

Shinji Ohmaki Interface of Being

大卷伸嗣

真空のゆらぎ

2023.11.1 [Wed.] [水] — 12.25 [Mon.] [月]

休館日 | 毎週火曜日 Closed | Tuesdays

国立新美術館 | 企画展示室2E(東京・六本木)

The National Art Center, Tokyo

Special Exhibition Gallery 2E

〒106-8558 東京都港区六本木7-22-2

7-22-2 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-8558

大卷伸嗣《Gravity and Grace》(部分)、2017年
Shinji Ohmaki, *Gravity and Grace* (detail), 2017

[開館時間]

10:00–18:00

*毎週金・土曜日は20:00まで

*入場は閉館の30分前まで

[主催]

国立新美術館

独立行政法人日本芸術文化振興会
文化庁

[協力]

株式会社アートフロントギャラリー

マインドセットアートセンター

株式会社中川ケミカル

[観覧料]

無料

[お問い合わせ]

050-5541-8600(ハローダイヤル)

[美術館HP]

<https://www.nact.jp>

[Opening hours]

10:00–18:00

*10:00–20:00 on Fridays and Saturdays

*Last admission 30 minutes before closing

[Organized by]

The National Art Center, Tokyo

Japan Arts Council

Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan

[With the cooperation of]

Art Front Gallery

Mind Set Art Center

Nakagawa Chemical Inc.

[Admission]

Free

[Inquiries]

(+81) 47-316-2772 (Hello Dial)

[Website]

<https://www.nact.jp/english>

新国立新美術館
THE NATIONAL ART CENTER, TOKYO

日本博 JAPAN
CULTURAL
EXPO 2.0

令和5年度日本博2.0事業(委託型)

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Overview

Shinji Ohmaki is known for creating large-scale installations that inquire into the nature of being and disrupt the somatic senses of viewers. He has presented these ambitious works to high acclaim not only in Japan but also in many other countries across Asia and Europe. In addition, he applies his unparalleled gifts in diverse settings ranging from the performing arts to projects that revitalize local communities, working with a host of collaborators to transform each site.

Engulfed in one of Ohmaki's spaces, we find ourselves examining our own presence in the world from fresh perspectives. By leaving vestiges of ourselves in these spaces, we arrive at tangible realizations of our own physicality. Whether enveloped in darkness or illuminated by intense light, we are urged to introspectively confront not only our bodies but also our minds and senses.

Ohmaki contemplates the historical arc that has led contemporary society to its current state and the issues it now faces, drawing on these reflections as a source of inspiration for his installations. Ohmaki's spaces, in which light and darkness play key roles, are infused with a sense of primeval life governed by celestial rhythms. This air of the primordial intermingles with the dazzling yet delicate decorative imagery that also features prominently in the artist's practice. His imagery reflects the way in which human beings throughout history have surrounded themselves with abstract patterns derived from nature and, by doing so, have engaged closely with the natural world. Even as they offer astute critiques of contemporary society, Ohmaki's installations vividly reflect humanity's fundamental, timeless and universal artistic inclinations.

This exhibition is staged dynamically in the largest gallery at the National Art Center, Tokyo, with a ceiling height of eight meters and floor space of 2,000 square meters. The installations, which can only be presented in such an expansive venue, resonate with us on a profoundly physical level, evoking a sense of organic integration that we have lost in our fragmented world. The elements of video, sound, and poetry will be further augmented by performances in the venue. We invite you to immerse yourself in Ohmaki's composite art for the contemporary era.

In closing, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to Shinji Ohmaki for his unstinting efforts toward the realization of this exhibition, and our heartfelt thanks to all the individuals and organizations who have generously cooperated in so many ways.

Shinji Ohmaki

Born in Gifu Prefecture in 1971 and currently lives in Kanagawa Prefecture. Ohmaki's artistic activity explores the theme and question of "Existence." The external world involving the environment and others, the internal world of memory and consciousness; this is an exploration of the body, which lies in between the boundaries of these worlds, aiming to create a bodily experience that captures the ambiguity of how these worlds interact with each other and move according to space and time.

His major solo exhibitions include *Depth of Light* (A4 Art Museum, Chengdu), *Before and After the Horizon* (Hiroaki Museum of Contemporary Art, 2023), *Rustle of Existence* (Kuan-du Museum of Fine Arts, Taipei, 2020), and *Proof of Existence* (Hakone Open-Air Museum, Kanagawa, 2012). He has also taken part in the Aichi Triennale and countless other international exhibitions both in Japan and abroad. In recent years, he further explores performance art, such as *Rain* (Aichi Prefectural Arts Theater, Nagoya / New National Theater, Tokyo / Happiness Hill Kota, Sakura / J: COM Kitakyushu Performing Arts Center, Kitakyushu, 2023).



Shinji Ohmaki portrait
Pic by paul barbera / where they create

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Exhibition Highlights

1. Installations Reflecting Ohmaki's Deepening Psychological Exploration

In addition to the latest version of the series *Gravity and Grace*, initiated in 2016, this exhibition is scheduled to present new works rooted in fundamental questions surrounding our reasons for living.

The Great East Japan Earthquake, tsunami and Fukushima nuclear power plant disaster of March 11, 2011 had a profound impact on Ohmaki. In *Gravity and Grace*, Ohmaki interrogates our society's attempts to wield the double-edged sword of nuclear power. Meanwhile, in recent years he has conducted extensive interviews with researchers in various fields of linguistics, investigating inseparable links between consciousness and language while exploring the nature of being. A new video installation produced during the COVID-19 pandemic is scheduled to be unveiled as a manifestation of this ongoing project. The deepening of Ohmaki's reflections on civilization and nature, life and death, over the approximately ten years between the events of March 2011 and the onset of the pandemic are reflected in this exhibition.



Gravity and Grace



Gravity and Grace (detail)

Photo courtesy of A4 Art Museum

The *Gravity and Grace* Series

The exhibition commences with the latest iteration of the *Gravity and Grace* series, first presented in 2016. A large vessel carved with a pattern of various plants and animals emits intense light, casting shadows in the shapes of flora and fauna. Here, Ohmaki responds to unprecedented human-made disasters caused by nuclear power with light as powerful as 840,000 lumens, which can be called a symbolic representation of the explosive energy of nuclear fission. With this mesmerizing light, to which viewers are literally drawn like moths to a flame, and the spectacle of people being so captivated, Ohmaki critiques a society excessively reliant on electricity. *Gravity and Grace* is the title of a collection of aphorisms by the French philosopher Simone Weil. According to Weil, as beings bound by gravity, it is by accepting the void that we can receive God's grace. Ohmaki is also scheduled to produce photograms based on this ambitious installation comprised of light and shadow.

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2. Massive Installations, Delicate Drawings

The exhibition will be held in a gallery with a ceiling height of eight meters and a total floor space of 2,000 square meters, and Ohmaki has conceived three large installations that make maximal use of the spacious venue. Due in part to their overwhelming, transhuman scale, the spaces Ohmaki creates often induce sublime sensations and spark deep introspection in those who enter them. Also on view will be numerous drawings that Ohmaki has produced in the process of creating these overwhelming spaces. The drawings capture the intangible atmosphere of sites, enabling the artist to verify the expanse and motion of space and intersections of light and shadow. The contrast between dynamic installations and delicate drawings is among the exhibition's highlights.



Rustle of Existence
Photo courtesy of A4 Art Museum

3. Interdisciplinary Collaborations

Taking a profound interest in the body inhabiting spaces and its physical relationships with others, Ohmaki has recently expanded his practice into the realm of theater, including producing the stage design for *Rain* (2023, Aichi Prefectural Art Theater, the New National Theatre, Tokyo, and elsewhere). With contrasts of light and darkness that beckon visitors into stage-like spaces, Ohmaki's installations powerfully evoke theatricality at a fundamental level. Stepping into these spaces, we become not just spectators but also actors who belong to the worlds Ohmaki constructs. Performances are also scheduled to be staged while the exhibition is on view.

In light of Ohmaki's recent inspiration from language, a collaboration with poet Ryoko Sekiguchi is also planned. New levels of depth will surely be reached when Sekiguchi's words run parallel to Ohmaki's world of imagery.

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General Information

Shinji Ohmaki: Interface of Being

Date: November 1 (Wed.)–December 25 (Mon.), 2023

Closed: Tuesdays

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Opening hours:

10:00–18:00 / *10:00–20:00 on Fridays and Saturdays

*Last admission 30 minutes before closing

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Venue:

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THE NATIONAL ART CENTER, TOKYO



令和5年度日本博2.0事業(委託型)

Admission: Free

Inquiries: (+81) 47-316-2772 (Hello Dial)

Website: <https://www.nact.jp/english>

Access

- Tokyo Metro Chiyoda Line, Nogizaka Station(C05),
direct access from Exit 6

- Tokyo Metro Hibiya Line, Roppongi Station(H04),
approximately 5-minute walk from Exit 4a

- Toei Oedo Subway Line, Roppongi Station(E23),
approximately 4-minute walk from Exit 7

(No parking)

Press Inquiries

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