

WATANABE Go - 'face'

September 15 - October 20, 2007

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ARATANIURANO is proud to be holding 'face', a solo exhibition by Go Watanabe, from September 15 to October 20.

Following his critically acclaimed debut in the 'very very human' exhibition at Toyota Municipal Museum of Art in 2005, and the 'Media City Seoul' exhibition at Seoul Museum of Art in 2006, this year Watanabe has taken part in successive group exhibitions, such as 'Beautiful New World: Contemporary Culture from Japan' held in Beijing and Guangdong, and 'Have you Eaten Yet? 2007 Asian Biennial' held at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts. This exhibition is the first solo show in Tokyo for this outstanding young artist.

Born in 1975 in Hyogo Prefecture, Watanabe's work until now has consisted of books that are completely blank other than a few pages, and portraits of female models with completely white make-up and hair.

In recent years he has developed these works even further to create the 'face ("portrait")' series, composed of backlit photographs and 3D computer graphics. Made by overlaying the image of a real person's face (skin) onto a 3D face that he has created on a computer, printed out on semi-transparent film and then mounted onto light boxes, these works confront the viewer with a strong sense of existence and yet at the same time a completely opposing sense of incomprehensibility. These young women who stare out with their large eyes, while being completely devoid of individuality, shine out a pure white light, radiating something akin to divinity.

This 'something' is not just a form of anonymity that defies interpretation, but something that cannot be labeled as either human or object, something that makes one feel the realm of the unrecognizable, something that belongs neither to the viewer nor the viewed object, but gives existence to both, something that seems to float on the autonomous surface of a boundary line. To put it in words, it is in this 'face' that Watanabe finds meaning. (The exhibition title in Japanese, kyomen, is a constructed word made up of the characters for 'boundary' and 'face').

The self, the world, people, life - one can say that there are all kinds of 'boundaries' that man considers, demarcates, fights over and wanders over. This behavior moves in step with the advance of technology, not least the science of cloning, and is becoming a more and more complicated and serious problem that we face. The 'faces' engendered in Watanabe's work are a powerful magnetic field, making us stand once again on these 'boundaries' - they have an urgent, powerful impact on our way of thinking.



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1. face ("portrait") - 10
2006, digital print, translucent
film, light box.
h.135 x w.123 x d.20 cm