<div style="border">

"Morel's Panorama"
art installation by Masaki Fujihata

</div>

"A mirror is a tool that reflects the one who is looking, and a camera is an equipment to photograph "the other" except the subject who is photographing. A camera lens reminds us of one's eye, and makes an eye contact with the photographed subject in place of one's gaze. When I used a panorama camera (which was not a usual experience), I found that it had no gaze. It is different from a mirror-like process of reflecting an image. Who is me, a self reflected on this mirror, a panorama camera, that has a complicatedly distorted personal quality?" — Masaki Fujihata

"Morel's Panorama" is an art installation originally made for YCAM by media artist Masaki Fujihata. This work aims to represent a viewer-self through panorama camera and projections.

What is a Panorama?

A panorama, when a viewer equals the subject, has a view of the whole scene surrounding the subject. Therefore, the image made possible through a panorama provides an all-round broad view that one's glance can't cover. In other words, a panorama is essentially what one can't grasp or represent without using some external photographic technology, and has passed through various challenges and wavering processes of vision, techniques and technologies in the long history of art. (A good example is a seamless imagery illusion device that has made a 360-degree view possible through the reproduction of a landscape in a man-made dome-shaped space. The technology looking on images as an illusion is related to shooting a film with special effects or multi-wide screen cinematography, and different technologies of virtual reality on current computers.)

The meaning of learning the world around us:

The matter of visualization, that is a description of the outside world, can be interpreted as territory-mindedness in that the subject tries to learn the outside world unknown to him, and inputs the data of that world as knowledge to form images or ideas. In fact, in the development of modernization, the control of territories by autocracy for the geographic reorganization went side by side with the portrayal technique and scale expansion in the painting. Both of those developments shared the same motif of a fundamental desire to control the existence and vision at the same time.

New relationship between panorama and technology:

Probably a sense of attractive tension between the subject and the panorama is still alive, and Morel's Panorama explores such possibilities. On the other hand, a proposed idea is that it would be interesting to create power opposite to the panoramic formation caused by the input of data, the information of the outside world monitored by the subject as the center (territorial expansion). This power means nothing but the creation of an unstable composition in which the subject itself is drawn out into the unimaginable outside. There, the subject has the zero strength, and its existence is fragmented and absorbed into the outside, that is, unknown panorama.

Then, the visualization technology made possible through the new idea plays an important role of absorption. In this "Morel's Panorama," the work is realized by the unique systems made through panorama camera with "all-direction sensors" and computers, the spatial arrangement of the systems, and the time strategy. How will it develop –– the sense of "I" who looks at it, and "my" sense (=reality) of being viewed and torn off by technologies?

Morel; who is?

The title "Morel's Panorama" is taken from the name of main character of "La invencion de Morel (The Invention of Morel)," an amazing novel by Adolfo Bioy Casares, an Argentina writer, published in 1940 (Japanese translation made by Toru Shimizu and published by Suisei-sha).

Masaki Fujihata

Born in Tokyo in 1956. After teaching at Keio University as an associate professor of the Department of Environmental Information, he is currently a professor of Department of Inter Media Art, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music. Since the 1980s, he has presented works of computerized animation and graphics, and drawn public attention. Since the 1990s, working on the interactive media technologies to develop them in artistic representations, he has put forward many projects using his own interfaces and programs. He is respected as the world-leading artist pursuing the relations between reality and communications.

In April and May 2002, in the city of Yamaguchi, as a pre-event sponsored by YCAM and cooperated by Yamaguchi Cable Television, works of virtual-space were televised 24 hours through the cable TV (channel 19) during the exhibition "Off-Sense - Shared Cyberspace," in which all citizens could communicate each other by accessing and using avatars. In elementary schools in the city, special workshops were held.