

NIKKEI newspaper – 03/2010 - JAPAN

Jean Claude Wouters Solo Exhibition – Taka Ishii Gallery “Repetitive exposure & questioning the status of memory »

When one tries to recall a scene from his memories, the outline and the details remain vague despite the effort. Rather, the sensations connected to one`s own body experience doesn`t erase so easily.

At the Jean Claude Wouters New Works Solo Exhibition at the Taka Ishii Gallery in Kyoto, viewers can realize such particular physical experience of memory. On exhibit are five works such as a scenery from an old book, and grey images based on nude photos the artist took himself. By repeatedly rephotographing the photos, the original images are transformed into an extremely vague state.

The four nude photos including “My Mystery” all appears as white surfaces. On initial viewing it is impossible to decipher what is represented. Even at close inspection, the vague images merely spread out as granular patterns. But if you keep looking at it over time, your eyes slowly adjust and you start to recognize details such as the folds of the bed sheet. The proximity and the duration of contact with the artwork become directly reflected in the perceptual experience of the viewers.

The piece entitled “My Heart” has been altered from the original illustration, and no matter how you look, it doesn`t converge into one image. Just like a painting without an end point, and without being able to observe the details, the consciousness of the audience gets drawn into the depth of emotion, hidden in the back of the photo surface, engendered by the encounter between the artist and the scenery.

Wouters was born in Belgium, and he is also a dancer trained under the famous choreographer Maurice Bejart. His rare sensitivity which captures reality as a physical expression, creates new possibilities for photography as a medium.

(Written by Tsukasa Ikegami, Curator of the Nishimiya City Ohtani Memorial Museum.)