

NEW VIDEO: JAPAN

A video exhibition co-organized by
The American Federation of Arts
and The Museum of Modern Art.



Naoko Tosa. AN EXPRESSION. 1985. 9 minutes.

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Japan is a country of contrasts, where a landmark Buddhist temple, Mister Donut coffee shop, and home video store coexist on the same block, and where the art of wearing a kimono is almost forgotten by a young generation that prefers French designer and punk clothes. Video has become integral to contemporary Japanese life, and reflects the traditions set by theater, radio, film, and photography, as well as the internationalization of popular culture. Video has been called a "bonsai" reality: in the same way that a carefully pruned miniature

tree is a metaphor for nature, a video production is an electronically manipulated representation of reality, one that is consistent with today's hectic pace. In Japan, a country among the most advanced techno-

logically in the world, where nearly everyone is considered an artist and art is part of everyone's life, the capacity for video's growth is enormous. As reflected by the experimental and documentary videotapes in

this anthology exhibition, the future for Japanese video promises to be fruitful and rewarding.

— Barbara London
Guest Curator

PROGRAM I 99 minutes

Shuntaro Tanikawa and Shuji Terayama

VIDEO LETTER
1982-83, 75 minutes

This extended video exchange between two celebrated artists — filmmakers/poets Shuntaro Tanikawa and Shuji Terayama — marked their introduction to the medium. Following the initial exchanges, the artists transcend self-consciousness to offer poignant insights into their selves and their medium.

Mako Idemitsu

GREAT MOTHER PART II: YUMIKO
1983-84, 24 minutes, 30 seconds

This narrative video centers around a cool, professional mother and her young, naive daughter who gets into trouble with a man whom she then marries. Interacting face-to-face, the two women also appear as silent presences in each other's homes on prominently placed monitor screens.

PROGRAM II 95 minutes

Jun Okazaki and Emi Segawa

FASTER THAN THE WIND
1983, 20 minutes

This is an impressionistic documentary of a two-month dance-caravan tour of Indonesia and Bali by "Byakko-sha," the White Snake *buto* dance group from Kyoto. The purpose of the dancers' and the videomakers' journey was to come into closer contact with the Asian spirit of their Japanese heritage.

Shoichiro Azuma

KUNIYAMA-SHINJI
1985, 27 minutes

Documenting the preparations surrounding the New Year's celebration in an old village in northern Japan, this work reflects how difficult it is to preserve old traditions, especially when younger generations have moved far away.

Akira Matsumoto

A LAKESIDE EVENT — 1981.
THE HANDICAPPED PEOPLE'S YEAR
1981, 30 minutes

A group of severely handicapped young people are taken on an outing to a lakeside camp. The tape sensitively shows how the experience instills new feelings of self-reliance in these spirited individuals.

Noriyuki Okuda

OBSOLETE THEATER
1982, 18 minutes

The effects of modern urbanization are the subject of this documentary. An old neighborhood theater in Osaka devoted to melodramas, faced with dwindling audiences and higher rents, is about to close.

PROGRAM III 56 minutes

Masaki Fujihata

MAITREYA
1984, 3 minutes

This polished, whimsical work begins with a Buddhist text. Cartoon-like automaton figures appear and begin making suggestive gestures. Suddenly they begin multiplying and dividing at an astronomical rate.

Ko Nakajima

MT. FUJI
1985, 20 minutes

Drawing from a vast collection of photographs Kozan Saito took of Mt. Fuji, Ko Nakajima constructs a soothing electronic ode to this celebrated site.

Mao Kawaguchi and Ayumi Shino

5.29 AYUMI SHINO
1984, 3 minutes

Interior spaces are designed as graphic layouts, so that the viewer cannot distinguish between what is two- and three-dimensionally rendered. The ambiguity between artificiality and reality is heightened by an audio track that consists of electronic and natural sounds.

Daizaburo Harada and Haruhiko Shono

HARD SCRATCH
1984-85, 5 minutes

T.V. ARMY
1985, 3 minutes

HARD SCRATCH is a promotional video for the "G.I. Joe Robot Band," whose miniature members include Joe, Richard, and Mark. Mascots of Radical T.V., the three dolls' computer-animated movements are set to an electronic sound track.

In T.V. ARMY, the artists feel that media images of atomic bombs are so cliched today they look like simple firecrackers. To them, the only true depiction of war is in comic books: "We now feel only the beauty of the particles of light on tv screens. War is like bubblegum."

Teiji Furuhashi

CONVERSATION STYLES: DUMB TALK, BALANCE
1984, 6 minutes

In these short performance works, stylized actions are seen in simple urban settings.

Katsuya Taka

DENO
1985, 2 minutes

The artist has woven together differently textured, fragmented images: confetti-like television snow, clips extracted from news shows, Super-8 movies of a child with a butterfly, and giggling little girls. The accompanying sound track alternates between static and appropriated music.

Kumiko Kushiya

HOUSE IN OIKOSHI
1984, 5 minutes

In this impressionistic work, the artist captures the feeling of an interior space. Her intention is to make the artificial appear more beautiful than reality.

Naoko Tosa

AN EXPRESSION
1985, 9 minutes

A surreal mood is established by rhythmically alternating abstract and realistic images. Using computer-processing devices, the artist creates a lyrical composition.

PROGRAM IV 78 minutes

Hironori Terai

ORDINARY LIFE
1985, 11 minutes, 41 seconds

The tape moves through several different personal settings — a studio-home, a park with pond — discovering the silent, solitary figures that inhabit these spaces.

Tetsuo Mizuno

...!?!ET?
1984, 8 minutes, 15 seconds

The artist whimsically plays with figure-ground relationships, first showing a landscape framed by black, then reversing the format and putting a black square inside the landscape. The artist inserts nonsensical, exclamatory pictograms, and on top sets a pencil, cup, and roll of tape. He playfully dusts all of the images with a photographer's airbrush.

Kunio Noda

SCALE
1983, 5 minutes, 30 seconds

The artist places a monitor — on which a single chord on an upright piano is played — in different environments. Through editing, the chord-playing monitor quickly moves across a row of stools, around a classroom, to a hallway floor, and lastly to the front of the upright piano where the artist stands playing.

Makoto Saitoh

A-R-K
1984, 5 minutes

A person is seen walking through several different urban areas. Despite location and time changes, the walker's gait remains constant.

Keigo Yamamoto

HUMAN BODY ENERGY NO. 3
1984, 4 minutes, 40 seconds

In this work, Keigo Yamamoto concentrates on *ki*, the spiritual energy or tension that exists between two people communicating with each other. He does this by reducing the two figures to reverberating outlines, which over time reveal aspects of their character through highlighted gestures.

Nobuhiro Kawanaka

SPINNING TIME
1983, 10 minutes

This formal study is based on a series of prewar post cards of urban Tokyo. The artist merges these images of the past with the same settings as they appear today in an evocative, lyrical way.

Osamu Nagata

MINAMI (SOUTHWIND)
1984, 9 minutes

The artist evokes a mood "as if carbon dioxide had melted away from a block of dry ice." Taped from a single vantage point (looking down a quiet neighborhood street), the action consists of an occasional car quickly passing by, cyclists and pedestrians appearing, disappearing, then reappearing. Through editing, time is rhythmically rearranged.

Morihiro Wada

THE RECOGNITION CONSTRUCTION XIII
1984, 26 minutes

This work consists of a repeated series of images which lose clarity with each recurrence. The cycle includes a woman walking down a sunny street away from the camera, a man traversing the same route but approaching the camera, and colorful objects: a green Volkswagen, a blue telephone, red flowers, industrial pipes, and a park bench.

Institutions interested in presenting *New Video: Japan* or other AFA film and video exhibitions should contact:
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