

Images taken from the 'it' series, published by Rat Hole, Tokyo, October 2006



— *Why do you shoot in black and white? Why the hard flash and high-contrast prints?*

What is the reason for your shooting/printing techniques?

— Monochrome expression has symbolism and abstractness. I find it interesting that another reality, one which is clearly different from the real reality, is born in the tone of the black and white world. High-contrast is my physiological preference, rather than a style of expression. Taking colour photographs can be interesting but I am unable to abandon printing my work myself. The important thing is that black and white photography allows me to print my own work. I believe my faith "Photography is monochrome" firmly.

Hard high-contrast images are my favourite. That is very simple. I hope to give high-contrast edges to emphasise the realism that things outside have.

— *Why do you photograph the very specific subject matter you shoot*

- found images/alleyways/night scenes/found objects?

— I am charmed by subjects that are very much a favourite or an absolute opposite. The things I like and I do not like are connected at bottom of my heart. I think my photography is caused by my physiological action.

— *Your photography has mellowed in recent years. Is this connected to a softening of your life or your personality?*

— The changes in my photography are not recognised by myself. I do not think I am ever influenced by the change of my age and personal life. I don't think there is any change in my photography essentially.

— *Why did you release a new version of 'Bye Bye Photography'?*

— The number of copies was small in the first run. This scarcity has made the price of the first addition much more expensive in the auction market. I never expected such a situation.

I have released a new version because I want the new, young photographers to be able to see this book, and I have had enquiries from many people overseas who would like to see it too.

— *And why do you think you have found such a large contemporary audience in the West?*

Perhaps the spread of the internet has made information about my photography available to a wider audience, especially amongst young people who are interested in the photography, museum, gallery and editorial world abroad. Maybe my personal vision or high-contrast images might be sympathised with and understood beyond borders. I do not know. As I think photography is an international medium, I feel very glad of the existence of an audience for my photography in the West is large.

— *What are you currently photographing?*

— Snap-shots in alleys.

— *Do you use digital cameras or digital technology at all? If not, why not? If yes, why and does digital technology offer you any new possibilities?*

— I would like to continue monochrome photographs with analogue cameras for as long as Tri-x films (Kodak) exist. Although I have a digital camera, I do not use this at the moment. Manufacturing of analogue systems: films, printing papers and chemical materials is grinding to a halt. If, one day, the materials are no longer produced then I will move to a digital system. I think the one most important thing is to be taking photographs, any way.

**It's interesting that another reality
is born in tone
of black and white.**