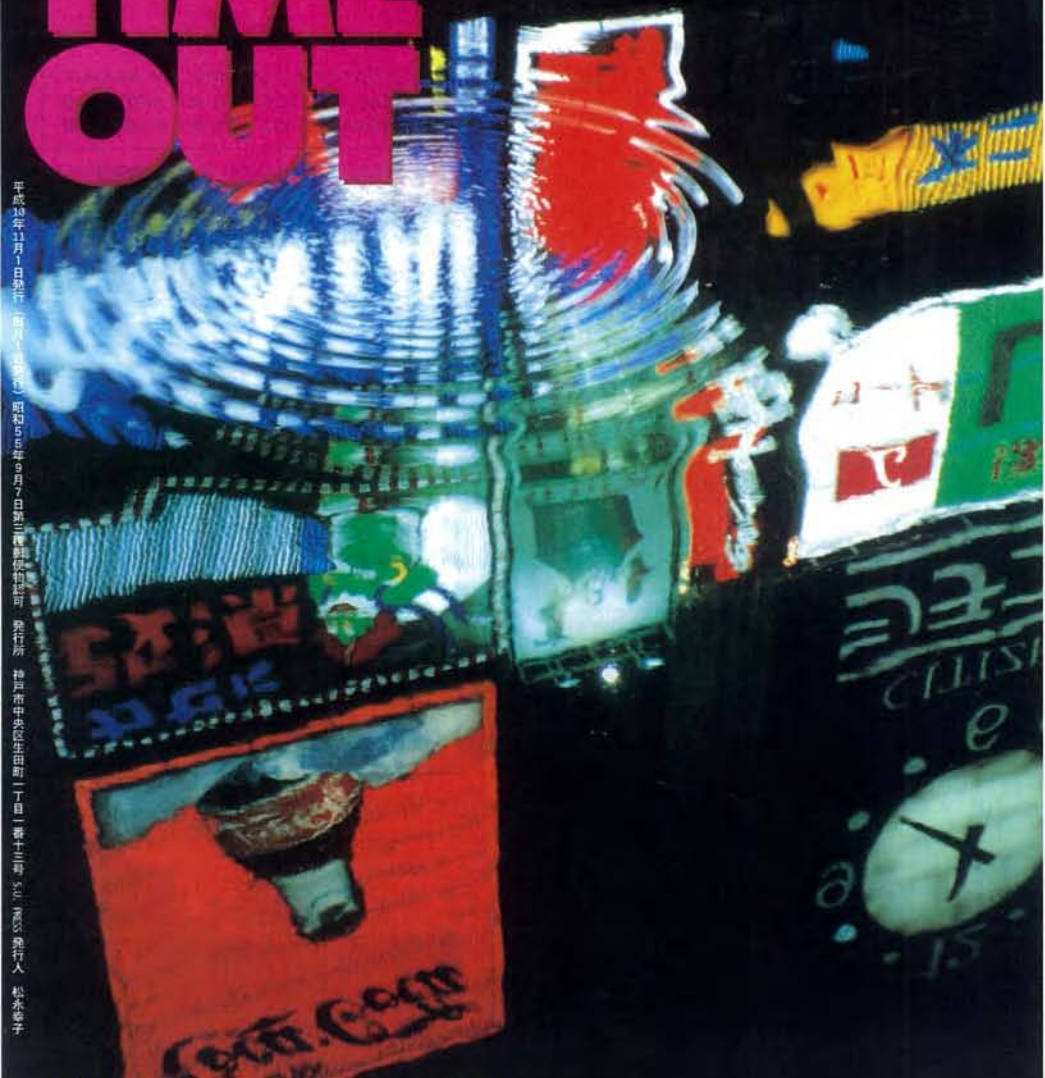


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# KANSAI TIME OUT



What's on in Kyoto, Kobe, Osaka, Nara, ... in English

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## VISUAL ARTS

### From Korea with love

Jim Cathcart previews two exhibitions by up-and-coming artists in Osaka this month

In 723 A.D., a statue of the Miroko Bosatsu – Contemplative Bodhisattva of the Future – was removed from Gyonju, Korea to Japan. The contemplative Miroko now resides in the tranquil confines of Horyuji in Nara. At the time, thanks to highly skilled artisans and religious instructors from the 'hermit kingdom', a transmission of Buddhist culture from India to Japan via China and Korea changed the landscape, mindset, and face of Japan. For innumerable reasons, this important episode in Japanese history has been overlooked, ignored and belittled by many who should know better. It seems ironic that modern Korea and its proud cultural history is often viewed as the rough, uncut diamond to the Japanese gem in all its finery. This, and the long time ambition to exhibit in Japan, is what has brought visual artist Andrew Owen to Japan for exhibitions in Osaka and Tokyo.

Owen is striving to narrow the gap that exists between the subject, artist, artwork, and the public – in effect, direct communication – and has been using a variety of minimal and conceptual approaches to express his art; utilising found ob-

jects, the appropriation of images, and paper excavation. When travelling in India, he discovered walls covered with multiple layers of Hindi movie posters. In his aptly titled paper excavation, 'The Well' (representing our soul), Owen cut a section of the layered posters from the wall and painstakingly removed concentric layers to reveal two Hindi actors almost kissing in a moment of frozen passion. An excavation into Korean porn posters in the form of bamboo had the Korean press believe the artist was making Korean art which totally confused Owen who says that bamboo is a pan-Asian symbol evident in a lot of Asian art.

Another method of Owen's is the appropriation of images. His evolving 'Obscure Tourism' installation shows cheap tourist souvenirs attached to out of focus photographs of tourist destinations. Take, for example, the Taj Mahal. More often than not, tourists often have no other desire than to have their photos taken in front of the Taj without giving any thought to the significance of the site. A whole local economy has built up around the site selling souvenirs which are often more important to the tourist. This spectacle of commercial nothingness brings into question what is real or unreal – the authentic obscured by the artificial.

All of Owen's work conveys what he feels is an intuitive feeling of impermanence and transience. His Osaka-based work is based around the urban, specifically Minami, area in all its self-gratifying glory. Neon inflicted photographic images of concentric ripples formed by nairdrops, *purikana* prints of the machine's own environment and life, and enlarged copies of print club

advertise engage the viewer with their accessibility. Exhibiting soon after Owen's Osaka appearances is Berlin-based artist Helen Cho whose career has flourished since leaving Canada four years ago. Her most recent exhibition in Seoul, 'The Rebellion of Space', was well received by an art community where the 'right connections' are usually necessary to get any recognition. This success resulted in Helen getting a flood of exposure from the local media.

Helen's work appropriates images and objects that evoke images of her childhood and explores to what extent we are influenced by childhood experiences and our family background. She has spent numerous hours creating 'half' costumes from knitted mohair (animal) and Indonesian hair pieces (human). These costumes are donned by Helen (and friends) and photographed exploring themes of nurturing and sexual blossoming in playful, innocent sex rituals. The artist's fetish for texture is accentuated by displaying the photos in mohair frames with the fuzziness of the mohair contrasted against the imperfection of exposed skin. Like Miroko's transmission 1,200 odd years ago, Owen and Cho are hoping they can transmit their own worlds to Japan. **KTO**

Andrew Owen's work can be seen on the front cover of this issue of KTO. Both Owen's Osaka exhibitions open Nov. 6, one at the Tank Gallery (~Nov. 20; 13:00-16:00; 06-211-4522) and the other at the Blue Nile Gallery (~Nov. 16; 17:00-21:00; 06-213-7010). Helen Cho's exhibition is at the Tank gallery (Nov. 21-27). Owen's first collection of essays, *Edge of Centre* is out now (see August 1998 KTO for a review).

## VISUAL ARTS LISTINGS

### ASHIYA

**ASHIYA SHIRITSU BIJUTSU HAKUBUTSUKAN** 2-25, Ise-cho, 15 min. walk from Hanshin Ashiyah stn. 0797-38-5432. Thru Nov. 29 exhibition on the dedication of Teshigahara Seifu (1900-79), the founder of Sogetsu School of flower arrangement, and the Third Master Hirashi (1927-) to the Japanese art scene of postwar period. Their activities were beyond the tradition and they had relationship with outstanding artists in various field. Works includes iron object-style works, informal paintings/artworks works relating to Sogetsu Art Centre, Sogetsu Experimental Film Festival by Teshigahara Hiroshi, Yazaki Katsumi, Okumura Aki, Matsumoto Toshio on Nov. 1, 14:00. Film Art Festival by Obayashi Nobuhiko, Katsura Kohji, Nakai Tsunehara Maruaki on Nov. 8, 14:00. concert 'Sogetsu and Avant-garde Music' by Kinugi Takehisa, Takahashi Yoji, Yamataka Eye, Iwami Kiyoshi, Teshigahara Atsushi (program 20th 'Cage/George' Electro/Chiyonagi Toshi/Takemitsu Toru) on Nov. 23, 18:00-6:00. free for children, 10:00-16:30, closed Mon.\*

### EMBA CHUGOKU KINDAI BIJUTSUKAN

12-1, Okuike-cho, Hankyu Roju bus from Hankyu Ashiyagawa stn. to Okuike. 0797-38-0021. Thru Dec. 26, ¥500/300/100. 10:00-16:00, closed Tues.

### HIMEJI

**HIMEJI SHIRITSU BIJUTSUKAN** 68-25, Honmachi, 0792-22-2288. Thru Nov. 23, Pop arts from Ludwig Museum, Germany, 100 works by 17 artists including Lichtenstein, Warhol, Jasper Johns, Jim Dine, Robert Rauschenberg et al. ¥1,000/600/200/800/400/100; 10:00-16:30, closed Mon.\*

### HIMEJI-SHI SHOSHA-NO-SATO BIJUTSU KOGEIKAN

0792-67-0301. Thru Nov. 23, ceramics from Chikuyu Kiln of Kutani Ware inscribed by Shimizu Kosho from Todaiji Temple. ¥300/200/50. 10:00-16:30, closed Mon.\*

### HIOGO

**HIKAMI-CHORITSU UENO KINEN BIJUTSUKAN** Kyobashi, Nanmatsu, Hikami-cho,

Hikami-gun, Hyogo, 0795-82-5945. Thru Nov. 23, Japanese-style paintings of birds and flowers by Tsuneka Bunki, landscape by his son Mikihiro, 70 works, ¥500/300/200. 10:00-16:30, closed Mon.\*

### HIOGO KENRITSU MARUYAMAGAWA KOEN BIJUTSUKAN

1163 Kojima, JR Kinokuni stn., 0796-28-3085. Nov. 1-Jan. 10, expressions in the painting styles, 35 works from Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Modern Art. ¥300/150. 9:00-17:00, closed Mon.\*

### NIHON GANGU HAKUBUTSUKAN

671-3, Nakanino, Kodera-cho, Kanzaki-gun. 15 min. walk east from JR Koro stn. 0792-32-438. Thru Nov. 24, Japanese wooden toys from Edo period onwards. ¥500/400/200. 10:00-17:00, closed Wed.

### SASAYAMA REKISHI BIJUTSUKAN

Go-fuku-machi, Sasayama-cho, Taki-gun, JR Shinku bus from Sasayamaguchi stn., JR Fukuchiyama line, 0795-52-0601. Thru Nov. 17, Japanese-style paintings of Kano School from Edo period. ¥500/300/200. 9:00-16:30, closed Wed.\*

### ITAMI

**ITAMI SHIRITSU BIJUTSUKAN** *Miyonomae-cho 2-chome*, 5 min. walk from Hankyu/JR Itami stn.,

0727-72-7447. Nov. 14-Dec. 23, Irish Contemporary art by Richard Gorman (1946-, Dublin), 23 of oils and tempera paintings. ¥700/350/100 (500/250/80). 10:00-16:30, closed Mon.\*

### ITAMI SHIRITSU KOGEI CENTRE

2-5-20 Miyonomae, 0727-72-5557. Nov. 6-23, Makishi Tamiko textiles of silk. Nov. 26-Dec. 13, 250 of dyes, ceramics and woodcrafts by Hyogo-based craftsmen, adm. free, 10:00-17:30 (16:30 last day), closed Mon.\*

### KOBE

**CHIC** 079-857-6540. Nov. 20/21, Sarah Brayce prints and paperworks which combine her handmade washis with intaglio printing techniques. 20th: 19:00-21:00 (opening reception); adm. free. 21st: 10:00-17:00, slide talk. 10:30-11:30.

### DAIMARU MUSEUM KOBE

078-331-8121. Oct. 29-Nov. 24, 50 Japanese-style paintings from Meiji to Showa by Takeuchi Seicho, Okumura Dogyu, Murakami Kagaku, Kobayashi Koki, Kawai Gyokudo from the collection of Yamatane Museum. ¥800/600 (600/400). 10:00-18:30 (17:30 last day).