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Yurie Nagashima & Miyo Stevens-Gandara Forever is Composed of Nows

November 21 – December 22, 2017 12-7pm

Closed on SUN, MON and National Holidays

Opening Reception: Tuesday, November 21, 6-8pm



Miyo

Stevens-Gandara *Night walking, Indiana* 2011, archival pigment print

©Miyo Stevens-Gandara / MAHO KUBOTA GALLERY

From November 21, Maho Kubota Gallery presents the joint exhibition “Forever is Composed of Nows,” by Yurie Nagashima and Miyo Stevens-Gandara.

“And a Pinch of Irony with a Hint of Love,” the Yurie Nagashima solo exhibition currently showing at the Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, offers a wide-reaching overview of the photographer’s work, ranging from her early photographs that sealed her artistic reputation to her latest pieces that hint at future directions, and providing viewers with the chance to see the work of the prolific artist through new eyes. Nagashima’s artistic career was jumpstarted in 1993 when she won a prestigious award at the age of 20 in a public competition aimed at discovering young talent, and the following year had a joint exhibition with US fine-art photographer Catherine Opie at the Parco

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Gallery. After graduating from Musashino Art University, she travelled to the US to take an MA course at CalArts. In 1998, during her second year of the program, she met Miyo Stevens-Gandara at a critique session. The two were immediately drawn to one another, and the two artists have maintained a close friendship ever since.

The idea of putting on a joint exhibition came to the pair suddenly, during one of their conversations. After spending time during their twenties together in California, when they were both heavily influenced by the riot grrrl movement, the two artists were separated when Nagashima moved back to Japan. Since then, they have continued exploring the possibilities of artistic expression on opposite sides of the Pacific. Nagashima's preoccupation with the relationship between self and other, as well as the issues associated with being a female artist, have come together in her artistic focus on the course of women's lives. Stevens-Gandara, while teaching at Rio Hondo College in Los Angeles, creates work around the themes of feminism, identity, and environmental destruction.

This exhibition brings together works that give insight into the pair's creative origins with works representing current threads or pointing to future directions in the careers of the two artists.

Representing Nagashima's early work are five skateboard works made in 1997 while the artist was living in America. These mixed-media pieces were realized by coating actual skateboards with photographic emulsion and directly printing photographs onto their surfaces. Alongside these, we present for the first time several of Nagashima's botanical photographs, captured over the last few years in various locations around the United States.

As well as displaying for the first time in Japan several pieces from Stevens-Gandara's *Wunderkammer* series, we present a distinctive work from her *The Wilderness of Childhood* series, which depicts scenes from the Indiana and Kentucky countryside that are deeply interwoven with her childhood memories. In addition to her photographs, we are also displaying several embroidery works, entitled *In Mourning*.

If all of the works making up this exhibition are the culmination of these two artists' daily insights and thoughts, they also present a picture of the great changes the world has undergone over the past twenty-something years and some of the many problems it has faced. One thing that the pair's recent work seems to have in common is a particular attitude to artistic creation—that of taking a step back from the gushing torrent of worldly affairs and retreating to a place of mental solitude, so as to take one's time and create at one's own pace, without being carried along by others. Appropriate, then, that the title of this exhibition is drawn from "Forever—is Composed of Nows," the work of 19th century American poet Emily Dickinson.

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Yurie Nagashima *Backstreet Billiards* 1997, photographic emulsions on skateboard
©Yurie Nagashima / MAHO KUBOTA GALLERY



Miyo Stevens-Gandara *Wunderkammer Series- Cactus skeleton* 2016, archival pigment print
©Miyo Stevens-Gandara / MAHO KUBOTA GALLERY

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Yurie Nagashima

Yurie Nagashima was born in Tokyo in 1973, and currently lives and works in Tokyo. After her sensational artist debut by her family nude portraits which was awarded PARCO Prize in 1993, she received her MFA from California Institute of the Arts in 1999. In 2015, Nagashima received Master's degree in Sociology at Musashi University, continues to develop her artistic language in relation with feminism and the society.

Her recent exhibitions includes "And a Pinch of Irony with a Hint of Love" (2017, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum), "To sew, to wear, to talk" (2016, KIITO design and creative center Kobe, Japan) "You reach out – right now – for something: Questioning the concept of Fashion" (2014, The Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower, Mito,/ Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, Kagawa).

Miyo Stevens-Gandara

Miyo Stevens-Gandara is a Los Angeles based artist working in a variety of media which include photography, drawing, embroidery, and various printmaking mediums. Her imagery explores issues of identity, feminism, culture, and environmental degradation. She received her BFA from the California College of the Arts, and her MFA from the California Institute of the Arts. She has work in the collections of the Museum of Latin American Art (MoLAA) and the Riverside Art Museum, and has been exhibited in the U.S. and internationally.

Miyo has a strong commitment to her community as part of her practice and has been involved in nonprofit arts outreach programs as a teacher and artist throughout her career. She currently teaches photography at Rio Hondo College.

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