

J-WAVE USA



**3 Days of Japanamericana
at UCLA
13-15 March 2008**

J-WAVE USA

Southern California as the Gateway to Japanese Contemporary Creative Industries in the West

Conference, Exhibition and Reception
UCLA 13-15 March 2008

WELCOME TO J-Wave USA at UCLA. Irrashimase! Our three days of events around campus celebrate some of the most original popular culture coming out of Japan today, but also cast a quizzical eye at the sometimes bizarre ways Japanese culture gets represented from the outside. In recent years there has been a veritable tsunami of Japanese anime, manga, toys, games, design, street fashion, j-pop, j-rock, and—of course—food coming into the US, much of it through Los Angeles. This is not lost on the Japanese government, at a time when Japan's traditional manufacturing power is in relative decline. They too are celebrating the global influence of Japan's new 'soft power', whether it comes in the shape of a cute cartoon kitty or OTT cosplay character.

'Gross national cool' may or may not be the key to Japan's economic future, but it certainly is inspiration to a whole new generation of US based creators and entrepreneurs. A panel on Friday brings together four of the most dynamic young local figures. We are also joined by two of the USA's most influential commentators on the 'Japanamerica' phenomena: authors Roland Kelts and Patrick Macias. On Thursday and on Saturday, a number of academic presentations featuring distinguished specialists reflect upon the transnational nature of offshore Japanese culture and business in the US, and its impact in both directions. As part of this trend, the Marui Corporation is one of several Japanese companies seeking to expand



fashion sales abroad on the back of the anime convention and j-rock boom, and on page 15 they offer an example of the products being introduced as part of the export drive. And, at the heart of the three days is an exhibition that is the first public showing on the West Coast of two of the most interesting artists in Japan today: the photographers Mikiko Hara and Mika Ninagawa. A public lecture, panel discussion and reception introduces their work.

Adrian Favell, Department of Sociology, UCLA

For further information please consult:
www.soc.ucla.edu/faculty/favell



COVER ART: Marina Kappos, 112 and 113, and (left) 115, a self-portrait, works from Tokyo Wonder Site (2007)

MARINA KAPPOS lives and works in Los Angeles. She received a BFA from the California Institute of the Arts (1995) and an MFA from the Yale University School of Art (1997). In 2007 she spent five months on the Tokyo Wonder Site Creator-In-Residence program, working and living in Tokyo. Solo exhibitions include Marina Kappos at Tokyo Wonder Site Shibuya (2007), A Murder of Crows at the Happy Lion in Los Angeles (2005), Yellow Fever at Sutton Lane in London (2003), Flora and Fauna at I-20 Gallery in New York (2002). She is represented by The Happy Lion in Los Angeles.

BACK COVER: Mika Ninagawa, self-portrait from 'WOMAN' at Omotesando Hills (2007)

J-WAVE

Entrepreneurship in LA

**Anderson School of Management
Korn Hall, 5-7pm**

**Address by the Japanese Consul General
Followed by Business Entrepreneurship Panel, featuring
Mike Tatsugawa, Ai Aota, Bobby Okinaka, and Jamie Rivadeneira
Introduced and moderated by Roland Kelts**

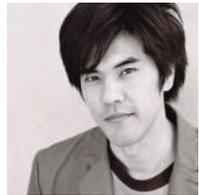
MIKE TATSUGAWA is one of the pioneers of the anime industry in the US, and is considered one of its foremost experts. He was one of the co-creators of AnimeCon, later founded Anime Expo (A/X), and is currently developing the Japanese pop culture industry in the US through Pacific Media Expo. He has appeared on NBC, CBS, Fox, CNN and has also been quoted in Newtype, Animage, LA Times, SF Examiner, the Village Voice and Daily Variety. He also used to be a columnist in Japan's AX Magazine. During the day, Mike is now finding new ways for people to connect at MySpace. www.pacificmediaexpo.com



AI AOTA specializes in marketing and introducing Japanese content in the US, in fields spanning toys, fashion, comics, music and the film industry. She presided over promotions and sales at Tofu Records, Sony Music, has overseen event planning for numerous Japanese rock band tours, and in 2006 was hired to promote the single largest Japanese Music festival held outside Japan, J-Rock Revolution (in LA). She launched Neu Bauhaus LLC in January 2008, with the aim of presenting new avant garde artists from Japan, who combine Street Pop trends with a zest for new world decadence. www.neubauhaus.net



BOBBY OKINAKA created an online magazine on Japanese fashion and urban culture called Tokyo à la Mode to promote the globalization of the Japanese pop culture lifestyle. Tokyo à la Mode is about what's cute and cool out of Japan. As a teen he lived on a US Army base outside of Tokyo and later, after graduating from UCLA in East Asian studies, he spent three years in Wakayama on the JET Program. He is currently writing a movie script on Tokyo nightlife and Japanese indie music. www.tokyotalamode.com



JAMIE RIVADENEIRA started JapanLA in June 2006. Her fascination with Japanese pop culture began when she first discovered Hello Kitty as a child. Her love for cute, simple Japanese characters never ended, and at the age of 28, she had the idea of opening a store named after the two places that she loved the most: Japan and Los Angeles. JapanLA sells cute, character-based gifts, toys, and t-shirts inspired by Japanese and Los Angeles pop culture. When asked how she selects the products for her store, Jamie says, "I only buy things I love". www.japanla.com



**Organized with the Japan America Business Association, Anderson School, UCLA
In association with the Japanese Consulate, Los Angeles**

followed by CATERED RECEPTION

**Anderson School, Entrepreneurs Hall, Atrium C 7-9pm
Sponsored by the Center for International Business Education Research,
UCLA**

Drinks provided by



"The book I've been waiting for... Kelts brings real insight to the way entertainment draws two very different worlds together."
— PETE TOWNSHEND

HOW JAPANESE POP CULTURE
HAS INVADED THE U.S.

JAPANAMERICA

ROLAND KELTS



ROLAND KELTS is the author of *Japanamerica: How Japanese Pop Culture Has Invaded the U.S.* (2007), available in both English and Japanese (www.japanamericabook.com). He is also a Lecturer at the University of Tokyo and The University of the Sacred Heart Tokyo, an editor of the New York-based literary journal, *A Public Space*, and a columnist for *The Daily Yomiuri*. He has lectured at Barnard College, New York University, Saint Ann's School and Phillips Exeter Academy. He is a graduate of Oberlin College and Columbia University, and is a recipient of the Jacob K. Javits Fellowship Award in Writing. Kelts's first novel, *Access*, will be published next year. His articles, essays, and stories appear in *Zoetrope*, *Playboy*, *Salon*, *DoubleTake*, *The Village Voice*, *Newsday*, *Psychology Today*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue* and *The Japan Times*, among others. He divides his time between New York and Tokyo.

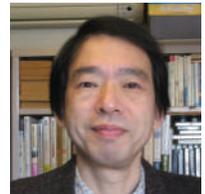
13 Mar 2008

Migrants' Los Angeles Revisited Studying Ethnic LA through its Immigrant Media

Department of Sociology
Haines Hall, 5-7pm

A workshop on the fieldwork methods and planned research of Tokyo urban sociologist Takashi Machimura, revisiting his pioneering study from the 1990s of Los Angeles' ethnic communities and their media. With invited guest Michael Peter Smith, and UCLA Sociology Professors Roger Waldinger and Min Zhou as discussants.

TAKASHI MACHIMURA is Professor of Sociology at Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo. He has authored or edited eight books in Japanese, including *Reconstructing Postwar Development: The Sakuma Dam Project and its Multiple Consequences* (2006), *Conditions of Civic-initiative Society: Confictive Public Sphere in the Planning Process of EXPO2005 Aichi* (2005, co-edited with Shunya Yoshimi), *Transborder Migrants in Los Angeles* (1999), and *The Structural Change of a Global City: Urban Restructuring in Tokyo* (1994). His English articles have appeared in *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* and other journals and books.



MICHAEL PETER SMITH is Professor of Community Studies and Development at the University of California, Davis. He has published 23 books focusing largely on the relationship between cities, the state, globalization, and transnationalism. Among these are *Citizenship Across Borders* (2008), with Matt Bakker; *Transnational Urbanism: Locating Globalization* (2001), *City, State & Market* (1988), and *The City and Social Theory* (1980). He has also co-edited *The Human Face of Global Mobility* (2006), with Adrian Favell; *Transnationalism from Below* (1998), with Luis Guarnizo; and *The Bubbling Cauldron* (1995) and *The Capitalist City* (1987), with Joe Feagin.



Sweet & Bitter Contemporary 'Girl Photography' from Japan



Mikiko Hara

VISIONS OF contemporary art from Japan in the US have been dominated by the influence of Takashi Murakami and Yoshitomo Nara's 'neo-pop' art, an anime and manga inspired world of childish characters and cartoonish sexuality. Their 'superflat' vision reflects well the obsessions and anxieties of a now ageing post-war, predominantly male, 'otaku' generation, but it often misrepresents the rather different mainstream urban girls' culture of contemporary Japan. Murakami is certainly giving the West what it wants. His brand of neo-japonisme in fact sometimes seems the only way that Japanese contemporary art can get noticed internationally. Nearly all the contemporary women photographers who have made some kind of splash on the global scene have used a parallel kind of logic to push up their value and reputation: think of Mariko Mori's cosplay girls, Miwa Yanagi's elevator girls, or Tomoko Sawada's school girls...

This is curious, because viewed from Japan, the circulation of these frankly orientalist conceptions often looks bizarre. And the western artworld largely overlooked another phenomenon in Japan that equalled the rise of the neo-pop movement, but did not spend much time translating itself for foreigners. The 'girl photography' boom of the late 1990s in Tokyo, discussed here by Hiromi Nakamura, put cameras in girls' hands,

and captured a rather different, and certainly more realistic, vision of this society. Our two featured artists today – who both emerged from this wave but have now transcended it – represent this vision in different ways. Theirs is an art of, by and for young women, that mixes high art aspirations with the sensibility of glossy fashion magazines and instant mobile phone snapshots.

Mika Ninagawa (born 1972) – who, by any measure, is a superstar in her native country – captures better than anyone the pure celebration of this urban Japanese girls' culture, for which she is a heroine herself. Clothes, sweets, cocktails, holidays, travel, friends – and never, ever, a boy in sight. Ninagawa, a fashion photographer by training, hangs out with her famous models, and documents her life as a photographer in photo diaries that themselves appear as features in the magazines and 'mooks' that line the bookstores of Tokyo. 'Woman' (2007), her stunning collection of iconic female portraits, that transformed the basement of Omotesando Hills into a rose strewn boudoir, capped a triumphant year on the rise in the artworld, most notably when one of her signature color rooms was adopted for Yuko Hasegawa's 'Space for Your Future' (2007), a major survey of contemporary installation/design work at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art.

Mikiko Hara (born 1967) represents the other side of life and art in Tokyo. Hers is a subtle documentary photography, born of the city's suburbs of endless sprawl, way out at the end of interminable commuter lines. A mother-of-three, who lives out in this real urban Japan, she has steadily built a career through much travelogue and diary style work. Her photography captures beautifully the everyday look and feel of the vast conurbation and what it is like to live there, holding up a very different kind of mirror to gendered life in Japan. There is a life beyond the endless youth of Shibuya party girls, overshadowed by the doubts and constraints of an unappealing adult future. It is work now gaining attention in major international photography circles, with shows in Europe and New York, a recent feature in *Aperture* magazine, and the acquisition of works by the Getty Center and other collectors in the US.

We are delighted to be able to showcase today the work of these two remarkable emerging artists.

Adrian Favell, UCLA

EXCLUSIVE UCLA EXHIBITION, 14 March 2008, 4-9pm

Mikiko Hara & Mika Ninagawa

Curated by Hiromi Nakamura and Adrian Favell

Anderson School of Management, Entrepreneurs Hall, Atrium C

Sponsored by the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles



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Hiromi Nakamura

Curator

Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography

Sweet & Bitter

**The Intimate Mirror of Contemporary
Japanese 'Girl Photography'**

Chapter 1: First, a 'Mirror'

There are many sayings in Japanese involving mirrors. For example: 'The eyes are the mirror of the heart'; 'Children (parents) are the mirror of their parents (children)'; 'The past is the mirror of the present'. But what might be the meaning of the saying: 'The sword is spirit of the samurai; the mirror is the spirit of the woman'? This, in a sense, gives me my theme today. Here 'sword' and 'mirror' are used as metaphors expressing the place in which the masculine or feminine spirit resides.

The title of the first section of my talk is taken from the essay 'Of Man and the Mirror', by Japanese writer Yukio Mishima, based on his writing on the book *Hagakure*, or *The Way of the Samurai*, which he always kept at his side. I do not wholly accept Mishima's assertion that: 'To a woman, a mirror is a makeup implement; to a man, it is the basis for self examination.' But I would like to note that he continued as follows: 'If the ethical sets great store on externals, then the exemplar of the external is the enemy—and also the mirror. What scrutinizes and criticizes the self are the enemy and the mirror.'¹

The words of the 19th century French poet Henri de Regnier more concretely touch on the essence of what is meant: 'When looking at their own reflections in a mirror, women do not do it in order to see their own appearance. They look in order to see how they are being

seen by others'. Therein lies the power and dread of the mirror. The artist, who knows this, will not be lost in it, or the labyrinth of reflections it threatens. With a mirror to provide accurate reflections both of the self and the essential nature of things, one can always set off on a journey to any place and at any time. Even today, the artist peers intently into the mirror, so as not to miss a decisive moment to come and not to muffle or dim the spirit that drives her.

Chapter 2: The Magic Mirror

Leonardo da Vinci stated that: 'Painting is the mirror reflecting society'. William Shakespeare noted that: 'Actors are the mirror of nature'. Of course, both are right, but I wonder if, when thinking about the arts, photography is not a more appropriate way of talking about mirrors? Discussions of photography, after all, almost always bring up the word 'mirror'.

The first practical photographic process, the daguerreotype, invented by Louis Daguerre, used a metal plate with a gleaming, mirror-like surface. This is one reason why the image of the mirror has acquired a fixed association with photography. One also thinks of portrait photographs, which faithfully mirror the subject's internal, psychological aspects—character, personality, even emotions—perhaps according to the subject's intentions, perhaps from an utterly different place.

The portrait photograph, however, presents more than a portrait of an individual; it also reflects the attitudes and consciousness of the age in which the subject lived. Photography has that depictive power. Like two mirrors arranged to allow a person to see his own back, it can show both the personal and the public, the 'I' and 'We'. From its invention mid 19th century, photography seems to have existed as a set of identical twins: one an art, opening up new means of expression, the other a science, with advanced technology. It is as though photography is, innately, both 'I' on the one hand and 'We' on the other. As Claude Bernard, French Physiologist, said in the late 1800s: 'In the Arts, 'I,' in the Sciences, 'We'.

In 1978, the exhibition 'Mirrors and Windows: American Photography' since 1960 opened at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. This exhibition described two ways of looking at photographs: (1) as reflecting the photographer's interior state (the mirrors) and (2) as opening up worlds (the windows). The exhibition examined the social qualities of photography systematically and in detail, applying a close scrutiny to photographs and their effects. The dual view of photography that this exhibition embodied has informed the main current of contemporary American photography. Photography was, in other words, seen as the 'mirror' reflecting society.

Theorists have questioned the representational theories of art that these conceptions were built on. But, although photography has changed with the times, from light-tight boxes to light receptors, as a mirror it does remain a tool for facing and addressing the self and the private life. The question, 'Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?', is still asked today. For the

mirror of photography 'copies truth'—the literal meaning of the kanji characters for 'photography' in Japanese—not when it is needed, but rather when it is not.

Chapter 3: Hello Kitty in Wonder 'Mirror' Land

In Japan today, the mirror takes the shape of a small pink toy machine, decorated in the unmistakable fourteen drawn lines of contemporary Japan's most famous pop culture export and superstar, Hello Kitty. This now global figure, was, according to her official profile, born in 1974 in the London suburbs, along with her twin sister Mimi. Kitty-chan, as we should call her, loves her mother's apple pie, and her best subjects are English, music, and art. Competing with her rival Snoopy, who was all the rage in Japan, she was able to snatch the seat of popularity in the blink of an eye. At first, this anthromorphization of a white cat captivated mostly children around the globe. But when the young girls became adults, some began decorating themselves with Kitty-chan accessories. These 'Kitty-lers,' as they are called in Japanese, are big fans who push the development of Kitty fashion. Now, these girls have become mothers, and some families consist of three generations of Kitty-ler fans! According to Kitty-chan's webpage, she exclaims: 'I love things that are tiny and cute!' Even if one were to change the 'Hello Kitty' used in this example, the expression 'cute,' or 'kawaii' in Japanese, lying at the base of this infatuation, is still a sentiment infecting Japan.

Since the year 2000, 'cute' has developed grammatically into a suffix: kimokawaii (kimochiwarui + kawaii) = yucky + cute; erokawaii (erotikku + kawaii) = erotic + cute); kowakawaii (kowaii + kawaii) = scary + cute; otonakawaii (otonappoi + kawaii) = adultish + cute; choukawaii (totemo + kawaii) = very + cute; motekawaii (moteru + kawaii) = to have boy/girlfriends + cute. New words that one cannot imagine are now being invented by someone somewhere. Caught up in the 'cute' whirlwind, we are being brainwashed due to the predominance of 'cute' over everything else. Like it or not, our lives are being flooded with the 'cute things' loved by Kitty-chan.

In 2001, Time Magazine put out a special issue on 'How the World Sees Japan'. A satirical cartoon depicted a samurai holding a cell phone, a geisha carrying a Hermès 'KELLY' bag, and a child lost in his videogame, with a boy playing with the robot-dog 'AIBO' in the background. These kind of stereotypical images, always including high tech elements, are typical in the West's visualization of Japan. However, an important revision to this picture has occurred over the past 7 years. Now, the character printed on the cell phone will be Kitty-chan; and, of course, the cell phone is camera equipped and ready to take snaps.

Chapter 4: Production of the 'Girl Photography' Boom

Which brings me to the production of what is known in Japanese as 'girlie photos,' or what I will call today 'girl photographers'. One of the most widely discussed trends in art in contemporary Japan has been the emergence of a generation of young female photographers during the

1990s. All were born about 1970, and the boom in the 'girl' photography it signaled, heralded a new chapter in the distinctive history of Japanese photographic art. 'Girl photography' is characterized by a rather skeptical viewpoint, accompanied by fresh and surprising narratives. The typical scenario of these girls is atypical. They didn't always go through the hoops of photography school. Rather, they worked as assistants for famous male photographers or as models before becoming professional photographers themselves. But what was so fresh about them? The most important factors behind this boom include the role of new public competitions, and the emergence of various new photography magazines.

Since 1991, Canon Inc. has, for example, promoted the project 'New Cosmos of Photography', as part of its cultural support for today's photography. Activities under its auspices include an open contest to discover, nurture, and support new photographers, whose challenge is to pursue possibilities in photographic expression. The questions addressed include: 'What can we do through photography? And what is possible only through photography?'

The ideas Canon proposes have become a clear sketch of the gateway to success—one reproduced by Japanese camera makers and film makers as well as photography magazines. They declared that the 'New Cosmos of Photography' marked a 'new era in the history of photography', a perspective that places importance on originality and uniqueness over technique and career track records. And this was the gateway for the new generation. As a result, a large number of female photographers appeared through this route, including Hiromix, Mika Ninagawa, Yuki Onodera, Junko Takahashi, Ayako Mogi, Jun Kanno, Rika Noguchi, Tomoko Sawada, Akiko Ozawa, and Kaori Yamamoto. Hiromix and Mika Ninagawa, in particular, became synonymous with a new phrase that captured this phenomenon in the press: 'girl photography'.

Japan's most famous international photographer, Nobuyoshi Araki, was an important force behind the



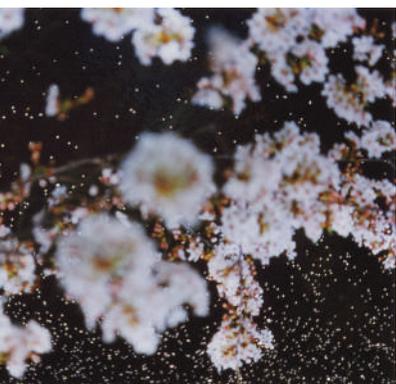
Mikiko Hara, *Untitled (Is As It) 1996*



Mikiko Hara, *Untitled (Is As It)* 1996



Mikiko Hara, *Untitled (Creating a Vacancy)* 2001



**Mika Ninagawa (clockwise from top left):
Acid Bloom 03-43-B2-4 2003
Mika 04-05-B2-1 (Anna Tsuchiya) 2004
Acid Bloom 03-11-B2-2 2003
Acid Bloom 03-13-B2-2 2003
Mika 04-106-B2-2 2004**

'excavation' of these women. Araki worked as a critic/judge on the Canon awards and supported these new photographers from early on, giving very precise evaluations of their work. His comments at the time about the two winners are very revealing.

Hironix: 'Life for 17-year-old high school girls is full of dangers. Each day is 'radical'. Each day passes. The world is nothing, stupid. Love is somehow painful. 'ROCK IS MY LIFE'. As you gradually become an adult, you're scared of yourself. You continue to live as you gnaw on yourself'.(2)

Araki: 'There's no self-control. She doesn't really think too much. She puts her feelings of the moment into action. She wants to make herself. She wants to do anything; she feels flexible. Boys think too much, so they're no good. The teens are great'.(3)

Akiko Ozawa: 'Everyday is full of things to do and meaningful in its own way. When I look around there are a lot of other possibilities for life that I don't chose. Just like the old saying 'The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence'. Happy, yet with just a tinge of sadness. One day for women 30 years of age'.(4)

Araki: 'In the last few years the idea of 'winners and losers' has become very popular. The 30-year-old women that appear in these photos capture the vibrant essence of the feminine strength of today's women and show that they are undoubtedly among life's winners. They're comfortable being alone and have the freedom to cultivate themselves. Like doing Yoga before bedtime—wonderful! Those photos show women living their lives to the fullest. A man could never take such pictures—they're terrific. (5) He adds: 'Photography itself has to have masculinity, but women appear to have more masculinity than men these days'.(6)

In the background, behind the boom of 'girl photography', there certainly lies the rise of 'kogyaru power', centering around high school girls, and more broadly the range of fashion and pop culture lifestyles identified with Tokyo's youth culture epicenters in Shibuya, Harajuku, Shimo-Kitazawa, Ikebukuro, and Shinjuku. From the latter half of the 1980s until the early 90s, as Japan's bubble economy was boiling, girls re-made their school uniforms into mini-skirts and began wearing baggy 'loose' socks, creating their own original fashions. They were involved not only in fashion as such, but also began accessorizing their bodies with, and competing through, fashionable high-tech tools such as pagers, cell phones, and print-club ('purikura') mini-photos. Particularly interesting is that girls were especially attached to photos. These girls were recorded by cameras and videos from the moment they were born. They grew up being used to standing in front of the camera. Most of this was in color. However, the girls also pushed this technology forward through retrogression. In contrast to the vivid colors produced by the various devices of the 'purikura', these girls also saw black and white photography as fresh. The emergence of the big boom in black and white versions of the color disposable camera was due to the power of these girls. Others used the garish colors of the 'purikura' as the template for wild and imaginative street fashions,

also captured on film. The 'kogyaru' came to carry cameras with them every day. Moreover, these cameras all had to be 'cute', as visible, desirable accessories, as well as machines. Cameras, which, until that time, had been used only on special days or to record a particular occasion, came to be used for recording casual everyday affairs. In other words, they moved from the hands of men to the hands of women.

Another example of a new venue for this emerging generation was Recruit, a company which began supporting artistic creators from around 1992 onwards. It opened the '3.3 meters squared Exhibition,' a small exhibition space for individuals' work in Tokyo's Ginza. It was one of the two very successful public competitions, in which famous young photographers were featured in significant numbers along with their photographs of the new age. Mika Ninagawa, Rika Noguchi, and Mikiko Hara all submitted works to the competition associated with the exhibition and received awards there. In addition, in 1999, a 'girl photographers' exhibition entitled 'Private Room II: Photographs by a New Generation of Women in Japan' was held at the Art Tower Mito Contemporary Art Gallery, consisting of ten female photographers, most of whom had received awards at the other two competitions.

It was not only the art and photography world that played an important roles in this boom. All of Japan's many subculture magazines produced special issues on 'girl photography', and new magazines appeared, weaving together special collections of photos clearly targeting the large new audience of young girl consumers. In addition to more long-standing publications aimed at pros and photography lovers, six new photography magazines have appeared since 2000, reflecting the amateur girl's hobby in a positive light. The magic of Kitty-chan is at work here. In addition, independent publishing houses are editing unique photography collections and producing best sellers. Rinko Kawauchi and Kayo Ume are representative examples of this trend, photographers, like Araki, who became more famous through printed books than through exhibiting on white gallery walls.



Mikiko Hara, *Untitled (Agnes Dei)* 1998

Chapter 5: We are Girls, Why Not?

In 2000, the Japanese 'girl photography' boom reached its peak. Women received the most important yearly award given in the Japanese photography world. Moreover, the award was given not to a single artist, but to the 'three sisters': the name given to Yurie Nagashima, Hiromix, and Mika Ninagawa, when lumping together the three biggest female stars. In the media, all magazines carried pictures of the 'three sisters' frolicking at the podium as they received the award. But why was a single prize given to the 'three sisters'? And why were they presented and curated this way? Whatever the reason behind the selection, it was an enormous seal of approval for the women. According to the media, it was because they just wanted the prize. But what is unmistakable is that the award was given to 'girl photographers'.

However, the leading players in this boom, seem to have followed the words of Oscar Wilde: 'Women demand to be loved, but not understood'. While this epithet is one of the reasons for their victory, it is also one of the reasons for their defeat. The boom came to an end. The media has moved on to other fads in contemporary art and design. But, first, why the victory? The girls triumphed because they didn't think of becoming 'good'—that is, 'professional'—like the skillful male photographers with many years of experience. And also because they were not afraid of failure. In other words, they made mistakes 'like girls'. They exposed to the public their own private lives that they had been enjoying, and it was a supreme delight to become the object of gossip among friends and acquaintances. The media loved all this, making them celebrities. However, this was simultaneously the reason for defeat. The media easily granted them what they desired, but, accordingly, they were consumed, used up, and quickly became yesterday's news. We Japanese women know the painful reality of the expiration date on 'girl'. And that may be one reason they lived fast. In any case, the era of 'girl photography' ended quickly. It is now over; or, rather, it is a style that has been absorbed by all photographers, regardless of age or sex.

One or two of the new women photographers have, however, have survived this media defeat, and are now emerging as individual artists, stronger than ever. Our two featured artists, Mika Ninagawa and Mikiko Hara, are a case in point. Finally, then, I would like to talk a little about Ninagawa and Hara's current projects. Already ten years have passed since the 'girl photographer' boom. As time passes, an interesting comparison appears between their 'then' and 'afterwards.' After these women participated in and won awards at the 1996 'New Cosmos of Photography' and '3.3 Meters Squared Exhibition', respectively, they got married, became mothers, and continued their creative activities now, but with their own styles. Ninagawa lives in the middle of Tokyo, enjoying and reflecting the pleasures of cosmopolitan city life. Hara lives in the suburbs and embodies the richness of living a slow life. I would like to introduce statements by both women, that give clues to their work and vision.

Ninagawa: 'It's like eating when hungry, going to

bed when tired, being with someone forever if you meet someone you like. In my opinion, taking self-portraits is along the same lines as fulfilling one's natural demands. When I take photographs alone in an airtight space, I feel as though I am taking a trip within myself. Having a camera is like having my own 4.5 tatami mat room [i.e., a retreat] everywhere. From a room covered with throw-off clothes, I am invited into an extraordinary world of limitless expanse.'⁽⁷⁾

Hara: 'Without getting frenzied, without getting loud, without getting frail, without flinching, without becoming pompous, without getting excited, without hesitating, without being affected, without losing hope, without getting depressed, without getting slack, without shaking, without being greedy, without throwing in the towel, without hardening up, without giving up... always.'⁽⁸⁾

As the curator of the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, I have presented the work of these two photographers at two exhibitions. In 2003, Ninagawa was shown as part of a show called 'On Happiness: Contemporary Japanese Photography', in which she created a bedroom-like refuge of super-saturated colors, full of flowers, fishes and personal items. In 2006, I presented Hara's work as part of the show 'Absolutely Private: On Photography from 2000 to the Present', that showed a series of photographs in which she objectively depicted the relationship between the self and the social. Importantly, they are no longer being curated as 'girl photographers', but rather as individual artists, with their own distinctive styles, themes and subjects. However, although their topics differ, a common background refrain born from the 'girl photographers' is shared by both.

Yes, their work is sweet: as befits a generation brought up on Kitty-chan and Shibuya-style girls' pop culture. But there is also a bitterness in their vision. That is their 'poison.' While casually pointing their lenses at everyday life, they were also pricked by the 'poison of youth', 'the poison of woman', and the 'poison of Japan'. This bitter taste, in contrast to the sentimental echoes of the term 'girl photographers', appeals to something else: to the depths of humanness and to a more mature sensibility. This is also perhaps the biggest reason why they have received so much support, and why they have endured while others like Hiromix have faded away. For sure, this dimension has been essential in the their recent expansion of creative activities from within Japan to abroad, something we hope their appearance on the West Coast today will help foster and extend.

TRANSLATED BY KRISTIN SURAK

Notes:

- 1 Mishima Yukio, Hagakure nyumon (On Hagakure), Shinchosha, 1983
- 2 Hiromix, for 1995 awarded work, 'Seven Teen Girl Days', New Cosmos of Photography, vol.3 July 1995, Canon Inc.
- 3, 6 Nobuyoshi Araki, selecting judge for Hiromix, above
- 4 Akiko Ozawa, for 2005 awarded work 'A Day: Women of 30 years', New Cosmos of Photography vol.20 2006, Canon Inc.
- 5 Nobuyoshi Araki, selecting judge for Akiko Ozawa, above
- 7 Mika Ninagawa, for 1996 awarded work 'Happiness Self Portrait', New Cosmos of Photography vol.5 July 1996, Canon Inc.
- 8 Mikiko Hara, for 1996 awarded work at 3.3 Meters Squared Exhibition, from Artist File of Guardian Garden, Recruit Co., Ltd.

Sweet & Bitter



**Hammer Lecture and Debate
with Hiromi Nakamura & invited speakers**
Hammer Museum, Lecture Hall, 1-3pm
Introduced and moderated by Adrian Favell
Sponsored by Center for Study of Women, UCLA



CHARLOTTE COTTON is department head and curator of photography at Los Angeles County Museum. Previously, she was curator of photography at the Victoria and Albert Museum and head of programming at The Photographers Gallery, in London. She was visiting professor at Yale University, and currently at the University College for the Creative Arts in the UK. She has also been visiting critic, including at SVA, Bard College, USC, and Cranbrook. Charlotte curated the exhibitions *Out of Japan* (2002) and *Guy Bourdin* (2003), and her books include *Imperfect Beauty* (2000) and *The Photograph as Contemporary Art* (2004).



LAURA MILLER is Professor of Anthropology at Loyola University Chicago. Recent publications include *Beauty Up: Exploring Contemporary Japanese Body Aesthetics* (2006), 'Those naughty teenage girls: Japanese Kogals, slang, and media assessments' (2004), and 'Graffiti photos: Expressive art in Japanese girls' culture' (2003). With Jan Bardsley, she edited *Bad Girls of Japan* (2005); the two are now finishing *Manners and Mischief: Gender and Power in Japanese Conduct Literature*. Her new book in progress is *Girl Power Japan: Gendered Domains of Cultural and Linguistic Vigor*.



SHARON KINSELLA does research on contemporary Japanese media processes and cultural production and the interaction of cultural formations with governance, youth policy and law. She has published on cute, otaku, mens' comic magazines, lolita complex, girls' in-street fashion, journalism and visual cultural representations. Sharon previously worked at Cambridge University, Yale, and MIT, and is currently based at Oxford University. She is completing a book called *girls as energy: fantasies of rejuvenation*, and has a chapter on girls' art from Japan in global circulation called 'Who's That Girl?' forthcoming in a compilation edited by Mary Steggle.



YOSHITAKA MOURI is Associate Professor of Sociology and Cultural studies at Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, Japan ('GEIDAI'). His research interests are postmodern culture, media, art, and urban culture. His publications include *Bunka= Seiji* and *Popyura Ongaku to Shihonshugi*, as well as the recent articles in English, 'Culture=Politics: The Emergence of New Cultural Forms of Protest in the Age of Freeter' and 'Subcultural Unconsciousness in Japan: the War and Japanese Contemporary Artists'. In 2007, he worked as a director of *Kitakyushu Art Biannual*.

The three days of events were curated by Adrian Favell, Department of Sociology, UCLA, organized in association with the Japanese Consulate, Los Angeles, and sponsored by UCLA Terasaki Center for Japanese Studies; UCLA International Institute; UCLA Department of Sociology; UCLA Center for the Study of Women; UCLA Dept of Asian American Studies; Hammer Museum at UCLA; UCLA Anderson School of Management; Japan America Business Association, Anderson School; Center for International Business Education Research, Anderson School; Japan Foundation, Los Angeles (funding for exhibition); Japanese Consulate, Los Angeles (funding for business conference and program); Modé Tea Café, Los Angeles; Marui Corporation, Tokyo.

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J-WAVE USA

Southern California as the Gateway to Japanese Contemporary Creative Industries in the West

A one day conference on the UCLA project
Public Policy Lounge 5391

ADVANCE REGISTRATION REQUIRED <afavell@soc.ucla.edu>

Program

8.30am Coffee and welcome

9.00am Adrian Favell, 'Introduction: Exporting and Importing Cool Japan',

9.20am Gabriella Lukacs, 'The Iron Chef: Japanese Food Television in the United States'
Discussant: Ted Bestor

10.10am Olga Sooudi, 'Creativity and mobility among Japanese migrant-artists in New York City '
Discussant: Sharon Kinsella

11.00am Coffee break

11.10am 'Japanese Street Fashion in Japan and the US'
Yuniya Kawamura
W. David Marx
Open discussion led by Patrick Macias

12.30pm Lunch

2.00pm Presentation and discussion of graduate student projects

2.00-3.00pm
Kristin Surak (UCLA), 'The Transnational Way of Tea: Tea Ceremony in Japan, China and California'
Yiling Hung (UCLA), 'Consumption and Urban Culture: "Conbini" Convenience Stores in Taipei, Tokyo and Los Angeles'
Discussants: Ted Bestor, Michael Peter Smith

3.00-4.00pm
Misako Nukaga (UCLA), 'Motherhood and Childhood in Transnational Lives: Gender and Ethnic Identities among Japanese Expatriate Families in Los Angeles'
Yoko Tsukuda (University of Tokyo), 'Defining the 'Immigrant': The Case of Contemporary Japanese Migrants in California'
Discussants: Laura Miller, Takashi Machimura

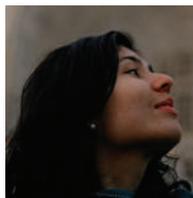
4.00-4.30pm 'Artworlds across the Pacific'
Adrian Favell
Yoshitaka Mouri
Closing Discussion



GABRIELLA LUKACS is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Pittsburgh. She is completing a book entitled *Scripted Affects, Branded Selves*, which analyzes the late 1980s development of a new genre of primetime serials in Japan (trendy drama), as a move away in the Japanese television industry from offering story-driven entertainment toward producing affect- and lifestyle-oriented programming. Her new projects explore Japan's changing place in global culture and the relationship between information technologies and new forms of labor in contemporary Japan.



TED BESTOR is Professor of Social Anthropology and Japanese studies and chair of the Department of Anthropology at Harvard University. He has written extensively on many aspects of life and culture in Tokyo. His most recent book, *Tsukiji: The Fish Market at the Center of the World* is an ethnography of the world's largest wholesale market for fresh and frozen seafood. Bestor's next book, tentatively titled *Global Sushi*, will examine the global fishing industry, the popular culture of sushi, and the environmental crisis of overfishing. He is past president of the Society for East Asian Anthropology.



OLGA SOOUDI is a Ph.D. candidate in Anthropology at Yale University. Her dissertation focuses on Japanese migrants to New York City and self-making, within the context of Japanese modernity and cultures of travel. She is particularly interested in migrant-artists, and the relationship between mobility and artistic production. From March 2008, she will be a guest scholar at the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research at the University of Amsterdam, Netherlands.



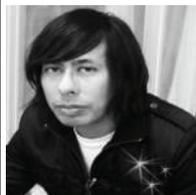
Yuniya Kawamura



W. David Marx

YUNIYA KAWAMURA is Assistant Professor of Sociology at the Fashion Institute of Technology/State University of NY. She is the author of *The Japanese Revolution in Paris Fashion* (2004) and *Fashion-ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies* (2005), translated in Italian as *La Moda* (2006), and in Swedish as *Modeologi* (2007). She is currently conducting a fieldwork study between Tokyo and New York making a comparative analysis of fashion subcultures between the two cities.

W. DAVID MARX is the Chief Editor of *MEKAS* (<http://mekas.jp>), a news and consulting service providing information on the Japanese fashion market. He is also the Founder of web journal *Neojaponisme* (<http://neojaponisme.com>) and writes essays on Japanese consumer trends and media insights for *Diamond Agency's* blog *clast*, currently syndicated in Japanese on *Livedoor News*. He is a former editor of *Tokion* and *The Harvard Lampoon*.



Writer, editor, and Japanese pop culture expert **PATRICK MACIAS** is the co-owner of *jaPRESS*, a company that creates media content and offers consulting services for a variety of US and Japan clients in the US and Japan, including *Viz Media*, *Chronicle Books*, *Marui*, and *NHK-TV*. He divides his time between San Francisco and Tokyo, and is currently the Editor-in-Chief of *OTAKU USA* magazine. His most recent book is *Japanese Schoolgirl Inferno: Tokyo Teen Fashion Subculture Handbook*, co-written with *Izumi Evers*. His blog can be found at <http://www.patrickmacias.blogs.com>.

Japanese Street Fashion in Japan and the USA

A Discussion



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