spot, or a painter paints amidst the crowd, becoming indistinguishable from the viewers. The authors become viewers, as well as authors, and what the viewers take in overlaps with what the authors create. The viewers then become authors. Likewise, when a dancer performs, the viewers begin dancing.

It was in such circumstances that *Sain* was screened. Of course the film was still banned, and was still being treated as a pornographic film. As the organizer of the ceremony, confronting the Kyoto police, I awaited being charged for exhibiting obscenity in public. However, some people stole the part that was labeled “obscene” (exactly half of the whole film). The old man in charge of the screening was too stunned to respond, though after being asked repeatedly, reported that apparently it had been stolen by several men. (Evidence proved later that a group of about forty people, with students at the center, had planned and carried out the theft.) Thanks to them, we escaped being charged with the public display of obscenity, however, the venue was surround by riot police, and the audience of eight hundred people and the owner of the venue blamed it on us, berating us for over two hours in a group discussion in front of the screen. “We got scammed!” they shouted, running up to the stage from every direction, and attacking us. After that, a thug appeared, dressed casually in a kimono, followed by his subordinate, claiming that the venue was on his “turf,” intimidating us and saying, “Two can play at that game!”

■ 11月.4.5.6.7 (日).8.毎夜 9時30分上映 ■ ア

■ 6(土)7(日)は混雑が予想されますので早い日をお選び下さい。

■ 脱出者『さいい』の報告 足立正生

現在の状況の不毛さは、「八方ふさがり」「出口なし」といった「鎖陰」と言う言葉に象徴されるような生やさしいものではないことは知っている。むしろ、人間性の限界だとか何とか云って、自分の方から倒れて、周囲に築き上げる分厚い壁。外からというより内側から支えてある、その壁こそが不毛なのだ。モラルだとか、平和だとか、愛だとか、希望だとか……それらが幾重にも幾重にも重なって、観念の殻となり、人間性という意識の外殻となり、赤血に染まって荒れ狂う猛牛と闘牛士のよう。本能的欲求と思想行動をとりまく、スタジオの壁となっている。

その壁の一端は、ひよいことまよいで出れば簡単だが、内股に無数の傷を負うことは避けられない。だから誰もが怒ろしくて越えられない。こつこつ軽くこずいたり、秘かにめざぶってみたりするのが関の山。そして、その壁ははるか上空にまでそり立った大壁面だと考えることで安住している。ごまかしている。——そんな、何ともやるせない腹立たしい不毛さなのだ。

だから「不毛だ、不毛だ」と泣き叫ぶのかいかにワイセツなとか。黙って壁を凝視し、体内に溢れる欲求を直線的に「スィーッ」とぶつければ、その衝動だけで不毛の壁は越えることが出来る。打ち破ることが出来る。

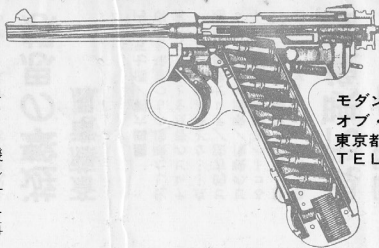
無意識の衝動とは、果して本能的な欲求を秘めたものかということとは自明だ。初めて、人間が皮膚から脱出して大気に触れることを可能にする、思想的欲求の行動だと云うことも。——エロチシズムと呼ぶ思想の行方だ。

映画『鎖陰』は、「鎖陰」という思想的状況の不毛を乗り越えることが出来る唯一のものとして、エロチシズムを提示した。その創作の実験目的は、その不毛さと思想が、男女の愛や、性や、死の世界の中どう切り結んでいるかということを表現することにある。自分たちの血を掻き取っては、フラスコで掬って調べ、映像化できないものまでフィルム上に定着しようと試みた。成功した実験もあれば、不成功な現象もある。しかし、それらが実験室の中に群れひろがり、はみ出し始めた。当然の結果だ。密室は狭く小さな世界だ。成果は世に問おう！ 出合うのは、鬼も居れば聖者も居る。そう考えて、『鎖陰』の上映が始まった。

ところが、実験室の外にも、やはり不毛の壁がもう一枚あった。『鎖陰』は、内容がワイセツだから危険だから止せと叫ぶ声があった。実験内容が、エロチシズムを主題としているのだから、見学者

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が「ワイセツだ!」と叫ぶ音色の方が、いやらしくワイセツな響きを持っている。しかし、それが壁なら越えなければならない。最終的な実験の一つだ。

そうして「鎖陰」は、映画「さいん」となり、可能な限りのエネルギーを蓄積しながら不毛の壁を乗り越えたものだと自負している。総身の傷はかすり傷。

だから、脱出者を英雄扱いにせず、実験室の中味を、充分に吟味貫味して、成功不成功の評価を下していただく。

なお「鎖陰」の制作主体である鎖陰制作委員会は、新たな実験室「ロトを殺した二人の息子」の作業を開始しています。そちらの方の見学も、御期待下さい。

■ 観賞批評 渋沢竜彦

かなり前に、「鎖陰」と云う不思議な映画を見せられたことがある。娯楽のような心理状況を残酷とエロテイズムの断片的なイナージで点綴し、しかもそこに、奇妙なノスタルジックな抒情を生んでいる作品であった。これはそのパターンに依拠して「白日夢」と言うくらいであるが、この映画がずっと通俗的であるの比較べて「鎖陰」は、はるかに斬新で日本の風土に根ざした死や欲望の暗さをほるかに見事に定着していたと思う。

■ 観賞批評 栗田 勇

これは、日本の青春が古い束縛を拒絶し、自分の肌で感じ目に見た現実を、全く新しい手法で追求した実験的作品である。

この一見、稚拙で難解にみえる映像は、むしろかえるような青春の体臭と妥協することなく、理論を貫ぬき通そうという強い決意に支えられて、私たちに、あきらかに一つの世代の出現を告げている。

■ 観賞批評 佐藤重臣

「鎖陰」はかなり色々なコトバを拾うことが出来た。…… シンボルもここまで来ると、ほとほと恐れ入るが、オンナという昆虫、神という十字架がシンメトリーの中心になるような方法にくらべて、このシンボルは仲々に鮮度があると思う。…… 観念でなく具体的に「市外不出」のような場面がいくつか出て来るが、それがブニエルの映画を見ているような意識の裏側の肉体の弛緩を感じしめるところにこの映画の魅力がある。

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As the organizer, I had to explain that, "Rather than considering the film to have been stolen, as long as that action was taken by participants in the ceremony, we shall consider it as one of the creations, and so now the screening has been concluded." The police as well as the audience were not buying it, saying, "Sue them! Or we will arrest them all for fraud, with the audience as witness." The audience hated the police, and screamed, "We are not going to bear witness!"

Indeed, the ceremony had reached its apex. The organizer was moved to tears and thanked the gods.

The next example is the *Sain Ceremony* in Osaka.

At this event we were actually unable to witness the audience's appearance. The two thousand tickets available exclusively for members had sold out. When preparations were completed five days before the event, the Council for Youth Problems in Osaka conspired against us with the Juvenile Division of the Metropolitan Police Department, and issued an order to remove the poster, because, "the poster looks obscene and disturbs public morality." Immediately thereafter, the owner of the venue (the Osaka Prefecture), by order of the Governor of Osaka, informed us of an order prohibiting our use of the venue, again due to the fear of "disturbing public morality." Our contract was canceled, and, having suffered considerable mental and financial damages, we requested compensation from Osaka Prefecture. While there was support for our case from progressive intellectuals and lawyers, we didn't hear a single word from the Prefecture, other than that they would "reinvestigate the situation and take the appropriate steps."

Thus, we carried out a grand mourning of the *Sain Ceremony*, throughout the city of Osaka, up to the Prefectural Office, with five committee members. It turned out to be rather hysterical, because *Sain* was laid in the coffin, incense was burned,

and we all trimmed our hair really short, matching each other, and quickly put up five hundred posters, one after another, on the street, as long as the glue lasted. Apparently, the audience, who did not know about the cancelation, came and went in groups of twos and threes—the triad-ring successfully shrunk to such an extent that authors could no longer remain authors and neither could the viewers, while the ceremony proceeded with only participants.

Meeting with the good audience known as Eirin (Motion Picture Code of Ethics Committee / Film Classification and Rating Organization)

For about a year after the completion of *Sain*, we asked various artists, poets, and film critics to watch the film at Eirin's screening room, trying to figure out a way to release it.

Among them, a poet named Sekine Hiroshi managed to succinctly describe where our subject resides. He said, “Teshigawara Hiroshi directed *Woman in the Dunes* [*Suna no on'na*, 1964] as a pastime for Sōgetsu School ikebana, and since *Sain* was mainly created by students, it is a pastime for students. They are the same, since both of them are pastimes.” This statement contains two problems. One is that it sounds like Mr. Sekine, presumably a poet by occupation, portrays himself as a worker. He compares creation and labor, and since creation is unprofitable, he calls it a hobby. Is he trying to say that poetry writing is labor and therefore valuable? We are not making films to make money. We only made the film by setting our creative minds in motion. And this salaryman-poet, employed by modern society, is presumptuous enough to explain it! Isn't that something? And this is where the second problem lies: *Woman in the Dunes* is a film designed by a craftsman to be seen by an audience. In contrast, *Sain* is not a film that was made for the purpose of being screened. The absurdity that this distinction carries little significance in terms of contemporary art really hit us hard once we completed the film. Those who are used to watching

either PR films or commercial films fill that gap by referencing the level of completeness of the work, or what constructive propaganda should look like, completely ignoring this distinction. The very seed of what makes genuine creation possible cannot be found without this distinction. We happily returned to the world of pastime. We have acknowledged ourselves to be outlaws, and have taken actions to free ourselves from the standard values created by this world.

It was at that moment I thought about Eirin, who had recently been on the warpath, establishing new rules and standards. What if we, the outlaws, in extreme opposition, faced off with Eirin's value criteria as regards the independent system of the art world? Perhaps Eirin would just ignore the outlaws who fell outside of their purview. With that in mind we visited Eirin in August.

Sure enough, Eirin refused a conversation with us. So, we decided to try to force their hand, to become participants in the *Sain Ceremony*, whatever it took. We had the school we had attended write a reference letter, and explored other connections. Eirin was finally drawn in by our efforts.

They asked that six scenes of the film be deleted. This we disputed. Next, they requested that we change the title and delete thirty specific parts (cuts) instead of the six scenes. We defended *Sain*, and deleted ten cuts in total, to acquire registration number EIRIN 14220. The ceremony, in which outlaws had given Eirin maximum power in the art world, was finally completed. "Oh, Eirin, participants in our ritual, and our dear friends!"



Both images: Nihon University New Film Study Club, still from *Closed Vagina (Sain)*, 1963, b/w, 59:00 min.
 © Archive Committee for Nihon University Film & New Film Club

On the mystery of the ritual

Apparently the ritual of *Sain*, which has lasted for four years, is approaching its finale. Last, I should report about the parts of the hidden mystery that can now be revealed. It's about taking control of the time that it takes for the consciousness to emerge from the "thing," and the details of the prescient faith we had beforehand: generally speaking, this is all part of the intention behind producing and directing *Sain*.

Though jointly created by a number of people, when the script was completed, strangely enough, no so-called statement of purpose as regards production existed at all. When making print-outs, the script didn't look good without it, so what we reluctantly added to the final draft is as follows: "The film is intended to pursue the potential of human communication, love, and hope as a new energy—and to face the challenge of developing a new melodrama." However, this was a total lie, something that we had never seriously thought. Conversely, we continued thinking of how to expose the hypocrisy of these "potentials"—such as love and hope—by exposing "things," and thus communicating (expressing) the impossibility of humanity (Professor Bataille put it simply as "the energies of eroticism that lead us to death").

Specifically, this means a woman with a closed vagina should die that way, leaving the closed vagina intact. The obscene thought of violating such a state is immediately connected to death. The man who loves a woman whose vagina is closed must make the entire world recognize that his love was established acknowledging this. Unless he can do that, he should die. Ideas and images such as these sprang from the situation surrounding the ceremony we conducted. In this sense, *Sain* perhaps appropriately speaks to contemporaneity.

In the midst of the “Sade trial,” our agenda concerning expressions like, “content-wise, obscenity and the thought of eroticism are totally unrelated,” was to shoot images that made it possible for the viewers to recognize instantly that there is a difference between obscenity and eroticism. All in all, that means *Sa-i-n*, with parts that were deleted by Eirin, unlike “Sade,” was brought to justice. What charming outlaws we were!

All of this pretense is based on the presumption that Eirin was the absolute authority of the time, and that we were fighting against the mechanism of power as best we could. The loss of value due to Eirin’s censorship, or having yielded to authority, caused no harm to *Sain*. The world of outlaws rejects such narrow-minded ideologies. We only aimed to highlight the outcry, and their shock at having been attacked by the outlaws. *Sain*, having been censored and become “sa-i-n,” its ceremony complete, is returning to the distant Sea of Okhotsk.

Looking ahead, the outlaws are now preparing the next ceremony, dreaming of being armed to the teeth, with the appearance of the production committee for *Roto o koroshita futari no musuko* [*Lot killed by his two sons*].

Case Studies

Introduction

Go Hirasawa

Around the time Satō Jūshin became editor-in-chief in 1966, the film criticism journal *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism] began actively focusing on marginal works and artists, including documentaries, self-made films, and “pink” films (which have erotic content but are not out-and-out pornography). Filmmaker Iimura Takahiko, film critic Kanesaka Kenji, art critic Ishizaki Kōichirō, musician Tone Yasunao, and others wrote extensively on underground cinema, expanded cinema, and intermedia in this journal’s pages, familiarizing Japanese readers with these movements and terminologies. On the heels of the Sōgetsu Art Center, which had single-handedly led efforts to bring exposure to these movements, artists, and works, came a series of new screening venues: “Lunami Film Gallery” at Lunami Gallery in January 1967; the underground theater Jiyū Gekijō (Free Theater), where Satō himself organized regular screenings, in June; and Underground Sasoriza, launched by Art Theatre Shinjuku Bunka director Kuzui Kinshirō in August. With the student protest movement approaching its peak in 1968–69 and the hippie and psychedelic movements advancing as well, spaces not usually dedicated to film, such as universities, vocational schools, live music clubs, discotheques, nightclubs, and bars joined the above venues in organizing independent film screenings.

Kanesaka, who lived in the United States for an extended period in the mid-1960s, actively introduced American underground cinema and its theories, and as a filmmaker, produced *Super Up* (1966). In January 1967, a public happening was held to record sound for *Hopscotch*, a film shot and edited in the US and Japan.

Given that the film was shot as a happening, musician Tone Yasunao suggested the film score recording also take the form of a happening, and he held a central role in the sound recording event with free jazz musicians Yamashita Yōsuke and Yoshizawa Motoharu, filmmaker Miyai Rikurō, photographer Morita Ichirō, as well as Satō and others participating. Conducted at the Sōgetsu Art Center, where the center of gravity shifted from music to film in the late 1960s, this was a seminal experiment that combined the two. “*Hopscotch: A Found Sound Happening*” (‘Ishikeri’ no otoire hapuninngu) is a valuable report on the event, written by Tone and published in *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism].

Jōnouchi Motoharu, who had produced *Document 6.15* (*Dokumento 6.15*, 1961), which covered the 1960 struggle over the US-Japan Security Treaty, documented *Shelter Plan* (*Sheltā puran*, 1964), a happening staged by the artists Akasegawa Genpei, Nakanishi Natsuyuki, and Takamatsu Jirō (of the group Hi Red Center) and their associates at the Imperial Hotel. After this, Jōnouchi turned his camera back to the protest movement as a new student leftism emerged in the late 1960s. He produced a series that began with *Nihon University Hakusan Street* (*Nichidai Hakusan-dōri*, 1968), which documented unrest at Nihon University, and continued with *Nihon University Public Collective Bargaining* (*Nichidai taishū danko*, 1968), *Gewaltopia Trailer* (*Gebarutopia yokokuhen*, 1969), and *Shinjuku Station* (*Shinjuku sutēshon*, 1968-74), which portrays an uprising in Shinjuku on International Anti-War Day on October 21, 1968. “Gewaltopia” was a concept of Jōnouchi’s, combining *Gewalt* (German for “force” or “violence,” but usually used in Japan in reference to violent left-wing student protest and clashes with authorities), and *utopia*. The related production was originally conceived not as a single work but as an unbroken, potentially endless series of film footage. “Silver Screen, Die! —Preface to an Essay on a Lemniscate” (Ginmakuyo shine! —Yokohachimojiron joron) was a poetic manifesto that appeared in 1968 in the industry journal *Kaku*, published by commercial

filmmakers and associates including Jōnouchi. *Yokohachimoji* literally means “sideways figure eight” and is a Japanese rendering of the infinity symbol. The text introducing this new theory thoroughly rejected conventional filmmaking and advocated a fusion of new cinematic experimentation and daily life.

Shūzō Azuchi Gulliver, active as a visual artist and performer since the mid-1960s, produced film works such as *SWITCH*, *WATCH*, *FILM*, *SCREEN* and *BOX* in 1966 and 1967. Utilizing the characteristics of cinema—twenty-four still images per second printed on rolls of film, run through a projector to become light and shadow, which is cast on a rectangular white screen, in a dark theater, and viewed by an audience—he produced a body of work, not so much films or video art pieces as philosophical experiments with the cinematic, using a variety of approaches to deliberately dissect the medium. Tone wrote a treatise on him, “On Gulliver” (Garibā no koto) published as a flyer distributed at *Two Men Shy in the Face of Andy Warhol / Underground Cinema Shinjuku a Go! Go! Go!* (*Andī wōhōru ni hajirau futari no otoko andā guraundo shinema shinjuku a gō gō gō*, 1968), a two-person event series with Miyai Rikurō.

Artist Ōe Masanori, who moved to New York’s East Village in 1965, began making films at the height of the psychedelic movement, producing *Loop Siki* (1966), *Head Game* (1967), which documents a “be-in” in Central Park, and *No Game* (1967), which chronicles a demonstration at the Pentagon on International Anti-War Day, while participating in the Newsreel collective along with Jonas Mekas and others. *Great Society* (1967) collaged newsreel footage of the massive political, social, and cultural upheavals of 1960s America with footage he had shot himself, and was projected simultaneously on six screens. After returning to Japan in 1969, he worked to bring a psychedelic revolution to the country in both theory and practice, and established Newsreel Japan with Kanesaka and the photographer Nakahira Takuma. In 1970 he participated in

activities of Banpaku Hakai Kyōtō-ha [Expo '70 Destruction Joint-Struggle Group] opposing Expo '70 Osaka, and was cameraman for the film *White Hare of Inaba* (*Inaba no shiro usagi*, 1970) by artist and leader of Zero Jigen [Zero Dimension] group, Katō Yoshihiro. Ōe called for a new spiritual revolution in “The Aesthetics of Ecstasy and the Yippie Revolution” (*Kōkotsu no bigaku to ippī reborūshon*) published in *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism].

Silver Screen, Die!—Preface to an Essay on a Lemniscate (1968)

Jōnouchi Motoharu

Originally published as “Ginmakuyo
shine! —Yokohachimojiron joron,”
Kaku [Nucleus], no. 1 (1968): 12–20.
Translated by Yūzō Sakuramoto

I see a red carburetor a winding highway.. ..
 I see National Pioneer Kajima... I see a Shinto
priest and his sons humbled by his presence... sheepish looking
workers big-bellied men humbling themselves at a meeting.. ..
I see a tunnel radiating underground a city in motion extending
to the grave.. ..
 I see the setting sun in a wasteland.. .. I see illusion and
retinal after-image.. ..
 I see the reality of twenty-four frames per second.. ..
I see all those parasites.. I see mine own “eyes” my own reality..
 in the disappearing time out of the despair of my ‘eyes’
involuntarily triggering pleasant vertigos
 intoxication inclining towards another town chance resem-
blances.. ..
 I see my pathology the ordeal of my pathology.. ..
 I see the world of geranium with an incinerator a dead silver
screen That’s it!
 I stare as hard as I can at the DEATH OF A SILVER LEAF!

Since a good while ago, I have truly believed that “I have no option but to see reality only through the silver screen,” and became hell-bent on visiting the preview-screening room like a somnambulist.

It must be because of the preview room’s impressive presence, like a Chinese noodle shop at midnight in Tennuma. In the magnificent preview room, there is a world of blankness and uproar similar to that of a mental hospital, and I—who love so much this blank world that coldly erases the uproar—step in, shivering in fascination.

So many people gather there, boisterously making noise. But the people have no substance, like phantoms, clamoring aimlessly, like men devoid of souls, lobotomized. Their voices also are unreal, floating as one big echo. The air surrounding the preview room is humid and somewhat heavy. As I step in, a sensual intoxication is invoked... presumably derived from memories of the house of death, a box with the whiff of death, or a silence that should not exist in the living world. WHO IS IT? WHO ARE YOU?... A “certain reality” is in motion and drifting beyond the preview room, just in front or at a far distance from it. Alas, you.. a coffin, you are a frozen coffin! Is there anything I can do other than lying down in this coffin filled with ice? Preview room you are a frozen coffin, and I am the son of the vampire starved for the blood of souls after midnight, and until the ancestor awakens, I will remain asleep, and I see you only in the light of a certain real spark. My awakening is a dream, which I begin to see as parched upon waking.

Ghosts scream and swell, and immediately are shattered without even leaving a silhouette. Their echo is also gone. I freeze my soul and release its heat. Dream passionately to the point of talking amidst delirium. Frozen sleep, your awakening!

I see, from the frozen sleep Da Vinci's camera obscura create the world dazzlingly, Robertson's magic lantern making your head spin, and as it turns into a thaumatrope, the old man at the barbershop wildly tears off the signboard with Duchamp's roto relief.... I see Edison's dry plate, Herschel's telescope, prism glasses, a mirage lens, and an electron gun.

I see an automaton, a horse running at full speed, a fire hose as violence, and a train arriving!

I see the endless chase begin, when Méliès extravagantly unveils his prodigious dance on the moon, and the massive success of a postal train robbery follows, and a cartoon joyfully runs, laughs and falls..

I see the cross-eyed man become a shogun, and a beautiful swimsuit girl drown in the pool.. ..a hunchback takes the skirt off a woman, and when the man with the short moustache and bowler hat in baggy pants rolls upside down, a huge TNT explosion! A ghost plays the fool, then a close-up shot of a foot kicking him in the ass. A tall pile of scrapped automobiles on a highway, a beer belly diving to the ground. And when a bunch of dumb cops start driving, a mad wedding ceremony erupts, where a delicious-looking pie performs an incredibly beautiful dance
oh my goodness, a fire pump spouts insanely.. ..

I reverse direction, and after the dream in awakening I see a shining light coming from cow with a c-section.. .. tears of fossilized fish from a million years ago, a thousand kilometer long procession of dead snail shells cuddling hermit crabs, and beyond that, the red sea spreading, and the swells of the grey sea

I see my womb, pithecanthropus, myself with a two thousand-year history, a twenty thousand-year history.. .. Cataclysmic universe, with dark planets at the hexacontaoctagon-shaped passageway I always take.., seven suns, and a fleet of sickles flying across the sky.. .. a surging, overflowing crowd, sentenced to death, decapitated.. ..

I see rotten tomatoes, black light bulbs I, who drifted amongst three islands, and an archipelago of seven thousand

more.. I, who, groping for two electric poles, wandered off into the desert.. a way to go home is.. .. get into the bedroom of VAN Film Research Center, a carnival float will be assembled there. With a chant of heave-ho, heave, carry the portable festival shrine with everyone, it's an eight-seater, and the float is accelerated to the speed of thirty-eight revolutions per second. Revolve! Destroy! VAN swells, and the room grows into an enormous space extending to the blue sky where is that fellow going to? Darkness approaches, escape! Knock your head against the wall! Let's have a party with your head covered in blood!!

Soon nothing must be visible, what is he planting in the flower field? Suicide! Suicide! Indeed, suicide is hope! Jump! Go jumping! There is a round window, beyond that window spreads the deep blue sea! Here we go! Back, run, jump! Farewell to la vie en rose!

I come to my senses, and walking around, look at the preview room my preview room.. .. dump trucks are forming a line, there is an experiment with fire, and a reservoir about to be built. Factories have been built all over, and everyone looks happy. Many views such as the evening landscape and the morning sun are in motion. That is all. Again, I am struck by sleep.

I woke up early, frozen, my eyes dry in pain, I see a man with bulging eyeballs and swollen balls.. .. I SEE a man with his lips thinly spreading across his face.. .. I see a beautiful boy with cosmos in his eyes.. ..

Their faces along with their voices creep into my heart, and begin echoing begin squeezing my chest begin piercing my throat I painfully open my nasal passages all the way, just roll my eyes back, and with my hair standing on end, my whole body becomes electrified the man with bulging eyes says beguilingly, "Hey boy, heh heh heh (this alone almost made my heart explode)

.. .. interesting (the temptation of horror fascinates my soul)..
..why don't you come inside here? (he is contemptuous as if he
saw through my soul)" The man with the thin lips comes closer
to my eyes, and to the tip of my nose (all I can remember is his
lips) and says with a half-smile (his lips spread other-worldly thin,
how similar he looks to the Chancellor in Poe's novel.) "You (with
a big half-smile) calm down (oh no, the words I hate the most. I
became convinced at this that he was a devil) you should write
(lips increasingly stretching sideways) talk (don't fall into his trap
he is a devil) (he is sucking up to me putting his lips even closer)
You saw it didn't you? (Alas, it's hopeless.. ..)"

The handsome boy keeps his mouth shut. For him, only
words echo in the brain. It's the song of his mother in Colorado
"Kill! Kill!! Kill!!"

Alas, which is my way? This reality or the hell I had
glimpsed, the illusory forest, or the devil's call, far away, the Sea
of Okhotsk, a call from far away, a mother's lullaby, Gibraltar, a
horse's head, Orma in space...

Out beyond the sliding door, beyond the door, beyond
the window, beyond the horizon, beyond the sky, beyond space,
beyond the universe, the unknown, it overwhelms me with horri-
fying volume, horrifying imagination... That enormous
volume, it is my own enormous momentary dizziness! My enor-
mous heart attack.. .. I see dark space wrapped by a sideshow
tent.. .. I see a demented LSD vision of hell.. ..

I see on virgin skin the motherland, engraved on the
rocks sixty-eight times.. ..

I don't remember when it was but I started steer-
ing toward safety. No matter how hard I steer clear of risk, no
matter how hard I aim for safety, on the night of the ordeal of a
thousand days of insomnia, where imagination is swallowed by
delirium, I feel compelled to get up right away from the bed that
had been left unmade for so long, to crawl on all fours, with heart

in uncontrollable pain, running around in different dead towns, extremely exhausted to the point where there is nothing to heal my heart other than to madly throw my arms around people at night and suck their blood, and in the daytime of a thousand days incapable of sleeping even under the bright sun, I see a dream in a frozen coffin. Bluebeard, my mentor, exact your curse. Cut off imagination with a sharp knife.

I see from frozen sleep in this century of darkness unbelievable strip shows performed, and the light of dawn for Dracula.. .. at the tunnel unveiling, a love poem, Jacques' pious prayer.. ..

In a universe gone mad, men with rubber heads becoming addicted to booze, morphine and opium..

sacrifice of their love and fear.. ..

In the world facing Frankenstein's retribution, myriad kleptomaniacs and hanged men emerge, and the masses, tired of living, form suicide clubs.. ..

Long live sabotage! A handshake between an anarchist and Don Quixote.. .. it is the damnation of Faust! The last day of Pompeii, the fall of Carthage the rise and fall of the Roman Empire, insatiable killing and destruction by Vandals and Tatars.. .. Nero and Agrippina, Antony and Cleopatra.. ..

Socks of a mailman who hammered too many nails to the soles of his shoes.. ..

“GENTLEMEN, CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON!!”

Exactly at that point in anticipation of the scene of the life and passion of Jesus Christ.. ..

Oh, I still wake up in the coffin even as the days go by a dream in reverse

I see the NIGHT OF A THOUSAND DAYS ... a beautiful girl cut in three round slices.. In beautiful April with a guillotine hissing, follow a ghoulish catching corpses, crumbling to dust in a labyrinth of mirrors, maybe time to say goodbye to this world.. .. wild beasts roar with fury at the copulation between a bear-girl and

a snake girl by a false dream Colorado is cold, ancient
Japan the Arcadia, death of a man, one million deaths, ten billion
deaths.. .. if I go away to the sea.. a way to Kunlun is it
April also for girls of the Borgia, Sun Wukong randomly firing a
machine gun, is it April also for the butterfly-woman's striptease
with a black umbrella? I ask him, why create ruin? without raining
without blood welling, because of his silence, is a smiling cat quite
unexpectedly, going to die? Izanagi and Izanami nestling together
this scabies-diseased freaky bastard!
beggar bastard!

How miserable I am to have been born from their
pus, turn your head around! Look here comes the brave
man, holding a frying pan in one hand, crazy Grete is passing,
crazy Grete, where are you going, spitting pieces of bread again
and again fly off, fly off into the dark galaxy far away, the earth
collapsing the sky covered with blood houses ablaze, goddamn
humans are all wounded, the world is full of incantations, and the
sun, covered with gun smoke, has no light.

I see an incantation of Apureisu as follows:

“once the incantation is chanted, whitewater flows backward the ocean freezes, winds are calmed, the sun loses its light, the froth of the moon disappears, stars ripped from the celestial sphere, daytime withers, night lives on infinitely”

Mantra, *nam myoho, yi zhi ge*, warlocks, red dragon, devil's magus, black plague, dysentery, Spanish flu, leprosy, hunger, the suffering of the Five-Year Plan, starvation to death, terrorism, killing, massacres, revolution, purge, sadistic murder, genocide, revolt, execution equipment, Iuitsushu, Lausanne, Hiroshima, fish falling from the sky, fish rising to the sky, the east of the sun, the west of the moon, a Van Allen belts, harbinger of a wonderful season, out of the gut of a swallowtail butterfly, of an albatross, of a duck, out of pig's castrated balls foretell the future a myth! sacrifice! Here comes a paeon for the cult of Orpheus!

Agrippa, Paracelsus, Nostradamus, do you call your prophecies of terror and grace our history, to serve your own design?

A vacuum, zero gravity, fall, rise, trench, moebius, five color theorem, fourth dimension, telepathy, correspondence, occult, clairvoyance, invisibility, solitude, sixth sense, death, reincarnation,

limit of imagination, I see one thousand nights without a dawn, I, who stand upright in the darkness and can no longer see anything at all. I CAN'T SEE!! Eternal time, running infinitely

I see, but no I just quietly float in darkness and freeze eternally, listening to the eternal moments

seeing no more, when space blindingly becomes one with my eyes

I wake up. I wake up with a heavy fatigue the preview room in blankness and uproar, small screen,

coffin with the whiff of death, the frozen coffin.. ..

I dare to swing my heavy foot a broken wall a screen, there is neither a dark nebula nor the anti-universe

outside, and filthy-looking towns, electric poles and goddamn humans

I cease to see to put my hands on collapsed houses, broken streets, and tattered shoes or rotten apples with this hand.. .

I ceased to see and begin to run to the market in an uproar to the front of a bakery, to the landlady of a greengrocer or to a group of guerrillas

Blow away.. .. retinal after-image.. .. reality of twenty-four frames per second.. ..

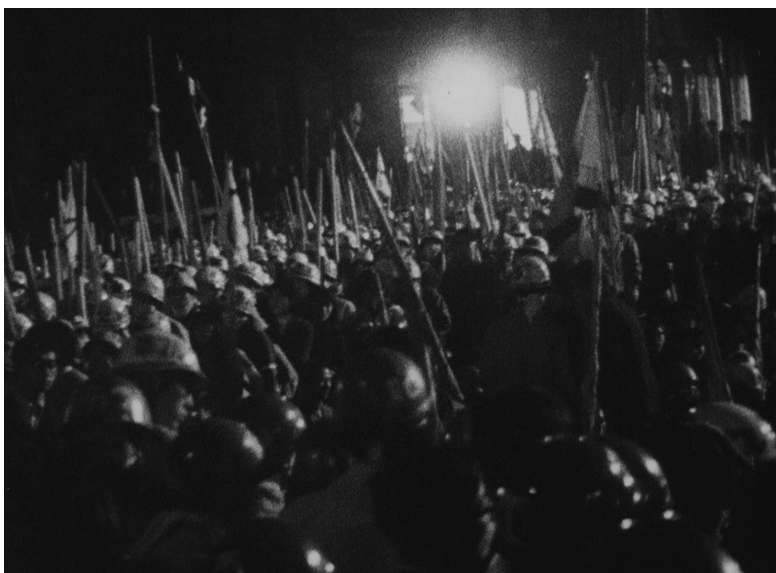
My pathology.. .. the ordeal of delirium.. ..

Blow away.. .. my eyes

Frozen coffin.. ..

Dead world of silver-leaf.. .. vanish from this world without trace!

I WILL DRIFT TO LIFE!



Jōnouchi Motoharu, still from *Gewalt* Trailer, 1969, 16mm, b/w, 12:00 min. © Jōnouchi Mineko

The Aesthetics of Ecstasy and the Yippie Revolution (1969)

Ōe Masanori

Originally published as “Kōkotsu no bigaku to ippī reborūshon,” *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism] 26, no. 7 (July 1969): 49–53.

Translated by Yūzō Sakuramoto

I “Dropout Manifesto”

The human species has been intensely involved in the civilization of productivity, which is based on the reality principle. The civilization of productivity is only viable under the suppression of the life instinct—Eros. The human species has been alienated from the pleasure-principle-based civilization of Eros as the life instinct for a long time. Through the long history of suppression, the reality principle, regarding production as the absolute and unique value, has remained fixed in our unconscious, making us lose sight of the civilization of Eros, the essence of life. In presenting revolution, the history of suppression may be transferred to a new reality-principle-based social system, still in the same civilization of productivity.

Instead, we must discover the civilization of Eros—the essence of life and philosophy of play which is life itself, freed from the reality principle-based oppressive labor of productivity.

Until now people have been persistently trying to change society through the logic of productivity, and through the logic of social engagement.

Regardless of what sort of action you take against this society of production, the civilization of productivity will remove the thorn you poke it with, and it will entangle and homogenize you. Unless you drop out of this society of production, Japanese civilization, which strongly rejects heterogeneous culture in particular, will make you become part of this endless homogenization.

What is the revolution that we are struggling for in this civilization of productivity? It all ends up perpetuating the same thing. People may perform the revolutionary plays at theaters, but so what?

What has to be changed, rather, is the concept called the civilization of productivity that soaks to the bottom of our unconscious. What we should do is drop out of the society of productivity completely, and exist in the world of play, which is based on the civilization of Eros, the essence of life: drop out of the society in which you have lived for so long, your workplace or your school, completely.

How wonderful to drop out. You will live beautifully, with no need to work. You will be able to do what you want, anywhere you want, anytime you want, any way you want.

In so doing, you will discover the excellent philosophy of play—the head game. Within that world work becomes equal to play, and non-work becomes labor for the first time, and it is here that people may put into practice this excellent philosophy of play.

Indeed, the creative process of the act of play itself means life, art, and true civilization. What is this alchemist's utopian universe?

I propose to the people of today, who have long since lost the civilization of Eros, its utopia, and its philosophy of play, that they casually pause and drop out of this civilization of productivity.

After dropping out of the society in which you have lived for so long, your workplace or your school, you must create a community of Eros for the dropouts. People of different ethnicities will drop out, and people will discover what they want to do. Community will be the place for love, the site for communication, the site for living, the site for cultural activity, and indeed, the site for the rite of life.

People will get clothes and food for free at the community store. They will collaboratively create houses and sites of community.

Some people will build communities in the magnificence of nature, and begin to plow the fields themselves. There will be schools, newspapers, and journals. Some people will sink into the alchemy called art. People will choose their sites for the rites of life, and try to live with each other in that creative process.

It is in this community of Eros, of dropouts, that for the first time you will be able to act genuinely, and unfold your own philosophy of play without getting involved in the society of productivity. It is a universe for the rites of life, where the distinction between creators, participants, and audience no longer exists, and all people become creators.

A strong and persistent fear of the civilization of Eros keeps you ranting about this universe from the other side, and unless you tear the cover off of the civilization of productivity, and drop out and try to join it, it will elude you.

Why not drop out to join this universe, what seems like a childish play with flowers, or simply a utopian dream, for the sake of truly living your life, and existing in the philosophy of play?

I will not call this universe an empty dream of the spring night. During three years of living in the community of Eros with flower children in the Lower East Side in New York, I have seen and experienced on-site the logic of the dropout, and the philosophy of play at work.

It is utopian not in the sense that people see it as an impossibility or a dream, but indeed that the utopian universe is continuously being created.

It is the random utopian thermal energy of each individual towards the civilization of Eros that creates this universe, and if it were not for this, neither individuals nor community could exist.

Even if a shift were made simply from state to community, without the random, fundamental thermal energy of Eros of the individuals therein, it would be impossible to create a community of the civilization of Eros.

And from the microcosm of the individual, a universe in sync with this cosmic world must be discovered.

Instead of a world view, we must adopt a new cosmic view.

It lies in the spirit of looking through a telescope at the evening stars and dreaming of the mystery of the universe, or in the cosmic unity of an extremely personal religion, or in the dream of a medieval alchemist, or in the spirit of the process of building the Watts Tower.



Öe Masanori, still from *Great Society*, 1967, six-screen 16mm films transferred to single-channel video, color, sound, 18:00 min.
© Öe Masanori

These cosmic views can be discovered not in the civilization of productivity, but rather only by dropping out.

In the society of productivity, you will remain a well-lubricated cog or a transistor in mechanical and computer-based civilization. Unless you drop out, this civilization of productivity demands and regulates that you must not interrupt the flow of electronics, not halt, not drop out, but that you simply be a part of the whole.

Would those who swing *geba-bo* clubs [gewalt (violence) stick] like crazy have aspirations toward a universe such as this? No matter how great or anarchistic their revolutionary theory is, what lies therein is ultimately just another execution of power. I cannot leave this wonderful universe in the care of those who can only see an inch ahead of their clubs.

Also, many of the people on the Left, who see the crisis of human beings in capitalist society critically, aggressively follow the dream of a socialist society or communist society. However, the world lying at their end is nothing but the same civilization of productivity, the oppression of political power in the name of

dictatorship of the proletariat. As long as productivity is the goal, the suppression of Eros has to exist.

You must completely drop out and win back that part of your life that has been continuously sold to these politics.

Because you are a wonderful microcosm when you become unified with the wonderful cosmic world.

You will be able to create the Eros-based community of organism in that universe. The organism in and of itself can maintain itself quite wonderfully.

Each organism in its process of life produces the living blossoms of Eros.

The wonderful universe of this organism, of nature, indeed is the universe that has continued turning people on since ancient times.

Why don't we get turned on by this wonderful world gifted to us by nature?

In the language of the minds of people, psychedelic drugs have always been medicine for spiritual awakening.

Psychedelic drugs are a medium providing key points for the civilization of Eros.

The gifts from nature are countless: marijuana, which is from cannabis blooming a green flower that grows naturally around the world; peyote, from a cactus bud; magic mushrooms; or the seeds of datura plants.

In addition, LSD, a synthetic drug that has become accessible recently, is derived from a type of fungus which grows on rye, and mescaline is an extract from peyote.

Psychedelic experience through these various drugs will bring you a wonderful consciousness-expanding trip. It will awaken your spirit, expose your life-Eros, offer aspiration to your universe beyond conceptual consciousness, reveal freedom from all sorts of things, and in the process of the creative act for freedom thereby function as a key for cosmic unity, for the civilization of Eros.

It will offer you a wonderful heaven and hell. No more and no less. What lies beyond that is a matter of the process of your own endless creative act for the universe.



Ōe Masanori, still from *Head Game*, 1967, film transferred to video, color, 10:00 min. © Ōe Masanori



Both images: Ôe Masanori, still from *No Game*, 1967, 17min, film transferred to video, b/w, 17:00 min. © Ôe Masanori

Psychedelic drugs just provide the key, and are not in and of themselves the goal.

Without experiencing psychedelia, including that caused by psychedelic drugs and that not accompanied by drugs — such as the experience of aesthetic ecstasy, cosmic unity in religion, or the experience of something—you will never be able to understand this universe.

Though this experience may turn out to be extremely difficult, that means you yourself are one of those many great people — Buddha, Jesus, and so on — who went through the same thing.

Let's turn on and tune in with psychedelic drugs, a gift from nature. Discover the civilization of Eros, and drop out of the society you have been accustomed to for so long.

LSD, which makes this psychedelic experience happen, is a medium that brings about a universe in which you travel infinitely, in a flying saucer that can travel around the universe in a circle for ∞ hours, like a revolving lantern running at a faster-than-light speed.

This faster-than-light communication media will define you as ultra-cool, present an ultra-cool revolution, and bring about an ultra-cool psychedelic civilization, an ultra-cool civilization of Eros.

These universes are about to pop up in the midst of the world situation. Revolution as this quiet change is starting to take place inside your brain cells. A civilization of mysterious madness is about to bloom. It exists inside of you, is always trying to take root inside you, and you have voluntarily been pinching back the buds. It is within each of you to allow a mysteriously wonderful flower to bloom. In order to do so, you must first drop out—spiritually and physically—of the society to which you have been accustomed.

I propose to the miserable people called *fūten-zoku* [vagabond tribe], who play a mentally paralyzing game of expression with coffee, alcohol, and pills, like people in normal society, and hold a bag with paint thinner fumes, that they throw away that plastic bag, abandon the mentally paralyzing game, gaze at the stars in the wonderful universe, turn on, tune in with psychedelic drugs, and drop out completely, both spiritually and physically, from the society that they have been accustomed to for so long.

Unless you can throw away the games people play and spiritually drop out, you will not be able to genuinely drop out. If not, you will be a mere terminal shadow in the society of productivity.

We are on the edge of a new awakening. Why can't we step forward towards a wonderful universe, towards the civilization of Eros? Why can't we let the wonderful flowers bloom?

Why not drop out in order to allow the wonderful head game of this civilization of Eros to unfold? You are exactly the people who should drop out.

(To be continued)

Hopscotch: A Found Sound Happening (1967)

Tone Yasunao

Originally published as “‘Ishikeri’
no otoire hapuninngu,” *Eiga*
Hyōron [Cinema criticism] 24, no. 5
(April 1967).

Translated by Colin Smith

Recently, happenings have been flourishing as an art form, and people often regale me with congratulations on this, which make me feel a bit befuddled. I cannot help feeling, however, that the actual substance of happenings has changed. It's not so much a matter of principle, as of simply slapping a convenient label on all kinds of events. For example, Kanesaka Kenji's film shoot in Ginza was described as a happening. So was Yamaguchi Katsuhiro's placement of a rotating art object on stage at an event held by the Environment no Kai group. At the same event, Ay-O staged a happening where seven people, illuminated with the seven colors of the spectrum in the manner of his signature rainbow paintings, performed various ordinary morning activities like brushing their teeth, splashing water on themselves, and doing exercises. And a weekly magazine reported that in a Salvador Dali happening, broadcast on CBC Television, a hallucinatory world like that of Dali's paintings was replicated on stage.

You could say “happenings,” like *objets* [as an art form] before them, have become a generally accepted art form, while their content has greatly diversified. And you could say that the descent into chaos of the roundtable discussion in this publication last month reflects the current state of the happening.

A tape recording of a happening was used as the soundtrack for Kanesaka Kenji’s new underground film *Hopscotch*. I suggested this idea to the director very hesitantly, but he gave his enthusiastic agreement and cooperation. The project was based on a conception of film as environment, or of getting audiences to perceive film as environment.



The recent broad public acceptance of happenings was probably responsible for the nearly one hundred spectators that gathered on the sole basis of an advance notice, a few lines long, in a book review publication. Held on January 19 [1967] at Sōgetsu

Hall, this recording session had the title *pull event*. The announcement consisted solely of instructions to “bring along something to *pull*” [the Japanese word for pull, *hiku*, was written phonetically in katakana so it could also be interpreted as “play an instrument,” “draw a line,” or “subtract”]. What to pull was left entirely up to the participants. The title was partly a pun on the English word “prevent,” which sounds quite similar to *pull event* when pronounced Japanese-style, and also recalls the title of the famed underground film *Pull My Daisy*, but there was no deep significance intended.



Both images: Kanesaka Kenji, *Hopscotch*, 1967, 16mm film transferred to video, 10 min., b&w, sound. Courtesy of Janus Films
— Fleetwood Film Library, Harvard Film Archive, Harvard College Library. © Kanesaka Kenji and Shimamoto Kumiko

The performance began spontaneously at no particular time. Miyai Rikurō, who cooperated greatly in the film’s editing, walked around pulling a toy duck that rattled. The sight of toilet paper being endlessly unspooled is a familiar one, and although in this case it was intended for use as a stand-in for a screen, it proved too flimsy and that effort ended in failure.

Inevitably, *Hopscotch*, the film, was projected on an ordinary screen, running backward, with color slides of tattoos (by Morita Ichirō) interjected now and then without warning. Pianist Yamashita Yōsuke led a group pulling a piano, Yoshizawa Motoharu appeared carrying a double bass, and the two began playing their respective instruments. An object consisting of an electric clock with a second hand, with a disc divided into various colors attached to its surface, was in fact my musical score in graphic notation, in which timbre is determined by color subtraction. Takamatsu Jirō, known for his *Shadow* paintings, did elementary school-level subtraction problems in chalk on a blackboard. Come to think of it, what Takamatsu does in his *Shadow* paintings is also a form of subtraction (of the person or object, leaving only its shadow). Satō Jūshin and Ōbayashi Nobuhiko engaged in a “tug-of-stick” match (like tug-of-war but with a long stick instead of a rope), and amazingly, there was quite a dramatic battle between the corpulent Satō and the skinny Ōbayashi. Then Satō Jūshin’s human “art object,” a bunny-girl in fishnet stockings, appeared. Then, I used the recorded tape of my electronic music based on the Japanese national anthem, “Kimigayo,” to wrap around the girl so she acted as a human tape recorder motor. The jazz critic Aikura Hisato was shooting toy arrows, but he later switched to playing the piano. Kanesaka Kenji walked all over the stage and throughout the seats, verifying that the event was thoroughly synchronized as an environment, and appeared to be satisfied with what he saw. The whole thing lasted a little more than thirty minutes.

The resulting recording, picked up by five stand microphones and six contact microphones, is a *musique concrète* piece in its own right. In fact, trimming the tape of more than thirty minutes into a nine-minute film soundtrack seemed like not only a meaningless exercise, but virtually impossible.

It amounted to confronting the question of what a film soundtrack is, and I came to the conclusion that it is one of our

institutions. Is it possible to eliminate this institution and thereby make people perceive a film soundtrack as an environment? To eliminate the symbolic framework by producing false silence,



Photograph of Pull Event, (Oto ire happuningu [Sound-insertion happening]) at Sôgetsu Art Center Hall, 1967. Private collection

a false climax, a false ending? This is the only kind of film soundtrack I might be capable of making. Nothing remains for me but the techniques of editing and electronic music. The editing of this particular tape, in a manner that faithfully reflected my intentions, was made possible by the kind support of Sōgetsu Art Center and its technician Kikuchi Shinpei.

On Gulliver (1968)

Tone Yasunao

Originally published as “Garibā no koto,”
event flyer for *Two Men Shy in the
Face of Andy Warhol/Underground
Cinema Shinjuku a Go! Go! Go!*
(*Andī wōhōru ni hajirau futari no
otoko andā guraundo shinema Shinjuku
a gō gō gō*) (Noa Noa, Tokyo,
July 12–August 4, 1968).
Translated by Colin Smith

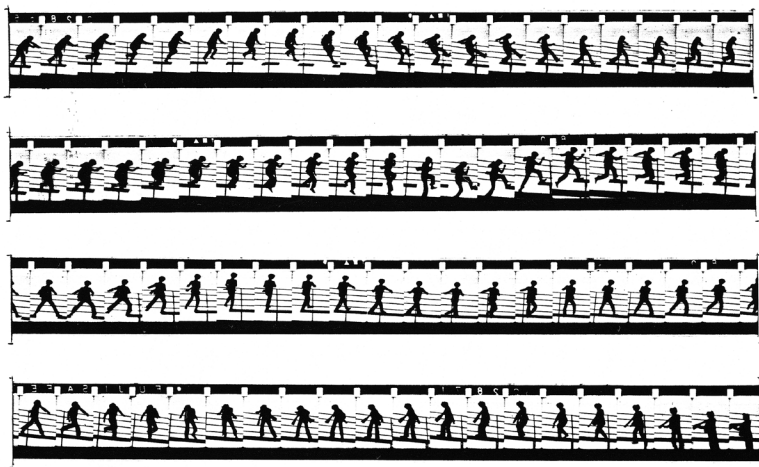
I often wonder how what we call “underground cinema” in Japan differs from plain old “experimental film.” Since the underground cinema movement came to be actively propagated by Kanesaka Kenji, after his return from the United States, several experimental film festivals have been launched and several new filmmakers have emerged, but nothing seems likely to resolve my uncertainty about what it all means. I can see no evidence of the collapse of genres in Japanese underground cinema, nothing like what caused Jonas Mekas to say, according to Kanesaka Kenji, “Rigid definitions of cinema have melted away....This dissolution of boundaries has occurred in the commercial as well as the art film world.” The widely held image of “underground” [*angura*, as it

is shortened in Japanese] involves cryptic eroticism and emphasis on representations of a perverse world, with profound imagery as its stock in trade. Missing from *angura*, though, is recognition that the movement has seen film only in the context of modernist art. The cinematic ideology promoted by key players in postwar avant-garde film was dependent on Jean-Paul Sartre's concept of "the imaginary," and never ventured beyond this territory. Many Japanese underground artists seem to me to be recycling and imitating this same ideology.

Basically, Sartre's phenomenology of the image succeeded in captivating the dynamism as a relational concept by having an object annihilated in lieu of an image (or *analogon* of an object). As a result, while the image was freed from being substantial reality, it was no longer an image itself but the represented image of reality, namely an object of lower order. In this view point, as an artistic expression, the underground cinema in Japan could not transcend modern epistemology.

I feel that Miyai Rikurō's employing the ideas of post-Pop art painting, and [Shūzō Azuchi] Gulliver's incorporating the happening concepts of John Cage and Allan Kaprow, in the production of works synthesizing multiple media beyond the film genre, are more than just cinematic innovations. Pop art capitalizes on the anonymity of the image, happenings seek to convert art into pure phenomena, and clearly both raise philosophical issues, rather than just seeking a stylistic transformation or a change in the framework of the genre.

Gulliver, in particular, is virtually unknown as a filmmaker but has consistently received media coverage for his outlandish aspects: as a notorious drifter, fashion model, and coiner of trendy buzzwords such as *hare-hare* and *appuru*. However, there is something in the work of this young man, only twenty years old—his reduction of cinematic expression to the barest essentials—unlike



Both images: Shūzō Azuchi Gulliver, *Cinematic Illumination*, 1968-69, 1440 slide films, 18 slide projectors, B/W, color, sound.
© Shuzo Azuchi Gulliver and SAGYO, Tokyo

the output of more conventional filmmakers. It recalls, in some ways, the sometimes excessively pure and rigorous approach of a Marcel Duchamp or a John Cage, but this seems to be this artist's home turf. I have high hopes that his keen intellect will open up exciting new artistic territory.



アンダーグラウンドシネマ・しんじゅく・あ・ごーん・ごーん・ごーん!

日常感覚に………
現前するもののみを………
虚体とは………
実体とに
その新宿測定鎖覚配置
概念や本質なんてごめんだ
現象(現前)を………

ガリバー配置

FILM
BOX
SCREEN
CAMERA
WITH DOOR

場所 = 西大久保「ノアノア」・明治通り・
Tel (371) 2778・3810 職安通り交叉点
日 = 12/2 ~ 8/ (毎週・金土日)
時 = 午後2:00 ~ 3:30

後援 = 日本アンダーグラウンド・センター

Both images: Flyer for Two Men Shy in the Face of Andy Warhol / Underground Cinema Shinjuku a Go! Go! Go! (Andi wōhōru ni hajirau futari no otoko andā guraundo shinema shinjuku a gō gō gō), 1968. Private collection

Pop Cinema: Cinema as Art in the Age of Reproduction

Introduction

Go Hirasawa

Miyai Rikurō was engaged with the conflict over the US-Japan Security Treaty in the 1960s, primarily in the field of theater, and later began working as a filmmaker. In 1966, with documentary filmmaker Kitamura Minao, he established Unit Pro as a combined living space and studio, and as the hippie movement and psychedelic revolution got underway, they produced interdisciplinary film works that transcended the framework of existing cinema. Miyai's works in expanded cinema recognized the essential quality of film to be its reproducibility. These works included *Phenomenology of Zeitgeist* (*Jidai seishin no genshōgaku*, 1967), which condensed the spirit of 1967 into a documentary containing a long take that moved from the studio to the east side of Shinjuku Station where the Zero Jigen [Zero Dimension] group staged a street ritual/happening; *Phenomenology of Differentiation* (*Bibun genshōgaku*, 1968), a frame-by-frame sequence of urban advertising signboards; *Shadow* (1968), featuring a man's shadow in negative-positive reversal; *I Love Yokoo-chan* (*Yokoo-chan daisuki*, 1968), which cuts back and forth between close-ups and long shots of the designer Yokoo Tadanori; and *Party* (1970), which applies the same approach to footage of lesbians engaged in sexual behavior. These works were shown using multi-channel projection or as performative screenings where Miyai highlighted cinema's reproducibility by projecting two prints made from the same film negative. Miyai was also involved in events, performances, psychedelic shows, live music performances, discotheque production, and more, and he pursued cinema or the moving image not as a medium to be controlled by a single artist, but as just one of many media to be fused with others in an attempt to expand its possibilities.

His text “The Phenomenological Documentary: Directions in Pop Cinema” (Genshōgaku-teki dokyumentarī: poppu shinema no hōkōsei) appeared in the February 1968 issue of *Eizō Geijutsu* [Image arts], and it is in effect his manifesto of cinema and artistic experimentation.

While discussing Jean-Luc Godard’s use of chance and Andy Warhol’s concept of Pop, Miyai criticized the rigidified political ideology of the Japanese postwar left and the New Left. At the same time, he recognized the shocking performances of Mishima Yukio, a nationalist at the opposite end of the political spectrum, for their nimble deployment of “illusion,” taking positions that could be extremely controversial both artistically and politically. However, he exposed the limitations as well as the possibilities of the latter approach, presenting an ontology that was neither that of the New Left nor that of Mishima. In Japan, the so-called 1968 revolution spread throughout the country, preceded in October 1967 by the Haneda struggle, which aimed at preventing Prime Minister Satō Eisaku from visiting the United States, and was sparked by conflicts in spring 1968 at Nihon University and the University of Tokyo. Miyai’s text also focuses on the Haneda struggle, noting that Mishima had defended the action, and that the magazine’s editorial board put together this special issue, “The Situation has Changed (from Mishima Yukio to Andy Warhol),” suggesting that this journal issue was assembled in response to the shock of the Haneda incident. However, while grounding his discourse in this context of political activism, Miyai sought new horizons beyond existing relationships between activism and cinema, or politics and art, by inquiring into the nature of Pop Cinema.

Eizō Geijutsu [Image arts] was the group newsletter of Image Arts Society (*Eizō Geijutsu no Kai*), launched in December 1964 by documentary filmmakers Noda Shinkichi, Matsumoto Toshio and others who had left the Association of Documentary Filmmakers (*Kiroku Eiga Sakka Kyōkai*), and published monthly

with Noda as editor-in-chief. The theory and practice of the Japanese New Wave film movement, which began in the late 1950s, was largely based on ideas discussed in *Eiga Hihyō* [Film criticism], first published in June 1957 by filmmaker Kasu Sanpei and others, and *Kiroku Eiga* [Documentary film], the association newsletter of the Association of Documentary Filmmakers, first published in June 1958. Meanwhile, many parallel debates were underway in general film-industry magazines such as *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism] and *Eiga Geijutsu* [Film art]. In the late 1960s, new film magazines appeared one after another, including *Kikan Firumu* [Film quarterly] established in October 1968 under the auspices of the Sōgetsu Art Center and edited by Matsumoto, Iimura Takahiko, and designer Awazu Kiyoshi; *Me* [Eyes], founded in 1969 by the Suginami Cineclub composed of editors and film critics; and *Dai Ni-ji Eiga Hihyō* [The second film criticism], headed by members of the critical avant-garde, such as film critic Matsuda Masao and filmmaker Adachi Masao. While numerous theories of film, critical stances, and controversies emerged in the pages of these publications, *Eizō Geijutsu* [Image arts] played a crucial role in connecting the US-Japan Security Treaty of 1960 and the new revolutionary movement that peaked in 1968. *Eizō Geijutsu* [Image arts] temporarily suspended publication in April 1966 due to financial difficulties, and resumed in November 1966 as a quarterly with Matsumoto as new editor-in-chief, but was forced to cease publication again after just three issues. Miyai had been on the editorial committee since the August–September 1965 issue, and after the magazine was revived, he reported on a symposium on Godard, wrote on Michelangelo Antonioni, and went on to present his ideas on Pop Cinema. While rooted in cinema and the moving image, this genre expanded into new areas of theory and practice and came to be known as Expanded Cinema and Intermedia.

The Phenomenological Documentary: Directions in Pop Cinema (1968)

Miyai Rikurō

Originally published as
“Genshōgaku-teki dokyumentarī:
poppu shinema no hōkōsei,”
Eizō Geijutsu [Image arts] 2, no. 3
(February 1968): 6–19.
Translated by Colin Smith

“Is it art or is it chance?
This is the question that defines truth in cinema.”
—Jean-Luc Godard

Introduction

Seven years after the campaign against the US-Japan Security Treaty, the focus of both art and ideology has significantly shifted to such issues as Haneda, and the insidious effects of a situation that we cannot clearly grasp.

We seem to be at a turning point. But in seeing the present as a turning point, we may be overly optimistic. We are thrust into a situation where we can hardly get an overall picture of the times we live in. Here await conflicts between the world and the self, and divisions between self and self. A field of *phenomena*, at first seemingly contradictory, concealed beneath the surface of everyday life, expands around us.

Rather than *phenomena* appearing before us, we ourselves seem to manifest as pure *phenomena*.

Those who react to this phenomenal age with opportunistic optimism, seeking to push an anti-establishment program blindly without noticing the disintegrating situation, appear to be suffering a backlash from the situation itself. When the situation takes hold and does not want to release us, is there a way forward for us, and in what direction does *art* go? Without grappling with these fundamental questions, there can be no path to apprehending the totality of the present age.

Our situation certainly offers little hope for optimism, but if we view it as a *tragedy*, nihilism caused by obsession with grim realities also threatens any chance to grasp our era in its totality. Nihilism, which lies at the core of the *tragic* outlook on our situation, is the product of an age in which we encounter *frustration* before even understanding reality, due to the ossification of our perceptions and the derealization of our surroundings.

When we do explore the reality of our age, we inevitably encounter a certain writer. He hovers around the fringes like a ghost, waiting to confront us with his premonitions of what is to come. "He" refers to Mishima Yukio.

The Situation

Today there is no one seeking to address Japan's situation by actually living *politics* and *ideology* more than Mishima Yukio. As the 1960s campaign against the Japan-US Security Treaty launched a process of analyzing the postwar era, Yoshimoto Takaaki's engagement with the situation shaped an ideology that intersected with what was going on at that time. This resembles Mishima's engagement with the current situation. Yoshimoto Takaaki succeeded in walking the tightrope between reacting against fascism and advocating its opposite, while mediating through emotions specific to the wartime generation.

At present, such *emotion-based ideology* seems to be manifested, in Mishima Yukio, as the fascism of reality itself. Or is Mishima seeking to sustain his own existence through *the illusion of evil* by presenting us with fascism as fantasy? Or...

In the New Year issue of *Eiga Geijutsu*, a dialogue between Mishima Yukio and Ōshima Nagisa shows that Mishima's ideology has indeed become quite extreme. However, simply declaring Mishima a political reactionary and a fascist achieves, at most, a safety zone for the self, an ideological playground of purism. Today, we must clarify the significance of the inherent relationships between Mishima's aesthetic and political principles, while acknowledging the radicalism of the principles that he supports.

To do so, we need first of all to return Mishima to the domain of ontology. This detour is necessary in order to reexamine and identify what politics and ideology mean to him. Above all, this is due to the ontological trap he sets both for us and for himself. How is it possible to neutralize the poison without ingesting it?

In the past, when asked why it was necessary for him not only to produce but also to star in his short film *Patriotism* [*Yūkoku*], Mishima responded:



Miyai Rikurō, still from *Phenomenology of the Zeitgeist*, 1967, 16mm, multiple projection, 35:00 min. © Miyai Rikurō

The artist redeems the existence of his work with his own blood, just as pelicans are said to feed their offspring with their own blood. When he brings a work of art into the world, he is actually transferring his own existence to the work of art, which is starved for this existence. I feel with all my heart and soul that I am a man who has experienced this starvation. It is only natural that I should want to transform myself into that mysterious thing we call a film actor, for whom eighty percent of the job is merely being present.

This is a confession, somewhat more articulate than most could make, from the soul of an artist who must, in the end, live with the accursed, bloody stigmata of compulsion, isolation, and terrifying freedom of his own mind. Here, the novelist Mishima Yukio produces art and at the same time continuously transfers his own existence to the work he has created by shedding his blood, bitterly grasping for the moment when the self is converted to

nonexistence. The novel gains existence, and the novelist Mishima loses it. And it is natural that Mishima, who is familiar with the sensation of nonexistence, would overcome the chance nature of this situation and seek to sustain its existence in a moment of *illusion*. Here, *illusion* is a form of acting.

The unacknowledged Mishima acts in *Patriotism* [*Yūkoku*], playing young Lieutenant Takeyama Shinji of the Imperial Way Faction, which orchestrated the 1936 attempted coup d'état known as the February 26 Incident. In doing so, he seeks to sustain his own existence. He knows that if he does not continue to act out his own existence, he will never grasp his own being. To echo Jean-Paul Sartre, consciousness is always (ontologically) separate from itself; consciousness is not consistent with itself, it belongs to the realm of the nonexistent rather than the existent. Consciousness endlessly slips away from existence.

Mishima faces this division of consciousness and existence head-on. He grapples with the problem of confirming his own existence. His existence slips away from him because of his inherent, underlying, internal split, which he interprets as the existence of the novel, and the nonexistence of the novelist Mishima Yukio.

Mishima Yukio needs the gaze of others in order to make his nonexistent self exist in this real world. He needs to be seen, and to feel that he is being seen. This is illustrated by a certain evolution occurring during *Kyōko's House*, which he described in an *Eiga Geijutsu* roundtable discussion.

Referencing *Kyōko's House*, Mishima describes himself as poised to hurl a baby representing postwar Japan into a river, hoping that someone will stop him and that the act will end as a mere gesture. In other words, he hopes that the eyes of others will stop him from committing the act, but others' lack of concern drive him to despair, forcing his raised arms to come down and do the deed.

It seems as if he hopes his actions derive their existence from others, but this is only an act. It is a game of imagined gazes. By casting postwar Japan into the river, in so doing casting away the lukewarm ideology of democracy, the character chooses a difficult path, commits violence toward the world, and tries to capture the true reality within himself through the magical effects of this abnormal and transgressive act.

This is also true of Mishima's bizarre behavior, which makes such a stir in the press. He is unable to resist the temptation of "the absolute." He plays a defined role. This turns others into spectators, and earns him the "existence" that is such a source of anxiety and concern. But in the context of contemporary Japan, no one pays attention to the true essence of his gestures. He is on the wrong path. So, he decides to go even further to grab people's attention: "I haven't been arrested yet, so I'm doing all kinds of things to get them to arrest me."

Since then, his ideological evolution and attention-seeking games have set him on a path from which it is increasingly difficult to return. He cannot bear his inactive "actions" being defined as absurd. He is, of course, well aware that his actions are incomprehensible to others. However, he does one perturbing thing after another so as to recover the existence of the unstable self and make an eternal claim on the act of casting the baby of postwar Japan into the river. There is no turning back now. His bets are placed.

In any case, in the relativized context of contemporary Japan, no one will even try to understand the meaning of his actions. So he chooses fascism in order to be seen in the most absolute terms possible. He chooses fascism to draw the attention and concern of others: "I am quite delighted that people call me a fascist." For Mishima, the act of choosing fascism has a dual significance.

Looking at the situation in Japan today, he has chosen to follow fascism not only as a political model, but also as a course of action. "I was surprised at the lack of reaction at the time," he said. His fundamental choice of "fascism" was a refusal of a lukewarm world, and in particular, of a literary scene that had ignored his existence.

Mishima placed *evil* in opposition to this lukewarm world. The *evil* he sought to perform was that of fascism in its pure form. However, for better or worse, this evil is not absolute evil. This is because Mishima knows that God, as an absolute other whose eye sees *evil for evil's sake*, does not exist.

Thus for Mishima, the state of the self living alongside the other is the absolute other. That is the meaning behind Mishima's shedding of his own blood, through the act of *hara-kiri* (*seppuku*), in his film: "I thought the only way to see bloodshed was to kill someone, but at some point a change occurred within me, and I thought if I wanted blood that much, I'd better shed my own blood." Mishima shifted from the aesthetics of murderous intent to the aesthetics of suicide.

Murderous intent toward others was, in his eyes, a rebellion against his own momentum, generated by the indifference of others. But this mode of relation is still an attempt to sustain his existence in the peoples' eyes, including his own. In this situation, he sought to make himself exist through the concrete agency of others. Although death would render the meaning of his final act in this world ambiguous, he still wishes for pure death.

If taken to the extreme, his own death will come to be another *illusion*. This is a kind of radical purism. Why should the issue of death be one of aesthetics? Here we can see the aesthetic absolutism and perfectionism regarding *death* in Mishima's ideology: "Cancer, or some other kind of bloodless death, is more frightening." But

it is worth considering the kind of strength that Mishima derives from the ideology of death, specifically the *illusion* of it. This bears relevance to the current situation. If Mishima was only falling into the existential trap of dreaming of the purity of *death*, the trap of existence itself, we could coldly dismiss such play-acting...

Mishima also brought up the issue of *illusion* when discussing the historical and ideological significance of the Haneda Incident of 1967–68: “It’s an expressive action, it is close to a form of art.” In this and another statement, he is concerned with heroism and a certain kind of mythos: “If they (Sanpa Zengakuren) [Three Faction All-Japan League of Student Self-Government] were to stage an armed uprising, I would be impressed. I could sympathize with them then.”

Here again, he is seized by a fever dream of the notion of the *absolute*. Viewing the Haneda Incident from the outside and projecting his own *absoluteness* onto its reality, he derealizes the incident itself. For him, Haneda is not an event in the real world, only a fictional phenomenon. Thus, his appearing to support violence in the historical context of the Haneda Incident is merely illusory. Mishima’s is a bankrupt dream of catastrophic violence, the product of aesthetic nihilism consumed by the appearance of death and pure negation.

The illusion of violence is invalid in the context of history. As we saw earlier, his affirmation of fascism is not a form of engagement with reality, but rather an attachment to existence as the staging of illusions; in the end, it is nothing more than a form of self-love. He is certainly indifferent to others (in this case, the students of Sanpa Zengakuren) and specific realities (the situation surrounding Haneda). He is absorbed in the ideology of the appearance of violence and death, as a means by which to render his own existence absolute in the eyes of others, and has no concern with the Haneda issue in a historical sense.

In any case, in our current age, to dream of sustaining an absolute existence only leads to *failure*. It is a stance that leads human beings toward *empty passion*. Of course, Mishima did not consciously choose to be empty, and on the contrary he showed himself to be a man of action. But the act he has chosen as the perfect gesture is an empty one that cannot be completed. It is the fate of contemporary existence and perfectionism.

Because he acts in order to validate himself, his action collapses into itself and is unable to attain historical significance. He pretends to support violence in a given historical context, but is in fact merely falling into an existential trap and seeking, through magical thinking, to possess the world for himself. This is only a dream, and we must not fall under his spell, as Ōshima Nagisa has done.

So, how can we extract ourselves from Mishima's performance, and eventually enter the realm of action and reality? How can we escape *illusion* and the ontology of the gesture, and attain a view of totality, of the big picture?

The Situation, Revisited

To clarify this issue, let us return to the situation, within the framework of ontology. Our situation, in 1968, is one in which every bit of existential meaning or value comes from outside.

We have reached the point where we can no longer evade this problem of *superficiality*, or the monistic doctrine of the *phenomenon*. Skepticism toward factuality and direction of intent toward invisible, essential existence, are by no means the tasks of contemporary art. It seems the very idea that *phenomena* conceal truth or actual substance, and that if we descend gradually from reality's surface into its depths we will find some essential truth,

are being swallowed up by the situation itself. And it seems necessary that we reveal these *phenomena* through chance action and the fact of *things*.

Ours is an era in which only those who have pushed internal deconstruction to the limit can attain reality in a given situation, and those who have not thoroughly completed the process of internal deconstruction can only dream of transcending the situation. From start to finish, the situation comes to us from outside. The situation is not created by our independent choices, it is only manifested as *phenomena*. In this age of *phenomena*, our skepticism itself becomes no more than another *phenomenon*.

However, we do not need to fear this. What we need now is to consider the world from the perspective of the objects in our hands, like cups and spoons, to think of and adopt the perspective of *things* as we maintain a skeptical distance from *phenomena*. It is necessary to view things from the interior of the situation, to endeavor to see our world with something like the *perspective of things*, rather than looking at objects from an authorial, i.e. human point of view.

But before we delve deeply into this issue, one lingering question remains: when and how can we get beyond the idea of “postwar art”? We tend to think of postwar art in terms of *subjectivity*, but regarding art of the 1950s, framing of the essence of artistic creation as existing in relationships between the internal and external world—as seen in avant-garde disputes between Hanada [Kiyoteru] and Yoshimoto [Takaaki], for instance—must be accepted as obsolete in the context of the current phenomenological situation.

There are those, like Hariu Ichirō, who have not yet moved beyond the 1950s assessment of the situation, and continue making vain efforts to view contemporary art in the dualistic terms

of inside and outside, subject and object. In some ways, the fact that such efforts are all in vain clarifies the situational meaning of the present moment in its logical extreme, but in the case of Mr. Hariu, these efforts are only the result of excessive seriousness.

Hariu criticized the Surrealists who, in the 1930s, retreated into two polarized, extremist camps: fascism and Stalinism. Forfeiting their position as leaders of the avant-garde, they became Communists by way of the Popular Front, in the process losing opportunities for self-objectivization through art objects and reverting to humanism. Today, Hariu maintains that the current issue is how to apply Hanada's thesis and trace the close interrelationships between the inner and outer world.

This bears relevance to Mishima Yukio, who instead of attempting to transcend postwar Japan from within, has thrown it out in the river, abandoned it in the process of playing games with the viewer's gaze and affirming his existence in the context of *the illusionary*. While frustrated by his failure to arrive at a fluid reality, he paradoxically continues to internalize the postwar mentality. Again we see the failure of an overly serious mind to grasp this contemporary situation.

In Hariu's mentality we see the avant-garde myth of a specific generation, which spent its youth invested in the avant-garde as "postwar art." Now, however, we are moving away from the postwar period and becoming apathetic, immersed in phenomena. In this phenomenal situation, all ideology that asserts internal continuity is stymied before coming to terms with the situation = phenomenon.

Artistically, as well, in this 1968 situation, an updated version of the avant-garde art of the 1920s and 1930s has ceased to function effectively. The major issues of 1950s art were debated in the context of disputes over socialist realism, documentary, and the early twentieth century avant-garde movements, Dada and Surrealism.

Today, however, in the field of cinema, [Jean-Luc] Godard aims to capture the present through *action* and *chance*, while [Michelangelo] Antonioni seeks to depict the present and the uncertainty of *existence*, and Jean Rouch and Chris Marker reveal existence in the *present continuous tense*. In the United States, Pop artist Andy Warhol has been producing films (Pop Cinema) that are inseparable from *reality*. In this era of ours, it does not seem possible to capture these developments in art and our current phenomenon-situation through the logic of interrelationships between internal and external, subject and object. In our phenomenal age, the issue we seek to address is how to get beyond the framework of postwar art and attain the clarity of contemporary art that does not seek *being* in a world of Mishima-like *illusion*.

For Mishima, a film is “a euphoric thing, with a sensual magic and an effect as if the body is melting.” His instinctive dislike of Antonioni and artistic attempts to present an opposing approach probably spring from this mentality. I wrote in an essay on Antonioni that he is one of the few artists who does not seek *being* in *illusions*. Antonioni’s characters, and the female ones in particular, do not manifest the privileged state of a moment of perfect *appearance* in the context of reality, like Anny in Jean-Paul Sartre’s *Nausea*.

His characters do not try to sustain their existence by playing some kind of role while wavering in the angst and ontological anxiety of facing nonexistence. Antonioni chose to reveal a reality in which tedium and clarity are synonymous in the transparent world of his work. He follows the path to reality from within ontology, and, unlike Mishima, he does not engage in opaque tricks that fall into an ontological trap. There is no devilish cinematic temporality like the one attempted by Mishima. Contemporary art for this phenomenal age can go in directions that present multiple opportunities to transcend both Mishima’s *illusions* and Hariu’s *postwar*.

The Possibilities and Limitations of Cinéma Vérité

Now it is time to discuss, in specific terms, what a phenomenological film is. One point of departure for phenomenological film can certainly be seen in cinéma vérité. Cinéma vérité is a new movement in documentary filmmaking that has developed in various ways, particularly in France, with filmmakers such as Rouch and Marker, though apparently Marker and others claim they do not practice cinéma vérité.

However, the Marker films we have been able to see thus far—*Le Joli Mai* (*The Lovely Month of May*) and *Le Mystère Koumiko* (*The Koumiko Mystery*)—certainly give a strong sense that the filmmaker has gotten inside reality with his camera. The films have a markedly phenomenological approach in which the filmmaker recaptures the camera's immediate ability to capture *being*. *Le Joli Mai* showed the potential of a phenomenological documentary to present to us real images, not illustrations or analyses, of French society at the end of the Algerian War.

Of course, Marker does not excel in terms of the social significance of reporting on reality, but the temporality of Marker's films, which face real existence squarely, connects to contemporary issues. In these films we can read the will to achieve *irreducibility*; he shows this reality fully, admitting that reality that cannot be reduced to anything else.

The intent of this unbounded approach to reality could be seen at the Sōgetsu Experimental Film Festival. In Rouch's *Chronique d'un été* (*Chronicle of a Summer*) Rouch engages with the loving relationship of a middle-aged woman suffering from the aftermath of the war and a younger man from a generation that did not experience war. The film begins with an empty feeling of uncertainty—will the man and woman fall in love? As the movie progresses, so too does their love. Although the middle-aged



Miyai Rikurō, still from *Phenomenology of the Zeitgeist*, 1967, 16mm, multiple projection, 35:00 min. © Miyai Rikurō

woman's past experiences appear repeatedly in the fault lines between the mentalities of the characters, they are presented not from the perspective of preserving the past in memory, but through the process of conflict between the two.

Here, for Rouch there is no differentiation between the time of making a film, and the time that passes during life more generally. His is not the quasi-sacred sense of time that is often associated with the creation of art, but the underlying temporality of his own existence. This is something that emerges from naturalism, but rapidly supersedes it. However, why is it that this *Chronique d'un été*, while adopting a humanistic perspective as a whole, seems to place a barrier between the audience and the screen? Here, it seems, lies the problem with cinéma vérité.

The weaknesses of cinéma vérité seem densely concentrated in Bertrand Blier's *Hitler, connais pas* (*Hitler—Never*

Heard of Him). Starting from a naive conviction that “the filmed subject is always interesting,” Blier works with an extremely real, current, and relevant theme, the youth of France, but the film does not succeed as a work. The cinematic space of cinéma vérité does not have any actuality to reveal to us. Why is this?

A problem seems to emerge when Blier says, “I wanted to showcase the life of one young person, as told by a large number of unspecified people.” He interviewed eight hundred young men and women indiscriminately, selected thirteen of them as representative of the group, then further narrowed it down to a single one to create a cinematic portrait. This does not capture reality in terms of the irreducible uniqueness of an individual, but rather adopts a pseudo-generalizing standpoint through the concentration of general realities into one individual. Concentrating eight hundred people into one person who serves as the face of a generation cannot capture our current era.

The filmmaker goes on to create a pointless, imagined dialogue among youth through montage. Thus, while maintaining the potential of the phenomenological documentary as best exemplified by Marker, cinéma vérité falls into methodological rigidity, succumbing to the ambiguous and therefore appealing temptation to document “life” as in Rouch’s films, and as in Blier’s reduction of diverse realities to a single face.

It seems that what separates French cinéma vérité from Warhol, as an exemplar of the American underground, is the different process of arriving at a fundamental temporality, through a subject such as “life,” and touching on fundamental temporality using reality as *substance*.

Now, we are ready to discuss the issues surrounding Warhol in American cinema.



Both images: Miyai Rikurō, still from *Shadow*, 1968, 16mm, multiple projection, 12:00 min. © Miyai Rikurō

Directions in Pop Cinema

Among the works screened at the Sōgetsu Experimental Film Festival, Warhol's *Vinyl* overwhelmed viewers with its sheer material quantity. There is certainly no room for argument about the work in terms of quantity. When we appreciate works of art, we are usually struck by the depth or richness of their images, but here we were overwhelmed by the material quantity itself. Here we see, as we have seen repeatedly, the state of art in this era of the phenomenon.

Depending on where you stand, it seems apparent that in the US, Warhol's films constitute a phenomenon that raises questions about the nature of America, and that in the Japanese situation, there is no era of the phenomenon, and there is a need for people in Japan to find their identity within their blood and sexuality.

[However] in Japan [the direction towards the phenomenon] can be seen in Akasegawa Genpei's Thousand-Yen Note Incident, with the entire work including the creation of countless thousand-yen bills and zero-yen bills and the ensuing trial constituting a unified work of anti-art. The *phenomenon* is by no means foreign to Japan.

In this age of *phenomenon* and *quantity*, we do not resist or fight back with the art of quantity, but rather *quantity* itself *exists* and is presented as a *phenomenon*, and herein lies the strength of Pop Cinema.

Incidentally, Iimura Takahiko reports that since 1963, Warhol has already produced 150 films. Among these, *Sleep* is eight hours long, and he is said to be working on a twenty four-hour film now. In light of this sheer quantity, and in terms of the number and length of his films, Warhol's ideology compels us to think about contemporary art in terms of quantity. When we spent seventy minutes of our lives watching *Vinyl*, we stood face to face with history.

Until now, we have repeatedly engaged with works of art consisting of images created through the imagination. And we have always traveled back and forth between these unreal worlds and our reality, spending a limited amount of time in a temporal continuum separate from the actual history in which we spend our lives.

However, *Vinyl* does not speak to us through the temporality of a work of art, but rather inserts its own fundamental time progression into the temporal continuum of art, revealing the space of the work so that it faces our current fundamental time progression directly. It is not composed or constructed time, but the irreducible time of history itself.

This is not a time for oppositional, external critiques of capitalism, but a time when the entire capitalist world goes hollow at its center, and we begin to smell its historic decay.

Warhol's work goes beyond theory; it provides words and reaches the core of *substance itself*, and the world is corroded by the transformation of *things* into phenomena. It is not a negation in a pure sense, but an affirmation that transcends the era of the hyperreal phenomenon from the inside, so that it is indistinguishable from the existence that has been affirmed, and finally arrives at a more powerful negativity than through negation.

Here, it can be said that the world of the work is not the world of the represented image, but that of the *action*, the *phenomenon* itself. It can be called a *direct* world, a methodology of presenting things themselves without mediation by the artistic world of images. This unmediated *directness* is the essence of *externality*. And the world of *Vinyl* is within the continuum of this reality.

There is no artist who has endeavored as thoroughly as Andy Warhol to overturn the relationship between the worlds of art and reality. Until now, art has involved creating works through the agency of the imagination. It is because we are alienated from our unbearable reality that freedom and imagination are possible, and through the denial and transcendence of this reality, we shape unreal worlds through imagination. This has been the process of creating art.

However, in *L'Avventura* (*The Adventure*), by allowing the character of Anna to escape from the world of the film, Antonioni refuses to perfect and gloss over this world. Meanwhile, Godard does not construct spaces in his works within reality, but takes the approach of disclosing spaces to reality by amassing everyday *actions* to a seemingly futile extent, and inserting *chance* occurrences that underlie everyday paradoxes. His creative endeavor is to compose not a world of symbols, but an open-ended world which is progressively disclosed to our own. Warhol takes this approach of creating realities a step further. His works are an extension of reality itself.

Herein lies what characterizes contemporary art in this phenomenal age: a tendency toward instinctive negation through the phenomenological method of presenting the *phenomenon* itself. And, in the sense that it rejects the world of images, it involves making a fundamental shift in what we have always regarded as art, a shift in the direction of anti-art.

Until now, art has been regarded as an arena for human conflict and struggle with *things*. In other words, we were not able to corrode things from the inside with our gaze, to see a can of Coca-Cola from the interior vantage point of the Coca-Cola itself. However, by making objects into *phenomena*, by moving in the direction of *homogenization* and *deindividualization* of objects, Warhol presents his perspective to us as impersonality itself. This impersonal viewpoint demonstrates, from the outset, the impossibility of being an artist, and by transforming a world centered on objects into one where *substance* and *action* are *phenomena*, reveals the hollowness and corruption of a world centered on *phenomena*. Thus, the penetrating clarity of Warhol's homogenization reaches its logical extreme. Today, clarity of perception like Warhol's appears to us in inside-out form. In Warhol's case it registers as aloofness, a sense that nothing matters: "Who knows what will happen to me in the coming decade? My only goal is to have a swimming pool in Hollywood. They're amazing, I love their artificial quality." Indeed, for him, art and situation do not matter. At the same time, his penetrating clarity is more substantial than the negativity of a certain stunningly confident, combative artist. For Warhol, there is no possibility of sustaining the pain of one's own existence in one instant of performative *illusion*. He simply continues moving in the direction of reality with no such idea in mind. His practice is nothing more than this, and nothing less.

In so doing, he reaches the core of things themselves and suddenly corrodes the world through a transformation of objects into *phenomena*. Here is the point of contact between the

phenomenological documentary and the potential of Pop Cinema, which holds the intentionality of anti-art, and which seeks to reach a totality from the center of the current era.

At the risk of overly simple categorization, in contemporary film there are artists such as [Luis] Buñuel and [Kenneth] Anger who seek to capture the essence of the present moment through the impulse of the inner image, and those like Godard and Warhol who seek to show the totality of this moment through “superficiality itself.” In the latter category, that of Godard and Warhol, we can see the potential of the phenomenological documentary we have been discussing, and of Pop Cinema.

In this we see the ideology and methodology of *anti-art* that conquers the danger of Mishima’s ontology of creating art where “beauty” always exists as a symbol of relativistic salvation—as so the nihilists don’t fall into the politics of absolutism—and that prevents us from indulging in such thoughts on the *illusion* of death: thoughts such as *live beautifully and die beautifully*, or even *put aside living and focus on how to die beautifully*.

It offers opportunities to transcend the postwar, and the world of Mishima-esque *illusion*. In Godard’s case, there is a way of capturing the totality of the current era through accumulations of partial realities, and in Warhol’s case there is a way of generalizing this totality by intervening in the parts themselves, with the parts remaining parts and not reduced to totality. The former creates collages of images by introducing staged “chance” and action into the fictional world of a work, as seen in *Pierrot le Fou*, and the latter employs the one-take principle to present specific, homogenized objects like Marilyn Monroe or Coca-Cola as viewed phenomena, capturing the essence of the temporality we experience today, as in *Vinyl*.

Now is the time to examine the possibilities and directions presented by these two methods, “collage” and “phenomenon.”

**CCJ Publication Project:
Japanese Expanded Cinema
and Intermedia: Critical Texts
of the 1960s**

**Author Biography,
Selected Events, Groups,
Spaces, Journals
and Related Chronology**

**Editors Biography & About
Collaborative Cataloging Japan**

Author Biography

Adachi Masao

Adachi Masao (b. 1939, Fukuoka Prefecture) entered the Film Studies Program at the Fine Art Department at Nihon University in 1959, where he joined the Nihon University Film Study Club, a.k.a. Nichidai Eiken (Nihon Daigaku Eiga Kenkyūkai) and made the acclaimed film, *Wan* (*Bowl*, 1961). The development of Nichidai Eiken films, starting with *Conversation between Nail and Sock* (*Kugi to kutsushita no taiwa*, 1958), followed by *The Record of N* (*N no kiroku*, 1959), *Nail* (*Kugi*, 1959), and *Pou Pou* (1960), reached a certain maturity with *Closed Vagina* (*Sain*, 1963). Adachi left university during the production of *Sain*, but continued to produce as a founding member of the VAN Film Science Research Center (VAN Eiga Kagaku Kenkyūjo), together with Jōnouchi Motoharu and Kanbara Hiroshi. VAN at this period was a space in which artists from a wide-range of genres came together, including the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition and the avant-garde scene at Sōgetsu Art Center. *Sain Ceremony* (*Sain no gi*) was planned in the context of happenings organized by Akasegawa Genpei, Kazakura Shō, Kosugi Takehisa, and others. While working in the field of multi-genre events, on the other hand, Adachi also participated in Film Indépendant, a collective of independent filmmakers, and established relationships with avant-garde filmmakers. Upon Adachi's joining, the direction of his filmmaking contributed to the work at Wakamatsu Production led by Wakamatsu Kōji, whose film, *Secrets Behind the Walls* (*Kabe no naka no himegoto*, 1967), notwithstanding its being categorized as "pink film," was selected for the Berlin Film Festival and caused an enormous controversy. In 1966, Adachi served as the assistant director for *Blood Is Redder than the Sun* (*Chiwa taiyō yori aka*), and wrote the script for *Hikisakareta Jijō* and other works. Meanwhile, Adachi independently produced *The Galaxy* (*Gingakei*, 1967), played a role in *Death by Hanging* (*Koshikei*, 1968) by Nagisa Ōshima, and at Ōshima's production company, Sōzōsha, he contributed to the script for *A Diary of Shinjuku Thief* (*Shinjuku dorobō nikki*, 1968).

Adachi co-produced with Sasaki Mamoru, scriptwriter for Sōzōsha, and Matsuda Masao, an anarchist film critic, *AKA Serial Killer* (*Ryakushō renzoku shasatsuma*, 1969), a film consisting only of scenery that serial killer Norio Nagayama must have seen. In 1971, along with Ōshima and Wakamatsu, Adachi was invited to Director's Film Week at the Cannes Film Festival. On his way back, he went to Palestine and produced a transborder newsreel film, *The Red Army/PFLP: Declaration of World War* (*Sekigun PFLP: Sekai sensō sengen*, 1971), co-produced by Japanese Red Army members including Shigenobu Fusako and PFLP. He subsequently developed the movement of the "Red Bus Film Screening Troop," traveling around the country and holding nationwide screenings. In 1974, Adachi left Japan and committed himself to the Palestinian Revolution, linking up with the Japan Red Army. His activities thereafter were not revealed until he was arrested and imprisoned in 1997 in Lebanon. In 2001, Adachi was extradited to Japan, and after two years of imprisonment, he was released and subsequently published *Eiga/Kakumei* [Cinema/revolution] (Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2003), an autobiographical account of his life up to now, edited by film critic Go Hirasawa.

limura Takahiko

limura Takahiko (b. 1937, Tokyo) is an artist, filmmaker, and writer who has lived between Tokyo and New York throughout his artistic career. Together with Ōbayashi Nobuhiko and Takabayashi Yōichi, limura was one of the first to organize screenings of 8mm films outside of amateur home movie circles in the early 1960s. Presenting screenings at gallery spaces, including the first in a series of *Naiqua Cinematheque* screenings held at Naiqua Gallery, Tokyo, in 1963, limura's peers mostly consisted of artists rather than filmmakers, which led to several collaborations: Yoko Ono created the sound design for *Ai (Love)* (1962-63); Nakanishi Natsuyuki co-directed *On Eye Rape (Shikan nit suite)* (1963); and Kazakura Shō performed happenings for the camera in *Dance Party in the Kingdom of Lilliput* (1964). These collaborations influenced the way limura presented his films, which led to his early experiments in expanded cinema and, eventually, film, and video installations. After winning a group prize at the experimental film festival EXPRMNTL in Knokke-le-Zoute, Belgium, in 1964, limura co-founded Film Indépendant with the other recipients. Encouraged by a positive review of his film *Ai (Love)* by Jonas Mekas, limura relocated to New York in 1966 where he initiated further collaborations, including with Alvin Lucier. As a co-editor of *Kikan Firumu* [Film quarterly] and writer, he often reported on art and film-related activities in the United States for Japanese readership, as in his essay discussing "Intermedia" for *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism], considered the first Japanese text to use the loanword. Returning to Tokyo in 1969, limura began immersing himself in video art and, ever since, has been considered a pioneer of expanded cinema, video art, and film installation in Japan.

Ishiko Junzō

Art critic Ishiko Junzō (1928, Tokyo–1977, Tokyo) first studied law at Tokyo University, where he later pursue a graduate degree in art history. He wrote about postwar avant-garde and underground art, design, and manga. As an artist, he participated in the event *Intermedia* (1967) in a collaborative work with Tone Yasunao and painter Suzuki Yoshinori. He wrote in journals such as *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism] and *SD* [Space Design].

Ishizaki Kōichirō

Ishizaki Kōichirō (1935, Hiroshima Prefecture–2017) was a film and art critic. Together with Adachi Masao, limura Takahiko, Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, Kanesaka Kenji, Satō Jūshin, Takabayashi Yōichi, Donald Richie, and others, he co-founded Film Indépendant in 1963, which produced and screened experimental and independent films. He organized the "Lunami Film Gallery" film series at Lunami Gallery in 1966 and, with Sato Jūshin, he co-organized *Intermedia*, the first event to use the term, in 1967. As an artist, he presented works at the *Group Sweet* exhibition at Shinjuku Dai'ichi Gallery in 1962. He wrote in journals such as *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism], *Bijutsu Techō* [Art notebook], *SD* [Space Design], and *Kikan Firumu* [Film quarterly]

Jōnouchi Motoharu

Jōnouchi Motoharu (1935, Ibaraki Prefecture–1986) studied at Nihon University Fine Art Department and was actively involved in the establishment of the Nihon University Film Study Club, a.k.a. Nichidai Eiken (Nihon Daigaku Eiga Kenkyūkai) with Hirano Katsumi, Kanbara Hiroshi, Taniyama (Koh) Hiroh, and others. As part of the collective, he directed *The Record of N (N no kiroku)*, (1959), which documents the damage caused by the Isewan Typhoon (Typhoon Vera), and embodies qualities seen in the theoretic juncture of the avant-garde and documentary filmmaking. This was followed by *Pou Pou* (1960), another work he directed that unfolds an intangible, dreamlike story. Around this time, Jōnouchi

and Kanbara established the VAN Film Science Research Center (VAN Eiga Kagaku Kenkyūjo), another forum for the collaborative creation of films, where he worked with figures of different genres including Teshigahara Hiroshi, Arakawa Shūsaku, Kazakura Shō, Akasegawa Genpei, Kosugi Takehisa, and others. Representative works include *Document 6.15* (*Dokumento 6.15*, 1961), *Hi Red Center Shelter Plan* (1964), *WOLS* (1964-1969), *Nihon University Public Collective Bargaining* (*Nichidai taishū danko*, 1968), *Gewaltopia Trailer* (1969), and *Shinjuku Station* (1968-1974), among others.

Manabe Hiroshi

Manabe Hiroshi (1932, Ehime Prefecture–2000, Tokyo) was an artist, cartoonist, and filmmaker. He graduated from Tama Art University Graduate School in 1957 where he studied oil painting. While in school in 1955, he formed the group Jitsuzai-sha (Actual Being) with Ikeda Masuo and others, which disapproved of existing art institutions. While working as an art instructor at a middle school, he contributed illustrations to science fiction novels, magazines, and newspapers. In 1961, he founded the Three-Person Animation Circle (Animation Sannin no Kai) with Kuri Yōji and Yanagihara Ryōhei and organized screenings at the Sōgetsu Art Center. As part of the Sōgetsu Contemporary Series 5: Three-Person Animation (Sannin no animēshon) screening in 1960, Manabe presented *Marine Snow: Animation for the Stage* (Marin sunō: Butai no tame no animēshon, 1960), which incorporated projected animation, Noh performance, and lighting.

Matsuda Masao (a.k.a. Hirokawa Mina)

Matsuda Masao (b. 1933, Taipei) joined the Japanese Communist Party in 1950 while in high school, later joining the Shokan-ha within the Party, which took a more militaristic approach, and becoming a professional revolutionary. He worked as an editor with publishers Miraisha and Gendaishichōshinsha and assumed leadership at the Tokyo kōdō sensen (Tokyo Action Front) and Revolto-sha (The Revolution Press). He formed Hihyō sensen (Critical Front) with Adachi Masao, Sasaki Mamoru, Hiraoka Masaaki, and Aikura Hisato, launching the new film journal *Eiga Hihyōron* [Cinema criticism]. In the process, he co-produced *A.K.A. Serial Killer* (1969). The radical Marxist “landscape theory” that emerged from this film caused considerable controversy. Major works include *Teroru no kairo* [Circuit of terror] (San-ichi Shobō, 1969), *Bara to Mumeisha: Matsuda Masao Eiga-ronshū* [Roses and anonymity: essays on film by Matsuda Masao] (Haga Shoten, 1970), and *Fūkei no shimetsu* [*The Extinction of Landscape*] (Tabata Shoten, 1971).

Miyai Rikurō

Miyai Rikurō (b. 1940, Shimane) is an artist with a multidisciplinary practice. As a student at Waseda University, Miyai joined the Association of Documentary Filmmakers (Kiroku Eiga Sakka Kyōkai) and was an active voice in documentary film criticism. By the mid-1960s, he began to be regularly featured in popular weekly magazines as a model and cultural voice representing the hippie (*fūten*) phenomenon, while continuing to write criticism for the film journals *Eizō Geijutsu* [Image arts] and *Kikan Firumu* [Film quarterly]. His own films brought together his critical interests in documentary and pop, which grew through his admiration of Andy Warhol, and culminated in his 1965 essay “The Phenomenological Documentary: Directions in Pop Cinema” (Genshōgaku-teki dokyumentari: poppu shinema no hōkōsei) and his double-projection film performance *Phenomenology of Zeitgeist* (*Jidai seishin no genshōgaku*, 1967). With Shūzō Azuchi Gulliver, he presented his own films at jazz clubs, such as Pit Inn and Noa Noa, and participated in events such as *Hopscotch Sound Insertion Happening* (Ishikeri hoppu sukocchi otoire hapuninngu, 1967) at Sōgetsu

Art Center, *Intermedia* (1967) at Lunami Gallery, and *ZONE* (1968), organized by the Art Film Association (Eizō Geijutsu no Kai) in Kyoto. He began to design discotheques and bars, such as Killer Joe's, Club Sharivari, and Station '70 in Tokyo, and Space Delicious in Osaka, expanding his practice to incorporate environment design. He participated in the 1970 World Exposition in Osaka (Osaka Expo '70) where he was one of only a few artists to stage a performance in the Pepsi Pavilion's mirrored dome, designed by E.A.T., before its cancellation. Miyai was a founding member of Video Hiroba, a collective of early video artists in Japan, and the leader of Unit Pro, an independent film production unit set up in his apartment in Shinjuku, Tokyo.

Ōe Masanori

Ōe Masanori (b. 1942, Tokushima Prefecture) is a filmmaker, writer, and translator. From 1965 to 1968, in his early twenties, he moved to New York and got involved in the Third World Studios with Stan VanDerBeek and Jonas Mekas. Joining Marvin Fishman at Studio M2, Ōe began filming protest activities as part of the Newsreel Collective. He participated in USCO's psychedelic shows and translated his psychedelic experiences into his films *Between the Frames* (1967) and *Salome's Children* (1968). With Yukihisa Isobe, he participated in the 1968 exhibition *Some More Beginnings*, organized by E.A.T. at the Brooklyn Museum. His work in psychedelic culture and political activism came together in *Great Society* (1967), co-directed by Marvin Fishman, a six-screen collage of newsreel footage from the television broadcast company CBS, which commissioned them to make it. Upon returning to Japan, he co-founded Newsreel Japan with filmmaker Masato Hara and photographers Nakahira Takuma and Kanesaka Kenji. They joined members of the collective Zero Jigen [Zero Dimension] and others to halt the 1969 edition of the Tokyo Film Art Festival at Sōgetsu Art Center on the grounds that the film festival's competition format encouraged a hierarchy among films, an act that was met with controversy. He followed the collective Zero Jigen to shoot their film *White Hare of Inaba* (*Inaba no shiro usagi*, 1970). He translated *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, published in Japanese by Kōdansha in 1974, and wrote extensively on his LSD experiences. He helped to found one of the first health-food stores in Japan and became an organic farmer.

Satō Jūshin (Shigechika)

Satō Jūshin (1932, Fukushima Prefecture–1988) was a critic, editor and organizer. He was the editor-in-chief of the journal *Eiga Hyōron* [Cinema criticism]. Together with Ishikazi Kōichirō, he co-organized the event *Intermedia* and appeared in films by Adachi Masao, Kanai Katsu, and Wakamatsu Kōji. He was a co-founder of the Japan Filmmakers' Co-operative and the Japan Underground Center.

Tone Yasunao

Tone Yasunao (b. 1935, Tokyo) is a Japanese-American artist, writer, theorist, and composer. In the early 1960s, he co-founded Group Ongaku, considered Japan's first improvised music group. Upon moving to New York in 1972, he joined the Fluxus group and, later, the Downtown improvisers and European electronica experimentalists. In Japan, he co-organized the Intermedia Arts Festival in 1969 and participated in the events *Sweet 16* (1963) and *Fluxus Week* (1965). He also presented *Investigation Event* (*Tone shō ten*), a one-week exhibition at Naiqua Gallery in 1964. He composed music for films by Jōnouchi Motoharu and Imura Takahiko, among others. Honors include the Ars Electronica Golden Nica award and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts award in music.

Selected Events

Jazz Film Laboratory JEUNE (October 21–22, 1960)

Jazz Film Laboratory (Jazz jikken-shitsu JEUNE) at Video Hall, Yūrakuchō, Tokyo, was a screening of films made by artists working in other mediums, including Terayama Shūji, Takemitsu Tōru, and Hosoe Eikoh, whose film featured Hijikata Tatsumi.

Document 6.15 (June 15, 1961; June 15, 1962)

In 1961, the All-Japan League of Student Self- Government (Zengakuren) commissioned VAN Film Science Research Center (VAN Eiga Kagaku Kenkyūjo) to make *Document 6.15* (*Dokumento 6.15*) as an ode to student protestor Kanba Michiko who had died during protest activities on June 15, 1960. Precursor to intermedia events, the projection of the film involved other elements, such as tape recordings and slide and light projection. The second event in 1962 involved Tone Yasunao, Kosugi Takehisa, Ichianagi Toshi, Kazakura Shō, and others.

1st Naiqua Cinematheque (August 8–9, 1963)

1st Naiqua Cinematheque at Naiqua Gallery was a film screening series organized by Iimura Takahiko. Participants included Ōbayashi Nobuhiko and members of Hi Red Center as discussants, and Tone Yasunao's graphic score. It launched a series of film screenings at the gallery.

Sweet 16 (December 3–5, 1963)

Sweet 16 at Sōgetsu Art Center was a performance event organized by Kuni Chiya with participants including Kazakura Shō, Kosugi Takehisa, Tone Yasunao, and Iimura Takahiko, who presented *Screen Play*, a projection of his abstract film *Iro* (*Color*, 1963) on the back of Takamatsu Jirō, a member of Hi Red Center.

Fluxus Week (September 8, 9, 11, 14, 1965)

Fluxus Week (*Furukusasu shūkan*) at Ginza Crystal Gallery, Tokyo, was organized by Akiyama Kuniharu, Ichianagi Toshi, and Yamaguchi Katsuhiro with the participation of Tone Yasunao and Shiomi Mieko. It is considered the first major presentation of Fluxus works in Japan.

A Commercial for Myself (December 16–17, 1964)

A Commercial for Myself at Kinokuniya Hall, Tokyo, was a screening of two-minute short films organized by Film Indépendant. Participants included Iimura Takahiko, Kazakura Shō, Tone Yasunao, Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, Donald Ritchie, and Akasegawa Genpei.

From Space to Environment (November 11–16, 1966)

From Space to Environment (*Kūkan kara kankyō e*) was an exhibition held at Matsuya Department Store Gallery, Ginza, and an event held at Sōgetsu Art Center. Organized by the Environment Society (*Enbairamento no Kai*), the exhibition showed works by Awazu Kiyoshi, Imai Norio, Takamatsu Jirō, and Yamaguchi Katsuhiro, and included Akiyama Kuniharu, Ichianagi Toshi, Tōno Yoshiaki, and others as participants in the event.

Shinjuku Art Festival (December 27–28, 1966)

Shinjuku Art Festival at Art Theatre Shinjuku Bunka was two evenings of performances with participants including 8 Generation, Kurohata, and Zero Jigen.

Hopscotch Sound Insertion Happening (January 19, 1967)

Hopscotch Sound Insertion Happening (Ishikeri hoppu sukocchi no otoire hapuninngu) was an event at Sôgetsu Art Center organized by Kanesaka Kenji and conducted by Tone Yasunao to make a live improvised composition of Kanesaka's film *Hopscotch*. Participants included Miyai Rikurô, Satô Jûshin, Takemitsu Tôru, Ôbayashi Nobuhiko, and others.

Intermedia at Gallery Lunami (May 23–28, 1967)

Intermedia, the five-day event at Lunami Gallery, Ginza, Tokyo, was the first presentation of "Intermedia" in Japan. Co-organized by critics Ishizaki Kôichirô and Satô Jûshin, the exhibition and event included works by Onishi Seiji, Adachi Masao, Kazakura Shô, Kanesaka Kenji, Tone Yasunao, Miyai Rikurô, and Jônouchi Motoharu.

Psyche-Delicious Intermedia Piece #1 (February 24, 1968)

Psyche-Delicious Intermedia Piece #1 at Angura Pop was organized by Kanesaka Kenji and Kazumata Kôichi. Considered the first "psychedelic" event in Japan, it featured Shinohara Ushio, Shûzô Azuchi Gulliver, Miyai Rikurô, Ôbayashi Nobuhiko, and the all-female dance group Bizarre Ballet Group.

EX POSE 1968: Say Something Now, I'm Trying (April 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 1968)

EX POSE 1968: Say Something Now, I'm Trying (EX POSE 1968: Nanika ittekure, ima sagasu) was an event series held at Sôgetsu Art Center and organized by Awazu Kiyoshi who also participated. Other participants included Matsumoto Toshio, Shinohara Ushio, Akiyama Kuniharu, Tôno Yoshiaki, and others.

Two Men Shy in the Face of Andy Warhol (July 12–August 4, 1968)

Two Men Shy in the Face of Andy Warhol / Underground Cinema Shinjuku a Go! Go! Go! (Andi wôhōru ni hajirau futari no otoko andā guraundo shinema Shinjuku a gô gô gô) was an event series organized by Shûzô Azuchi Gulliver and Miyai Rikurô at Noa Noa, Shinjuku, and Theater Pit Inn, Shinjuku, every Saturday, that involved presentations of their films.

Time Zone (November 8, 14, and 19, 1968)

Time Zone (Time Zone: kokoni tatteiru—soshite?) at the Mainichi Shimbun Branch Office 3rd Floor Hall was an event series organized by the Art Film Association (Eizô Geijutsu no Kai). The events involved the presentation of films and happenings. Participants included Imai Norio, Matsumoto Shôji, Shûzô Azuchi Gulliver, Kawaguchi Tatsuo, Miyai Rikurô, among others.

This is 8 Generation! (November 11–14 and 18–21, 1968)

This is 8 Generation! (Korega 8 generêshonda!) was an event series organized by 8 Generation at Theater Pit Inn, Shinjuku that involved happenings and films. Participants included Kokuin and Zero Jigen.

Image Speaks! (January 12–19, 1969)

Image Speaks! (Eizô wa hasshin suru!) was a series of events held at Galerie 16, Kyoto, where a dome-screen was installed for the projection of films and happenings. A follow-up

event, *Image Speaks! Continued*, took place at Shinanobashi Gallery, Osaka (February 4–9, 1969). Both events were organized by the Art Film Association (Eizō Geijutsu no Kai), including Imai Norio, Matsumoto Shōji and Kawaguchi Tatsuo, and participants included Shūzō Azuchi Gulliver and Miyai Rikurō.

Intermedia Arts Festival (January 18, 19, and 21, 1969)

Intermedia Arts Festival was an event series organized by Tone Yasunao, Kosugi Takehisa and Shiomi Mieko that took place at Killer Joe's and Nikkei Hall. It included many performances based on Fluxus instructions, as well as works by Ichianagi Toshi, Shūzō Azuchi Gulliver, among others.

Cross Talk / Intermedia (February 5–7, 1969)

Cross Talk / Intermedia was the fourth event of the *Cross Talk* series organized by the American Cultural Center to foster collaboration between Japanese and American artists working primarily in the field of music. Spearheaded by Roger Reynolds and Kuniharu Akiyama, the event was unique in the series for its focus on expanded cinema. Participants included Stan VanDerBeek, Alvin Lucier, Robert Ashley, George Cacioppo, Salvatore Martirano, Gordon Mumma, Ronald Nameth, David Rosenboom, Ichianagi Toshi, Matsumoto Toshio, Imura Takahiko, Yuasa Jōji, Takemitsu Tōru, Kosugi Takehisa, and Shiomi Mieko. Works presented include Imura Takahiko's *Circles* and Matsumoto Toshio's *Projection for Icon*. The event was held at Yoyogi National Gymnasium.

8 Generation + Intermedia Show (February 22–23, 1969)

8 Generation + Intermedia Show at Theatre 36, Nagoya, was organized by Zero Jigen and involved happenings and films. Participants included Zero Jigen.

Osaka Expo '70 (March 15–September 13, 1970)

Expo '70 was the first world exposition in Asia. Participants included Matsumoto Toshio, Awazu Kiyoshi, Yamaguchi Katsuhiro, Hijikata Tatsumi, Miyai Rikurō, Ichianagi Toshi, Imai Norio, and others.

Expanded Art Festival (March 21–22, 1970)

Held at the Kishi Gymnasium in Shibuya, Tokyo and organized by dance critic Ichikawa Miyabi, the Expanded Art Festival was primarily a dance event with performances by Atsugi Bonjin, Kuni Chiya, Ankoku Butoh dancer Hijikata Tatsumi's disciple Ishii Mitsutaka, and others.

Cine-Happening Festival (June 13–27, 1970)

Cine-Happening Festival (Cine-happening matsuri) was a festival with film and performances organized by Japan Underground Center at Ikebukuro Art Theatre, Tokyo. Participants included Adachi Masao, Kosugi Takehisa, and the Taj Mahal Travelers.

Expression in Film '72 (October 14–19, 1972)

Expression in Film '72 (<Eizō no hyōgen '72> mono, ba, jikan, kūkan—Equivalent Cinema—) exhibition, held at Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, was organized as the 5th edition of the Exhibition of Contemporary Plastic Arts (Gendai no zōkei, 1968–). It was a group exhibition of sixteen artists and twenty-three projectors in one room. Organized by Imai Norio and Matsumoto Shōji, who also participated, the exhibition is considered the first major presentation of film *Play*.

Selected Groups

ArtTheater Guild (ATG)

An independent film production company established in 1961 and active through the mid-1980s, the Art Theater Guild produced and distributed non-commercial, art films. Starting out as a distributor of foreign new wave films, after around 1967 it began to produce low-cost films and support filmmakers such as Ōshima Nagisa and Yoshida Kijū, who left large film production companies in order to make art films. Directors included Teshigahara Hiroshi, Shindō Kaneto, Imamura Shōhei, Ōshima Nagisa, Matsumuro Toshio, Wakamatsu Kōji, Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, Hani Susumu, and others.

Film Indépendant

A group for producing and screening independent and experimental films founded in 1964 by Adachi Masao, Imura Takahiko, Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, Kanesaka Kenji, Satō Jūshin, Takabayashi Yōichi, Donald Ritchie, and others. This collective of independent filmmakers was primarily comprised of those who received a group award at EXPRMNTL 3 (1963) in Knokke-le-Zoute, Belgium. They also published a manifesto in *Yomiuri Shimbun* about “free cinema that breaks away from capital and industrial filmmaking.” The group organized a one-off event, titled *A Commercial for Myself* (December 16–17, 1964), but activities were infrequent thereafter.

Japan Filmmakers' Cooperative

Established in 1968, the Japan Filmmakers' Cooperative was modeled after the operation system of the New York Film-Makers' Cooperative, and distributed independent and experimental films. Without a jury or review process, any independent filmmaker could register and distribute to cine clubs and universities throughout Japan, and 75% of the revenue from rental fees were given to the artists while 25% remained with the cooperative for operating costs. At the start, the organization operated with 32 artists distributing 70 titles.

Japan Underground Center (Nihon Andāguraundo Sentā)

Around the time the Japan Filmmakers' Cooperative was established, Japan Underground Center also started as the for-profit wing of the organization. The two offices were located at the agency of the magazine *Eiga Hyōron*, for which Satō Jūshin served as the chief editor at the time. In 1969, a quarrel around whether to boycott the Film Art Festival Tokyo 1969 at Sōgetsu Art Center divided the organization, resulting in the withdrawal of Satō and Kawanaka Nobuhiro from the Japan Filmmakers' Cooperative, and the two continuing to distribute at the Japan Underground Center. As the popularity of underground films dwindled, Satō and Kawanaka parted ways, and the Japan Underground Center closed temporarily in 1971. However, Kawanaka and others reopened it in the same year as Underground Center and Underground Cinemateque.

Three-Person Animation Circle (Animation Sannin no Kai)

Three-Person Animation Circle (Animation Sannin no Kai) was founded by Kuri Yōji, Yanagihara Ryōhie, and Manabe Hiroshi in 1960. The group was active in Sōgetsu Art Center, where they held the first Animation Festival (1966). Their presentations involved multiple projection and performances with projection, marking them as key precedents of expanded cinema in Japan.

Selected Spaces

Angura Pop (1968–unknown)

Angura Pop was a discotheque disguised as a café and restaurant. Designed by Kawamura Yukio, the space housed many events including *Psyche-Delicious Intermedia Piece #1* and Phantom Black Festival, which included performances by Zero Jigen.

ArtTheater Shinjuku Bunka (1962–1974)

Art Theater Shinjuku Bunka was one of the ten cinemas of the Art Theater Guild of Japan (ATG), a distribution and exhibition outlet set up across the country to screen foreign arthouse and local independent films. Located in Shinjuku, Tokyo, it was considered the centerpiece cinema and, under the management of Kuzui Kinshirō, the space was used for late-night theater productions, performances, and experimental film screenings. 8 Generation, Matsumoto Toshio, Three-Person Animation Circle, and Adachi Masao are just a few of the figures who performed or screened in the space.

Discotheque Killer Joe's

Killer Joe's (1968–?) was a discotheque in Ginza designed by Miyai Rikurō and Hayata Yasuhiro with illustrations by Tanaami Keiichi. It was one of the venues where Intermedia Arts Festival was held.

Gallery Lunami

Gallery Lunami (1963–1998) was a gallery space ran by Namikawa Emiko in Ginza, Tokyo. It held many events and exhibitions, including *Intermedia*, events by Zero Jigen and Group Sweet, and the *Lunami Film Gallery* film series, with screenings of works by Jōnouchi Motoharu and Ōbayashi Nobuhiko.

Naiqua Gallery (Naika Garō)

Encouraged by artist Nakanishi Natsuyuki and started by Miyata Kunio, the son of an internal medicine (*naika*) doctor at their clinic space, Naiqua Gallery was active from 1963–1967. The gallery became a presentation space for avant-garde art of the time, and hosted exhibitions and events by such artists as Hi Red Center (Takamatsu Jirō, Akasegawa Genpei, and Nakanishi Natsuyuki), Miki Tomio, Shinohara Ushio, Nakamura Hiroshi, Yoko Ono, Imura Takahiko, and others. The gallery closed in 1966 once Miyata received his medical degree to resume medical practice.

Nihon University Film Study Club, a.k.a. Nichidai Eiken (Nihon Daigaku Eiga Kenkyūkai)

Nichidai Eiken, founded in 1957 by Hirano Katsumi, Kanbara Hiroshi, Taniyama (Koh) Hiroh, Jōnouchi Motoharu, and others, released *Conversation Between Nail and Sock* (*Kugi to kutsushita no taiwa*, 1958), primarily produced by Hirano and Taniyama, followed by *The Record of N* (*N no kiroku*, 1959), documenting damage caused by the Isewan Typhoon (Typhoon Vera), primarily produced by Kanbara and Jōnouchi. During the campaign against the 1960 US-Japan Security Treaty, Jōnouchi and associates fully participated in the protest movement while continuously documenting it from inside, rather than from an objective outsider's perspective, and the film study club released the results as *Pu Pu* (1960). Nichidai Eiken was reorganized into the New Film Study Club during the course of the Security Treaty conflict, and in the fall of 1960, Jōnouchi, Kanbara, Asanuma Naoya, Kawashima Keiji, and Adachi Masao established the VAN Film Science Research Center.

Sōgetsu Art Center

An active hub of experimental art in Japan from 1958–1971, Sōgetsu Art Center presented films, jazz and contemporary classical music, performances, and visual art. Located within the Sōgetsu Ikebana School, the Art Center was directed by Teshigahara Hiroshi, an heir of the school. The center was an important place of international exchange, hosting many artists, filmmakers, and musicians from abroad. Such artists included John Cage, David Tudor, Merce Cunningham, Robert Rauschenberg, Yoko Ono, and Nam June Paik. Besides presenting events, Sōgetsu Art Center published the *SAC Journal*, which was a forum for debate on experimental art, film, and music in 1960s Japan. Director of the Sōgetsu Art Center Teshigahara Hiroshi and filmmaker Hani Susumu founded the Cinema 57 group, which screened independent films while also making their own work, *Tokyo 1958* (1958). The screening activities at Sōgetsu Art Center eventually led to the establishment of the Art Theater Guild, which specialized in showing art films. In November 1960, the animator Kuri Yōji and others held the Three-Person Animation screening. This was followed in July 1961 by the start of the Sōgetsu Cinematheque, which presented experimental films, documentaries, and works for television. In February 1966, the Sōgetsu Cinematheque invited Henri Langlois of the Cinémathèque Française to curate the International Avant-Garde Film Festival, which presented historical and contemporary experimental films from around the world and influenced many artists in Japan. Underground Cinema, a festival presented in June of that same year, introduced experimental works by filmmakers such as Imura Takahiko, Kanesaka Kenji, and Stan Brakhage and led to the popularization of the term “underground cinema” in Japan. In November 1967, the first Sōgetsu Film Art Festival—renamed Film Art Festival 1968 the following year and canceled in 1969 due to political protests—served to expand the space in which established and emerging filmmakers working in experimental and avant-garde genres actively shared their work.

Theater Scorpio

Theater Scorpio (1967–1974) was an underground theater and cinema space. Located in the basement of the Art Theater Shinjuku Bunka, the space was managed by Kuzui Kinshirō and screened works and/or performances by Adachi Masao, Imura Takahiko, Shūzō Azuchi Gulliver and 8 Generation.

VAN Film Science Research Center (VAN Eiga Kagaku Kenkyūjo)

Founded in 1960 by Jōnouchi, Kanbara, Asanuma Naoya, Kawashima Keiji, and Adachi Masao, the VAN Film Science Research Center was a place where not only filmmakers but also people working in various media, including fine artists, musicians, photographers, and editors, could assemble. Out of this interaction emerged *Document 6.15* (*Dokumento 6.15*, 1961), produced by VAN members as a documentary of the Security Treaty struggle, and staged as a one-time screening performance. The production and screening of *Document 6.15* was commissioned by the All-Japan League of Student Self-Government (Zengakuren) for a memorial ceremony for Kanba Michiko. This public gathering, organized primarily by Zengakuren, both marked one year since the start of anti-Security Treaty demonstrations and memorialized the death of Kanba, a female University of Tokyo student killed during a demonstration in front of the National Diet Building in June 1960.

Selected Journals

***Dai Ni-ji Eiga Hihyō* [The second film criticism]**

Dai Ni-ji Eiga Hihyō [The second film criticism] was headed by members of the critical avant-garde, such as film critic Matsuda Masao and filmmaker Adachi Masao.

***Eiga Hihyō* [Film criticism]**

The theory and practice of the Japanese New Wave film movement, which began in the late 1950s, was largely based on ideas discussed in *Eiga Hihyō* [Film criticism], first published in June 1957 by filmmaker Kasu Sanpei and others.

***Eizō Geijutsu* [Image arts]**

Eizō Geijutsu [Image arts] was the group newsletter of Image Arts Society (Eizō Geijutsu no Kai), launched in December 1964 by documentary filmmakers Noda Shinkichi, Matsumoto Toshio, and others who had left the Association of Documentary Filmmakers (Kiroku Eiga Sakka Kyōkai), and published monthly with Noda as editor-in-chief. It played a crucial role in connecting the US-Japan Security Treaty of 1960 and the new revolutionary movement that peaked in 1968. It was temporarily suspended in April 1966 due to financial difficulties, and resumed in November 1966 as a quarterly with Matsumoto as new editor-in-chief, but was forced to cease publication again after just three issues.

***Kikan Firumu* [Film quarterly]**

In the late 1960s, new film magazines appeared one after another, including *Kikan Firumu* [Film quarterly] established in October 1968 under the auspices of the Sōgetsu Art Center and edited by Matsumoto, Imura Takahiko, and designer Awazu Kiyoshi.

***Kiroku Eiga* [Documentary film]**

Started in June 1958, *Kiroku Eiga* [Documentary film], was the association newsletter of the Association of Documentary Filmmakers.

***Me* [Eyes]**

Me [Eyes] was founded in 1969 by the Suginami Cineclub and composed of editors and film critics.

Related Chronology

1957

Spring: Nihon University Film Study Club, a.k.a. Nichidai Eiken (Nihon Daigaku Eiga Kenkyūkai) established.

June: Journal *Eiga Hihyō* [Film criticism] first published.

August: Teshigahara Hiroshi and filmmaker Hani Susumu founded the Cinema 57 group.

1958

June: Journal *Kiroku Eiga* [Documentary film] first published.

September: Sōgetsu Art Center established.

1960

March: Sōgetsu Art Center journal, *SAC Journal* first published.

October: *Jazz Film Laboratory (Jazz jikken-shitsu JEUNE)* at Video Hall, Yūrakuchō, Tokyo.

November: Three-Person Animation screening at Sōgetsu Art Center.

December: VAN Film Science Research Center (VAN Eiga Kagaku Kenkyūjo) established.

1961

June: *Document 6.15 (Dokumento 6.15)* screening during the “Memorial assembly for Kanba Michiko” at Kyōritsu Kōdō Hall.

November: Art Theater Guild established and ran through to the mid-1980s.

1962

June: *Document 6.15 (Dokumento 6.15)* screening during the second “Memorial assembly for Kanba Michiko” at Kudan Hall.

1963

July: Naiqua Gallery opened.

August: *1st Naiqua Cinematheque* at Naiqua Gallery.

December: *Sweet 16* event held at Sōgetsu Art Center.

1964

January: Hi Red Center staged *Shelter Plan* at the Imperial Hotel.

February: Journal *Eizō Geijutsu* [Image arts] first published.

May: *Sain Ceremony (Sain no gi)* held at Gion Kaikan Hall, Kyoto.

September: Film Indépendant established.

December: First Film Indépendant event, *A Commercial for Myself* held at Kinokuniya Hall, Tokyo.

1965

January: Journal *SD* [Space Design] first published.

September: *Fluxus Week (Furukusasu shūkan)* held at Ginza Crystal Gallery.

December: *Muse Week (Myūzu shūkan)* at Modern Art Center of Japan.

1966

August: Jōnouchi Motoharu and VAN's *Hi Red Center Shelter Plan* presented as evidence during the “Thousand-Yen Bill Incident” trial of Akasegawa Genpei.

November: *From Space to Environment (Kūkan kara kankyō e)* exhibition held at Matsuya Department Store Gallery, Ginza.

December: Shinjuku Art Festival at Art Theater Shinjuku Bunka.

1967

January: *Hopscotch Sound Insertion Happening (Ishikeri hoppu sukocchi no otoiire hapuninngu)* at Sōgetsu Art Center.

February: Lunami Film Gallery study group at Lunami Gallery presented Jōnouchi Motoharu and VAN's *Hi Red Center Shelter Plan* (billed in the program as *VAN DOCUMENT*).

May: *Intermedia*, a five-day event at Lunami Gallery, Ginza, Tokyo

November: First Sōgetsu Film Art Festival — renamed Film Art Festival 1968 — held at Sōgetsu Art Center. Series canceled in 1969.

1968

February: *Psyche-Delicious Intermedia Piece #1* event at Angura Pop.

March: Japan Filmmakers' Cooperative established.

April: *EX POSE 1968: Say Something Now, I'm Trying* (*EX POSE 1968: nanika ittekure, ima sagasu*) event series held at Sôgetsu Art Center. *Matsumoto Toshio's For the Damaged Right Eye* (*Tsubure-kakatta migime no tameni*) screened.

July-August: *Two Men Shy in the Face of Andy Warhol / Underground Cinema Shinjuku a Go! Go! Go!* (*Andi wôhôru ni hajirau futari no otoko andâ guraundo shinema Shinjuku a gô gô gô*) event series at Noa Noa, Shinjuku.

November: *Time Zone* (*Time Zone: kokoni tatteiru—soshite?*) held at the Mainichi Shimbun Branch Office 3rd Floor Hall.

November: *This is 8 Generation!* (*Korega 8 generêshonda!*) event series held at Theater Pit Inn, Shinjuku.

1969

January: Intermedia Arts Festival event series held at Killer Joe's and Nikkei Hall.

February: *Cross Talk / Intermedia* organized by the American Cultural Center held at Yoyogi National Gymnasium.

February: *8 Generation + Intermedia Show* held at Theater 36, Nagoya.

1970

March-September: Osaka Expo '70

March: Expanded Art Festival at the Kishi Gymnasium in Shibuya, Tokyo.

June: Cine-Happening Festival (Cine-happening matsuri) organized by Japan Underground Center at Ikebukuro Art Theater, Tokyo.

1972

October: *Expression in Film '72* (<Eizô no hyôgen '72> *mono, ba, jikan, kūkan—Equivalent Cinema—*) exhibition at Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art.

Editors Biography & About Collaborative Cataloging Japan

Go Hirasawa

Go Hirasawa is a researcher at Meiji-Gakuin University working on underground and experimental films and avant-garde art movements in 1960s and '70s Japan. His publications include *Cultural Theories*: 1968 (Tokyo, 2010), *Koji Wakamatsu: Cinéaste de la Révolte* (France, 2010), and *Masao Adachi: Le bus de la révolution passera bientôt près de chez toi* (France, 2012). He has organized *Underground Film Archives* (Tokyo, 2001), *Koji Wakamatsu* (Berlin International Film Festival, 2008, Cinematheque Française, 2010), *Masao Adachi* (Cinematheque Française, 2010 and Harvard Film Archive, 2012), *Art Theater Guild and Japanese Underground Cinema, 1960–1986* (The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2012), *Throwing Shadows: Japanese Expanded Cinema in the Time of Pop* (Tate Modern, Rotterdam International Film Festival, 2016), and *TV Politics: Nagisa Oshima* (Documenta, 2017).

Julian Ross

Julian Ross is an Assistant Professor at Leiden University in LUCAS, the Centre for the Arts in Society. His recent publications include book chapters and articles in *The Japanese Cinema Book* (BFI, 2020), *America: Films from Elsewhere* (The Shoestring Publisher, 2019) and *Japanese Expanded Cinema Revisited* (Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, 2017). As a curator, he has presented curatorial projects related to Japanese Expanded Cinema at Tate Modern, BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, and Art Institute of Chicago. He was a curatorial advisor for the exhibition *Japanese Expanded Cinema Revisited* at the Tokyo Photographic Art Museum and is a Core Research Group member of Collaborative Cataloging Japan. He is a Programmer at International Film Festival Rotterdam and Locarno Film Festival.

Ann Adachi-Tasch

Ann Adachi-Tasch is Executive Director of Collaborative Cataloging Japan, a not-for-profit that supports preservation and archiving of Japanese historical and experimental moving image works. She has worked at The Museum of Modern Art where she managed projects for the Museum's global research initiative titled Contemporary and Modern Art Perspectives (C-MAP), and contributed to the launch of its digital platform, *post* (post.at.moma.org). In 2009, she organized a touring screening program and publication of Japanese experimental video and film, *Vital Signals* at Electronic Arts Intermix, a video art archive and distributor where she was the Distribution Coordinator. She has given presentations and written about the status of media archiving at The Museum of Modern Art (Tokyo); Keio University Art Center (Tokyo); Tate Modern (London); and the Archives of American Art (Washington D.C.), among others.

Collaborative Cataloging Japan

Collaborative Cataloging Japan (CCJ) is an international, 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, documenting, and disseminating the legacy of Japanese experimental moving image made in 1950s–1980s, in order to enable their appreciation by a wider audience. CCJ aims to strengthen the supporting ecology for preservation and dissemination by offering public events, research and preservation initiatives, and resource on the web. Without this effort, this unique sector of Japanese cultural heritage,

which historically has been underrepresented and unsupported, would remain available to only a very few. Buried in artists' studios or independent archives, many works are in danger of literal disappearance as film and video mediums continue to deteriorate. The scope of moving image focus includes: fine art on film and video, documentations of performance, independently produced documentaries, experimental animation, and experimental television. For more information, please visit: <http://www.collabjapan.org/>

Japanese authors of the primary documents in this book are noted in Japanese form, family names first followed by given names, except for figures well known internationally by their given names first. The production staff of this book including the co-editors and translators appear with given names first.

Collaborative Cataloging Japan
Japanese Expanded Cinema and Intermedia:
Critical Texts of the 1960s

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Edited by Ann Adachi-Tasch, Go Hirasawa, Julian Ross
Designed by Julie Högner, Archive Appendix
Copyedited by Jennifer C Cornwell and Rachel Valinsky
Translated by Yuzo Sakuramoto and Colin Smith

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Japanese Expanded Cinema and Intermedia: Critical Texts of the 1960s

Intermedia and Expanded Cinema, both as critical approach and artistic practice, left an indelible mark in a period of Japanese art history that is broadly considered to be one of its most dynamic moments in the wake of its postwar reemergence.

Despite the burgeoning interest in academic and curatorial circles in this segment of Japanese art history, the paucity of readily available material in a language other than Japanese has meant the local context, particularly the ways in which the terms were critically debated, was relatively neglected.

Rather than assuming the interpretations of the terms were the same as their counterparts abroad, we decided to commission translations of a selection of key texts that we felt were instrumental in shaping the specific discourse around these terms.

Through these translations, our hope is that Japanese debates on intermedia can contribute to international discourse, and that works of Japanese Expanded Cinema can be preserved, reenacted and analyzed with these discussions in mind.

Contributors:

Go Hirasawa
Ann Adachi-Tasch
Julian Ross

Adachi Masao
Iimura Takahiko
Ishiko Junzō
Ishizaki Kōichirō
Jōnouchi Motoharu
Manabe Hiroshi
Matsuda Masao
(a.k.a. Hirosawa Mina)
Miyai Rikurō
Ōe Masanori
Satō Jūshin
(Shigechika)
Tone Yasunao