

# OKUMURA Yuki



▶ *The Lone Curator*

2021 / video, 29'56"

© Okumura Yuki

## CURATOR'S NOTE

The words in the work are by no means a faithful representation of our (the co-curators') discussions over Zoom or e-mail, but instead the monologue of the exhibition's postulated "curator." Most of them are indeed our own remarks and correspondence, and their memory lingers in my lips and ears. But through editing, interpreting, and translation, they have shifted slightly to a different context, a different voice, a different script, as if they belonged to a different person entirely. The real conflict that I personally had inside and outside of the discussions is not here. Through a process of repeated translation, it has overflowed into something external to the work.

The project of an exhibition (and perhaps of a work of art too) may well begin from the sense of despair that people will never fully understand each other, no matter how many words they use. And yet, they do not abandon the activity because they maintain a faint hope for the encounters and discoveries that may arise from it. As is often

said, curating is akin to finding constellations among the countless stars in the night sky. So to speak, it is similar to drawing lines between twinkling lights that are many light years away and connecting them with images. Even if the environment changes, this remains the same. Under the auspices of curation, people have narrowed, widened, and twisted the distances that exist between various objects, sometimes with great care and sometimes with brute force. In this work, Okumura uses our (the co-curators') indecisive discussions to generate an image of "the curator" and thus reposition the distances we keep ourselves. (M.T.)

Organizer's note: "SUKI: The Sense of Multi Vernacular" was held at the Japan Pavilion in the Venice Biennale at 1995. "Trans-Culture" Exhibition was co-organized with the Japan Foundation and the Fukutake Science and Culture Foundation at Palazzo Giustinian Lolin during the Venice Biennale 1995.

## CREDITS

## CONTRIBUTIONS

## VOICE

Andrew Maerkle

## VIDEOS

Lee Kit

## SUBTITLES

Futoshi Miyagi

## SCORE

## REMOTE MEETINGS

Eriko Kimura, Kenichi Kondo, Tomohiro Masuda,  
Shino Nomura

## RECORDING

Tomohiro Masuda

## TRANSCRIPTION

Yuki Naito

## RECOMPOSITION

Yuki Okumura

## PRODUCTION

## DIRECTION

Yuki Okumura

## NAVIGATION

Tomohiro Masuda

## COOPERATION

Eriko Kimura, Kenichi Kondo, Shino Nomura

## SUPPORT

MISAKO & ROSEN, Tokyo

LA MAISON DE RENDEZ-VOUS, Brussels

## COMMISSION

The Japan Foundation

## THANKS

Martin Germann, Luciana Janaqui, Jeffrey Ian Rosen,  
Misako Rosen, Jun Yang

## PROFILE



photo by Yuki Naito

## OKUMURA Yuki

Born in Aomori Prefecture in 1978. Currently based in Brussels and Maastricht. Okumura has worked in a wide range of media including video, installation, performance, curation and translation. For example, he takes up 1960s and 1970s art movements, or artists such as On Kawara, staging interventions in their work through reinterpretation or translation, and sometimes inserting fiction-like episodes and settings. Due to the inevitable shifts that occur to the subject and the object through that process, what had been rigid connections become temporarily fluid.

Major exhibitions in recent years include “29,771 days – 2,094,943 steps” (LA MAISON DE RENDEZ-VOUS, Brussels, 2019), “The Man Who, An Ephemeral Archive” (Keio University Art Center, Tokyo, 2019), “Na(me/am)” (Convent, Ghent, 2018) and “Hisachika Takahashi by Yuki Okumura” (Maison Hermes Le Forum, Tokyo, 2016).

Website [↗](#)

## SATO Masaharu



▶ *I touch Dream #1*

1999, video (silent), 3'34", private collection © Estate of Masaharu Sato



▶ *I want to be a wolf*

2017, video (silent), loop, private collection © Estate of Masaharu Sato

## CURATOR'S NOTE

After studying oil painting at an art university in Tokyo, Sato Masaharu enrolled as a guest student at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. *I touch Dream # 1*, which he produced shortly after arriving in Germany, was his first video work. Suffering from the desperate loneliness of life in a foreign country and incessant nightmares, Sato drew fragments of his dreams in charcoal and photographed them one by one to create an animation. Two extremely personal anxieties, from the realms of reality and dream, are outlined in this work and manifested in a universal and actual reality.

In 2010, when he returned to Japan having stayed in Germany for a decade, Sato was diagnosed with cancer, and his creative work played out within the context of a long struggle with illness that ended with

his death in 2019. The rotoscoping technique, which became synonymous with his work, involved breaking down video footage of actual landscapes into individual frames, painstakingly tracing them and then re-animating the whole. This results in a blurring of the line between the real and the fictional, between presence and absence. *I want to be a wolf*, in which a wolf – an animal that has been extinct in Japan for years – repeats the same action endlessly, awakens in us feelings of uncertainty and yet also actuality. The resulting sense of ambivalence forces us to interrogate anew the many boundary lines that we had always assumed to be self-evident. (N.S.)

CREDITS

*I touch Dream #1*

Directed by SATO Masaharu

TECHNICAL ASSISTANT

SATO MEIBERGEN Ray

MODEL

SHIMOJO Kenichi

*I want to be a wolf*

WOLFSUIT

Mile Paxton

COURTESY

OGAKI Mihoko

KEN NAKAHASHI

imura art gallery

Estate of Masaharu Sato

## PROFILE



photo by Art Collectors'

## SATO Masaharu

Born in Oita Prefecture in 1973. Worked in Ibaraki Prefecture. Passed away in 2019. After graduating from Tokyo University of the Arts, Sato was enrolled as a guest student at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf for two years from 2000. After shooting footage of real landscapes with a video camera, he traced them on a computer using rotoscoping techniques to create animated videos. The sense of incongruity arising from the gap between the original footage creates an intersection between reality and fantasy, and awakens the viewer's consciousness. Major exhibitions include "DOMANI: The Art of Tomorrow" (The National Art Center, Tokyo, 2020), "Dr. Reaper" (solo exhibition–KEN NAKAHASHI, Tokyo, 2019), "Roppongi Crossing 2019: Connexions" (Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, 2019), "First Lingering Mist of Spring" (Tokyo Arts and Space Hongo, Tokyo, 2019), "The Iris of a Wolf" (BLOCK HOUSE, Tokyo, 2017) and "Hara Documents 10 Masaharu Sato: Tokyo Trace" (solo exhibition–Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, 2016). Recipient of the 12th Taro Okamoto Award for Contemporary Art (2009).

KEN NAKAHASHI [✉](#) imura art gallery [✉](#)