

“Look at music and listen to photos” at Gentaro Ishizuka’s solo exhibition
‘Ondulatoire’ at KOTARO NUKAGA, Roppongi.



Gentaro Ishizuka, *Ondulatoire #003*, 2017/2022

From February 5th (Sat) to March 31st (Thu), 2022, KOTARO NUKAGA, Roppongi is pleased to present ‘Ondulatoire’, a solo exhibition by Gentaro Ishizuka. The exhibition will present 17 artworks including new works by the artist.

The world as seen from under the hood of a dark cloth and through the focusing screen of a camera lens seems to appear three-dimensional, due to the manipulation of the camera. It is "as if the eyes are molding the world into a sculpture," as Ishizuka describes it. This idea of reinterpreting the photographic space underlies Ishizuka’s entire photographic practice to date. Adopting a style that draws upon the 1970s strategy of “deadpan photography” (Note 1), which aimed to present a detached and documentative (hence “deadpan”) form of photography as art, Ishizuka allows us, in this age of digital photography where everything in the world is seen as a flat image, to experience the world through different eyes.

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), one of the greatest architects of the 20th century, is known for freeing architecture from it’s form with his rational approach and proactive integration of new materials, Domino systems of construction, and other innovative building methods. Le Corbusier designed the

Couvent de La Tourette in Lyon (constructed in 1960), and instructed his pupil, the architect, mathematician, and composer Iannis Xenakis (1922-2001), to design the building's fenestration. Xenakis rejected counterpoint music, a compositional style which tends to organize melodies in an orderly fashion, and introduced a complexity that allowed for fluctuations on the micro level and expressions of large, dynamic mass on the macro level. He incorporated a mathematical element into his music, utilizing a method of sheet music termed graphic notation, rather than musical scores. It is often said that the design of La Tourette's windows and exterior openings share something in common with the score of his most famous piece, *Metastaseis*.

The louvers (window shutters with angled horizontal slats to admit light and air) that Xenakis arranged at irregular intervals within the fenestration, which he named *ondulatoire* (Note 2) ("undulatory"), were highly successful in adding a musical element to La Tourette, creating a new interpretation of the architectural space. The sunlight shining through the window panes created a musical score of shadows on the ground, allowing the enclosed monastery to become a meditative place where one could notice fluctuation and change within the continuous cycle of days and years that compromise ascetic training. It can be said that this very fluctuation, this orchestral music that continues to be played through light and shadow there, is *ondulatoire*.

This "score" created by Xenakis, this orchestra performed by light, is the motif that Ishizuka selected for his works this time. From amongst the various "musical performances" that are played throughout the year in the cloister of La Tourette, Ishizuka selected the winter and summer solstices, which expressed the maximum capacity of the fluctuations. In this way, the overall vastness and mass of this daily-fluctuating performance can be perceived. This exhibition will also present works depicting the fenestration of the Chandigarh College of Art (constructed in 1965), another work of *ondulatoire* created jointly by Le Corbusier and Xenakis. The contrast between these two types of *ondulatoire* allow a different axis of approach in understanding the breadth of the music of La Tourette's *ondulatoire*, reconstructing in three dimensions the wavering world as seen by the composer Xenakis. What Ishizuka expresses this time through the reinterpretation of photographic space is the three-dimensionalization of music; that is, the very architecture of music.

With Ishizuka as conductor, this exhibition functions as a concert of the symphony of *ondulatoire*. By experiencing this space where the viewer is able to "look at music and listen to photos", we hope that you will be inspired to reassess your understanding of the relationship between architecture, music, and photography.

(Note 1) Deadpan

A style of photography in which the subjectivity of the artist is excluded from the photograph in order to express objectivity, as described by photography curator Charlotte Cotton in her book "The Photograph as Contemporary Art."

The adoption of a deadpan aesthetic moves art photography outside the hyperbolic, sentimental and immediately subjective. Such pictures may engage their viewer with emotive subjects, but the sense of the photographer's emotional perspective is not an obvious guide to understanding their meaning. Deadpan photography offers an apparently measured way of seeing beyond the limitations of a subjective vantage point, pausing to contemplate and distill the flow of time; a way of mapping the extent of phenomena and forces that govern the man made and natural world and can be invisible from a physical and emotional human standpoint.(Charlotte Cotton, "The Photograph as Contemporary Art New Edition (Gendai Shashinron Shinpan)", translated by Etsuko Ohashi and Michiko Oki, Shobunsha, 2016, p. 83)

(Note 2) ondulatoire

French for "wavy," the name given to windows with heterogeneous louvers. The official name is Pans de Verre Ondulatoires, meaning "wavy glass surface".

EXHIBITION DETAILS

Gentaro Ishizuka, 'Ondulatoire'

February 5 (Sat) - March 31 (Thu), 2022

11:00-18:00 (Tue - Sat)

*Closed on Sun, Mon and Public Holidays

*Schedule and contents are subject to change at the request of the national and local governments.

VENUE

KOTARO NUKAGA, Roppongi

Piramide Bldg. 2F, 6-6-9 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032 Japan

3 minutes walk from Tokyo Metro Hibiya Line and the Toei Subway Oedo Line Exit 1 or 3 of Roppongi station

ARTIST PROFILE



© Mina Soma

Gentaro Ishizuka

Gentaro Ishizuka (Tokyo, b. 1977) was awarded for the Photographic Society of Japan Newcomer's Award in 2004, and later in 2011, he was selected as the member of Overseas Study for Upcoming Artists of the Cultural Agency Program. In his early works, Ishizuka explored photography through documentary and artistic approach, and his photobook "PIPELINE ICELAND/ALASKA" (pub. Kodansha), the compilation of these early works, took the Higashikawa New Photographer Award in 2014. In 2016, he took the grand prize for Steidl Book Award Japan and his photobook "GOLD RUSH ALASKA" is planned to be published from Steidl. He joined the exhibition Syncopation: Contemporary encounters with the Modern Masters held in Pola Museum of Art and attracted attention for its installation work that was composed together with the modern paintings by Cézanne and Magritte. Recently, he has been exploring with spatiality of photographic expressions, for example, sculptural work made from a photographic paper exposed in the darkroom and mosaic work that weaves photographic papers in layers, whilst photography has become perceived as a plain code in our social media era. This year in 2022, Ishizuka will be exhibiting at, not just at KOTARO NUKAGA, Roppongi, but also in a group exhibition at Arts Maebashi and yearly exhibition called "DOMANI: tomorrow" at The National Art Center, Tokyo.

WORKS



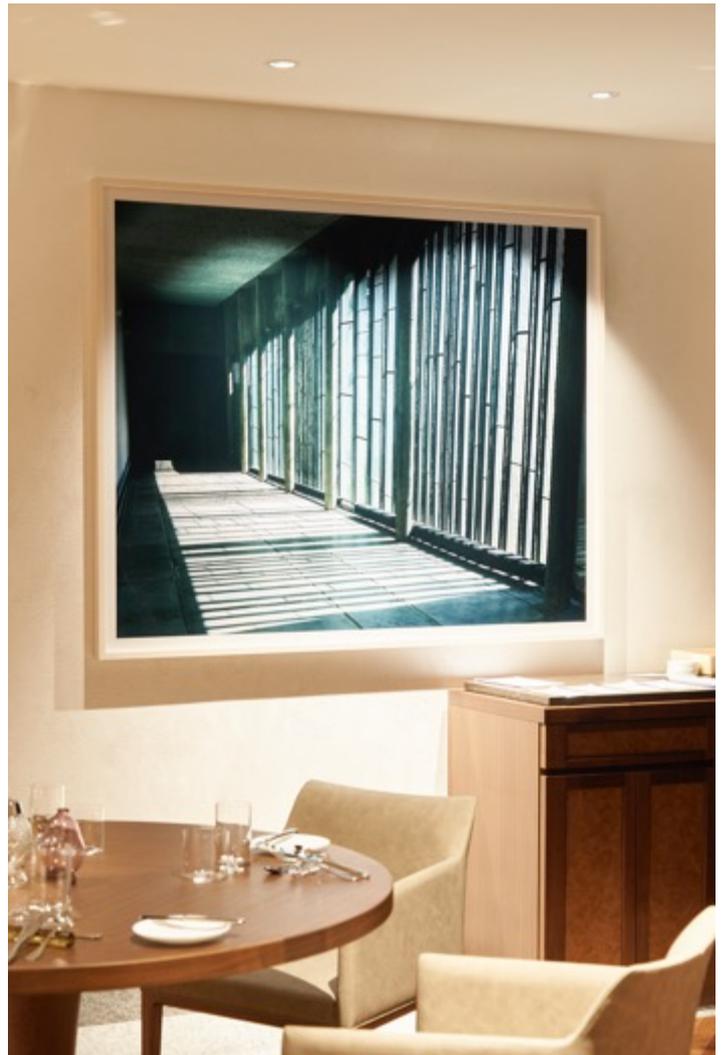
Gentaro Ishizuka, *Ondulatoire Chandigarh #013*, 2018/2022



Gentaro Ishizuka, *Ondulatoire #002*, 2017/2022



Gentaro Ishizuka, *Ondulatoire Chandigarh #001*, 2017/2022



Gentaro Ishizuka, *Ondulatoire #001*, 2018/2020

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