

PRESS RELEASE

**"Beautiful New World: Contemporary Visual Culture from Japan"
2007.9.25 - 10.21**

Long March Space, Beijing

People have always sought a new and better society and world. It was hoped that the 21st century would usher in a new age of peace, but so far it has turned out very differently, and anxiety is spreading throughout the nations of the world. The rapid economic growth of Japan following World War II brought progress in urban development and internationalization, symbolized by the Tokyo Olympics of 1964. By the time of the Osaka Expo in 1970, however, it was common to hear theories of impending decline. Since the 1990s, there have been new causes for anxiety, including the collapse of the bubble economy and the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. The growth of armed conflict throughout the world has caused this anxiety to take a greater hold on people's minds. In 1930, Aldous Huxley wrote *Brave New World*, the story of a highly developed machine civilization that produces an anti-utopian society. Japanese manga often contain scenarios of world destruction due to conquest by monsters or aliens or natural calamities. The words "New World" are often used as a vulgar name for recreational facilities or amusement parks. They invite people to a virtual or dream world, a place to escape from the real world. The unending repetition of triumph and disaster in human history has continually raised the question, "How can the world be made beautiful, wonderful, and new?"

"Beautiful New World: Contemporary Visual Culture from Japan," is an exhibition being held to commemorate 35 years of normalized relations between Japan and China. It presents the work of 34 creative people working in a variety of fields, media art, architecture, fashion, manga and anime as well as contemporary art. It is one of the first exhibitions to be presented in China that gives a comprehensive overview of contemporary Japanese culture since the 1990s. The overall theme is divided into three parts, (1) Beautiful Real World, (2) New Media World, (3) End of the World and Future World. Based on the phrases "beautiful world" and "new world," this exhibition presents multiple

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levels of expression and explores contemporary society from many different angles. At a time when the nations of the world face many complex social and political issues, an inquiry into the possibilities of a new and more beautiful world could lead to a global discourse transcending national or cultural boundaries. We will be pleased if this exhibition provides an opportunity for thinking about a better future to be shared by humankind.

Exhibition Website www.beautifulnewworld.info

Section 1: Beautiful Real World@Long March Project

Section 2: New Media World@Inter Arts Center

Section 3: End of the World and Future World@B.T.A.P.

Section 1: Beautiful Real World@ Long March Project

The works in this section represent expressions that derive and/or deviate from reconsidering the value standards for "beauty" and re-evaluating the idea of what is "reality." They are works that define "beauty" based on the projected female images in commercial advertisements and fashion industry, and works that reflect on the evolution of its value standards; works that examine the relationship between appearance versus substance; Japanese manga and animations that illustrate gender-specific features in the boy's world / girl's world; and works that focus on "kawaii" culture, as well as the personal world-view of *hitori-asobi* (solitary play) that deviates from this culture. Also on exhibit will be works by artists who, from the 1990s onwards, have discovered new values and realities in their everyday surroundings and events. They have created honest and real images of their experiences that attract empathetic viewers.

Aida Makoto

exonemo

Kaneuji Teppei

Konoike Tomoko

Kusama Yayoi

Murayama Ruriko

Nishiyama Minako

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Odani Motohiko
Okazaki Kyoko
Paramodel
Sawa Hiraki
Shimabuku
Takamine Tadasu
Tanaka Koki
Ujino Muneteru
Watanabe Go
Xijing Men (Ozawa Tsuyoshi, Chen Shaoxiong, gimhongsok)
Yanagi Miwa

Section 2: New Media World@ Inter Arts Center

The art of new media has changed the ways in which we view the world. The works that tune into the new possibilities of communication and physical sensibilities are becoming ever important in considering contemporary society; such works take interest in what effect technological development in images and sound has on human sensations. The idea that perceives human relationships, or relationships between human and the environment as fluid, rather than predetermined, could be the driving force behind such developments. The works to be on exhibit in this section encompass a broad range of works, including not only those works that incorporate new technology, but also those that relate to the urban environment, fashion, and objects.

Atelier Bow-wow
doubleNegatives Architecture
Fuji Hiroshi
Ikeda Ryoji
Oshii Mamoru
Tsumura Kosuke
Yokoyama Yuichi
National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (Miraikan)

Section 3: End of the World and Future World @B.T.A.P.

This section touches on the deep-seated apocalyptic world-view in Japanese

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society and culture, together with the visions for the future that are projected as result. The apocalyptic world-view is shaped by the disintegration of society and the collapse of urban cities, caused by natural disaster, war, and genocide as such, as well as death and the fear of facing death, while the visions for the future are projected in forms of cities in rejuvenation and futuristic cities. Some of the works in this section signify eternity and sustainability in relation to these themes.

Fujihata Masaki

Hatakeyama Naoya

Miyajima Tatsuo

Miyamoto Ryuji

Ohmaki Shinji

Urasawa Naoki

Yanobe Kenji

Yoneda Tomoko

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