

# MERCEDES-BENZ ART SCOPE

**Mercedes-Benz Art Scope 2015-2017: Wandering to Wonder**

Participating artists: Taro Izumi, Menja Stevenson, Tokihiro Sato

**Saturday, May 27 – Sunday, August 27, 2017**



[1] Tokihiro Sato, *An hour exposure 1990/2017 Tokyo-Shibuya*, 2017 Photo/Diptych

## **Exhibition Outline**

Mercedes-Benz Japan has sponsored Mercedes-Benz Art Scope since 1991, a mécénat activity that gives contemporary artists from Japan and Germany a chance to experience a different culture. The Hara Museum of Contemporary Art has been a partner in this program since 2003, providing a venue to showcase and communicate the artistic results.

This year's show features three artists: Japanese artist Taro Izumi who resided in Berlin in 2016, German artist Menja Stevenson who resided in Tokyo in 2015 and Japanese artist Tokihiro Sato, a past participant who spent his residence in France in 1993 and was invited this time as a guest artist. Izumi's video works have been made during his stay in Berlin and question supposedly culturally influenced behaviors. The conceptual/abstract photographs and monotypes by Stevenson reflect her encounters with the contemporary and traditional Japan. Sato will show previous images taken of places in Tokyo together with images taken again of the same places, but with different methods to contrast changes in his creative expression and Tokyo's past and present.

## Participating Artists



### Taro Izumi

#### [Video installation] *Interweaving images to create strange spaces*

Taro Izumi creates drawings, image installations and videos. The presented video works show actions in public and private space by himself or others and oscillate between absurdity and surreal slapstick. Through the fusion of fiction and reality in his installations, Izumi manages to humorously address culturally influenced behaviors, rituals, and rules.

**Profile:** Born in 1976 in Nara, Japan, Izumi received an MFA at Tama Art University. He has participated in numerous exhibitions in Japan and abroad, including the Yokohama Triennale (2011) and *Winter Garden: The Exploration of the Micropop Imagination in Contemporary Japanese Art* at the Hara Museum (2009). His solo exhibition *Taro Izumi – Pan* was held at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris in spring of this year. Izumi currently lives in Tokyo.



### Menja Stevenson

#### [Photography, monotype, other] *Observing the "old" and "now" in a different culture*

Menja Stevenson's working method can generally be described as "discovering and collecting." Using various mediums such as video, photography, drawing, sculpture, performance she records the trivial things and phenomena encountered in the minutiae of everyday life, turning them into art. For Menja Stevenson, it was her first trip to Japan, and so she carried her camera on walks that she took around Tokyo and its environment. The photographs reveal a peculiar strangeness towards the city as an experiential space by depicting topographically uncertain locations in painterly color sequences. The large leaves of the 12-part series of monotype prints also play with color traces. They are the result of Menja Stevenson's study of traditional Japanese Ukiyo-e woodcuts, but reflect her contemporary interpretation of this time-honored genre.

**Profile:** Born in 1982 in Rottweil, Land Baden-Württemberg in Germany, Stevenson studied media art at the Stuttgart Academy of Art and Design. She works in a variety of mediums such as photography, performance and installation. She currently lives in Stuttgart.



### **Tokihiro Sato [Photography]**

#### ***Camera snippets of "myself" and "Tokyo" before and after***

Tokihiro Sato is an artist who practices photography (a praxis that he - based on the literal translation - defines as "painting with light"). At first glance, his work appears to be different from that of the two artists above. The commonality lies, however, in the physical performance of the artist that occurs in front of the camera, but which cannot be observed due to the conceptual play with light. The photo series *Photo-Respiration* was created in the 1980s and 1990s (works from this series were presented in Art Scope in 1993) and portrays urban scenes of Tokyo, which he visits once again twenty-five years later. Through the one-hour exposure time, the places appear devoid of humans and create an enigmatic moment of silence and reflection. The perceptions and pictorial readings of the viewers can "wander" in open spaces suspended in time.

**Profile:** Born in 1957 in Yamagata, Japan, Sato received a BFA and MFA from the Tokyo University of the Arts. He has received numerous awards include the Minister of Education Award (2015) and has held solo exhibitions at such museums as the Tokyo Photographic Art Museum (2014 and The Art Institute of Chicago in the USA (2005). He has participated in group exhibitions that include *Photography and Beyond in Japan* held at the Hara Museum (1994), which traveled to six venues within North America), *12 years of Art Scope: Reflection on Artist in Residence* (2003), and *Time Present - Photography from the Deutsche Bank Collection* (2015). He lives in Saitama and is currently a professor at the Tokyo University of the Arts.

### **About Mercedes-Benz Art Scope**

This program was launched in 1991 under the name *Art Scope* and the Hara Museum has been a partner and exhibition space since 2003. With the present exhibition, the program has been renamed *Mercedes-Benz Art Scope*. As its main points, the program seeks to promote the development of contemporary art and the exchange of culture between Japan and Europe by providing an artist-in-residence experience of approximately 3 months in Berlin for Japanese artists and in Tokyo for German artists, and organizing and holding a group exhibition featuring the participating artists at the Hara Museum to present

the results of their experience.

In addition to the name change, it was decided that one past participant of the program would be invited as a guest artist. It was thought that by showcasing the recent work of past participants, a light would be shone on the trajectory of their post-residence careers, and therefore on the program's history and evolution of more than a quarter of a century.

In recent years, artist-in-residence programs have been flourishing throughout the world as a means of enabling individual artists to create work or conduct research for that purpose for a given period of time and to deepen cultural exchange at the place of residence. In Japan, municipalities, NPOs and other bodies have been actively engaged in such activities since the 1990s.

### **The following is a list of previous *Art Scope* exhibitions held at the Hara Museum**

2014        *Art Scope 2012-2014 – Remains of Their Journeys*

Participating artists:

Ryosuke Imamura, Satoshi Ohno, Rita Hensen, Benedikt Partenheimer

2011        *Art Scope 2009-2011: Invisible Memories*

Participating artists:

Meiro Koizumi, Hiroe Saeki, Eva Berendes, Jan Scharrelmann

2008        *Art Scope 2007 / 2008 – Faces of Existence\**

Participating artists:

Izumi Kato, Yuken Teruya, Eva Teppe, Ascan Pinckernelle

2006        *Art Scope 2005 / 2006 – Interface Complex\**

Participating artists:

Hiroharu Mori, Kohei Nawa, Katja Strunz, Georg Winter

2005        *Art Scope 2004: Cityscape into Art – Michiko Shoji Johannes Wohnseifer*

Participating artists:

Michiko Shoji, Johannes Wohnseifer

A star (\*) is used to indicate exhibitions that were also held at Daimler Contemporary, the contemporary art gallery operated by Daimler AG in Berlin.

Before the Hara Museum's partnership began, *Art Scope* was a program that sent only Japanese artists to Monflanquin in the south of France. The artists who participated during this period are as follows:

Satoko Masuda (1991), Ko Kashiwagi (1992), Tokihiro Sato (1993), Kenjiro Okazaki (1994), Keita Egami (1995), Seigen Kyu (1996), Asako Tokitsu (1997), Takanobu Kobayashi (1998), Yasuko Iba (1999), Tomoko

Maekawa (2000), Sayaka Akiyama (2001), Nobuyuki Takahashi (2002)

To mark the start of the Hara Museum's partnership, the twelve artists were featured in *12 Years of Art Scope: Reflection on Artist in Residence* which was held in 2003.

### **Related Events**

#### **[1] Artist Talk** (with consecutive Japanese/English interpretation)

May 27 (Saturday), 2017, 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Place: The Hall at the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art

Speakers: Taro Izumi, Menja Stevenson, Tokihiro Sato / Moderator: Atsuo Yasuda (deputy director, curator / Hara Museum of Contemporary Art)

#### **[2] Workshop**

During the exhibition, participating artist Tokihiro Sato will hold a hands-on workshop that both parent and child can take part in.

**\*NOTE:** Details of the events will be announced at a later date. Reservations are required and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

### **Exhibition Catalogue**

A catalogue with photos of the exhibition (installation views) will be published during the exhibition.

The volume will be in full color and include both Japanese and English texts.

### **Free Shuttle Service from Shinagawa Station to be provided during the Exhibition (on Saturdays, Sundays, and national holidays).**

During the exhibition, a Mercedes-Benz V Class (with a capacity of six persons) will provide free transport between Shinagawa Station Takanawa Exit (JR and Keikyu) and the Hara Museum on Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays. Please visit the Hara Museum website and blog for details.

**H A R A**  
**MUSEUM**



## Exhibition Details

**Exhibition title:** *Mercedes-Benz Art Scope 2015-2017: Wandering to Wonder*

**Dates:** May 27 (Saturday) – August 27 (Sunday), 2017

**Venue:** Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, 4-7-25 Kitashinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 140-0001

Tel: 03-3445-0651 Fax: 03-3473-0104 E-mail: [info@haramuseum.or.jp](mailto:info@haramuseum.or.jp)

Website: <http://www.haramuseum.or.jp> Mobile site: <http://mobile.haramuseum.or.jp>

Blog: <http://www.art-it.asia/u/HaraMuseum> Twitter <http://twitter.com/haramuseum> (in Japanese only/

Account name: @haramuseum)

**Organized by:** Hara Museum of Contemporary Art and Mercedes-Benz Japan, Co., Ltd.

**Under the auspices of:** Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Japan

**Cooperation and residency program coordination provided by:** Arts Initiative Tokyo [AIT]

**Participating artists:** Taro Izumi, Menja Stevenson, Tokihiro Sato

**Hours:** 11:00 am-5:00 pm, Wednesdays until 8:00 pm (last entry 30 minutes before closing)

**Closed:** Mondays (except July 17), July 18

**Admission:** General 1,100 yen; Students 700 yen (high school and university) or 500 yen (elementary and junior high); Free for Hara Museum members and students through high school every Saturday during the school term; 100 yen discount per person for groups of 20 or more

**Directions:** 5 minutes by taxi or 15 minutes on foot from JR Shinagawa Station (Takanawa exit); or from the same station take the No.96 bus, get off at the first stop (Gotenyama) and walk 3 minutes. During the exhibition, a Mercedes-Benz V-Class (with a capacity of six persons) will provide free transport between Shinagawa Station Takanawa Exit (JR and Keikyu) and the Hara Museum on Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays. Please visit the Hara Museum website and blog for details.

\* On Sundays and public holidays, a guided tour of the exhibition will be given by the curator in charge (lasting approximately 30 minutes, starting at 2:30 pm).

Free mini-tours in English are also available on a periodic basis. Please enquire at the admission counter on the day of your visit.

**Images for Publication** \* Please include the related credit for each image used. Images should not be trimmed, altered or superimposed with text.



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[1] Tokihiro Sato, *An hour exposure 1990/2017 Tokyo - Shibuya*, 2017 photograph/diptych

[2] Tokihiro Sato, *An hour exposure 2017 Tokyo - Akihabara*, 2017 photograph

[3] Menja Stevenson, *I would like to be come cat*, 2017 photograph 70 x 100 cm

[4] Menja Stevenson, *e / The Master's Table*, 2015 monotype/from a set of 12 191 x 97 cm each

[5] Taro Izumi, installation view at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2017 (reference image)

©Taro Izumi Courtesy of Galerie GP & N Vallois, Paris and Take Ninagawa, Tokyo

Photo: André Morin Photo provided by: Palais de Tokyo

[6] Taro Izumi, *The piercing wink of the star that is not visible*, 2017 (reference image)

※ Works 1 to 4 are included in the exhibition. Works 5 and 6 are not. All works are copyrighted by the artists.

### Source of press images for lending and publicity

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