



Kota Takeuchi
Artist's residency and exhibition

7 -29 July 2016
12pm-6pm, Thurs-Fri

Kota Takeuchi is interested in how we physically view and perform images of public scenery, social events, and their memory. He works across painting, film, video, internet and sculpture, between the gallery and public space. Takeuchi is renowned as the representative of the *Finger Pointing Worker*, whose webcam performance in response to the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster has become an iconic image of the event. His recent work explores the loop of digital image capture investigating relationships between media and social memory by revisiting historical monuments and modern industrial legacies. For his first UK residency and exhibition he will present three video works alongside a new body of work investigating questions of memory and deep time at sites across the UK and Belgium.

Room 1: Memory Bug

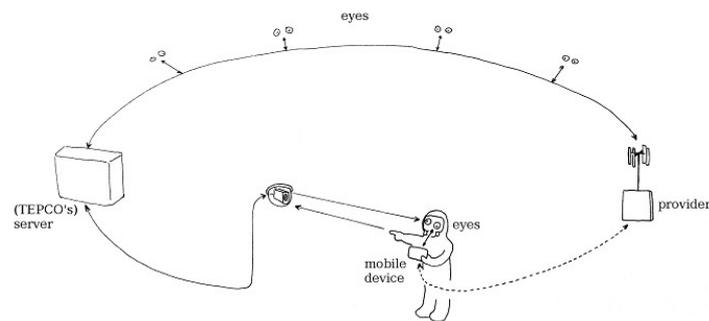
Kota Takeuchi presents three video works *Portable Mind* (2008), *Pointing at Fukuichi*; *Live Cam* (2011) and *About a Public Art* (2010).

Portable Mind (2008) is a video of a performance where the artist paints photographs of criminals on a police board at Kanagawa Police Headquarters. The portraits depict notorious fugitives wanted by the Japanese police for murder, robbery and terrorism. The portraits are displayed in locations around the town of Kanagawa; such as stations, public baths and police boxes or on the web. These faces have been etched into the Japanese public consciousness as images of death and fear. By burying such images in the cityscape, Takeuchi aims to paralyse our sense of fear, he aims to create a new perspective on the city environment, where we navigate feelings of anxiety and safety.

On Saturday 31st December 2011, one of the wanted criminals Makoto Hirata, (a former member of the Aum Shinrikyo religious group) presented himself at a police station and was arrested. Ironically the fugitive had to present himself to the police or they would not have recognised him. The Metropolitan Police Department, the central office of Japanese police, turned him away thinking he was joking. This incident illustrates the skepticism of the portrait and the power of the criminal portrait over the real-life person presented standing in front of us.

Pointing at Fukuichi; Live Cam (2011) a video by Finger Pointing Worker. Following the Friday 11th March 2011 Great Eastern Japanese Earthquake and major disaster that occurred at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear power plant, Takeuchi was hired to work at the plant. He began attending press conferences about the incident and wrote a daily blog about the working conditions of the plant. Takeuchi orchestrated a performance with another worker at the plant to produce *Pointing at Fukuichi* where a performer was filmed pointing at the CCTV cameras. The artist changed the ordinary structure of viewing video, where the viewer becomes the person being watched, and the audience becomes

complicit in the artwork. The work is a homage to Vito Acconci's *Centers* (1971) video, an artwork where he is filmed pointing at a camera for an extended period of time producing a psychological dynamic between the artist and the viewer. The *Finger Pointing Worker* also points at himself while looking at himself in live on screen on his phone where the footage is online. Takeuchi's performance became highly evocative of TEPCO's (Tokyo Electric Power Company) sensitivity about the accident in the Japanese news and on social media. Dangerous levels of radiation and risk of contamination have lessened at the spot where the *Finger Pointing Worker* was sited, since 2013 workers only need to wear safety masks at the site of the nuclear reactor.



About a Public Art (2010) traces the production of a public artwork in reverse. Takeuchi placed a sculpture without permission, in a public park, it was formed from a mould of a human sized blow up sex doll and coated with vinyl and mortar. Although the doll is disguised, it challenges ideas of moral consciousness about consent and nudity in public places. Much like *Portable Mind*, it references the proliferation of images, which invade our every day consciousness.

Take Stone Monuments Twice (2013-) is an ongoing series of photographs, drawing from a book by Ichiro Saito called '*Economic History in the Modern Age of Iwaki*' (published in 1976) documenting stone monuments and makers in the southeast coastal region of the Fukushima Prefecture. In 2013, Takeuchi followed Ichiro Saito's guidebook, retracing his steps and re-photographed the stones. The resulting series of images explores the distinction between monument and site markers, where the marker/s have some urgency about communicating a message for the future, rather than simply remembering the past. Whilst a monument is important as a site of remembrance, Takeuchi considers the potential of when there is no-one left to remember it, do the monuments become a historical artifact rather than part of contemporary culture?

Selfie in Sublime (2016-) is a series of 'selfies' A collage work of artist Gustav Courbet in a Cave emulating an underground repository and artist Kota Takeuchi in an underground laboratory for testing the storage of nuclear waste, both digital reproductions displayed on a mobile phone.

Takeuchi is interested in the way in which images circulate online, reinventing the concept of the authentic image or the original experience. His new series of 'selfie's' collapse centuries and continents to create new cultural souvenirs using classical motifs. Historical sites are filtered through different landscape genres from the pastoral scene and sublime nature.

His interest in selfie's came from a trend in observing 'sightseeing' disaster areas which, are often places of great suffering, the work draws upon the depiction of landscapes in fine art and their marketing and self-consciousness of tourist's and the social media era of self-branding tourism.

Often in his work Takeuchi explores the loop of digital image capture and distribution and how images are transformed or degraded through the translation of different mediums such as painting, film or through social media. The images may change during the duration of the exhibition after Kota's various site visits.

Room 2: Residency and work in progress, *Pursuing a Lost Mallard*

During his residency at Arts Catalyst over June - July 2016 Kota Takeuchi is undertaking new research into concepts of memory and time in the UK and Belgium. Visiting locations of man-made disasters, historical monuments and nuclear sites.

Takeuchi will develop his new work ***Pursuing a Lost Mallard*** (2016- ongoing) taking its name from a stolen sculpture in Flixborough, in Lincolnshire, dedicated to the memory of those lost to a chemical plant disaster. In the development of the exhibition, Takeuchi presents a video from his site visit and interview with priest Derek Green and local historical expert Dr Jeremy Jolley. The development of the Mallard sculpture will be the ongoing focus of the exhibition.

Site visits

Flixborough is a village in North Lincolnshire, where in 1974 a chemical plant explosion killed 28 people and injured a further 36. Around 1,800 buildings within a mile radius of the site were damaged in this, Britain's biggest ever peacetime explosion until the Herefordshire Buncefield Oil Depot explosion in 2005. From his visit and interviews with people, Takeuchi will develop films, sculptures and research responding to the disaster, its living and archival memory.

Takeuchi will participate in a field research trip to the Belgian underground research laboratory for the geologic storage of radioactive waste in partnership with Z33 and the Belgian nuclear waste agency NIRAS / NIROND. Constructed in 1980 the HADES lab is 255m underground and built in a deep clay formation for the purpose of researching the possibility of geological disposal. Like underground laboratories in France, Sweden and Japan, it is a research infrastructure and is never intended to be used as a final repository for radioactive waste.

Supported by

Kota Takeuchi's Artists residency has been organised by **S-AIR** in Japan in partnership with **Arts Catalyst**, supported by the **Sasakawa Foundation** and **Agency for Cultural Affairs, the Government of Japan**.

Special thanks

Snow Contemporary, Tokyo and Seiko Maeyama

Open Studio & Discussion

On Saturday 16 July curator and writer Eiko Honda will be in discussion with Kota Takeuchi, chaired by artist Kaori Homma from Art Action UK.

Go to www.artscatalyst.org to book a place

Kota Takeuchi, b.1982

Selected group exhibitions

2016 *Material Nuclear Culture*, KARST, Plymouth

2015 *Don't Follow The Wind*, A house in Difficult-to-Return Zone in Fukushima, Japan

2013 *Media / Art Kitchen*, Bangkok Art & Culture Centre, Bangkok, Thailand

and *As the representative of Finger Pointing Worker*, (Finger Pointing Worker is a man who pointed at the public live camera in Fukushima No.1 nuclear power station after the disaster in 2011. Kota Takeuchi is the agent of him.)

2015 *GBLALE:GLOBAL CONTROL AND CENSORSHI*", ZKM_Lichthof1+2, Karlsruhe, Germany

2014 *Good Morning Mr Orwell* 2014, Nam June Paik Art Center, Seoul, Korea

"Three Years After", Wilfrid Israel Museum, Hazorea, Israel

2013 *Now Japan*, Kunsthal KAdE Amersfoort, Amersfoort, Netherlands

Kota Takeuchi will present his artwork **Take Stone Monuments Twice** as part of the group exhibition **Material Nuclear Culture** at KARST Gallery, Plymouth, UK (17 June – 14 August 2016), and **Perpetual Uncertainty**, Bildmuseet, Sweden (2 October 2016 – 15 January 2017).

List of Works

Room 1

Left, Clockwise

Selfie in Sublime (2016)

A collage work of artist Gustav Courbet in a Cave emulating an underground repository and artist Kota Takeuchi in an underground laboratory for testing the storage of nuclear waste, both digital reproductions displayed on a mobile phone.

Take Stone Monuments Twice (2013 – onwards)

The following stone monuments were documented by Ichiro Saito in his book 'Economic History in the Modern Age of Iwaki' (1976) and re-photographed by Kota Takeuchi from 2013 as part of his ongoing artwork 'Take Stone Monuments Twice'. The monuments are located in the Southeast coastal region of the Fukushima Prefecture, Japan (left to right).

四倉国有林下戻記念碑

Yotsukura Forest Disposal Monument (1937)

A monument to commemorate returning part of the national forest to the village.

地辻復興記念碑

Landslide Recovery Monument (1929)

A monument commemorating land reconstruction after a landslide.

江の浦埋立記念碑

E-no-Ura Reclamation Monument (1949)

A monument to land reclamation for a residential coastal area.

内郷坑遭難碑

Uchigo Coal Pit Accident Monument (1909)

A monument mourning 13 workers killed by a fire in Uchigo Coal Pit.

鉄道殉難者供養塔

Pagoda for Railway Victims (1922)

The Pagoda enshrines workers who were killed whilst working in a tunnel and people who were killed by trains.

村有林払下之碑

Returning The Village-Owned Forest Monument (1954)

A monument commemorating the returning of the forest to the village from the national government.

鎌田山記念碑

Kamata Hill Monument (1939)

The shape of the Kamata Hill was changed by a deep cut for a national road. This monument commemorates the building new approach stairs to a shrine on the hill.

朝鮮人勞務犠牲者之碑

Monument to Korean Worker Victims (1947)

A memorial for 193 Korean coal mine workers who were commandeered and killed by accidents and overwork in the Second World War.

忠烈護空之碑

Unswerving Loyalty for protecting the skies (1937)

Memorial for two aviators who died in a plane crash caused by machine trouble.

About a Public Art (2010)

Digital film, 8.19 mins

Portable Mind (2008)

Digital film, 10.44 mins

Pointing at Fukuichi; Live Cam (2011)

Digital film, 15.22 mins

Room 2

Left, Clockwise

Pursuing a Lost Mallard (2016)

Mixed media sculpture on board, on-going development

Pursuing a Lost Mallard (2016)

Digital film, with Derek Green and Dr Jeremy Jolley. Filmed in Flixborough, Lincolnshire, UK.

Pursuing a Lost Mallard (2016)

Printed email on board to Dr Jeremy Jolley.