

# C a m e r a A u s t r i a

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## POSITIONS IN JAPANESE PHOTOGRAPHY

Mao ISHIKAWA, Keizo KITAJIMA, Kisei KOBAYASHI, Mika NINAGAWA, Sakiko NOMURA, Masafumi SANAI, Tomoko SAWADA, Risaku SUZUKI, Kyoichi TSUZUKI

October 4 – November 2, 2003  
Camera Austria – Kunsthau Graz

### Press information

What are the themes of today's young generation of Japanese artists? How do they deal with the artistic heritage of the previous generation which still felt the impact of the fall of the Empire and developed its positions against the background of a serious change in political culture – a generation which experienced the global mediatisation of images and was able to put forward artistic ideas in a newly gained "freedom"? What are the cultural premonitions guiding current art production in the face of a highly developed and hence again vulnerable capitalist system, in the light of the tensions and ruptures arising from simultaneously maintaining Japanese modernist traditions on the one hand and facing the current social problems and cultural decline, particularly in urban centres, on the other? Do Japanese artists take up themes specific to Japanese or Asian culture? If so, how are they influenced by Western conditions of production and response, considering their strong presence at exhibitions in Europe? And vice versa, given this recent "Japan boom" in Europe, what is their influence on art production in the West?

The exhibition project "Positions in Japanese Photography" was conceived as part of Camera Austria's special programme for *Graz 2003 – Cultural Capital of Europe: Keep in Touch*. The international network of relationships with individuals and institutions built up by Camera Austria on the basis of publications, exhibitions and symposia has been the formative element in this: co-operating with international artists, theoreticians and curators who have formerly participated in various projects, the aim is to reconsider the status of the image with all its artistic and social implications.

Japan and Japanese contemporary arts production is a focus here, because Camera Austria looks back on a long series of projects with Japanese photographers ever since the 1970s. Several times Graz was the first city to present central positions of contemporary Japanese photography outside of Japan (e.g. with exhibitions and publications by Daido Moriyama 1980; Shomei Tomatsu, 1984; Nobuyoshi Araki, 1992; Miyako Ishiuchi 1993). These projects were planned in close collaboration with the Graz-based photographer Seiichi Furuya, who is a co-founder of *Camera Austria* and has since the mid 1970s served as an artistic mediator between Japan and Austria.

Within the conceptual frame given by *Keep in Touch*, the goal of the current project is to include a new and younger generation of Japanese artists, curators and theorists into this existing network. The exhibition and symposium will be programmatically developed in conjunction with them, so as to explore the status of the image in contemporary Japanese art production in all its complexity and diversity, to keep going the communication process and thus to create a basis for further projects.

Christine Frisinghelli / Seiichi Furuya / Manfred Willmann (curators)

Thanks to Toshiharu ITO, Tokyo; Hisako MOTOO, Tokyo; Maren Lübbke, Berlin; Kanako NASU, Graz/Tokyo.

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### Exhibition

Opening: Friday, October 3, 2003, 6 p.m.

Duration: October 4 – November 2, 2003

Location: CAMERA AUSTRIA – KUNSTHAUS GRAZ

### Symposium

Friday, October 31 + Saturday, November 1, 2003

Location: Kunsthaus Graz Space04

### Participants

Masafumi FUKAGAWA, curator, Kawasaki City Museum

Toshiharu ITO, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music

Mao ISHIKAWA, photographer, Naha, Okinawa

Michiko KASAHARA, curator, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo

Kazue KOBATA, art producer, adjunct curator, P.S 1 Contemporary Art Center/MoMA, NY

Shino KURAIISHI, curator, Yokohama Museum of Art

Minoru SHIMIZU, art historian, Doshisha University, Kyoto

Kyoichi TSUZUKI, writer, photographer, editor

Toshiya UENO, sociologist, Department of Expressive Cultures, Wako University, Tokyo

### Publication

The project is documented in *Camera Austria* magazine, No. 84 / December 2003 (German/English).

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Download press materials under: [www.camera-austria.at/presse](http://www.camera-austria.at/presse)

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