

We are pleased to announce Soichiro Yamaguchi's solo exhibition "dessin" at Communication Gallery Fugensha from September 7, 2023 to October 1, 2023.

Soichiro Yamaguchi is a photographer born in Tara-cho, Fujitsu-gun, Saga Prefecture in 1959 and lives in Okayama City, Okayama Prefecture. After dropping out of the Faculty of Law at Hosei University in 1980, he entered the Tokyo College of Photography in 1980 and joined "Shajuku Shimotakaido" organized by the late Takayuki Komori, who was also an instructor at the school. In 1993, he published his first book, "Urban Circuit" (Yatake Shuppan), a collection of 6x7 photographs of Shinjuku at night. Yamaguchi then moved to Okayama Prefecture in 2002 and resumed his work after a 12-year gap. His series of photographs of rural landscapes through a window while driving a car, mainly in eastern Okayama Prefecture, where he is based, have been published in the photo books "FRONT WINDOW" (Sokyusha, 2013) and "Driving Rain" (Folder, 2013).

In recent years, Yamaguchi has been working diligently on a series of works in which 16 A4-size photographs are pasted onto a 1200 x 900 mm cardboard support, which is then painted. In 2023, a solo exhibition of this series was held at the Nagi Museum of Contemporary Art. In this exhibition, he will present new works from this series with nudes as the motif.

The artist began photographing nudes late at night in the spring of 1999, when he suddenly had an idea to photograph his own body. The series of works were published in the nude feature in the July issue of "Asahi Camera" in the same year. Since then, he has continued to photograph nudes of both genders at every opportunity, but this will be the first time for him to present them in an exhibition.

Yamaguchi likens his life's work of photographing nudes to the artist Morandi's repeated depictions of vases and bottles. He says that he is not particularly interested in the individual owner of the nude, but that photographing nudes is an act of "stepping into a world that has yet to be seen". It is like a never-ending drawing process of trial and error to capture the subject. We invite you to view this fresh body of work from the artist's 38th year of activity.

A gallery talk with photographer Hiromi Tsuchida will be held during the exhibition.

It was late at night in the spring of 1999, when I was living in a town in the eastern part of Saitama Prefecture, everything was asleep, my family had returned to my parents' house, and the empty house was enveloped in darkness. I was lying in bed alone in my bedroom, staring at the ceiling, when suddenly I began to prepare to take a picture. I set up a small black round chair with a dark curtain in the background, put a single eye lamp across the stand, put a T-max p3200 into my SLR camera with a 20mm f/2.8 wide angle lens and started shooting the naked man with the self-timer. The shoot lasted about two hours, and this is my first nude photograph, and the first time I photographed myself as a subject. Rather than photographing myself, I felt like I had an object, naked, that I could pose in any way I wanted.

One of my favorite artists is a painter in a provincial town in Italy who repeatedly painted vases and bottles. Although he painted jars and bottles, he did not want to show the jars and bottles he was painting, but rather, he seemed to be trying to enter a new world by painting them. After photographing myself naked, I continued to photograph myself naked at every opportunity, regardless of gender. The body is an individual, but I am not particularly interested in that individual; rather, photographing nudes is an act of seeking and touching a world that I have never experienced. I believe that this may have been the same kind of feeling that a solitary painter sought in a jar or bottle.

Soichiro Yamaguchi