

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] Exhibition

Fujiko Nakaya + Shiro Takatani
new installation "CLOUD FOREST"

August 7 (sat) - October 17 (sun), 2010 10:00 - 19:00 (in August -20:00)

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] Patio, Foyer, Central Park

"artistic environmental spheres" formed by fog, light and sound
Large-scale project unveiled simultaneously in three public spaces in and around YCAM

The upcoming *CLOUD FOREST* exhibition at the Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] presents examples of newly discovered environmental creation, realized with an "artistic environments" themed fusion of artistic expression and information technology.

Currently on show in three different public spaces in and around YCAM will be a large-scale collaborative project featuring "fog sculptures" by Fujiko Nakaya, an artist whose works have gained much attention at various occasions in Japan and overseas, along with the original light and sound art of Shiro Takatani.

These commissioned installations conceived in-residence at YCAM combine artificial fog, sunlight and sound, orchestrating with the help of originally developed devices and responding to changing weather conditions a variety of impressive sceneries.

Visitors can experience transformations in their perception as they interact with artworks incorporating information technology while walking in the fog in the patios or surrounding park. While introducing and reevaluating foresighted art and science projects originally presented at the EXPO '70 Osaka, which eventually inspired this new project, the exhibition anticipates the future of environmental creation, "informational spheres" of tomorrow, and possible creative quests through art.



"CLOUD FOREST" [Central Park] (YCAM, 2010)

■ **Press Preview**

August 7 (sat) 13:30-15:00

Website <http://cloudforest.ycam.jp/>

Organized by Yamaguchi City Foundation for Cultural Promotion
In association with Yamaguchi City, Yamaguchi City Board of Education

Grants from THE ASAHI SHIMBUN FOUNDATION
Supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs Government of Japan in the fiscal 2010

Co-developed with YCAM InterLab

Produced by Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]



〈INQUIRY〉

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CLOUD FOREST — Prospects of art-inspired new environmental creation

Rather than addressing “environmental” issues only from an ecological point of view, this “artistic environmental spheres” themed exhibition focuses on the mutual relationships between natural, social, mental and informational environments. Aiming to provide a stage for such diverse aspects of the subject matter to function as interfaces for each other, *CLOUD FOREST* pursues a contemporary form of environmental creation triggered off by transformations in human perception. The shifting perceptual experience of interacting with artworks incorporating information technology and YCAM’s architectural characteristics makes the visitor aware of spatial transfigurations, and ultimately commands ideas related to “environments” of the future.

■ “Environment” as an art form

This exhibition is based on a definition of “environment” as a compound of mutually generative, penetrative and reflective areas. While there have been various movements in the past that proposed environments as stages for or components of art, such as land art or earth art, this exhibition aims to explore the creative aspects of media art for possible new forms of “environments”. Think of it as an attempt to generate with the help of information technology open environments embracing multiple interlinked, mutually “environmental spheres”. In this day and age, the concept of “environments” manifested through spatial transformations is surely going to write its own quiet yet forceful story.

■ 40 years after the EXPO '70 Osaka: E.A.T. reinterpreted from a contemporary point of view

E.A.T. (Experiments in Art and Technology) attracted worldwide attention when the American experimental collective presented their work in the Pepsi Pavilion at the EXPO '70 Osaka. At this huge international event, the group of collaborating artists and scientists presented the astonishing results of their pioneering exploration of the relationship between environment and art, driven by the participating artists' innovative ideas. Considering the 40 years between then and the present day as a fundamental period of transition from the material productivity-based viewpoints of progressive science to invisible information capitalism, this exhibition attempts a critical review of the ideas and accomplishments of E.A.T. By interpreting such forward-thinking approaches of art and science with an eye on contemporary information society and perspectives of environmental creation, we aim to disclose a contemporary form of reality and its new environmental components.

■ “Environments” emerging out of human perception and networking technology

This exhibition couples the “fog sculptures” of Fujiko Nakaya with the creative ideas of the late David Tudor, who was in charge of interactive sound when Nakaya's works were first introduced at the EXPO '70 Osaka's Pepsi Pavilion. The “fog sculptures” take on a variety of appearances at the main venues in and around YCAM, shown alongside a new installation piece incorporating Tudor's original concept of soundscapes based on environmental reverberation. Altogether, the displays can be considered as a collaborative attempt of new environmental creation, undertaken by Fujiko Nakaya together with the YCAM staff and such post-Expo generation artists as Shiro Takatani. These works utilizing information technology to incorporate in various ways transformations of both natural surroundings and human perception communicate a sensory idea of critical, totally new “spheres of artistic environments”.



Fujiko Nakaya "Fog Sculpture #47773" Pepsi Pavilion
Commissioned by Experiments in Art and Technology
(EXPO' 70, Osaka, Japan, 1970)
photo: ©Takeyoshi Tanuma



"Island Eye Island Ear" Project by Experiments in Art & Technology (Knavelskar Island, Sweden, 1974)
photo: Fujiko Nakaya

“CLOUD FOREST”

The exhibition's title, “CLOUD FOREST” is borrowed from the name of a subtropical forestal area that is characterized by a frequent formation of mist about the canopy level. It is a place that can be considered as a peculiar zone of active interpenetration right in the middle between wild nature and the realm of human society. At the same time, the title is a reference to David Tudor's sound installation/performance piece “Rainforest”. Approaching the laws of nature by means of cutting-edge technology, this exhibition pays deep homage also to the innovativeness of the “Island Eye Island Ear” project that Fujiko Nakaya conceived with Jacqueline Monnier back in the 1970s.

about works

“Environmental spheres” in three installations

■ Patios

Interfaces of fog, light and sound

The entirely glass-walled patios - high open spaces that allow wind, rain and sunlight to fall in - are intermediate places combining/connecting the outside (natural environment) with the inside (artificial environment). This exhibition includes large-scale installations involving artificial fog, light (reflected sunlight) and sound, which transform the Center's two patios into interfaces between two different types of environments. Influenced by the surrounding interior and exterior environments, the artificial fog that is emitted in varying intervals from multiple directions forms convections of various modes and configurations. In addition, a special mirror device is used to redirect sunbeams into the fog. As optical effects will vary significantly according to the fog's configuration, meteorological conditions, and the position of the sun, the displays will continue to take on different appearances depending on the time, position and angle. As locations, sizes, and positions of installed apparatus are different in both patios, visitors can appreciate two completely different installations. Furthermore, special sound systems installed inside the exhibition spaces allows visitors to perceive the soundscapes locally while walking through the fog. Also visible from outside the glass walls are subtle motions of fog and light that one normally doesn't see in the open nature.



“CLOUD FOREST” [Patio] (YCAM, 2010)

■ Foyer

Soundscape defined by an intense mixture of sound and light

Exhibited in the foyer, a place flooded with natural light from the patios on both sides, is Shiro Takatani's large-scale installation based on reflections of sound and light [Sound Designed by Takuya Minami (softpad)]. Nine specially built sonic devices - two-meter-high rotary square poles fitted with four superdirective speakers each - are arranged in a grid pattern on the floor in the center of the exhibition space. While the poles rotate at varying speed, all of the 36 speakers emit alternately synchronous and asynchronous superdirective sounds to weave complex sonic carpets. Next to field recordings of natural environmental sounds, the installation uses audio sources prepared by David Tudor for the EXPO '70 Osaka. These components will form a densely complex acoustic environment while echoing in complicated patterns from the venue's walls and stairs. Visitors can look forward to enjoying an absolutely unique spatial experience in a setting bathed in a mix of artificial and natural light.



“CLOUD FOREST” [Central Park] (YCAM, 2010)

■ Central Park

“Fog sculptures” flowing and merging with the environment

Fujiko Nakaya's “fog sculptures” are exhibited in wide outdoor spaces. Like in the patios, clouds of artificial fog will be generated also in the central park in front of YCAM. Due to rapidly changing wind conditions, here the fog clusters will move in instantaneously shifting patterns. While marveling at these massive formations of fog quite different from the sceneries in the patios, the visitor can witness how these “fog sculptures” flow and merge with the environment.

* Also on display are photographs and video footage of previous works related to this exhibition (Fujiko Nakaya & David Tudor, EXPO '70 Osaka “Pepsi Pavilion”, etc.)

Artist Profile



Fujiko Nakaya

Artist

Sapporo-born Fujiko Nakaya is an internationally known Japanese artist who works extensively with pure-water fog to create fog installations, performances, fog stage sets, and environmental park designs. Her first fog sculpture was commissioned by Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.) for the Pepsi Pavilion at the EXPO '70 Osaka. There are permanent installations of her work at Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao; the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; Showa Kinen Park, Tokyo; and the Museum of Snow and Ice, Kaga, Japan, an Isozaki-designed museum built in honor of Nakaya's father, a snow and ice scientist who produced the first artificial snow crystal. Nakaya has collaborated on dance and performance works with video artist Bill Viola, composer David Tudor, and choreographer Trisha Brown, as well as installations with Shiro Takatani and media art group double-Negatives Architecture. Among her most recent works are a huge waterfall-like fog installation realized for the Singapore Biennale under one of the city's main bridges; an interactive fog landscape controlled by wind for the Yokohama Triennale; *MU: Mercurial Unfolding* at Institut Franco-Japonais in Tokyo; and a Fog Garden for the Japan Industry Pavilion at Shanghai Expo.

photo: Kazuo Fukunaga



Shiro Takatani

Artist

Born in 1963. Graduated from the Environmental Design - Art Dept. of Kyoto City University of Arts. Joined Dumb Type as one of the founders in 1984, and has been involved especially in their performances' visual and technical aspects. As a solo artist, Takatani collaborated with Akira Asada on a municipal project in Groningen, Holland (artistic director: Daniel Libeskind), in 1990. He created images for the concert *Dangerous Visions*, a collaboration with Art Zoyd and the National Orchestra of Lille, in March 1998, and was in charge of visual direction for Ryuichi Sakamoto's opera *LIFE* in September 1999. His own solo video installation works include *frost frames* (1998) and *optical flat* (2000), as well as *IRIS*, a collaboration with fog sculptor Fujiko Nakaya for the Valencia Biennial in 2001. His installation commissioned by the Natural History Museum of Latvia in Riga for the exhibition *Conversations with Snow and Ice*, was presented in November/December 2005 as part of a retrospective of the accomplishments of snow and ice scientist Ukichiro Nakaya (1900-1962). In 2006, under the auspices of the Japan Foundation's 2006 Australia-Japan Exchange Project "Rapt! 20 Contemporary Artists from Japan", Takatani was selected for a one-month artist residency in Australia and exhibit in Melbourne.

Related events

Opening events

Demonstrative Performance

August 7 (sat) 19:00 - 20:00

Artists: Fujiko Nakaya, Shiro Takatani, softpad (Takuya Minami, Tomohiro Ueshiba, Hiroshi Toyama)

Artist Talk

August 8 (sun) 14:00 - 16:00

Artists: Fujiko Nakaya, Shiro Takatani

Moderator: Akira Asada

Gallery tour

Through the tours, participants will discover together with YCAM educational staff, most attractive features of the exhibition.

August 15 (sun), 28 (sat), 29(sun)

September 4 (sat), 5 (sun), 11 (sat), 12 (sun) 18 (sat), 19(sun), 25 (sat), 26 (sun)

October 9 (sat), 10 (sun), 16 (sat), 17 (sun)

14:00-15:00

* Application: Please visit YCAM 1F Ticket Information prior to each tour

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Sound Design & Graphic Design Takuya Minami (softpad)
Programming: Ken Furudate
Curator: Kazunao Abe (YCAM)

Date & Time:

August 7 (sat) - October 17 (sun), 2010

10:00 - 19:00 (in August -20:00)

Venue:

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]
Patio, Foyer, Central Park

Admission free

*Closed Tuesday *Cancelled in case of rain at the Central Park

<http://cloudforest.ycam.jp/>