TERAYAMA, Shuji (10 December, 1935 – 4 May, 1983)

Terayama Shūji was an avant-garde Japanese poet, playwright (for stage and radio), filmmaker, and photographer associated with New Wave cinema and underground theatre movements such as post-*shingeki*. Born in Aomori Prefecture, then raised by relatives after his father died in the Pacific War and his mother moved to distant Kyushu to work, he settled in Tokyo, where he would spend the majority of his adult life. After studying literature at Waseda University, he began writing poetry, making his mark with a major prize for new *tanka* writers in 1954. In 1967, with his wife Kujo Kyoko, he co-founded the experimental theatre group *Tenjo Sajiki* (天井桟敷, usually called “The Gallery” in English; the title is taken from the Japanese translation of Marcel Carné’s film *Les Enfants du Paradis*). The same year, he founded “Universal Gravitation Drama Laboratory” (*Engeki-jikkenshitsu Banyu Inryoku*) an experimental gallery, cinema, and theatre space which later spun off the theatre group “A Laboratory of Play: *Ban’yu Inryoku.*” His films investigate the relationship between revolution, eroticism, youth culture, family psychology, and identity. Terayama’s works explore new formal and aesthetic techniques, while both forwarding and constantly questioning the radical politics of post-WWII avant-garde arts in Japan.

References and further reading:

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List of Major Works:

*Emperor Tomato Ketchup / Tomato Kechappu Kōtei* (original short version 1971, long version 1996)

*Throw Away Your Books, Rally in the Streets! / Sho o Suteyo, Machi e Deyo* (1971)

*Pastoral Hide-and-Seek / Den'en ni Shisu* (aka: "Pastoral Hide and Seek") (1974)

Paratextual material:

Terayama Shūji, *Japanese Dream*. Zen Foto Gallery, 2013. Limited Edition.

TERAYAMA, Shuji - Jordan A. Yamaji Smith, California State University, Long Beach