

BODY, CAMERA, ACTION:
UNDERSTANDING THE METAMORPHOSIS OF PERFORMANCE ART IN JAPAN

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ABSTRACT

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Daria Melnikova

Ayako Kano

This dissertation is a study of the specific medium “performance art” (*paifōmansu āto*) in Japan, situated in the transnational and comparative context of the 1960s and the 2010s. Extensively drawing on the art criticism of Akiyama Kuniharu, Ishiko Junzō, Sawaragi Noi, Tōno Yoshiaki, Tone Yasunao, and Yoshida Yoshie, this research investigates the discursive space of performance that constructs a multiplicity of historical terms such as happenings, events, festivals, spectacle. In the 1960s, the fashion of happenings (initially coined by American artist Allan Kaprow) spread outside of artistic institutions such as museums and theaters to the space of the city, raising the issue of space and environment. Unlike Kaprow’s reluctance toward documentation, many happenings were produced for the camera; in Japan, happenings coincided with the journalistic turn in avant-garde film, reinforcing the so-called concept of actuality (*akuchuariti*) and image (*eizō*). Inspired by Marcel Duchamp, the art group Hi Red Center captured the ambiguity of both reality and fiction in their performances *Yamanote Line Festival* (1963) and *Shelter Plan* (1964). In the 21st century, the art group ChimPom and the New-York based Japanese *butō* artist Eiko continue the legacy of Hi Red Center in their use of body and camera in performances that intersect not only urban but also

digital and public space. In the digital era, the sense of place and community as well as the issue of connectivity and isolation stronger than ever occupy the artists after the Fukushima disaster of March 2011. From this perspective, the theory of place (*basho*) of Japanese philosopher Nakamura Yūjirō helps us address the conundrum of body, site, community and public. While in *Making the Sky of Hiroshima “PIKA”* (2008) and in *Level 7 feat. Myth of Tomorrow* (2011) ChimPom probe the limitations of public art and democracy vis-à-vis community, in *A Body in Fukushima* and *A Body in a Station*, Eiko uses her body and camera as a conduit to connect the abandoned sites of Fukushima and Philadelphia.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1. BETWEEN REALITY AND FICTION: THE CUSTOM (FŪZOKU) OF A HAPPENING 14	
Anniversary Dinner Banquet of Defeat	28
News Flash! Who is Using the Communication Satellite.....	32
CHAPTER 2. YAMANOTE LINE FESTIVAL: FROM HAPPENING TO ENVIRONMENT	37
CHAPTER 3. BOXES AND CANS: PERFORMANCE AND DOCUMENTATION IN POSTWAR JAPAN.....	58
Mr. Hi Red Center in the City.....	62
Rescuing the Body in the Era of Image Politics: Hi Red Center’s Performance Shelter Plan (1964).....	66
CHAPTER 4. AN (IN)VISIBLE BODY PERFORMING IN PUBLIC SPACE	78
Public Art and Public Space	79
ChimPom and Making the Sky of Hiroshima “PIKA”	85
CHAPTER 5. PERFORMING MYTHS IN PUBLIC AND DIGITAL SPACES	97
Level 7 feat. Myth of Tomorrow	100
CHAPTER 6. THE CONUNDRUM OF BODY AND SITE IN PERFORMING THE TRAUMA	115
Performing a Site-Symbolic Place	125
CONCLUSION.....	138
APPENDIX.....	149
BIBLIOGRAPHY	163
INDEX	171
LIST OF CHARACTERS	173

INTRODUCTION

Japan has a long tradition of performances such as *noh* and *kabuki* that pride themselves on preserving older forms. Celebrated as cultural heritage, these genres have also received much scholarly attention. What interests me, however, are artists who sought to break with the carefully scripted and transmitted forms of traditional theater. In this study, I explore the development of “performance art” (*paifōmansu āto*) as a new artistic medium within the cultural, social and political milieu of Japan during two major periods: the 1960s and the 2010s. Even though the date of the ‘birth’ of performance art may be debated, in my study, I depart from the introduction of the generic term “happening” in the early 1960s in Japan and its specific application. Furthermore, unlike the happenings of the 1960s, the period of the 2010s shows in a particular extent the changes in the status of performance art as an artistic medium. Yet, the remaining issues and the significance of both the body and the camera in performance art bridge these fifty years.

I define “performance art” as a form of artistic expression that manipulates the performer’s body as well as the image, whether projected by the performer, captured by a camera, or codified into a text. The audience and the physical space of the performance are secondary in its definition. The notion of the body includes both physical flesh and psychological self. Praxis and duration are often described as the foundational characteristics of performance art. However, if we adopt this definition, the image of a performance work would be absorbed into the realm of documentation. Instead, I include

the image within the scope of performance art and consider the related question of the visibility of the body. How do the body and the image correlate? What processes become visible and why? What aspects are concealed, disappeared or repressed and why? How does the relationship between the body and the image develop through generations? These are major questions that I explore in my research.

In the field of scholarship on performance art, the ontology of performance remains ambiguous. On the one hand, Peggy Phelan argues that performance is a live organism: the presence of a physical body creates the performance, and, therefore, it cannot be documented. In *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*, Phelan argues that reproducing the performance is, ontologically speaking, impossible; the physicality of the performing body in a particular time and space creates the ‘real’ of a performance.¹ For her, the performance is an original that cannot have a copy; thus, the photographic image of the performance becomes something other than the performance itself.

On the other hand, in his article “The Performativity of Performance Documentation,” Philip Auslander introduces a radically different approach to the ontology of performance and its documentation. He ties performance to the documentary and theatrical categories: while the former inherits this ideology from photography as a means to access reality, the latter admits that the reality of performance can exist within the space of an image.² He argues that both categories have similarities and intersections,

¹ Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993), 148.

² Philip Auslander, “The Performativity of Performance Documentation,” *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 28, no. 3 (2006): 1-10.

for there is both the act of performance and the preservation of it: “The act of documenting an event as a performance is what constitutes it as such. . . . Documentation produces performance.”³ Auslander’s argument completely contradicts Phelan’s ontology of performance: while the latter denies the possibility of reproducing performance, the former argues that documentation can performatively produce the performance itself.

In her work *Ouvrir Le Document* (Open the Document), Anne Bénichou reviews three norms of a document—the idea of authenticity (a proof), a track (a testimony), and a pedagogical value (an instruction)—to push beyond the common understanding that the documentation that the artists create of their works is a trace.⁴ Bénichou points to the aestheticizing of documentation in the field of performance, installation, and interactive art objects, for this process is conceived by both the artists who spend much time and effort to create a “document” of their work, and by art institutions that use these documents as part of the display. These documents eradicate their own documentary value, as they are understood as art works. Furthermore, she points out that the status of the document and the art work is identified by its “place,” for example, a library or museum collection respectively. Bénichou addresses the hybrid nature of documentation being documents on one occasion, artworks on another, or both simultaneously. The field of contemporary art requires us to reevaluate the status of the document, and I find this understanding particularly salient for such an ephemeral art form as performance.

³ Ibid., 7.

⁴ Anne Bénichou, *Ouvrir Le Document: Enjeux Et Pratiques De La Documentation Dans Les Arts Visuels Contemporains* (Open the Document: The Issues and Practices of Documentation in Contemporary Visual Arts) (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2010), 47.

Furthermore, in his interdisciplinary *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*, Nick Kaye defines performance art through the concept of site; he links site-specificity to the notion of a 'site,' rather than a particular kind of place.⁵ From this perspective, performance art uses documentation as a mechanism in producing an experiential dimension of site. In theater studies, Richard Schechner connects performance theory to ritual and develops the concept of "restored behavior." His anthropological perspective explains the distance between the self and behavior, which is analogous to that between an actor and the role the actor plays on stage.⁶ The "restored behavior" involves the process of repetition of an original action and awareness of this repetition. The body uses its own memory to replicate behavior but does not necessarily do the same for someone else's "original behavior."⁷ Schechner's idea of "restored behavior" gives more freedom to the performer to manipulate the body, by distancing the body and the self, and by displacing the self of the "original behavior" of the performer and the self that is performed. This displacement implies that the body might represent itself in another psychological state as well as time and space.

In the field of art history and theater studies, there are several major traits in studying performance in Japan. First, scholars view performance art as produced by an artistic group or an individual artist in the context of avant-garde. Jennifer Weisenfeld uncovers performative experimentations of the avant-garde collective MAVO (1923-25)

⁵ Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000), 3.

⁶ Marvin Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1996), 3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 47.

to situate artists and art-related people within the context of Japanese modernity as active agents in its formation. For her, modernity in Japan and in the West generated a counterculture characterized by revolt, anarchy and nihilism, while it transformed the national culture of Japan into a ‘battleground.’⁸ In considering Mavo’s critique of the state, society, and art establishment places, Weisenfeld unifies modernism and avant-garde under one roof, thus expanding Peter Burger’s category of avant-garde.

Ming Tiampo’s intervention into the Eurocentric study of modernism explores the “new wave” of avant-garde in the 1950s-1970s, focusing on the Gutai Group (1954-1972), partly including performance.⁹ Her primary goal is to decenter the discourse of originality, rather than to illuminate the specificity of the medium of performance art, which historically was called “happenings.” Tiampo raises the question of objecthood, materials, and representation in the transnational context of modernism. Being both geopolitical and art-historical constructs on the one hand, and being viewed as derivative on the other hand, Japanese modern art had to face the question of originality and authenticity. Midori Yamamura analyzes several erotic happenings of Yayoi Kusama (1929-) in her monograph, as she writes about the originality and eccentricity of an individual artist confronting the reality of the conservative art world. Yamamura explores the biography and mental instability (neurosis) of Kusama to consider how various social

⁸ Gennifer Weisenfeld, *Mavo: Japanese Artists and the Avant-garde, 1905 - 1931* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

⁹ Ming Tiampo, “Translation: Decentering Jackson Pollock” in *Gutai: Decentering Modernism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

encounters have shaped her art.¹⁰ The specificity of Yamamura's inquiry, however, touches upon the particularity of happenings only to a certain extent.

A second tendency assigns performance art a lesser art historical value. William Marotti views the artistic practices of the late 1950s and early 1960s as art-based activism, particularly the exhibitions of the Yomiuri Independent and the happenings of the Hi Red Center (HRC formed in 1963); his approach stresses the social discontent and demonstrations of Japan after World War II to prove the existence of an "activist" mode in the Japanese avant-garde scene.¹¹ In his analysis of HRC, Marotti notes that the term "happening" was not widely used, so the artists used a vocabulary that was familiar to a broader contemporary avant-garde audience such as "events" (*ibento*) or "festivals" (*fesutibaru*).¹² Since his interest lies more in politics rather than in art, the genealogy of happenings remains outside the scope of his study.

Miryam Sas examines experimental works of the 1960s-1980s in relation to political and cultural contexts, covering the genres of underground theater, film, *butō* dance and photography. She is preoccupied not with a linear history but rather with the key theoretical moments that defined the cutting-edginess of those artistic practices.¹³ Even though the strength of her interdisciplinary study lies in the appropriation of poststructuralism and the theory of subjectivity of Japanese philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō

¹⁰ Midori Yamamura, *Yayoi Kusama: Inventing the Singular* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2015).

¹¹ William A. Marotti, *Money, Trains, and Guillotines: Art and Revolution in 1960s Japan* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013).

¹² *Ibid.*, 223.

¹³ Miryam Sas, *Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan: Moments of Encounter, Engagement, and Imagined Return* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2011), 15.

(1889-1960) in interpreting those artworks, Sas avoids happenings, as presumably not sufficiently justified theoretically.

Peter Eckersall blurs the line between theater and politics in postwar Japan; his study of Japanese underground theater or *angura* researches the theatricality of politics and the politicization of theater in terms of a new understanding of selfhood or *shutaisei* (主体性).¹⁴ The cooperation between theatre artists and political activists marked an era of creativity and experimentation in the field of avant-garde theater. In considering the origin of the performativity of protests, he connects protest with ritual; thus, the urban space transforms into a stage of public spectacle or a mass ritual of protest. Thus, the street that is the main stage of happenings evolved into a politicized space.

Reiko Tomii situates performance art within the anti-art movement or *han-geijutsu* (反芸術), a term that art-critic Tōno Yoshiaki coined in 1960 to describe new vanguard practices. Unlike Marotti, Tomii proposes to read the works of anti-art not from the perspective of the Marxist critique of capitalism but rather from the creative act defined by Marcel Duchamp.¹⁵ She explains that the concept of anti-art and an *objet* should be interpreted as a readymade. Tomii tries to find how anti-art became art, while Marotti is interested in the structure of power, democracy and capitalism in Japan. Furthermore, Tomii seeks to develop a new universal approach to the global study of

¹⁴ Peter Eckersall, *Theorizing the Angura Space: Avant-Garde Performance and Politics in Japan, 1960-2000* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

¹⁵ Reiko Tomii, "State v. (Anti-)Art: Model 1,000-Yen Note Incident by Akasegawa Genpei and Company," *positions: east asia cultures critique* 10, no. 1 (2002): 141-172, accessed September 1, 2017, <https://muse.jhu.edu/>.

modern art, proposing the notion of “international contemporaneity.” On the one hand, she notes that the mode of articulation about contemporary art in the art historical discourse of that time was still caught up in the “catching up” mentality and the fear of “imitation” while overlooking the art itself. On the other hand, she urges us to study the fact of contemporaneity, which situates Japanese contemporary art within the broader context of the global art world, as an inseparable entity from the first mode of articulation.

Since the essence of Tomii’s argument lies in the discursive practice of three major art critics—Haryū Ichirō, Miyakawa Atsushi and Tōno Yoshiaki—she misses what I consider an important point that art critic Ishiko Junzō expressed in his essay “What will be called after Happening” in the June 1968 issue of *Eiga Hyōron*.¹⁶ I find Ishiko’s argument particularly valuable because he seeks to distance himself from the issues that produce the discourse of anti-art and confuse our understanding of Japanese contemporary art in the global context. Tomii is right to link the materialization of *gendai bijutsu* (contemporary art) as a manifestation of international contemporaneity with the Tokyo Biennale and Expo Osaka of 1970; those events in their scope implied the “international.”

In this study, I focus on what I call performance-*ron*, or the discourse of the development of performance art in Japan. I study the traits that create a problem in

¹⁶ Ishiko Junzō, “Hapuningu igo to yobareru mono (What will be called after Happening),” *Eiga Hyōron* 25 (June 1968).

understanding avant-garde art in Japan in general, and performance art in particular. I identify the tendencies that disconnect prewar and postwar performative practices on the one hand, or that generalize performances as a form of anti-art and political activism on the other hand. Furthermore, my approach to performance documentation pursues a “democratizing” objective of conferring reality both on the object and its image. I borrow this approach from the ontology of the photographic image of André Bazin, as explained further below; thus, I treat neither body nor image as an index of performance. In addition, I develop a framework of the visibility of the body to consider performative practices from the perspective of art, and beyond the acts of provocation, anarchism, theatricality of politics, or activism. My major goal is to focus on the artistic value of performance art and to recognize the rise and development of performance art as an independent medium within the modern and contemporary art scene of Japan.

Chapter One connects the rise of Happenings in 1960s Japan with the season of image politics. It traces the shift from a more private sphere of the self to a more public domain of everyday life in the 1960s-1970s. The defeat of the country in WWII, the demonstrations against the renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, and the subsequent failure of the Left and the student’s movements were among the external factors that affected the visibility of the body in the realm of action. As artists intervened in the everyday to expose the body’s liberation, the new artistic conscience inspired experimentation with mediums and materials that produced the discourse of art, anti-art, and non-art or *geijutsu*, *han-geijutsu*, and *hi-geijutsu* (芸術, 反芸術, 非芸術). My

critique of labeling performances “anti-art” is in conversation with the argument of art critic Sawaragi Noi (榎木野衣).¹⁷ For him, there is no firm historical foundation for the opposition of art and anti-art; rather anti-art exists as an accomplice to art in a literal way. I approach performance practices from Yuriko Furuhashi’s key concepts of actuality (アクチュアリティ) and image or *eizō* (映像); both terms emerged during the late 1950s.¹⁸ In the discourse of cinema, photography, and television, actuality carries with it the feeling of eventfulness, currentness and factuality. *Eizō* describes the relation of cinema to television. The manipulation of the image’s psychological trustworthiness accompanies the exploration of the self and the search for new subjectivity. Starting with the essay “After Happening” (1968) by art critic Ishiko Junzō, I argue that Japanese artists pioneered the use of the camera in their happenings, undermining the sense of factuality by manipulating the trustworthiness of an image. Performance artists incorporate image into their works to remediate actuality and produce what can be called a spectacle of the spectacle.

In my analysis of performance art, I review the anarchist concept of “direct action.” In *Nikutai no Anākizumu* or *The Anarchy of the Body*, KuroDalaiJee (黒田雷児 also known as 黒ダライ児) addresses the multiplicity of performance practices in the

¹⁷ Sawaragi Noi, *Nihon, Gendai, Bijutsu* (Japan, Contemporary, Art) (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1998).

¹⁸ Yuriko Furuhashi, *Cinema of Actuality: Japanese Avant-Garde Filmmaking in the Season of Image Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).

1960s; he explores the body as a space of anarchy.¹⁹ His idea originates in the discussion of “direct action” or *chokusetsu kōdō* (直接行動) and documentation. In the 1960s, performance artists produced works that intervened in daily life. They sought to disturb the “uneventfulness” of the everyday by their happenings, which received a label of “direct action.” Artists pioneered the use of media in their artistic experiments, creating spectacular and controversial performances for both the audience and the camera. I argue that focusing on “direct action” and documentation limit the scope of performance art; it leads to the disappearance of the body in the realm of activism on the one hand, and the refusal of the performance’s ontology as an image on the other hand. Rather than an expression of direct action, the form of street performance marks a shift from a radical confrontation of the political era to the economic era, which consumes the overt form of protest.

Chapter Two analyzes *Yamanote Line Festival* (1962) performed by Takamatsu Jirō, Akasegawa Genpei, and Nakanishi Natsuyuki (the artists of Hi Red Center) in Tokyo. I argue that during the *Yamanote Line Festival* the presence of the camera and portable *objets* in the city space created what art critic Ishiko Junzō calls the confusion of awareness of art action and non-art action, and that therefore Hi Red Center was able to capture the ambiguity in their happenings. I explore the notion of environment, festival

¹⁹ Kuroda Raiji, *Nikutai no anākizumu: 1960-nendai Nihon bijutsu ni okeru pafōmansu no chika suimyaku* (The Anarchy of the Body: Underground Streams of Performance Art in the 1960s Japanese Art) (Tokyo: Guramu Bukkusu, 2010).

and the Duchampian idea of readymade in relation to happenings, as I do a close reading of Ishiko's essay "After Happening."

In Chapter Three, I focus on the issue of a document in the context of the performances of Japanese art group Hi Red Center (HRC, 1963-1964). I review the ontology of performance of Peggy Phelan to introduce a new approach to the definition of performance in relation to its documentation, which I argue can exist as both a live action and an image through an analogical relation. I juxtapose the argument of Phelan and that of Philip Auslander on performance documentation to include the image in the ontology of performance. Since both Phelan and Auslander depart from the issue of performance vis-à-vis photographic image—in this case it covers photography and video—I review the ontology of photographic image developed by André Bazin. And then, I apply the notion of photographic image of Bazin to my study HRC's performance *Shelter Plan* (1964).

Chapters Four and Five investigate the notion of the physical body in the age of digital image, as technology and social media create an overexposed visibility of a "ghostly," absent body. I argue that the intersection of digital and public spaces becomes a productive site of confrontation for performers questioning the role of art in moments of social crisis. Particularly, I examine the sense of place and community as well as the issue of connectivity and isolation that occupy the current generation of artists after the Fukushima disaster of March 2011. In this chapter, I analyze two public art projects – *Making the Sky of Hiroshima "PIKA"* (2008) by Japanese art group Chim↑Pom (also

ChimPom), and *Hiroshima Projection* (1999) by Polish artist Krzysztof Wodiczko – to address the peculiarity of public space in Japan, especially when it involves local community. Then, I examine the guerilla performance *Level 7 feat. Myth of Tomorrow*, which was created by ChimPom at Shibuya Station in Tokyo in response to the Fukushima disaster, and the role of social media in this event.

And finally, in Chapter Six, I consider a series of performances by the *butō* artist known as Eiko, *A Body in Fukushima* and *A Body in a Station* (2014-2015) that connects the site of Fukushima and train stations in Philadelphia and New York. For my analysis, I review the intersection of public art and democracy discussed by Rosalyn Deutsche that I approach through Nakamura Yūjirō's philosophy of place (*basho*).²⁰ In his book *Basho (toposu)*, Nakamura explains the notion of place-foundation or *basho qua foundation* as he combines the category of field (*ba*) from natural science and linguistic *topos*.²¹ He suggests four aspects of *basho qua foundation*: the foundation of existence, somatic place, symbolic place, and linguistic *topos*.²² I use the framework of these four types of place in relation to performance art within the context of public art in Japan.

²⁰ Her definition of democracy stems from such theorists as Hannah Arendt, Jacques Rancière, and Claude Lefort who approach democracy as a space of appearance (Arendt), visibility and invisibility (Rancière), or emptiness (Lefort) respectively as I will explain in Chapter Four. For Deutsche, democracy exists as long as the public space gives presence to those who disappeared or were invisible or unheard; in other words, democracy is more about vision than visibility. For more information see Rosalyn Deutsche, *Hiroshima After Iraq: Three Studies in Art and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

²¹ Nakamura combines natural science (field, *ba*) and linguistics (*topos*) to think about place (*basho*) from four perspectives: *basho* of natural philosophy and rhetoric, *basho* of physics, from the non-linear material system to the life system (also in physics), and *basho qua foundation*.

²² Nakamura Yūjirō, *Basho: Toposu* (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1989), 125-126.

CHAPTER 1. BETWEEN REALITY AND FICTION: THE CUSTOM (FŪZOKU) OF A HAPPENING

In June 1968, the film magazine *Eiga Hyōron* (Film Critique) published an essay “Hapuningu igo to yobareru mono” or “What is After Happening,” by renowned art critic Ishiko Junzō (1928-77). The piece is fascinating because it highlights not only the major issues of the medium of happening but also of the new forms of postwar Japanese art in general. Ishiko focuses on the concept of the expressive act (*hyōgen kōi*) that blurs the boundary between artistic performance and everyday life. He suggests that the very idea of anonymous action should be reviewed in light of Duchamp’s readymade *objet*, even though the term was covered by American artist Allan Kaprow (1927-2006) in 1959.

Ishiko was not alone in turning his attention to the notion of *objet* in the increasing discussion of happenings. Art critic and artist Yoshida Yoshie traces the transformation of happenings from *objet* to action painting, and then from assemblages to environments. His point is valuable not so much for situating happenings within the transnational context of Japan, the U.S., and even the USSR, but for describing the background in which the term “happening” spreads its roots. On the one hand, news media globally advanced the use of the term. On the other hand, “happening” was both changing its area of application and disturbing from within the social milieu of Japan.

The everyday of happenings was closely associated with television, more specifically with the production of media events. The media coverage of political protests that emerged in the early 1960s and the constant presence of the camera that accompanied the so-called season of politics contributed to the ubiquitous use of the

word “happening.” For the notion of both *objet* and *eizō* being intertwined in what is understood as happening by artists in Japan, I argue that the common strategies of manipulating the image’s psychological trustworthiness accompany the exploration of the self and the search for new subjectivity. Central to my analysis is the changing concept of happening concerning *objet* and *eizō*. Starting with the essay “What is After Happening” of Ishiko Junzō, I argue that Japanese artists pioneered the use of the camera in their happenings, undermining the sense of actuality to produce what I would call a spectacle of the spectacle. In my analysis of performance practices of the art group Hi Red Center (1963-64), I investigate how the presence of the performer’s body and the camera creates the ambiguity of reality and fiction. From this perspective, I continue the conversation of Yuriko Furuhashi on avant-garde cinema in the field of performance art by applying her critical concepts of actuality (アクチュアリティ) and image or *eizō* (映像) that emerged during the late 1950s. In the discourse of cinema, actuality carries with it the feeling of eventfulness, current-ness, and factuality while *eizō* describes the relation of cinema to television.

Furthermore, in this chapter, I focus on artists whose social status and artistic expression were closely related to each other, to address the nature of the medium of happening in transnational context. My approach to the study of performance art in the artistic milieu of postwar Japan is in conversation with Ming Tiampo’s intervention into the Eurocentric study of modernism.²³ Being both geopolitical and art-historical

²³ For more information see Ming Tiampo, “Translation: Decentering Jackson Pollock” in *Gutai: decentering modernism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

constructs on the one hand, and being viewed as derivative on the other hand, Japanese modern art had to face the question of originality and authenticity. Unlike Tiampo's focus on cultural mercantilism that she borrowed from economics, I do not seek to decenter the discourse of originality or to answer the question of who came first. Neither am I interested in creating causal and linear narratives about artistic influence. Instead, I would like to convey the awareness of a dialogue between artists that has persistently found ways to cross borders and to undermine convention. I argue that there is a universal trend in redefining art and finding a new form of artistic expression that comes with action and peculiar to Japan definitions and discoveries.

In late 1950s-60s Japan, art critics and artists used the notion of *fūzoku* (風俗) to articulate the phenomenon of happening (*hapuningu*) or *dekigoto* (出来事) that spread into both the everyday and artistic milieu. In this context, they sought to answer the question of whether happening was another trend (*fūzoku*) or had the capacity as a form of expression. In his article of 1968, Yoshida Yoshie compares the popularization of happenings with the term *apure* (from prewar French *Après Guerre* movement) that Japanese youth reintroduced into the Japanese vocabulary around 1945-1955, after a series of crimes were labeled *apuregeru-no hanzai* (アプレの犯罪). It was mostly associated with the social misconduct of the young and meant reckless, degenerate, or irresponsible.

In postwar Japan, the social phenomenon of *apure* reflected the spirit of young people in response to the collapsed notion of traditions, morals, and values. For example,

in 1948, Tokyo University student Yamazaki Akitsugi organized “Light Club” (*Hikari no kurabu* 光のクラブ), a money lending business. The group of young people spread a vast advertisement campaign and raised enough money to lend with a high-interest rate. After being arrested for the violation of the Price Control edict and as a result having his company bankrupted, Yamazaki poisoned himself. His classmate Hiraoka Kimitake (later Mishima Yukio) would use the accident and Yamazaki as a protagonist in his story *The Age of Blue* (*Ao no jidai* 青の時代, 1950). This incident was one of many *apure* cases that reflected the everyday transformation among young people in Japan. While *apure* was exclusive to the Japanese audience, the term ‘happening’ was of a global scale.²⁴

Furthermore, the news media itself popularized the word ‘happening’ in the coverage of news that involved social discontent. For example, *Asahi Journal* published an article *Wakai Chikara ga Enjita Shinjuku Hapuningu* (The Performance of Young Power in a Shinjuku Happening) in November 1968 that discussed recent misbehavior of young people in Shinjuku.²⁵ In May 1968, Japanese anchor Kijima Norio produced “The Happening Show of Kijima Norio” that was broadcasted live about social and artistic events on Nippon TV on Saturdays from 10:30-11.30 p.m. The first broadcast of May 18 did not start smoothly. Many spectators (reaching up to 5000 students and young salarymen) flooded the square in front of the Shinjuku Koma Theater for the show, including more than one hundred police officers. There occurred a small argument

²⁴ Yoshida Yoshie, “Hapuningu no henbō (Transformation of Happenings),” *Tenbō* 128 (August 1969), 93.

²⁵ Amano Michie, *Wakai Chikara ga enjita Shinjuku hapuningu* (The Performance of Young Power in a Shinjuku Happening), *Asahi Jānaru*, no. 10 (45) (508), (November 1968).

between the crowd and the police, and some audience members were disturbed by the ridiculous content of the program. Because of the number of people that gathered in the park, Kijima could not reach the mike and ran away to the nearest Toho parlor. The police had to interfere as the young people shouted, “We want to speak to Kijima Norio” or “Give in Kijima Norio.”²⁶ These media events reflect the cultural context of the phenomenon of a happening. “The word ‘happening’ was all over the place,” acknowledges Yoshida, but “the general audience had mixed feelings. The common joke demonstrates the common humorous attitude: ‘a dog pees on a hydrant—this is a performance.’”²⁷ The society closely associated the term “happening” with demonstrations and misbehavior rather than a form of artistic expression—any incident that was covered by mass media could be called a happening. Thus, the notions of actuality and happening not only were intertwined and interconnected but could also refer to the same event in the news media.

Ishiko Junzō and Yoshida Yoshie excavate the happening’s capacity of expression beyond being a current and popularized art form. They pay tribute to the father of the term in artistic meaning, American artist Allan Kaprow, and his “18 Happenings in 6 parts” that he presented at the Reuben Gallery in New York in the fall of 1959. Both Ishiko and Yoshida recognize Kaprow’s authorship, but they are less convinced about the methods of Happening, as they review the argument of American critic and activist Susan

²⁶ “Yoru no Shinjuku, “Hitosōdō: Tonda shin terebi shō (Evening Riot in Shinjuku: Unexpected New TV Show),” *Asahi Shimbun*, 21 May 1968.

²⁷ Yoshida, “Hapuningu no henbō,” 93.

Sontag. In her famous essay “Happenings: An Art of Radical Juxtaposition” (1962), Sontag sees in Happenings the Surrealist sensibility of arts that were “united by the idea of destroying conventional meanings and creating new meaning or counter-meanings through radical juxtaposition” on the one hand, and she references Artaud’s “theater of cruelty” as the closest way to describe the features of happenings on the other hand.²⁸ In his review of Sontag, Yoshida suggests a link between happening-like action and the power of imagination in the short story “Lemon” written by Kajii Motojirō (1901-32) in 1924.²⁹ The protagonist buys a lemon and walks in the department of art books and albums at the Maruzen Store in Kyoto; he picks one book after another, assembles them in a pile and puts the lemon on top of it. Then, the hero leaves the store imagining what if the golden bomb, the lemon, explodes and destroys the entire building into small pieces. Yoshida recognizes in the theatrical and terrorist act of the hero a potential of being called a happening based on the argument of Sontag; thus, Yoshida recognizes in “Lemon” the precursor of happenings in Japan.

Ishiko takes a closer look at the argument of Sontag by fleshing out seven principles of Happening that Allan Kaprow theorized in *Assemblage, Environments, and Happenings* (1966):

- (A) *The line between art and life should be kept as fluid, and perhaps indistinct, as possible.*
- (B) *Therefore, the source of themes, materials, actions, and the relationship between them are to be derived from any place or period except from the arts, their derivatives, and their milieu.*

²⁸ Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation, and Other Essays* (New York: Dell Pub. Co., 1966), 263-274.

²⁹ Yoshida, “Hapuningu no henbō,” 93.

- (C) *The performance of a Happening should take place over several widely spaced, sometimes moving and changing locales.*
- (D) *Time, which follows closely on space considerations, should be variable and discontinuous.*
- (E) *Happenings should be performed once only.*
- (F) *It follows that audiences should be eliminated entirely.*
- (G) *The composition of a Happening proceeds exactly as in Assemblage and Environments, that is, it is evolved as a collage of events in certain spans of time and in certain spaces.*³⁰

Since these seven principles echo such qualities of Artaud's "theater of cruelty" as the elimination of individuality, one-ness of action, and recovery of ambiguity, Sontag emphasizes Artaud's idea of "total spectacle."³¹ However, as Ishiko criticizes, the sense of the object, the body or feelings that are involved in an action, are lost:

If happenings can be said to have started from the independence of the expressive act that tries to claim autonomy as a phenomenon, then the body would have no condensing function, other than to be dismembered as a part of the phenomenon. If we were to state it in a more general way, the methodological understanding of action painting lies in its awareness that the relationship between the self and the world can no longer be represented as one reality, and in its attempt to be a fragment of the world, and, in its discovery of the directness of the action that attempts to engage all at once with the world. From this we can understand that action is not shown there unified with some concept, but is presented as action itself, that is, as a naked existence that is nothing but the body. Therefore, and this is precisely why, it seeks a more total recovery of the senses. When Sontag sees the precursor of happenings in Artaud, will she not lose sight of the further development of happenings, taking the form of environmental spatial formation? This is how it seems to me.³²

³⁰ Allan Kaprow, *Assemblage, Environments & Happenings* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1966), 188-198.

³¹ For more information see Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre and Its Double: Essays* (Montreuil: Calder, 1970).

³² Ishiko, "Hapuningu igo to yobareru mono," 76-77. Translated from:

ハプニングが、現象として自律しようとする、表現行為の自立性から出発したのだとすれば、先述のように肉体は現象の部分として解体されるほか、どのような凝縮機能をもはたさないだろう。より一般的ないい方なら、アクション・ペインティングという方法的認識が、すでに自己

In this context, Ishiko raises the issue of the status of the body, specifically the physical body as an object in performance, as well as a happening itself as an object; he highlights an essential element in the theory of happenings, the notion of the environment, as well. Ishiko indicates that a happening, even though it unites the performer and the spectator into one body, is a phenomenon of action that by itself embodies a form of communication, and, thus, it is a form of media.³³ He reads the principle (F) of Kaprow not as a literal elimination of the audience but rather as the moment when it becomes part of a performance: “The happening emerges when a spectator stops being a spectator.”³⁴ In this form of communication, the phenomenon of an individual’s environment is lost, since the bodies, actions, objects belong to the same world, and this seems to bother Ishiko because then the environment is nothing but an “asexual and transparent world.”³⁵ He writes: “the vector of happenings that leads towards the body as *objet* corresponds simultaneously, as a matter of course, with the logic that promotes the autonomous movement of the concept, and therefore also the autonomy of the image. These also lead to the autonomous independence of expression as phenomenon. Cognitively, this means

と世界との関係をひとつのリアリティに仮構することの不可能性に醒め、ついに世界一の断片であること、まさにそのことによって、世界に一举にかかわろうとする行為の直接性の発見であったことによってしても、行為は、なんらかの概念と合一してそこに転現されるのではなく、かえって行為それ自体、したがって肉体であるしかない裸性の実在に還元される。だから、であればこそよりトータルな知覚の回復が求められるのであったのではないか。ゾンタークは、アルトーにハプニングの先駆を見ることによって、ハプニングの発展的形式ともいえる部分の、とりわけいっそうエンバイラメンタルな空間設定への論派を、いつか見失うことになるのではあるまいか、と僕には思えるのである。

³³ Ibid., 78.

³⁴ Ibid., 78.

³⁵ Ibid., 78.

the impossibility of action to mediate the movement from word to image, and vice versa. The phrase “painting as phenomenon” captures this situation most appropriately.”³⁶ What Ishiko criticizes is the aim of searching for a pure subjective expression in a happening; he argues that if theater, music or dance has the quality of a happening, it does not mean that the happening is theater. In his critique, Ishiko opposes the theory of the new theater of American scholar Michael Kirby published in 1965. Kirby suggests that happenings are a non-matrixed performance with elements of theater. By emphasizing that a happening is not theater, Ishiko points out that the fashion of happenings as “the aimless, non-everyday direct action” that embodies another fashion.³⁷

His critique of “customization” anticipates the logic of dissimulation that Jean-Francois Lyotard developed in his critique of semiotics as nihilism in *Libidinal Economy* (1974), specifically viewing any event as a signifier, or “the signified of which can be analyzed according to a wider structure.”³⁸ In other words, the happening-ness of *fūzoku* mirrors Lyotard’s observation that “the theatrical division between a real outside and an inside simulating this outside (to simplify) rests on the contrary on the conviction that everything is a sign, but that nothing is marked or signified, that in this sense, signs are

³⁶ Ibid., 78. Translated from:

ハプニングのオブジェとしての肉体へと向かうベクトルは、当然ながら同時作用的に、観念の自律運動を、したがってまたイメージの自律化をも促す論理と対応する。それらはいずれも現象であるしかない表現の自律的自立でもあり、認識的には、言葉からイメージへ、あるいはその逆へとわたることの、行為を媒介とする不可能性のほかならず、「現象としての絵画」といういい方が、その間の事情をもっとも適切にいい当てている。

³⁷ Ibid., 78. Translated from:

ハプニングが風化したのではなく、風俗が一見ハプニング的に現出したということにすぎないのだから。

³⁸ James Williams, *Lyotard and the Political* (London: Routledge, 2000), 44.

signs of nothing. . . .”³⁹ Ishiko foresees Lyotard’s desire to break with modernity in the most radical way, when he criticizes contemporaneity. In his attempt to confront the mode of art criticism in his more expanded version of the 1968 essay “After Happening” Ishiko follows what art critic Miyakawa Atsushi (1933-77) started in his essay “After Informel” in *Bijutsu techō*, June 1963.⁴⁰ In the original essay, Miyakawa emphasized the need to simultaneously confirm whether or not modernity took shape in the arts and to acknowledge the establishment of contemporaneity in the realm of expression. In Japan, *Informel* is associated with Gutai artists who sought to oppose their concern with individualism to the notion of a national body.⁴¹ Miyakawa suggests that “before” and “after” *Informel* marks the historical transition from modern (*kindai*) to the contemporary (*gendai*) era. The novelty of action painting and abstract expressionism led art criticism to connect those artistic practices to the fashionable idea of art now.⁴²

In the late 1960s, the object of Ishiko’s critique lay in the belief that the existing mode of thinking about contemporaneity, which Miyakawa acknowledged, remained caught up in modernity. Ishiko appropriated Miyakawa’s approach to contemporaneity when he designated a particular form of expression as both the perception and fact of

³⁹ Jean-Francois Lyotard, *Libidinal Economy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 69.

⁴⁰ For more information see Ishiko Junzō, *Imēji-ron* (Discourse of Image) (Tokyo: Ramasha, 1987).

⁴¹ French art critic and collector Michel Tapié published a book and organized an exhibition of the same name, Art Informel, in Paris in 1952. The styles included abstract paintings of Karel Appel, Alberto Burri, Willem de Kooning, and Jean Dubuffet.

⁴² In the 1950s, in the post-occupation era, The Gutai Art Association (1954-72) became the embodiment of *gendai* for both their approach to the artistic expression and their achievement of international acclaim. For example, in *Challenge to The Mud* (1955), half naked Kazuo Shiraga (1924-2008) cast his body into a pile of clay, tossed himself in the material back and forth, sculpted shapes with his body, and finally created the so-called expanded painting.

contemporaneity rather than assuming that contemporary was something else. Ishiko writes: “While Mr. Miyakawa viewed the potential of contemporaneity in the act of expression of Informel, I probe the realization of that potential in the medium of a happening.”⁴³ I find Ishiko’s argument particularly valuable for he seeks to distance himself from the issues of historicism that produces both the discourse of anti-art and confuses the understanding of Japanese contemporary art in the global context. Ishiko turns from the semiotics of an image to that of a language that coincides with the popularized movement of the so-called linguistic turn in philosophy. As he questions the epistemological liability of contemporaneity, Ishiko reviews the mode of fetishization and customization of the mode of describing happenings and therefore contemporaneity. For Ishiko, a happening is most importantly a form of communication and, therefore, a type of media. His specific emphasis on communication originates in the notion of environment and its multiplicity that culminated in the exhibition “From Space to Environment” in 1966. In that exhibit, artists, sculptors, architects, designers, musicians, photographers, city planners and critics of the “Environment Society” considered various angles of the environment from the space of the city to technology and electronics. Later in this chapter, I will return to the significance of the exhibition in defining space and environment as well as the place of happenings in this process.

⁴³ Ishiko, “After Happening” in *Imēji-ron*, 236. Translated from: アンフォルメルに表現における現代への可能性を見た宮川氏にならば、ぼくは、ハプニングにこそ、その実体化への転機をすかしてみたいのである。

What is an environment? Originally, Allan Kaprow designates environments and happenings being “the passive and active sides of a single coin, whose principle is an *extension*.”⁴⁴ For example, his environment *Yard* (1961) was made of hundreds of used tires scattered over the sculpture garden of the Martha Jackson Gallery in New York; visitors could walk on the tires or throw them around. Kaprow organized happening *Eat* in the Bronx in 1965. It was set in the caves of a former brewery, where visitors were offered white and red wine by two girls, or they could climb a ladder to get bread and jam in an alcove, or try to reach bananas and apples hanging from the ceiling.⁴⁵ Even though Michael Kirby calls *Eat* not “quite theater” for its emphasis on the “static environmental elements” rather than performance qualities, these two acts of expression illustrate the blurred boundary between environments and happenings.⁴⁶

However, unlike the Kaprowian extension of environments in happenings, as Yoshida Yoshie explains, many artists expanded actions from happenings to environments. This meant “to expand an action dramatically and ritualistically, to explore the meaning of a new communication of life from action, to push it towards the political and social space, and on the other hand, to reject the theatrical, to organize accurately and with tension an event, which is provoked between action and object.”⁴⁷ As an example,

⁴⁴ Kaprow, *Assemblage, Environments & Happenings*, 184.

⁴⁵ Michael Kirby, “Allan Kaprow’s “Eat,” *The Tulane Drama Review* 10, no. 2 (Winter, 1965): 44-49.

⁴⁶ Michael Kirby, *The Art of Time* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1969), 77.

⁴⁷ Yoshida, “Hapuningu no henbō,” 95. Translated from:

それは行為を、ドラマチックに、またはリチュアリスチックにひろげてゆくもの、また行為から生活のあたらしいコミュニケーションの意味をさぐろうとするもの、それを政治や社会の空間にまで押しひろげようとするもの、さらにまた逆に、劇的なものを否定し、行為と物とのあいだに惹起されるイベントを、緊張にたえて正確におこなおうとするものなどがある。

Yoshida mentions the ritualistic tendency in the scandalous happening of Japanese artist Kudō Tetsumi (工藤哲巳 1935-90) when he licked a phallus shaped *objet* and stirred up the thighs of a girl with an electric drill; or the destructive tendency of European happenings such as the *décollage* performances of German artist and co-founder of the Fluxus Movement Wolf Vostell (1932-98).⁴⁸ While Kudō expanded the action into a dangerous erotic ritual, Vostell deconstructed the notion of a collage by tearing down rather than assembling parts, or producing objects with integrated TV sets and car parts. Both examples deal with the tension between the action and object in one way or another.

The place or location delineates the characteristics of a happening as well. In late 1950s-early 1960s New York, it was limited to the intimate and interactive experience in small galleries or random “found” places; artists sought to break the fourth wall of the conventional theater practice and to escape the traditional modes of artistic expression. In 1960s Japan, there were cultural and artistic institutions that promoted avant-garde, experimental and underground cinema, documentary, dance, music, animation, and theater, and organized Happenings. Thus, critics like Yoshida and Ishiko situate the movement of Happenings within the context of intermedia, underground cinema, and environment art in the 1960s. The Sōgetsu Art Center (SAC, 草月アートセンター), Art Theatre Guild of Japan (ATG, 日本アート・シアター・ギルド), The Nihon University Film Study Club (日本大学芸術部映画研究会), The VAN Film Research Center (VAN

⁴⁸ Ibid., 95.

映画科学研究), and The Modern Art Center of Japan (モダン・アート・センター・オブ・ジャパン) provided collaborative environments for all genres of expression including fine arts, photography, and film, for both Japanese and international artists. These centers held festivals, concerts and screening programs showcasing the most cutting edge and innovative works, including Happenings that were performed either in conjunction with events or independently. The Sōgetsu Art Center was among the first places that hosted several Happenings. On May 24, 1962, Yoko Ono performed the scandalous “Cut Piece” wherein any member of the audience could come up on stage and cut a piece of her clothes.⁴⁹ Robert Rauschenberg created what he called a “combine” of painting and sculpture, *Gold Standard* when he painted and placed objects on a gold folding screen during the event “Twenty Questions to Bob Rauschenberg” on November 28, 1964.⁵⁰ A number of Happenings were held at the SAC in conjunction with the “From Space to the Environment” (*Kūkan kara kankyō e*) exhibition that was organized in Ginza Matsuya Department Store between 11-16 November in 1966 in Tokyo. For *Compound View No. 1*, music composer Shiomi Mieko (塩見允枝子 b.1938), avant-garde artist Yamaguchi Katsuhiko (山口勝弘, 1928-2018), music critic Akiyama Kuniharu (秋山邦晴, 1929-96) and artist Ay-O (爨嘔 b. 1931) sat around the table with a water tank on top of it; they performed random actions such as writing a word on a cigarette and then

⁴⁹ For more information see Julia Bryan-Wilson, “Remembering Yoko Ono’s ‘Cut Piece,’” *Oxford Art Journal*, 26:1 (2003): 99-124.

⁵⁰ For more information see Hiroko Ikegami, *The Great Migrator: Robert Rauschenberg and the Global Rise of American Art* (Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, 2010).

smoking or taking the temperature of the water.⁵¹ Even though this happening showed some absurd actions, it was performed on stage clearly marking the performative and artistic expression recognized as such. In contrast with the happenings that were staged in urban space, these actions could confuse the audience but there was a distance between the performer and the spectator.

Anniversary Dinner Banquet of Defeat

Yoshida Yoshie titled one of the first happenings “Anniversary Dinner Banquet of Defeat” (*Haisen kinen bansaikai* 敗戦記念晩餐会). This took place on August 15, 1962, with Akasegawa Genpei, artist Iida Tatsuo (1948-), avant-garde artist Kazakura Shō (1936-2007), avant-garde artist and musician Tone Yasunao (1935-), butō artist Hijikata Tatsumi (1928-1986), artist Yoshino Tatsumi (1940-), artist Yoshimura Masunobu (1932-2011), among others. Yoshida chose the date of August 15, the day World War II ended with Japan’s surrender. Although this is known in Japan as “Anniversary of the End of War” (*shūsen hinen hi*, 終戦記念日), Yoshida chose to call it “Anniversary of Defeat.” Yoshida explained, “unless people become aware of the defeat, no matter how much time passes Japan will remain purposeless. The defeat meant ‘We can’t eat anything,’ so we decided to eat.” At that time, Yoshida was living at a community center where many financially limited artists could meet. On the day of the banquet, at the

⁵¹ Midori Yoshimoto, “Fluxus Nexus: Fluxus in New York and Japan,” *post* (July 9, 2013), accessed May 26, 2018, http://post.at.moma.org/content_items/199-fluxus-nexus-fluxus-in-new-york-and-japan#Fig%2016-20%20jump.

entrance was a topless man with muscular body and hairy chest, greeting guests with a box for collecting money next to him. With the collected money the artists bought meat and rice for the banquet. However, as the guests could not get even one bite of the food, the public expressed anger and accused the organizers of fraud; in turn, Asahi Shimbun questioned the presence of art in this work. Unfortunately, there were no pictures taken to show the humor of the event, though an invitation card with the name of a participant and “Art minus Art” written at the top conveys the prankish mood of the happening. In the money-sensitive era of postwar Japan, people used to think more about the value of money than about art. Although the guests’ expectation of what they should have received in exchange of money was deceived and some critics found lack of art in the performance, Yoshida suggests that the banquet’s happening extended an everyday activity into the artistic context.⁵² For instance, the topless artist Yoshimura Masanobu continued to brush his teeth for two hours, which caused his gums to bleed. In this case, the extension was realized not only in the performance of a daily ritual in a non-everyday environment but also taking the daily activity to extremes for a non-everyday purpose.

The principle of extension that Kaprow advocated as the passive and active sides of environments and happenings does not work quite right in this case. In his essay of 1969, Yoshida points to the connection of happenings with the news media and social environment and emphasizes that, unlike Kaprow, Japanese artists implemented the

⁵² Yoshida Yoshie, “Yoshida Yoshie: ōraru hisutorī (Yoshida Yoshie: Oral History),” interview by Mitsuda Yuri and Nakajima Izumi, *Oral History Archive of Japanese Art*, August 14, 2011, http://www.oralarthistory.org/archives/yoshida_yoshie/interview_01.php.

disturbance (*kakuran*) of the society from inside through the capacity of happenings. He relates the emerging practice or the extension of everyday into art and vice versa, to expanded cinema and intermedia in the early 1960s. His awareness of the role of news media is also evident in the use of the word *akuchuaritii* (actuality) in the context of happenings. Furthermore, Ishiko Junzō mentions the “actuality of happenings” when he discusses the capacity or rather the strength of the medium in confusing reality and fiction; he finds this capacity in the anonymousness of action. I will return to the argument of Ishiko later, but Tone Yasunao refers to the loss of actuality among those actions that do not possess an anonymous nature anymore in the late 1960s. In sum, their reference to actuality testifies to what Furuhata calls the journalistic turn of political avant-garde filmmakers that expands to happenings as well. For filmmakers the medium of film was a way to convey their critique of the newsworthiness of journalism.⁵³ The Season of Politics produced by the marriage of politics and media bridged cinema and journalism, encouraging other media to appropriate the strategies of journalism and television. In the proximity of filmmaking and news media, while filmmakers experimented with the strategies to simultaneously appropriate and differentiate the spectacle of newsmaking, artists could take advantage of the word “happening” itself in creating the confusion of media event making and artistic expression.

This period witnesses the rise of media discourse. In 1962, Japanese architect Isozaki Arata published the essay “City Demolition Industry, Inc.” (*Toshi hakaigyō* 都市

⁵³ Furuhata, *Cinema of Actuality*, 3.

破壊業 KK) in *Japan Architect* (*Shinken-chiku* 新建築) in September 1962, as he developed the idea of “Invisible City” (*mienai toshi* 見えない都市) on the merger of urban planning and information space. In 1962, American historian Daniel J. Boorstin wrote *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* emphasizing the falsehood of image in the news production or the so-called phenomenon of “pseudo-event.” Japanese anthropologist Umesao Tadao (梅棹忠夫, 1920-2010) argued the role of mass media in advancing society into the Information Age in his essay “Information Industry Theory” (*Jōhō sangyō ron* 情報産業論) published in *Asahi Broadcast* (*Hōsō Asahi* 放送朝日) in 1963. The concept of falsehood in relation to both image and the production and distribution of information in the city space tie together these works.

First, I would like to address Isozaki’s “City Demolition Industry, Inc.” that has become an influential essay for artists including Hi Red Center. Isozaki tells a story of a former killer turned into an owner of a seemingly utopic company for developing approaches to destroy cities. By the end of the essay, there is an impression that this is a conversation between the ego and the alter ego of Isozaki as an architect. Isozaki critiques the abstract concept of the city, and suggests that methods—i.e. actions—matter more than the “conceptual aim of destruction”: “Now, if one is of the opinion that only methods are of significance nowadays and that each individual can prove his identity only when he risks his life in executing these prescriptions, it might be said that the aim and the prospect are only ghost images and that the real image is present only in

the methods.”⁵⁴ The idea of urban design and city planning becomes intertwined with the former killer’s prospectus of the city’s demolition, in other words, the desire of the killer to destroy the city equals the desire to challenge city planning. In the period of economic growth of the 1960s, the idea of art, what is seen as art can be identified only through actions and not through theories.

News Flash! Who is Using the Communication Satellite

Media-conscious Hi Red Center probes the risky task of producing the “real images” of the city and engages with the issue of falsehood reinforced by news media in various ways. This also raises the question of the blurred boundary between artistic expression and criminal activity. For instance, HRC published a set of leaflets titled *News Flash! Who is Using the Communication Satellite* (Tokuhō! Tsūshin eisei wa nanimono ni tsukawarete iruka! 特報!通信衛星は何物に使われてるか) in April 1964. This project highlights the coincidence between the TV broadcast as well as the assassination of John F. Kennedy and an attempted assassination of the U.S. ambassador to Japan Edwin Reischauer; artists imply the possibility of a third assassination of French President Charles de Gaulle in light of the upcoming broadcast testing between Japan and Europe. HRC explained that they had no interest in prophecy; rather they suddenly noticed a coincidence between these events and turned it into art: “Once we sent off our

⁵⁴ Isozaki Arata, “City Demolition Industry, Inc.” in *Disastrous Consequences*, ed. Eric Cazdyn (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 855.

concern about the time coincidence, then we did not care about the result.”⁵⁵ In their realization of prophecy, art critic Sawaragi Noi notes that the possibility to acknowledge their actions as both art and crime depends on the unfixed boundary between art and crime. However, I suggest that it is the information city—the intersection of city and news media—that catches the actions of artists in the in-betweenness and undeterminedness of art and crime.

The distinction of art and non-art or art and crime lie in the anonymity of action being recognized as a happening. Ishiko explains that this is the power of a new form of expression to remain an unrecognizable action. He compares the anonymity or the state of a non-understandable action with the Duchampian *objet* such as the urinal titled *Fountain*, which did not exist as a readymade until Breton called it that.⁵⁶

The freedom of exceeding all previous understandings of action—neither being artistic action nor non-artistic action—disturbs the everyday

⁵⁵ Sawaragi, *Nihon, Gendai, Bijutsu*, 209-210. Translated from:

そして、最初は「別にそういう俗っぽい予言者の興味でやったのではなくて、たまたま偶然の油断した隙間を見つけて、そこでただ一つの芸術をただけ」であり、「時間的暗号の警告をその時間内に発送してしまえば、あとはもう結果はどうでもいい」ことだったにせよ、それが予想もできない展開を見せ、芸術とも犯罪ともつかない非決定的なあわいの領域から、芸術であると同時に犯罪であるような決定可能な領域が、その時点ですで見え隠れしていたように思えるのは、わたしだけでしょか。

⁵⁶ Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) was a French artist and writer who is recognized as the one of the most influential figures in the art world in the twentieth century. He turned from the traditional forms of visual arts to developing art that could agitate the mind. His scandalous work *Fountain*, a porcelain urinal put on its back and signed “R.Mutt,” was anonymously submitted for the exhibition for the Society of Independent Artists in New York in 1917. The decision to reject the work by the board members of the society infuriated Duchamp who advocated for a jury-free exhibition. Duchamp had the work photographed by a famous photographer and gallery owner Alfred Stieglitz (1877-1946); since the original of *Fountain* got lost, this image is the only remaining evidence of the work. It was not until 1935 that *Fountain* acquired its identity as a “readymade” when André Breton, the leader of the surrealist movement and poet, wrote about the intervention of Duchamp in plastic arts in his article “Phare de la Mariée” (The Lighthouse of the Bride) in the surrealist magazine *Minotaure*. The theory of “readymades” turns into ordinary manufactured found objects that Duchamp took out of their context and modified according to his ideas.

understanding through its logic of the exceeding movement and distorts its relationality. Conversely, it was such a disturbance of understanding that forced the birth of a term like happening, and this force was the actuality of happening. And as the neutrality of the term happening suggests, it was related to expressive actions in general, be it fine-arts, theater, music, dance, and also sought to cover at once the suture between reality and fiction through the now-ness of action.⁵⁷

According to Ishiko, a happening is an anonymous action until recognized as such. The choice or the mode of recognizing the action as art or non-art can undermine the freedom of anonymity. The action has the quality of performativity not only in the artistic, theatrical or musical sense, but also in how it can be defined as art or something else. In this context, by performativity I understand what Jean-Francois Lyotard characterizes as the process of knowledge production. The knowledge of both reality and fiction is realized through performance. Since the power of a Happening lies in the production of new conditions as well as the destabilization of the existing conditions of knowledge production, the performativity of this communication is not fixed. The HRC's manipulation of media events functions as the dissimulation or the "way in which a system always conceals within itself affects and hence other systems that are inconsistent with it and with each other."⁵⁸ Their happenings mirror or exist within the system of

⁵⁷ Ishiko, "Hapuningu igo to yobareru mono," 75. Translated from:

芸術行為でも非芸術行為でもないという、いわばそれまでのどのような種類の行為にかかわる認識からみ出そうとする自由は、そのはみ出すという運動の論理によって、認識の日常性を惑乱し、関係的にひずませる。逆にいえば、そのような認識の惑乱が、ハプニングという言葉の誕生を強制したのであり、その強制力がハプニングのアクチュアリティもあった。そしてハプニングという中性的な用語が暗示するように、それは美術的、演劇的、音楽的、舞踊的のいずれでもありうるよな、表現行為一般に関わりながら、行為の現在にかけて、現実と虚構との縫い目を、一気にカバーしてしまうとした。

⁵⁸ Williams, *Lyotard and the Political*, 40.

capitalism in order to identify a thing, in this case a media event, and then to be able to reproduce it. Lyotard writes:

To think something, is to be able to think it, to produce it and reproduce it. There is no first time, repetition is primary since it is included in the very constitution of the element: concept, commodity. If it is not repeatable, equally exchangeable, it is not an element of the system.⁵⁹

Lyotard's critique of capitalism is particularly useful in relation to Hi Red Center's capacity to produce and reproduce media events for further repetition by third parties, while the void or fiction of the event uses the mechanism of news production against itself; and thus, it remains concealed as an element within the system. In the leaflets *News Flash! Who is Using the Communication Satellite*, the artists use the power of the media event to manipulate what Daniel Boorstin calls "pseudo-events."

Boorstin describes how in the world of mass information and communication a "pseudo-event" or a happening has several characteristics: not spontaneous but planned, planned for being reproduced, ambiguous in its relation to reality, and intended to be a self-fulfilling prophecy.⁶⁰ For instance, a televised debate with pre-announced questions, or a leak type of news, can be viewed as "pseudo-event." In the leaflets of HRC, the "news flash" in the title suggests that this is an important announcement produced by a news company, while the absurdness of the statement questions its authenticity.

Furthermore, the ambiguity of accuracy triggers the potential of the news to be virally

⁵⁹ Lyotard, *Libidinal Economy*, 251.

⁶⁰ Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (New York, Evanston: Harper Colophon Books, 1964), 11-12.

distributed by other media sources. And finally, there is a chance that their prophecy of the assassination of a political leader might be fulfilled; thus, the group would bear responsibility for this event. Even if HRC rejects any prophecy in their art project, it is the mechanism of event-making that complicates their actions. The art group understood how the apparatus of media functions in a capitalist society.⁶¹ In the age of information, it is not an event that creates news, but rather news that creates the event. In the world of “pseudo-events,” the void of information is constructed through the truthfulness and arbitrariness of an image. HRC uses the medium of performance to address the issue of falsehood and emptiness; they mirror the illusion of the image that “pseudo-event” manifests as truth.

⁶¹ Matsui Shigeru, poet and professor at the Tokyo Art Media Center, notes that HRC was media strategic rather than media conscious; during the boom of live television and happenings in the 1960s, they participated in the NHK program *Maketto-ten* (マーケット展) in 1963, Terayama Shuji/TBS's “Anata-wa...” in 1960, then in the show *Kijima Norio happuningu shō* of anchorman Kijima Norio (木島則夫) in 1968.

CHAPTER 2. YAMANOTE LINE FESTIVAL: FROM HAPPENING TO ENVIRONMENT

The Japanese art journal *Bijutsu Techō* dedicated the November 1966 special issue to the exhibition “From Space to Environment” that took place in Ginza Matsuya Department Store in Tokyo between 11-16 November the same year. The international show of artists, sculptors, architects, designers, musicians, photographers, city planners and critics presented a variety of media to speculate on the concept of environment. Among the published photos under the rubric “Annihilating Plan of Art” (*geijutsu no muka keikaku*) was *Yamanote Line Event* (Yamanote-sen no ibento 山手線のイベント) (figs.1-3). The description says:

A tour of Yamanote Line with a white plaster mask on. The disturbance of reception. An escape from art. Creating a vacuum through actions between everyday life and art.⁶²

On October 18, 1962, the artists of future Hi Red Center, Takamatsu Jirō, Akasegawa Genpei, and Nakanishi Natsuyuki, as well as photographer Murai Tokuji and several other participants, performed *Yamanote Line Festival* (Yamanote-sen no fesutibaru 山手

⁶² *Bijutsu techō* 275, no. 11 (November 1966): 89. Translated from: 石膏の仮面をつけて、山の手線を一周。享受の攪乱。芸術からの脱出。日常生活と芸術との行為による真空状態化。

線(のフェスティバル) that occupied the platform and the train cars of the circular Yamanote Line in Tokyo. For this performance, Nakanishi applied white foundation to his face and carried a transparent plastic egg-shape compact *objet*; Takamatsu used a long, made-of-everyday-objects rope that stuck out of a Boston bag. Artists interacted with the objects in random, sometimes erotic ways in front of the passengers (audience) while the photographer documented the performance with a camera.

I argue that during the *Yamanote Line Festival* the presence of the camera and portable *objets* in the city space created what art critic Ishiko Junzō calls the confusion of awareness of art action and non-art action, and that therefore Hi Red Center was able to capture the ambiguity in their happenings. I suggest it is not an extension of a happening into environment or vice versa, but rather a constant escape to be acknowledged as a happening. In my analysis, I apply Richard Schechner's notion of the ritual to argue not precisely that *Yamanote Line Festival* is a form of festival, but quite the opposite, that it cautiously avoids being a pure festival. Following the argument of art critic Tōno Yoshiaki (1930-2005) that happenings have the quality of festivals, I uncover *what* is festive or not about the happenings and *why*.⁶³ Furthermore, I review Ishiko's essay "After Happening" to follow his reading of Marcel Duchamp's readymade in relation to the 'compact *objet*' and the definition of happenings. Finally, I analyze the erotic and fetishized interaction of Nakanishi with his 'compact *objet*.'

⁶³ Tōno Yoshiaki, Akasegawa Genpei, and Anzai Shieo, "Toshi kūkan no naka no shintai (A Body in the Space of a City)," *Yuriika = Eureka* 16, no. 212 (September 1984): 149.

Before getting to the analysis of the performance I would like to review the concept of space and environment in relation to artistic practices, and particularly performance. During the symposium “What are Happenings” (*hapuningu to wa nani ka*) published in the 1967 issue of *Eiga Hyōron*, Tone Yasunao describes that space (空間) means “empty” or “hollow” so it is fiction, while environment (環境) encloses people and centers on the self.⁶⁴ Even though it is arguable whether space is fictional or not, the proximity of environment and people marks the milieu of happenings as social, political and cultural. However, the definition of environment leads to confusing views that music critic Akiyama Kuniharu (秋山邦晴, 1929-96) reviews in a discussion with artists and critics in the article “From Environment to X: One Year after the Exhibition ‘From Space to Environment’”:

The contemporary time is the era of mass media. We can even say the era of technology. This much is certain. Look at present-day Ginza, there are lights, neon signs, sounds, a beautiful turmoil of colors; this is environment and our lives are immersed in it. And environment art reflects this directly. In this way....

Indeed, there are many ways in which environment art is treated as a sort of naturalism. In Japan, the movement of happenings, intermedia, and underground has this romantic misunderstanding of environment. There is a tendency of misunderstanding along those lines the issue of art engaging the audience or seeking audience participation. This is an ideology that seeks close attachment to the environment and can be understood as either an expression of naturalistic emotionalism, or as a kind of romantic affirmation of humanism.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Satō Shigechika, “Happuningu to wa nani ka! simpojūmu (What are Happenings! A Symposium),” *Eiga Hyōron* 24, no. 3 (March 1967): 70.

⁶⁵ Akiyama Kuniharu, “Kankyō kara X e ‘kūkan kara kankyō e’ ten kara ichinen (From Environment to X: One Year after ‘From Space to Environment’),” *bijutsu techō* 292, (1967): 66. Translated from:

In this quote, Akiyama specifies the general tendency in interpreting environment, and he also remarks on the multiplicity of the interpretations. So, what is the environment of happenings? Describing the context of the 1960s, Tōno Yoshiaki explains that happenings are not about anti-art or art, rather they have the festival-ness (*shukusai-sei* 祝祭性).⁶⁶ Furthermore, playwright Kisaragi Koharu (如月小春, 1956-2000) acknowledges that the happenings of the 1960s had a strong entertainment (*fūzoku* 風俗) quality as well; they were soft on the viewer. Furthermore, artist Tone Yasunao (刀根康尚, b. 1935) states that they are a form of entertainment (*fūzoku*) or blur the line between reality and entertainment; “happening is a happening in the directness of an action.”⁶⁷ Being an immediate and anonymous action, happening loses its sense of actuality after the 1960s.⁶⁸ Tone refers to the fact that initially happenings were performed in the streets and other public places without a fixed or specific place. Certainly, Tōno explained the sense of violation during the happenings, as the space of a performance did not hold citizenship (*shiminken*); it was not a “corner at a department store” as it became more common

現代はマス・メディアの時代だ。テクノロジーの時代。そこまではいい。現実の銀座をみたまえ。光あり、ネオンあり、音あり、色彩の美しい氾濫と混迷だ。これが環境であり、われわれの生活はとっぷりとそのなかに浸っているのだ。それがじかに反映しているのが環境芸術である。そんなぐあいに……。

たしかに、いわゆる環境芸術は、なにかそうした一種の自然主義としてとらえられる面が多いかもしれない。わが国でのハプニングやインター・メディア、アンダー・グラウンドのうごきにも、そうしたロマンチックな誤解がおおい。そこでは芸術が観衆を参加させるとか、まき込むという問題も、そういう意味でとらえられている傾向がある。それは環境への密着主義であり、自然主義なエモーショナルリズムの表現ともみられるし、一種のロマンチックな人間肯定主義ということもいえるだろう。

⁶⁶ Tōno, Akasegawa, and Anzai, “Toshi kūkan no naka noshintai,” 149.

⁶⁷ Tone Yasunao, “Hapuningū kara intā-media e (From Happenings to Inter-media),” *Eiga Hyōron* 25 (June 1968): 80.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 80.

later.⁶⁹ Another reason why happenings were associated with entertainment is that they were staged in discotheques (like the early twentieth century cabarets in Europe) in the late 1960s in Tokyo. The spread of discotheques, cafes and go-go clubs, such as Ungura Pop, Space Capsule, MUGEN, and Panic, brought art and people closer and produced what film director Hamano Yasuhiro (b. 1941) calls “spaces for ‘environment art.’” Thus, the environment of happenings was more about entertainment rather than art.

Ishiko Junzō seems more critical about the view of happenings through the prism of entertainment:

Happening included theater, music, dance, even the act of shooting film. It recognized their similarity in the singularity, contingency, and ambiguity of action, and accentuated the senses of contemporaneity. To put it differently, if the popularization of happening means indiscriminately putting the name happening to the directness of all non-utilitarian and non-everyday action, then happening cognitively embodied the contemporaneity, of becoming just another term for popular fashions (*fūzoku*). It's not that happenings became popular, but merely that popular fashions appeared in the guise of happenings.⁷⁰

Ishiko suggests a more complicated stance on the definition of happenings that cannot be art action or non-action; it conceals the in-betweens of reality and fiction in remaining an anonymous action. This freedom of happening is both its power and ability to intervene

⁶⁹ Tōno, Akasegawa, and Anzai, “Toshi kūkan no naka noshintai,” 148.

⁷⁰ Ishiko, “Hapuningū igo,” 77-78. Translated from:

ハプニングは、演劇や音楽、舞踊や、さらには映画を撮るという行為まで、行為の一回生や偶然性、多義性の類同を認めつつ同時代的な知覚をきわ立たせたのであった。いや非合目的性で非日常的な行為の直接性を、差別なくハプニングと呼ぶことが、ハプニングの風俗化であるのなら、ハプニングは新風俗の別称となりうる現代性を、すぐれて認識論的に体現していたからだ、といいかえておけば足りるだろう。ハプニングが風化したのではなく、風俗が一見ハプニング的に現出したということにすぎないのだから。

in the everyday. In the 1960s, the sense of actuality was unstable, and artists were able to capture the ambiguity in their happenings. Indeed, the title of *Yamanote Line Festival* gives a sense of carnival and entertainment, for HRC did not apply the term “happening” to describe their actions at that time. Akasegawa emphasizes, “a happening is connected with the society and environment. The connection with the environment is very important. A pure action cannot achieve this objective.”⁷¹ But then, he adds:

The society becomes the subject matter. To call it society or environment implies something political or conversely anti-political, so I don't like those words and want to use *mawari* [surroundings, locality] instead. What this might mean is that everything *mawari* has equivalently become subject matter for work. This work has an unstructured form; it is not a still thing. For this reason, I think that *mawari* cannot be neglected. If it is neglected, then there is no meaning in performance.⁷²

Akasegawa suggests that the site of a happening is linked to the social cause but is not necessarily politicized. The train station is a public place, the social surroundings of a daily ritual of commuting, in which people of all professions and occupations cross their paths. However, it is a place of visibility to present a theatrical spectacle as well. From this perspective, the relationship between public events and mass media reinforces the

⁷¹ Tōno, Akasegawa, and Anzai, “Toshi kūkan no naka noshintai,” 149.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 150. Translated from:

素材が社会になってくるというかね。社会とか環境とかと言うと、何か政治的になったり、あるいは反対に非政治的なりというイメージがあるので嫌なんですけど、要するに“周り”と言うことですね。その“周り”のものすべてが等価なものとして作品の素材になってきたということなのかもしれません。この場合、作品と言っても、不定形で、一つに静止したものではないわけなんですけどね。ですから、僕はそういう“周り”というのは無視できない事柄だと思うんですよ。それがないと、パフォーマンスということの意味がないわけですね。

happening-ness of the spectacle. In *Yamanote Line Festival*, Hi Red Center inverts this relationship by creating a spectacle of the spectacle. They do not pursue a direct critique of news media or the apathy of everyday life but appropriate the product of news media and consumerism against itself. As Matsui writes, “the Gutai and Neo Dada were introduced to the mass media by their gaudy performances, the approach of HRC is more indirect; a journal advances information or a rumor creates an incident.”⁷³ HRC manipulates the common consciousness of actuality and eventfulness by inverting both the sense of reality and festival, and it is out of this confusion that their happening is born.

Art critic Miyakawa Atsushi characterized the practices outside of an art institution as a “descent into the everyday.” In his essay “Anti-art —Spin into the Everydayness” (1964), Miyakawa noted the fluidity of the boundary between art and non-art:

Spin into the everydayness is an annihilation of the boundary between art and non-art. Art can be anything, and anything can be art. But with the decisive interchange of art and non-art, there is a disconnection between art and non-art that becomes more and more acute. For, even though art can be anything and anything can be art, it does not mean that art can be everything and everything can be art. Anti-art is not non-art. Since there could not exist a level at which art becomes art, my thesis is not going back to the useless question “what is art,” rather it addresses a “crazy” question of impossibility — “Can the absent art exist?”⁷⁴

⁷³ Nariae Hajime and Shigeru Matsui, “Play it Cool in Tokyo <HRC>shiki kaitenmokuba ni notte mita (ato) (Play it Cool in Tokyo: Riding the festive carousel of HRC (second part)), *AIDA* 214 (July 2014): 16.

⁷⁴ Sawaragi, *Nihon, gendai, bijutsu*, 200.

Miyakawa raises the question for the possibility of the act of expression that resides in the realm of everyday life. Art critic Sawaragi Noi notes that Miyakawa separates the madness of anti-art and the possibility of anti-art by differentiating two types of anti-art. The first variant of a “spin into the everydayness” expands the concept of art in the form of a rebellion against conventional and institutional art forms. The statement that “even though art can be anything and anything can be art, it does not mean that art can be everything and everything can be art” has a “connotative and analytical” meaning, for it questions the existence of a boundary between art and non-art.⁷⁵ Both Miyakawa and Sawaragi would agree that by using the space of the city, HRC question the boundary itself. While the authority of museum space gives the potential for any object to become art, the context of the street reinforces that “even though art can be anything and anything can be art, it does not mean that art can be everything and everything can be art” statement. In the environment of a city, there is a rupture between art and non-art that involves the “absent art,” which makes one action an art and another non-art, although it originates from the definite exchange between art and non-art.⁷⁶ However, the disconnection of art and non-art becomes more controversial in the streets, and HRC probes the limitations of the boundary between art and non-art; they are media strategic and theater cautious.

In *The Future of Ritual*, Richard Schechner studies festivals and carnivals in the public space of streets, squares, and buildings; the target of his inquiry includes political

⁷⁵ Ibid., 205.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 207.

events like the anti-Vietnam War demonstration in Washington (1970) and “democratic movement” in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square (1989), or the ritual drama of north India, or spring break at the beach. He traces the transformation of those public spaces into a playground merging political, personal, aesthetic and ritual.⁷⁷ Schechner recognizes the shift from a more personal place (living room, kitchen, bedroom) of modern theater to the “emerging festival theatre—liminoid rather than liminal—[that] repositioned itself in places where public life and social ritual have traditionally been acted out.”⁷⁸⁷⁹ The festival of HRC mirrors the liminoid quality of the social order by camouflaging the ambiguity of relationship between art and environment.

Yoshida Yoshie described happenings in Japan, and specifically Hi Red Center, as the process of extending happenings into environments, or what Akasegawa calls *mawari*. Rather than Kaprow’s idea of extending environment into happening, first, there is an obvious framework of extension; Hi Red Center “extends” the artistic action into the place of the social ritual of commuting, the environment. However, I would like to stress that the notion of *mawari* is not simply the everyday. While Akasegawa explains *mawari* as the surroundings, I would like to push his interpretation further, for the *mawari* is not only the

⁷⁷ Richard Schechner, *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance* (London; New York: Routledge, 1993), 49.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁷⁹ British cultural anthropologist Victor Turner (1920-83) introduced his concept of liminality in the middle of the twentieth century. Liminality is a transitional state; a liminal event such as a rite, a ritual of marriage, pilgrimage that causes a change in society, consciousness, values, identity. There are three phases in this process: pre-liminal (separation from of an individual or a group from previous state), liminal (transition to a new state without fixed position), and post-liminal (reincorporation of a new fixed state). A liminoid event can have similar qualities as a liminal event, but it does not cause a change in the status, identity, values etc.

“environment” that is the outside space, for example, the public place of the train station, but it is also an inverted inside or concealed space; in this context, I suggest that the portable *objet* of Nakanishi is the inverted inside environment enclosed in the shape of the plastic transparent egg. I will give a more detailed analysis of the portable *objet* further in this chapter, but first I would like to pay attention to how the happening of HRC becomes an inversion of the festival.

Schechner appropriates Victor Turner’s concept of the liminoid that suggests spatial and temporal ambiguity of a liminal event such as, for example, a revolution or baptism; for example, a protest that turns into a carnival with performative actions that blend politics, rituals, aesthetics, and erotic gestures:

Doubtless, there has been a mutually fruitful exchange between art performances and symbolic public actions. By the 1960s, these actions constituted a distinct liminoid-celebratory-political-theatrical-ritual genre with its own dramaturgy, *mise-en-scene*, role enactments, audience participation, and reception. This theatre is ritual because it is efficacious, intending to produce real effects by means of symbolic causes. It is most theatrical at the cusp where the street show meets the media, where events are staged for the camera.⁸⁰

In this quote, the liminoid characterizes the ambiguity of fiction and reality that lies in both the nature of the happening and the strategy that the performers appropriate. They achieve the theatrical effect through the intersection of site and image. However, Hi Red Center’s performance does not literally have liminoid character; rather it is an inverted version of what the new type of public spectacle has become.

⁸⁰ Schechner, *The Future of Ritual*, 50-51.

The art group shows the cynicism, parody and nonsense of capitalism by teasing the existing system of economy (*kisei no keizai shisutemu* 既成の経済システム).⁸¹ This system of capitalism is a readymade (*kisei* 既製) in itself that produces other readymades such as market, management, corporate business, media, advertisement, etc. The late 1950s and early 1960s were the era of television and the formation of the notion of media event. In Japan, there was a boom in mass culture, department store and apartment complex buildings that created a dream world of urban life. The mass production and mass communication transformed the former imperialist nation into a mass society of a capitalist state.⁸² In the 1960s, the notion of readymade object expanded from the material goods to more abstract or invisible things, and the city became the embodiment of the abstraction.

Hi Red Center stages *Yamanote Line Festival* in the public space of train stations for the camera while replicating the image of the city as a space of information. In their actions, there is ambiguity whether or not this is a news event to be reported on TV; what explains the photographer following, for example, Nakanishi's interaction with the *objet*. What makes the audience believe whether this action is a media event, or an artistic happening is a product of the sense of actuality. HRC manipulates the public

⁸¹ Nariae and Matsui, "Play it Cool in Tokyo (second part)," 13.

⁸² As political scientist Matsushita Keiichi observed, it created a pseudo subjectivity that characterized the working class as passive; in this reality, "mass democracy actually meant pseudo-democracy (*giji demokurashii*), because it left the people open to manipulation by elites." For more information see Yamada Ryūsaku, "'Mass society' and 'civil society' in postwar Japan," in *Globality, Democracy and Civil Society*, eds. Terrell Carver and Jens Bartelson (London: Routledge, 2011).

consciousness of the “invisible city” by creating the visibility of an event-making.

Although William Marotti sees the power of the Yamanote performance in creating a gap between art and life, I advocate that it is rather pushing or blurring the boundary of the information city. I would not call their actions an intervention either, for they had not necessarily sought to violate or transform the everyday. Indeed, the happening disturbs the public or “outside” space from within that creates a sense of violation; for example, the photographs of the performance show the puzzled or even disgusted faces of the passengers watching the artist’s interaction with the portable *objet* in the train. The happening “extended” the boundary into the real life and disturbed the “outside” from the inside. On the one hand, happening does not have a legal claim or citizenship rights (*shiminken* 市民権) on the space, and thus creates a sense of hostility on the “outside.” On the other hand, this act of expression does not quite fit into the terrorist concept of “direct action” either, for the act of physical violence is absent, and the artists leave it up to the passengers/audience the choice of remaining in the *mawari* of the happening or leaving it. This also raises the question of the notion *shimin* or citizen.

As Simon Andréw Avenell notes, in the 1960s intellectuals connected *shimin* with the ideas of “universalism, spontaneity, equality, individualism, and democracy.”⁸³ It appealed to activists for the reason that, unlike *kokumin* defined by the state, *shimin* was more conceptual, and had a performative quality that was useful for activist appropriation. In the performative context, Avenell refers to Japanese political scientist

⁸³ Simon A. Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens: Civil Society and the Mythology of the Shimin in Postwar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 69.

Matsushita Keiichi (松下圭一, 1929-2015) that *shimin* is made by ordinary people making politics by themselves.⁸⁴ Such thinkers as Maruyama Masao (丸山眞男, 1914-96) and Ōtsuka Hisao (大塚久雄, 1907-96) laid ground for the development of the idea that became a synthesis of nation and everyday life. Maruyama explains that the shift from being imperial subjects to being people, as well as from the public domain and community-oriented values towards the private domain and values of consumerism, transformed mass society into a group of politically indifferent, and thus easily manipulated people.⁸⁵ Matsushita notes that the public and the state are difficult to imagine separately, and that for this reason the public is associated with the state. Public in this sense can be replaced with the notion of state, country, society or community, while private is located in the realm of non-state and outside of politics, thus the Japanese idea of democracy lacked the engagement of ordinary people within the public sphere. In the milieu of the political apathy of postwar society in Japan, as Avenell argues, the *shimin* concept became an empowering ideal that should have awakened the civic consciousness (*shimin ishiki*). He emphasizes that the mythological nature of how the intellectuals and activists constructed the notion of citizenship on the basis of spontaneous action, individual autonomy, and democracy.⁸⁶ Following Claude Lévi-Strauss' idea of mythmaking, Avenell does not assess mythology from the perspective of imagination or fiction but rather from “what it represented and the kind of action it made

⁸⁴ Ibid., 1.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 58.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 3.

possible in the present.”⁸⁷ Even though he sees the positive outcome of the *anpo* activism through its linking of private life, the intersection of the space of the everyday and happenings reinforces the liminoid quality of the *shimin* idea.⁸⁸ In other words, while for Avenell the mythology of *shimin* is not about fiction, in *Yamanote Line Festival* Hi Red Center explores the void of democracy and *shimin* idea.

The theatricality of the “staged for the camera” events echoes Daniel Boorstin’s notion of “pseudo-events.” As mentioned earlier, Boorstin characterizes the world of mass information as “pseudo-events.” In his definition of “pseudo-events” he uses the word “happening” that seems paradoxical, especially considering the fact that happenings took shape around this time. In the age of information, it is not an event that creates news, but rather news that creates the event. In the world of “pseudo-events,” the void of information is created through the trustworthiness and arbitrariness of an image. In the *Yamanote Line Festival*, HRC uses the medium of performance to address the issue of falsehood and emptiness; they play upon not a “pseudo-event,” but rather mirror the illusion of the image that “pseudo-event” manifests as truth. Nakanishi explains that the activity of HRC are “pseudo-actions” like pseudo-events. The art group understood how the mechanism of media functions in a capitalist society. Because *Yamanote Line Festival* is a “pseudo-action” that appropriates the strategy of a “pseudo-event” or a liminoid

⁸⁷ Ibid., 3.

⁸⁸ Avenell tries to see the positive outcome of the *anpo* failure through the conception of *shimin* that helped to mobilize political consciousness in the private sphere of civil society. In May and June 1960, mass demonstrations took place against the revised Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan (*sōgo kyōryoku oyobi anzen hoshō jōyaku*) that became known as *anpo*. During the protest Michiko Kanba, an undergraduate student of the University of Tokyo, died, causing a severe social critique.

event staged for a camera against itself, it cannot be called a ritual in the Schechnerian way. Instead, the happening should be viewed through the theory of the readymade. Ishiko Junzō states, “The confusion of awareness [where is art action and non-art action] enforces the appearance of the word happening; this enforcement is the actuality of happening. It covers at once both the reality and the fiction; it involves artistic, theatrical, musical, dance kind of form of expression along with the actuality of the action.⁸⁹ The essence of Ishiko’s argument is that the happening created a fluid boundary between reality and fiction, and it is the perception of them that is played upon. The confusion of awareness is achieved by the mode of mediating between an object (*chose*) and *objet* that Duchamp introduced in his idea of the readymade.

The transformation of consciousness that appears during the performance from the side of the recipient defines the liminal qualities of both the everyday and the performance. From this perspective, the void of HRC’s “pseudo-events” expands Marcel Duchamp’s idea of readymade. When Duchamp bought a postcard reproduction of Leonardo da Vinci’s *Mona Lisa* and drew a moustache and a goatee in pencil, he created an anti-art object that attacks the value and uniqueness of a masterpiece, but he also transformed the way of seeing the object. In a museum, the viewer ‘sees’ a painting as an art work for he already knows that this is a masterpiece. In Duchamp’s readymade, the act of seeing equals thinking.⁹⁰ The actuality of the readymade was the mode of seeing art as art and an everyday object as goods (*buppin*). For example, the conscious perception

⁸⁹ Ishiko, “Hapuningu igo,” 75.

⁹⁰ Ishiko, “After Happening,” in *Imēji-ron*, 245.

defines the urinal as an everyday object (*buppin*) and Leonardo Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* as a non-everyday object, because the former is a non-art object based on its utilitarian value, while the latter is an art object of non-utilitarian value.⁹¹ Duchamp's readymades created an intellectual intervention into the perception of a work of art, the status of an everyday object and its representation.⁹² His juxtaposition of linguistic puns and objects challenges the function of visual representation and pushes the cognitive abilities out of the comfort zone. By the act of choosing or replacing, Duchamp transformed an object into an *objet* by the mode of seeing. For example, in L.H.O.O.Q. (1919), the found object for the readymade was a cheap postcard reproduction of Leonardo de Vinci's *Mona Lisa*. In the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan, through the mirror stage the viewer identifies himself/herself in the reflection; this is the concept of *moi*. The mode of seeing the postcard as an object (*buppin*) or *chose* corresponds to the mirror stage of the object that is known to be the postcard (the object is reflected). On the other hand, following the logic that the mirror reflects objects (the subject reflects or *soi*), Duchamp's *Mona Lisa* with the moustache is a readymade *objet*. Ishiko explains that Duchamp collapses the perception of the famous painting because "it [painting] is only a *buttai* which is the trace of colors on canvas (Mona Lisa was painted on wood board)."⁹³ The life of an *objet* lies in the anonymity of the object, once the *objet* is recognized as the *objet* it is no longer the readymade. The readymade stresses the anonymity as no name or identification

⁹¹ Ibid., 241.

⁹² For more information see Dalia Judovitz, *Unpacking Duchamp: Art in Transit* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

⁹³ Ishiko, "After Happening," in *Imēji-ron*, 244.

(*mumeisei*). And this can be understood as both the absence of authorship and the absence of the naming the object for what it is. For example, Duchamp does not sign the readymade or chooses his pseudonym of Rose Sélavy; or he comes up with a pun for the title as he did for his moustache Mona Lisa or L.H.O.O.Q., which when read in French pronunciation yields the sentence “she’s got a hot ass” (*elle a chaud au cul*).⁹⁴ And more importantly, the anonymity keeps the fluidity or in-betweenness of whether this object is art or non-art. Ishiko suggests that Hi Red Center pursues the anonymity of action (*tokumeisei*), but unlike Duchamp who brought the readymade to the art space of the museum, Hi Red Center put their *objets* into the everyday space of a train station.

If Duchamp's “readymade objet” was a questioning of the mode (*koto*) mediating between *buttai* (object) and *buppin* (objet), then the HRC objet was a tool for questioning the mode mediating between “anonymous action” and “named action.” This also connects with the principle of happening: the object is elevated from being an object (*buttai*) to a mode (*koto*) itself. This is an assertion of the “anonymization of action,” and could also be called the reduction of the mode of expression to an object.⁹⁵

Ishiko understands that Duchamp had a solid sense of actuality, the artist liberated the *objet* from daily reality by putting it into another reality. In other words, Duchamp changed the context of an everyday utilitarian object such as an urinal but it remained in

⁹⁴ Judovitz, *Unpacking Duchamp*, 142.

⁹⁵ Ishiko, “After Happening,” in *Imēji-ron*, 250. Translated from:

デュシャンの「既成品のオブジェ」が、〈物体〉と〈物品〉との間を架橋する〈事〉への問いかけであったとすれば、一例としてのハイレッド・センターのオブジェは、〈無名の行為〉から〈有名の行為〉へとあいわたる〈事〉への問いのための道具といえよう。これはハプニングの原理へと通じて、〈物体〉は〈物体〉であることから、〈事〉それ自体へとひき上げられる。それは〈行為〉の匿名化への主張であり、表現という〈事〉の〈物体〉への還元といいかえてもいいかもしれない。

the site of a museum. In postwar Japan, the sense of reality got lost and HRC, as Ishiko implies, were able to seize that sense. The actuality of the happening is the sense of a lost reality, the falsehood of reality, the void.

In a part of the happening, Nakanishi uses a portable objet or *pōtaburu-obuje* (the key word is *hakobu* or “carry”), a plastic egg with fish bones, watches and other stuff inside (fig.4). In issue 8 of the magazine *Keishō*, he explained that his *objet* “desires the living space” or “deals with the living space” (生の空間を望む). Ishiko notes the action in which Duchamp brought the urinal from the toilet (everyday, non-art space) to the gallery (non-everyday, art space). However, the plastic egg—without questioning everyday or non-everyday—is an object (*buppin*) that does not belong to the space of everyday space or daily use; instead, it is a thing that “deals with the living space” or “wishes for the living space.” In this context, “the living space” does not correspond to the non-everyday space. Rather, it is an incomplete, chaotic space that embraces the everyday space and non-everyday space.”⁹⁶ Unlike Duchamp’s ‘see=think,’ for HRC’s ‘touch=think’ or ‘experience=think.’⁹⁷ Ishiko points that the portable *objet*, the egg is not a found object that was taken outside of the context of daily use and inserted into the artistic, non-everyday milieu. The realm of the egg exists in-between being non-everyday and everyday, and it gravitates towards, seeks for being in this state. The act of touching, experiencing the ‘flesh-ness’ of the object gives nothing but the void, not real experience

⁹⁶ Ibid., 254.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 254.

of the object for the objects that are inside the egg cannot be reached. In other words, this is as if the fetish resides inside the fetish.

Inside the plastic egg, Nakanishi placed such objects as the faces and chains of wrist watches and pocket watches, sand timer, scissors, cracked egg shell, fishbone, rope among others, and filled the container with liquid. To make the *objet* portable (*hakobu*), Nakanishi attached a short rope with a holder to the body of the plastic egg. During the happening, inside the train he hanged it on the handrail and shone a flashlight on the egg. The photographs show puzzled and disgusted faces of the passengers who witnessed his actions. On the station platform, Nakanishi squatted and licked the egg while Murai Tokuji photographed his action. While Ishiko sees an almost animistic context in Nakanishi's treatment of the egg, I would like to expand his view to include sexual or erotic fetishism that is implied in the act of licking, caressing and reeling in and out of the portable *objet*. Nakanishi mentions that the "mobile" *objets* ("*kadōteki*" *obuje*) "means that there is an energy within the object (*buttai*) itself."⁹⁸ The language—desire, energy, caress—already alludes to the fact that the egg is the fetish that Nakanishi does not choose but creates by himself. From the Freudian perspective, a fetish is a substitute for the lack of penis and the fear of castration, when by giving up the command of the father, a boy "refused to take cognizance of the fact of his having perceived that a woman does not possess a penis." In the Oedipal complex, the boy identifies himself with his father, having a fear of castration in front of his mother who lacks a penis. In his essay

⁹⁸ Marotti, *Money, Trains, and Guillotines*, 224.

“Fetishism,” Sigmund Freud writes: “To put it more plainly: the fetish is a substitute for the woman’s (the mother’s) penis that the little boy once believed in and – for reasons familiar to us – does not want to give up.⁹⁹ In this context, the egg becomes another classical fetish object like feet or shoes. The threat of castration is substituted with the energy that the fetishized egg promises. The lack of wholeness is substituted with the fetish.

In her book *This Perversion Called Love*, Margherita Long discusses the similarity between the definition of fetishism in the novels of Tanizaki Jun’ichiro and Freud.¹⁰⁰ For Tanizaki, the Japanese uniqueness celebrated by culturalism is a kind of fetish. By culturalism Long means the return by intellectuals in the 1930s to the Japanese tradition and heritage as a way of overcoming modernity in both literature and philosophy. In this context, she reads Tanizaki’s three essays to reveal the latent sense of suffering that the writer felt towards the culturalism.¹⁰¹ Long suggests that Tanizaki anticipated the feminist cinematic critique, the concept of “male gaze” (as described later by film scholar Laura Mulvey), by the act of blinding that removes the voyeuristic pleasure of looking. From this perspective, I read the portable *objet* of Nakanishi as a fetish that embodies his suffering from the void of capitalism. While Tanizaki blinded his

⁹⁹ Sigmund Freud, “Fetishism,” in *Miscellaneous Papers, 1888-1938*, vol. 5 of *Collected Papers* (London, Hogarth and Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1924-1950), 198.

¹⁰⁰ In her comparison, Long focuses on the short story *Portrait of Shunkin* while her principal area of inquiry is the three essays of Tanizaki, “In’ei raisan (In praise of shadows),” “Ren’ai oyobi shikijō (Love and sexual desire),” and “Geidan (Speaking of art).” For more information on Tanizaki and Freud see Margherita Long, *This Perversion Called Love: Reading Tanizaki, Feminist Theory, and Freud* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2009), 117-120.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

protagonist, Nakanishi made the egg out of transparent plastic exposing its interior and vulnerability. When the artist shone the flashlight in the interior of the already transparent egg, his action gives the elusiveness of the desired object inside the egg or the void of the fetish.

CHAPTER 3. BOXES AND CANS: PERFORMANCE AND DOCUMENTATION IN POSTWAR JAPAN

On November 9 - December 23, 2013 and February 11 - March 23, 2014 Nagoya City Art Museum and the Shoto Museum of Art respectively held a retrospective titled *Hi Red Center: The Documents of "Direct Action"* (Hai reddo sentā: chyokusetsu kōdō no kiseki ハイレッド・センター : 「直接行動」の軌跡) and dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the art group Hi Red Center. The exhibition of around 250 pieces, including objects, documents, photographs, posters, sculptures, installations, ‘traced’ forty happenings performed by the group from August 1962 to August 1967. What is a document for an artwork? French scholar Anne Bénichou suggests the typical definition:

The notion of document underlies the idea of authenticity (the document as a proof), a track (the value of testimony), but also a pedagogical value (it informs; it instructs) as the Latin etymology (*documentum*, the verb *docere* meaning “to teach”) indicates. By reviewing these three norms, we can *a priori* consider that the documentation that the artists create of their works is a trace, which confirms their [artworks] existence and informs about them.¹⁰²

Even though I agree that the ‘documents’ of Hi Red Center have a secondary or informative value, I would like to push further and propose that they have a hybrid nature. HRC uses documentation as an essential part of performance production, and with an even more radical stance of valuing the image more than the live action. For example, during a round table discussion in 1984, Akasegawa Genpei, art critic Tōno Yoshiaki,

¹⁰² Bénichou, *Ouvrir Le Document*, 47.

and photographer Shigeo Anzai compared the photograph of performance to a moment of memory; they note that those who saw a live performance found it less fascinating than those who saw the photographs. They equate the image to the most intriguing moment of the performance, the “wow” effect being caught in the memory.¹⁰³

In this chapter, I introduce a new approach to the definition of performance in relation to its documentation, which I argue can exist as both a live action and an image through an analogical relation. By analogy I understand what Kaja Silverman means as “the world” that “gives everything the same ontological weight.”¹⁰⁴ I juxtapose the performance ontology of Peggy Phelan and the performance documentation of Philip Auslander to prove the necessity of a more democratizing and inclusive approach. Since both Phelan and Auslander depart from the issue of performance vis-à-vis photographic image—in this case it covers photography and video—I review the ontology of the photographic image as developed by André Bazin. From this perspective, I pursue the idea of “analogical relation” of the performance and the photographic image to permit the co-existence of performance as a spatially-temporally real as well as photographically reproduced. First, I examine the exhibition catalogue *Hi-Red Center: The Documents of “Direct Action”* to rethink the notion of a document in the artistic, archival, and exhibition context, for even though the performances remained in the past, the catalogue serves as both the performance and the document in itself. Then, I analyze the

¹⁰³ Tōno, Akasegawa, and Anzai, “Toshi kūkan no naka noshintai,” 149.

¹⁰⁴ Kaja Silverman, *The Miracle of Analogy: or The History of Photography* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), 11.

performance *Shelter Plan* (Sherutā keikaku シェルター計画) of Hi Red Center and the process of its documentation, or more specifically the analogical relationship between the photographic image and the performance that produces the model of a box, how the re-presented reality of the physical body is transferred on the object (the box) (fig.5).

In the catalogue, the English title of the exhibition reads “the documents of ‘direct action,’” but the Japanese version *kiseki* (軌跡) signifies a locus, trajectory, and track of those actions. The objects, texts, video, and photographs serve as the locus of HRC’s performances; *kiseki* becomes an index, by which the viewer can trace the performances. However, in the context of the analogical relation of performance and photography, this catalogue gives more than an index of the performance. French scholar Anne Bénichou points out the hierarchy that exists between photographs as art objects that have aesthetic value and photographs as ‘trace’ of performance that have ancillary, testimonial and didactic functions. Contemporary art requires the reevaluation of the distinction for the sake of the dialectic between the document and the artwork.¹⁰⁵ Bénichou addresses the complex status of documentation, its hybrid nature of being at times both documentary and artistic. She notes that in the field of art they circulate as documents on one occasion, as artworks on another, or both simultaneously. Moreover, while the definition of a happening excludes documentation— as formulated by Kaprow—many artists broke with this tradition for the sake of documentation. Nariae Hajime, a curator of Tokyo Station Gallery, reminds us that HRC places trust in the fact that a photograph has an informative

¹⁰⁵ Bénichou, *Ouvrir Le Document*, 81.

value for society; they ironically quote the modern system that prefers the image of a person rather than a true person, in other words a passport or identification card.¹⁰⁶ In this context, documentation is an essential part of their performances; both the performance and the image co-exist in the performing moment. Artists manipulate their actions and the image in creating the spectacle of an event making. They perform events on the platform of a train station, inside a train car, in the streets of Tokyo, or a hotel room, for the sake of being performed and being photographed. Thus, as Bénichou points out, the aestheticization of documentation in the field of performance is conceived by both the artists who spend much time and effort to create a “document” of their work, and art institutions that use these documents to place on view. These documents eradicate their documentary value, as they are understood as art works.

The problem of documentation is also closely related to the situation of the 1960s when the generic terms for what I call performance art was happenings (*hapuningu* or *dekigoto*), events (*ibento*), spectacle (*supekutaru* or *misemono*) and reflected the notion of actuality discussed in the previous chapter. Media strategic HRC took advantage of this in their use of the method of Boorstin’s “pseudo-events” to stage “pseudo-actions” (*gijiteki na kōdō*). Since they sought to mirror the characteristics of a ‘pseudo-event’ which are produced specifically for the camera, it is inevitable that their actions were planned for being reproduced in photo, film, text and other objects. The conspiracy of their performance, however, reinforces the sense of void and falsehood, as they explore

¹⁰⁶ Nariae Hajime, and Matsui Shigeru, “Play it Cool in Tokyo <HRC>shikikaitenmokubani notte mita (mae) (Play it Cool in Tokyo: Riding the festive carousel of HRC, first part),” *AIDA* 213 (June 2014): 9.

the mechanism of news production. Anonymous action and anonymous identity walk hand in hand for this art group.

Mr. Hi Red Center in the City

So, who is Mr. Hi Red Center? In his interview with art curator Yamada Satoshi, the former member of HRC Nakanishi Natsuyuki explained the idea behind the identity of the group. Hi Red Center (Takamatsu's *taka* for Hi; Akasegawa's *aka* for Red; and Nakanishi's *naka* for Center), was a group of people but it was actually a fictional character, similar to Marcel Duchamp's Rose Sélavy.¹⁰⁷ Even though there are these three members associated with the name, the identity belongs not to the members but rather to Hi Red Center as an individual, or Mr. "Hi Red Center" as Nakanishi himself put it.¹⁰⁸

The anonymity created by Mr. Hi Red Center led some scholars and art curators to describe the activities of the group as a form of anarchist secret society performing "direct action" or *chokusetsu kōdō*. The term circulated at the symposium in 1962 where a group of young artists (affiliated with *Yomiuri Andepandan*) discussed the *Yamanote Line Festival* (October 18, 1962).¹⁰⁹ In issues 7 and 8 of art magazine *Keishō*, the discussion of the symposium was published under the title "Signs of Discourse on Direct

¹⁰⁷ Nakanishi made an example of Duchamp's *Men Before Mirror* (1934) under the name of Rose Sélavy that was actually created by Man Ray and a young German girl. They used the fictional character of Duchamp for the essay.

¹⁰⁸ Yamada Satoshi, and Nakanishi Natsuyuki, "<HRC> – Yure no aru basho kara no hōkoku (<HRC> – A report from a shaky place)," *AIDA* 215 (September 2014): 5.

¹⁰⁹ For more information about the symposium see "Beyond the Guillotine: Speaking of Art/ Art Speaking" in William Marotti, *Money, Trains, and Guillotines*, 207-244.

Action—Concerning One Experiment” that Marotti links to the theory of “direct action” of anarchist Kōtoku Shūsui in early 20th century Japan.¹¹⁰ In 2013, even though Yamada Satoshi, a curator of the Nagoya City Art Museum, explained HRC’s artistic practice through the prism of a secret association (*himitsu kessha*) with “direct actions” as well, he seems more skeptical since HRC’s actions are not an act of anarchist terrorism.¹¹¹ Indeed, history knew of non-violent examples of direct action advocated by Martin Luther King in the civil rights movement that he described in *his Letter from Birmingham Jail* in 1963. From this perspective, artists play upon the ambiguity of the action rather than its ideology, and HRC uses the credibility of the image. In the age of new media, the information is manipulated through the truthfulness and arbitrariness of the image that in turn leads to the ambiguity of the sense of actuality. In their performances, HRC reinforces the effect of ambiguity through the relation of the happening to reality; their actions are concealed behind, as Ishiko Junzō suggests, being anonymous actions.

Takamatsu Jirō (高松次郎) was born on February 20, 1936 in Tokyo. In the 1960s-70s, he was an influential participant and founder of ‘dandyism-like’ art scene in Japan working in photography, sculpture, painting, drawing and performance. In 1958, he exhibited his first works at Yomiuri Independent Exhibitions. Between 1958-61, Takamatsu developed his *Rope* works, which are sometimes also called *Anti-Existence* (*hanjitsuzaisei* 反実在性). These are works that seek to transcend the space of a painting

¹¹⁰ Marotti, *Money, Trains, and Guillotines*, 209-210.

¹¹¹ *Himitsu kessha* is a group of people who are tied together by one goal; they keep their activities, location, name, and participants in secret. In pre-war Japan, for example, any communist *kessha* was restricted by law, so Japanese communist parties were formed illegally.

and extend the line into the real space (*genjitsu kūkan*), thus overcoming the connection between the real time and space and void (*kūkyo* 空虚). He would use *Rope* in the *Yamanote Line Festival* performance. After Hi Red Center, in 1964 he would transform the notion of *fuzai* into the *Shadow* series and develop a theory of happenings.

Akasegawa Genpei (赤瀬川源平) was an artistic pseudonym of Akasegawa Katsuhiko, born in 1937 in Yokohama. After two months at Musashino Art University, he quit school. In 1958, he presented his work at the 10th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition for the first time. In 1960, he participated in the avant-garde group Neo Dadaism Organizers with Shinohara Ushio, Yoshimura Masunobu, and Arakawa Shusaku. His most scandalous and controversial work was a fake 1000-yen note that embroiled him in a trial known as the “Thousand-yen bill incident.” Even though he was found guilty for violating the 1894 Law Controlling the Imitation of Currency Securities and had to pay a fine, the trial itself became a media event.¹¹² In the 1970s, Akasegawa successfully extended himself in drawing manga, writing essays and short stories; he was awarded the Akutagawa Prize for Literature in 1981.

Nakanishi Natsuyuki (中西夏之) was born in Tokyo in 1935. In 1958, he graduated from the Tokyo University of the Arts majoring in oil painting and would become a professor there later in his career. In 1959, he won the prestigious Shell Art Prize. In 1963, he presented his work *Laundry Tongs Assert a Stirring Action* (Sentaku

¹¹² For more information see Reiko Tomii, “State v. (Anti-)Art: Model 1,000-Yen Note Incident by Akasegawa Genpei and Company,” *positions: east asia cultures critique* 10, no. 1 (2002): 141-172.

basami kakuhan kōdō o shuchō suru 洗濯バサミは攪拌行動を主張する) at the 15th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition. In 1965, Nakanishi would begin his collaboration with butō artists Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo.

Even though together Takamatsu Jirō, Akasegawa Genpei, and Nakanishi Natsuyuki were the founding members of the group, they succeeded in remaining hidden behind the identity of Mr. Hi Red Center for a short time. They brilliantly manipulated the anonymity of their organization during the performance “A Campaign to Promote Cleanup and Orderliness of the Metropolitan Area” (Shutoken seisō seiri sokushin undō 首都圏清掃整理促進運動, fig.6) on October 16, 1964. For the Summer Olympic Games in 1964, the Japanese government organized a campaign to present an improved image of Tokyo to the international audience. This was strategically important after the defeat of World War II. In their performance, HRC mocked the campaign to present Tokyo as a clean city. For this event, wearing white robes, masks, gloves, and an armband with a signature red exclamation mark, the group members went into the streets of the Ginza district in Tokyo. They carried brooms, buckets, tooth brushes, and even a magnifying glass to clean the sidewalks. Akasegawa Genpei created a banner “Be Clean! Cleaning in Process,” which the group mounted next to the area of cleaning. They performed the cleaning event so persuasively that neither a policeman nor the pedestrians recognized the prank. In the streets, the performance appeared as a reportage for the promotion of city cleaning. A woman stopped to have a closer look at what the artist was fervently scrubbing. A policeman with his hands held at his back suspiciously observed the process

(Fig.5). The presence of the camera, the angle that captured the performance in a surveillance fashion, from an extremely low or high point, reinforced the effect of a news reportage covering the cleaning event. Even though art critic Sawaragi Noi suggests that the illusion became possible due to the simulacrum of the sign “Be Clean! In Process of Cleaning” rather than the practice of cleaning, I would add that the artists achieved the delusional realism of the event through the presence of the camera as well. Sawaragi’s reading of Jean Baudrillard’s notion of simulacrum being not a copy but a truth in itself is not sufficient, for, as Hajime pointed out, the group played upon the informative value of the photograph in the society.

Rescuing the Body in the Era of Image Politics: Hi Red Center’s Performance Shelter Plan (1964)

The protests of the 1960s blurred the line between political activism and avant-garde artistic practices in Japan. Their intersection with news media, photojournalism and documentary reinforced the sense of actuality and factuality in the artistic production as well. Yuriko Furuhashi described this period as the “Season of Image Politics” referring to the manipulation of media events in avant-garde Japanese cinema, especially the critique of media spectacle and the changing conception of cinema in relation to television and other image-based media. I examine the issue of the medium of performance art in the era of image politics through the art group Hi Red Center’s *Shelter Plan* that was staged between January 26-27 in 1964 at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, a building made famous for being designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

In the context of “Image Politics,” some scholars discuss performance art from the perspective of activism, stressing the political more than the artistic context. Others view the image of a performance art work as a matter of film and photographic documentation. However, regarding the status of the image and documentation in the 1960s avant-garde in Japan, the removal of the notion of a document from performance practices jeopardizes the fact that those performances were produced for the camera and for the sake of being documented. I argue that HRC was in the vanguard of appropriating the image and interweaving documentation beyond a supplementary value to performance practice. From this perspective, I follow André Bazin’s theory of reality as both the object and its photograph to confirm that performance co-exists as both a spatiotemporal reality and an image.¹¹³ Central to my analysis is the agency of the artists in rescuing an individual’s body (*nikutai*) in a world of “pseudo-events,” in which, according to Daniel J. Boorstin, the news creates an event rather than the event creating the news.

Hi Red Center created one of their most provocative performances, *Shelter Plan*, in January 1964. Prior to the event, the group sent invitations via post to the participants to collaborate in their shelter project. Among the participants were Nam June Paik, Yoko Ono, Kazakura Shō, Yokoo Tadanori, Kawani Hiroshi and other artists. A room in Tokyo Imperial Hotel became the site for their performance. The guests who accepted the

¹¹³ In *What Is Cinema?*, André Bazin criticizes the obsession with the real in order to liberate the photographic image from the conditions of time and space as “the photographic image is the object itself.” For more information see André Bazin, *What Is Cinema?*, trans. Hugh Gray (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

invitation to participate in the performance received such instruction as to call in advance, to enter the hotel through the front door, to wear a tie and gloves, and to bring a bag. They were also asked not to leave any fingerprints in the hotel lobby. Once they were invited upstairs and entered the hotel room, the participants received an HRC stamp—a red exclamation mark—on a 1000-yen note as a passport. The name, date of birth, address, and belongings of each guest were verified, and fingerprints and body measurements were taken. Each participant was photographed from six points of view – en face, left profile, right profile, back, top and bottom – to create a custom-sized model of a shelter that could be ordered in four sizes, ranging from life-size to one-tenth of life-size. There were also cans filled with sand available for purchase. A 16 mm film made by Jōnouchi Motoharu documented the process of performance.¹¹⁴

What is performance and what is documentation in *Shelter Plan*? What happens with the body in this artistic action? In *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*, Peggy Phelan stresses the ontologically impossible idea of the performance’s reproduction; once the performance is over, the physical body is gone; thus, the image (video or photo) of the performance becomes something other than performance. Phelan writes:

Performance’s only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representation of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance. To the degree that performance attempts to enter the economy of reproduction it betrays and lessens the promise of its own

¹¹⁴ *Haireddo sentā: Chokusetsu kōdō no kiroku ten (Hi-Red Center: the Documents of “Direct Action”)* (Nagoya: “Haireddo sentā ten” Jikkō Iinkai, 2013), 110.

ontology. Performance's being, like ontology of subjectivity proposed here, become itself through disappearance.¹¹⁵

In emphasizing the tendency towards disappearance and the impossibility of the performance's reproduction, Phelan tries to overcome the question of mechanical reproduction and erase the notion of aura from the discourse. What is real and what is a copy? The real of the performance occurs in the time and space of its creation; it is both an original and a copy in itself. For Phelan, while photography has a departing point of the original, which becomes the copy through the process of reproduction, performance cannot have a copy. The real of performance is created via the presence of a physical body; the disappearance of the physicality creates a performance.¹¹⁶ Thus, in her ontology, the body serves as an index of the performance that perishes, and thus there is no trace left. In other words, performance is an ephemeral entity. So is the body of the performer. Any kind of performance documentation cannot access the ephemeral performance.

In the 1984 article "A Body in the Space of a City," Tōno Yoshiaki, Akasegawa Genpei, and Anzai Shieo discuss the notion of one-ness and document in performance art. Tōno jokes that those people who didn't go to see a happening thought it was amazing, while those who went to see it regretted the boredom of the experience; however, in his view, the document of the performance could influence the memory of

¹¹⁵ Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*, 146.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 148.

the experience.¹¹⁷ His humor reflects that the photograph of a performance made a live action more interesting than a real experience, for the former had an aura, but at the same time the information contained in the photograph held some kind of mystery and suspicion.¹¹⁸ Anzai emphasizes the importance of the experience between the performer and the spectator. He states that if there is a tasteful moment (気がきいた瞬間), it is enough for the experience; if not, then the photograph could not be helpful either.¹¹⁹ Phelan reasons the impossibility of performance reproduction with the presence of a physical body in a live action and its absence in the photograph. The body is an object of consumption for the spectator, and it disappears in his memory:

Performance honors the idea that a limited number of people in a specific time/space frame can have an experience of value which leaves no visible trace afterward. Writing about it necessarily cancels the “tracelessness” inaugurated within this performative promise. Performance’s independence from mass reproduction, technologically, economically, and linguistically, is its greatest strength.¹²⁰

Even though her statement echoes the agreement in the discussion of Tōno, Akasegawa, and Anzai that the actual experience and the interaction between the spectator and the performer is what makes a live action interesting, for the artists Takamatsu, Akasegawa, and Nakanishi of Hi Red Center a document can be the strength of a performance as well.

¹¹⁷ Tōno, Akasegawa, and Anzai, “Toshi kūkan no naka noshintai,” 158. Translated from: 写真を通じた情報のそういうズルさとか胡散臭さというのはあると思いますね。

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 158.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 159.

¹²⁰ Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*, 148-152.

Akasegawa asserts that in creating a document a performance can manifest its power.¹²¹

Phelan disputes the tracelessness of performance for the sake of the body, when she discredits performance reproduction, and therefore those works that use documentation for the production of performance. The problem of reproduction lies on the periphery of performance and photography, or more specifically the ephemerality of the former and the documentary virtue of the later.

In his article “The Performativity of Performance Documentation,” Philip Auslander introduces a radically different definition of performance documentation; he attributes primary value to the process of documentation. Auslander ontologically ties performance to the documentary and theatrical categories. The former inherits this ideology from photography as a means to access reality, while the latter admits the reality of performance in the space of an image. He argues that both categories have similarities and intersections, for there is both the act of performance and the preservation of it: “The act of documenting an event as a performance is what constitutes it as such. . . . Documentation produces performance.”¹²² In this context, Auslander refers to the artistic action of Yves Klein’s *Leap into the Void* (1960). The photographically documented jump of Klein off a roof is a photomontage, but since the performance exists in the space of a photograph, the question of documentary category is woven into the artwork. Auslander’s argument completely contradicts Phelan’s definition of performance, which

¹²¹ Tōno, Akasegawa, and Anzai, “Toshi kūkan no naka noshintai,” 159. Translated from: 記録にしてみても初めて力が発揮できる部分というものもあると思うんですよ。

¹²² Auslander, “The Performativity of Performance Documentation,” 7.

marks performance and photography as mutually exclusive. The difference between Phellan and Auslander is a matter of ideology--while Phelan denies the ontological possibility of performance reproduction, Auslander advocates the ontological performativity of performance documentation.

However, performance can be live, staged, filmed, photographed, viewed, remembered, experienced, and more. Hi Red Center created performances that could be called 'performative' and 'documentative': their detailed attention to capturing the process of performance I call "documentative" while the performative aspect applies to both the action and the use of an image. For example, the images applied on the surfaces of each of the boxes produced in *Shelter Plan*, transfer the identity of the object, the body it belongs to, to its reproduction. Thus, the photographs of the body are free of documentary condition and continue to be present in the performative way of the box, in a similar way as the photograph of Yves Klein's *Leap*.

The obsession with the real is a keystone in Phelan's ontology. If a live performance is the only real, then all the performances that exist in our memory, texts, videos, and photographs are something other than performance. But even though a performance is shifted into another representational world, it does not lose the representational quality as in the model of the shelter in Hi Red Center. I advocate that performance can be both an action (performance) and an image (photo, video, or text), through an analogical relationship that does not compare the two according to one criterion to establish similarities or separate them, but rather defines their nature as

equally important. In my pursuit of the analogy of the action and the image of an action, I seek to escape the treatment of the body as a trace and follow the view of Ishiko Junzō that “the vector of happenings that leads towards the body as *objet* corresponds simultaneously, as a matter of course, with the logic that promotes the autonomous movement of the concept, and therefore also the autonomy of the image” that I have stated in the previous chapter.¹²³ Ishiko refers to the phenomenological approach in performance that requires the situatedness of the body in the durational experience in a certain time and space. The temporal nature of the performance makes the object ephemeral as well, and for this reason the body is treated as a sign, trace or index in the Peircean sense (Charles Sanders Peirce).¹²⁴ In *Shelter Plan*, the artists produce a custom-made model of a shelter that bears the identity of the participant. The presence of the body is the point of departure; unlike Phelan’s priority of the disappearance of the physical body, Hi Red Center takes scrupulous account of the body for its preservation. First, the physical measurements create the mathematical record of the corporal three-dimensionality (figs. 7-8): the width of the body’s profile from chest to the back (39 cm), the width of shoulders (50 cm) and head (25 cm). There is an indication of gender (female), age (40-50), name (Ono Maria), a fingerprint (in blue ink), and address (112

¹²³ Ishiko, “Hapuningu igo,” 78. Translated from:

ハプニングのオブジェとしての肉体へと向かうベクトルは、当然ながら同時作用的に、観念の自律運動を、したがってまたイメージの自律化をも促す論理と対応する。それらはいずれも現象であるしかない表現の自律的自立でもあり、認識的には、言葉からイメージへ、あるいはその逆へとわたることの、行為を媒介とする不可能性のほかならず「現象としての絵画」といういい方が、その間の事情をもっとも適切にいい当てている。

¹²⁴ American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) developed his “Semiotic Theory” in the 1860s. He introduced three signifying elements: a sign, an object, and an interpretant.

Chamber Street, New York). The photographs captured the body from six points of view: Yoko Ono posed for the camera enface, back, left and right profiles; the camera captures the top of her head and then from the bottom of her feet. And finally, these images were placed on each side of a rectangular box that created a three-dimensional re-presentation of a model of the body's shelter (fig. 3). I assess that the photographic image in Hi Red Center's performance is valued above the lived action, and from this perspective, the critique of Ishiko could be reapplied in the context of the phenomenon of photography as well.

According to André Bazin, the photographic image is not something that took place in the past, but rather "the object freed from the conditions of time and space that govern it"; it exists as the object itself freed from its temporal contingencies.¹²⁵ In his essay, he notes that photography and cinema represent the physical real more than painting or sculpture, for they escape the appearance of the artist's touch. It removes the trace or appearance of the human touch like brushstroke but not the touch itself. He argues that photography and cinema "confers on [an object] a quality of credibility," for we believe in the existence of the object reproduced. Bazin does not necessarily confirm the trustworthiness of the image, but the sense of the real is already attached or pre-exists in the photographic image. The common sense treats the reproduction of the real as if it were the object itself. For this reason, he suggests that "the photographic image is the object itself . . . it is the model."¹²⁶ The image is neither a representation nor a substitute

¹²⁵ Bazin, *What Is Cinema?*, 14.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

of the real; it is the presentness granted by the image that is significant. The way a viewer perceives the image is governed by the psychological authenticity of the real; the photograph satisfies the desire of the preservation of life through the representation of life. This is similar to the way Bazin describes the death mask, which embodies the facial identity of the deceased and that continues the existence of the body. For Bazin, however, the photograph replicates the real, transfers the identity to the object reproduced; it gives an access to the real in the present.

In *Shelter Plan*, the impossibility to preserve the body or the ephemerality of the body is revealed in the presentness of the photographic image. The applied images on the shelter box as well as the corporal dimensions and description augment the perception of the real. The “real” body becomes not the one that one cannot have, but, as Amelia Jones states, the one of a transfigured subjectivity (a shift from a modernist to a postmodernist mode) read through the works themselves, and it is the relationship between the body/subjects and documentation that debunks the fixed notion of body and subjectivity.¹²⁷ Jones echoes Bazin’s photographic image as the real that embodies the reproduced object. Her suggestion of unfixed body and subjectivity through documentation reinforces the failure of an attempt to fix the body in *Shelter Plan*.

In postwar Japan, the physical body was emerging as “a site of expression and as the root source of desire and subjective autonomy (*shutaisei*).”¹²⁸ The differentiation between

¹²⁷ Amelia Jones, “Presence in Absentia Experiencing Performance as Documentation,” *Art Journal* 56, no. 4 (1997): 12.

¹²⁸ Tiampo, *Gutai: Decentering Modernism*, 41.

the nation's body (*kokutai*) and the individual's body (*nikutai*) has been a battleground for Japanese artists to express their revolt and freedom. After WWII, for the avant-garde performance artists, the path started from the discovery of the body as a space of an individual. In her work *Gutai: Decentering Modernism*, Ming Tiampo discusses the question of originality, individualism and subjective autonomy regarding the artistic searching of expression among artists in postwar Japan, particularly artists' resistance to "mass psychology" of a nation that was imposed on the society during WWII. The path towards a free body has started with the first artistic attempts to explore the physicality of the body; avant-garde artists explored the flesh of an individual's body as an object of sexual desire in the early 20th century. Gennifer Weisenfeld attributes the discovery of the body as an expressive tool to the avant-garde pioneers MAVO, who showed a self-conscious awareness of a free-form body movement in their performances.¹²⁹ The combination of the performance and the camera manipulated the visibility of the body for both the pre-war and the post-war artists in Japan. While the pre-war artists explored the body in a more private sphere of the self-discovery, the post-war artists pursued a more overt goal of sharing and exposing the self-discovery of the body to the world.

In *Shelter Plan*, there is an obvious critique of the government regarding the nuclear politics on the one hand, and the dissemination of the individual's body into the realm of *kokutai* on the other hand. The double meaning behind the loss of the body lies in the destruction of the body in case of a nuclear bombing as well as the disappearance of the

¹²⁹ Weisenfeld, *Mavo*, 234.

body behind the mass psychology of a nation. In *Shelter Plan*, HRC exposes not only the instability of the body and subjectivity per se, but also the futility or the ridiculousness of an attempt to rescue the body in case of a nuclear bombing. Their attempt to fix it by a meticulous description of the body and its measurement has the opposite effect of “fixing,”; it gives even more ephemerality or absence to the body. The shelter’s failure highlights the inability to fully know the body through its physical presence, and it transforms the perception of life in the reality of media and the proliferation of images in the 1960s.

CHAPTER 4. AN (IN)VISIBLE BODY PERFORMING IN PUBLIC SPACE

Japan, Tokyo, Shibuya Station. . . . If you have ever been there, you will remember the sense of confusion, being overwhelmed or feeling lost among people, hallways, and exits. A feeling of constant movement permeates this place, as people hurry to pass rather than enjoy the surroundings. For this reason, the passersby often overlook a gigantic, 30 meters wide and 5.5 meters tall mural on the wall at Shibuya Mark City near the walkway leading to the Keio Inokashira line. *The Myth of Tomorrow*, originally created for the Hotel de Mexico in 1969 and discovered in Mexico City in 2003, belongs to Japanese artist Okamoto Taro (fig.9). It depicts the atomic bombing and its victims in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 as well as the Lucky Dragon incident in which a Japanese fishing boat was contaminated by U.S. nuclear testing. The mural has two missing parts in the bottom right and left corners, parts that were cut out so that it could fit the wall of the Hotel de Mexico. This nuance will be discussed further in this chapter. The mural made its way from a hotel to a train station, becoming one of the most celebrated public art projects in Japan.

What interests me in this chapter is the medium of performance art in public places and how the notions of public and artistic become intertwined in the digital era of the 21st century. Artists rethink the notion of the physical body and physical place, as technology and social media create an overexposed visibility of a “ghostly,” absent body. I argue that the intersection of digital and public spaces becomes a productive site of

confrontation for performers questioning the role of art in moments of social crisis. In particular, I examine the sense of place and community as well as the issue of connectivity and isolation that occupy the current generation of artists after the Fukushima disaster of March 2011. In this part of the dissertation, I first analyze two public art projects--*Making the Sky of Hiroshima "PIKA"* (2008, fig. 10) and *Hiroshima Projection* (1999, fig. 11) – to address the peculiarity of public space in Japan, especially when it involves local community. For my analysis, I review the intersection of public art and democracy discussed by Rosalyn Deutsche that I approach through Nakamura Yujiro's philosophy of place (*basho*). In his *Basho (toposu)*, Nakamura explains the notion of place-foundation or *basho qua foundation* as he combines the category of field (*ba*) from natural science and linguistic *topos*.¹³⁰ I use the framework of these four types of place in relation to performance art within the context of public art in Japan.

Public Art and Public Space

Where does the concept of public begin and end? Don Mitchell argues that “the end of public space,” which has occupied the discourse of public space since the early 1990s to the present time, has not arrived yet. Mitchell criticizes the fact that there exists a more controlled and planned appropriation of public space that guarantees proper behavior of its occupiers, rather than an unconstrained use of public space that politicizes

¹³⁰ Nakamura combines natural science (field, *ba*) and linguistics (*topos*) to think about place (*basho*) from four perspectives: *basho* of natural philosophy and rhetoric, *basho* of physics, from the non-linear material system to the life system (also in physics), and *basho qua foundation*.

and threatens social stability.¹³¹ These two perceptions are based on Henri Lefebvre's recognition of the representations of space and representational spaces respectively. In both cases, there is a struggle over the question of who the space is for and how it should be used. For example, controlled space restricts the actions of the users to particular norms of behavior, while activists or homeless people can violate these norms. Mitchell argues that public spaces are *spaces for representation*, "a place within which a political movement can stake out the space that allows it to be *seen*."¹³² The paradox of his argument is that by claiming public space, a social group disseminates into the public; in other words, public space makes something visible while concealing something else. Thus, the public space becomes a place of what might be called unfixed visibility.

Mitchell accuses public space of theater or spectacle of creating images that exclude particular social groups, such as homeless people and political activists, as "undesirable." I find this claim dubious, for there are examples that show performance artists being on the side of a marginalized group as well.¹³³ On the one hand, the treatment of performance artists as activists marginalizes them as undesirable users of public space; on the other hand, it erases the artistic value of their work. In the following section, I would like to address the question of public space for artistic production. To show how the notion of unfixed visibility functions in the public space, I compare two

¹³¹ Don Mitchell, "The End of Public Space? People's Park, Definitions of the Public, and Democracy," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 85, no. 1 (1995): 108–133.
www.jstor.org/stable/2564281.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 115.

¹³³ Mitchell, "The End of Public Space?," 120.

performance/installation art projects – *Making the Sky of Hiroshima “PIKA”* by Japanese art group ChimPom (2005) and *Hiroshima Projection* by Polish artist Krzysztof Wodiczko (b. 1943). I argue that it is the denial of access into the public space that creates the visibility of the performer’s body. Unlike Wodiczko’s smooth integration into the public space of the memorial, ChimPom’s exclusion marks the biases of public space; however, the ambiguity of what counts as public invites us to expand the notion of democracy. Thus, my questions are *what* becomes visible in performance art in public spaces as well as *when* and *why*.

Before making the comparison, I would like to clarify the intersection of democracy and public art, particularly how control over the production and use of public space affects performance art in Japan. By public art or *paburikku āto* or *kōkyō-no āto* (公共のアート) I understand a type of art that uses public space as a connection but not a mediation between site and community. If we choose to think of public as a mediator between site and community, then we will fail to acknowledge the complex relationship between public art and public. The democratic administration of public space regulates the hierarchy between it and public art by assigning a particular relationship between the freely accessible space and those who use this space.

Miwon Kwon has traced three major paradigms of public art. First, the “art-in-public-places” introduced a site as a pedestal for an artwork; the site became a museum under an open sky, while public here meant that the artwork was accessible to all.¹³⁴ In

¹³⁴ Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004), 60-63.

Japan, the emergence of public art in the form of sculpture had started in the 1950s. A new type of bronze statue primarily conveyed a particular ideology—peace, freedom, family, well-being—and its artistic value was only secondary. Mainly nude male and female figures or a woman with a child were placed in public spaces like parks, squares, or near pedestrian crossings.¹³⁵ Unlike monumental statues of famous political figures, the pacifist message of these sculptures putatively rejected the former nationalistic and imperialistic rhetoric of Japan. In the 1960s, there was a shift from ideology to the landscaping of urban environment; sculptures similar to flowers were supposed to beautify the city scenery. For example, for this purpose in 1961 Contemporary Public Sculpture Exhibition (now the Ube Biennial) was inaugurated in the park of Ube city in Yamaguchi prefecture; unlike anthropomorphic sculptures of the 1950s, these works were more decorative and abstract in form. In this context, “art-in-public-places” remains part of what Lefebvre would call “representations of space” or what Japanese art critic Nakahara Yūsuke (1931-2011) characterized as improving the environment by means of sculpture. In other words, public art serves the environment and the community it belongs to, thus conforming with the democratic administration of public space.

The second paradigm of “art-as-public-spaces” integrated an artwork into a specific site to generate a dialogue and to make art more socially responsible and functional.¹³⁶ In 1970s Japan, after the Japanese Environmental Pollution Prevention Act

¹³⁵ For more information see Naoki Takeda, *Nihon no paburikku āto* (Japanese Public Art) (Tokyo: Seibundō Shinkōsha, 1995).

¹³⁶ Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 67-69.

(1970) and Natural Conservation Law (1972) were passed, the idea of greening and environmental responsibility entered public art, along with that of promoting cultural heritage. At this point, the definition of “public art” manifested these tendencies. For Sugimura Sokichi, a founder of the Public Art Research Library, now the Public Art Research Institute, public art could be anything, if the public recognized its artistic value.¹³⁷ For example, Sugimura considered shrine gates (*torii*) and other traditional objects in communities as public art having aesthetic and spiritual value; he also criticized the society for forgetting this fact:

Public art is a work of art that utilizes the value it has and its power to fascinate people to create a society. In fact, in a number of cities in the world, real ‘Public Art’ in that sense started to appear. We sincerely hope that there will be many people who will continue to show interest and participate in ‘Public Art’ and that they will utilize the power of art with enthusiasm and perseverance in the making the city and scenery.¹³⁸

This type of public art for both Kwon and Sugimura pursues a utilitarian objective. In this definition, there is a sense of equality between public art and public space; the notion of participation is tightly woven into the canvas of public art, celebrating the purpose of beautifying the site. Specifically, in 2000, the “Proposal Regarding the Promotion of Public Art” called for popularization of public art; 1% of the construction cost of a public building would go to art and culture associated with the building, a practice widely

¹³⁷ Mami Maruko, “Sights of the City,” *The Japan Times*, August 19, 2001, accessed February 21, 2017, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2001/08/19/general/sights-of-the-city/#.WKy7UjI-L6Y>.

¹³⁸ Quoted in Elizabeth Norman, “Public Art in Japan” in *Political Economy of Art: Making the Nation of Culture*, ed. Julie F. Codell (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2008), 52.

known and exercised in the world.¹³⁹ The Proposal had many supporters among politicians, intellectuals, artists, and business people in Japan. The message of Taki Hisao, the President of Japan Traffic Culture Association suggests that 1% for Arts will be “the cultural power” and become “the driving force of public art, as it creates a more ideal society,” and it will be a “sort of declaration by the Japanese government to place art and culture at the foundation of the country.”¹⁴⁰ While the slogan sounds too good to be true, there are several questions that should be considered. What will be the procedure for selecting an artist and a work of art? How will the public participate in the decision-making? Could the public-ness escape utilitarianism, or rather would it be allowed to do so? Moreover, this program favored the artistic medium of sculpture, installation, and mural among others. What status would the medium of performance art receive in this program? The utility of public art as an aesthetic value does not challenge the social status of the site and its residents. Thus, the discourse of public art continued its struggle with the field of city planning and urban studies. From this perspective, I would like to turn to the third type of public art, which challenges the boundary of public space, using ChimPom as an example.

¹³⁹ France started this program in the 1950s while the USA – in the 1960s.

¹⁴⁰“Public Art,” Japan Traffic Culture Association, accessed February 21, 2017, <http://jptca.org/en/publicart/>.

ChimPom and Making the Sky of Hiroshima “PIKA”

ChimPom consists of six members: five men—Ushiro Ryuta, Yasutaka Hayashi, Okada Masataka, Mizuno Toshinori, Inaoka Motomu—and one female artist who goes by the name Ellie. In 2005, the group began experimenting from a considerably modest standpoint, since Ellie was the only member with an art background in drawing and sculpting. They went forward utilizing a video camera as a brush and their bodies as a canvas, driven by the will to do “something interesting.” In an interview with *Frontline*, Ellie explained that the group was inspired by the MTV show *Jackass*: “We’d watch *Jackass* and say, ‘Wow, we should do something funny like that.’”¹⁴¹ So they did funky things and pranks to play with the issues of consumerism and fetishism. For example, *Super Rat* (2006) speculates about the life and culture of young people in Shibuya and the side effects of this life. Shibuya district is a well-known area for shopping and entertainment in Tokyo. The super rats of Shibuya are also famous for being resistant to poison. For *Super Rat*, ChimPom caught several rats and stuffed them in a manner akin to Pikachu, a yellow anime character with cute red cheeks, from the popular Pokemon franchise. The artists explained that the rats reminded them of teenage girls inhabiting Shibuya, where all types of cultures like Japan Pop, Superflat, and Gals flourish. *Super Rat* was a performance turned into an installation project that targeted the consumer culture of young people, by producing “real figures of Pikachu.”¹⁴² The realness of the

¹⁴¹ Marco Werman, “The Atomic Artists,” *Public Broadcasting Service, Frontline*, 26 July 2011, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/the-atomic-artists/etc/transcript.html>.

¹⁴² ChimPom, *SUPER RAT* (Tokyo: Parco Publishing, 2012), 82.

stuffed rats as popular anime characters impersonated the side of popular culture that is obsessed with the aesthetic of cuteness and fetishism. ChimPom placed the stuffed rats in the streets of Shibuya district and took photos of them as if they had always been there. ChimPom took the rats out of the context of their everyday existence where they were invisible as a marginalized group and produced them as legitimate members of the neighborhood with a new visibility. Even though in *Super Rat* ChimPom's actions intersected the area of public, they did not resonate with the community to the extent their performance *Making the Sky of Hiroshima "PIKA"* did.

In my comparison of ChimPom's *Making the Sky of Hiroshima "PIKA"* and Wodiczko's *Hiroshima Projection*, I analyze the peculiarity of public space in Japan. On October 21, 2008 in Hiroshima, a charter plane drew with white smoke the onomatopoeic word *pika* (flash) five times in the blue sky over the Hiroshima Peace Memorial. ChimPom shot a video and took photographs of this action from the Peace Memorial Park to present them at the exhibition at the Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art in November. The artists sought to remind the viewers of the fragility of peace: "We would like to leave 'stimulus' rather than messages. ... Japan is peaceful. ... However, we human beings have to keep confronting the trauma we produced by ourselves. Otherwise, we will not be able to realize the virtue of the 'peace,' nor defend it."¹⁴³ The quintessence of this remark is the idea of "confronting the trauma" that results in the confrontation of public space, since the memories of trauma as well as war and defeat

¹⁴³ "Making the Sky of Hiroshima PIKA!," ChimPom, accessed March 23, 2017, <http://chim-pom.syncl.jp/?p=custom&id=13357617>.

keep haunting Japanese society.¹⁴⁴ In the *Making the Sky of Hiroshima “PIKA”*, ChimPom probed the role of art in overcoming the history, or “confronting the trauma,” as they addressed the topic of nuclear power and war memory. In this performance, the ambiguity of public space—Hiroshima Peace Memorial and Park— particularly its administration by local community, interfered strongly in the process of artistic production and reception of the work. ChimPom’s message of peace, the desire to keep the memory but to try to see things differently, which the group found particularly timely for the younger generation, proved insensitive and inconsiderate from the point of view of the local community, whose feelings were hurt.

The reaction of the public, especially the atomic-bomb survivors, *hibakusha*, was fury. The local newspaper *Chugoku Shimbun* chastised the performers for not giving a warning in advance as well as not respecting the trauma of the survivors and local community. The co-chair of Nihon Hidankyo (Japan Confederation of A-and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations) Tsuboi Sunao, himself a survivor of the bomb, characterized the performance as self-satisfied and self-important, having nothing to contribute to a message of peace.¹⁴⁵ An artist and also *hibakusha* Irino Tadayoshi (1939-2013) explained: “I have the impression that whenever artists from Tokyo and foreign countries

¹⁴⁴ In her book *The Long Defeat*, Akiko Hashimoto assesses the memory narratives and their narrators to illustrate how three major strategies—nationalism, pacifism, and reconciliationism—continue to shape identities in Japan. As she takes into account the sides of both the perpetrators and the victims, Hashimoto address the tension about the revising of Japan’s pacifist constitution and remilitarization. *The Long Defeat: Cultural Trauma, Memory, and Identity in Japan* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹⁴⁵ “Geijutsuka ‘heiwa uttae’ hikōki de ‘pikā’ no moji egaku (Artist painted a word ‘pika’ by a plane as ‘a peace message’),” Hiroshima Peace Media Center, accessed January 26, 2018, <http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/?p=640>.

use the theme of Hiroshima and Atomic Bomb, the city uncritically accepts the artwork.”¹⁴⁶ The mayor of Hiroshima Shimamoto Norio (島本登夫) insisted that the group express their sincere apology in front of the community.

The leader of ChimPom, Ryuta Ushiro explained in response: “We expected that it would become an issue. If it hurt the feelings of *hibakusha*, it pains us, but we wanted to appeal to young people who do not know the war.”¹⁴⁷ The problem with this statement is the fact that young people are not that unfamiliar with the war; the pedagogical sources cultivate pacifist sentiments in young generations in their everyday life in and outside school.¹⁴⁸ Could it be rather that ChimPom was criticizing the pacifist education itself, as they seek to encourage the young people to face their trauma without trigger warnings?

Even though the negative reaction of the public towards ChimPom’s actions could be understandable for ethical reasons, a decade earlier a project with a similar message of peace had produced a different impression on its audience. The Polish artist Krzysztof Wodiczko created the public project *Hiroshima Projection* for the anniversary of the tragedy. He explained his approach as:

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. Translated from:

市は、東京や海外の芸術家が「ヒロシマ」や「原爆」をテーマにしているというだけで、無条件に作品を受け入れている印象だ。

¹⁴⁷ Ibid. Translated from:

問題になるのは予測していた。被爆者を傷つけたとしたら心が痛むが、若者と戦争を知らない世代の関心呼びたかった。

¹⁴⁸ For more information see Akiko Hashimoto, “Pedagogies of War and Peace: Teaching World War II to Children” in *The Long Defeat*, 83-118.

My position is that you cannot work towards peace, being peaceful. If the peace is to be one where everybody quits and doesn't open up—share what's unspeakable, offer unsolicited criticism, defend others' rights to speak and encourage discourse—that peace is worth nothing. It reminds me of the kind of peace that was secured in my old country under the Communist regime. That is the death of democracy.¹⁴⁹

In this quote, Wodiczko understands the notion of peace being a source of confrontation in a democratic society, in which there exists the possibility to question the value of peace, to talk about traumatic memory, and to express an artistic opinion.

For this work, Wodiczko interviewed Japanese and Korean survivors as well as their descendants, now the younger generation. He recorded their testimonies to be played along with the projected hands of the survivors on the wall between the Hiroshima Peace Memorial and the river. The reflected spectacle in the river along with the recorded voices of the testimonies were meant to reanimate the A-Bomb Dome. The juxtaposition of the hands and voices with the memorial building created a united body of common memory. The anthropomorphizing quality of his performance-installation with the incorporation of the body of the *hibakusha* added a humanizing effect. The artist's involvement with the public let him produce a work that is both disturbing and healing vis-à-vis the trauma of the atomic bombing. Even though he challenged the public space by pursuing a troubling theme, he did so with respect for the community that was reciprocated and confirmed by the community. He familiarized the audience with his

¹⁴⁹ Krzysztof Wodiczko, "Hiroshima Projection," interview by Art21, *Art21*, November 2011, <https://art21.org/read/krzysztof-wodiczko-hiroshima-projection/>.

actions while ChimPom chose a surprise effect. However, instead of accentuating the ethical, I wish here to explore the issue of community versus individual that lies deeper beneath the conflict regarding public space.¹⁵⁰

Art theorist Rosalyn Deutsche celebrates Wodiczko's artwork for the way it "aids the appearance of others while at the same time making visible the limits the face places in representation." Deutsche argues that he transforms the act of seeing and listening into a form of witnessing, and that his Hiroshima projection "facilitated the emergence of a public sphere in which the appearance of others is prized because, questioning the social order, it keeps democracy from disappearing."¹⁵¹ Her definition of democracy stems from such theorists as Hannah Arendt, Jacques Rancière, and Claude Lefort who approach democracy as a space of appearance (Arendt), visibility and invisibility (Rancière), or emptiness (Lefort) respectively, as I will explain later. For Deutsche, democracy exists as long as the public space gives presence to those who disappeared or were invisible or unheard; in other words, democracy is more about vision than visibility. In the conundrum of public space versus acts of artistic expression, the notion of space should be taken into consideration, since it is both a physical place and the subject of debates:

¹⁵⁰ Deutsche stresses the fact that Wodiczko extends the notion of democracy by giving voices to both the Japanese survivors who face the bombing as well as the justification of the American attack (but there is more than attack, there is the entire history of war that they face, the guilt); Koreans survivors who faced the bombing as well as "Japanese imperialism and discrimination." Rosalyn Deutsche, *Hiroshima After Iraq: Three Studies in Art and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 55.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 70.

Public space can also be defined as a set of institutions where citizens—and, given the unprecedented mixing of foreigners in today’s international cities, hopefully noncitizens—engage in debate; as the space where rights are declared, thereby limiting power; or as the space where social group identities and the identity of society are both constituted and questioned.¹⁵²

In this quote, Deutsche references the idea of public sphere introduced by German philosopher Jürgen Habermas (b. 1929). For Habermas, public sphere is the place for expressing freely and equally opinions on social matters in order to achieve a common agreement, as well as to offer the opportunity for political change. This concept is central to exercising deliberative democracy. Deutsche praises Wodiczko’s *Hiroshima Projection* for expanding and revitalizing democracy by challenging the meaning of public space and changing the vision; his work invites the viewer to become a witness for the events and circumstances that people endured, while evoking an ethical response to the witnessed.¹⁵³ Even though the public space serves for the appearance of others and new ways of looking in Wodiczko’s projection, it turned into a hostile environment for the vision of ChimPom. The debate that surrounds the performance of *Making the Sky of Hiroshima “PIKA”* is preoccupied with public space as a locus. There the identity of the local community as atomic bomb survivors and the right of the artist to engage with the common memory of this social group collide. By contrast, ChimPom was denied the right to access the common memory of the event by the Hiroshima community. In their

¹⁵² Rosalyn Deutsche, “Rosalyn Deutsche: The Question of “Public Space,” interview, accessed January 15, 2018, <https://iwalewapublicspace.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/rosalyn-deutsche--the-question-of-public-space.pdf>

¹⁵³ Deutsche, *Hiroshima After Iraq*, 55-70.

project, when the identity of an artistic group and the social identity of *hibakusha* collide, the democratic nature of public sphere is put into doubt.

Claude Lefort designates democracy as “the ability to appear in public space to the declaration of rights” while the “hallmark of democracy is uncertainty about the foundations of social life,” since there is no referent of power such as God, natural law or self-evident truth. For Lefort the people become the source of power, but this source does not have a fixed identity.¹⁵⁴ The disembodiment of the identity of the society or the loss of the body of the king—the shift from a visible source of power (the king) to the invisible one (the public)—signals the emergence of a condition where nobody occupies the king’s place.¹⁵⁵ The public replaced the foundation while the place of the king became empty. The removal of the external referent of rule granted power to the people and thus concealed the source of power. And for Lefort, democracy in its current form does not resolve the conflict of public space but rather sustains it. The collision between the community of Hiroshima and ChimPom generated the visibility of artistic subjectivity that challenges the boundary of public space. The suppression of ChimPom’s visibility is the result of the dispute that their performance was not appropriate, since the antecedent of power is located in the realm of the community.

Thus, the relevance of *Hiroshima Projection* and irrelevance of *Making the Sky of Hiroshima “PIKA”* are a matter of vision. In Wodiczko’s work, the viewer is converted

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 63.

¹⁵⁵ Bernard Flynn, *The Philosophy of Claude Lefort: Interpreting the Political* (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 2005).

into a witness; he sees the other, as if he is the other but not completely. This act performs in the manner of memorial therapy of a traumatic event and locates it within a perspective of ethics.¹⁵⁶ By contrast, ChimPom's performance pushed the viewer to confront the trauma as a silent shock: they entered the space of the common memory of the bombing and its aftermath when the plane wrote the onomatopoeia *pika*. The signifier of *pika* silently signified the sound of an explosion which awakened a sense of loss and fear. From the perspective of ethical inappropriateness, their action was denounced as an insult to the memory of the community. ChimPom confronted the trauma but at the same time they negated the traumatic effect of their confrontation. The removal of the project from the exhibition and the artists' public apology signaled that the community occupied the "empty place" of power. The moment or place when the community emerged vis-à-vis the individual in this debate of public space is what the philosopher Nakamura Yūjirō calls *basho* qua foundation. It is to this concept that I now turn.

In "Basho qua Foundation," Nakamura designates particular ontological places as the ground for the establishment of the individual self. By foundation he means a basis (*kiso* 基礎) and a base (*konkyo* 根拠), but in a more philosophical sense he refers to the Aristotelian notion of foundation that translates *substratum* (matter that underlies properties of a thing) from Latin or *hypokeimon* (underlying thing) from Greek.¹⁵⁷ While the Cartesian *Cogito ergo sum* or "I think, therefore I am" posited the foundation of

¹⁵⁶ In her analysis of Wodiczko's vision, Deutsche refers to French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas and his reevaluation of ethics in the appearance of the Other as an entity whose visibility can never be fully achieved.

¹⁵⁷ Nakamura, *Basho: Toposu*, 125-126.

human existence within the individual, modern science and technology also encouraged the individual to break free from social foundations. However, this independence proved catastrophic, since it led to the collapse of the ecosystem, environmental pollution, nuclear waste and radiation, and the other disastrous outcomes.¹⁵⁸ This led to casting doubt on the autonomy of the self from the community (*kyōdōtai* 共同体) or the native environment (*koyū kankyō* 固有環境). In this case, the unconscious is what holds human beings together on the social foundation that exists in opposition to independent consciousness.¹⁵⁹ Here Nakamura refers to Freud's distinction that the *ego* is the conscious while *id* is the unconscious. He writes:

Unlike the native environment, the community and the unconscious do not form a spatial place. The conscious self gives the form to a place (*basho*) or field (*ba*). Similar to the native environment, the community and the unconscious establish the place as the foundation of life. Since the self of the individual cannot be entirely independent, the self emerges on the ground of the community and the unconscious as the foundation.¹⁶⁰

Nakamura suggests that the global environment, native environment, community of living beings, and the unconscious are all related to the notion of place. He parallels the dynamic relationship between the self and the place as the foundation with the relation between the hero and the chorus in Greek tragedy. First, there exists the chorus, and

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 130.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 134-138.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 135. Translated from:

共同体や無意識は、固有環境とちがってふつうの意味での空間的な場所を形づくるものではない。とはいえ、意識的自我がそこに於いて成り立つ場あるいは場所を形づくっている。共同体も無意識も固有環境と同じく、私の存在根拠としての場所をなしている。われは、それ自体では自立できず、共同体や無意味を基礎としてその上に初めて成立するからである。

gradually the leader of the chorus transforms into the hero. The chorus (the voice of the gods, the crowd, etc.) embodies the unconscious of the community. The hero cannot exist without the chorus, because he engages in a dialogue with the unconscious of the self and the community.¹⁶¹ The collapse of the ecosystem is the result of the separation of the individual from the chorus structure of society.

In their desire to engage in a dialogue, ChimPom appealed to the unconscious of the community, as the hero addresses the chorus. However, the choice of the word *pika* played negatively upon the unconscious, first of all, because its connection with the colloquial expression *pika-don* (literally, “flash-boom”) that connotes the explosion of the atomic bomb. Furthermore, the community instinctively associated the sky with the atomic bombing, as a source of danger and suffering. Their memory and associations became a common ground for the community to suppress the visibility of this group’s artistic expression. The performance removed the presence of the survivors’ bodies and thus disembodied the Peace Memorial. In other words, the lack of “common sense” disconnected ChimPom and the Hiroshima community, as the artists’ action challenged the public space of common memory. While the public replaced the foundation for Lefort, the community occupied the “empty space” of power as the place qua foundation for Nakamura. The body of the individual remains concealed as long as it is enfolded within the community. An independence from the *basho* qua foundation manifested in the disconnection of ChimPom from the community in Hiroshima and exposed the

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 136-137.

vulnerability of the individual voice, thus sustaining the notion of public space as a struggle for the freedom of artistic expression. And the comparison between *Making the Sky of Hiroshima "PIKA"* and *Hiroshima Projection* reveals the tension between an individual and the community. In the hierarchy of the administration of public space, the community acted in opposition to the individual and defined the limit of relevance and utility of art. When an individual enters the public space to express an individual artistic will, the materialization of his visibility depends on the evaluation of his actions by the authorities, the public, or, in this case, the community. Since the community decides whether the artistic action is appropriate or not, the visibility of an individual can be suppressed and denied further representation in the public space. From the two examples we see that the meaning and place rather than the issue of ethics led to the confrontation between the community and ChimPom.

CHAPTER 5. PERFORMING MYTHS IN PUBLIC AND DIGITAL SPACES

FIRST OF ALL, we think the world must be changed. We want the most liberating change of the society and life in which we find ourselves confined. We know that such a change is possible through appropriate actions.

Guy Debord

On March 11, 2011 an earthquake of a 9.0 magnitude hit the Pacific coast of the Tōhoku region in Japan. The quake triggered devastating tsunami that washed away thousands of lives and left the survivors without a place to live. The tsunami also damaged the cooling system of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant that resulted in the meltdowns of three reactors. The nuclear catastrophe reached level 7, the highest according to the International Nuclear Event Score. The danger of radiation led to the evacuation of residents within a radius of 20-30 kilometers in Fukushima. The government restricted the area by completely prohibiting the entry of unauthorized individuals as well as by taking control of the information to be released to the media. Thus, the images that spread all over the news were those taken from a distance of more than thirty kilometers away from the Power Plant.

The lack of information fueled social anxiety while the inconsistent actions of Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) representatives, who were responsible for the Plant, worsened the situation. The chairman and the president of TEPCO were absent during the first crucial hours of the disaster and subsequently failed to handle the

aftermath of the disaster.¹⁶² After the explosion of Unit 3 on March 14, prime minister Naoto Kan and other officials withheld the information from SPEEDI (System for Prediction of Environmental Emergency Dose Information), because they did not want to show the predicted results of the emission of radioactive materials, for fear of inciting mass panic.

Public anxiety and distrust progressed with the growing miscommunication between Prime Minister Naoto Kan and TEPCO's management. On April 16 and 17, Asahi Shimbun published a survey that reflected the public opinion on the inadequacy of information released by the government. As a consequence of concealing the scale of the disaster, a number of anti-nuclear demonstrations took place in Tokyo. On April 10, 2011, a group of 15,000 people gathered in Kōenji. On September 19, 2011, 60,000 protesters shouted out "Sayonara nuclear power." The shutdown of all nuclear power reactors occurred between 2011 and 2012 for investigation. This legal procedure prevented the government from restarting the reactors. Nuclear power provides more than a quarter of Japan's electricity supply, and the hurried desire of the government to reopen the reactors resulted in mass protest in July 2012. In Summer 2012, the protest organized by the Metropolitan Coalition Against Nukes numbered up to 200,000 people. The scale of social mobilization demonstrates a new wave of public discontent that has not been seen since the US-Japan Security Treaty (Anpo) protests in the 1960s.

¹⁶² Yoichi Funabashi and Kay Kitazawa, "Fukushima in review: A complex disaster, a disastrous response," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 68, no. 2 (November 2012), 12.

On the one hand, Oguma Eiji, a Japanese historical sociologist, links the growth of the antinuclear movement to the global rise of social movements. However, he notes the changing nature of social structure and the failure of the Japanese news media to acknowledge those changes. The media, he claims, continues to use the old framework of the role of the housewives in the antinuclear movements established in the 1980s. The new agency of activism belongs mainly to the non-permanently employed workers, health workers, and foreign activists or workers. The core full-time employees with good income and employment security have low interest as well as a lack of time due to the Japanese corporate employment system. Students have more free time but less freedom to express their political views, and they avoid participation in activism that can jeopardize their future employment. Oguma calls it an issue of political culture and social integration, since the core of Japanese society—the workers of corporations and students—remain outside the antinuclear movement.

On the other hand, cultural sociologist Carl Cassegard sees the new activist power in young people without permanent employment or *freeters*. He argues that “freeter activism” is the driving force of the new resurgence of protest movements in post-Fukushima Japan, marking a shift from the hidden discontent of the 1990s. Collective trauma, alternative space, and empowerment are three major theoretical frameworks of social participation and presence, or public visibility. Even though Cassegard includes ChimPom in the scope of his inquiry, he focuses on the activist perspective of their social

engagement, especially their engagement with the nuclear theme and work with the local community in Fukushima.

In general, scholars of political and social science closely connect performance art with activism, particularly in the context of the recent renewal of the anti-nuclear movement that sparked an activist mode of artistic production. While I acknowledge the activist significance of those artistic practices, I am frustrated that the artistic value of the works remains overlooked. In my analysis of performance *Level 7 feat. Myth of Tomorrow*, I am interested in several questions. How does ChimPom maintain their “invisibility” and play with the image? How does the return of authorship create conflict between the artists and the public? Why is there a conflict? How does the digital space function? What twist does it give to the debates of public space and democracy? What role does the community play? How does an individual and community relate in the digital space? In continuation of my conversation about the public, I will consider the notion of *basho-topos*, which is the fourth notion of place of philosopher Nakamura Yūjirō.

Level 7 feat. Myth of Tomorrow

Crowds are flooding Shibuya Crossing near Shibuya Station. A camera close-up of the station window reveals a blazing image of Okamoto Taro’s *The Myth of Tomorrow*. In the next shot we are inside the station in front of the large-scale mural. The mural depicts the victims of atomic bombing at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Near

the mural, people are casually passing the walkway, three women are standing and chatting in front of the mural, and a random couple stops for a moment. The camera focuses on the dominating figure of a skeleton in the mural. The superimposed text explains: “This is a nuclear mushroom cloud. One cloud comes out of another.” A small creature in the bottom left corner is Daigo Fukuryū Maru or the Lucky Dragon 5, an allegoric representation of exploding forceful power.¹⁶³ The next flashback shows Daigo Fukuryū Maru in real action. The title *Level 7 feat. Myth of Tomorrow* appears. The next shot shows two men dressed in black; they are carrying something flat and long. Another shot focuses on the mural. The sequence of close-ups of the men and the mural reaches a climax when the two men stick the flat object to the right bottom corner of the mural. People are gazing at what is happening; some are taking pictures.

When the performance is over, the camera brings the viewer outside of the station, focusing on the window through which the edited part of the mural is visible. “I think now is the time for people to view the artwork,” states the text; meanwhile the crowd continues to move through the crosswalk. One hour after the installation of the panel, the first message appears on Twitter, asking whether or not Okamoto Taro

¹⁶³ Daigo Fukuryū Maru was a Japanese tuna fishing boat with a crew of 23 people who were exposed to radiation during one of the thermonuclear weapon tests Castle Bravo by the U.S. at Bikini Atoll, Marshall Islands on March 1, 1954. As a result, the crew members became infected with hepatitis C and suffered from radiation syndrome; Kuboyama Aikichi died on September 23, 1954. All the crew were acknowledged as *hibakusha*. Currently, the boat is on view at Daigo Fukuryū Maru Exhibition Hall near Tokyo. For more information see <http://d5f.org>.

predicted the explosion of Fukushima Power Plant, as the public saw the prophecy in the right bottom corner of the mural.¹⁶⁴

This is the video of the performance that ChimPom recorded for their individual exhibition “REAL TIMES” held from May 20-25, 2011 at MUJIN-TO Production, Tokyo. Later, it was uploaded to YouTube on July 25, 2011 (with almost 27,000 views).¹⁶⁵ In this performance, the anonymous actions of ChimPom and the use of Okamoto’s painterly style conceals the visibility of their authorship, while exposing the legibility of the final image of both the mural and the panel produced by their guerrilla situation. During the time that the identity of ChimPom remains “invisible,” the conflict between the public and the artistic does not take shape; the members of ChimPom remain in the public space of Okamoto’s work that is “accepted” as public, belonging to the community. Once their identity is revealed and their panel is recognized as a “fake” Okamoto, the confrontational zone of public space materializes. For this slippery moment between myth and revelation that creates the traumatic experience of their performance, the notion of *place-topos* will help us understand what is legible in performing the myth.

In the preceding chapter, I addressed the intersection of public space and performance art, how the notion of public can range from a discursive space to a particular place, and how differently those perceptions or realizations of public function in art projects. Public space as a place of discussion leads to the fourth notion of place

¹⁶⁴ ChimPom, LEVEL7 feat. Myth of Tomorrow, Youtube, July 25, 2011, accessed April 4, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKZBhbzLqv4>.

¹⁶⁵ The soundtrack of the video is “Non, je ne regrette rien (D.O.N.S. Remix)” by Groove Phenomenon, a song originally performed by Edith Piaf, and translates “No, I don’t regret anything.”

that Nakamura refers to as *topica* or linguistic *topos*. In ancient rhetoric, the place-ness of the language had a fundamental nature, as it helped to locate the pieces of an argument; for example, the public place or *agora* was a square for a debate and conversation in Greece. In regard to the place-ness of the argument, Cicero said that “when the hidden place is dispersed, then what is hidden can be discovered.”¹⁶⁶ In this quote, Cicero suggests that an argument is scattered in small pieces, and to detect and arrange those pieces in a puzzle becomes possible through a discussion. For Nakamura, *topica* or linguistic *topos* is a locus of arguments regarding a particular point in question in a discussion, *topic* is the basis of common sense.¹⁶⁷ Italian philosopher Giovanni Battista Vico (1668-1744) spoke about the advantages of the notion of *topica* to discuss a problem comprehensively from various perspectives, to answer the problem from a particular field, and finally, to select and combine appropriate arguments and points to speak about the problem persuasively. Nakamura found this a great strength of Vico, the use of many small arguments and points in the speech.¹⁶⁸ In my investigation of “performing the myth,” I am interested in what meanings the performance creates for the community. Likewise, I wish to ask: What is the place-*topos* of their performance? And how does this engage with the public space as democratic?

¹⁶⁶ Quoted in Nakamura, *Basho: Toposu*, 152.

¹⁶⁷ John W. M. Krummel, “Introduction to Nakamura Yūjirō and his Work,” *Social Imaginaries* 1, no. 1 (Spring 2015), 71-82.

¹⁶⁸ Nakamura, *Basho: Toposu*, 153-154. For more information on philosophy and rhetoric as well as Giovanni Vico see Giuseppe Ballacci, *Political Theory between Philosophy and Rhetoric* (London, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

As I mentioned earlier, in the intersection of public space and artistic expression, the notion of space goes beyond the physical place and enters the realm of discourse. Following up the theme of “Explosion Representation” of the Tenth Symposium of the Association for Studies of Culture and Representation (表象文化論学会) in Tokyo in 2015, a group of critics and scholars discussed the existing gap in the field of study of explosion.¹⁶⁹ The representation of explosion, one of the major themes in animation, film, theater, literature and other media, faces particular limitations. On the one hand, there is the conundrum of the limits of representation and the real event that exceeds the possible extent of visual representation. On the other hand, the ethics and politics antagonize artistic expression on the grounds of morality and sensitivity of the topic, specifically such as nuclear explosion, bombing and radiation.

How do we represent something non-representable like a nuclear explosion or radiation? In *Atomic Light (Shadow Optics)*, Akira Mizuta Lippit addresses the question of “avisuality” created by visual technology in the representation of atomic explosion: “There can be no authentic photography of atomic war because the bombings were themselves a form of total photography that exceeded the economies of representation, testing the very visibility of the visual.”¹⁷⁰ The technology of the x-ray gave transparency to the body, while the actual flash of atomic light transformed the bodies into shadows. In his essay “Peace and Atomic Bomb” (September 1945), Sergei Eisenstein described the

¹⁶⁹ Among the discussants were critic Ishioka Yoshiharu (石岡良治), English literature scholar Kitamura Sae (北村紗衣), film scholar Hatakeyama Muneaki (畠山宗明), contemporary philosophy scholar Hoshino Futoshi (星野太), and film critic Hashimoto Kazumichi (橋本一径).

¹⁷⁰ Akira M. Lippit, *Atomic Light (Shadow Optics)* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 95.

atomic weapon as having “destructive power that exceeds destruction,” as he tries to understand how a destructive weapon could bring peace.¹⁷¹ Eisenstein explains that the nuclear bomb has divided the world into before and after and will continue to shift the social consciousness. As he compares the atomic bomb with the power of an idea, a concept, he emphasizes the emerging set of new cinematic issues and goals that the future generation will have to resolve and develop.

In the film industry, the theme of explosion has been widely exploited, and an action movie cannot be imagined without something blowing up or crashing. As Jeffrey Sconce argues, in the last two decades, explosive apathy has become an invisible cinematic device that diverts the spectator’s attention to the key points of the spectacle; it stimulates the viewer to appreciate the exciting moments of an action (explosion):

The awesome is a fleeting moment of spectacle frozen for more considered contemplation, a moment when the impact aesthetic caps its impact by breaking the lateral/frontal staging of action with an equally contrasting manipulation of time/movement, one that allows the viewer to shift from merely absorbing impacts, shocks, and attractions to instead study, in minute detail, the space and trajectory of the action.¹⁷²

The cinematic awesomeness of explosion or the sublime drives the spectator to enjoy the destruction from a safe distance. The beauty of the spectacle, the fascinating picture conceals the reality of explosion being caused by an act of violence. For example,

¹⁷¹ Sergei Eisenstein, *Neravnodushnaïa Priroda* (Unseen Nature), vol. 2 (Moscow: Muzeï kino, 2006), 8.

¹⁷² Jeffrey Sconce, “Aesthetics – Explosive Apathy” in *B Is for Bad Cinema: Aesthetics, Politics, and Cultural Value*, eds. Claire Perkins and Constantine Verevis (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014), 31.

watching a car crash on screen is different from being in it; but the proliferation of its representation forges explosion apathy.

From this perspective, the issue of explosion representation being both an awesome cinematic experience and a non-representable real occupies the recent debates on explosion representation that tries to decenter its study as a spectacle. I suggest that in *Level 7 ChimPom* demonstrates an artistic approach that distresses explosion apathy in their fleeting invisibility of identity and striking legibility of the image. By distress, I mean the devices to camouflage the raw or original image and the subject, or what Hal Foster refers to as a “rupture between the perception and the consciousness of a viewer touched by an image.”¹⁷³ The visual apathy achieved such an extent that the legibility of the image became blurred, veiled, screened. Eric Cazdyn attributes this “seeing and not seeing” mode of perception of images to the “meanings and effects of capitalist accumulation and images” that increase to “a different level of abstraction.”¹⁷⁴ The contingency between the mode of production of both meaning and capital, which he reveals, can serve as the mechanism of appropriating and manipulating the image. The experience of the confusing subject matter of the image can be traumatic in a Lacanian “missed encounter” that I will address further below.

¹⁷³ Hal Foster, *The First Pop Age: Painting and Subjectivity in the Art of Hamilton, Lichtenstein, Warhol, Richter, and Ruscha* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2012), 114.

¹⁷⁴ Eric M. Cazdyn, *The Flash of Capital: Film and Geopolitics in Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 25.

The panel that ChimPom attached to Okamoto's mural depicts the explosion of the reactors at the power plant in Fukushima. The artists chose an image taken from a distance of thirty kilometers that the media kept circulating (fig. 12). It shows massive thick grey smoke bursting out and over the building of the Units of Fukushima Power Plant. ChimPom translated the image of this dramatic scene into the schematic primitive language of Okamoto Taro, and thus edited the history of nuclear power in Japan that the artist depicted in the mural *Myth of Tomorrow* (fig. 13). ChimPom's panel shows two black clouds of smoke with red threatening eyes rising from the destroyed armature of the building. In the panel, the representation of the explosion is presented in allegoric and ironic manner. The black cloud of smoke with red eyes shows a thin red tongue, like a child that was caught performing a prank. Or the sticking out tongue implies a shortage of breath and air. Even though the humorous approach distances the viewer from the brutality of the real event, the picture remains disturbing.

ChimPom's "staging of the image" distresses the spectacle of explosion, as the repetition of the image manipulates the cinematic effect of explosion apathy in the situation. "Staging an image" signifies "distancing the image," as it retrieves memories, impressions, associations that are hidden deep in the consciousness. In his essay *Pictures*, Douglas Crimp explains the idea of "staging of the image" regarding the production of works by a generation of artists in the late 1970s in New York; he does not mean the re-enactment of the represented by the image, but distancing from the original image in such a manner that it becomes forgotten. For example, in Cindy Sherman's (b. 1954) *Untitled*

Film Stills (1977-80) there is a simultaneous presence and absence of narrative that Crimp explains as “both a trace(ing) and an effacement of the filmed image, a drawing that is simultaneously an erasure.”¹⁷⁵

In ChimPom’s performance, the presentation of the image—the translation of the media picture into the primitive language of Okamoto’s painting and an anonymous guerilla attachment of their panel to the mural—gave theatrical presence to the image of explosion. First, the performance itself creates the effect of a “staged image” for there is the fiction and reality or the presence and absence of the narrative. And then, the image of explosion remediated into the painted panel “stages” the myth as the real.¹⁷⁶ The subject matter of ChimPom’s panel and Okamoto’s mural do not have the psychological resonance to the extent that the staging them together produces. Each artwork exists separately showing the representation of atomic explosion, but the moment when the myth turns into a prophecy brings the anxiety. ChimPom took the image out of its contemporary context and inserted it the new context of past history and prophecy. Their confusion of temporalities revalued *The Myth of Tomorrow* out of a new mythology of nuclear power and radiation in the situation at the Shibuya Station.

The juxtaposition of the old and new, or past and present in constructing a situation reminds us of the practice of *détournement* introduced by Situationist

¹⁷⁵ Douglas Crimp, “Pictures” in *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation*, ed. Brian Wallis (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984), 180.

¹⁷⁶ Eric Cazdyn attributes this seeing and not seeing mode of perception of images to the “meanings and effects of capitalist accumulation and images” that increase to “a different level of abstraction.” He connects the way of production of meaning and the way of production of capital and their contingency. For this contingent and consumerist relationship, the notion of meaning and place got lost for the definition of public, community.

International (SI), an international avant-garde organization in 1957-1972. In the 1960s, the Situationists used *détournement* to disrupt the spectacle of urban space, as a capitalist critique of the fragmentality of the real created by the media. The philosophy of Guy Debord (1931-1994), the founding member of SI, analyzes social relationships in the capitalist world mediated through the visual representations that he defines as spectacle. Debord suggests that a radical action or a construction of situations can completely change the world, and the technique of *détournement* can implement this goal. In other words, there is a thin line between artistic production and an act of vandalism in his philosophy. He writes:

In this sense there can be no situationist painting or music, but only a situationist use of those means. In a more elementary sense, *détournement* within the old cultural spheres is a method of propaganda, a method which reveals the wearing out and loss of importance of those spheres.¹⁷⁷

The logic of *détournement* serves propaganda purposes while devaluing the original work of art, with a chance of its deconstruction. ChimPom's *détournement* of Okamoto's mural, however, does not seek to deconstruct the artwork; rather it reestablishes the continuity of its meaning.

Myth of Tomorrow depicts the destruction of a substance, the collapse of a material world caused by atomic bombing. The painting presents the chaos as both myth and reality and takes the disappearance of human sense to the extreme while reminding

¹⁷⁷ Situationist International Online, "Definitions," accessed April 4, 2018, <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/definitions.html>.

us of the past and warning of the future. Before ChimPom's performance, very few people remembered this public artwork that spreads over a vast space on the wall of Shibuya station. ChimPom's conspiratorial application of the panel does not destroy the materiality and integrity of the mural per se, rather the group inserted their addition into the missing part in the bottom corner of the painting. Similar to their performance *Making the Sky of Hiroshima "PIKA,"* ChimPom interfered with the public space of common memory, as they revitalized the freshly experienced trauma of Fukushima. Their use of the current event's imagery of the reactor's explosion functions as the Lacanian repetition of a missed encounter.

In "The Unconscious and Repetition," Jacques Lacan defines repetition as not reproduction, but something which is "always veiled in analysis," and it is a process that "occurs *as if by chance*".¹⁷⁸ In repetition, there is a return to the Real as a traumatic experience, because the encounter with the Real is always a missed encounter, since a screen prevents a direct encounter with the Real. Thus, the screen gives access to the Real and frustrates the attempt to touch it.¹⁷⁹ ChimPom "screens" the traumatic repetition of history through the cinematic technique of film editing or montage introduced by Sergei Eisenstein. Through montage Eisenstein evokes particular emotional shocks or responses

¹⁷⁸ Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, eds. Jacques-Alain Miller and Alan Sheridan (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998), 54.

¹⁷⁹ Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2009), 135.

as he brings together elements that are distant in time and space as well as contexts; the montage can be visually and psychologically aggressive.¹⁸⁰

What is the aggressive moment in *Level7 feat. Myth of Tomorrow*? Is it the choice of the familiar explosion imagery in Fukushima? Or is it the subject of Okamoto's painting? It is their juxtaposition that evokes the ideological or thematic effect. ChimPom's montage of the panel and the mural produces an emotional shock in the spectator in the form of *déjà vu*, the experience of a nuclear catastrophe. We can understand their application of the panel as both a physical act of editing and a stylistic aesthetic of montage. While the former corresponds to the performative aspect of *détournement*, the latter takes advantage of a shock encounter while manipulating the perception of the traumatic experience. From the discontinuity of elements, Okamoto's mural and ChimPom's panel, a historical continuity from Hiroshima to Fukushima is born. Furthermore, the confusion of temporalities is achieved through the treatment of the "found" image in the news media.

Repeating an image found in the media was a common technique in the 1960s Pop Art movement. Artists like Andy Warhol appropriated the Duchampian notion of a readymade to images that they found in the magazines, newspapers, and TV. In the *Death in America* series, Warhol paints history, as he addresses the issues of race during the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S.¹⁸¹ At that time, American print and TV media

¹⁸⁰ Sergei Eisenstein, *Writings, 1922-1934: Sergei Eisenstein Selected Works: Volume I*, trans. Richard Taylor (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 34.

¹⁸¹ Anne Wagner, "Warhol Paints History, or Race in America" in *Race and Representation: Affirmative Action*, eds. Robert Post and Michael P. Rogin (New York: Zone Books, 1998).

popularized the brutal images of riots. For example, for his acrylic and silkscreen painting *Race Riot* (1964) Warhol picked the photographs by journalist Charles Moore that were published in *Life* magazine (17 May 1963) showing a policeman's dog attacking a black man. In this context, the role of repetition creates the shock effect that Warhol incorporates to disturb the apathy that the viewers developed towards their perception of the image. The repetition of the images keeps the historical narrative to emphasize the drama, while the colors of red, blue and white painted over the screens, particularly the repetition of red, connote the color of the of American flag and blood.¹⁸²

While ChimPom use a readymade image from the media as a point of departure, they take advantage of the ability of the image to produce a spectacle out of a traumatic experience. And for this reason, their remediation of the explosion functions to the advantage of the repetition. Specifically, the repetition of the image by the media generates the spectacle of nuclear explosion and dramatizes the narrative, if not terrorize the spectator. ChimPom's redundancy acts as if they are both spectator and performer. As a result, the audience recognizes the brush of Okamoto Taro and start to question the prophecy of the *Myth of Tomorrow*. ChimPom explains:

It's easy to remain a spectator of the spectacle, and it's easy to criticize it also. But instead, while remaining immersed in the flood of advertisement, we use it [the advertisement] to produce a new work of art. We engage with the power of the media against itself. In order for art to produce a new value, we need to be both spectators and artists. Particularly in Japan, since there is no persuasiveness in making the distinction between calling oneself (*jishō*) an artist and being called (*tashō*) an artist, in the spectator as well there is no distinction between

¹⁸² Ibid., 110.

calling oneself a spectator and being called a spectator. In other words, everybody can be an artist while being a spectator. ChimPom is the creator of *Level7 feat. Myth of Tomorrow*; but more than anyone else we were also hard-core viewers/appreciators of the *Myth of Tomorrow*. Our ideal of art is to make art while still being spectators. So maybe ChimPom should just be called 'self-proclaimed artists.'¹⁸³

In their artistic process, the means can be justified, if the spectator engages in active critique of the spectacle rather than remaining its passive consumer. To perceive reality in a clear way, the artist should simultaneously be a consumer and a producer, according to ChimPom. The role of the artist is to guide the spectator towards realizing these possibilities as well. This active approach helps us to see beyond the image. ChimPom seeks to distress the apathy of the spectator by crushing the distance between the image and the audience.

First, spectators are actual witnesses of the performance at the station; they document the performance with their cameras and use social media to spread the information about the on-site intervention. For example, the Tweet about whether or not Okamoto Taro predicted Fukushima explosion went viral. Second, ChimPom uploaded the video of the performance on YouTube and also took advantage of their social media

¹⁸³ ChimPom, *Art as Action* (Tokyo: Asahi Press, 2012), 87. Translated from:

スペクタクルの観客でいるのも、それを安易に批判することも簡単です。そうではなく、広告の洪水の中でそれを使って新たな作品を作り出す。マスコミの力を逆手にとって巻き込む。アートによって新しい価値を生み出すためには、観客であることと表現者であること、その両方が必要なのではないのでしょうか。

特に日本では、アーティストの自称／他称に説得力がないように、観客にも自称／他称はないはずです。つまりみんなが観客でありながら表現者になりうる。ChimPomは<LEVEL7 feat, 『明日の神話』>の作者ですが、誰よりもハードコアなく明日の神話>の鑑賞者でした。僕らが考えるアートの理想は、観客のまんまで表現していくことです。だからChimPomは「自称芸術家」で合っている可能性もありますね。

presence on Instagram and Facebook. Their performance makes legible those layers that were hidden and dispersed. The argument of ChimPom (being both spectator and artist) constructs their own discourse of Japanese history and its repetition. Whether they come to the public space of the train station to face the public or move their rhetoric to the digital space, the two poles of their artistic production combine theory and practice. Thus, the communicative approach between the spectator and the artist generates public deliberation on issues of politics and society, as well as artistic production and reception. ChimPom seeks to expand the spectators' and artists' self-interest and self-involvement, providing new ways of social engagement and artistic practice; they raise the question of both the vision and the way of seeing. From this perspective, ChimPom does not solemnly act as an individual apart from the community, but as both individual and community.

CHAPTER 6. THE CONUNDRUM OF BODY AND SITE IN PERFORMING THE TRAUMA

“Sometimes I only think that some big natural disaster is the only way for people to get together. An involvement is something that is greater than them. There is so much suffering and destruction in our human social systems which is effectively holding us back.”

Marina Abramovic

Daylight fills the spacious hall of the 30th Street Station in Philadelphia. People are rushing to catch a train. Some are waiting, drinking coffee, chatting. Their destination is unknown, but there exists a sense of constant movement. Amid this turmoil of bodies and sound a slim, fragile figure of a woman appears. She looks different from other travelers: a somber yellow kimono conceals her whitened skin as she walks barefoot. Thick black hair falls naturally on her back. She gently carries a long fabric of red silk. This is an artist known as Eiko, a member of the New York-based Japanese performance duo Eiko & Koma.¹⁸⁴ She chose the 30th Street Station to present her first solo work A

¹⁸⁴ The technique developed by Eiko & Koma originates from *ankoku butō*, an artistic dance form developed by Tatsumi Hijikata and Kazuo Ohno in Japan in 1960s. Being a student of Kazuo and being inspired by his choreography, Eiko with her partner Koma developed their own artistic style. The dance vocabulary has the same slow and controlled movements, however, it lacks the boldness of expression. There is less physical force and more spiritual move. Their attitude to place and people is more ‘delicate’ in a way that they co-exist with the site rather than intervene.

Body in a Station (2014) (fig. 14). Her performance is a continuation of the project that she created during 2013-2014, namely *A Body in Fukushima* (fig. 15).

In Summer and Winter 2014, Eiko made a journey to the Fukushima area with William Johnston, a photographer and professor of Japanese history at Wesleyan University. During the trip the artist and the photographer stopped at various abandoned locations in Fukushima. Eiko used those sites as a place to perform her dance while Johnston photographed her performance. Their collaboration produced photos that were exhibited at Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (PAFA) in conjunction with her *A Body in a Station* project. The images capture the striking contrast between the ruined spaces and thriving nature; amid this deserted landscape Eiko's stillness seems particularly motionless. The sense of loneliness experienced in Fukushima Eiko represented with new force in Philadelphia's station. She noted the contrast between the liveliness of the 30th street station and the emptiness of once populated stations in Fukushima, saying:

What if I dig a hole into this marble floor as if digging a well for water and that hole goes and reaches to Fukushima: then it is like a hole that is the passage to another world in Alice's Wonderland.¹⁸⁵

This quote captures the essence of Eiko's project to connect two sites of train stations by using her body. After performing in Fukushima, she transports her experience to another site in Philadelphia. The relationship between the two sites remains "democratic,"

¹⁸⁵ William Johnston and Eiko Otake, "The Making of 'A Body in Fukushima': A Journey through an Ongoing Disaster," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 13, no.2 (March 9, 2015), accessed April 30, 2015, <http://japanfocus.org/-William-Johnston/4295>.

meaning each site exists by itself as well as relating to each other in her dance. The presence and awareness of the camera adds another dimension to the transcendent space of her performance. In considering the question of site, I revisit the notion of public as both the space of a train station and symbolic place. In her dance, I review the conundrum of body, site and camera through the lens of Nakamura's two final concepts of place – the somatic place and the symbolic place. Nakamura calls the body as the foundation of the self-conscious or the somatic place. In the performance, the somatic place of Eiko internalizes the public space of trauma. In this case study, the public place is not for confrontation but for connecting and healing communities achieved by the humanizing effect of the dance vocabulary.

In the discussion of the body in performance art, a controversial issue has been the presence of the physical body as the foundational element of performance. Scholars suggest various perspectives on the definition and role of the body; it can be physical, abstract, disappeared, disconnected, absent, fragmented etc. Johannes Birringer claims that the language of performance codified the body into a system of representation; the “multiplying screens and false mirrors” conceal the initial body.¹⁸⁶ The linguistic abstraction of body that objectifies, erases, violates or negates the body achieved its highest degree, limiting the ontology of performance art. On the one hand, in performance analysis, a semiotic approach applies a framework of signs and meanings to

¹⁸⁶ Johannes Birringer, *Theatre, Theory, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana U.P., 1993), 212.

“read” performance works.¹⁸⁷ For example, Japanese theater director and theoretician Suzuki Tadashi views performance as a process of reading a sign that contains a multiplicity of significations. When the performer does this, many readings become possible, or rather the ambiguity of the sign comes out. The variety of readings creates ambiguity around the body, for a performer uses the actual body (*nikutai*) as a tool in the act of reading. In his groundbreaking work *Culture is the Body*, Suzuki suggests his grammar, a method of actor training that focuses on the physical body, specifically the feet, thus connecting to and making inseparable with the ground. His connection of the body and the ground emphasizes the material, physical aspect of the body. If we speak in Nakamurian way, the actual ground and the feet are the foundation of the existence of the body.

On the other hand, the body becomes the locus of trauma that can be approached from a psychological perspective. In this case, performance is a method of healing. For Peggy Phelan the Freudian notion of reconstruction and repetition are a way to revisit the history of a traumatic background. For her, dance becomes a temporal and spatial frame of the body, allowing for a “revision of the body’s relation to its own past.”¹⁸⁸ In other words, the traumatic experience internalized in the body becomes accessible through the act of performance. Similar to talking out the trauma as a healing method in

¹⁸⁷ For more information on the role of semiotics see Marvin Carlson, “Semiotics and its Heritage” in *Critical Theory and Performance*, eds. Janelle G. Reinelt and Joseph R. Roach (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), 13-25.

¹⁸⁸ Peggy Phelan, *Mourning Sex: Performing Public Memories* (London: Routledge, 1997), 53.

psychoanalysis, the performative language of the body constitutes the dance vocabulary and creates the history and memory of the body. The disadvantage of this approach lies in the slippage between the body and the site because the site rather than the body can be the origin of the traumatic event or experience. In Fukushima, there exists the physical and psychological trauma of the catastrophe among the individual bodies of the residents, but the site itself is a locus of trauma for the community and for others who sympathize. For these ideas, the troubling moment is the unity of the body as a subject and object in performance art. While Suzuki connects the feet and the ground, turning the body into object, Phelan connects “immobile legs” and the unconscious, prioritizing the mind. In *A Body in Fukushima*, Eiko is not a witness of the trauma since she was not present in Fukushima at the actual time. Her therapy is of another kind.

From this perspective, the performance theory of “restored behavior” developed by Richard Schechner suggests the distancing of the performing body from the conscious self; the same body can reenact itself in a wide range of actions, for example a different physical and/or temporal state or place. Restoring a behavior in performance brings symbolic and reflexive meanings that give the reenactment of an action or revisiting of a trauma never the same state, “never for the first time.”¹⁸⁹ Unlike Phelan’s therapeutic approach, Schechner does not limit the performance to the traumatic experience and suggests a more generalizing approach. His idea of rehearsal—the states and meanings that the performing body acts for the second to the *n*th time—applies paradoxically to

¹⁸⁹ Richard Schechner, *Between Theater & Anthropology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 36.

Eiko's performance. Indeed, her choreography has an aspect of improvisation and openness for a chance encounter, but she improvises from already "rehearsed" and stored vocabulary that is symbolic and physically responsive. Still while acting out of pre-existing movements, she keeps re-inventing them during the performance as well.

So how does the idea of connecting the sites of Fukushima and Philadelphia happen through Eiko's body? I apply the theory of Nakamura's somatic place to see how Eiko restores her temporal and spatial contact of Fukushima in Philadelphia to conceptually define the abstract connection of the two sites. Nakamura prioritizes the body as the foundation of self-consciousness; the physical presence of the body articulates the temporal and spatial place (*ba*), and the time and space can be seized as an extension (拡張) of the somatic body:

First, the body is the foundation of the conscious self, but this distinguishes a spirit [心] and a body [体], or the spirit [精神] and the body [身体]; this doesn't mean that the first resides in the latter. [...] We do not hold the body as a tool we live the body itself.¹⁹⁰

The body is the ground level, the foundation from which the self-conscious based in the body receives a place. The frame of the body is open, for the physical body is not enclosed in the skin but it expands, opens into the world. The experience of the body pertains to the body shape-frame in time and space. Nakamura makes an example of noh actors. On the stage, the actors wear masks that obstruct their vision. However, their

¹⁹⁰ Nakamura, *Basho: Toposu*, 139.

temporal and spatial involvement with the stage is internalized in their body to such an extent that it becomes part of their body frame.¹⁹¹ The somatic place is the experiential extension of the body into the place. Nakamura's vision of somatic place is a more grounded version of the body theory of Ichikawa Hiroshi. Ichikawa (influenced by Maurice Merleau-Ponty) wrote extensively on dance; he proposes the unity between the body and the spirit as he differentiates the co-referential body-subject and body-object. Both co-exist and are part of each other; one cannot exist without another:

Body-subject is a body as a spatial object, we live it from within, and we grasp it directly. This body is the basis of our actions, it penetrates us from the bright horizon of consciousness to a dark and foggy horizon. It is constantly in front of us, or rather present *with* us. In spite of this, or because of this it in itself remains without being brought to awareness. In this sense, we should say that we do not *have* the body, but we *are* the body.¹⁹²

Ichikawa unites the self-conscious and unconscious in one body and does not limit it to being enclosed by skin. For example, the body-object performs in time and space and the body-subject internalizes this practice. The body-subject is the inner perception of the body experiencing things. For this reason, the body-subject does not have a physical boundary, rather it has an experiential dimension that Ichikawa calls body-space. The

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 141.

¹⁹² Shigenori Nagatomo, "Ichikawa's View of the Body," *Philosophy East and West* 36, no. 4 (1986): 376. For more information see Miyabi Ichikawa, *Kōi to Nikutai* (Action and Body) (Tokyo: Tabata Shoten, 1972), 71.

body-space perceives an object through a bodily-dialogue, a visual or tactile interaction with the perceived object.¹⁹³ Nakamura defines it simply as somatic place.

In Eiko's performance, the body-space becomes a conceptual conduit between Fukushima and other sites. The dance at the abandoned train stations is the point of her departure to create her own knowledge of the traumatic event of which she was not a direct witness. Her dancing body becomes the somatic place of Fukushima and Philadelphia. In the body-space, the unity of the body and mind acknowledges two states – Eiko's body involved with the place and her awareness of this action. The dimension of the lived-in experience is fluid as it changes with each site; the multiplicity of practices expands the somatic place. When Eiko arrives at Philadelphia's 30th Street Station, she "restores" the somatic place of her body in Fukushima, but as Schechner reminds us, the reenactment or the revisiting of a trauma, in this case her interaction with the aftermath of the disaster, occurs in a different way than in Fukushima. In her dance, she interacts with objects and environment; the contact received from the outside objectifies the body as definite and material, or as Ichikawa suggests, body-object. Unlike the body-subject, the body-object is lived from outside. The bodily dialogue helps her to discover the physicality of an object; an act of touching an object awakens the sense of self-identification, the sense of not being a part of the object perceived. The body-space is constructed through the contact with things, a dialogue. The physical interaction with an

¹⁹³ Nakamura takes the notion of Ichikawa's body-space and Nishida's logic of place so that the somatic place is the mutual experience of the body and the site.

object helps the self to understand the objectivity of the object as well as discovering the self.¹⁹⁴

Eiko becomes the body-object to let the actual observers of the disaster such as plants, houses or a concrete wall act upon her body. For example, during her performance Eiko places her body on sand, asphalt, railroad rails, granite floor, bush, or window glass. There is an act of contacting sand as well as the act of sand contacting her body (fig. 16). This exchange of sensations brings the materiality of the object, it expands the experiential dimension of the body-space. In this dialogue, Eiko identifies the sand as a material entity on the one hand, and she connects this bodily exchange to the traumatic environment of Fukushima on the other hand. Similarly, by viewing ruined houses or abandoned stations, Eiko absorbs the sense of loneliness and grief that she performs. Through her dance, the tactile or visual contact becomes internalized, and then the body-space of this experience emerges.

The somatic place is created by the dialogue of body-subject and body-object. This idea of bodily dialogue echoes Rosemary Candelario's notion of "choreography of immersion" or a "process of diving deeply and actively into another environment" that suggests "being absorbed into and kinesthetically engaged with another element, with the possibility that the process may transform both the bodies and the site."¹⁹⁵ Even though

¹⁹⁴ For more information see Shigenori Nagatomo, *Attunement Through the Body* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992).

¹⁹⁵ Rosemary Candelario, "Bodies, Camera, Screen: Eiko & Koma's Immersive Media Dances," *The International Journal of Screendance*, Vol 4 (2014), accessed April 26, 2015, <http://screendancejournal.org/article/view/4522/3774#.VT0ocbrfY20>.

the transformative nature of the deep engagement with the site seems powerful, I find the slippage between the body and the site troubling. On the one hand, the notion of immersion can lead to a point when the body transforms into a site. Another confusing moment is the presence and awareness of the camera in Eiko's performance. Immersion seems to be the state of being that seeks to achieve the state of being as an object perceived; it's either one or another, the body tries to immerse into the camera or the camera immerses into the body. On the other hand, the absorption of the body into another object negates the subjective status of the body.

On one occasion, Condelario describes the body of the performer immersing in a site while the "camera remains an outside observer"; on another occasion, the "camera immerses itself in the site of the dancing body."¹⁹⁶ However, in either scenarios, the camera enters the somatic place of Eiko's performing body. Nakamura explains this phenomenon:

Body becomes the continuation of an action; when driving a car, the body continues into the space of the driving car. The body extends into the space, and the space externalizes into the body, because there is a connection rather than a separation between the two.¹⁹⁷

The camera enters the body-space of Eiko, but it does not mean a literal extension of the body, the presence of the camera is part of her experience. In other words, the camera is a continuation of her somatic experiential dimension of the site. The presence of the

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Tadashi Suzuki and Yūjirō Nakamura, *Gekiteki Gengo* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1999), 45.

camera does not erase the physicality of the body, both the camera and the body co-exist in the somatic place of the dancing body. On the site of the performance, Eiko has moments of awareness of the presence of the camera and those of its absence; there is a dialogue with the camera, but the artist is not bound to a constant interaction. For the level of awareness, as Ichikawa proposes the unity of the mind and the body, the strength of their unity gives more awareness to either body or mind: “we will be self-conscious of the mind when we can make the potential world our own world by making the degree of synthesis (of mind and body) higher and by liberating from the control of the circumstances.”¹⁹⁸ Based on my experience of her performance, I noticed that Eiko appears to move between the levels of unity, for she seems to experience higher or lesser moments of immersion in the environment. In her interaction with the surroundings, she encounters physical objects to have a bodily dialogue with them. The idea of the dialogue implies a reciprocal relationship between the elements of the performance; they co-exist in one place. Her dance evokes symbolic and reflexive meanings that are related to the notion of site.

Performing a Site-Symbolic Place

The project *A Body in Places* is a series of performances that Eiko started in Fukushima. In *A Body in a Station* Eiko connected two sites, Fukushima and Philadelphia. In 2015, she added another location – the Fulton Street Station in New York

¹⁹⁸ Ichikawa Hiroshi, *Shintai-ron Shūsei* (A Collection of Body Theory) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2001).

(fig. 17). Similar to 30th Street Station, Fulton is a huge transportation hub that links multiple lines and destinations in the vicinity of Wall Street and the World Trade Center. The choice of the site brings in the implications of 9.11 on the one hand and draws a parallel with 3.11 on the other hand. The three performances share the common public place of a train station that makes the notion of site an integral part of the performance.

In *A Body in a Station*, Eiko begins the curve of her performance from the station's entrance of the 30th street, extends it to the center of the main hall, turns to the left of the Train Information Display, and ends in the North Waiting Room to go back as a boomerang on the same trajectory. Each of the four performances within the interval of one week lasted for three hours. Eiko performed alone, she moved almost imperceptibly following the curve with rare and unexpected accelerations. Sometimes she stopped to have laconic eye contact with the viewer. The white make-up depriving expression could not hide her emotions, her eyes were full of sorrow. The captivated audience followed the artist. In the North Waiting Room, the dance culminated when Eiko laid herself down on black futon and white silk kimono set on the marble floor. Her dance seemed like an exploration by a traveler mapping the space of the station with light steps. Even though the kimono concealed her body and feet, as she moved the skirt revealed the complexity of the motion. The dance might have seemed mundane. However, the simplicity of the performance hid years of training.

In her article "Bodies, Camera, Screen: Eiko & Koma's Immersive Media Dances," Rosemary Candelario discusses the relationship between the site and body in

the duo's dance vocabulary that she characterizes as a "choreography of immersion" or a "process of diving deeply and actively into another environment." In *A Body in a Station*, the immersive method has a reciprocal effect on both body and site. By viewing Eiko's act, the audience gradually becomes absorbed into the space that she creates through her body language. Eiko's curiosity in an exploration of new environment reaches the viewers, encouraging them to gradually detach from the reality of the train station. The artist's graceful and controlled movements create an alternative space in which there is room for meditation and trance. She unobtrusively engages the audience in her world and makes it seem as though time freezes. The delicate manner of her "immersion" lets body, site, and created spaces peacefully coexist and intertwine. Her choreographic sinking into contemplation is fully realized when the audience comes to grasp with her practice; the crowd of viewers follows the artist as a silent dialogue unfolds between them.

Eiko achieves this complete involvement by the viewer in the dance mainly through the choreography and eye contact. As mentioned before, she executes a controlled, slightly pantomimic language of the body. In order to hear her silent speech, a viewer has to reach the same level of concentration. In the environment of the train station with the constant coming and going of travelers, this task seems especially challenging. Being in the audience, I realize that overcoming of this distracting factor represents one of the main challenges. The eye contact with Eiko for several instants might involve the viewer; she shares a moment of intimacy that opens up the curtain to

her “wonderland.” Even though the *oshiroi* makeup should conceal Eiko’s facial expression, her eyes convey a story of feelings.

While proceeding deeper into the station, Eiko transmitted an aura of melancholia on the site and for the audience while simultaneously adapting to the business of this transportation hub. The people’s reaction to her “immersing” dance is ambiguous. Curiosity and indifference divide them into absorbed and unabsorbed categories. Even though the performance lasted three hours, the point of immersion may occur instantly and last as long as the viewer decided to stay or go. The turnout of the audience stayed fluid. Throughout Eiko danced with restrained intensity and high concentration. She drove herself to emotional and physical exhaustion, the main principle of *butō* dance. One would feel this intensity more or less depending on the time of being engaged.

In the previous paragraph, I have described the absorption of the audience and the site in Eiko’s performance. The inconspicuous nature of Eiko’s “immersion” lies in her ability to adapt to the environment of the performance and vice versa. The idea of ‘performing a place’ arises from the possibility of harmonizing the performance and the site’s environment. The narrative of grief unfolded in the specific site of the Philadelphia’s 30th Street Station through her dance. The trope of mourning that Eiko applied in her “immersion” connected the site of Fukushima and Philadelphia on spatial and emotional levels. At 30th Street Station, by “performing a place” Eiko told the history of the disaster and fit the post-disaster trauma into a new context. The repetitive mode of both performance and dance technique, as Candelario characterizes

Eiko&Koma's reparative dance, means the recognition of what already happened in Fukushima and might happen in the future, as well as the desire to deliver this message to the audience. Although there is no overt political statement, Eiko's dance was filled with grief for Fukushima that she transcends in her performance in the station in Philadelphia.

Another question that remains ambiguous is the site-specificity in Eiko's performance. Even though Rosemary Candelario prefers adaptivity to specificity, the latter category cannot be disregarded. Generally, the site-specific performance is any work presented in a location other than a theatre with the audience's interaction. In his *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place, Documentation*, Nick Kaye theorizes the concept of site by locating it in the realm of visual art and architecture, linking site-specificity to the notion of site, rather than a particular kind of place.¹⁹⁹ Following the theory of Michel de Certeau that *space is a practiced place*, Kaye states that "a 'site-specific work' might articulate and define itself through properties, qualities or meanings produced in specific relationships between an 'object' or 'event' and a position it occupies."²⁰⁰

In *A Body in a Station*, the particularity of a train station represents a secondary meaning while the site comes to the foreground. Eiko articulates the conceptualization of site by moving her performance from one location to another. This articulation creates an abstract content of 'place' or space. In other words, *A Body in Fukushima* and *A Body in a Station* share the space that transcends the geographical boundary. The artist uncovers

¹⁹⁹ Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000), 3.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

the ‘hole’ between two realities by transforming the idea of ‘site.’ The macrocosm of space incorporates the microcosm of particular kinds of places. For example, in Fukushima, Eiko performed not only among the abandoned train stations but also ruined houses and empty streets, while in Philadelphia she remained within the walls of the station. What becomes important is the way she affects the sites and the everyday, how they intertwine through her experience.

De Certeau’s separation of physical and abstract places or site and space originates in the adaptation of Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotics. If for Saussure the act of reading realizes the sign, for de Certeau space is produced through practice. Thus, “performing a place” means reading the sign ‘place.’ Then place is a system with two levels of information—the form which the sign takes, or geographical site, and the concept it represents, or abstract space. The semiotic interpretation of the performance of a place facilitates the understanding of the multiplicity of spaces that is created during the dance.

From this perspective, I see the difference between the arguments of Nick Kaye and Rosemary Candelario in their methodological approach to theorizing performance. While Kaye’s site-specificity addresses the structuralist concept of language, Candelario seems to favor a Foucauldian poststructuralist idea of time which she uses as an epigraph to her dissertation. Specifically, Nick Kaye is caught by the fluidity of places and the slippage between site and performance; and Candelario extends de Certeau’s random

practices of everyday to the rehearsed and improvisational performance. Consequently, “performing a place” becomes simultaneously fluid, multilayered, and extended.

In *A Body in Fukushima*, Eiko uses her body in choreographing the place to address what is lost, forgotten, silenced, and imagined. The amplitude of spaces, which appears to bother Kaye but not Candelario, grasps the complexity of connotations of place. Fukushima is a site of contamination, destruction, and grief, as well as the questioning of the state’s responsibility towards society and raising the awareness of nuclear legacy in Japan.

However, the meanings of these sites make Eiko’s project into what might be called site-symbolic. In her article “A New Journey through Other Spaces,” Bertie Ferdman investigates the genealogy of the term “site-specific” and the existing confusion and proliferation of its linguistic variations; she illuminates the engagement of a growing number of artists with site and their search to articulate it beyond the framework of theater.²⁰¹ In generic terms, a site-specific performance is located outside of traditional theater buildings, in found and unexpected spaces with a more direct and interactive approach with the audience.

In this context, space as practiced place can be both a secular one, formed by the human daily activity and a religious one created through worship. From this perspective, I attribute Eiko’s site-specificity to the symbolic meaning of her performance. Although I agree with Rosemary Candelario characterization of Eiko’s incorporation of site as site-

²⁰¹ Bertie Ferdman, “A New Journey through Other Spaces,” *Theater* 43, no. 2 (2013): 7.

adaptive, I find that in *A Body in Places* the notion of place goes beyond the limit of site-adaptive, and for this reason, I argue that Eiko's performance is site-symbolic and remains in the realm of site-specific performance. Ferdman mentions that in recent practices artists tend to use site as a context for their work.²⁰² By introducing Nakamura's third place-*topos* as symbolic place, I expand the recent transformation of the notion of site-specific in performance art.

The space and time of a place corresponds to various desires, for example, the kitchen for cooking or the bedroom for sleeping. However, Nakamura writes "when it comes to people, the internal articulation of time-space originates from both the actual and symbolic desire."²⁰³ The symbolic desire connects a place, for instance a mountain peak with a particular meaning that transforms it into a holy location. He explains that in ancient society the cosmic perception of the world influenced the city layout; for example, in ancient Egypt, the form of hieroglyph for 'city,' a letter X in a circle, is reflected in the structure of the actual city with four areas divided by two roads intersecting at the center.²⁰⁴ Even though Nakamura refers to religious, sacred or mythical space in particular, the symbolic place need not necessarily relate to religion per se, but rather to a symbol. While Nakamura suggests that a shrine at the top of a mountain can be a symbolic place, I argue that a train station has the potential to become a symbolic place depending on the desire. Eiko performs at various abandoned locations in Fukushima,

²⁰² Ibid., 20.

²⁰³ Nakamura, *Basho: Toposu*, 144-145.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 145.

which is a discursive place of the nuclear disaster.²⁰⁵ Following the logic of Nakamura, the meaning of Eiko's symbolic desire to connect the world of local and international communities produces the symbolic place of loss and grief; it forms out of her physical presence in the specific site.

In the public space of the train station, Eiko produces the symbolic place by “performing” her somatic place. The idea of ‘performing a place’ appears from the possibility to harmonize the performance and the environment of the site by pairing “non-specific narratives with specific sites and bodies” which produces an encounter of “various histories from different times and places.”²⁰⁶ In *A Body in Fukushima*, the “non-specific narrative” of grief unfolds in the specific site of Fukushima; the event of the triple disaster with its posttraumatic effect produces the context of the performance. In other words, the removal of Eiko's presence from the site of Fukushima would erase the narrative of mourning absorbed and produced through the dance. At 30th Street Station, Eiko performs the experiential dimension of post-disaster trauma in the new context. At Fulton Station, she layers the history of the 3.11 upon that of 9.11. In *Body in a Station*, the densely populated space of the 30th Street and Fulton train stations create a stark contrast with the emptiness of the train stations of the Jōban Line in Fukushima; this reinforces the message. Eiko articulates the conceptualization of site by moving her performance from one location to another: Fukushima, Philadelphia, and New York; the

²⁰⁵ In this case, by discursive I understand the meanings and implications that the site of Fukushima embodies.

²⁰⁶ Rosemary Candelario, “Eiko & Koma: Choreographing Spaces Apart in Asian America” (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, ProQuest, UMI Dissertations Publishing, 2011), 99.

site is part of her somatic place, both relate to each other but do not replace each other. Similarly, to the body-space representing a “qualitatively non-homogeneous space,”²⁰⁷ the site can represent a physically measurable place as well as an unlimited space, which is produced via practice, a dance. *A Body in Fukushima* and *Body in a Station* share space that both transcends a geographical boundary and contains a multiplicity of meanings. The artist uncovers the ‘hole’ between two realities by expanding the idea of site as a symbolic place. The symbolic place within the microcosm of the everyday forms through the trope of mourning performed at the sites of Fukushima, Philadelphia or New York.

In ‘performing a somatic place,’ Eiko uses her body-space to reconstruct the memory of trauma. Peggy Phelan examines the idea of dance healing trauma by making a parallel with the treatment of patients through performative speech discussed by Josef Breuer and Sigmund Freud in their *Studies on Hysteria* (1895). Focusing on the relationship between the “body and truth, the body and time, the body and language,” Phelan claims that “dance can be said to be the elaboration of possible temporalities for the body that are interpreted in movement; and psychoanalysis can be said to be the elaboration of possible narratives for the body that are interpreted (or displaced) in the body’s symptom.”²⁰⁸ The movement creates the memory of the body; or dance becomes a temporal and spatial frame of the body, allowing for a “revision of the body’s relation to its own past.”²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ Nagatomo, *Attunement Through the Body*, 379.

²⁰⁸ Janelle G. Reinelt and Joseph R. Roach, eds., *Critical Theory and Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), 437.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 438.

In *A Body in Fukushima*, Eiko performs an act of mourning; the bodily dialogue with the site creates the experiential dimension of trauma internalized in the performer's body. The constructed corporal memory of mourning she brings to other locations. For example, *A Body in a Station* is the reconstruction of her traumatic experience in Fukushima performed in Philadelphia. The dance transfers the temporal and spatial dimension of the trauma that Eiko created through her body-space. The ideology of movement allows her to “interpret the trauma of the unlived event for the first time — and the interoperation creates the cure.”²¹⁰

So Eiko's performative interpretation of trauma becomes a source of self-treatment. The performance does not conceal the body but exposes its vulnerability in her post-traumatic dance therapy. Specifically, she dances to an extent of exhaustion as her body communicates the trauma caused by both physical and psychological pain absorbed in Fukushima. The repetitive mode of performance becomes a process of on-going therapy; it gives a particular dynamic to Eiko's dance vocabulary. Paradoxically, there are moments when her choreography is striking for its absence of movement. Eiko dances slowly across the hall of the 30th Street Station, and then she stops moving completely. The periods of stillness create temporal gaps between the instants of motion; this motionlessness is the rhythm for Eiko's performance. In *A Body in Fukushima*, her rhythm is played on the constant stillness of the deserted site and resonates with the vitality of nature. In contrast, in *A Body in a Station* the rhythm exists in disharmony with

²¹⁰ Ibid., 444.

the ongoing motion of Philadelphia's 30th Street Station. Whether she performs in the street or at the train station, the rhythm of stillness rather than that of movement performs the trauma.

Furthermore, Eiko engages the audience through her eye contact. In her interview, she says: "During the long hours of performance I try to see each person's eyes one at a time though I also move with my eyes closed."²¹¹ She wants "to have a moment of that one to one. So this is not really a finished work presented in a grand place: It's [her] laboratory."²¹² In other words, the laboratory becomes the non-measurable, experiential body-space in Eiko's performance. Similar to the idea of bodily dialogue, the visual encounter with the spectator's eyes establish a connection with Eiko's body-space. The audience gradually becomes absorbed into the somatic place of Eiko that she restores through her dance vocabulary. Her controlled movements engage the audience through the choreography, while eye contact creates an instant of intimacy with her experience. The crowd follows the artist as a silent dialogue unfolds between them.

Dancing deeper into the space of the station, Eiko spreads the aura of melancholia to the site while simultaneously adapting to the business of the transportation hub. During the three hours of the performance, the turnout of the audience stays fluid as some stay connected or choose to leave. The intensity and high concentration of her dance drives

²¹¹ Eiko&Koma, "At the Service of Ambiguity, A Fragile Body – An Interview with Eiko and Koma," interview by Isaak Immanuel, March 12, 2012, <http://eikoandkoma.org/index.php?p=ek&id=3636>.

²¹² Gia Kourlas, "For Half of a Dance Duo, a Venture Alone in a Crowd," *New York Times*, October 1, 2014.

the artist into an emotional and physical exhaustion when she concludes and bows to the audience outside the exit of the station.

In *A Body in Fukushima* and *A Body in Fukushima*, the public place of the train station relates to the somatic place of Eiko's performance. The bodily dialogue with the objects in Fukushima and the internalized experience of the site gives the symbolic meaning for Eiko that she seeks to communicate in her dance. The symbolic place of the performing body gives the sense of place and connected-ness to both communities in Fukushima and in Philadelphia.

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I explored the development of “performance art” (*paifōmansu āto*) as a new artistic medium within the cultural, social and political milieu of Japan during two major periods: the 1960s and the 2010s. I suggested a new definition of “performance art” as a form of artistic expression that manipulates the performer’s body as well as the image, whether projected by the performer, captured by a camera, or codified into a text.

Through my interdisciplinary focus on the ontology of performance art, I have sought to redirect those practices that were included in other art forms in Japan, as well as to decenter the study of modern and contemporary art as exclusively European. I have combined this with a meticulous visual analysis of performance works, while acknowledging the significance of their political, social and cultural value. Finally, I have proposed a democratizing approach of the visibility of the body that treats neither body nor image as a sole index of performance. In my transnational narrative of cultural cooperation, I leave open the dilemma of the geopolitical situation and human interactions in particular historical moments. In the following, I will summarize the main themes and issues of the dissertation.

Between Reality and Fiction: The Custom (fūzoku) of a Happening

The defeat of Japan in WWII, the demonstrations against the renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, and the subsequent failure of the left and the student's movements were among the external factors that shifted the visibility of the performer's body from a private sphere of the self to the public domain of everyday life in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In the global art world, this is the birth of happenings, a generic term of performance art, associated with American artist Allan Kaprow.

In Japan, the media coverage of political protests that emerged in the early 1960s and the constant presence of the camera that accompanied the so-called season of politics contributed to the ubiquitous use of the word "happening." In my approach to performance practices, I applied the concepts of actuality (アクチュアリテイ) and image or *eizō* (映像) that Yuriko Furuhashi explored in her *Cinema of Actuality*. For the notion of both *objet* and *eizō* being intertwined in what is understood as happening by artists in Japan, artists applied the common strategies of manipulating the image's psychological trustworthiness accompanying the exploration of the self and the search for new subjectivity.

Departing from the essay "After Happening" (1968) by art critic Ishiko Junzō, I described how Japanese artists pioneered the use of camera in their happenings to undermine the sense of factuality by manipulating the trustworthiness of an image and produce what I called a spectacle of the spectacle. Ishiko's argument is particularly

valuable in order to escape the issues of historicism that create an obstacle in situating the understanding of Japanese contemporary art in the global context. He emphasized that a happening is not a fashion (*fūzoku*) but most importantly a form of communication and, therefore, a type of media. The significance of the exhibition “From Space to Environment” that was organized in 1966 opened up new possibilities for defining both happenings and environments. However, art critic Yoshida Yoshie explained that unlike Kaprow, many artists expanded actions from happenings to environments, but not vice versa. Yoshida pointed to the connection of happenings with the news media and social environment. Japanese artists disturbed the everyday from inside through the capacity of happenings whose power was to remain an unrecognizable action.

Yamanote Line Festival: From Happening to Environment

The happening *Yamanote Line Festival* (1962) performed by Takamatsu Jirō, Akasegawa Genpei, and Nakanishi Natsuyuki created the confusion of awareness of art action and non-art action through the presence of the camera and portable *objets* in the environment of the city space. The environment of a happening can be defined in a general sense as a social, political and cultural context or as a particular place. Furthermore, for being organized in discotheques and clubs, happenings were associated with a form of entertainment and festival, as Tōno Yoshiaki, Tone Yasunao, and Kisaragi Koharu noted. However, *Yamanote Line Festival* was performed

in a different type of environment. In my analysis, I applied Richard Schechner's reading of a liminoid event to reveal that *Yamanote* happening is not a form of festival. Since it cautiously avoids being a pure festival, HRC deceived the common perception of actuality and eventfulness by inverting both the sense of reality and festival. The confusion of reality and fiction gave birth to their happening.

Another type of environment was presented in the portable *objet* of Nakanishi: the plastic transparent egg. Inside the plastic egg, Nakanishi placed such objects as the faces and chains of wrist watches and pocket watches, sand timer, scissors, cracked egg shell, fishbone, rope among others, and filled the container with liquid. All these things represented the environment of the everyday life enclosed inside of the egg, while the erotic interaction of Nakanishi fetishized the *objet*. Ishiko claimed that the artists liberated the notion of *objet* from daily reality by putting it into another reality, because they were able to understand that the sense of reality got lost in postwar Japan. The falsehood of reality became the actuality of the happening, and the fetisization of the *objet* exposed the void of capitalism.

Boxes and Cans: Performance and Documentation in Postwar Japan

In examining the retrospective *The Documents of "Direct Action"* of Hi Red Center, which presented photographs and other objects as documents, I turned to the

issue of document in relation to artwork. In this chapter, I introduced a new approach to the definition of performance in relation to its documentation in order to include both a live action and an image in one room. For that end, I reviewed the argument of Peggy Phelan that performance reproduction is ontologically impossible, because the physical body is not present in the image of the performance. Her view is in contradiction with Philip Auslander who prioritizes the process of documentation over the performance itself. Since both Phelan and Auslander cope with the issue of performance vis-à-vis photographic image, I extended André Bazin's theory of reality as both the object and its photograph to confirm that performance co-exists as both a spatiotemporal real and an image. Hi Red Center used documentation as the strength of their *Shelter Plan* to produce a custom-made model of a shelter that bears the identity of the participant. Even though Hi Red Center created a meticulous account of the body to preserve it, their documentation revealed the failure of such an attempt.

The problem of documentation was also connected to the notion of actuality in the 1960s, since art happenings and news happenings shared the same word. The media strategic HRC manipulated this perception of actuality and factuality in the artistic production that intersected with news media, photojournalism and documentary, particularly due to the anonymity of their actions and hiding their true identities. The artists communicated the unstable sense of body and subjectivity of the 1960s in their

critique of the nuclear politics of the state as well as the dissemination of the individual's body into the mass psychology of a nation.

An (In)visible Body Performing in Public Space

In the digital era of the 21st century, artists face the issue of the physical body and physical place vis-à-vis technology and social media; this conundrum creates an overexposed visibility of a “ghostly,” absent body. The intersection of digital and public spaces becomes a productive site of confrontation for performers questioning the role of art in moments of social crisis. I examined the sense of place and community as well as the issue of connectivity and isolation that occupied the current generation of artists after the Fukushima disaster of March 2011. Don Mitchell defined public spaces as *spaces for representation*; by claiming public space, a social group or an individual becomes the public. While public space could create a visibility of one thing or event, it could easily conceal another one. There are circumstances when an artist can be either welcomed or denied entering this space. In my comparative analysis of two public art projects—*Making the Sky of Hiroshima “PIKA”* (2008) by Japanese art group ChimPom and *Hiroshima Projection* (1999) by Polish artist Krzysztof Wodiczko—I addressed the peculiarity of public space in Japan, as a conflict between an individual and a local community. Unlike Wodiczko's smooth integration into the public space of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, the members of ChimPom were

excluded by the community. Their denial of access to the public space not only gave visibility to the artistic body but challenged the notion of democracy associated with public space.

As reviewed in this chapter, there are three main paradigms of public space according to Miwon Kwon. First, a site as a pedestal for an artwork could be associated with the emergence of public art in the form of sculpture with a particular ideology of peace, freedom, family, and well-being in 1950s Japan. The second paradigm integrated an artwork into a specific site for the function of creating a social dialogue, specifically the environmental responsibility and the promotion of cultural heritage in 1970s Japan. However, from the perspective of an aesthetic value tied to utilitarianism, public art remained in the scope of urban planning and studies. The third type challenged the boundary of public space as a place of democracy, the freedom of artistic expression.

While Wodiczko's *Hiroshima Projection* communicated humanism and ethical sensitivity by anthropomorphizing the building of the memorial with the body of the *hibakusha*, the guerilla performance of ChimPom reawakened the traumatic memory of the community, causing their withdrawal of the project from the exhibition. To explore the visibility of artistic subjectivity created through the collision between the community of Hiroshima and ChimPom, I reviewed the approach of democracy discussed by Rosalyn Deutsche as a space of appearance (Arendt), visibility and invisibility (Rancière), or emptiness (Lefort) respectively. ChimPom's sky-drawing of the word *pika*

that connoted the colloquial expression *pika-don* (literally, “flash-boom”) removed the presence of the survivors’ bodies and threatened the sacred space of the Peace Memorial. I used the notion of place (*basho*) developed by Nakamura Yūjirō to portray how the separation from the *basho* qua foundation disconnected ChimPom from the community in Hiroshima. The public space exposed the vulnerability of the individual voice and emerged as a place of struggle for the freedom of artistic expression.

Performing Myths in Public and Digital Spaces

After the 3.11 disaster, the growth of the antinuclear movement gave a new agency of activism to young people and non-permanently employed workers who exercised such theoretical frameworks of social participation and presence as collective trauma, alternative space, and empowerment. The scale of social mobilization demonstrated a new wave of public discontent that has not been seen since the US-Japan Security Treaty (*anpo*) protests in the 1960s. In this context, some performance art projects became connected with activism, as the renewal of the anti-nuclear movement sparked an activist mode of artistic production. Being frustrated with the lack of an artistic analysis of these works, I investigated the performance *Level 7 feat. Myth of Tomorrow* through the framework of Nakamura’s *basho-topos* (the place-ness of the language to locate the pieces of an argument).

Since ChimPom manipulated the image of the explosion of the reactor of the Fukushima Nuclear Plant, I addressed the theme of explosion in media, and how the film industry developed a sense of apathy towards explosion as an invisible cinematic device that kept the attention of the spectator on the key points of the spectacle (Jeffrey Sconce). In their performance, ChimPom distressed explosion apathy by camouflaging the original image. Their “staged image” (Douglas Crimp) translated the news media picture of explosion into the primitive language of Okamoto Taro’s painting; they attached their panel to Okamoto’s mural which gave a theatrical presence to the image of explosion. ChimPom borrowed the technique of juxtaposing the old and new, or past and present, from the practice of *détournement* introduced by Situationist International. ChimPom screened the traumatic repetition of history (a direct encounter with the Real) through Sergei Eisenstein’s technique of montage. Their repetition of a found image manipulated the ability of the image to produce a spectacle out of a traumatic experience, as they crushed the distance between the image and the audience.

The Conundrum Body and Site in Performing the Trauma

The New-York based Japanese artist Eiko performed a series of performances *A Body in Fukushima* and *A Body in A Station* (2014-2015) that connected the site of Fukushima and train stations in Philadelphia and New York. To address the question of site in performance art, I revisited the notion of public as both the space of a train station

and a traumatic memory. In Eiko's dance, I reviewed the intersection of body, site and camera through Nakamura's concept of somatic and symbolic places. Eiko connected her body and the public space of the physical and psychological trauma of the catastrophe, thereby pursuing an objective of healing. In *A Body in Fukushima*, since Eiko was not a witness of the trauma, she created her own experience of the site as a locus of trauma for the community. I applied the theory of Nakamura's somatic place (an experiential extension of the body into the place) to the "restored behavior" (Richard Schechner) of Eiko's temporal and spatial contact with the sites in Fukushima and then in Philadelphia. I suggested that her performance of the somatic place was a conceptual conduit of the abandoned train stations in Fukushima and the 30th Street Station in Philadelphia. The bodily dialogue with the objects and the environment helped her to absorb the trauma of the site. For the presence of the camera in her dance, the camera became a continuation of her somatic experiential dimension of the site, because Eiko encountered a dialogue with the camera.

In order to resolve the ambiguity of the notion of a site in performance, I reviewed Rosemary Candelario's argument of a site-adaptive performance versus Nick Kaye's emphasis on a site-specific performance. From the perspective of their ideological differences, I interpreted Eiko's dance through the site-symbolic meaning rather than site-adaptive or site-specific, as I introduced Nakamura's idea of a symbolic place. Even though Nakamura referred to religious, sacred, or mythical space such as mountain peaks,

the symbolic place of Eiko turned the site of a train station in a symbolic place, based on her desire to convey the sense of loss and grief to the world of the local and international communities.

APPENDIX



Figure 1. *Yamanote Line Festival*, Nakanishi Natsuyuki with his *Compact Objet*, October 1962 (exhibition catalogue).



Figure 2. *Yamanote Line Festival*, Nakanishi Natsuyuki with his *Compact Objet*, October 1962 (exhibition catalogue).



Figure 3. K. Murada paints the face of Nakanishi with white foundation, *Yamanote Line Festival*, October 1962 (exhibition catalogue).



Figure 4. Nakanishi Natsuyuki, *Compact Objet*, 1962 (Museum of Modern Art, New York); Bones watch and clock parts, bead necklace, hair, eggshell, lens, and other manufactured objects embedded in polyester; 5 5/8 x 8 3/8 x 5 1/2" (14.3 x 21.2 x 14 cm).



Figure 5. Kawani Hiroshi, *Shelter Plan*, January 1964 (exhibition catalogue).



Figure 6. Hi Red Center, *A Campaign to Promote Cleanup and Orderliness of the Metropolitan Area!*, October 16, 1964 (exhibition catalogue).



Figure 7. Yoko Ono, *Shelter Plan*, January 1964 (exhibition catalogue).

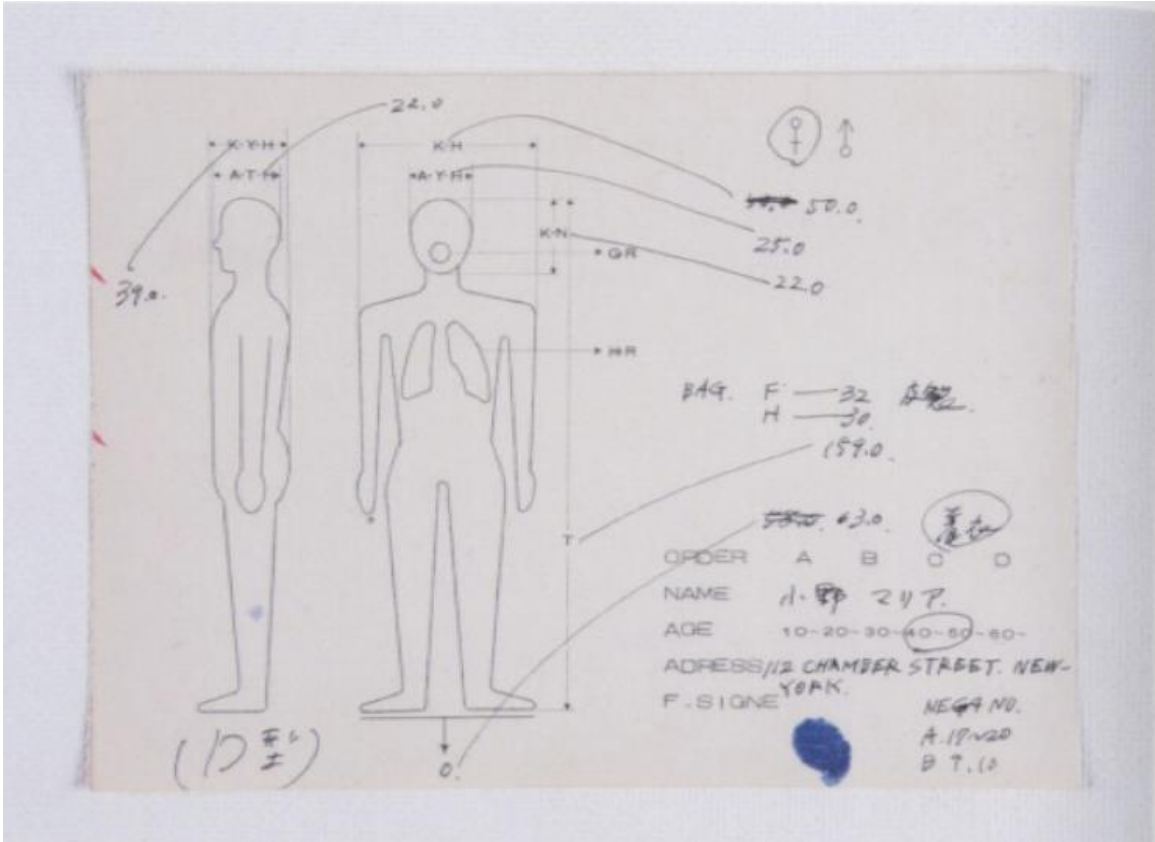


Figure 8. Yoko Ono, *Shelter Plan*, January 1964 (exhibition catalogue).



Figure 9. Okamoto Tarō, *Myth of Tomorrow* (image from Flickr, Chris Ubik), 1967-69.



Figure 10. ChimPom, *Making the Sky of Hiroshima "PIKA"* (photo, ChimPom website), October 2008.



Figure 11. Krzysztof Wodiczko, *Hiroshima Projection* (1999)



Figure 12. NHK news, a still of the explosion at Fukushima Nuclear Plant, March 2011.



Figure 13. ChimPom, *Level 7, feat. Myth of Tomorrow*, (bottom corner panel), May 2011.



Figure 14. Eiko, *Body in A Station*, photo Zach Zesha



Figure 15. Eiko, *Body in Fukushima*, photo William Johnston



Figure 16. Eiko, *Body in Fukushima*, photo William Johnston



Figure 17. Eiko, *A Body in a Station* at Fulton Street Station, New York 2015 (photo is mine).

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INDEX

A

A Body in a Station, 20, 120, 121, 130, 131, 133, 138, 164
A Body in Fukushima, 20, 120, 121, 124, 133, 135, 137, 138, 140, 149
actuality, 17, 23, 26, 38, 41, 48, 50, 51, 56, 59, 60, 62, 69, 71, 74, 142, 144, 145
Akasegawa Genpei, 15, 19, 36, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 67, 72, 77, 78, 143, 174
akuchuariti, 174
anonymous action, 22, 42, 48, 50, 61
Atomic Bomb, 94, 110

B

Basho, 20, 21, 86, 99, 100, 108, 109, 125, 136
buppin, 60, 61, 62, 174
butō, 14, 20, 36, 72, 120, 132
buttai, 60, 61, 63, 174

C

capitalism, 15, 42, 43, 55, 64, 144
ChimPom, 20, 87, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 98, 99, 101, 105, 106, 107, 111, 112, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 146, 147, 148, 160, 161, 174, 175, 176
citizenship, 48, 56, 58, 175
common memory, 96, 98, 99, 102, 115
community, 20, 36, 57, 85, 88, 89, 92, 93, 94, 96, 98, 100, 101, 105, 106, 108, 109, 113, 119, 123, 146, 147, 149, 175

D

dekgigoto, 24, 69, 174
democracy, 15, 20, 55, 57, 58, 86, 88, 95, 96, 97, 98, 106, 146, 147
détournement, 114, 116, 148
Direct Action, 66, 67, 70, 75, 144
Documentation, 10, 11, 12, 78, 79, 82, 133, 144
Duchamp, Marcel, 15, 22, 41, 46, 59, 60, 61, 62, 70

E

Eiko, 20, 120, 121, 124, 126, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 149, 150, 162, 163, 164
eizō, 17, 22, 142, 174
environment, 33, 35, 45, 47, 143

F

festival, 19, 46, 48, 51, 53, 54, 143, 174, 175
Freud, Sigmund, 64, 100, 138
Fukushima, 20, 86, 103, 104, 105, 107, 112, 115, 116, 119, 121, 123, 124, 126, 130, 132, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 140, 146, 148, 149, 161, 163, 164
fūzoku, 24, 31, 48, 49, 141, 142, 174

G

gendai bijutstu, 16, 174

H

happening, 14, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38, 41, 42, 43, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 58, 61, 62, 63, 68, 71, 77, 107, 142, 143, 144, 174
hapuningu, 24, 25, 46, 69, 174
Hi Red Center, 14, 19, 23, 39, 40, 43, 45, 46, 51, 54, 55, 56, 58, 61, 66, 68, 70, 71, 72, 74, 75, 78, 79, 80, 144, 156
hibakusha, 94, 96, 98, 107, 147, 174
Hiroshima Projection, 20, 86, 87, 92, 95, 97, 99, 102, 146, 147, 160

I

Ichikawa Hiroshi, 125, 129
Ishiko Junzō, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 38, 41, 42, 46, 49, 50, 59, 60, 62, 63, 71, 80, 142, 144, 174

K

Kankyō, 47
Kaprow, Allan, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33, 37, 54, 68, 142
kiseki, 66, 68
kūkan, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 67, 71, 77, 78, 175
kyōdōtai, 100, 175

L

Level 7 feat. Myth of Tomorrow, 20, 106, 107, 148

M

Making the Sky of Hiroshima "PIKA", 20, 86, 87, 91, 92, 98, 99, 102, 115, 146, 160

mawari, 50, 54, 56, 175
misemono, 69, 175

N

Nakamura Yūjirō, 20, 99, 106, 147, 175
Nikutai, 18, 126

O

objet, 15, 22, 30, 34, 41, 46, 54, 56, 59, 60, 61, 62,
63, 64, 80, 142, 144

P

pafōmansu āto, 9, 141, 175
performance art, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 23,
69, 74, 77, 85, 88, 91, 105, 108, 122, 124, 136,
141, 142, 148, 149, 175
photographic image, 10, 16, 19, 67, 75, 81, 145
pseudo-actions, 59, 69, 174
pseudo-events, 43, 44, 58, 59, 69, 75
public art, 20, 85, 86, 88, 89, 90, 146, 175
public space, 20, 53, 56, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 92, 96,
97, 98, 102, 106, 108, 109, 115, 119, 122, 137,
146, 149

R

readymade, 15, 19, 22, 41, 46, 55, 59, 61, 116, 175
restored behavior, 12, 124, 149
ritual, 12, 15, 34, 37, 46, 51, 53, 54, 59

S

Shelter Plan, 19, 68, 74, 75, 76, 79, 81, 82, 84, 145,
155, 157, 158
shimin, 56, 57, 58, 175
shiminken, 48, 56, 175
shutaisei, 14, 83, 175
site, vi, 11, 20, 51, 55, 62, 75, 83, 85, 88, 89, 90, 119,
120, 121, 123, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132,
133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 140, 146, 149, 150
site-specific, 133, 135, 150
spectacle, 15, 18, 23, 28, 38, 51, 55, 69, 74, 87, 96,
110, 111, 112, 114, 117, 118, 142, 148, 175
subjectivity, 14, 18, 23, 55, 76, 82, 84, 99, 142, 145,
147

T

Takamatsu Jirō, 19, 45, 71, 72, 175
Trauma, 93, 149

V

visibility, 10, 16, 17, 19, 20, 51, 56, 83, 85, 87, 92,
97, 99, 101, 105, 107, 110, 141, 142, 145, 147

W

Warhol, Andy, 111, 116
Wodiczko, Krzysztof, 20, 87, 92, 95, 96, 97, 99, 146,
147, 160

Y

Yamanote Line Festival, 19, 45, 46, 50, 51, 56, 58,
70, 71, 143, 151, 152, 153

LIST OF CHARACTERS

Akasegawa Genpei 赤瀬川源平 (1937-2014)
Akiyama Kuniharu 秋山邦晴 (1929-1996)
akuchuariti アクチュアリティ actuality
Anzai Shigeo 安齋重男 (b. 1939)
apuregeru-no hanzai アプレの犯罪 apure crime
Arakawa Shūsaku 荒川修作 (1936-2010)
Ay-O 爨嘔 (b. 1931)
basho 場所 place
basho toshite noshintai 場所としての身体 somatic place
buppin 物品 goods
buttai 物体 body, object
Chimu pomu チン↑ポム Chim↑Pom (also ChimPom)
chokusetsu kōdō 直接行動 direct actions
dekgoto 出来事 happening
eizō 映像 image
Erii エリイ (unknown)
fesutibaru フェスティバル festival
fuzai 不在 absence
fūzoku 風俗 custom/fashion
gendai bijutstu 現代美術 contemporary art
genko teki toposu 言語的トポス linguistic *topos*
gijiteki na kōdō 疑似的な行動 pseudo-actions
han-geijutsu 反芸術 anti-art
hapuningū ハプニング happening
Haryū Ichirō 針生一郎 (1925-2010)
hi-geijutsu 非芸術 non-art
hibakusha 被爆者 atomic-bomb survivor
Hijikata Tatsumi 土方巽 (1928-1986)
himitsu kessha 秘密結社 secret association
hyōgen kōi 表現行為 expressive act
ibento イベント event
Inaoka Motomu 稲岡求 (unknown)
Ishiko Junzō 石子順造 (1929-1977)
Isozaki Arata 磯崎新 (b. 1931)
Kajii Motojirō 梶井基次郎 (1901-1932)
kakuran 攪乱 disturbance
kankyō 環境 environment
Kawani Hiroshi 川仁宏 (1933-2003)

Kazakura Shō 風倉匠 (1936-2007)
kindai 近代 modern
 Kisaragi Koharu 如月小春 (1956-2000)
kisei 既製 readymade
kiso 基礎 foundation, basis
kokumin 国民 people, nation
kōkyō āto 公共のアート public art
konkyo 根拠 base, foundation
koyū kankyō 固有環境 native environment
 Kudō Tetsumi 工藤哲巳 (1935-1990)
kūkan 空間 space
kūkyo 空虚 void
kyōdōtai 共同体 community
 Maruyama Masao 丸山眞男 (1914-1996)
mawari 周り surroundings, locality
mienai toshi 見えない都市 Invisible City
misemono 見世物 spectacle
 Miyakawa Atsushi 宮川淳 (1933-1977)
 Mizuno Toshinori, ChimPom 水野俊紀 (unknown)
mumeisei 無名性 anonymity
 Nakamura Yūjirō 中村雄二郎 (1925-2017)
 Nakanishi Natsuyuki 中西夏之 (1935-2016)
 Okada Masataka, ChimPom 岡田将孝 (unknown)
 Okamoto Tarō 岡本太郎 (1911-1996)
 Ōtsuka Hisao 大塚久雄 (1907-1996)
paburikku āto パブリックアート public art
paḡōmansu āto パフォーマンスアート performance art
paḡōmansu-ron パフォーマンス論 performance-ron
 Sawaragi Noi 榎木野衣 (b. 1962)
Seiji no kisetsu 政治の季節 Season of Politics
shimin ishiki 市民意識 civic consciousness
shiminken 市民権 citizenship
 Shinohara Ushio 篠原有司男 (b. 1932)
 Shiomi Mieko 塩見允枝子 (b.1938)
shōchō kūkan toshite no basho 象徴空間としての場所 symbolic place
shukusai 祝祭 festival
shutaisei 主体性 individualism
sonzai konkyo toshite no basho 存在根拠としての場所 foundation of existence
supekutakuru スペクタクル spectacle
 Takamatsu Jirō 高松次郎 (1936-1998)

Tone Yasunao 刀根康尚 (b. 1935)
Tōno Yoshiaki 東野芳明 (1930-2005)
Umesao Tadao 梅棹忠夫 (1920-2010)
Ushiro Ryūta, ChimPom 卯城竜太 (unknown)
Yamaguchi Katsuhiko 山口勝弘 (1928-2018)
Hayashi Yasutaka, ChimPom 林靖高 (unknown)
Yokoo Tadanori 横尾忠則 (b. 1936)
Yoshida Yoshie ヨシダヨシエ (1929-2016)
Yoshimura Masunobu 吉村益信 (1932-2011)
zen'ei 前衛 avant-garde