

**The world of 'Landscape Art' by Kyoji Takubo known for his various renovation projects.**



Kyoji Takubo, *Camélia* 2021-#10, 2021, ©Kyoji Takubo

KOTARO NUKAGA is pleased to announce Kyoji Takubo's solo exhibition "*Camélia*" from April 17 to May 22. In this solo exhibition, we will be showcasing 13 pieces of cut-outs that dynamically expresses yabutsubaki (Japanese camellia)

\*Mariko Kobayashi "*Stories that went Over*" will be held concurrently.

During his college years at Tama Art University (painting course), he presented his solo exhibition "*Image Judgement*" which drew his attention as an artist representing the Post Mono-ha generation. After making *OBELISK* (1979), a piece portraying marks of physical actions, he moved

on to creating assemblage works such as *Argo* (1983) using scrap materials, and in 1984 he announced works of the same series at 41st Venice Biennale as the Japanese representative. Also, his works expanded to architectural practices; *A Day — Layers of Time I· II* (1987) which was made open public at Setagaya Art Museum, was an artwork where he reconstructed his atelier in the museum.

Takubo's turning point was in *Absolute Scene 1987*, a workpiece where he carefully tore down two old houses, which were planned to be destroyed due to redevelopment, whilst leaving its post and beam. On the floor, he laid glass panels to allow viewers to walk inside, and after this process, he tore down all parts of the houses. Whilst the house disappeared from our daily landscape, the memory of it was archived by the photographer, Shigeo Anzai. This art project was a collaboration between Ryoji Suzuki (architect) and Anzai, and this started to make Takubo's major work as reformation projects.

In the same period, he was attracted to an abandoned chapel when visiting Normandy, France, and became the supervisor of its renovation project for 11 years. He covered jobs from fund-raising to actual work at the chapel, and created the mural painting whilst crossing over linguistic and cultural boundaries; and by this continuous collaboration between the local people, the project was completed in 1999. The chapel, loved among the local people, was highly applauded for its remarkable success, and Takubo received the Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters from the French Minister of Culture.

After returning to Japan in 2000, he became the official cultural advisor of Konpira-san Shrine in Kagawa prefecture and started the renovation project of Kotohirayama. After Honden Zenza-sai (a ceremony for transferring the deity to another shrine) in 2004, Takubo drew yabutsubaki with a strong touch on a fusuma of Shiro-shoin, and also undertook the architectural design and mural painting of café&restaurant Kami Tsubaki. He has been showing the vitality of historical places with magnificent scale and is still actively producing new artworks. Takubo thinks a world where all creatures live in prosperity will be completed by creating 'Landscape Art' —the reborn landscape made by combining and converting other elements together, whilst human beings and other creatures coexist with respect. No matter if the artist finishes the artwork or not, 'Landscape Art' continues to stay as the place of expression.

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*A Cut-out of a Tsubaki*

Our common interest in "light" and "color" became a major element after Modern Art, especially through Newton's *Optics* and Goethe's *Theory of Colors*. There were new painting methods by Delacroix and Turner, Manet and Monet, as well as the unique approach to "color" by Cézanne, Matisse, and Mondrian.

Today, embodying "color" to "light", or "light" to "color" as a whole, has become the common method because of technological changes. I was especially influenced by Matisse's methods in his last half of life, such as 'the Cut-Outs', where he cut and pasted colored paper, and *The Rosary Chapel* where he created harmony between colors and lights, by letting the light strike into the room through the colored stained-glass, and reflect on floors, walls (tile painting), and ceilings. So for my practices of 'Landscape Art', I made *The Chapel of Apple* in France, *Kami Tsubaki* in Konpira-san Shrine, and a mural mosaic made by natural stones at the University of Sacred Heart, *Le Pommier d'or (The Golden Apple)*, done in 2017. Through these works, I discovered the central images "apple", "yabutsubaki" and "golden apple", for each particular landscape, and now, I am moving towards a new 'Landscape Art' \*.

*A Paper-cutting of a Tsubaki* in this exhibition, is the first image of this new 'Landscape Art'.

Kyoji Takubo

\* "What I am aiming for in 'Landscape Art', is a site where expressions stay alive in the future, after the artist's absence."

Kyoji Takubo, *Sites of Expression* (Kodansha Gendai-shinsho, 2003)

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In this exhibition, we will be presenting a new series of cut-out in the motif of yabutsubaki. Seto Inland Sea's unique environment, where he visited during the renovation project of Kotohirayama, was calm because of its warm climate, and

islands with gentle ridges. As if responding to this environment, yabutsubaki bloomed with its dignified presence. Takubo says that he read the cultural features of the land from this flower and thought of it as "the flower in its existence with earth and water"; which then became an important material for him. Whilst changing its material and method, this is a motif that appears repeatedly in his works, such as drawings using sepia color, and mosaic made by natural stones. Takubo's new 'Landscape Art' will beautifully raise its curtain with this one and only yabutsubaki.

## **EXHIBITION DETAILS**

Kyoji Takubo "Camélia"

April 17, 2021 - May 22

11:00-18:00 (Tue-Sat) \*Closed on Sun, Mon and Public Holidays

KOTARO NUKAGA

TERRADA Art Complex 3F, 1-33-10 Higashi-Shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, 140-0002 Japan

\*Gallery hours and other information are subject to change

## **VENUE**

KOTARO NUKAGA

TERRADA Art Complex 3F, 1-33-10 Higashi-Shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, 140-0002 Japan

## **ARTIST**

Kyoji Takubo (1949, Ehime) studied painting at Tama Art University. He started his career as an artist in 1971, exhibiting 5 series of solo shows '*Image Judgement*' at the galleries in Tokyo. In 1980s he focused on the creation of assemblage, and represented Japan in the 41st Venice Biennale.

Furthermore, in collaboration with architect Ryoji Suzuki and photographer Shigeo Anzai, he produced the project '*Absolute Scene – 1987*' showing viewers the process of tearing down two old houses. This project took him far in his artistic odyssey to explore works involved with architecture which arose with memories and history ingrained in a specific place.

From 1989, moving to Normandy, France, with his family, he devoted 11 years to the restoration of a small abandoned chapel. For the project of '*La Chapelle des Pommiers*', Takubo received Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters from the French Minister of Culture.

After returning to Japan, he has been undertaken the restoration of the whole sanctuary of Kompira-san shrine in Shikoku, produced mosaic wall painting for Global Plaza Entrance of University of the Sacred Heart, Tokyo, offering many paintings of various plants to Auberge "The HIRAMATSU Karuizawa Miyota" opened in March, 2021 and many other projects producing 'Landscape Art' that will live even after the disappearance of the artist.

He has exhibited at galleries and museums including Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo and Ohara Museum. His work is in the permanent collections of The National Museum of Art, Osaka, The Museum of Art, Ehime, etc.

Visiting professor in Tama Art University, Distinguished Guest Scholar in University of the Sacred Heart Tokyo.

## WORKS



Kyoji Takubo, *Camélia 2021-#1*, 2021, ©Kyoji Takubo



Kyoji Takubo, *Camélia 2021-#7*, 2021, ©Kyoji Takubo



Kyoji Takubo, *Camélia 2021-#12*, 2021, ©Kyoji Takubo

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