

The CCA Wattis Institute, 360 Kansas St, San Francisco, CA 94103, USA

Yuki Kimura: Inhuman Transformation of New Year's Decoration, Obsolete Conception or 2



Title : Yuki Kimura: Inhuman Transformation of New Year's Decoration, Obsolete Conception or 2, installation view at Wattis Institute of Contemporary Arts, 2016

Credit : Photo by Johnna Arnold, courtesy the artist and Taka Ishii Gallery.



Yuki Kimura: Inhuman Transformation of New Year's Decoration, Obsolete Conception or 2

The CCA Wattis Institute, San Francisco

13 December 2016 - 25 February 2017

Review by Anke Therese Schulz

"We are too accustomed to thinking in terms of the 'present.' We believe that a present is only past when it is replaced by another present. Nevertheless, let us stop and reflect for a moment: How would a new present come about if the old present did not pass at the same time that it is present?" - Gilles Deleuze, 'Bergsonism', 1966.

In her exhibition 'Inhuman Transformation of New Year's Decoration, Obsolete Conception or 2,' Yuki Kimura presents a meditation on the concept of history, and how its constituent parts - the past and the present - mirror, and relate to one another. The artist's newest mixed-media object installation is a visual response to French philosopher Gilles Deleuze's 1966 challenge to reflect on the question of when the present ends, and the past begins.

In considering this question, Kimura has assembled a group of similar – yet, tellingly different – objects, based on items detailed in four pairs of vintage, found photographs. The central object, 'Table Matematica', features an altar-like buffet table, topped by an assemblage of Jägermeister liqueur bottles in thirteen different sizes. 'Table Stella'

consists of three dining tables of varying dimensions, with: table tops portraying enlarged versions of appropriated, vintage photographs; reflective steel legs; a collection of old stone ashtrays; and two miniature replicas of German cathedrals located in the cities of Cologne and Aachen. The eponymous 'Mirrors' comprises two large dressing mirrors that, leaning against the gallery wall, reflect and divide 'Table Matematica', and the installation space, in half. On the opposite wall, we find 'Division and Revision #2', a pair of oversized, and almost identical, photographs depicting a three-tiered, vintage drinks table bearing numerous liquor and wine bottles. Collectively, all four objects mirror and reflect each other, thus lending the installation a strong sense of multiplicity and cohesion. The objects' placement throughout the gallery space encourages viewers to wander among them, so as to consider Deleuze's question from multiple vantage points.

Kimura's choice to ground her latest work in Deleuzian theory may be a reflection of her biography, specifically her Japanese 'past' and her German 'present.' Though born and raised in Kyoto, Kimura has more recently resided and worked in Berlin - facts represented in this installation by references to both cultures. The liqueur bottles and miniature cathedrals are a nod to Germany, while Japan is symbolized by 'Mirrors' - a visual reference to the kagami mochi, or mirror rice cake. The kagami mochi is a traditional Japanese New Year decoration consisting of two round rice cakes stacked on top of each other, decorated, and displayed near the front door of Japanese households for the purpose of warding off evil spirits as the old year passes into the new. The two rice cakes – and, in this exhibition, the two mirrors – represent the past and the future, and as such provide a central, personal motif for Kimura's work. Thus, 'Inhuman Transformation' offers both an expression of Kimura's thoughts on Deleuze's question, and a way to engage in our own individual commemorations of the old and the new year.

Published on 2 February 2017
