

Hiroko Inoue – New photographic work

Born in Osaka, photographer, video-artist, and sculptor, Hiroko Inoue has lived and worked in both Japan and Germany since 1999. She set up her studio in Mulheim, Ruhr region in 2000. While commuting between Japan and Ruhr, she occasionally works in Berlin, Vienna, and Dusseldorf. She is deeply involved with social themes in her photographs, installations and photo-sculptures that the environmental and technology issues have become decisive roles in her works more and more in recent years.

After majoring in literature, anthropology, and sculpture, Inoue learned techniques of dye and weaving professionally in Cultural Anthropology Institute of Okinawa, her photographs show the imprint of its features well. Using any fabric, whether out of any texture, materiality and texture have equal importance as light and shadow for her photographs, and there is her unique artistic methods that obscuring and blurring as well as visualization and exposure.

The important thing as an artist, there is a concern with the retrieve hidden or repressed aspects of our daily life in this world. Hiroko Inoue has been to put serious efforts to dealt with social trauma as well as personal trauma that the traumatic experience of the Great Hanshin Earthquake in 1995 gave the impulse; the disaster of Fukushima highlighted the blind belief in advanced Technological civilization and its progress, and conflict between the nature and the environment which cannot be completely dominated by human beings. It has become her principal theme.

“Mori-Forest” series which she improved photographs that were taken in the forest in Japan and Germany in the darkroom: she left traces of brushes and impression of brushstrokes to fit like a second layer over the image that gives somewhat ambiguous mysterious atmosphere. Her works come out from forests that do not reveal their own history, with bring the cycle of growth and decline in a sensitive way of consciousness. Ruhr region where is seen everywhere that the landscape of nature has ever changed by the technological industry that has been a center of industry in Germany once. It is a place ideal for her activity similar to the scenery of the Japanese forest which is a country of birth for Hiroko Inoue.

This artist contemplates the impact brought about by her own works in the following manner. "March 11th, 2011, the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami: on that day,

the images were broadcasted on TV, showed the countless lives and people's all property were swallowed up by the tsunami, like as the fallen leaves. I shall never forget. Currently, the climate has been changing all over the world. I believe that we need to find sustainable society from attempting to reduce consumption of every condition instead of satisfying our lives on purely materialistic way.”

In the photograph of “Mizu-Water” series, occurred in parallel with the “Mori-Forest” series, made a strong impression of the river landscape of Rhine and Ruhr despite the fact that has changed its look by the waves of every kind of industrialization. Hiroko Inoue has made her way in groping for the aim of the great beauty and power of the nature. Above all, especially there are the ancient sacred rivers of Japan where connote such the eternal cycle of life, growth and decline, death and rebirth, that she has tried to retain in the image in the sensitive processing of light and shadow. Then her photographic works acquire a new dimension: when installing light boxes, Hiroko Inoue gives you actual visual presence that the scene of the photographs spread into the space from the wall, and attracts viewers in a manner that appeals to physical sensations.

In the spatial installation, “Koya-light of Koya” 2015 is using the entire room, set up the photographs around the wall and on the floor with displaying that continue the arbor and leaves reflecting on the water surface. The viewers become part of art work that has been sensitively produced. Overwhelming power and beauty that gives off the entire work pursued no other aim than drawing attention to alert the fragile state of our world in which the nature of human beings and its technological civilization are increasingly threatened. Inoue's photographic works warn you that we should realize again human beings is as a part of the nature that the law of nature is human nature at the same time, external nature is also internal human nature simultaneously. Hiroko Inoue' works has provided this as the ready for thought and sensuously comprehensible models for years.

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