

HANS & FRITZ

CONTEMPORARY

SALON #2 > YOI KAWAKUBO

DATES: 12.07.2019 – 02.08.2019

OPENING HOURS: By Appointment Only

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Yoi Kawakubo's work is fundamentally and profoundly conceptual, and yet it is its poetic visual and presentation which strike the viewer immediately. The works may appear to be attempting to grasp the unfathomable, trying to make sense of the world that does not make sense, as if trying to make sense of a dream. In this solo exhibition, Kawakubo examines the non-physicality of certain phenomena and how it manifests itself, like a self-determining organic mechanism.

After visiting Fukushima Prefecture after the Great East Earthquake in Tohoku, northeastern Japan, Kawakubo buried silver halide films in the evacuation zone. The artist then retrieved the films after a number of months and printed them using an enlarged format. Instead of blocking the light through the action of burying the films, in opposition to photographs' original method of being shown its image by light, Kawakubo transformed radiation that is invisible to the naked eye into the visible form. The title of this work is a quotation from the words of the American physicist Robert Oppenheimer who led the Manhattan Project that produced the first atomic bomb during World War II. Oppenheimer, also known as "the father of the atomic bomb" compared himself to the god of destruction in the Hindu holy text Bhagavad Gita.

"If the radiance of a thousand suns were to burst into the skies, that would be like the splendour of the Mighty One..."

The universe Kawakubo creates is complex and transcends culture with its multiple layers of meaning behind a poetic and elegant façade. What might initially be seen as several disparate works, upon engagement and reflection, gradually starts to form a coherent whole. Much like his wall installations, his body of work invites the visitor to strip down the layers leaving some aspects of each apparent, to finally arrive at the coherent and complete picture.

Yoi Kawakubo

Born in Toledo, Spain in 1979, lives and works between London and Tokyo. BA in Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba, Japan. Following his time working as a financial market trader, Kawakubo embarked on his artistic career in 2008.

Selected solo exhibitions include:

'Two million years of solitude, cherry blossoms and fifty thousand light years more' Koganecho Site-A, Yokohama, Japan in 2017, 'Stella Maris was a name I found in a dream', Daiwa Foundation Japan House, London, and 'Fall', Shiseido Gallery, Tokyo, in 2016.

Selected group exhibitions include:

'Islands, Constellations and Galapagos', Yokohama triennial 2017, Yokohama, Japan, 'Seize the uncertain day', The University Art Museum - Tokyo University of the Arts, Tokyo, and 'Linguamania', Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, in 2017.