

Transphère #5

トランスワイア #5

Art - photographie

パリ
日本文化
会館

Maison
de la culture
du Japon
à Paris

Tomoko Yoneda

米田知子

Dialogue avec Albert Camus

アルベール・カミュとの対話

Exposition
de photographies
28.03.—
02.06.18

101bis, quai Branly
75015 Paris
Métro Bir-Hakeim
RER Champ de Mars

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Entrée libre

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amangsalto KADIST

Tomoko Yoneda. Extrait d'une série de photographies. Musée de l'Homme, Paris. 2015. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Musée de l'Homme, Paris. 2015. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Musée de l'Homme, Paris. 2015. Courtesy of the artist.

Press release

Exhibition

28.03.— 02.06.18

Tomoko Yoneda is an internationally renowned Japanese photographer who lives and works in London. For almost thirty years, she has travelled the world, recording traces left by history. For this hitherto unpublished series that she is presenting at the MCJP, she has followed in the footsteps of Albert Camus, through Algeria and France, carrying on her reflection on the memory of places by way of her sensitive and poetic photographs. It is a subtle evocation of the youth of the author of 'The Stranger'.

For this fifth part of the Transphère series - an exhibition cycle dedicated to contemporary Japanese creation - Tomoko Yoneda immersed herself in the life and work of Albert Camus. She went to the places that marked the writer's childhood and youth: Algiers, Tipaza, the ancient Roman port he loved where a stele to his memory now stands, but also Paris, Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, the village in the Auvergne where he lived from 1942 and where he wrote 'The Plague'. Also, Chambry where his father, engaged as a Zouave, fought during the Battle of the Marne, and Saint-Brieuc where, in 1947, Camus, with great emotion, discovered his father's tomb. His father died there in 1914, as he recounts in his unfinished novel, 'The First Man'. About thirty photographs selected for this exhibition are a dialogue between the photographer and the writer, between the past and the present. It encourages us to think about colonisation, war, and the battles and humanism of Camus.

Tomoko Yoneda studied photography in the United States and then in London at the Royal College of Art, at the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union. She realised then that even the most powerful structures and ideologies are ephemeral, and that the society in which we live could be radically transformed in a flash. Deeply questioning the turbulent history of the 20th century, she travelled to Eastern Europe, Northern Ireland, Taiwan, Bangladesh, and more recently to Fukushima in Japan. The resulting photographs are formal compositions of seemingly ordinary places. The titles Yoneda gives to these works bring us back to past events, revealing the traces of forgotten tragedies within our everyday environment.

Curator : Aomi Okabe, Artistic director of the exhibition, MCJP



© Tomoko Yoneda, *Lovers*, *Botanical Garden of Hamma, Algiers*, 2017, courtesy of ShugoArts

Tomoko Yoneda

(...) For this exhibition, by traveling in the places, and the history, in which Camus lived and breathed, and which served as the sources of his creativity, through images from the author's beloved Algeria and France and conversations with the people there, my aim was to assemble an exhibition addressing the notion of a universal, radiant love. Responding in my work to events of bygone eras, and the dark shadows now engulfing Europe, Japan and the world once again, I hoped to encourage viewers to turn their thoughts to the nature of human "being."

The Neither Victims nor Executioners series of essays around which "Dialogue avec Albert Camus" revolves made a powerful impression on me, in Cold War America at the time. Camus' essays pointed to the nascent totalitarianism following the dropping of the atomic bombs in 1945 and the drawing of Cold War lines between east and west, and suggested a new beginning for our century, hitherto one of fear and dread dominated by the principle of the end justifying the means.

In them, Camus poses the fundamental question, "Do you, or do you not, directly or indirectly, want to be killed or assaulted?" If the answer is "no" one must refuse to be executioners, refuse to legitimize the taking of human lives.

Have the times in which Camus lived, and the wars of our predecessors, set us on a path toward greater peace? The truth that Camus spent his life seeking—dignified rebellion and justice as authentic individuals, pure in their loyalty—is an eternal challenge for humanity. Sensing the importance, in today's turbulent times, of pursuing—pivoting on Camus' works and how he lived his life—the fundamental meaning of "existence and love as a human being possessed of life" my hope is that the works in "Dialogue with Albert Camus" will encourage a dialogue across wide-ranging topics and people.



© Tomoko Yoneda, *Waiting for a ship, the port of Algiers*, 2017, courtesy of ShugoArts

Neither Victims nor Executioners

Aomi Okabe

Curator, Artistic Director of the exhibitions,
Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris

Tomoko Yoneda, who had been familiar with *The Stranger* and Albert Camus's other novels since she was in junior high school, encountered Camus in earnest when she picked up an English translation of the book *Neither Victims nor Executioners* while studying in the US at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Originally published immediately after the end of World War II in 1946 in *Combat*, an underground newspaper put out by the French Resistance in Paris during the war, this series of essays became a guiding principle for Yoneda's photographic practice.

Camus asked two questions: * "do you want to be killed...?" and "do you want to kill...?" If the answer to both was "no," then the only option was to seek peace.

(...)

Yoneda arrived in Europe in 1989 during a time of great upheaval that included the Gulf War and the collapse of the Berlin Wall. She was shocked by the suddenly changing reality, and as a result of placing herself at the center of this great paradigm shift she understood "that things we had believed in because they were right in front of us would not necessarily last forever, and indeed had the potential to collapse or become something else entirely."

(...)

I invited Yoneda to take part in *Transphère #5* at the Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris because I have long been captivated by the almost perfect composition and quality of her work, but also because I wanted to know how, as a photographer sensitive to the vicissitudes of history and the crises facing humanity, she would address the influx of refugees, the continuing terrorist attacks, and the other problems afflicting contemporary Europe.

At the heart of the bonds that tie France and the Islamic world lie the colonial history of French Algeria from 1830 to 1962 and the cruel Algerian War of Independence. As well, even if today's refugees make it to Europe, in order to live they must take on dual cultural identities. While exploring these and other issues from 2015, Yoneda recalled the life of Albert Camus, whom she had been interested in from a young age.

(...)

After shooting in Algeria using a camera from the 1950s that had belonged to her father, Yoneda arrived in Marseilles by boat, just as Camus had when he set off for Paris. She had hoped to be able to have a discussion with local students—Camus's true juniors—in Algeria, but because she was unable to get permission to shoot using the heavy equipment, and shooting with standard equipment also strictly controlled, did not go as she wished, this plan did not come to fruition. However, she hopes to be able to hold the exhibition in Algeria and engage in dialogue with the people there in the future.

Japan's position after the war is often compared to that of Germany, but for a time the difficult relationship between post-war Japan and its former colonies such as China and Korea was similar in some aspects to that between Algeria and France.

(...)

Since the terrible tragedy in Fukushima in which the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami of March 11, 2011, led to the area being exposed to radiation, Yoneda has continued to raise questions concerning the modern and contemporary history of Japan by photographing a chrysanthemum as a portrait of the Japanese and the tiny paper cranes folded by Sadako, the young girl who died as a result of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Until the Tohoku disaster, artists like Yoneda who produced outstanding works from a socially minded perspective were small in number in Japan, which was said to have taken peace for granted. Since the disaster, however, people's awareness changed and among the younger generation a new appreciation of the pioneering nature of Yoneda's work began to spread.

In any country, there is a past that people want to forget. Perhaps there are souls that will be redeemed as a result of the act of erasing or forgetting this past. However, is it not precisely having the courage to look hard at the truth that gives us the strength to build the future?

One of the things Camus loved dearly was the light at Tipaza, the ancient Roman ruins on the Algerian coast. The image of Camus uncovered by Tomoko Yoneda as a result of her relentless research and unwavering respect for humanity constitutes a message of love addressed to all of us, encouraging us as we struggle in the face of harsh realities and embracing us in the clear light of the Mediterranean.

Photographing the present as if it were the past

Marta Gili

Director, Jeu de Paume

(...)

Photographing what is now as if it were what was before, what was in the time of that other who is absent. Scrutinising a particular place that received him, some stones or a tree that he probably gazed at, a window with light falling through it, light that may well have fallen on him, bodies that may have accompanied him. Landscapes, houses, a desk. Dreams, words and desires: justice, peace, war, truth, nostalgia, love, sacrifice. In short, a human being ... always the human being.

(...)

Imagining Albert Camus through his writings, his life and his exiles requires the construction of an ode to reality that goes beyond the visible, beyond what can be said or heard. With her pictures, like Camus with his words, Yoneda sympathises with reality in a way that is concrete and abstract at the same time, always keeping it at a distance and creating “not the prose of the document, but prose that has been suffered like a document”. For Yoneda it is not a matter of telling the story of Camus’s life or singing the praises of his influence on French and world literature, but of asking questions about the possibility of building a photographic space for a re-evaluation of values and feelings that, with the passing of time, have become part of the political substratum of our contemporary society.

(...)

Imagining – as if we were onlookers – the course of Albert Camus’s existence through Yoneda’s pictures, the places where he had his roots or lost them, where he fell in or out of love, where the conflicts of his time were enacted and where he adopted an intellectual and emotional attitude towards them, primarily involves reflecting about relationships of closeness with one’s own contemporary experience. The ambiguity of the images of Yoneda’s documentary prose enables viewers to wander with their imagination through the analogies and dissimilarities between past and present. Comparing, analysing, investing emotions and feelings with the memory of someone else which becomes mixed up with one’s own.

(...)



© Tomoko Yoneda, *Entwined* - Trees in the middle of a former trench at the Battle of the Marne, 2017, courtesy of ShugoArts

Tomoko Yoneda

- 1965 Born in Akashi-city, Japan
Lives and works in London
- 1991 MA in Photography, Royal College of Art, London, UK
- 1989 BFA in Photography with Faculty Award, The University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago USA

Solo Exhibitions (selection)

- 2015 Beyond Memory, Grimaldi Gavin, London, UK
- 2013 We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo
- 2011 Japanese House, ShugoArts, Tokyo
- 2009 Beyond Memory and Uncertainty, SAGE Paris, Paris
- 2008 An End is a Beginning, Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo
- 2006 Monochrome Works 1996-2003, ShugoArts, Tokyo
- 2005 After Amnesia: Scenes of Conflict That Have Forgotten Their Past, Daiwa Foundation, London, UK
After the Thaw, ShugoArts, Tokyo
- 2003 Beyond Memory and Uncertainty, Shiseido Gallery, Tokyo
- 2000 Tomoko Yoneda, Zelda Cheatle Gallery, London, UK
Between Visible and Invisible, Zeit-Foto Salon, Tokyo
- 1997 Topographical Analogy, Zeit-Foto Salon, Tokyo

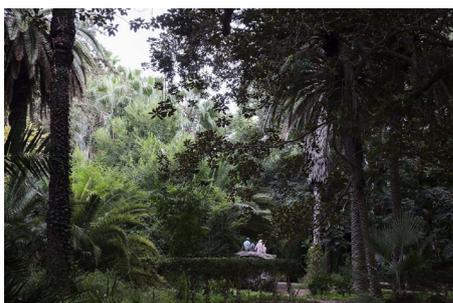
Group Exhibitions (selection)

- 2018 Travelers: Stepping into the Unknown, The National Museum of Art, Osaka
- 2017 Native revisions, Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, Singapore
- 2016 Tell Me A Story: Locality and Narrative, Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2015 Discordant Harmony: Critical Reflection on the Imagination of Asia, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima
- 2015-2017 In the Wake: Japanese Photographers Respond to 3/11, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston ; Japan Society, New York ; Asia Society, Houston
- 2014 Burning Down the House: The 10th Gwangju Biennale, Korea
SeMA Biennale Mediacity Seoul, Seoul Museum of Art, Séoul, Korea
- 2013 Awakening – Where Are We Standing? – Earth, Memory and Resurrection, Aichi Triennale 2013, Aichi
Unattained Landscape, The Bevilacqua La Masa Foundation, Venice, Italy
- 2011 Bye Bye Kitty!!! Between Heaven and Hell in Contemporary Japanese Art, Japan Society, New York, USA
- 2010 Roppongi Crossing 2010: Can There Be Art?, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo
- 2007 Venice Biennale, The 52nd International Art Exhibition: Think with the Senses - Feel with the Mind. Art in the Present Tense, Venice, Italy
- 2007 The 10th International Istanbul Biennial, Not Only Possible, But Also Necessary: Optimism in the Age of Global War, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2006 Berlin-Tokyo/Tokyo-Berlin, Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin, Allemagne / Germany
- 2003 The History of Japanese Photography 1854-2000, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA
- 2002 Fragilités – Printemps de Septembre, Toulouse ; Centre d'art et de photographie de Lecture, Lecture, France

Public Collections

- The British Council, London
- Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo
- Himeji City Museum of Art, Himeji Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art, Kobe
- Izu Photo Museum, Shizuoka
- The Japan Foundation, Tokyo
- Kadist Art Foundation, Paris and San Francisco
- Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris
- Mori Art Museum, Tokyo
- The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
- The National Museum of Art, Osaka
- Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
- San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco
- Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai
- Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo
- The University of Chicago, Chicago
- The Victoria and Albert Museum, London
- Yokohama Museum of Art, Yokohama

Visuals for the press



© Tomoko Yoneda
Lovers, Botanical Garden of Hamma, Algiers
2017, courtesy of ShugoArts



© Tomoko Yoneda
By the shore, Tipaza
2017, courtesy of ShugoArts



© Tomoko Yoneda
Waiting for a ship, the port of Algiers
2017, courtesy of ShugoArts



© Tomoko Yoneda
Books - Memorial to the student victims during the Algerian War of Independence, University of Algiers
2017, courtesy of ShugoArts



© Tomoko Yoneda
Entwined - Trees in the middle of a former trench at the Battle of the Marne
2017, courtesy of ShugoArts



© Tomoko Yoneda
Hotel - where Camus finished his first draft of 'The Stranger'
2017, courtesy of ShugoArts



© Tomoko Yoneda
House - Home of Dr Le Forestier. Le Chambon-sur-Lignon
2017, courtesy of ShugoArts



© Tomoko Yoneda
A statue in a pond and sky seen through palm trees, Botanical Garden of Hamma, Algiers,
2017, courtesy of ShugoArts

Around the exhibition

Artist talk

Conversation with Tomoko Yoneda

Tuesday, March 27 at 6 p.m.

Petite salle (ground floor)

Duration: approximately 1h30

Free entrance with reservation (reservation starting from February 26 : www.mcjp.fr)

Language: French (and Japanese with consecutive translation to French)

With **Tomoko Yoneda** and **Marta Gili** (Director, Jeu de Paume)

Moderated by **Aomi Okabe**

“Like Camus with his words, Yoneda sympathises with reality in a way that is concrete and abstract at the same time, always keeping it at a distance and creating “not the prose of the document, but prose that has been suffered like a document”. For Yoneda it is not a matter of telling the story of Camus’s life or singing the praises of his influence on French and world literature, but of asking questions about the possibility of building a photographic space for a re-evaluation of values and feelings that, with the passing of time, have become part of the political substratum of our contemporary society.” Marta Gili

Round table

Tomoko Yoneda and Albert Camus

Thursday, March 29 at 6 p.m.

Petite salle (ground floor)

Duration: approximately 1h30

Free entrance with reservation (reservation starting from February 27 : www.mcjp.fr)

Language: French (and Japanese with consecutive translation to French)

Tomoko Yoneda, Olivier Todd and Mauricette Berne

moderated by **Aomi Okabe**

Since the centenary of the birth of Albert Camus in 2013, there has been a renewed interest in the work and thought of this author, in France as well as in Japan. This round table will be an opportunity to compare Tomoko Yoneda’s views on Camus with those of eminent Camus specialists, Olivier Todd and Mauricette Berne.

Conference

Camus, Algeria... and Japan

Tuesday, May 22 at 6 p.m.

Petite salle (ground floor)

Free entrance with reservation (reservation starting from Avril 23 : www.mcjp.fr)

Language: French

Meeting with two specialists of Albert Camus’ work

Agnès Spiquel is professor emeritus of French literature at the University of Valenciennes and president of the Society of Camusian Studies. She collaborated on the edition of the complete works of Camus in ‘La Pléiade’ (Gallimard). During this conference, she will explain how Camus is considered today in Algeria.

Hiroshi Mino is vice-president of the Society of Camusian Studies and President of the Japanese section of this Society. He is also Professor Emeritus of French Literature at Nara Women’s University and Director of the Open University of Japan in Nara. It is Camus’ links with Japan that he has chosen to talk to us about during this meeting.

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Exhibition

March 28 to June 2, 2018

Salle d’exposition (2nd floor)

Tuesday to Saturday

From 12 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Free entrance

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