

IBASHO is delighted to introduce two new artists with the exhibition 'Parallel Crossings'. Ariko Inaoka and Sean Lotman are husband-wife on a "parallel" course with geographic "crossings" in their photographic aesthetic.

Ariko Inaoka (b. 1975, Kyoto, Japan) not only pursues personal photographic projects but also manages her family business, her ancestral restaurant in Kyoto that has been running since 1465.

Her series 'Eagle and Raven' that will be on display at IBASHO, was created in Iceland, a place where Inaoka connects with her childhood memories. When she first visited the country it felt like returning home and the Icelandic landscape and atmosphere reminded her of the Kyoto from her childhood. The twins Eagle and Raven (Erna and Hrefna in Icelandic) have been the subjects of Inaoka's series over a period of nine years. Fascinated by the strong harmony between the two girls, Inaoka saw similarities between the twins' telepathic connections and the Shintoist belief that 'kami' ('God') exists in all elements. The twins' statement that they "dream the same dreams" became the Leitmotiv in the series 'Eagle and Raven'.

The accompanying book 'Eagle and Raven' is being published by Akaaka and will be launched during the exhibition.

Sean Lotman (born in Los Angeles, US) has lived in Japan, first in Tokyo, then in Kyoto, since 2003. Originally a writer of fiction, Lotman is interested in the narrative potential of photography and more specifically how photography can tell surreal stories. Being an American in Japan, Lotman decided to deploy Japanese geography, people and culture to create his own imaginative, often whimsical, interpretation of his new homeland.

In his series 'Sunlanders', on display at IBASHO, Lotman portrays a land of people and places not as they are, but as they never could be. Also works from Lotman's other series 'The Sniper Paused So He Could Wipe His Brow', 'Middle Life Notes' and 'Lost in Space' will be exhibited.

Lotman's books 'Sunlanders' (2016) and 'Middle Life Notes' (2019) will be available in our bookshop.

The exhibition will run from 25 January - 8 March 2020.

The vernissage will take place on Saturday 25 January from 2 - 6 pm in the presence of the artists.

Sean Lotman

Artist Statement

Originally a writer of stories, I am interested in the narrative potential of photography-- how pictures can be assembled to articulate a mood-- and the mood I am most concerned with aesthetically is one of surreality. A child of comic books, *Twilight Zone* episodes, and Technicolor musicals, I am interested in reconstituting realities parallel to ours, somewhat familiar but rather not, like half-remembered dreams. As an American in Japan, essentially a stranger needing to adapt to a society unlike the one I've always known, I have, in turn, attempted to turn Japanese geography, people and signs into an imagination all my own, filtered through a psychedelically-infused color palette. It is a world of my own making, transposed upon my color darkroom prints. Vividly portrayed in reds, blues, blacks, and yellows, this is a land of people and places visualized not as they are, but as they never could be.

Sean Lotman

Biography

A native of Los Angeles, California, Sean Lotman has lived in Japan, first in Tokyo, then in Kyoto, since 2003. His background is in narrative fiction, and his short stories, essays and poetry have been published in numerous places online and in print. His first photo book, *Sunlanders*, was published by Bemojake in September, 2016, featuring color darkroom prints made by his own hand. His newest book, *Middle Life Notes*, a collection of Diana f+ prints combined with *waka* poems, was published by Neutral Colors in Tokyo in autumn of 2019. Sean is represented by Galerie Agathe Gaillard in Paris, France and Ibasho in Antwerp, Belgium.

Selected Bibliography

Books: *Middle Life Notes*, Neutral Colors, 2019

Sunlanders, Bemojake, 2016.

Zines: *On Not Taking Pictures*, Soap and Rocket, 2017

Selected Exhibitions

2019 Group show “La Passeggiata,” Galerie Agathe Gaillard, Paris, France.

2018 Group show “Wild Dogs in Paris”, Magic Beans Gallery, Berlin, Germany.

2018 Group show, “Au Soleil,” Galerie Agathe Gaillard, Paris, France.

2018 Revela'T (Analogue Photo Festival), “Sunlanders,” Vilassar de Dalt, Spain.

2018 Solo Show, “Sunlanders,” Forum Kyoto, Kyoto, Japan.

2017 Group Show, “We Are the Street,” Leica Gallery, Seoul, South Korea.

Eagle and Raven by Ariko Inaoka:

Iceland is a place where I connect with my childhood memories. I grew up in Kyoto, Japan. There are many shrines and temples and they were my playground. In their gardens I collected stones and touched the pure spring water. There was a silence in the air, within the smell of the soil after the rain, within the colors of leaves, within the shadow of the sunset light. I remember my memories with soft colors, which were created by diffused glow through shoji screens. When I visited Iceland for the first time I felt like I was returning home. The soft silver light of the far North, created by thick clouds over the sky, somehow made everything so familiar to me. The landscape reminded me of Ukiyo-e paintings, low-contrast sunshine illuminating empty space. There is a silence in the Icelandic countryside that I remember from childhood.

Erna and Hrefna, means Eagle and Raven in Icelandic. I met them when they were six years old while I was photographing my previous landscape project, SOL. I photographed them between the ages of nine and sixteen. I often hear that identical twins have telepathic connections between them, and I feel it is true with Erna and Hrefna, as I have never seen such a strong harmony between any two human beings. Once they told me, "We dream the same dreams together." This one phrase returned to me again and again, becoming a leitmotif for this project. I interpreted what they told me, as something akin to Japanese Shintoism describing kami (god) existing in all elements. When we connect with anything harmoniously-- nature, animals, humans and stars-- we are dreaming the same dream together. Telepathic power is one of the many inexplicable things in this world. However, being with Erna and Hrefna leads me to believe that we have more natural power in us than we actually know.

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Biography:

Ariko Inaoka (b. 1975, Kyoto, Japan) moved to the United States at the age of 17 and gained a BFA in photography from Parsons School of Design in New York. After working as a photographer in New York and Tokyo, in 2011 while continuing her personal photography projects, she decided to take over her family business, her ancestral restaurant in Kyoto that has been running since 1465. Her first photo book SOL was published in 2008 by the Japanese house, Akaaka, and her second book Eagle and Raven is published in 2020. Her work has been published by various international media, including the BBC and The Guardian. She lives in Kyoto. She shoots with film and makes her prints in her darkroom.

Education

1999 Graduated Parson School of Design BFA degree Photography department
1995 Graduated Fransisco Parker High School in San Diego

Solo exhibition

2018 Eagle and Raven, Revela-T, Spain
2013 Eagle and Raven, KG plus Kyotography , Kyoto
2011 OM, Target Gallery , Tokyo
OM, Slant Gallery , Kanazawa
2009 SOL, Rocket Gallery , Tokyo
2008 SOL, TRAX Gallery , Yamashina
SOL, Shin-bi Gallery , Kyoto

Group exhibition

2019 TRANSIT group exhibition at Cannon gallery , Tokyo and Osaka
2014 TRANSIT group exhibition at Fuji film gallery , Tokyo and Osaka
2013 Two-person show at Mitsukoshi Gallery, Taipei.
2010 Artium , Fukuoka
2008 Art court frontier , Art Court Gallery , Osaka
2005 Photography and Haiku Poems - Dedication of Flowers exhibition by women photographers , Tokyo National Museum, Tokyo