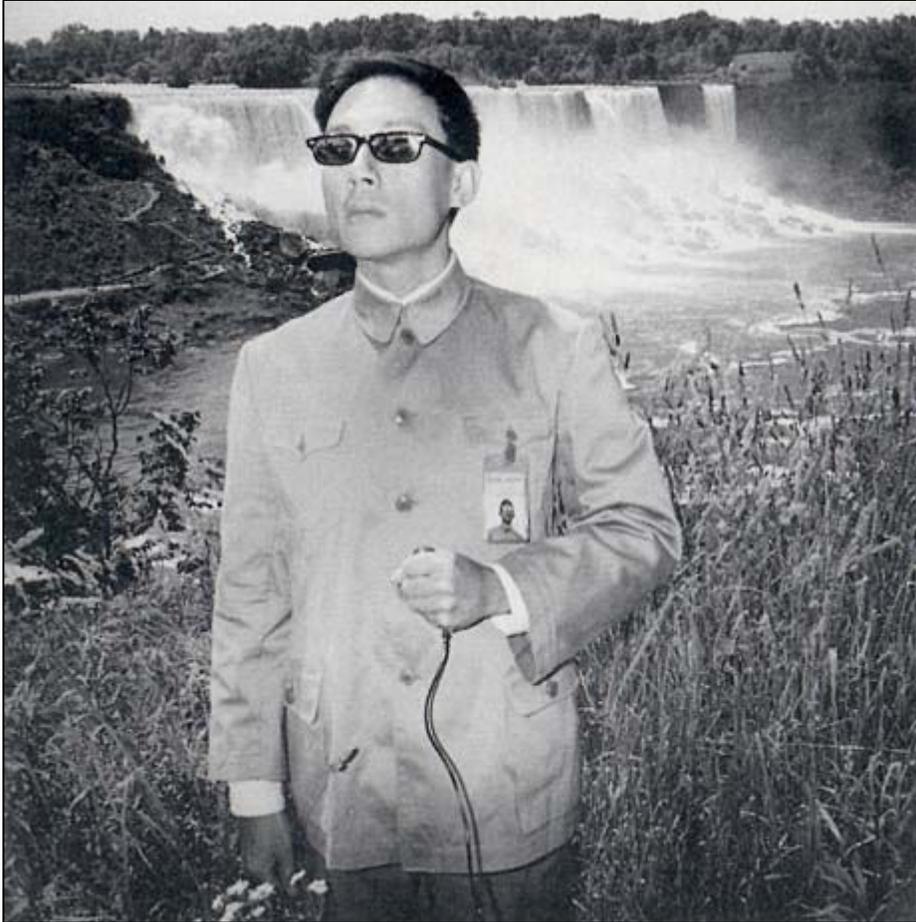


Imag(in)ing the West:
**Michiko Kon, Dinh Q. Lê, Nikki Lee, Yasumasa
Morimura, and Tseng Kwong Chi**



**The Sheldon Art Galleries, St. Louis
Gallery of Photography
January 24 – March 27, 2004**

Imag(in)ing the West: Michiko Kon, Dinh Q. Lê, Nikki Lee, Yasumasa Morimura, and Tseng Kwong Chi

The artists brought together in this exhibition share a wide range of responses to the intersections, laminations and layerings of Asian and Western histories as well as social, popular and art-historical culture. Michiko Kon, Dinh Q. Lê, Nikki Lee, Yasumasa Morimura and Tseng Kwong Chi are five artists of international reputation who use photography to explore some of these complex relationships. Their resulting works are crystallization and an amalgam of traditions from both cultures, and speak to issues in the construction of history, memory and established social and cultural expectations. Their works are, on one hand an exploration of the “other” and their place within that system, but their insidious appropriation of Western cultural traditions and stereotypes could also be read as a statement of subversion against Western hegemonic cultural practice.

Wearing a Mao-era suit, reflective sunglasses and an identification badge that subversively read “Slutforart,” performance artist Tseng Kwong Chi traveled the world, producing self-portraits at leading landmarks like the Eiffel Tower, Niagara Falls, the Statue of Liberty, and other iconic tourist sites, as well as at society parties, (which he often infiltrated, unannounced and uninvited). When he first took the persona of the Communist-era Chinese cadre, he was astounded at the ease with which he was accepted in his guise. Difficult to imagine in a post 9/11 world, Tseng was able to infiltrate events, and had his portrait made with dignitaries, socialites, and other artists who did not yet know him.

In his *East Meets West* self-portrait series begun in 1979, the photographer explored the construction and preconception of cultural identity and the phenomena of tourism, analyzing the “pervasive ignorance of Westerners regarding Asia generally and China specifically.” The “Expeditionary” series, as the body of work is also known, was first initiated when Tseng visited Provincetown, a haven for artists and with a vibrant Gay community. In following years, Tseng visited North American and European sites whose meanings are steeped in histories that claim power or glory. In these photographs, he often employed the low vantage-point associated with post-revolutionary communist propaganda imagery to create dynamic, powerful self-portraits. Mining art history and popular culture sources such as Hollywood films depicting iconic tourist sites and landscapes such as *North by Northwest* and *Lolita*, Tseng presents tableaux that are at once critiques and celebrations.

In his early works, Tseng made the construct of the photograph evident. The shutter release cable is clearly visible in the artist’s hand as we are made aware of the *moment* of exposure and his complicity within it. By this act he underscores the “representational” and “documentary” aspects of the work, laying bare the constructed nature of the image while simultaneously signaling his power over the construction of identity within the context of politics and place. In over 100 photographs, the artist collected and catalogued iconic sites and

monuments, claiming a place in the imaging and imagining of these places.

In later years, Tseng used an assistant so he could be freed from the camera's umbilical cord. Seen from afar in many of these works, his figure often seems to dissolve into the landscape he occupies. Taken at Lake Ninevah, the Grand Canyon and Mount Rushmore, and other expansive landscape sites, these photographs are a reminder of German Romantic paintings by Kaspar David Friederich, Arnold Böcklin or Carl Gustav Carus. In them, the artist is contemplative, communing with nature in a boat on a foggy lake, or a small figure on a mountaintop overlooking the Grand Canyon. Sepia toned, they are also an homage to American 19th century expeditionary landscape photographs. Parallels have also been made to Chinese Northern Sung Dynasty (960 – 1279) painting, where mists and wide vistas suggest the infinite and unknowable.¹ Much like Tseng's later landscape compositions, figures in these paintings were represented as minute against the grandeur of the landscape.

Born to Chinese parents who fled to Hong Kong from China's Cultural Revolution, Tseng was raised in an environment of cultural intersections. Still under British rule, Hong Kong was a city of complex and jarring dichotomies. Anglophile parents exposed Tseng and his sister Muna to European music and arts and later moved to Canada. Tseng studied in an international setting in Vancouver and Paris, where he learned to speak fluent French. Around 1978 he changed his name from Joseph Tseng to Tseng Kwong Chi. Born Tseng Kwong Chi (His Chinese formal name) Joseph was the name his parents gave him while they lived in Hong Kong. In this context, Tseng's investigations of can be read on several levels. On the surface, the works present to the (Western) viewer an image of "The Chinese," or "The Other," but in the context of his early childhood influences, the images can also be seen as those constructed by one outside his own culture imagining and questioning perceived cultural identities. As an artist, Tseng refused to be ghettoized as an "Asian" artist, but made the study of racial stereotypes an integral part of his work. A man in exile, Tseng was most comfortable in the cosmopolitan city of New York, where everyone seemed to be from somewhere else. His own cultural heritage was cosmopolitan, layering Chinese, European and American influences. In his works, Tseng traversed the boundaries of "insider" and "outsider," self and "the other." This dichotomy lays bare myths of authenticity in proscribed views of cultural "truths," both "Western" and "Asian."² Tseng traveled the United States and Europe making photographs for his *East meets West* series until 1990 when he died of AIDS at the age of 40. Ironically, he never visited China, but had planned a trip the year he died.

Yasumasa Morimura also investigates identity through cultural manifestations. Since the early 1980s, he has transformed Western icons of art history and film by personifying central figures in works by Rembrandt, Goya, Manet, and Cindy Sherman, or in Hollywood photographs of Audrey Hepburn, Marlene Dietrich or Marilyn Monroe, among many others. In his complex constructions, the artist applies elaborate makeup and costume, or digitally inserts his visage into

reproductions of iconic paintings. Morimura's Asian features become a central element in the transformation as he places himself within the context of Western art history and most recently, takes on the photographic personae of a number of golden-age Hollywood stars. The artist *occupies* these iconic images – images both painted and photographic, which have become canons of Western culture, and transforms them into subversive appropriations.

Jorge Lopez writes, "*Morimura has always played with the ontological as well as political strings that command the dissemination of Western imagery. Underlying his work is a lucid understanding of the power of well known images, a power he appropriates to deliver a whimsical but strong contestation of the hegemonic canons of art history and the culture industry. In the series 'Art History' this contestation results in an intriguing union of photography and painting where both procedures are clearly indicated yet not entirely left to their own logic.*"³ Although the conflation of painting and photography are at the root of the works, this is not its most important premise. Morimura's work is one of dualities. While East vs. West lies at the surface, other contentions such as masculine/feminine, original/reproduction, high art/low art and artist/viewer also make up the complex layers of meaning in the work.

Begun at a time when a number of artists were questioning the canons of art history, dissecting and dissolving "masculine" and "feminine," and revealing the fissures in photographic veracity, Morimura's series have left nothing unscrutinized, uncollected, unoccupied. From Goya's *Third of May*, the retrograde paintings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema and the "orientalized" *Olympia* of Manet, to modern and contemporary appropriators like Marcel Duchamp, Andy Warhol and Cindy Sherman, the artist has claimed and celebrated his part in this process of canonization. His most recent investigations and appropriations of Frida Kahlo's self portrait personae are also breakthroughs. While previously the dualities of Asian/European images formed the emphasis of Morimura's work, in this series the artist investigates Mexican culture, and in particular, the life of an inveterate self-examiner, Frida Kahlo. Although Morimura has "played" people of color, (the slave in Manet's *Olympia*) his investigation heretofore has only been cursory. In his Kahlo series, Morimura has engaged in a dialogue with the Mexican painter, finding similarities in their appropriation of alternate personae. He has even engaged in a fictional interview with the artist in which he discusses with her their similarities, while she argues their differences and questions his motives for his inquiry.

In his *Actress* series, Morimura superimposes his "imagined" actress with a familiar, iconic image, unlike Cindy Sherman, who constructs her "Hollywood" scenarios entirely from the imagination. In Morimura's works, his image is merged with that of the actress and he *becomes* the image-icon that we know so well through photographs. Morimura begins with a familiar image (a photographic representation) of a constructed persona. Originally publicity photographs for specific films, the images of actresses on which Morimura's own

self-portraits are based, are already artificial constructions – picturing actresses in the guise of another character. The “original” does not exist. Morimura’s Audrey Hepburn or Marlene Dietrich (featured in the exhibition), on the other hand, exist in the mind of the artist, who, together with the viewer’s complicity, constructs the new persona. Morimura treats the appropriation of character as well as the *idea* of photographic representation and the notion of a constructed self. This merging of the imagined and the representation takes place both in the artist’s mind, and in that of the viewer, who plays an integral role in the transformation. This strategy is made clear in a published imagined conversation between himself and Frida Kahlo. In the “interview,” Morimura reveals his desire not only to appropriate a persona, but to become a new Morimura-imagined version of the chosen subject. Of Frida he writes “*I am not a researcher. In my line of work of creating art, I prefer to use my imagination. I prefer to converse with the Frida in my mind. The Frida who floats up in that fantastic sphere, who plays upon my various feelings and thoughts and moods. And in the process of our imaginary conversations, that Frida and I begin to blend and merge into a state that is my self-portrait. It is not my intention to reproduce Doña Frida's life and work per se. This is not a look-alike contest after all.*”⁴ True also in his *Actress* series, Morimura imagines the persona of the subject, sinks into the subject, and becomes the mind’s image – a mechanically contrived representation and the “other” simultaneously.

Korean-born performance artist Nikki Lee also becomes an imagined “other,” taking on a variety of personae both Western and non-Western through her immersion in a variety of social groups in the mainstream and on the fringes. Appropriating mannerisms, lifestyle and dress of yuppies, skateboarders, swing dancers, strippers, the elderly, lesbians and ethnic groups such as young Japanese, Koreans or Hispanics, Lee becomes one of the group. Photographs are made by friends and passers-by, who record her infiltrations. A combination of documentary street photography and performance art, the resulting images show a layered, constructed “reality” that is at once real and artifice. Lee makes us aware of culturally driven stereotypes through her appropriations and in the construction of her multiple identities. They force us to think about our own assumptions about race and social culture and both reinforce and undermine stereotypes by bringing them to the surface in photographs that take on the naming of cultural differences.

Lee’s investigation of these subcultures, however, is as much about “the extension of the self” as they are an investigation of the “other.” Rene de Guzman writes “*the artist believes that individual identity is porous, relational, and dependent upon context. There is no pre-existing, inherent self, sealed off from outside forces. This particularly Buddhist understanding echoes a range of theoretical perspectives on the nature of identity, from existentialism to post-structuralism, which suggest that identity does not exist outside of our actions and behavior, and that our selves are based on how we negotiate assigned social roles.*”⁵ These social roles are negotiated through fashion, accessories

and the appropriation of mannerisms. Lee, who originally came to the United States to study fashion design, has made the study of adornment as a beacon of self and the solidification of social standing an important component in her work. However, for Lee, a one sided reading – that of an investigation of cultural (mis)identity – is a narrow one. She prefers to see her work as an investigation of the many sides of the self. *“Changing myself is part of my identity. That’s never changed. I’m just playing with forms of changing... I want to make evidence, as John Berger calls it. I always feel like I have a lot of different characters inside and I was curious to understand these things. I wanted to see some sort of evidence. That I could be all of those different things.”*⁶ Historically, the self-portrait was the self-reflective arena of male artists. However, with the rise of the “New Woman” in the 1920s and the women’s movement of the 1970s, many more women have chosen to assert their multiplicity in self-portraiture. For these artists, the freedom of self-representation was a powerful assertion of freedom and independence. For Lee, the self portraits are documents (evidence) of the multiplicity of her being.

The underlying concept of Lee’s work is about the multiplicity of identity: *“other people make me a certain kind of person. It’s about inner relationships and how those really address the idea of identity,”*⁷ she states. *“People ask me who my influences are – Nan Goldin, Cindy Sherman – but for me, it’s the people around me. My boyfriends, sisters, or friends I talk to. The real people around me affect my work, not other artists.”*⁸ Like Cindy Sherman, Lee takes on a variety of personae to explore her self and its potential. Unlike Sherman’s, however, Lee’s photographs are about a very public negotiation of social groups. While Sherman’s characters are privately imagined and internalized, and only eventually become public through exhibition, Lee’s representations *require* public interaction. Her photographs are a collaboration between individuals, and are as much about interpersonal relations and interactions, however manufactured they might originally be.

While the work is about the many faces of the self in a global society, conceptually she says, her project is still very “Oriental.” Westerners, Lee believes “think of their identity as a unitary thing, ideally expressed though the manifestation of a single, authentic persona no matter what the context. Lee however, thinks of her own identity both in and out of her work as defined by a constantly fluctuating set of relationships with other people: “we” rather than “I.”⁹ In this way, her interactions and appropriations of a variety of selves speak to this Oriental sensibility.

Lee however also acknowledges that she has a “global personality.” Raised in Korea, she was exposed to American popular culture and commodities: *“I ate at McDonald’s, I roller-skated and watched Hollywood movies, I watched Wonder Woman and Starsky & Hutch.”*¹⁰ This layering of cultural influences is further underscored by her name-change when she moved to the United States. Like Tseng Kwong Chi, Nikki Lee also adopted a new name. However she moved

from her Korean given name of Lee Seung-Hee to Nikki Lee – from Asian to Western, rather than from Western back to Asian as Tseng had done. The name Nikki (inspired by the name of the model Nikki Taylor) was chosen by a friend, who paged through a *Vogue* magazine looking for ideas. This layered self – a self of imagination and appropriation – is evident in the cumulative body of Lee’s works.

The layerings of identity, memory and preconception and the intersection of real and imagined cultural histories are also the subject of the large-scale works of Dinh Q Lê. Born in Vietnam, Lê creates woven photographic works that cross cultures and intersect iconic mass media images and found Vietnamese portrait photographs. In his most recent body of work, *From Vietnam to Hollywood* featured at the Venice Biennale in 2003, Lê uses photographs culled from press sources, films like *Apocalypse Now*, and antique shops. The resulting large-scale works are visually beautiful and thought provoking metaphors for the shifting complexities and intersections of personal and public memory.

In the series Lê utilizes the now iconic film *Apocalypse Now*, distilling images such as that of the characters Willard, played by Martin Sheen or the cowgirl Playboy Bunny and sets these against an anonymous photograph of a Vietnamese woman found in an antique store or a portrait of a friend. Interwoven, Lê positions these “memories” in a “shootout with one another for the meanings and the memories of the Vietnam War.”¹¹ These works relay the “struggle for control of meanings and memories of the Vietnam War” between the personal, media driven and Hollywood constructs of the War.¹² The photographs, cut into strips and woven together into patterned “tapestries,” reveal and conceal shifting images that question what is a real, imagined or manufactured memory.

Opium Dreams, from *Vietnam to Hollywood* on view in the exhibition, is from Lê’s *Shootout* series. In this work, the artist brings together the face of Willard with the left half of photojournalist Eddie Adams’ infamous 1968 photograph of the execution of Viet Cong suspect Bay Lop, by South Vietnamese General Nguyen Ngoc Loan and a found image of an anonymous Vietnamese woman. A refugee from Vietnam, Lê and his family originally escaped to Thailand before emigrating to the United States in 1979. Studio portraits like the one of the young Vietnamese woman incorporated into *Opium Dreams* were acquired as the result of his search for his own family photographs, which were left behind when they fled Vietnam. “Sifting through these old photographs, I was hoping that one day I would find some of ours. Along the way I realized these photographs are in a way my family’s photographs. These people also were probably forced to abandon memories of their lives because either they did not survive the war or they had escaped from Vietnam,” Lê remembers.¹³ Using these surrogate images, the artist appropriates and creates new imagined family histories.

Questioning the veracity of memory is key in Lê’s works. While the original publication of the Adams image already carried a series of laminated connotations, its “program” in *Opium Dreams* is equally multifarious. Adams’

original Pulitzer-prize winning photograph has been the object of much controversy since it was published in 1968. One of the most potent photographs in the medium's history, Vicki Goldberg in *The Power of Photography* writes "the picture outlasted the event, becoming a key memory and a potent symbol of a war that harshly divided Americans and left a bitter legacy."¹⁴ Printed on the front pages of almost every world newspaper, the image was appropriated for varying agendas and was used to both promote and condemn the war. Not readily apparent in the photograph are the circumstances surrounding the capture and execution of Bay Lop. Various accounts of the event document that Lop was "indeed a Vietcong lieutenant, who had killed a South Vietnamese major, his wife and their children."¹⁵ Adams regretted the making of the photograph, saying "a lot of times picture pictures do lie...It condemned this guy....I think that two people died in that picture – not only the man that was shot, but him (General Loan)."¹⁶ When read in the context of its original and varying connotations, the image within Lê's construction shifts and changes depending upon the viewer's knowledge and beliefs in its histories.

Lê's series *From Vietnam to Hollywood* is for the artist an accumulation of all the work (he) had been doing about the Vietnam War over the years. The woman in the "tapestry" is a metaphor for the range of memories felt by Vietnamese on a greater scale.¹⁷ The Adams photograph, quite literally from the beginning, as Goldberg tellingly puts it, began its life as a "key memory," and as Lê uses it to comment on the malleability of history. The photograph, he states, "... *lost most of its political punch. It has become an iconic image of shock rather than brutality. Most of the young generation today don't have the background of the Vietnam war to put it in context. Even with the older generation, we have seen it so much that it almost lost all its power. Now it is just a part of our memory of the Vietnam War, and this memory of ours consists of everything from news footage (replay in VN war documentaries), images from newspapers (reprints in books), to Hollywood fictions. Facts and fictions merged seamlessly into one another. Everything is contaminated.*"¹⁸ Lê sets both images against a large portrait of Willard from the film *Apocalypse Now*, subverting the "truth" and "reality" of both "originals" by using the Hollywood construct as a "backdrop." The metaphor of layered memories and constructed, "contaminated" histories is further underscored by Lê's physical action of weaving. Inextricably enmeshed both in the image and in our collective memories, The whole asks us to question how and by whom memories and histories are constructed.

Construction of a different kind lies at the core of Michiko Kon's images of high-heeled shoes, corsets, brassieres, and sneakers constructed of fish scales, heads, eyes and octopus tentacles. At once beautiful and grotesque, the images are subversive views of high fashion and evoke the materials of torture. Kon sees the objects she creates as metaphors for the "delicate balance between life and death." However, they can also be seen in the context of both Japanese and Western sexuality and as a comment on the fetishistic presentation of merchandise in Japanese culture. Fish, in Japan a ubiquitous commodity

divorced of nature, becomes the material that enfolds and joins Western commodities.

Surrealism plays a large role in Kon's works however woven through is also the atmosphere found in some Japanese fairy tales which depict transformations and transmutations of a supernatural nature. In these stories, demons often take the guise of beautiful women, only to transform themselves into hideous hags when the paramour does not follow instructions. Underlying these ghost stories are often references to fecundity and putrefaction, also inherent in Kon's photographs. Kon's objects seem to be placed half way through this transformational process. Both beautiful and terrible, the objects carry the weight of knowledge and the reminder of fleeting time and ephemeral life.

For each of the artists in this exhibition, photography is an important component in the creation of meaning in the works. Kon utilizes the medium to fix the transitory, Tseng and Lee create self-referential documents and "evidence," while Morimura and Lê use mechanical reproduction to question canons of art and social history as written by the West. Indeed, without photography these images could never have been made because the nature of photography and the questions that arise through its utilization are critical to the construction of meaning the works on view.

-- Olivia Lahs-Gonzales, Director
The Sheldon Art Galleries

Notes

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² For an in-depth analysis of this subject, consult *A Fiction of Authenticity: Contemporary Africa Abroad* by Shannon Fitzgerald and Tumelo Mosaka, (St. Louis: Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, 2003).

³ Jorge Enriquez Canalez Lopez, "Yasumasa Morimura: Actress and Art History," *Globe* (E Issue 4, 1996)

(<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/visarts/globe/issue4/morimtxt.html>)

⁴ Yasumasa Morimura, "Frida de Mi Corazon: An Imaginary Dialogue" Aperture Website (http://www.aperture.org/yasumasa_morimura.html), 2001

⁵ Rene de Guzman, "Nikki Lee: The Skateboarders Project and Other Works," exhibition essay for *Try This On!*, (San Francisco: Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 2001).

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⁶ Nikki Lee in "Conversation with Nikki Lee" by Gilbert Vicario, *Nikki S. Lee: Projects*, (Ostfildern-Ruit, Germany: Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2001), 100.

⁷ *ibid*, p. 101

⁸ *ibid*, p. 98.

⁹ Russell Ferguson, "Let's be Nikki" in *Nikki S. Lee Projects*, p. 17.

¹⁰ Nikki Lee in "Conversation with Nikki Lee" by Gilbert Vicario, *Nikki S. Lee: Projects*, p. 106.

¹¹ Christopher Miles and Moira Roth, *From Vietnam to Hollywood: Dinh Q. Lê* (Seattle: Marquand Books, published in association with Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Seattle; Shoshana Wayne Gallery, Santa Monica; and P.P.O.W., New York, Distributed by D.A.P, 2003), 16.

¹² *ibid*, p.20.

¹³ *ibid*, p. 9

¹⁴ Vicki Goldberg, *The Power of Photography*, (New York, London, and Paris: Abbeville Press, 1991), 226.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 229.

¹⁶ Eddie Adams, Sound clip on Newseum website,

(<http://www.newseum.org/warstories/interviews/mp3/journalists/bio.asp?ID=22>)

¹⁷ Goldberg, *The Power of Photography*, 16.

Artist Biographies

Michiko Kon

Born in Kamakura of the Kanagawa Prefecture in Japan in 1955, Kon graduated from the Sokei Art School in 1978, where she studied woodblock printing, collage, and assemblage. She later attended the Tokyo Photographic College. Kon's photographs have been exhibited internationally, and are included in the permanent collections of the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House. Kon's studio is located near the Tsukji fish market in Tokyo.

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Dinh Q. Lê

Born in Ha Tien, a Vietnamese border town near Cambodia in South Vietnam, Lê escaped to Thailand with his family after his town is invaded by the Khmer Rouge in 1977. He and his family immigrated to Los Angeles in 1979, where he attended high school. He received his B.F.A. from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1989 and his M.F.A. in photography from the School of Visual Arts, New York. Lê received a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in 1994 and was featured in the Venice Biennale in 2003. He has exhibited internationally and his works are in numerous public and private collections.

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Nikki Lee

Nikki Lee was born in Kye-Chang, Korea in 1970. She received her B.F.A. in photography in Korea in 1993, and in the mid 1990s, she moved to New York to study at the Fashion Institute of Technology. In 1999 she received her M.A. in photography from New York University. Lee served as an intern and assistant to fashion photographer David LaChapelle, and has exhibited internationally in numerous one person and group exhibitions since 1998. Her works are found in the collections of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, The

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Saint Louis Art Museum, among others. In 2002 she received a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award. Nikki Lee has lives and works in New York City.

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Yasumasa Morimura (Lives and works in Kyoto, Japan)

Born in Osaka, Japan in 1950, Morimura graduated from the Kyoto City University of Art in 1978. Since 1985 he has been exhibiting in solo and group exhibitions internationally. He was featured in one-person exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (1992); the Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art, Jouy-en-Josas, France (1993); the Hara Art Museum, Hara, Japan (1994), and the Yokohama Museum of Art, Yokohama, Japan (1996), among others. His work was featured in the exhibition "Japanese Art After 1945: Scream Against the Sky" at the Guggenheim Museum SoHo in 1994. His work is found in numerous important museum collections.

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Tseng Kwong Chi

Tseng was born in Hong-Kong in 1950 and immigrated with his family to Canada at the age of 10. He received his artistic training in Paris and Vancouver and lived in New York from 1970 until his death in 1990. Tseng documented graffiti artist Keith Haring's work on the streets and in the subways of New York and photographed for magazines. Selections from his East Meets West series are found in the collections of the Guggenheim Museum, The George Eastman House, Rochester, New York, the Walker Art Center, the Chrysler Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Art, and a complete set resides in the collections of the Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, Arizona.

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Checklist of the Exhibition

Yasumasa Morimura

Japanese, born 1951

Self Portrait (Actress) / After Marlene Dietrich 1, 1996

Ilfochrome on plexi glass

Courtesy the Artist and Lühring Augustine Gallery, New York

Yasumasa Morimura

Japanese, born 1951

Self Portrait (Actress) / After Audrey Hepburn 2, 1996

Ilfochrome on plexi glass

Courtesy the Artist and Lühring Augustine Gallery, New York

Michiko Kon

Japanese, born 1955

Apron of Sardines, 1994

gelatin silver print

Courtesy the Artist and Robert Mann Gallery, New York

Michiko Kon

Japanese, born 1955

Brassiere of Gizzard Shad, 1986

gelatin silver print

Courtesy the Artist and Robert Mann Gallery, New York

Michiko Kon
Japanese, born 1955
Cuttlefish and Sneaker, 1989
gelatin silver print
Courtesy the Artist and Robert Mann Gallery, New York

Michiko Kon
Japanese, born 1955
Hat of Yellowtails, 1986
gelatin silver print
Courtesy the Artist and Robert Mann Gallery, New York

Michiko Kon
Japanese, born 1955
High Heel of Salmon and Flatfish, 1990
gelatin silver print
Courtesy the Artist and Robert Mann Gallery, New York

Michiko Kon
Japanese, born 1955
Lingerie of Pond Herrings, 1992
gelatin silver print
Courtesy the Artist and Robert Mann Gallery, New York

Michiko Kon
Japanese, born 1955
Shrimp and Boot, 1992
gelatin silver print
Courtesy the Artist and Robert Mann Gallery, New York

Tseng Kwong Chi
Chinese, 1950-1990
Empire State, New York, 1979
gelatin silver print
Courtesy Muna Tseng Dance Projects Inc.
The Estate of Tseng Kwong Chi

Tseng Kwong Chi
Chinese, 1950-1990
Hollywood, California, 1979
gelatin silver print
Courtesy Muna Tseng Dance Projects Inc.
The Estate of Tseng Kwong Chi

Tseng Kwong Chi
Chinese, 1950-1990

Coliseum, Rome, Italy, 1988
gelatin silver print
Courtesy Muna Tseng Dance Projects Inc.
The Estate of Tseng Kwong Chi

Tseng Kwong Chi
Chinese, 1950-1990
Grand Canyon, Arizona, 1987
gelatin silver print
Courtesy Muna Tseng Dance Projects Inc.
The Estate of Tseng Kwong Chi

Tseng Kwong Chi
Chinese, 1950-1990
Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C., 1982.
gelatin silver print
Courtesy Muna Tseng Dance Projects Inc.
The Estate of Tseng Kwong Chi

Tseng Kwong Chi
Chinese, 1950-1990
Niagara Falls, New York, 1984
gelatin silver print
Courtesy Muna Tseng Dance Projects Inc.
The Estate of Tseng Kwong Chi
(essay cover photo)

Tseng Kwong Chi
Chinese, 1950-1990
World Trade Center, New York, NY, 1979.
gelatin silver print
Special edition of 500
Each \$250 unframed
Printed and authorized by The Estate of Tseng Kwong Chi

Net proceeds benefit the families of low-income workers at the tragedy site through the Robin Hood Foundation.

Nikki S. Lee
Korean, born 1970
The Ohio Project (7), 1999
Fujiflex print
Courtesy Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York

Nikki S. Lee
Korean, born 1970

The Yuppie Project (5), 1998
Fujiflex print
Courtesy Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York

Nikki S. Lee
Korean, born 1970
The Hip Hop Project (36), 2001
Fujiflex print
Courtesy Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York

Dinh Q. Lê
Untitled, (Opium Dream), 2003
Chromogenic color prints and linen tape
Courtesy the Artist and ShoshanaWayne Gallery, Santa Monica

This essay is published in conjunction with the exhibition *Imag(in)ing the West: Michiko Kon, Dinh Q. Lê, Nikki Lee, Yasumasa Morimura, and Tseng Kwong Chi* in the Gallery of Photography of the Sheldon Art Galleries, January 24 – March 27, 2004. Essay Copyright © Olivia Lahs-Gonzales and the Sheldon Art Galleries, 2004.

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